

**New York Sea Grant
New York's Great Lakes Basin - Small Grants Program
2017 Request for Proposals**

New York Sea Grant (NYSG) in partnership with the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (NYS DEC) is requesting proposals for projects that serve to benefit the environment and economy of New York's Great Lakes basin by demonstrating the application of ecosystem-based management (EBM) to local watershed challenges. This small grants program is made possible by the New York State Environmental Protection Fund and Article 14 of Environmental Conservation Law.

Proposals due by 4:30 PM Eastern September 22, 2017

Time Line:

- RFP announced – June 26, 2017
- Application Guidance Webinars – July 19, 2017 2pm; and, August 16, 2017 10am
- Proposal Submission Deadline – 4:30 PM EST, September 22, 2017
- Award Notification – Week of October 30, 2017
- Project term dates – March 1, 2018 to June 30, 2019
- Projects must be completed – June 30, 2019
- Final Reports due by September 29, 2019

INTRODUCTION to the PROGRAM:

With guidance from planning initiatives by New York State agencies and NYSG, the New York's Great Lakes Basin Small Grants Program <http://www.nyseagrant.org/glsmallgrants> is intended to support stakeholder-driven efforts to restore and revitalize the state's Great Lakes region and demonstrate successful application of EBM.

In July of 2014, New York State published an interim copy of *New York's Great Lakes Basin Action Agenda*, commonly referred to as the Great Lakes Action Agenda (GLAA), an action plan for the application of EBM principles in New York's Great Lakes basin. The document identifies pressing problems and actions which will benefit from holistic approaches needed to protect natural resources, environmental quality and economic development. The complete document may be found at <http://www.dec.ny.gov/lands/91881.html>.

This small grants program is designed to support local projects that lead to larger-scale activities described in the GLAA. This program is anticipated to be available on an annual basis, depending on funding. Each year, new priorities may be identified, as sub basin work group meetings identify regional and basin wide collaborative actions needed. New York State researchers are encouraged to apply to the New York State Great Lakes Protection Fund small grants program, administered by the Great Lakes Research Consortium with support from the NYS DEC and New York Great Lakes Basin Advisory Council. More details of that small grants program can be found at <http://www.esf.edu/glrc/nyglpf.htm>. The purchase of land is not allowed under this program.

PROJECT PRIORITIES:

NYSG is soliciting proposals (up to \$25,000) for projects that implement Goal #7 of the GLAA: “Enhance community resiliency and ecosystem integrity through restoration, protection, and improved resource management.”

It is anticipated that a total of \$200,000 will be awarded to 8-10 proposal requests. Consistent with the actions listed under this goal and the preliminary feedback from a series of GLAA work group meetings, projects that contribute to maintaining and restoring healthy ecosystems and habitats, improved shoreline/riparian management, flooding avoidance, and erosion control and planning for future coastal and community resilience will be preferred. Furthermore, projects should integrate EBM principles to the degree possible (see page 5, Evaluation of Proposals for a description).

Eligible projects may include project planning, design, and/or implementation, information management, tool development, demonstration projects, and targeted outreach and education initiatives to support management actions and address the following areas of Goal #7:

1. Protect critical infrastructure in Great Lakes coastal communities by using natural and engineered measures to improve resiliency where possible.

** for example, design an innovative pilot project that utilizes natural ecosystems and nature-based shoreline protection techniques to reduce risks to public infrastructure.*

2. Reduce inland vulnerability to extreme weather events by promoting wetland protections in flood-prone areas, evaluating a wetlands and natural systems mitigation banking program to promote restoration, and expanding green infrastructure and urban forests to slow storm runoff.

** for example, planning for and piloting innovative uses of green infrastructure and nature-based solutions to reduce stormwater runoff and mitigate high storm flows.*

3. Adapt to threats caused by climate change by restoring ecosystem biodiversity, increasing habitat connectivity, and supporting resiliency initiatives for natural and built environments

** for example, identify areas within a community that are vulnerable to weather events, or conduct ecosystem vulnerability analysis demonstrating how resiliency measures can be incorporated into local planning.*

Also, with input from the sub basin work groups, additional areas of interest consistent with the GLAA include: assessing, protecting and restoring natural infrastructure (e.g. coastal wetlands, floodplains, headwater forests, streams, etc.); stewardship and education initiatives to help communities prepare for and adapt to climate change including high/low water levels, drought and high intensity precipitation events; and, development of resiliency

strategies and land use plans that integrate ecosystem services including economic and social analyses of the value of resiliency.

WHO CAN APPLY:

Proposals will be accepted from the following entities which are located in New York's Great Lakes Basin:

- Not-for-profit organizations,
- County and local governmental or public agencies, such as municipalities and regional planning or environmental commissions; and,
- Educational institutions, including, but not limited to, public and private K-12 schools, Colleges, and Universities.

DURATION OF PROJECTS:

Projects must be completed by June 30, 2019. Expenditures made before or after the project term dates will NOT be eligible for reimbursement. No Cost Extensions (NCE) may NOT be allowed due to sponsor restrictions. However, at the time of contracting, depending on funding, NCE opportunities may be available.

BUDGET SIZE:

Budget requests cannot exceed \$25,000.

COST-SHARE REQUIREMENTS:

Match is not required.

HOW AND WHEN TO SUBMIT:

Full proposals must be submitted by **4:30 pm EST on September 22, 2017**. They must be submitted electronically through New York Sea Grant's electronic submission web site, www.nysgproposal.org, which will **not** accept proposals submitted after 4:30 pm EST on September 22, 2017.

PROPOSAL FORMAT:

A standardized application cover sheet, goal and focus checklist, 90-2 project summary form, and 90-4 budget form are available through the website link above and **must** be used with each proposal. All proposal components should be submitted as one document.

1. Cover Sheet:

Title; project lead and project team; contact information, including address, telephone and email; amount requested.

2. Goal and Focus Checklist:

Title; project lead; GLAA goal(s); focus area(s); EBM principle(s).

3. Project Description:

The main body of the proposal must be succinct and be no longer than five single-spaced pages in 12 point Times New Roman font (not including the cover sheet, goal and focus checklist, biographical sketch of top three personnel, required letters of support, timeline,

budget justification, cost reasonableness statement, budget form, and project summary form). Provide:

- Identify GLAA goal and specific action(s) that project addresses
- Project Summary
- Goals and Methods
- Objectives, Activities, Outputs, Outcomes, and Deliverables
- Briefly describe how the project integrates EBM principles (See Evaluation Criteria)
- Personnel and Collaboration
- Project Location: all projects must be located within and/or directly related to New York's Great Lakes basin (see map at <http://www.dec.ny.gov/lands/29065.html>)

4. Personnel and Partners:

List the key personnel involved in the project, identifying the project lead. Include a brief biographical sketch (2 page maximum per person) for the three top personnel. Include name, address, phone, fax, and e-mail address for each. If you are working with other partner organization(s), state the name of the organization and how the partnership will work. These pages do not count toward the 5 page project description.

5. Letters of Support for projects including activities on public property:

Applicants are required to provide letters of support from municipal governments if the proposal includes activities on public lands. These pages do not count toward the 5 page project description. General project support letters are not required and will not be considered in the evaluation process.

6. Timeline:

Schedule for starting and completing the project. These pages do not count toward the 5 page project description. *Projects must be completed by June 30, 2019.* Be sure to include your tasks, project measures and deliverables in your timeline. Please limit timelines to 1 page.

7. Budget Justification:

Budget justifications should reflect key project milestones, deliverables, and schedules to support invoicing. These pages do not count toward the 5 page project description. For each budget category, identify the funding amount, why, who, when and where the requested funds will be used. Budget categories include the following:

- a. Labor costs: List each person separately. Provide basis for labor costs.
- b. Fringe Benefits: Provide explanation of how fringe benefits are applied and documentation for the rate or dollar amounts assessed.
- c. Permanent Equipment: Provide make, model and dollar amount. Explain whether price was determined from vendor quote, catalogue price or past experience. Permanent equipment includes items like fish tanks, graduated cylinders, monitoring equipment, textbooks, etc.
- d. Expendable Supplies and Equipment: Provide a list of expendable supplies and

equipment needed for the project.

- e. Travel/Transportation: Describe nature and purpose.
- f. Other Costs: Provide breakdown for items needed and include a justification.
- g. Indirect Costs: Provide Indirect Cost Rate Agreement, if applicable.

8. Cost Reasonableness Statement:

Cost reasonableness statements should identify how costs were determined and how they are appropriate and competitive (e.g. used market rates, competitive salaries, etc.). These pages do not count toward the 5 page project description. Budget justifications and cost reasonableness statements are not the same.

9. 90-4 Budget Form:

Use the provided form to detail the project's budget. These pages do not count toward the 5 page project description.

10. 90-2 Project Summary Form:

Use the form provided to list project leads, co-leads, and term dates, and to summarize objectives, methods, and rationale (objectives and methods must match what is in the Project Description). These pages do not count toward the 5 page project description.

ADDITIONAL REQUIREMENTS OF SUCCESSFUL APPLICANTS:

- **Certificate of Liability Insurance:** Applicants will need insurance coverage. At this time, do not include proof of insurance. However, should funding be awarded you will be required to provide proof of insurance, Workmans Compensation and Disability benefits.
- **Audited statements:** Please be aware that if you are successful, in order to process the award, we will require an A133 recent audit or recent audited financial statements.
- **Permits:** For all projects requiring permits, all necessary permits must be obtained prior to conducting the relevant activity.
- **Documentation of Ownership and Public Interest in Property:** Prior to receiving the award, successful applicants must be able to document adequate ownership rights in and to the subject property, and that the ownership or use of the subject property is of a public nature.
- **Municipal Endorsement:** Prior to receiving the award, successful applicants must provide a municipal endorsement and authorization to conduct the proposed project on municipal property.

EVALUATION OF PROPOSALS:

All proposals that are complete and meet the deadline will be evaluated by a technical review team consisting of, at a minimum, members of New York Sea Grant and State agencies.

The Team will evaluate complete proposals based on the following criteria:

- Proposal must clearly identify and link to one or more of the actions and associated milestones listed under GLAA Goal #7.
- Degree to which the project integrates EBM principles and describes how they will be applied, as listed below:
 - Focusing on a particular place with natural boundaries (e.g. subwatershed);
 - Supporting sustainable activities in and uses of the ecosystem;
 - Prioritizing the health and integrity of the whole ecosystem over the needs of a single activity, species or interest;
 - Considering interactions within and/or among ecosystems;
 - Integrating ecological, social, economic and institutional perspectives and concerns;
 - Including the participation of stakeholders;
 - Promoting coordination and/or collaboration among various stakeholders and management entities;
 - Using and/or generating scientific information to inform decision-making; and
 - Implementing adaptive management.
- Appropriateness of the project's defined measurable outcomes or deliverables in regards to the project goals and whether they can be completed and invoiced within 16 months of contract approval.
- Prior experience of the project team
- Appropriateness of budget
- Project must be located within and/or directly related to New York's Great Lakes basin (see map at <http://www.dec.ny.gov/lands/29065.html>).
- Inclusion of an outreach component to support broad scale communication and/or application of project results.
- Degree to which the project will present opportunities to maximize implementation of the GLAA.
- Degree to which the project builds local and/or organizational capacity for future related projects.

FUNDING GUIDELINES:

A contract between Stony Brook University and the selected recipient must be signed before a Purchase Order will be issued. Proposals for new projects will be accepted. Funds are available for specific costs associated with project implementation and for general overhead expenses. The selected projects will require application for reimbursement, including all receipts. If you are selected for funding, in addition to electronic copies of any products produced, you will have to send brief progress status reports and invoices at the end of each calendar quarter and a mid-project and final report along with an evaluation of your project, electronically, to the New York Sea Grant office.

Webinars: Two webinars will be held to present information on the proposal process: on July 19 at 2pm, and on August 16 at 10am. Please register through Cornell's event registration service: https://reg.cce.cornell.edu/SmallGrants_112.

If you have questions or difficulties registering, please email David White at dgw9@cornell.edu, or call (315) 312-3024.

For more information, contact:

David White, New York Sea Grant, (315) 312-3042, dgw9@cornell.edu.