Marine Protected Area (MPA) Outreach and Education Small Grants Program, Privately Funded RFP 2025

The Marine Protected Area (MPA) Outreach and Education Small Grants Program is a competitive grant program providing support for projects focused on outreach and education to improve compliance with MPA regulations statewide. Improved public awareness of MPA regulations promotes ocean stewardship to increase protection of marine life within MPAs, which in turn maximizes the expected ecological benefits from these areas. This round of the program is privately funded and administered by Coastal Quest.

Program Objectives

The MPA Outreach and Education Small Grants Program will support efforts that increase compliance with MPA regulations and promote MPA stewardship statewide. Priority will be given to projects that serve communities in need of environmental and climate justice and California Tribes and tribal organizations. The Program will also support the implementation of MPA products and programs that:

- Are in demand and will not be affected by the petitions currently under review by California Department of Fish and Wildlife (see CDFW's story map of petitions) (e.g. organizations show that they are receiving requests for: more printed copies of the product, more field trips offered, more versions of a product, etc. AND organizations can confirm that the petitions both approved and under review by CDFW will not affect their products)
- Support MPA outreach and education access broadly. (e.g. supporting MPA access includes but is not limited to increasing: ADA compliant MPA tools and resources, transportation opportunities to MPAs, bilingual MPA materials, etc.)
- Promote MPA stewardship by local communities, in particular communities in need of environmental and climate justice and California Tribes and tribal organizations.
- Can show outreach efforts yield changes in behavior or actions by their target audience
- Support outreach and education priorities outlined in the Decadal Management Review such as:
    - Conduct targeted outreach to specific audiences to connect stakeholders with coastal resources and encourage stewardship and compliance with MPA regulations.
    - Expand targeted outreach and education materials and events to under-represented user-groups.

Grant Timeline

Task	Timeline
Proposals Due	5/28/25
Grant Period Starts	7/1/25
Interim Grant Report & Check In Meetings	10/31/25
Final Report	2/6/26

Funding

Small grants will range from $15,000-$30,000. A minimum of 4 grants will be awarded.

Applicant Eligibility

Funds can be awarded to:

- Public Agencies (local, state, and federal)
- Public or private universities
- Nonprofit organizations
- For-profit entities
- California Native American Tribes and tribal organizations
- Fiscally sponsored organizations, groups in the process of incorporating as a 501c3 and other entities that partner with a sponsor organization eligible in this list

Proposal Scoring Criteria

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

Clarity and Articulation; sound approach *(25 points)*

- **Clarity and Articulation**: The project description, goals, and objectives are clear, well-developed, and realistic. The proposal outlines a logical approach with evidence of the types of actions that will likely succeed.

Alignment *(40 points)*

- **Alignment:** Application shows alignment with the outreach and education priorities outlined in the Program Objectives. Proposed project will not be affected by petitions (granted or pending) that CDFW is in the process of reviewing.

Time effectiveness *(25 points)*

- **Task list and timeline:** Outlined tasks can be feasibly completed in a timely manner, achieving project goals and objectives.

Cost effectiveness *(10 points)*

- **Project budget:** Budget is appropriate for the project described. 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.

To Apply

Proposals must be completed online through the Google Form application by May 28, 2025, at 5:00pm PT. We will contact you if we have any questions regarding your application. Should you be chosen for an award, you will receive an email in the end of June 2025 from mpasmallgrants@coastal-quest.org.

Contact Information

Please reach out to Coastal Quest with any questions or concerns at mpasmallgrants@coastal-quest.org.

Proposal Requirements

Responses will be accepted via Google Form. No email responses will be accepted. The list of questions below is to support applicant preparation.

Applicant Information
1. Primary contact person
2. Name of organization applying
3. Type of organization applying
4. Email and phone number
5. Primary address

Project Proposal
6. Project Title
7. Project Summary: please provide a summary of the proposed project. (500 words)
8. Amount of funds requesting
9. Project location, target audience for outreach and engagement, and community(ies) served (200 words)
10. Project background/context: please provide background information about your project including making a case for why your proposed project is in demand and will not be made obsolete by the CDFW petitions in review. (200 words)
11. Project objectives and outcomes: please include a description of the impact this project will achieve, including objectives and outcomes, for your project and your approach to tracking them. (200 words)
12. Project Scope and Timeline, Project Budget, and Performance Metrics: please find a link to a template to be filled out and submitted here.

Project Scope and Timeline
Not every month is expected to have a task/deliverable, some may be left blank. Reviewers want to understand project flow.

Month	Tasks and Deliverables
July	[Task], [Deliverable]
August	
September	
October	
November	
December	
January	

Project Budget
Please input grant funding requested and, if applicable, match funding (secured or anticipated). Additionally, please input overhead percentage.

	Grant Funding Requested	Match Funding (optional)	Total Project Budget
Personnel			
Travel			
Supplies and Materials			
Subcontractor(s)			
Overhead (X%)			
Total			

Performance Metrics

Using the list of measures in the table below, choose all the measures that best represent the type of project you are proposing, and your desired outcomes. Describe how you will gather data for each of the performance measures selected. If the project is awarded, you will be required to report on these measures at the end of the project.

In-person and virtual events, trainings, outreach, and education:	*Goal and Approach* *Write NA if not applicable to your proposal.*
A. # of people participating in the outreach, education, or training event (in person event)	*EXAMPLE:* Goal: 1,000 people participating in person. Approach: We will maintain a sign-in sheet that all participants will use to sign in for events. These sheets will be tallied after each event.
B. # of participants in outreach, education, or training events (virtual)	
C. % of participants representing one or more of the RFP priority audiences (listed in RFP under "RFP Priority Projects"	
D. % of participants demonstrating an increase of knowledge about California MPAs stewardship and compliance (what they are, rules & regulations, how to care for them) (requires a before/after assessment approach)	
E. # of hours for outreach, education, or training event	
Digital media (i.e. videos, social media and email campaigns, websites, etc.)	*Goal and Approach* *Write NA if not applicable to your proposal.*

F. # of digital media reach and/or engagement (number of people who see and/or actively engage with your digital content; specifically:
   a. Social media - # of people reached
   b. Videos - of views
   c. Email campaigns - # of people received
   d. Websites - # of individuals viewed	

G. % of increase of digital media reach and/or engagement compared to similar digital media effort	
Printed material (i.e. brochures, books, pamphlets, toolkits, etc.), both virtual and hard copy	*Goal and Approach* *Write NA if not applicable to your proposal.*

H. # of copies of materials that increase knowledge or awareness about California MPA stewardship and compliance	
I. # of copies of materials that increase knowledge or awareness about California MPA stewardship and compliance in non-English languages	
J. # of downloads of materials that increase knowledge or awareness about California MPA stewardship and compliance	
K. # of downloads of materials that increase knowledge or awareness about California MPA stewardship and compliance in non-English languages	
Other	*Goal and Approach* *Write NA if not applicable to your proposal.*
L. # of outreach and education products created in non-English languages	
M. # of staff /volunteers/partners stating improvement in quality of outreach and education methods (requires a before/after assessment approach)	

Proposal Scoring Rubric

Scoring Criteria	Strong 90-100%	Proficient 80- 89%	Adequate 70-79%	Fair 60-69%	Poor 59% and below
Clarity and articulation; sound approach (25 points)	Project description, goals, and objectives are **clearly described, logical,** and **practical**; evidence of actions that will succeed is **thoroughly documented.** No shortcomings.	Project description, goals, and objectives are **clearly identified**; evidence of actions that will succeed is **documented.** Minor shortcomings.	Project description, goals, and objectives are **somewhat identified**; **limited** evidence of actions that will succeed is documented. Few shortcomings.	Project description, goals, and objectives are **vaguely** identified; **unclear** evidence of actions that will succeed is provided. Significant weaknesses.	Project description, goals, and objectives are **not provided,** inadequately addressed, or there are serious inherent weaknesses.
Alignment (40 points)	Project **strongly aligned** with RFP Program Objectives. Will not be affected by the CDFW petitions in review.	Project **aligned** with most RFP Program Objectives. Not clear regarding petition slate.	Project **somewhat aligned** with RFP Program Objectives. Could be made obsolete if certain petitions are approved.	Project **unclearly aligned** with RFP Program Objectives and unclear regarding petitions.	Project **not aligned** with RFP Program Objectives and/or will be made obsolete with the approval of certain petitions.
Time effectiveness (25 points)	Task and timeline are **complete, practical,** and **feasible**.	Task and timeline are **complete.**	Task and timeline are **complete but may not be practical**.	Task and timeline are **vague.**	Task and timeline are **not complete.**
Cost effectiveness (10 points)	Budget is **complete** and **contains all required** information; budget is **cost effective,** detailed, accurate, fiscally **sound,** and **linked** to activities and outcomes. No shortcomings.	Budget is **complete** and **contains all required** information; budget is **cost effective** or **related** to activities and outcomes. Minor shortcomings.	Budget is **complete** but **lacks** detail and/or accuracy; it may not be **cost efficient** and/or **related** to activities and outcomes. Few shortcomings.	Budget is **vague** with **limited** information; not fiscally sound as written and/or includes **unallowable expenditures.** Significant weaknesses.	Budget is **not complete,** inadequately addressed, or there are serious inherent weaknesses.