



**National
Marine Sanctuary
Foundation**

**Capacity Building to Implement
Coral Restoration Action Plans in the U.S. Pacific Islands
2023 Grant Opportunity
National Marine Sanctuary Foundation**

WELCOME

The National Marine Sanctuary Foundation (Foundation) is pleased to offer an opportunity to apply for the *Capacity Building to Implement Coral Restoration Action Plans in the U.S. Pacific Islands Grant* with funds provided by the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA). NOAA and the Foundation are interested in funding opportunities that directly contribute to coral restoration progression in the U.S. Pacific Islands by supporting capacity building and restoration implementation projects. These grants will enable the continual efforts to implement coral restoration in the four U.S. Pacific Island jurisdictions of American Samoa, Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands (CNMI), Guam, and Hawaii.

The primary goal for this funding opportunity is to help transition the U.S. Pacific Island jurisdictions from coral restoration planning into implementation and to support the activities identified in the draft action plans developed by each jurisdiction. Proposed projects can fall into two categories: ***Coral Restoration Capacity Building and/or Coral Restoration Implementation.*** Coral restoration capacity building projects may include filling remaining gaps and needs (technical/scientific support, training) in order to implement the draft coral restoration action plans and/or planning to support the development of subsequent action plans for the goals identified by the local jurisdiction. Restoration implementation projects may include activities that support active restoration in priority sites identified in the draft action plans. Funds will support organizations (1) with demonstrated expertise in coral reef restoration and (2) who are either already actively, directly/indirectly engaged in, or have concrete plans to be engaged in coral reef restoration in one or more of the US Pacific Island jurisdictions.

Please carefully read the information that follows, as this opportunity represents a new funding opportunity, collaboratively put forth by the Foundation and NOAA. In managing a grant opportunity focused on building partnerships, the Foundation is pleased to work with NOAA partners to support a wide range of opportunities in coral restoration through the *Capacity Building to Implement Coral Restoration Action Plans in the U.S. Pacific Islands Grant* opportunity.

OVERVIEW

About the Capacity Building to Implement Coral Restoration Action Plans in the U.S. Pacific Islands Grant Opportunity

This grant opportunity will support projects that directly contribute to coral restoration progression in the U.S. Pacific Islands by providing the means for capacity building and/or restoration implementation. The four U.S. Pacific Island jurisdictions started a coral restoration planning process in 2020 that led to the development of a draft action plan for each jurisdiction for one priority restoration goal. However, additional investment and capacity is needed to meet the U.S. Pacific Islands coral restoration goals and implement the draft restoration action plans.

Draft restoration action plans can be accessed here:

- American Samoa:
https://www.ncei.noaa.gov/data/oceans/coris/library/NOAA/CRCP/NMFS/OHC/Projects/31238/Watson2021a_AS_Restoration_ActionPlan.pdf
- CNMI:
https://www.ncei.noaa.gov/data/oceans/coris/library/NOAA/CRCP/NMFS/OHC/Projects/31238/Watson2021_CNMI_Restoration_ActionPlan.pdf
- Guam:
https://www.ncei.noaa.gov/data/oceans/coris/library/NOAA/CRCP/NMFS/OHC/Projects/31238/Hoot2021_Guam_Restoration_Goal1_ActionPlan.pdf
- Hawaii:
https://www.ncei.noaa.gov/data/oceans/coris/library/NOAA/CRCP/NMFS/OHC/Projects/31238/DAR2022_Hawaii_Restoration_ActionPlan.pdf

Coral restoration is relatively new in the U.S. Pacific Islands and the jurisdictions have highlighted the need for the underlying capacity required to accomplish restoration. As additional funding opportunities become available for coral restoration work, the Foundation and NOAA want to ensure that participating organizations working in the U.S. Pacific Islands are well equipped to compete for future larger-scale restoration funding opportunities.

The projects funded under this opportunity will help transition the U.S. Pacific Island jurisdictions' local prioritized reef sites identified in the draft restoration action plans from restoration planning into implementation, which will ultimately restore their ecological function and the benefits they provide to local communities. The grants will be awarded through an open, competitive process to directly seed and enable organizations to contribute to coral reef restoration goals over a one to two year period at priority sites in the U.S. Pacific Islands. See below for proposal requirements and examples of the capacity building and restoration implementation projects these grants will support.

REQUIREMENTS, FUNDING AVAILABILITY, AND PERIOD OF PERFORMANCE

Requirements

Proposals submitted to the Foundation can fall into two categories: Coral Restoration Capacity Building and/or Coral Restoration Implementation. Proposals must showcase how the proposed funding of capacity building and/or restoration implementation projects will directly contribute to the coral reef restoration goals of one or more of the four U.S. Pacific Island jurisdictions. **Proposed projects should reflect work that can be fully executed *within 24 months* of funding. No extensions will be granted.**

Applicants may apply for funding for both coral restoration capacity building and coral restoration implementation in a single proposal; however, proposals should clearly differentiate between capacity building and restoration implementation and related activities and milestones.

Example capacity building and restoration implementation project categories are listed below. *Please note that the list below is neither exhaustive nor definitive for purposes of this grant; submitted proposals should directly reflect an organization's specific capacity building needs and/or restoration implementation plan.*

Category 1: Coral Restoration Capacity Building to Support Implementation of Draft Action Plan and/or Support Development of Subsequent Action Plan

- A. Capacity building
 - Staff training
 - Knowledge exchanges
 - Internship/scholarship programs
- B. Technical/scientific support for implementation
 - Permitting
 - Scientific assessments needed for implementation (baseline data collection, data synthesis and analysis)
 - Data management
 - Monitoring plan development
 - Input from technical experts (e.g. specific intervention techniques)
 - Scientific support (stress testing plugs, genetic testing)
- C. Restoration planning
 - Site-specific planning for sites identified in draft action plans (target species, interventions, etc.)
 - Community and stakeholder engagement/outreach
 - Development of subsequent restoration plans for remaining goals identified by the local jurisdiction

Category 2: Restoration Implementation: Restoration at Priority Sites Identified in Draft Action Plans

- Pilot projects including testing of restoration techniques
- Implementation of restoration activities identified in draft action plans
 - Permitting
 - Site selection
 - Collection of source materials/brood stock
 - Coral outplanting
- Design, build, and/or expand coral nursery capacity (*In-* or *Ex-Situ*)
- Nursery maintenance
- Restoration monitoring

Proposals may include as many capacity building and restoration implementation projects as are pertinent to an organization's needs, as long as all other requirements and eligibility criteria are

met. Proposed capacity building and restoration implementation projects should be thoroughly detailed; depending on the capacity needs proposed within an application, the Foundation may request additional information or project details. *Please see below section 'How To Apply' for more details on submittal information.*

Funding Availability and Period of Performance

The majority of awards for Category 1: Coral Restoration Capacity Building will fall in the \$50,000 to \$200,000 range total for a period of one to two years, and the majority of awards for Category 2: Restoration Implementation will fall in the \$100,000 to \$400,000 range total for a period of one to two years; however, upper or lower limits to award size are not specified, as ***this opportunity specifically seeks to fund coral restoration capacity building and implementation needs.*** Funds will be awarded on a yearly basis based on successful progress of project work and availability of appropriated funds. The Foundation expects to issue awards in May 2023. Project start dates can be flexible, with the earliest project start date of June 1, 2023. Projects should be completed at the latest by May 31, 2025. **No extensions will be granted**, therefore propose activities that can be completed in this timeframe.

Match (cost-sharing) and leveraged resources are not required, but are strongly encouraged. Match is the non-federal share of costs that the grantee or the grantee's partners contribute to accomplish the purposes of the grant. Additional points will be awarded in review of proposals for organizations that can show partial or full match. Match may include in-kind contributions of personnel (salary/fringe) by the grantee and goods and services by the grantee and/or partners. Leveraged resources are new resources brought to the project that support growth and scale and can be in the form of in-kind and cash contributions. Priority may be given to projects in or that can provide support to American Samoa, CNMI, and Guam as well as projects that can serve more than one U.S. Pacific jurisdiction. See Review Criteria for more information.

ELIGIBILITY

Applications must demonstrate how the proposed funding of capacity building will directly contribute to the coral reef restoration goals of one or more of the four U.S. Pacific Island jurisdictions. Implementation projects must demonstrate that proposed activities directly support the draft action plans of one or more of the U.S. Pacific jurisdictions. In general, the Foundation will assess the proposal based on the criteria below to ensure it is eligible for this funding before sending the proposal to reviewers:

- The applicant is either already directly or indirectly involved in coral restoration in the U.S. Pacific Islands or can provide concrete plans to be engaged in restoration at one or more priority sites;

TIMELINE

- February 2, 2023 - Request for Proposals Opens - *2 month application period*

- March 1, 2023 - Applicant Q&A Webinar: 2 - 3 pm HST, register for webinar here: <https://us02web.zoom.us/meeting/register/tZ0sdOiorz0iHND3IWPhycFVuOvdpsQL6nQg>
 - A recording of the webinar will be available on the Foundation's [YouTube](#) channel.
- March 31, 2023 - Request for Proposals Closes
- April - May 2023 - Review Period – *applicants may be contacted for interviews or additional information*
- May 11, 2023 - Notification of Awards to Applicants
- June 1, 2023 - Grant Terms Start

HOW TO APPLY

Proposals should be submitted by 11:59pm EST on Friday March 31, 2023. Send all required proposal documents as separate attachments in one email. Required documents are listed below. Email proposals to RFP@marinesanctuary.org. Send your email, with the subject line: **Capacity Building to Implement Coral Restoration Action Plans in the U.S. Pacific Islands Grant: [Name of Organization]/[Title of Project].**

The Grant Application and Budget template can be found here: [Grant Application with Budget](#). Please convert your Grant Application with Budget to a .pdf file named with this format: ORGANIZATION NAME_US PACIFIC ISLANDS GRANT.pdf. Applications should not exceed 20 total pages.

Required proposal documents:

- **Grant Application with Budget** (20 page limit):
 - **Project Summary:** Project Title, start and end date, total budget and requested funding, project summary
 - **Applicant organization description;**
 - **Project Narrative:**
 - Detailed explanation of how the proposed capacity building projects will enable the organization to upscale operations and to be prepared for future influxes of restoration-focused capital;
 - Detailed description of how coral restoration will be implemented at one or more of priority sites;
 - Success targets: metrics that demonstrate the success of capacity building efforts, and/or restoration.
 - Leveraged Resources: demonstrate any partnerships, collaborations, or additional resources that bring additional program benefits or scale.
 - **Deliverables/Timeline:** Projects must be completed by May 31, 2025 at the latest. No extensions will be granted.
 - **Goals/Outcomes**
 - **Budget:** Full budget and related budget narrative. For proposals requesting multiple years of funding, please use the multi-year budget table linked on the application;

- **Project Justification:** A full examination of how the proposed project(s) directly contribute to the advancement and success of coral restoration in the U.S. Pacific Islands.
- **Environmental Compliance:** Status and list of required permits allowing for active restoration and/or nursery structures or other environmental compliance documentation required to implement the proposed work and;
- **Letters of Support:** Letters from the community, or partners demonstrating local support for the organization and proposed project objectives.
- **Audited financial statements** or three previous months of financial statements if no audits are available;
- **Data management plan** if data will be collected as part of the proposed project.

Additionally, and as applicable to the capacity needs proposed within an application, please include the following:

- *For Infrastructure-based needs*
 - Blueprint of the overall infrastructure design and construction
 - Details on the overall timeline and process for installing proposed infrastructure.
- *For Personnel needs*
 - Position descriptions for each identified personnel need, as well as a clear description of how the proposed personnel roles align with pre-existing roles and responsibilities already present within the organization
 - Clear delineation within the proposed budget of personnel salary needs

The organization representative who submits the proposal via email, as well as anyone copied on that email, will receive a return email within 2 business days from the Foundation confirming that we have received your proposal. All organizations that submit a proposal will receive notification whether or not your project is selected for funding by May 11, 2023. Please direct any questions to Michaela Miller, Conservation Manager (mmiller@marinesanctuary.org). *At any time during the review process the Foundation may request additional information or details for any/all proposed capacity needs within an applicant's proposal.*

REVIEW AND SELECTION PROCESS

Proposals will be reviewed by the Foundation and NOAA. Proposals may also have their projects evaluated by independent external reviewers for technical merit. Projects will be evaluated based on how well they align with the draft action plans developed by American Samoa, CNMI, Guam, and/or Hawaii.

Final awardees must submit interim progress reports each December 30th and June 30th of award period and a final report 30 days after the performance period end date. Progress reports and the final report must include photos or video of project activities. The Foundation will provide standard progress reporting forms.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Applicants may request additional information by emailing Michaela Miller, mmiller@marinesanctuary.org.

ABOUT THE NATIONAL MARINE SANCTUARY FOUNDATION

The National Marine Sanctuary Foundation, founded in 2000 by America's most influential ocean conservation leaders, works with communities and NOAA to conserve and expand these special places for a healthy ocean, coasts, and Great Lakes. Sanctuaries and monuments are our essential network of protected waters, owned by every American and championed by us. Connected by currents, they sustain miraculous species, coastal communities, and our shared heritage. The Foundation is a leading voice for U.S. protected waters, and our work extends from the ocean floor to the classroom to Capitol Hill. The Foundation supports a growing portfolio of Community Stewardship, Outreach, and Education programs aimed at providing students, educators, and lifelong learners with opportunities to explore and discover connections to the natural world, no matter where they live.

REVIEW AND SELECTION CRITERIA

Proposed projects will be reviewed and ranked based on the criteria below:

A. Importance/Relevance and Applicability of Proposal to one or more U.S. Pacific Island Jurisdictions (American Samoa, CNMI, Guam, Hawaii) (40 points)

- a. Does the proposed project demonstrate the organization's ability to directly contribute to coral restoration progression in the U.S. Pacific Islands?
- b. Are the proposed actions aligned with the draft coral restoration action plans of one or more of the U.S. Pacific Island jurisdictions?
- c. Can the applicant demonstrate active partnership/participation with the local jurisdiction(s) in coral reef habitats and/or coral restoration?
- d. Does the program complement and/or build on (and not duplicate) other conservation work in the proposed project area and/or other applicant partners?
- e. Does the applicant demonstrate long-term interest in coral reef habitats and/or coral restoration in one or more of the U.S. Pacific Island jurisdictions?

B. Technical Merit (25 points)

- a. Does the application clearly describe how the project will be executed logistically and provide validity/feasibility of the approach?
- b. Does the proposal include details sufficient to determine that it can reasonably be completed?
- c. Are proposed timelines and milestones reasonable and allow project completion on or before May 31, 2025?
- d. Does the applicant define success targets, plan to collect and report specific information pertinent to track project success, and have clear project outputs and outcomes?

C. Qualifications of Applicants (20 points)

- a. Does the applicant have demonstrated expertise in coral reef restoration ?
- b. Is the applicant either already directly or indirectly involved in coral restoration in the U.S. Pacific Islands or can provide concrete plans to be engaged in restoration at one or more priority sites?

- c. Does the applicant have a commitment to, or experience with, reaching the proposed project goals/objectives?
- d. Does the applicant provide plans to show that they will continue to be engaged in coral restoration work beyond the scope of this Grant?
- e. Did the applicant provide letters of support from the local jurisdiction, community, or partners demonstrating local support for the organization and proposed project objectives?

D. Project Costs (15 points)

- a. Does the applicant adequately justify the proposed budget request, with all necessary and associated details? Is there sufficient detail to verify that the budget request is reasonable for the type of objectives proposed?
- b. Is a significant percentage of the budget directly related to project activities and fostering positive outcomes/results?
- c. Are requested funds for salaries and fringe benefits only for those personnel who are directly involved in implementing the project? *Note that personnel may also be identified as a capacity need.*
- d. In general, and apart from any personnel asks, does the budget adequately detail the amount of time each current staff member will spend on the project; is this a reasonable amount of staff time for such a project?

Additional Points

+2 Points: Projects demonstrating any match.

+2 Points: Projects that can demonstrate a benefit to or partnership across more than one U.S. Pacific jurisdiction.

+2 Points: Projects that directly support American Samoa, CNMI, or Guam.

