



CALIFORNIA
OCEAN
PROTECTION
COUNCIL

Request for Qualifications: Intertidal Library Field Collections

Add-On Biodiversity Collection Events

Applications DUE: July 14, 2025, at 5:00pm PST

Purpose of the RFQ

This RFQ is for add-on biodiversity collection events, which are defined as add-ons to existing efforts in areas where field teams are **already engaged in research or monitoring in California's coastal intertidal habitats**. A separate RFQ has been issued for novel biodiversity collection events, which aim to capture a wide range of specimens from various geographic locations within California's coastal intertidal habitats. Both types of biodiversity collection events will capture specimens from a range of taxonomies (e.g. algae, invertebrates, and vertebrates) across California's diverse open coast intertidal habitats (rocky shores, sandy beaches, and coastal estuaries excluding the San Francisco Bay). Collected specimens will be preserved in museum collections, and tissue samples from the collected specimens will be taken to generate a unique genetic signature (DNA barcode) for each species collected.

The California Intertidal Biodiversity DNA Barcode Library Project Team seeks to partner with field teams to include add-on biodiversity collection events into their existing field plans from Fall 2025 to Summer 2026. The RFQ is needed to better understand the landscape of experts available to complete this work alongside their planned intertidal fieldwork (e.g. long-term monitoring, biodiversity monitoring, marine protected area monitoring, etc.). Field teams interested in applying should be able to integrate biodiversity collection protocols as an add-on to their ongoing intertidal fieldwork. These collection events can be tailored to the specific habitats, regions, or species of interest to the applicant.

GOAL: Select field teams already engaged in research and monitoring efforts to collect organisms from California's intertidal habitats and prepare specimens for DNA sequencing.

Background

In 2023 Governor Gavin Newsom signed the Budget Act of 2023 (AB 102), which includes a legislative directive to the Ocean Protection Council (OPC) to lead the development of the [California Intertidal Biodiversity DNA Barcode Library](#) (hereafter referred to as the Intertidal Library). This grant is administered by Coastal Quest in partnership with OPC.

Through this RFQ, the Project Team aims to achieve the following objective:

- Collect whole samples of species found in California's intertidal zone, making sure each sample is tagged with its exact location (geo-referenced) and photographed, focused particularly on algae, invertebrates, and select vertebrates. Along with collecting these samples, also collect related data, tissue subsamples, and DNA extracts. All of this information will be stored in public collections that are durable and long-lasting, ensuring accessibility for future researchers.

Scope of Request

The Intertidal Library Project Team seeks to leverage existing scientific research and monitoring efforts planned to occur in California's intertidal habitats, including rocky shore, sandy beach, and estuarine habitats (excluding the San Francisco Bay), to collect intertidal specimens needed to generate reference barcodes for the Intertidal Library.

The add-on biodiversity collection events entail:

- Coordination of field teams that will collect specimens and substrate while also minimizing environmental impacts.
- Presence of taxonomic experts and technicians to identify, take tissue samples, and prepare specimens for long term preservation for as many voucher specimens as possible.
- Successful transport of samples to a natural history museum for long-term storage and processing.
- Methodical data collection and record-keeping using predetermined standards and protocols for the project.

Specifically, we are asking applicants to share the locations for their planned field efforts and the nature of their planned fieldwork. Given the flexible nature of the request, the specifics of which species to collect can be determined on a case-by-case basis. Applicants are expected to provide details on their planned field work and how the proposed add-on biodiversity collection events and subsequent specimen processing would be adopted as part of your existing plans. Additionally, collection of environmental DNA water and sediment samples from field locations may also be requested.

Selected field teams will be expected to comply with the following requirements:

- Coordinate all field work with The Project Team and comply with the Intertidal Library project Standards and Protocols, which will be provided to successful applicants before they begin field work. This includes using standard data sheets and integrating them into data management workflows to ensure similar processes across the project's collection efforts.
- Collect metadata to ensure sample traceability and consistency with existing [biodiversity data standards](#), such as the [Darwin Core standards](#).
- Keep detailed records accounting for all voucher specimens gathered from collection efforts for compliance and reporting with the California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) scientific collection permit and chain of custody.
- Minimize habitat disturbances and avoid disturbing established long-term intertidal monitoring sites during field sampling events to collect voucher specimens.
- Sort voucher specimens by similar morphology to the lowest possible taxonomic group and follow standard protocols to preserve the specimens for further processing.
- Send collected voucher specimens to a predetermined location for further processing.

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, including federally recognized tribes and nonprofit organizations applying on behalf of non-federally recognized tribes.
- Fiscally sponsored organizations, groups in the process of incorporating as a 501c3 and other entities that partner with an eligible sponsoring organization.

RFQ Application Requirements

Applications will be accepted via Google Forms. You must sign in using a Gmail account or an email that is Gmail-compatible. Supplementary documents are shared through Google Docs. If you have any questions or need assistance, please email us at Intertidal.Library@coastal-quest.org

An example of some of the application questions are provided below:

Qualifications- Use the [Google Form](#) to answer these questions.

1. Do you have an active California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) Scientific Collectors Permit (SCP)?
 - Yes or No
2. If you answered yes to the above question, please briefly describe the scientific purpose, the species you were collecting, and the locations you are collecting from.
 - Short answer response.
3. If you answered yes to the above question, have you maintained compliance with CDFW's scientific collection permits and chain of custody?
 - Short answer response.
4. Have you ever collected voucher specimens from the field?
 - Yes or No
5. Will any members of your field team be currently enrolled in or recently graduated from an undergraduate science-based program?
 - Yes or No
6. Do you have any experience collecting environmental DNA (eDNA) water or soil samples?
 - Yes or No
7. Do you plan to partner with any California institutions/organizations or Tribal governments? If so, please list all partners.
 - Short answer response.
8. State the purpose of your planned intertidal field work that would be conducted alongside collection of voucher specimens for the Intertidal Library. (*150 words max*)
 - Short answer response.
9. State your tentative approach for integrating voucher collections into your existing fieldwork plans. Please focus on how voucher collections for the Intertidal Library would fit into your existing field plans and highlight any potential limitations such as the number of specimens that could be sorted, identified, and processed for shipment. Selected teams will coordinate with the Project Team for targeted

species collection and appropriate methods for gathering specimens. (400 words max)

- Short answer response.

10. Please list any scientific or management questions your approach to vouchering specimens could answer (e.g. fill a geographic gap, target underrepresented taxa, etc.).

- Short answer response.

Submission Instructions for Supplemental Spreadsheets

Please answer the following questions using the Google Sheets provided.

You can access a template to report the sites you plan to visit for the collections [HERE](#). For each site, please list the coordinates, the California Region, the habitat type, and the planned date for field work.

Site	Coordinates	California Region	Habitat type	Planned Date

What is the estimated cost to collect 100 specimens at one add-on biodiversity collection event, including travel, labor, and materials? You can access a template for completing this budget scenario [HERE](#).

Intertidal Library - Request for Funds			
Estimated Project Budget			
Please estimate the costs for each line item using a justifiable breakdown of cost under this scenario: What is the estimated cost to collect 100 specimens at one add-on biodiversity collection event, including travel, labor, and materials?			
Line item	Grant Funding Request	Match Funding (optional)	Total Project Budget
Personnel			
Travel and Lodging			
Supplies and Materials			
Facilities and Equipment			
Subcontractors			
Overhead (X%)			
Total			

Review Process and Timeline

The Request for Qualification is intended to help the Project Team understand the landscape of qualified teams and identify any similar efforts underway. The application is meant to be a straightforward, high-level overview of information needed to better understand the best pathway to complete vouching intertidal specimens. Applications will be accepted through **July 14, 2025**, with decisions made by late July.



The Project Team will review applications and reach out to a select group of qualified applicants for funding consideration and a complete Scope of Work.

Depending on the submissions received, the Project Team may request applicants coordinate field efforts and collaborate in fulfilling the grant's objectives.

FAQs

Why are we doing an RFQ?

We want to understand the landscape of experts and geographic locations where collection events in the California intertidal zone occur.

For the add-on biodiversity collection events, we encourage applicants to propose creative collection efforts that match your existing field plans. These collections can be tailored to the applicant's ongoing fieldwork, targeting a specific habitat, region, or species of interest.

Can I apply to both types of collection events?

Yes!

Do I need to have a Gmail account to access the application form?

Yes! You must sign in using a Gmail account or an email that is Gmail-compatible. Supplementary documents are shared through Google Docs. If you have any questions or need assistance, please email us at Intertidal.Library@coastal-quest.org - we are here to help!

Once I apply, what happens next?

The Project Team will review applications and reach out to a select group of qualified applicants for funding consideration and a complete Scope of Work.

If you have any questions, please contact us at Intertidal.Library@coastal-quest.org.