



NFWF

Electronic Monitoring and Reporting Grant Program

2023 REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

Applicant Webinar: **Thursday, August 24, 2023 at 3:00 PM Eastern Time**
Full Proposal Due Date: **Monday, October 16, 2023 by 11:59 PM Eastern Time**

OVERVIEW

The National Fish and Wildlife Foundation (NFWF) will award grants that catalyze the voluntary implementation of electronic technologies (ET) for fisheries catch, effort, and/or compliance monitoring, and improvements to fishery information systems in U.S. fisheries. We anticipate awarding up to \$3.8 million through this solicitation.

The Electronic Monitoring and Reporting (EMR) Grant Program will advance the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration's (NOAA) 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 EMR Grant 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. Examples of ET include any electronic tool used to support fisheries monitoring both onshore and at sea, including electronic reporting (e.g., e-logbooks, tablets, and other input devices), electronic monitoring (e.g., electronic cameras and gear sensors on-board fishing vessels), and vessel monitoring systems or electronic tools to improve data processing, management, or access.

The EMR Grant Program was created through a partnership with NOAA. Additional funding support for the 2023 program is provided by the Walton Family Foundation and Shell USA, Inc.

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, recreational, or for-hire sectors. Fisheries operating outside the U.S. are ineligible for funding under this opportunity.

Fisheries nationwide are eligible to receive funding to support electronic monitoring and reporting efforts, including data management system modernization. NFWF's priority fisheries include the Gulf of Mexico reef fish fishery, the New England groundfish fishery, the West Coast groundfish fishery, and the Alaska halibut and groundfish fisheries, but other fisheries are fully eligible and have a strong history of receiving funding (see [Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2023 Joint Explanatory Statement](#), p. 257).

PROGRAM PRIORITIES

Proposals should address one or more of the program priorities listed below. All proposals should outline conservation benefits of the project. Monitoring change in project metrics and ET improvement or adoption over time should be a key aspect of project proposals. NFWF and partners intend to fund projects that have wide benefits for public resources including meeting conservation, management, and stakeholder objectives. All proposals should describe how projects will promote interoperability with other fishery data systems, enhance data sharing, and encourage consistent and easy access to data by authorized users. If applicable, proposals should explain how projects will accomplish NOAA Fisheries' regional ET priorities, as outlined in the ET Regional Implementation Plans. NOAA Fisheries released updated ET Regional Implementation Plans in August 2021, and the plans are available [here](#). Where appropriate, projects that include preparation and dissemination of technical documentation of best practices and principles, including data formats and standards used will be more competitive.

1. ***E-technology in fishery data collection:*** Projects addressing this priority will implement EMR strategies for the support of fisheries conservation and management, including:
 - a. Support the implementation of voluntary, cost-shared electronic monitoring and reporting efforts, fishery data system developments, and software developments to improve the consistency, interoperability, quality, and usability of information to support sustainable fisheries management and conservation of marine resources;
 - b. Expand technology or data modernization efforts to the regional-scale or cross regional scale, such as fleet-wide and/or sector-scale solutions that have broad footprints in terms of the number of individuals they impact. Competitive proposals will demonstrate close coordination with relevant federal or state fishery management agencies;
 - c. Transfer benefits of fisheries electronic technologies to fisheries, regions, or stakeholder groups that have not yet benefitted or engaged with electronic technologies and data modernization;
 - d. Strengthen ET implementation and catalyze the adoption of electronic monitoring and reporting programs and fishery information system improvements consistent with the NOAA Fisheries regional ET priorities, or data collection programs identified by Regional Fishery Management Councils. NFWF encourages applicants to review and reference priorities in the ET Regional Implementation Plans available [here](#), and if necessary contact their regional NOAA Fisheries staff.

Generally, projects under this priority will 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 address regional ET priorities and goals. This may include development of a regional or cross-regional roadmap with timelines to advance ET; innovative approaches, including incentives, to encourage and retain fishermen participation in improved monitoring; assessment of current and future ET costs and benefits; and/or outreach to inform and encourage adoption of ET. Competitive proposals will include outreach and engagement of commercial fishermen, recreational fishermen, and/or other fishing businesses.

2. ***Modernize data management systems:*** Projects addressing this priority will modernize data management systems in order to reduce costs and improve consistency, interoperability, quality, and/or usability of information collected using e-technology. Applicants should



coordinate closely on data management with NOAA Fisheries and/or regional Fishery Information Networks, as appropriate. Eligible activities include:

- a. Improve capacity to ensure that electronically collected data are: 1) communicated and processed efficiently; 2) meeting appropriate standards for chain of custody, confidentiality, and archiving; 3) meeting 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); and 4) accessible from a variety of authorized applications.
- b. Explore or advance innovative data storage solutions (including cloud storage) to address questions of storage costs, access, and security across multiple data contributors and users including fishermen, managers, scientists, and other stakeholders.
- c. Develop processes and technology to reduce the cost of fisheries data collection and review (e.g., automated catch accounting and video analysis) as well as storage of large volumes of data (e.g., open-source software that minimizes the data to be stored, enables data access and interoperability, increases the speed of video review, and/or increases file compression).
- d. Convene stakeholders across a region or multiple regions or otherwise propose an approach to develop a data modernization vision. Example areas of focus could be establishing ET data and performance standards, developing a roadmap with timelines to advance data modernization, regional or fishery data visioning plans, and/or exploring non-federal funding models for fisheries data collection.
- e. Test solutions to data availability challenges in areas with limited broadband access, such as rural communities and remote fishing grounds.
- f. Communicate ET and data modernization advancements and lessons learned across fisheries and across regions through sharing of best practices and technical documentation.

Projects should seek to use one of the two following approaches when addressing the priorities listed below:

- 1) Implement proven innovations at-scale - Competitive proposals will scale-up proven data modernization or ET innovations that are positioned to impact a significant portion of the fleet and/or multiple fishing communities. When applicable, such proposals will focus on the diffusion, adoption, and application of innovative strategies.
- 2) Develop or pilot innovative ideas – Competitive proposals will develop, test, and/or pilot innovative solutions and approaches to known fisheries and data management challenges. Innovations from all U.S. fisheries will be considered.

Community Impact and Engagement: Projects that incorporate outreach to communities, foster community engagement, and pursue collaborative management leading to measurable conservation benefits are encouraged. When possible, projects should be developed through community input and co-design processes ensuring traditional knowledge elevation. Additionally, projects should engage community-level partners (e.g., fishing associations, municipalities, NGOs, community organizations, community leaders) to help design, implement, and maintain projects to secure maximum benefits for fishing communities, maintenance, and sustainability post-grant award.



PROJECT METRICS

To better gauge progress on individual grants and to ensure greater consistency of project data provided by multiple grants, a list of metrics for the EMR Grant Program is available in Easygrants. Applicants will choose from this list for future 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 an applicable metric has not been provided, please contact Gray Redding (Gray.Redding@nfwf.org) to discuss acceptable alternatives.

Example Project Activity	Recommended Metric	Metric Instructions
<i>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.</i>	<i>Metrics available in the Easygrants full proposal application.</i>	<i>Please review these instructions carefully to understand if a given metric is appropriate for your project.</i>
Develop a formal plan to implement an EM/ER monitoring program or modernize data management systems.	Management or Governance Planning - # plans developed	Specify the number of plans developed with input from multiple stakeholders and that identify monitoring or system improvement objectives. Examples of types of plans may include an implementation plan, operations plan, data management plan, software design document, etc. Specify the type of plan or plans in the “Notes” section.
Address an activity prioritized in a NOAA Regional Electronic Technologies Implementation Plan or prioritized by a regional Council.	Management or Governance Planning - # management plan activities being implemented	Enter the number of ET plan activities this project addresses and list the region and plan priority in the “Notes” section.
Build capacity for electronic technology and data modernization.	Building institutional capacity - # FTEs with sufficient training	Enter the number of staff or full-time equivalents (FTE) with sufficient training and skills engaged in conservation activities. Provide the skills that the FTEs will have in the “Notes” section.



<p>Participants agree to, and comply with, an incentive agreement (e.g., implementation plan, data sharing agreement, exempted fishing permit, vessel monitoring plan, etc.).</p>	<p>Participants complying with their incentive agreement - # participants in compliance</p>	<p>Enter the number of participants complying with an incentive agreement developed through the project. Specify and describe the type of incentive agreement that participants will be complying with in the “Notes” section.</p>
<p>Implement a regional-scale EM/ER monitoring program.</p>	<p>Monitoring - # vessels in monitoring program</p>	<p>State the number of vessels directly engaged/participating in monitoring program(s).</p>
<p>Implement a regional-scale EM/ER monitoring program.</p>	<p>Monitoring - # of trips monitored using electronic technology</p>	<p>Enter the number of fishing trips monitored using EM/ER technology over the grant period. In the “Notes”, please specify total number of trips taken.</p>
<p>Engage government agencies, non-governmental organizations and other stakeholder groups in implementing ET or addressing data modernization challenges.</p>	<p>Capacity, Outreach, Incentives- # of organizations contributing to goals</p>	<p>Enter the number of organizations participating in the project. In the “Notes” section, please briefly list the entities, the type of entity (local, state, or federal government, NGO, for-profit business, etc.) and how they are participating.</p>
<p>Develop, test, or implement a tool or technique for decision making, data collection, or other use.</p>	<p>Tool development for decision-making - # tools developed;</p> <p>Tool development for decision-making - # tools/techniques tested;</p> <p>Tool development for decision-making -# tools/techniques implemented</p>	<p>This field represents multiple metrics, based on where tools are in the process of implementation. Enter the number of tools developed, tested, or implemented, and specify the type of tool(s) in the “Notes” section.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Developing a tool would mean early conceptualization and creation. • Testing a tool would represent pilot stage deployment of a tool. • Implementing a tool would occur through at-scale deployment of the tool.
<p>Train and engage new staff in the implementation of an ET project or data modernization initiative.</p>	<p>Economic benefits - # jobs created</p>	<p>Enter the number of individuals hired by organization or contractor to directly work on the project (non-volunteers). Jobs should be directly engaged in project activities, funded</p>



		by the grant, and should not have existed or been unfilled prior to the grant period. A job must be counted as either a job created or a job sustained, it cannot be counted as both. In the metric "Notes" section describe and provide the full-time equivalent (FTE) for the jobs created.
Change the profitability of a fishing activity or fleet by implementing a new practice.	Economic benefits - % profitability	Enter the percent of revenue represented by profit (profit/total revenue) due to the project.
Affect the number of days a fishing season is open.	Fishing Season - # of days	Enter the number of days open to fishing within the regular season. In the "Notes" describe how the project would contribute to these days being open.
Engage fishermen or other stakeholders in a project through education, assistance, or other means.	Outreach/ Education/ Technical Assistance - # people reached	State the number of people, such as fishermen, reached by outreach, training, or technical assistance activities. Use the "Notes" section to identify the type of outreach or assistance, and level of engagement had with people reached.
Help fishermen or other stakeholders implement a new practice or other behavioral change such as using an application or new technology.	Outreach/ Education/ Technical Assistance - # people with changed behavior	Enter the number of people reached that have demonstrated a minimum threshold of behavior change. This metric should only be chosen if the project has clear methods to define and measure behavior change, which should be described in the "Notes" section.
Develop an electronic monitoring program or program to monitor the implementation of a new technique.	Monitoring - # monitoring programs	Enter the number of monitoring programs to be implemented, established, or continued by the project.
Trace the capture and sale of seafood from the vessel through the supply chain to the consumer.	Monitoring - tons traced through supply chain	Enter the number of tons of seafood traced through the supply chain as a result of the project.

ELIGIBILITY

Eligible and Ineligible Entities



NFWF

- Eligible applicants include non-profit 501(c) organizations, state government agencies, local governments, municipal governments, Tribal Governments and Organizations, educational institutions, commercial (for-profit) organizations, and international organizations.
 - For-profit applicants: please note that this is a request for grant proposals, not a procurement of goods and services; see the Budget section below for specific cost considerations.
- Ineligible applicants include U.S. Federal government agencies, including Regional Fisheries Management Councils and unincorporated individuals.

Ineligible Uses of Grant Funds

- **Equipment:** Applicants are encouraged to rent equipment where possible and cost-effective or use matching funds to make those purchases. NFWF acknowledges, however, that some projects may only be completed using NFWF funds to procure equipment. If this applies to your project, please contact the program staff listed in this RFP to discuss options.
- Federal funds and matching contributions may not be used to procure or obtain equipment, services, or systems (including entering into or renewing a contract) that uses telecommunications equipment or services produced by Huawei Technologies Company or ZTE Corporation (or any subsidiary or affiliate of such entities) as a substantial or essential component, or as critical technology of any system. Refer to Public Law 115-232, section 889 for additional information.
- 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 EMR Grant Program will award approximately \$3.8 million in grants for the 2023 funding cycle. 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. Matching contributions from non-federal sources (both cash and in-kind) must equal or exceed a 1:1 ratio (100% of the requested amount). NFWF recognizes that it may be a challenge to meet the required 1:1 match ratio. NFWF has a limited pool of funds available to assist with meeting the match requirement for certain applicants, especially those working with underserved communities. Please contact Gray Redding (gray.redding@nfwf.org) to understand eligibility for this assistance. Applicants will be prompted to include information on other sources of funding for the project in the application section entitled “Matching Contributions.” Match should be expended within the period of performance of the project. To allow for contracting, project periods of performance should start four to six months after the award date in March 2024 and cannot exceed 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.

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 to ensure activities are technically sound and feasible.

Partnership and Community Impact – The applicant organization partners and engages collaboratively with diverse local community members, leaders, community-based organizations, and other relevant stakeholders to develop and implement the proposed project. This ensures long-term sustainability and success of the project, integration into local programs and policies, and community acceptance of proposed restoration actions. Non-traditional partners or communities are enlisted to broaden the sustained impact from the project. Describe the community characteristics of the project area, identify any communities impacted, describe outreach and community engagement activities and how those will be monitored and measured. Use demographic data to support descriptions and submit letters of support from community partners and/or collaborators demonstrating their commitment to the project and engagement in project activities as proposed.

Cost-Effectiveness – Cost-effectiveness analysis identifies the economically most efficient way to meet project objectives. Project includes a cost-effective budget that balances performance risk and efficient use of funds. Cost-effectiveness evaluation includes, but is not limited to, an assessment of effective direct/indirect costs across all categories in the proposed budget according to the type, size and duration of project and project objectives. Project budgets will be compared to similar projects to ensure proposed costs across all budget categories are reasonable for the activities being performed and the outcomes proposed.

Transferability – Project has potential and a plan to transfer lessons learned to other communities and/or to be integrated into government programs and policies. For projects with significant research and development costs or those at a pre-competitive stage, addressing how you will produce and share technical documentation of your work will be a key aspect of this transfer.

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.)

OTHER

Applicant Demographic Information – In an effort to better understand diversity in our grantmaking, NFWF is collecting basic demographic information on applicants and their organizations via a voluntary survey form (available in Easygrants). This information will not be shared externally or with reviewers and will not be considered when making grant decisions. For more details, please see the tip sheet and the Uploads section of Easygrants.

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.

Environmental Services – NFWF funds projects in pursuit of its mission to sustain, restore and enhance the nation's fish, wildlife, plants and habitats for current and future generations. NFWF recognizes that some benefits from projects may be of value with regards to credits on an environmental services market (such as a carbon credit market). NFWF does not participate in, facilitate, or manage an environmental services market nor does NFWF assert any claim on such credits.

Intellectual Property – Intellectual property created using NFWF awards may be copyrighted or otherwise legally protected by award recipients. NFWF may reserve the right to use, publish, and copy materials created under awards, including posting such material on NFWF’s website and featuring it in publications. NFWF may use project metrics and spatial data from awards to estimate societal benefits that result and to report these results to funding partners. These may include but are not limited to: habitat and species response, species connectivity, water quality, water quantity, risk of detrimental events (e.g., wildfire, floods), carbon accounting (e.g., sequestration, avoided emissions), environmental justice, and diversity, equity, and inclusion.

Matching Contributions – Matching Contributions consist of cash, contributed goods and services, volunteer hours, and/or property raised and spent for the Project during the Period of Performance. Larger match ratios and matching fund contributions from a diversity of partners are encouraged and will be more competitive during application review. Projects require a 1:1 non-federal matching contribution. NFWF has limited funds to assist with meeting this match requirement for certain applicants. Applicants should contact Gray Redding to understand eligibility for these funds.

Procurement – If the applicant chooses to specifically identify proposed Contractor(s) for Services, an award by NFWF to the applicant does not 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. Documentation of compliance with these regulations must be approved prior to initiating activities that disturb or alter habitat or other features of the project site(s). Applicants should budget time and resources to obtain the needed approvals. 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.

Permits – Successful applicants will be required to provide sufficient documentation that the project expects to receive or has received all necessary permits and clearances to comply with any Federal, state or local requirements.

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](#)).

Applicant Webinar ([Register here](#))
Full Proposal Due Date

August 24, 2023 at 3:00 PM EDT
October 16, 2023 by 11:59 PM EDT



NFWF

Review Period
Awards Announced

October - March 2023
Early March 2024

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 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. Please disable the pop-up blocker on your internet browser prior to beginning the application process.
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 webinar, please [register here](#).

A [Tip Sheet](#) is available for quick reference while you are working through your application.

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

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

Gray Redding
Gray.Redding@nfwf.org

For issues or assistance with our online Easygrants system, please contact:

Easygrants Helpdesk

Email: 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.