



National Marine Sanctuary Foundation

Gear Innovation Technician

Location: Remote and on-site (Santa Cruz, CA)

Contract Period: March 2026 to August 2026 (fixed term, with the possibility of extension)

Compensation: \$30.00 per hour, averaging 40 hours per week based on project needs, plus approved expenses.

Budget: Up to \$30,000

Project Description

The National Marine Sanctuary Foundation, a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization and leading voice for U.S. protected waters, is seeking an independent contractor to fulfill the role of Gear Innovation Technician. The contractor will support field trials of innovative on-demand fishing technologies designed to reduce whale entanglement risk.

Responsibilities include supporting field trials with commercial fishermen, organizing and maintaining a gear library, and assisting with data collection, entry, analysis, and reporting. The contractor will work independently and meet specific deliverables outlined in this agreement.

This contract seeks a professional with excellent organizational, analytical, and communication skills, who is tech-savvy and eager to learn with the ability to operate and troubleshoot new technologies. Experience with cooperative research projects involving commercial fishermen is strongly preferred.

Scope of Work

The contractor is expected to complete the following tasks:

1. Field Trial Coordination

- Support field trials with approximately ten fishermen over a 3-month period. Coordinate gear delivery, pick-up, and training sessions to prepare fishermen for participation.
- Provide technical and operational support during the trials.
- Assist with collection of field trial data in coordination with participating fishermen.



2. Gear Lending Library Support

- Become familiar with innovative fishing gear technologies used in field trials.
- Maintain, track, and organize gear inventory, including documenting gear condition and usage.
- Conduct inspections and basic maintenance to ensure gear readiness.
- Support the development and refinement of procedures for gear check-out, check-in, and inventory tracking.
- Support the development and refinement of training and operational support materials for proper gear operation and maintenance.

3. Data Management and Reporting

- Assist with the collection, review, and organization of trial data recorded using data sheets and tablet-based applications.
- Support data analysis and preparation of summaries and reports.
- Develop reporting tools to meet research permit requirements.
- Prepare a final report summarizing trial outcomes, challenges, and recommendations.

Timeline

- March 2026: Orientation, gear preparation, and trainings.
- April-June 2026: Field trials, data collection, and gear library support.
- July-August 2026: Continued field trials, data collection, gear library support, data analysis, and reporting.
- August 2026: Final products submitted to the Foundation.

Deliverables

- Training sessions and field trials with participating fishermen
- Maintained and updated gear inventory system to track gear usage, condition, and maintenance
- Training and instructional materials for proper gear operation and maintenance
- Data summaries and reports meeting research permit requirements
- Final report summarizing trial outcomes, challenges, and recommendations



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Capabilities

Required

- Bachelor's degree in fisheries, marine conservation, ocean technology, or a related field.
- Demonstrated ability to operate and troubleshoot technical equipment.
- Strong written and verbal communication skills, with proficiency in data entry and analysis tools such as Microsoft Excel or R.
- Reliable transportation and a valid driver's license to travel to project locations within Central California (mileage reimbursed).
- Availability to work independently and complete deliverables within the agreed timeline.

Preferred

- Experience working on fisheries or marine conservation projects involving commercial fishermen.
- Familiarity with California trap gear fisheries.
- Experience aboard commercial fishing vessels in adverse weather conditions.

Terms of the Agreement

- The contractor is responsible for managing their own schedule and ensuring deliverables are completed on time.
- Work will involve a combination of remote and in-person activities, including participation in up to three meetings per week and support for training sessions with fishermen, field trials, and gear library activities, as required to fulfill the scope of work.
- Work may require occasional travel within Central California

How to Apply

Applications will be evaluated on a rolling basis until position is filled.

Please submit your application package to the Foundation through C-STAAAR – the Foundation's Collaborative System for Tracking Activities, Awards, and Reporting – using the following link: [C-STAAAR](#).



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Step 1:

You will need to register your organization to begin your application. You can find registration steps and instructions [here](#).

Step 2:

Once you have set up your organization profile, navigate to the applicant home page. You can always access the homepage by clicking the “Applicant Homepage” button in the top right corner. You should then scroll down and click “View Active Contract RFPs” to find the ***Gear Innovation Technician*** RFP. Click the “Apply to RFP button” to see the application page and be sure to click the blue “Start Application” button at the bottom of the page to begin the application.

Step 3:

Only complete the sections that are indicated as required fields (these are indicated with an asterisk*). These sections include:

- Title: [Your Name]
- Amount Requested: \$30,000
- Start Date: March 1, 2026
- End Date: August 31, 2026
- Agreement Signatory: Yourself

In supplemental attachments please upload:

- Cover letter
- Resume
- At least three professional references.

Please direct all questions regarding the RFP and registering in C-STAAR to support@marinesanctuary.org with the email subject line: RFP QUESTION Gear Innovation Technician.

Useful Resources

<https://marinesanctuary.org/gear-innovation/>



National Marine Sanctuary Foundation

About Us

The [National Marine Sanctuary Foundation](#) is the official non-profit partner of NOAA's Office of National Marine Sanctuaries, supporting its system of 18 marine environments from Massachusetts to American Samoa and the Great Lakes to the Florida Keys. We protect these iconic places, care for marine wildlife and habitats, honor our nation's maritime history and cultural traditions, and promote the enjoyment of these public waters through a combination of coalition-building, private fundraising and federal support.

In a quarter of a century, we've expanded and deepened people's connections and access to our ocean, coasts, and Great Lakes, and built partnerships with coastal communities and businesses alongside the over 629,000 square miles of public waters that belong to all Americans.

TERMS & CONDITIONS

This is a Request for Proposals only. Issuance of this RFP does not in any way obligate the Foundation to make an award or pay for costs incurred by potential offerors in the preparation and submission of an offer. In addition:

- (a) The Foundation may cancel RFP and not award;
- (b) The Foundation may reject any or all responses received;
- (c) Issuance of RFP does not constitute award commitment by The Foundation;
- (d) The Foundation reserves the right to disqualify any offer based on offeror failure to follow RFP instructions;
- (e) The Foundation will not compensate offerors for a response to RFP;
- (f) The Foundation reserves the right to issue an award based on an initial evaluation of offers without further discussion;
- (g) The Foundation may negotiate with short-listed offerors for their best and final offer;
- (h) The Foundation reserves the right to order additional quantities or units with the selected offeror;
- (i) The Foundation may reissue the solicitation or issue formal amendments revising the original RFP specifications and evaluation criteria before or after receipt of proposals;
- (j) The Foundation may modify the specifications without issuing a formal notice to all offerors when the revisions are immaterial to the scope of the RFP;



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(l) The Foundation reserves the right to waive minor proposal deficiencies that can be corrected prior to award determination to promote competition.

The National Marine Sanctuary Foundation is an equal opportunity provider that is committed to diversity and inclusion. We prohibit discrimination and harassment of any kind based on race, color, sex, religion, sexual orientation, national origin, disability, genetic information, pregnancy, or any other protected characteristic as outlined by federal, state, or local laws.