



National Marine Sanctuary Foundation Ernest F. Hollings Ocean Awareness Trust Fund Request for Proposals

The National Marine Sanctuary Foundation seeks proposals to increase ocean awareness, particularly focused on how humans and the oceans are interconnected and how the ocean can be managed sustainably. The Foundation is interested in innovative proposals to engage the public in compelling ocean stewardship issues that highlight areas where both humans and the marine environment can benefit from effective and focused action.

The Ernest F. Hollings Ocean Awareness Trust Fund

The fund was established at the National Marine Sanctuary Foundation in 2005 as a tribute to the longstanding commitment of former U.S. Senator Ernest F. Hollings (D-SC) to promoting public involvement and understanding of the benefits of the oceans to current and future generations. During his many years of service to the nation Senator Hollings championed a wide array of ocean related issues, including increasing human knowledge about the marine environment through research and education. This resulted in significant improvements in the way the United States manages one of its greatest natural resources, its oceans and coasts. His efforts culminated in enactment of the Oceans Act of 2000, which established the U.S. Commission on Ocean Policy, which in 2004 issued a national report to guide ocean policy in the 21st Century. Senator Hollings is also a Trustee Emeritus of the National Marine Sanctuary Foundation. The Ocean Awareness Trust Fund seeks to continue this important work by ensuring that all Americans understand and value these precious resources, and by promoting opportunities for the people of all ages to become actively interested and involved in ocean stewardship.

The Foundation

The National Marine Sanctuary Foundation is the private, non-profit partner to the federally managed National Marine Sanctuary System; and was created to inspire all people to preserve, protect and promote our nationwide network of marine sanctuaries including a national marine monument. These 14 marine protected areas encompass over 150,000 square miles of marine and Great Lakes waters stretching from the Florida Keys to the Pacific Islands, from Lake Huron to the Gulf of Mexico. Through public and private sector partnerships the Foundation creates conservation-based research, education and outreach programs designed to connect the public with these extraordinary ocean and coastal resources. Learn more about the National Marine Sanctuary Foundation at www.NMSFOcean.org. Learn more about National Marine Sanctuaries at <http://sanctuaries.noaa.gov>.

About the Awards

- Total funding available is \$100,000.
- Awards will range from \$10,000 to \$25,000; NMSF anticipates awarding only four to six grants this year. The NMSF will not review requests that fall below or above this range.
- A 1:1 match is required. Government, private sector, or non-profit funds and in-kind support may be used for matching. Matching funds outside your organization are preferred.
- Funding is available for a period of up to 18 months. The goals outlined in the funding proposal must be achieved within this time period.

About the Application Process

Timeline

- Proposals must be submitted via online application <http://www.surveymonkey.com/s/NMSFHollingsGrant> by **11:59pm Eastern Daylight Time on October 22, 2010.**
- Final awards will be announced by **December 17, 2010.**

Eligibility

- Eligible applicants are formal or informal education institutions, nonprofits, commercial organizations, and state, local and Indian tribal governments.
- Previous awardees of a grant from the Ernest F. Hollings Ocean Awareness Trust Fund are eligible to apply only if they have submitted the final report on their previous award, or receive approval from NMSF.

Program Priorities

- The Foundation seeks to fund projects that educate and engage the public to increase their awareness of ocean issues and understanding of their relevance to future health and well-being. With limited funding available, the Foundation will only consider projects that address these specific issues:
 - **Marine Debris**
 - **Human Interaction with Marine Mammals**
 - **Non-Point Source Pollution and Runoff**
 - **Oceans and Human Health**
 - **Ocean Acidification**

Proposals must select ONE of the above categories that the proposal most prominently addresses. Selection is primarily for categorization purposes only, but may help appropriately gather input from external experts if needed. The NMSF has no established quota for selecting projects pertaining to particular priorities. For example, all of the awarded projects in 2010 may be projects that are categorized as “Marine Debris”; alternatively, potentially none of the selected projects will come from that category. Any input gathered from external experts is influential, but not a final determining factor in the grant review process.

- Projects should be public awareness-building projects that convey an ocean conservation message, and to the extent possible, include on-the-ground

conservation of marine or Great Lakes resources. The outreach component must be specific and defined, with measurable milestones.

- Ideally, projects will establish or build on existing connections with the business or user community in the region the project takes place, or businesses/corporations that benefit in a positive outcome of the project. (i.e., partnering with area grocery stores for messaging about plastic bag usage, or, matching funds for project come from in-kind product donated by reusable bag company)
- Projects should link to priorities identified in relevant expert reports and policies such as the National Ocean Policy, and explain the project's potential to complement federal, state, or local initiatives designed to implement such priorities, particularly if federal or state funding gaps exist.
- Priority will be given to projects that highlight the role of national marine sanctuaries in ensuring a healthy ocean and sustainably managing the ocean. Projects that physically take place in national marine sanctuaries, rely on expertise of national program or sanctuary site staff, or otherwise partner with one or more national marine sanctuaries will be considered above projects of similar merit that do not highlight national marine sanctuaries. In order to receive priority, a Letter of Support from NOAA's Office of National Marine Sanctuaries is required. This letter should be written by an individual sanctuary Superintendent, Regional Office Director, or National Program Lead and should be send to the NMSF according to the directions for Letters of Support.

Application Requirements

Proposals must be submitted via the online application at <http://www.surveymonkey.com/s/NMSFHollingsGrant> by **11:59pm Eastern Daylight Time on October 22, 2010**. Proposals submitted by fax or mail will not be reviewed. Please do not send a duplicate copy by fax or email. A confirmation email from the Foundation noting that your proposal is complete will be sent to the organization submitting the proposal following the receipt of your Letter(s) of Support.

- The online application will require contact information, summary information about your proposal, a project narrative and budget, noted below. A print out of the questions on the application is available on our web site at www.NMSFocean.org/our-grants. The Foundation recommends that you cut and paste your responses from an application such as Microsoft Word for questions that require a narrative response.
 - A) Project Goals (300 words or less)
 - B) Project Description (1000 words or less)
 - C) Project Timeline and Measurable Milestones;
 - D) Budget, including description of matching funds or in-kind services;
 - E) Evaluation: describe how the program will be evaluated; and,

- F) Acknowledgement of the National Marine Sanctuary Foundation;
- G) Biosketches of Project Leaders/Directors

- Required Elements to Be Sent Separately:

- At least ONE (1) Statement/Letter of Support from a project partner is required and should be sent via email to grants@nmsfocean.org by the October 22nd deadline. Letter(s) should be sent by the applicant organization. If more than one letter is included, please send them as attachments to a single email. Do not send more than 2 letters of support. The subject line of the email sending the Letters of Support should read:

Hollings Grant LOS: (name of applicant organization)/(project title)

(DO NOT have partners email/mail/fax statements of support to NMSF separately.)

Review and Selection Process

- Initial/First-round review of proposals will be based primarily on the information provided on pages 2, 3, and 4 of the online application (Summary Information).
- Proposals will be reviewed by a minimum of three reviewers.
- Final selections will be made by the National Marine Sanctuary Foundation Board of Trustees.
- Awards will be announced on December 17, 2010.
- Notification will be sent on the status of all proposals, regardless of the decision.
- Funds will be available to awardees in January 2011.

Reviewers will evaluate:

- Importance or relevance to program priorities, and the extent to which the project is likely to increase public awareness of issues related to those priorities;
- How well the project effectively leverages partnerships;
- Whether the approach is technically sound and if the methods are appropriate to reach project goals and objectives;
- Whether the applicant possesses the necessary education or experience to accomplish the project;
- Whether the project costs are realistic to complete the project; and
- Whether there is a means to evaluate the success of the project in meeting measurable goals and objectives.

Reporting Requirements

Awardees must submit to the Foundation progress reports each February 1 and August 1 for the duration of the project, and a final report upon completion of the project. The Foundation will provide standard reporting forms.

For Additional Information

- Visit the National Marine Sanctuary Foundation web site at **www.NMSFocean.org**.
- For additional questions that cannot be answered through the RFP or FAQ, contact Allison Alexander at (301) 608-3040, x 3 or **allison@nmsfocean.org**.