

**SUPPORTING STATEMENT**  
**U.S. Department of Commerce**  
**National Oceanic & Atmospheric Administration**  
**Sea Grant Program Application Requirements for Grants, for Sea Grant Fellowships, including the**  
**Dean John A. Knauss Marine Policy Fellowships, and for Designation as a Sea Grant College or Sea**  
**Grant Institution**  
**OMB Control No. 0648-0362**

**SUPPORTING STATEMENT PART A**

**Abstract**

This is a request for extension of a currently approved information collection.

Applications are required for the designation of a public or private institution of higher education, institute, laboratory, or State or local agency as a Sea Grant college or Sea Grant institution. Applications are also required in order to be awarded a Sea Grant Fellowship, including the Dean John A. Knauss Marine Policy Fellowships. Grant monies are available for funding activities that help attain the objectives of the Sea Grant Program. In addition to the SF-424 and other standard grant application requirements, up to three additional forms are required with a grant application. These are the 90-1 Sea Grant Control Form, used to identify the organizations and personnel who would be involved in the grant; the 90-2 Project Summary Form, which collects summary data on projects; and the 90-4 Sea Grant Budget Form, which provides more budget detail than the SF-424A.

**Justification**

**1. Explain the circumstances that make the collection of information necessary. Identify any legal or administrative requirements that necessitate the collection. Attach a copy of the appropriate section of each statute and regulation mandating or authorizing the collection of information.**

The objectives of the National Sea Grant College Program, according to the Sea Grant legislation (33 USC 1121-1131) are to increase the understanding, assessments, development, utilization, and conservation of the Nation's ocean, coastal, and Great Lakes resources. It accomplishes these objectives by conducting research, education, and outreach programs.

Grant monies are available for funding activities that help attain the objectives of the Sea Grant Program. Both single and multi-project grants are awarded, with the latter representing about 80 percent of the total grant program. In addition to the SF-424 and other standard grant application requirements, three additional forms are required with a grant application. These are the Sea Grant Control Form, used to identify the organizations and personnel who would be involved in the grant; the Project Record Form, which collects summary data on projects; and the Sea Grant Budget. NOAA Form 90-1, Sea Grant Control, NOAA Form 90-2, Project Record Form, and NOAA Form 90-4, the Sea Grant Budget, are approved under OMB Control No. 0648-0362. Each form provides information needed by the program but not supplied by the standard application process. The specific needs are described in Question 2 below.

The Sea Grant legislation (33 USC 1126) provides for the designation of a public or private institution of higher education, institute, laboratory, or State or local agency as a Sea Grant college or Sea Grant institute. Applications are required for designation of Sea Grant Colleges and Sea Grant Institutes. Institutions seeking designation as a Sea Grant college or Sea Grant institute must submit an application in accordance with 15 CFR 918.7. This is a one-time collection required only when a college or institution first requests to join the Sea Grant program, or when an existing program seeks to change the scope of its current designation. No forms are used. The data the collection provides helps the program officers determine the suitability of the applicant for meeting the standards and conditions for being a Sea Grant College as set forth in 33 USC 1126 and 15 CFR 918.5. These requirements are currently cleared under OMB Control No. 0648-0362.

Applications are required in order to be awarded a Sea Grant Fellowship, including the Dean John A. Knauss Marine Policy Fellowships. The requirements are set forth annually in announcements published via Grants.gov. These requirements are currently approved under OMB Control No. 0648-0362.

**2. Indicate how, by whom, and for what purpose the information is to be used. Except for a new collection, indicate the actual use the agency has made of the information received from the current collection.**

Sea Grant Colleges or Institutes: The application for designation as a Sea Grant college or Sea Grant institute is required only when a college or university requests to be recognized as a Sea Grant program. Existing programs may also use the same application process to request a change in the scope of their current designation. Applications are to provide an outline of the applicant's capabilities and the reasons why it merits designation. The standards to be met are set forth in 15 CFR 918.3. The data the collection provides helps the program officers determine the suitability of the applicant for meeting the standards and qualifications for being a Sea Grant college or institute as set in the authorizing legislation.

Sea Grant Fellowships: Applications for Sea Grant Fellowships, including a Dean John A. Knauss Marine Policy Fellowship, must include a resume or curriculum vitae; a personal education and/or career goal statement; up to three letters of recommendation, including one from the student's major professor or student advisor; and a copy of undergraduate and graduate student transcripts. Depending upon the nature of the Sea Grant Fellowship, additional information may be required including a letter of endorsement from the sponsoring state Sea Grant Director; a brief description of and letter of endorsement from a required partner, if any; a project description if the fellowship is research related; and information about the student's remaining degree requirements. This information is used by program officers to evaluate the applicants and to determine which applicants will be most likely to forward the goals of the Sea Grant Program during and after the fellowship. The program seeks to support not only the best students but ones who intend to pursue related goals in the future.

Sea Grant Forms: The NOAA Form 90-1, Sea Grant Control, is used primarily to identify the organizations and personnel who would be involved in the proposed grant, and to collect project metrics such as number of graduate students involved. A goal of the Sea Grant program is to maximize the number of graduate students working on research projects. For funded grants, the information is used by the National Sea Grant Office (NSGO) to collate accurate information on the number of students supported with Sea Grant funds and to summarize the impact of Sea Grants on the academic community. Certain minimal summary financial data are also required to help evaluate whether the resources proposed are sufficient to achieve the goals. Much of this information is similar to biographical and other information contained in OMB

Circulars A-102 and A-110, but NOAA has found it more efficient to use a form to gather this and related information.

The NOAA Form 90-2, Project Record Form requires information on the investigators involved, as well as the overall funding, objectives, methodology, and rationale for the project. In addition, the form provides information on collaborations between governmental organizations, industry, and the Sea Grant program, and also collects project classifications for tracking and analysis. The information is used by both the NSGO and the state Sea Grant programs to help determine the value of each individual project to the total program, whether matching costs are allowed, the rationale for funding and the methodology used, as well as administrative controls. This speeds the review process and reduces the chance of applicants wasting time making proposals that duplicate an existing or past project. It also provides the basic data for the next project summary for an on-going project, so that the data only has to be updated rather than resubmitted.

NOAA Form 90-2 data form the basis for many of our responses to the Administration, the Congress, other agencies, and to the public about the scope of Sea Grant activities. The information is placed on a project management database where both Sea Grant personnel, potential grant applicants and the public can see what other projects have been funded.

The NOAA Form 90-4, Sea Grant Budget, supplements the budget information in a SF 424A Form. The SF-424 provides only a summary of costs for the entire award. It does not give a detailed breakdown of costs associated with each project in a multi-project award, and such a breakdown is necessary for these applications because the Sea Grant program awards large multi-institution omnibus grants. The Form 90-4 gives the program officer a detailed breakdown of costs for each project funded by Sea Grant and allows the officer to determine whether or not the cost of a project is reasonable based on the level of effort stated in the proposal. Without these breakdowns, it would be impossible for the program officer to efficiently monitor the use of resources or the costs associated with each project funded by the National Sea Grant College Program.

In response to Section 515 of the Treasury and General Government Appropriations Act for Fiscal Year 2001 (Public Law 106-554), NOAA has issued guidelines for ensuring and maximizing the quality of information disseminated by the agency. Information submitted to the National Sea Grant Office in grant applications is regularly subjected to internal NSGO review as part of the grant award process. Of the various types of information collected (described above) some of the information will be disseminated to the public or used to support publicly disseminated information. Sea Grant has administrative mechanisms in place to ensure that a basic level of quality of information products is maintained. These include procedures for competitive peer review of all research grants, and performance-based evaluations of all university Sea Grant programs according to guidelines set by the NSGO.

Sea Grant is a science and education organization. It does not have regulatory responsibilities. In general, the NSGO provides summary information to the public about the grants it awards. Information is publicly disseminated through the publication of reports describing Sea Grant's university-based research, education, and outreach activities. These reports are widely distributed in both print and web-based formats. All reports and supporting data are reviewed for objectivity, utility and integrity, as required by the NOAA guidelines before they are disseminated. Previously disseminated information is reviewed on a regular basis to ensure the information is current and continues to comply with the NOAA guidelines.

**3. Describe whether, and to what extent, the collection of information involves the use of automated, electronic, mechanical, or other technological collection techniques or other forms of information technology, e.g. permitting electronic submission of responses, and the basis for the decision for adopting this means of collection. Also, describe any consideration of using information technology to reduce burden.**

The NOAA Form 90-1 (Sea Grant Control), NOAA Form 90-2 (Project Summary Form), and NOAA Form 90-4 (Budget Supplemental), are available in electronic format. The NSGO maintains a relational project management database to store, archive, and retrieve information provided on these forms. The forms are used to respond to solicitations for grant applications. All solicitations are published online at <http://grants.gov>. The forms, and instructions for using them, are provided in the solicitation documents at <http://grants.gov>, or available online at <https://seagrant.noaa.gov/inside-sea-grant/implementation/>. The Form 90-2 webform can be accessed via <https://webform.pier.seagrant.noaa.gov/Home.aspx>.

**4. Describe efforts to identify duplication. Show specifically why any similar information already available cannot be used or modified for use for the purposes described in Question 2**

This information is not collected by any other federal agency or available from any other source.

In some instances, there is duplicative metadata. An example of this is a project identifier or annual budget summary that is collected on both the Form 90-4 and the Form 90-2. The National Sea Grant College Program, and its individual institutes, understand that such duplicative metadata collection is required for efficient review and population of the aforementioned project management database. A custom-built, centralized application software that would eliminate the collection duplicative metadata is of interest, but likely several years away from affordability.

**5. If the collection of information impacts small businesses or other small entities, describe any methods used to minimize burden.**

These requirements have no significant impact on small businesses or entities.

**6. Describe the consequence to Federal program or policy activities if the collection is not conducted or is conducted less frequently, as well as any technical or legal obstacles to reducing burden.**

The grant and fellowship application information is required as part of the annual grant application process and cannot be collected less frequently. The requests for Sea Grant College or Sea Grant Institute designation or change in designation is a one-time action at the respondent's discretion.

**7. Explain any special circumstances that would cause an information collection to be conducted in a manner inconsistent with OMB guidelines.**

This collection will be conducted in a manner consistent with OMB guidelines.

**8. If applicable, provide a copy and identify the date and page number of publications in the Federal Register of the agency's notice, required by 5 CFR 1320.8 (d), soliciting comments on the information collection prior to submission to OMB. Summarize public comments received in response to that notice and describe actions taken by the agency in response to these comments. Specifically address comments received on cost and hour burden.**

A Federal Register Notice soliciting comments on this information collection was published on December 13, 2023 (88 FR 86321). No comments were received.

Pursuant to 5 CFR 1320.8(d), NSGO consulted with external stakeholders to obtain their views on the availability of data, frequency of collection, clarity of instructions and recordkeeping, disclosure, or reporting format, and on the data elements to be recorded, disclosed, or reported. No comments were received.

**9. Explain any decision to provide any payment or gift to respondents, other than remuneration of contractors or grantees.**

No payments or gifts are made.

**10. Describe any assurance of confidentiality provided to respondents and the basis for the assurance in statute, regulation, or agency policy. If the collection requires a systems of records notice (SORN) or privacy impact assessment (PIA), those should be cited and described here.**

No confidentiality is promised.

**11. Provide additional justification for any questions of a sensitive nature, such as sexual behavior or attitudes, religious beliefs, and other matters that are commonly considered private. This justification should include the reasons why the agency considers the questions necessary, the specific uses to be made of the information, the explanation to be given to persons from whom the information is requested, and any steps to be taken to obtain their consent.**

No sensitive questions are asked.

## 12. Provide estimates of the hour burden of the collection of information.

A significant difference in available funding opportunities occurs on a biennial basis as the typical length of a Sea Grant grants award is two-years. The current range in annual responses has resulted in a slight refinement from previous calculations, and work is shown later in this paragraph. There is also variability in the number of responses per respondent. For example, respondents that are associated with Sea Grant Institutions (34) may submit 5-25 project applications per year, while other non-institutional respondents (80) submit only 1. Thus, for years that initiate the majority of grant awards, we apply an average of 20 responses / Sea Grant institution (34), and 10 responses per Sea Grant institution (34) during off years. For a 3-year period this calculates to be: Total = [Year 1 (20\*34) + Year 2 (10\*34) + Year 3 (20\*34)] / 3 Years = 567 Responses. Annual responses are similar for non-institutional respondents (80 respondents \* 1 response / year).

Information Collection	Type of Respondent (e.g., Occupational Title)	# of Respondents /year (a)	Annual # of Responses / Respondent (b)	Total # of Annual Responses (c) = (a) x (b)	Burden Hrs / Response (d)	Total Annual Burden Hrs (e) = (c) x (d)	Hourly Wage Rate (for Type of Respondent) (f)	Total Annual Wage Burden Costs (g) = (e) x (f)
Form 90-1 (Control Form)	Applicant <sup>b</sup>	114	5.67	647	0.50	324	\$40.64	\$13,167.36
Form 90-2 (Project Summary)	Applicant <sup>b</sup>	114	5.67	647	0.25	162	\$40.64	\$6,583.68
Form 90-4 (Sea Grant Budget)	Applicant <sup>b</sup>	114	5.67	647	0.25	162	\$40.64	\$6,583.68
Application for Designation as a Sea Grant College or Regional Consortia <sup>d</sup>	Education Administrators, Postsecondary (11-9033)	1 <sup>d</sup>	0.25	0.25	20	5	\$55.38	\$276.90
Application for Sea Grant Fellowships	Environmental Science and Geoscience Technicians (19-4040)	65	1	65	2	130	\$26.99	\$3,508.70
<b>Totals</b>				<b>2,006.25</b>		<b>783</b>		<b>\$30,120.32</b>

<sup>a</sup> The information collected and structure in the Long and Short are identical, however the Long version allows multi-projects to be included in one file.

<sup>b</sup> An applicant may be a Sea Grant institution staff member (financial, educational, or scientific specialist), or scientific or environmental specialists associated with non-Sea Grant academic institutions, businesses, or non-governmental organizations

<sup>c</sup> The average hourly wage rate was calculated from individual median hourly wage rates for the typical occupations that submit applications: Financial Specialists (13-2000; \$44.37), First-Line Supervisors of Farming, Fishing, and Forestry Workers (45-1011; \$37.33), Life, Physical, and Social Science Occupations (19-0000; \$40.21

<sup>d</sup> Designation as a Sea Grant College or Regional Consortia occurs sporadically, roughly once every four years

**13. Provide an estimate for the total annual cost burden to respondents or record keepers resulting from the collection of information. (Do not include the cost of any hour burden already reflected on the burden worksheet).**

There are no capital/start-up or ongoing operation/maintenance costs associated with this information collection.

**14. Provide estimates of annualized cost to the Federal government. Also, provide a description of the method used to estimate cost, which should include quantification of hours, operational expenses (such as equipment, overhead, printing, and support staff), and any other expense that would not have been incurred without this collection of information.**

Cost Descriptions	Grade/Step	Loaded Salary /Cost	% of Effort	Fringe (if Applicable)	Total Cost to Government
<b>Federal Oversight</b>					
Supervisory Function (x3)	Z-5	\$280,281	2%		\$16,817
Program Officer (x6)	Z-3	\$169,571	5%		\$50,871
Program Officer (x6)	Z-4	\$238,290	5%		\$71,487
Data Coordinator (x1)	Z-3	\$169,571	40%		\$67,828
<b>Contractor Cost</b>					
Data Quality Assurance (x1)	Z-2	\$128,766	4%		\$5,151
<b>TOTAL</b>					<b>\$212,154</b>

**15. Explain the reasons for any program changes or adjustments reported in ROCIS.**

The cost to the federal government was updated to use a loaded salary (base salary + 50% benefits) to be consistent with other NOAA information collections.

Information Collection (Annual)	Respondents		Responses		Burden Hours		Reason for change or adjustment
	Current Renewal / Revision	Previous Renewal / Revision	Current Renewal / Revision	Previous Renewal / Revision	Current Renewal / Revision	Previous Renewal / Revision	
Form 90-1 (Control Form)	114	114	647	647	324	324	
Form 90-2 (Project Summary) Webform	114	114	647	647	162	162	
Form 90-4 (Sea Grant Budget)	114	114	647	647	162	162	
Application for Designation as a Sea Grant College or Regional Consortia	1	1	0.25	0.25	5	5	
Application for Sea Grant Fellowships	65	65	65	65	130	130	
<b>Total for Collection</b>	<b>407</b>	<b>407</b>	<b>2,006.25</b>	<b>2,006.25</b>	<b>783</b>	<b>783</b>	
<b>Difference</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	

Information Collection (Annual)	Labor Costs		Miscellaneous Costs		Reason for change or adjustment
	Current	Previous	Current	Previous	
Form 90-1 (Control Form)	\$13,167.36	\$9,781	0	0	Used current BLS data for labor costs.
Form 90-2 (Project Summary); Webform	\$6,583.68	\$4,891	0	0	
Form 90-4 (Sea Grant Budget)	\$6,583.68	\$4,891	0	0	
Application for Designation as a Sea Grant College or Regional Consortia	\$276.90	\$229	0	0	
Application for Sea Grant Fellowships	\$3,508.70	\$2,985	0	0	
<b>Total for Collection</b>	<b>\$30,120.32</b>	<b>\$22,777</b>	<b>\$0</b>	<b>\$0</b>	
<b>Difference</b>		<b>\$7,343</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	

**16. For collections of information whose results will be published, outline plans for tabulation and publication. Address any complex analytical techniques that will be used. Provide the time schedule for the entire project, including beginning and ending dates of the collection of information, completion of report, publication dates, and other actions.**

The NSGO provides summary information to the public about the grants it awards. Information is summarized and disseminated through the publication of reports describing Sea Grant's university-based research, education, and outreach activities. These reports are widely distributed in both print and web-based formats. In addition, NSGO maintains a project and accomplishment database on its public website at <http://seagrant.noaa.gov/>. Information will be distributed internally and externally.

**17. If seeking approval to not display the expiration date for OMB approval of the information collection, explain the reasons that display would be inappropriate.**

The agency plans to display the expiration date for OMB approval of the information collection on all instruments.

**18. Explain each exception to the certification statement identified in "Certification for Paperwork Reduction Act Submissions."**

The agency certifies compliance with [5 CFR 1320.9](#) and the related provisions of [5 CFR 1320.8\(b\)\(3\)](#).