Texas Gulf Coast Planning Grants
2024 REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

Submission Deadline: January 31, 2024, 5:00 PM CT

DESCRIPTION
The Texas Gulf Coast Planning Grant Program is an internal funding mechanism meant to foster interdisciplinary collaborations and partnerships to solve scientific, technological, policy, and economic challenges facing the Texas Gulf Coast to preserve thriving Texas coastal communities. The program is led by the Texas Gulf Coast Research Center at the University of Texas at Austin's (UT Austin) Marine Science Institute (UTMSI) and is administered by The University of Texas Marine Science Institute with support from the College of Natural Sciences' (CNS) Strategic Research Initiatives team.

The proposed projects must be located at or of specific relevance to the Texas Gulf Coast and not general in nature.

Planning Grant
Planning grants support projects that build capacity and foster collaborations to undertake the activities necessary to establish future alliances, or other large-scale networks to address a broadening participation challenge facing the Texas Gulf Coast at scale. These awards could be used for training, technical support, and opportunities for information exchange. Funding is not intended to support research activities and/or new data collection, except for the purpose of a needs assessment or evaluation. Proposals should clearly state the problem the award addresses and outline goals, objectives, and end products.

Here are a few examples that demonstrate how applicants might implement a planning grant to serve as a stepping stone to a subsequent opportunity:
* Surveys/interviews/focus groups that enhance understanding of an issue facing a Texas Gulf community to inform the focus of a future proposal;
* Outreach and engagement activities that invite nontraditional partners to the conversation to ensure a research project provides benefits to the entire community;
* Building relationships with other coastal entities to identify and address research gaps;
* Consensus-building activities around larger projects happening in the community, e.g., fishing pressure, mangrove migration, oyster restoration, relative sea level rise;
* Compiling existing and large datasets to answer a new question;

- Testing of novel technologies and/or equipment before pursuing a full-scale research project that employs them.

Minimum Requirements
- Project teams must include at least one Principal Investigator (PI) with at least a 50% appointment at the Department of Marine Science OR the Marine Science Institute as lead PI.
- Project teams must also include at least one non-academic, external partner who advances or informs policy on the Texas Gulf Coast. Eligible partners include relevant municipality, state/city resource agencies, environmental nongovernmental organizations, or industry.
- The external partner(s) role(s) can be either paid or unpaid (i.e., consulting or advisory); however, their contributions should be critical to the success of the proposed project.
- Project teams may also, but are not required to, include one or more PIs with a primary appointment at UT Austin outside of the Department of Marine Science.

AWARD INFORMATION
Up to **five** Gulf Coast Impact 2030 Grants **($20,000 maximum each)** will be awarded. Projects should be proposed with a performance period of 18 months with an end date of August 31, 2025. No extensions are allowed.

Allowed Expenses

- Faculty salary (summer or otherwise) up to 1-month, but not to exceed $5,000 for each PI and one Co-PI
- Technician, Postdoc and Research Scientist support (UT-Austin only)
- Staff support for collaboration (UT-Austin only)
- Materials/supplies/consumables
- Consultant charges
- Travel or workshop hosting (ex. stipends, travel, and subsistence)
- Analytical services
- External Partner support (Through an exclusive acquisition justification such as a purchase order or contract).

Unallowed Expenses

- Basic administrative support
- Indirect costs
- Office supplies
- Computers, unless there is justification for specialized use included in the proposal
- Equipment, unless there is justification for specialized use included in the proposal
- Scientific Publication charges
- Graduate student support

ELIGIBILITY

See specific requirements above. Applications must meet the following eligibility criteria:

- UT team members must be tenure-track faculty, professional faculty, Mission-Aransas Reserve PIs, or research-track scientists with PI status. Adjunct faculty, visiting researchers, and postdocs are not eligible to serve as Co-PIs but may be named as investigators in proposals.
- Cross-college collaborations are allowed.

APPLICATION COMPONENTS

All application documents should be formatted using 1-inch margins and no smaller than 11-point font. Recommended fonts are Arial, Georgia, Helvetica, and Times New Roman. The documents listed below are required, unless otherwise noted, and must be submitted by the application deadline.

1. **Lay Summary**. In 100 words or less, provide a lay summary for your collaboration and proposed project. Describe the potential impact to the Texas Gulf Coast for a general audience.

2. **Proposal**. Limit to two (2) pages. Organize the proposal in the specified order using the section headings and instructions provided below.

   a. *Background and Goals*

   Explain the challenge(s) facing the Texas Gulf Coast that your team will address. Explain why these challenge(s) would benefit from the proposed project. Discuss the specific project goals and potential impact of the proposed project on the Texas Gulf Coast.

   b. *Approach*

   Detail the team's approach to addressing the stated challenge(s). Describe key milestones and any anticipated deliverables. If the project tests a novel technique, applicants should explain how it is novel.

   c. *Participating Team Members*

   List participating members, clearly explaining each team member's role in the collaboration and level of effort. This section should clearly describe why each team member is critical to the project's success.

3. **Letter of Support:** No page limit. Provide evidence of the municipality, Texas resource management agency, nongovernmental organization or industry's interest in the project.

4. **Budget and Budget Justification**. No page limit. Submit a detailed budget with justification that outlines expenditures in the following categories:

   a. A&P salary (ex., faculty & postdoctoral fellows)

   b. Classified Salary (ex. research technician)

      c. Wages (ex. student salaries)

      d. Equipment >$5,000

      e. Supplies (Ex. materials, analytical services, boat fees, partner contracts, tuition)

      f. Travel

APPLICATION SUBMISSION INSTRUCTIONS

Applications must be submitted through Competition Space, UT's online submission interface. To apply, visit https://utexas.infoready4.com/#competitionDetail/1924107 Login using your UT EID and password to create your application. Complete the application form and upload the required application documents described above and click "Submit Application" at the bottom of the page. You will also have the option to save a draft and return to continue your application at a future time. If this is your first time submitting a proposal through Competition Space, refer to the "Note" at the end of this RFP for further instructions. Application components should be combined and uploaded as a single pdf and submitted by the **deadline of 5:00 PM CT on January 31, 2024**.

REVIEW CRITERIA

The Chair of the TGCRC, or their appointee(s), will evaluate the applications. Proposals should be written in a manner accessible to non-experts in your specific field. The following evaluation criteria will be used and given an approximate weight based on the indicators below:

1. The project has the potential to create collaborations or products that will impact the Texas Gulf Coast by addressing clearly identified challenges facing the region within the time horizon of the award track. (35 points)

2. The scope of the proposal is feasible for the performance period. (30 points)

3. The proposed project has a solid collaboration plan to ensure the end goal will impact policy or promote change to Texas coastal resources. (20 points)

4. The proposed team members have the expertise to advance the project and are clearly committed to the project's success. (15 points)

POST-AWARD REQUIREMENTS

Awardees will be required to submit a final report upon project completion. Awardees may also be asked to describe results of TGCRC Grant-funded work at future UTMSI events or provide content for social media and outreach events. Budget transfers between expense categories may be restricted to 10% of total project cost. Awardees shall provide acknowledgment of support in any publication (including Web pages) of any material based on or developed under this project in the following terms:

"This material is based upon work supported by the 88th Texas State Legislature for the Texas

Gulf Coast Research Center at The University of Texas Marine Science Institute."

UTMSI support also must be orally acknowledged during all news media interviews, including popular media such as radio, television and news magazines.

TIMELINE
Submission window opens: December 1, 2023
Submission deadline: January 31, 2024
Announcement of awardees: February 2024
Anticipated award start date: March 1, 2024
Award end date: August 31, 2025

CONTACT INFORMATION
Application website: https://utexas.infoready4.com/#competitionDetail/1924107

Program questions should be directed to Sally Palmer: sally.palmer@utexas.edu

Application submission interface questions should be directed to CNS Strategic Research Initiatives: CNS_SRI@austin.utexas.edu

The form and timing of Gulf Coast Planning Grants are subject to change in subsequent years.

The content of this announcement is relevant only for the 2024 competition cycle.

Note: *If this is your first time submitting a proposal through the proposal submission website, you will first need to affiliate yourself with the College before you can submit. To do this, login with your EID and password, then click on the "Hello, [Name]" link at the top right of the website. This will take you to your user profile. In your user profile, under "Primary School or Department," select "Natural Sciences, College of" and then scroll to the bottom of the page and click on the Save Changes button. You will now be able to apply.*