Electronic Monitoring and Reporting Grant Program

2017 REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

Full Proposal Due Date: September 11, 2017 by 11:59 PM Eastern Time

OVERVIEW

The National Fish and Wildlife Foundation (NFWF) will award grants that catalyze the implementation of electronic technologies (ET) for catch and compliance monitoring and improvements to fishery information systems in U.S. fisheries. We anticipate awarding approximately $3.6 million through this solicitation.

The Electronic Monitoring and Reporting (EMR) Grant Program will advance NOAA’s sustainable fisheries goals to partner with fishermen and other stakeholders, state agencies and Fishery Information Networks to systematically integrate technology into fisheries data collection and observations as well as streamline data management and use for fisheries management. Specifically, the Program will solicit proposals that develop and implement promising ET that improve the timeliness and quality of fisheries data; expand access and availability of data; increase knowledge of fisheries for management, industry and science purposes; improve regional data management systems and data interoperability; and empower fishermen and other citizens to become more actively involved in the data collection process.

The EMR Grant Program was created through a partnership with the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), with additional support from the Gordon and Betty Moore Foundation and the Kingfisher Foundation.

GEOGRAPHIC FOCUS

The Electronic Monitoring and Reporting Grant Program is a national program and will consider proposals from all U.S. state and federal fisheries, including commercial or recreational sectors.

PROGRAM PRIORITIES

In 2017, the EMR Grant Program will support the implementation of voluntary, cost-shared electronic monitoring and reporting programs and fishery data system developments to improve the consistency, interoperability, quality, and usability of information to support fisheries conservation and management. Priority fisheries include the charter for-hire recreational fishery in the Gulf of Mexico, the Northeast Multispecies Groundfish fishery. With regard to ongoing evaluations of EMR technology on small, fixed-gear boats, priority will be given to proposals that utilize currently available technologies that contribute in the near-term to improved fisheries management, including
but not limited to catch or discard data (see Senate Report 114-239 accompanying the Commerce, Justice, Science and Related Agencies Appropriations Act, 2017).

The EMR Grant Program will consider proposals that strengthen ET implementation and catalyze the adoption of electronic monitoring and reporting programs and fishery information system improvements consistent with the NOAA Fisheries Regional Electronic Technology Implementation Plans, or data collection programs identified by Regional Fishery Management Councils. NOAA and the Fishery Management Councils created the Regional Electronic Technology Implementation Plans to provide a schedule of where and how to adopt appropriate electronic technologies, if any, for all fishery management plans. To read the individual regional plans, click on the links below:

- Greater Atlantic
- Atlantic Highly Migratory Species
- South Atlantic, Gulf of Mexico, and Caribbean
- West Coast
- Alaska
- Pacific Islands

The Program will prioritize funding for the implementation of regional-scale electronic monitoring and reporting strategies, such as fleet-wide and/or sector-scale solutions that have broad footprints in terms of the number of individuals they impact. Proposals likely to be competitive under the EMR Grant Program must coordinate closely with relevant federal or state fishery management agencies and will focus on the following aspects of monitoring and reporting and data modernization:

- Improve reporting and monitoring of fisheries, including but not limited to assisting commercial and recreational fisheries with acquiring and deploying appropriate ET needed to increase accountability and advance broad-level implementation of the Regional Electronic Technology Implementation Plans. This may include development of a clear roadmap with timelines to advance ET and/or innovative incentives for fishermen participation in improved monitoring;
- Build on successful EMR implementation projects that have spearheaded advancements in data transferability and demonstrated that such approaches will increase the quality, speed, and agility of fisheries data entering the management process;
- Improve capacity to ensure that electronic data being reported from the field are: 1) communicated and processed efficiently, 2) meet appropriate standards for chain of custody, confidentiality, and archiving, and 3) comply with rigorous standards needed for inclusion in stock assessments, catch accounting, and management (and provide at a minimum, trip level catch or discards at least by species and number); 4) can be accessed from a variety of authorized applications;
- Develop tools and technology to reduce the cost of fisheries data collection and review (e.g., automated catch accounting and video analysis) as well as data storage of large volumes of data (e.g., open-source software capable of minimizing the amount of data that requires
storage, enables data access and interoperability, increases the speed of video review, and/or file compression);

- Explore the future direction of data modernization. Such an exercise may include convening stakeholders, and/or exploring opportunities to finance fisheries data collection and management using non-federal funds going forward;
- Test solutions to data availability in areas with limited broadband access, such as rural communities and remote fishing grounds; or
- Coordinate closely on data management with the National Marine Fisheries Service or regional Fishery Information Networks, as appropriate.

**PROJECT METRICS**

To better gauge progress on individual grants and to ensure greater consistency of project data provided by multiple grants, the EMR Grant Program has a list of metrics in Easygrants for grantees to choose from for reporting. We ask that applicants select only the most relevant metrics from this list for their project (all possible program metrics are shown in the table below). If you do not believe an applicable metric has been provided, please contact Erika Feller (Erika.Feller@nfwf.org) to discuss acceptable alternatives.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Example Project Activity</th>
<th>Recommended Metric</th>
<th>Additional Guidance</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Example project activities are given for demonstration purposes only and are not meant to be inclusive of all activities that could be associated with a given metric.</td>
<td>Metrics available in the Easygrants full proposal application.</td>
<td>Please review the additional guidance carefully to determine if a given metric is appropriate for your project.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Develop a formal plan to implement an EM/ER monitoring program</td>
<td>Management or Governance Planning - # plans developed</td>
<td>Number of plans developed with input from multiple stakeholders and that identify monitoring objectives. Examples of types of plans may include implementation plan, operations plan, data management plan, software design document, etc.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Participants agree to, and comply with, an incentive agreement (e.g., implementation plan, exempted fishing permit, vessel monitoring plan, etc.)</td>
<td>Participants complying with their incentive agreement - # participants in compliance</td>
<td>Number of participants complying with an incentive agreement developed through the project</td>
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Implement a regional-scale EM/ER monitoring program | Monitoring - # vessels in monitoring program | Number of vessels directly engaged/participating in monitoring program(s)
---|---|---
Implement a regional-scale EM/ER monitoring program | Monitoring - # of trips monitored using electronic technology | Number of fishing trips monitored using EM/ER technology over the grant period. In the notes, please specify total number of trips taken.

**ELIGIBILITY**

**Eligible and Ineligible Entities**

- Eligible applicants include non-profit 501(c) organizations, state government agencies, local governments, municipal governments, Indian tribes, educational institutions, businesses, international organizations, and unincorporated individuals.
- Ineligible applicants include U.S. Federal government agencies.

**Ineligible Uses of Grant Funds**

- NFWF funds and matching contributions may not be used to support political advocacy, fundraising, lobbying, litigation, terrorist activities or Foreign Corrupt Practices Act violations.
- NFWF funds may not be used to support ongoing efforts to comply with legal requirements, including permit conditions, mitigation and settlement agreements. However, grant funds may be used to support projects that enhance or improve upon existing baseline compliance efforts.

**FUNDING AVAILABILITY AND MATCH**

The 2017 EMR Grant Program will award approximately $3.6 million in grants. The majority of awards under this program will fall in the range of $200,000 to $500,000, although upper or lower limits to award size are not specified.

The EMR Grant Program will receive proposals under one of two funding opportunities. Proposals focused on the New England groundfish fishery should follow guidelines provided under #1: *New England Groundfish – Electronic Monitoring and Reporting Grant Program*. All other proposals should follow the guidelines provided under #2: *Electronic Monitoring and Reporting Grant Program*. 
1. **New England Groundfish – Electronic Monitoring and Reporting Grant Program** – This opportunity is reserved only for proposals that will implement electronic monitoring and reporting solutions specifically for the New England groundfish fishery. This opportunity will target the purchase of equipment for New England groundfish monitoring and other transition costs. A minimum of a 0.5:1 match of non-federal cash and/or in-kind services is required (i.e., New England groundfish applicants must provide match that is equal to half of the total award amount requested); this reduced match requirement is due to the availability of non-federal funds that can only be applied to the New England groundfish fishery.

2. **Electronic Monitoring and Reporting Grant Program** – Proposals that implement electronic monitoring and reporting solutions in any US fishery should apply under this opportunity, except the New England groundfish fishery. A minimum of a 1:1 match of non-federal cash and/or in-kind services is required for these grants. Grant proposals with higher match rates may be more competitive. Applicants will be prompted to include information on other sources of funding for the project in the application section entitled “Matching Contributions.” Project periods may run for up to two years.

**EVALUATION CRITERIA**

All proposals will be screened for relevance, accuracy, completeness, and compliance with NFWF and funding source policies. Proposals will then be evaluated based on the extent to which they meet the following criteria.

**Program Goals and Priorities** – Project contributes to the Program’s overall conservation goals, and has specific, quantifiable performance metrics to evaluate project success. Project addresses one or more of the program priorities outlined in the Request for Proposals.

**Technical Merit** – Project is technically sound and feasible, and the proposal sets forth a clear, logical, and achievable work plan and timeline. Project engages appropriate technical experts throughout project planning, design, and implementation.

**Transferability** – Project has potential and plan to transfer lessons learned to other communities and/or to be integrated into government programs and policies.

**Communication** – Project includes a detailed plan to communicate information about the project to appropriate audiences.

**Funding Need** – Project establishes a clear need for the funds being requested, and demonstrates that activities would not move forward absent funding.

**Conservation Plan and Context** – The project advances an existing conservation plan or strategy.
Monitoring – Project includes a plan for monitoring progress during and after the proposed project period to track project success and adaptively address new challenges and opportunities as they arise.

Long-term Sustainability – Project will be maintained to ensure benefits are achieved and sustained over time. This should include how future funding will be secured to implement necessary long-term monitoring and maintenance activities.

Past Success – Applicant has a proven track record of success in implementing conservation practices with specific, measurable results.

Partnership – An appropriate partnership exists to implement the project and the project is supported by a strong local partnership that leverages additional funds and will sustain it after the life of the grant. Identify proposed partners, if known (including potential or contemplated subawards to third party subrecipients of the applicant), the roles they will play in implementing the project, and how this project will build new or enhance existing partnerships. (Note: a project partner is any local community, non-profit organization, tribe, and/or local, state, and federal government agency that contributes to the project in a substantial way and is closely involved in the completion of the project.)

Match – Matching contributions (both cash and in-kind) must equal or exceed a rate of 0.5:1 (50% of the award amount) for applicants to the New England Groundfish EMR RFP. All other applicants must contribute match of at least 1:1 (100% of the award amount). Grant proposals with higher match rates may be more competitive.

OTHER

Budget – Costs are allowable, reasonable and budgeted in accordance with NFWF’s Budget Instructions cost categories. Federally-funded projects must be in compliance with OMB Uniform Guidance as applicable (OMB Uniform Guidance).

Procurement – If the applicant chooses to specifically identify proposed Contractor(s) for Services, an award by NFWF to the applicant does not necessarily constitute NFWF’s express written authorization for the applicant to procure such specific services noncompetitively. When procuring goods and services, NFWF recipients must follow documented procurement procedures which reflect applicable laws and regulations.

Publicity and Acknowledgement of Support – Award recipients will be required to grant NFWF the right and authority to publicize the project and NFWF’s financial support for the grant in press releases, publications and other public communications. Recipients may also be asked by NFWF to provide high-resolution (minimum 300 dpi) photographs depicting the project.

Receiving Award Funds – Award payments are primarily reimbursable. Projects may request funds for reimbursement at any time after completing a signed agreement with NFWF. A request of
an advance of funds must be due to an imminent need of expenditure and must detail how the funds will be used and provide justification and a timeline for expected disbursement of these funds.

**Compliance Requirements** – Projects selected may be subject to requirements under the National Environmental Policy Act, Endangered Species Act (state and federal), and National Historic Preservation Act. As may be applicable, successful applicants may be required to comply with additional Federal, state or local requirements and obtain all necessary permits and clearances.

**Federal Funding** – The availability of federal funds estimated in this solicitation is contingent upon the federal appropriations process. Funding decisions will be made based on level of funding and timing of when it is received by NFWF.

**TIMELINE**

Dates of activities are subject to change. Please check the Program page of the NFWF website for the most current dates and information (*Fisheries Innovation Fund*).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Dates</th>
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<tr>
<td>Applicant Webinar</td>
<td>August 15, 3-4pm, Eastern</td>
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<tr>
<td>Full Proposal Due Date</td>
<td>September 11, 11:59pm, Eastern</td>
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<tr>
<td>Review Period</td>
<td>September 12 – December 15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Awards Announced</td>
<td>By December 18</td>
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**HOW TO APPLY**

All application materials must be submitted online through National Fish and Wildlife Foundation’s Easygrants system.

1. Go to [easygrants.nfwf.org](http://easygrants.nfwf.org) to register in our Easygrants online system. New users to the system will be prompted to register before starting the application (if you already are a registered user, use your existing login). Enter your applicant information.

2. Once on your homepage, click the “Apply for Funding” button and select this RFP’s “Funding Opportunity” from the list of options.

3. Follow the instructions in Easygrants to complete your application. Once an application has been started, it may be saved and returned to at a later time for completion and submission.

**APPLICATION ASSISTANCE**

To register for the application webinar, please [click here](http://example.com).

A Tip Sheet is available for quick reference while you are working through your application, which can be downloaded [here](http://example.com).
A PDF version of this RFP can be downloaded at [Fisheries Innovation Fund](#).

Additional information to support the application process can be accessed on NFWF’s [Applicant Information](#) webpage.

For more information or questions about this RFP, please contact:

_Erika Feller_
_Erika.Feller@nfwf.org_
_(202) 595-3911_

For issues or assistance with our online Easygrants system, please contact:
Easygrants Helpdesk
Email: [Easygrants@nfwf.org](mailto:Easygrants@nfwf.org)
Voicemail: 202-595-2497

Hours: 9:00 am to 5:00 pm ET, Monday-Friday.
Include: your name, proposal ID #, e-mail address, phone number, program you are applying to, and a description of the issue.