

2017/2018 Marine Protected Area Collaborative Network—Small Grants Program Request for Proposals (RFP) Guidelines and Application Procedures

The Marine Protected Area (MPA) Collaborative Network Small Grants Program, funded by the California Ocean Protection Council (OPC) and administered by Coastal Quest, provides support for California's [MPA Collaborative Network](#),¹ a network of individual MPA Collaboratives coordinated by a network director. The network currently operates in California's coastal counties to execute projects that support the State's [MPA Management Program](#). Projects chosen for funding will address priority needs in at least one of four focal areas that make up the MPA Management Program: [outreach and education](#), [research and monitoring](#), [enforcement and compliance](#), and [policy and permitting](#).

Background

Following the completion of California's MPA network in 2012, the State recognized the need for more capacity and coordination to support the MPA Management Program. In partnership with a diverse group of stakeholders, the State helped support the creation of the MPA Collaborative Network,² which engages local experts, members of the public, and local law enforcement across all of California's coastal counties in informing and supporting the MPA Management Program. Fourteen Collaboratives currently operate within the MPA Collaborative Network. Each Collaborative is composed of volunteers who participate in outreach and education activities and citizen science projects, and work with local law enforcement to ensure effective management and compliance with MPA regulations.

Using funds from Proposition 84 (the Safe Drinking Water Quality and Supply, Flood Control, River and Coastal Protection Bond Act, passed in 2006), OPC will fund a small program that provides grants to Collaboratives, supporting projects that address State priorities within the MPA Management Program.

Program Overview

- **Size of grants:** Each Collaborative is eligible to receive a grant of up to \$15,000. **Collaboratives may instead choose to partner on projects and jointly apply for single grants larger than \$15,000 (e.g., Collaboratives A, B, and C apply to complete a single, coordinated project for up to \$45,000).** A total of \$210,000 dollars will be distributed under the grant program over two rounds of funding. If, after round 1, all funds have not been not applied for or awarded, a second round will begin. Round 2 will be competitive and open to all Collaboratives: the highest-scoring projects will be awarded regardless of whether their recipients also received funds in round 1.
- **State Wildlife Grant Program alignment:** The [State Wildlife Grant \(SWG\) Program](#) provides federal grant funds to states to support state programs that broadly benefit wildlife and habitats, but particularly "Species of Greatest Conservation Need" as defined by individual states. The California Department of Fish and Wildlife uses SWG Program funds to develop and implement its [State Wildlife Action Plan](#) (SWAP), which includes a companion plan on marine resources.³ The companion plan identifies the top strategy categories for collaboration as data collection and analysis, law and policy, and management planning.⁴ Collaboratives may align their project(s) with the SWG Program

¹ The Collaborative Network is working with the Statewide Leadership Team, MPA Collaborative Network staff, and Blue Earth Consultants, a Division of ERG, to develop a draft memorandum of understanding to outline the core purpose and goals of the network and formalize the partnership between the Collaborative Network and the State.

² Also see *The California Collaborative Approach: Marine Protected Areas Partnership Plan*:

http://www.opc.ca.gov/webmaster/ftp/pdf/docs/mpa/APPROVED_FINAL_MPA_Partnership_Plan_12022014.pdf.

³ SWAP "Marine Province" chapter: <https://nrm.dfg.ca.gov/FileHandler.ashx?DocumentID=109215&inline>; SWAP *Marine Resources Companion Plan*: <https://nrm.dfg.ca.gov/FileHandler.ashx?DocumentID=136127&inline>.

⁴ SWAP *Marine Resources Companion Plan*: <https://nrm.dfg.ca.gov/FileHandler.ashx?DocumentID=136127&inline>.

and SWAP *Marine Resources Companion Plan* priorities and apply for matching funds through the SWG Program.

- **Categories of grants:** Grants will fund projects that fall under at least one of four focal areas that make up the MPA Management Program: 1) outreach and Education, 2) enforcement and compliance, 3) research and monitoring, and 4) policy and permitting.
- **Application format:** Grant applications must be submitted on the provided application forms (see “Application Summary,” page 5) and all requested attachments, as listed below under “Application Requirements.”
- **Project scoring:** Projects will be scored on a 100-point scale to evaluate how well each proposed project meets the grant guidelines and addresses State needs and priorities within the MPA Management Program. If a project scores lower than 70 points, the applicant will be asked to resubmit the proposal with requested changes, or submit an alternate project. See “Project Scoring Criteria,” below, for more details.
- **Deadline for applicants:** Applications must be delivered via email to info@coastal-quest.org by **11:59 p.m. PDT on September 1, 2017**. Proposals may not be submitted via fax or mail. Collaboratives are encouraged to send preliminary project concepts and draft proposals by August 14, 2017, to Coastal Quest for preliminary review and feedback before final submission. Collaboratives are also encouraged to call Coastal Quest directly at 510-268-8207 for any project inquiries throughout the proposal process.
- **Grant review process:** The Grant Review Committee⁵ will score each proposal and will submit a list of proposed projects to the MPA Statewide Leadership Team, which will review the list and provide final approval of proposals by November 2017.
- **Notification and grant disbursement:** Applicants will be notified following approval from the MPA Statewide Leadership Team in November 2017. Grants will be disbursed by November 30, 2017.
- **Project timeline:** Each grantee will be awarded a one-year grant that begins on December 1, 2017, and closes on December 31, 2018. Grantees will be required to submit various documents to Coastal Quest, including a midterm report due on June 29, 2018, and an executive summary and final grant report due on February 1, 2019 (“Mid-term and Final Grant Report Template,” page 9). Grantees should expect at least one in-person meeting or conference call with Coastal Quest to discuss grant progress and ensure projects and reporting are on track.

Eligibility of Applicants

An applicant must co-chair one of the California MPA Collaboratives: San Diego, Orange County MPA Council, Catalina, Los Angeles, Santa Barbara Channel, San Luis Obispo, Monterey, Santa Cruz, San Mateo, Golden Gate, Sonoma, Mendocino, Humboldt, and Del Norte. (Again, a group of Collaboratives may choose to work together and submit one application to pool funds.) Up to 25% may be built into the grant budget to cover administrative overhead expenses⁶ for the project. All applicants and vendors

⁵ The Grant Review Committee (GRC) is composed of seven key stakeholders of the MPA Management Program, with external expertise in California MPAs, grant-making, program evaluation, and organizational and institutional management and effectiveness. The GRC will participate and provide feedback throughout the grant-making process, including developing a grant-making strategy and reviewing and awarding grants.

⁶ Administrative overhead expenses are related to the operations of the Collaborative as a whole and administration of the grant (e.g., labor costs associated with time spent managing the grant and reporting to the donor, fundraising to leverage funds, office supplies, insurance, bank charges). They are not directly tied to specific program goals, objectives, or outcomes (e.g., production of educational materials or monitoring equipment).

associated with the project must adhere to the State's [non-discrimination program](#) requirements, at GC 12990 (a–f) and CCR, Title 2, Section 8103.

Eligibility of Projects

- Projects must fit into at least one of the focal areas that constitute the MPA Management Program.
- Projects need to have a strong MPA focus and show a direct benefit to the California MPA Management Program.
- Priority projects that have been identified by the [MPA Statewide Leadership Team Work Plan FY 15/16–17/18](#) include (but are not limited to):
 - Identify and implement opportunities to insert MPA messaging in existing related, non-MPA-specific efforts to broaden outreach and education efforts (e.g., informational video with planned distribution at airports, hotels, and other tourist destinations).
 - Create printed, locally specific outreach materials (e.g., waterproof MPA fishing guides, maps, species identification cards), identify key locations for materials to be distributed in areas frequented by both consumptive and non-consumptive users, and coordinate distribution of materials.
 - Produce video content that promotes local area MPAs, educates the audience about MPA regulations, and/or encourages appropriate use of MPAs. Identify physical (i.e., aquaria, visitor centers, etc.) or web-based (i.e., Thank You Ocean, collaborative website, social media, phone app, YouTube, Vimeo, etc.) locations where the video can reach its intended audience and make an impact.
 - Hold or take part in outreach and education events (e.g., Honor the Ocean with the Los Angeles MPA Collaborative and Wishtoyo Chumash Foundation, MPA Day at aquaria with educational games and materials, lectures or meetings with consumptive users to communicate science findings or other research in local areas).
 - Create a citizen science inventory to gather information (e.g., location, objectives, methods, data) about citizen science monitoring programs, projects, resources, and learning opportunities within California and promote findings in interactive platforms such as a website, social media, or mobile device application.
- Collaboratives are encouraged to communicate often with Coastal Quest and OPC to ensure that proposed projects align with State priorities and emerging issues. (See “Contact Information,” below.)

Project Scoring Criteria

Projects will be scored up to 100 points using the following criteria:

- **Clarity and articulation; sound approach:** Project description, goals, objectives, and outcomes are clear, well-developed, and realistic. Proposal outlines a logical approach with evidence of the types of actions that will likely succeed. *(25 points)*
- **Alignment; sustainability; impact:** Application shows relevance to [MPA Management Program](#) priorities, both local and statewide. We seek thoughtfully developed ideas; technically sound concepts; and creative, innovative approaches that will make an impact. We will consider the degree to which a project could be continued with other funding after the grant ends, and/or increase organizational or audience capacity. *(30 points)*
- **Time effectiveness; project management:** The project task list, timeline, and description of risks and mitigation strategies show the feasibility of completing outlined tasks in a timely manner and

achieving project goals and objectives. Key team member(s) identified, with capacity and skills to lead and manage the project. (20 points)

- **Interactive opportunities:** Project description clearly defines actions to communicate progress and results with the MPA Statewide Leadership Team and the ocean community (e.g., creation of a blog, press release). (15 points)
- **Cost effectiveness:** Budget is appropriate for the project described. (5 points)
- **Completeness:** Application is complete. (5 points)
- ***Extra Credit* Scalability:** Project likely to cause “ripples” by providing tools or knowledge to other Collaboratives, advancing the field into new areas, or building collaborations with other entities. (5 points)

Application Requirements

Please use the attached application form to provide the following information:

1. **Contact information**
2. **Cover letter (1 page)**
3. **Background/history of project (0.5 pages)**
4. **Project description (1–5 pages)**
5. **Project budget (1 page)**

Conditions of Award

- Grantee agrees to use the California Marine Protected Areas approved logo (which will be provided) on any promotional materials produced.
- Grantee agrees to hold the California Ocean Protection Council, California Department of Fish and Wildlife, California Natural Resources Agency, and Coastal Quest harmless.
- Grantee agrees to use the waiver of liability forms developed by the California Ocean Protection Council and California Natural Resources Agency (or the equivalent) where appropriate (e.g., conducting an activity or event).
- Grant funds may not be used to purchase food, beverages, gifts, insurance, or items that will be sold. If any given Collaborative chooses to use grant funds to subcontract administration services, associated indirect costs must be capped at 25% of the total amount of the grant.
- All work must be completed by December 31, 2018. Grantees should develop a project that is realistic and will make an impact, and focus on completing projects within budget and by the December 31, 2018, deadline.

Contact Information

Submit grant-related questions and applications to:

Tegan Hoffmann and Jennifer Lam
Coastal Quest
283 Fourth Street, Suite 202
Oakland, CA 94607
Email: info@coastal-quest.org
Phone: 510-268-8207

Submit questions about state priorities within the MPA Management Program to:

Cyndi Dawson and Tova Handelman
California Ocean Protection Council
1416 Ninth Street, Suite 1311
Sacramento, CA 95814
Email: cyndi.dawson@resources.ca.gov,
tova.handelman@resources.ca.gov
Phone: 916-653-6598

**MPA Collaboratives Small Grants Program
Application Summary**

Please provide responses to the sections below.

1. Contact information:

Collaborative(s) name			
Primary contact person			
Phone		Email	
Secondary contact person			
Phone		Email	
Primary address			
Proposal prepared by			
Signature		Date	

2. **Cover letter (1 page):** Provide a cover letter addressed to the Grant Review Committee on your organization’s letterhead, including logos of all partners (if a multi-Collaborative project), a summary of your proposal (including project background, goals, objectives, and outcomes), and any additional materials accompanying your proposal. The letter should begin with the sentence: “[name of Collaborative(s)] requests a grant of \$[amount] over [period of time].” The cover letter should not exceed one page, and should briefly summarize your proposal based on the application sections below.

3. **Background/history of Project (0.5 pages):** Briefly discuss the project background. Address questions such as:

- How and why was this project developed?
- What is the baseline status or need for this project?
- Is this project new or building on a previous project?
- If this project is ongoing, how long ago was it established? Has it met initial goals and objectives (briefly describe); if not, how will further funding help the project reach the original goals and objectives?

4. **Project description (1–5 pages):** Include the following information organized under the following sub-headings:

Clarity and articulation; sound approach

a. **Project goals, objectives, and outcomes:** Provide the goals, objectives, and outcomes. Outline a logical and practical approach with actions that will likely succeed.

Alignment; sustainability; impact

b. **Alignment:** Describe the relevance of the project to the MPA Management Program priorities. Which focal areas within the MPA Management Program (outreach and education, enforcement

and compliance, research and monitoring, policy and permitting) does this project address? How will this project help meet the [State’s priorities for management of the MPA Network](#)?

- c. **Sustainability:** Describe the approach to project sustainability used by your Collaborative(s), in the near term and in the future (reference a timeframe). What components of the project (e.g., partnerships, operational capacity) can potentially be continued after the grant ends? Which processes, methods, or tools can be considered as sustainable?
- d. **Impact:** Understanding the impacts of a project can help guide future improvements and mid-course corrections, as well as help to evolve the MPA management field as a whole. Describe how you will measure and document the impacts of your project. In other words, describe the evaluation metrics and measures of progress you will use to evaluate project success relative to each goal and objective, and how you will track them. Examples of possible metrics are audience satisfaction with the project experience; changes in their knowledge, skills, attitudes and/or behaviors; and changes to the environment.

Time effectiveness; project management

- e. **Task list; key team members; and timeline:** Provide details on specific project tasks and timeline, including identification of key team member(s) who have capacity and skills to lead and manage the project. Projects and spending of funds must conclude by the end of 2018. (See template below. Add more rows as needed; alternatively, feel free to provide information as text.)

Project Task List and Timeline													
Task, Including Team Member Responsible	December 2017	January 2018	February 2018	March 2018	April 2018	May 2018	June 2018	July 2018	August 2018	September 2018	October 2018	November 2018	December 2018
Task #1	<i>Example:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Collaborative members meet to discuss and outline content of a new fishing brochure. • John Doe coordinates 												
Task #													
Task #													

- f. **Risks and mitigation strategies:** Describe any risks to project performance, such as strategic, operational, and/or political risks, and evaluate their likelihood and potential consequences. For each major risk, identify mitigation strategies, methods, and tools to manage and overcome the risks.

Interactive opportunities

- g. **Distribution, communications, and/or outreach plan:** Describe a distribution, communications, and/or outreach plan that clearly defines actions to share progress and results with the State and ocean community, such as the creation of a blog, press release, etc.

Likewise, **if your project focuses on the production of outreach and education materials** (e.g., brochures, videos, informational handouts, and traveling exhibits), outline an outreach plan that includes:

- i. **Who:** Who will be the main distributor of the outreach and education materials? Identify any State agency or other partners that may be involved in distribution. Identify the audiences that this project will specifically target, including the number of people, age or grade levels, demographics, and geographic area. Describe your plan for recruiting your target audience (or how you have already recruited them). Explain why you decided to focus on this audience.
 - ii. **What:** Define the types of outreach materials that are being distributed. For brochures, informational handouts, and waterproof materials, how many copies will be produced and disseminated?
 - iii. **Where:** Include the possible names of businesses, aquaria, events, school districts, hotels, online and mobile platforms, etc., where the produced materials will be made available.
 - iv. **When:** Provide a timeline of when distribution of the produced materials will occur, and if the distribution is one-time or will be ongoing beyond the length of the funding cycle.
 - v. **How:** Describe how you intend to reach your target audiences, and any plans for community outreach to boost the visibility of the project.
- h. **Interactive partnerships:** Collaboration between the applicant and government agencies (including tribes); conservation, science, or fishing organizations; and other Collaboratives on proposed projects is highly encouraged. Identify any partners that may collaborate on the proposed project and describe the partnership.

Cost effectiveness

- i. **Statement of need for the requested funding:** Include a description of any other financial and human resources that are available. If the project is expected to continue beyond the end of this grant, explain the longer-term funding plan.
- j. **Permits required** (*if any*)
- k. **Project budget (1 page):** (*See below for template.*)

***Extra Credit* Scalability**

- l. **Scalability:** Describe the approach to scalability used by your Collaborative(s), in the near term and in the future. Please reference a timeframe. Which mechanisms and tools can be considered as scalable? What organizations or populations could be enhanced by scaling the project?

Application Summary (cont'd)
Grant Application Budget Form

Collaborative(s) name:

Project title:

Requested grant amount (\$15,000 maximum/Collaborative): \$ _____

Total project budget (if different): \$ _____

	Grant Funding Requested	Matching Funds <i>(identify entities and amounts)</i>	Total Project Budget
Project personnel (salaries and wages) ⁷			
Fringe and benefits ⁸			
Travel ⁹			
Supplies and materials ¹⁰			
Contractual services <i>(specify subcontractors)</i>			
Other <i>(specify)</i>			
Total Direct Costs			
Indirect costs <i>(i.e., administrative overhead)</i> ¹¹			
TOTAL PROJECT COSTS			

⁷ Attach an explanation of rate(s) and hours for each position for which funds are being requested.

⁸ Amount requested for benefits should reflect actual costs, not to exceed 46.5% of amount requested for salaries.

⁹ Personal vehicle travel reimbursement currently paid at the rate of 54 cents/mile. Travel to or from outside California is not eligible for inclusion in the grant request budget.

¹⁰ Include a list of the major supplies, materials, and equipment and how much they cost.

¹¹ Administrative overhead in excess of 25% of total project budget minus subcontractor and equipment costs will not be funded by grant. Administrative overhead expenses cover costs that Collaboratives incur not directly tied to a specific program goals, objectives, and outcomes, such as production of educational materials or monitoring equipment. They are related to the operations of the Collaborative as a whole and to administration of the grant (e.g., staff time, salary, office supplies, insurance, bank charges, time taken to manage grant and reporting with donor, fundraising to leverage funds).

**MPA Collaboratives Small Grants Program
Mid-term and Final Grant Report Template**

If you are awarded a grant, your contract will include requirements for a mid-term report and a final report. These reports tell the story of your project: what happened, what went well, and what you would do differently.

- The **mid-term report** (3–5 pages) should report on the project to date. Are you on track? Any adjustments to the plan?
- The **final report** (3–5 pages) shall be submitted before the end of the contract period. It should tell the story of your project including what was accomplished and what was learned as a result of the experience.

The mid-term and final reports should include the following categories of information:

1. Executive summary (1 page; see table template below)

Collaborative(s)		
Primary contact person		
Phone		Email
Project title		
Project start date		Project completion date
Total grant amount		
Expenditures		
Summary of goals, objectives, and outcomes		
Additional information		
Signature		Date

2. Project description, goals, objectives, and outcomes (1–3 pages): Provide background information on the project, including:

- a. **Narrative**—Description of what happened, summarizing what was accomplished based on the evaluation metrics, relative to the goals and objectives described in your grant proposal, and considering the following:
 - How has the baseline status (described in the background of the original proposal) changed through the achievement of your project outcome?
 - What did you learn from the project?
 - Were there unexpected developments? How were they handled?

- Were there any unanticipated internal or external factors that impeded or contributed to the success of your project?
 - Did you make any changes to the project partway through, or do you plan to make changes in the future? In hindsight, would you have done anything differently?
- b. **Participants/audience**—Description of project partners, participants, or audience, including how many people you served, where they are from, other demographics (e.g., age or grade level, ethnicity, percent English language-learners) and how you conduct outreach for your project.
 - c. **Copies of media and products**—Media coverage, outreach pieces, curricula, and how-to manuals, including any translations.
 - d. **Optional**—Brief stories and/or photographs illustrating the success of your project submitted via email, for possible use by OPC to publicize the results of the MPA Collaborative Network Small Grants Program.
 - e. **Next steps (if applicable)**—Where do you see this project going? Any future plans or next phases of the effort?
3. **Project budget report (1 page):** Provide a budget report using the template below. Please list the original proposal budget along with an accounting of grant funds spent to date. If there are major deviations or re-allocations from the original proposed budget, add footnotes justifying these deviations to the budget document. Describe the amount and sources of additional funds and in-kind services if applicable. If you have unspent funds and have finished the work that was proposed in the grant, you must return the unspent funds or submit a request to use those funds for other charitable purposes.

	Total Grant Budget	Total Actual Grant Expenses	Variance between Budget and Expenses
Project personnel (salaries and wages)			
Fringe benefits			
Travel			
Supplies and materials			
Contractual services (specify subcontractors)			
Other (please specify)			
Total Direct Costs			
Administrative costs (i.e. overhead)			
TOTAL PROJECT COSTS			

Please email mid-term report (by 5 p.m. PDT on June 29, 2018) and final report (by 5 p.m. PST on February 1, 2019) to Coastal Quest at info@coastal-quest.org.