



Irish Aid

An Roinn Gnóthai Eachtracha
Department of Foreign Affairs



Foras na Mara
Marine Institute



OUR SHARED OCEAN
PROGRAMME



Our Shared Ocean

Building partnerships with
Small Island Developing States



Foras na Mara
Marine Institute



Irish Aid

An Roinn Gnóthai Eachtracha
Department of Foreign Affairs



Applicant Guidelines

Direct Funding Project Awards Call 2025

The *Our Shared Ocean* Programme is funded by the Department of Foreign Affairs through Ireland's Development Co-operation Programme, Irish Aid, and administered the Marine Institute.

Table of Contents

1. Introduction	3
2. Purpose	4
3. Duration and Value of Awards	4
4. Our Call Topics	5
5. Who can apply?	6
6. Proposal Submission	7
7. Evaluation of Proposals	8
8. Grant-Aid Rates and Eligible Costs.....	8
9. Researcher Recruitment and Location	10
10. Equality, Open Access and Research Integrity.....	10
11. Project Supervision and Reporting	10
12. Extension and Termination	11
13. Freedom of Information Act.....	11
14. Data Protection	11
15. Intellectual Property Rights	11
16. Application Procedure and Close Date.....	12
Annex 1 UN Sustainable Development Goals	13
Annex 2 Eligible Small Island Developing States	14
Annex 3 Irish Public Research Performing Organisations	15
Annex 4 Evaluation Procedure.....	16
Annex 5 Cost Categories	19
Annex 6 Grant-Aid Agreement Template.....	22

Contact Details (for enquiries and queries)

Our Shared Ocean Team
Marine Institute
Rinville
Oranmore
Co. Galway H91 R673
Ireland

oursharedocean@marine.ie
[@OurSharedOcean](https://twitter.com/OurSharedOcean)

Tel. +353 (0)91 387200

1. Introduction

As part of the Climate and Oceans focus of [A Better World](#), Ireland’s policy for international development, and the associated national [Strategy for Partnership with Small Island Developing States](#) (SIDS), there is an ambition to build closer partnerships between Ireland and SIDS. The Our Ocean Wealth Summit on 10th June 2019 provided an important milestone in this effort. Political leaders and UN Permanent Representatives from almost 30 SIDS travelled to Ireland to meet Irish political leaders and officials. The Summit addressed shared experiences of island nations and discussed the critical challenges faced by many of the SIDS which are on the front line in dealing with climate change impacts and vulnerable, in particular, to sea-level rise and extreme weather events.

Building on this success, the Department of Foreign Affairs (DFA) and the Marine Institute (MI) established ‘Our Shared Ocean’ to support research, knowledge exchange and capacity building in partnership with SIDS. The programme will run from January 2022 to December 2027 with a total investment of €4.1 million funded by the DFA, and administered by the MI.

The *Our Shared Ocean Direct Funding Project Awards Call 2025* is a new initiative within an existing suite of competitive calls that will address specific ocean, climate and sustainable blue economy related challenges faced by SIDS; support the building of scientific and technical capacity to address such challenges; and promote the exchange of knowledge and expertise between Irish institutions and their counterparts in SIDS to underpin longer-term cooperation. Applicants for this funding should address a topic under one of the three themes as outlined in Table 1, and also state how their award will contribute to achieving the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (refer to Annex 1) by 2030 and link to the [UN Decade of Ocean Science for Sustainable Development](#).

Unlike previous calls under the Our Shared Ocean programme, this direct-funding call will allow Project Award applications from recognised SIDS institutions. There is no requirement for an Irish research partner to be directly involved. This change is based on stakeholder feedback and the removal of a potential barrier to equitable access to international funding for developing states.

Table 1: Themes

1. Oceans and Climate Action	2. Inclusive and Sustainable Blue Economy	3. Marine Policy and Ocean Governance
<p>Adaptation, mitigation and nature-based solutions, socio-economic dimensions and the preservation of marine and maritime-related culture.</p> <p>Cultural and Social effects of Climate Change.</p> <p>Biosecurity and managing the impacts of invasive species.</p> <p>Healthy oceans.</p> <p>Ocean observations – role to inform climate services.</p>	<p>Renewable energy, aquaculture, seaweed and fisheries.</p> <p>Value chains and biopharmaceutical research.</p> <p>Promoting entrepreneurship.</p> <p>Coastal communities.</p> <p>Tourism.</p> <p>Skills foresight and planning.</p>	<p>Marine spatial planning and marine protected areas.</p> <p>Maritime law.</p> <p>Financing for enforcement and regulation.</p> <p>Digital tools and data management (e.g. environmental).</p> <p>International cooperation.</p>

2. Purpose

The objectives of the *Our Shared Ocean* Programme are:

1. Build the Irish capability and knowledge base in support of the UN Sustainable Development Goals related to sustainable ocean management, blue economy and climate change as set out in Global Ireland and the SIDS Strategy.
2. Support capacity building in eligible SIDS partner countries in the following areas:
 - (i) ocean observing, seabed mapping, data and informatics, integrated ecosystem assessments;
 - (ii) Integrated Maritime Policy, ocean governance & sustainable blue economy; and
 - (iii) Climate science and climate services for adaptation, planning and resilience.
3. Establish and grow research partnerships between Irish institutions and international counterparts, providing research and technical support to assist eligible SIDS in addressing specific ocean and climate related challenges and opportunities.

This call aims to specifically address capacity building as outlined in objective 2 above.

3. Duration and Value of Awards

Direct Funding Project Awards 2025 are subject to max Grant Aid of **€100,000 for 12 to 18 Months**.

Projects can be Desk-Based, Lab-Based or Field Based (or combinations of each). Three awards of €100,000 each are available under the 2025 call with a maximum investment of € 300,000.

Applications are welcome from those project teams who have completed the support and mentoring programme for future Decade Actions from Caribbean SIDS, co-funded in part by Our Shared Ocean and in partnership with UN Decade of Ocean Science for Sustainable Development. One award will be made available to this group.

Successful grantees will receive payment in instalments, up to 30% on signature of the grant-aid agreement and the remaining 70% in six-monthly or annual instalments following submission of the required reports (financial and technical).

Successful grantees will be subject to financial due diligence checks, which will be advised as part of the conclusion of a Grant-Aid Agreement.

4. Our Topics

The Department of Foreign Affairs and the Marine Institute hosted online Policy Dialogues facilitated by Change by Degrees, which provided an opportunity for SIDS to meet with Irish counterparts and discuss current challenges.

Participants welcomed this early engagement as an opportunity to initiate a new type of best practice research partnership which promoted parity of esteem for the island states. A subsequent report, by Change by Degrees, captured the common environmental, oceanic and governance issues identified by the participants. Additional, extensive stakeholder engagement with governments, NGOs, research groups, regional island assemblies and international actors further established local, regional and global opportunities and challenges for the Programme.

1. **Sargassum** - We invite proposals (including research and industry consortia) into the development of novel technologies to mitigate against harmful blooms.
2. **Blue Carbon** - Improve quantification of relevant habitats and / or provide governance of initiatives to benefit regional stakeholders.
3. **Coastal Engineering** - Develop and implement novel solutions to mitigate against rising sea-levels.
4. **Climate Resilience** – Using eco-system based adaptation strategies, develop digital sensing technologies to increase climate resilience and empower local communities.
5. **Coastal and Marine Management** – Design and implement best-practise Nature Based Solutions to protect vulnerable coastal areas.
6. **Ocean Economy** – Identify key skill requirements for relevant growth sectors e.g. blue biotechnology and renewable ocean energy. Consult with industry to identify needs and ascertain supports (i.e. education, training and funding etc.) to benefit these sectors.
7. **Digital Technology** - Develop a digital interface to manage data observations in real-time with regional applications.
8. **Education** - Develop material for the provision and delivery of training workshops to standardise the collection, management and sharing of marine data with local and regional applications including endorsement by the UN Decade.
9. **Best Practise** - Develop User Guides for researchers on how to:
 - a. prepare accurate 'cost benefit analysis' for scaling up research from prototype testing.
 - OR**
 - b. effectively communicate research and synthesise for policy advice.
10. **Communication** – Develop strategic communication tools to map, promote and disseminate conservation / environmental initiatives in SIDS including multimedia.

Important:

- Applicants should state how their award will contribute to achieving the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (refer to Annex 1) by 2030 and link to the [UN Decade of Ocean Science for Sustainable Development](#).
- Additionally, projects that identify and establish clear capacity building initiatives and demonstrate how research can be applied regionally are welcomed.
- Please note the above topics are neither exhaustive nor exclusive and are only intended to provide guidance. Direct Funding Project Award proposals are welcomed on any topic relevant under the three broad themes in Table 1 (refer to page 4).
- Applicants are also strongly encouraged to review existing research programmes, strategies and priorities in the public domain such as those on Science Capacity in SIDS¹ and also those with a regional dimension^{2,3}.
- The Our Shared Ocean team is available to discuss possible research proposals (oursharedocean@marine.ie).

5. Who can apply?

Applications are invited from eligible, legal SIDS entities with the appropriate scientific and technical qualifications and research expertise. The lead applicant must be a member of the full-time staff in a **Public** Research Performing Organisation or Higher Education Institute in an eligible SIDS (refer to Annex 2).

Applicant Research Performing Organisations or Higher Education Institutes must be able to demonstrate at least 10 years of research activity supported by external funding awards. Any queries with respect to eligibility will be subject to a case by case evaluation.

The lead applicant will:

- Hold a PhD or equivalent qualification for at least three years (awarded 2020 or prior).
- Must be a full-time member of staff (permanent or with a contract that covers the period of the award, which is expected to commence in Jan 2026 for a max of 18 months) or
- A contract researcher with a contract that covers the period of the award, who is recognised as an independent investigator and will have allocated office and research space for which they will be fully responsible for at least the duration of the award (from application in 2025 to completion in 2027 – see previous).

Co-applicants can be a member of staff from a Higher Education Institute (HEI) or Public Research Performing Organisation (RPO) from Ireland or from the SIDS (in Annex 2).

¹ Chapter 3 of

https://www.researchgate.net/publication/346503481_Science_in_Small_Island_Developing_States_Capacity_Challenges_and_Options_relating_to_Marine_Genetic_Resources_of_Areas_Beyond_National_Jurisdiction

² Samoa Ocean Strategy 2020–2030: <https://www.sprep.org/sites/default/files/documents/publications/samoa-ocean-strategy-management.pdf>

³ Commonwealth Blue Charter: Ocean Action Report (2022) DOI: <https://doi.org/10.14217/ComSec.959>

Our Shared Ocean – Project Awards

Through this initiative, researchers from SIDS-based institutions can apply directly to the Our Shared Ocean programme for Grant Aid via competitive calls. Applications do not require an Irish partner as co-applicant although they can include one if this is deemed to add value to the proposed research. To ensure the main aims and goals of the programme continue to be met i.e. building research partnerships between Ireland & SIDS, a Project Monitor will be appointed to evaluate progress and provide advice and support as appropriate. The Project Monitor, nominated by the Our Shared Ocean Programme Team, will have relevant experience in the research topic and will schedule and attend progress update meetings during the project life-cycle at 6, 12 & 18 months.

There can be a **maximum of three partners** from different organisations (e.g. SIDS HEI and SIDS RPO plus Irish HEI and Irish RPO), and all partners are required to sign the Grant-Aid Agreement (refer to Annex 6). **Note:** Multiple applicants from the same organisation are permissible, but only one from that organisation signs the Grant-Aid Agreement.

Funding for other participants (e.g. industry from Ireland or Small Island Developing States) can be included under Subcontracts/External Assistance subject to the 20% limit and normal public procurement regulations.

6. Proposal Submission

These Applicant Guidelines provide information on general issues such as eligibility, the evaluation and awarding of research grants, research costs and the application process.

Successful applicants will be required to sign a Grant-Aid Agreement in advance of starting any work funded by this Programme. Please refer to Annex 6 to view the template for this Grant-Aid Agreement.

The applicants (lead and co-applicants) are expected to develop the proposal jointly. The benefit of the research should primarily accrue to Small Island Developing States (SIDS).

The *Our Shared Ocean* Programme is committed to adhering to the following principles to ensure that there is equity between international research collaborators⁴. These principles include equitable design and implementation of research programmes, shared publication of research results, and a respect for different research cultures.

Elements identified for consideration in the development of research partnerships and proposals between SIDS and Ireland include:

- A shared vision of success.
- Shared values including fairness and respect, the usability of research (action and policy oriented with tangible outputs and societal benefits), readiness to listen, openness to feedback.
- Acknowledgement of any power inequalities and cultural differences with measures to mitigate risks.
- Clarity about roles, ownership and the sharing of benefits.
- Clarity on governance around how decisions are made and how resources are allocated.
- An emphasis on co-creation of research proposals.
- A commitment to fair acknowledgment of all partners in publications and citations.

⁴ Policy dialogue report available on request, please email oursharedocean@marine.ie

Our Shared Ocean – Project Awards

Applications must be made on the standard application form submitted through the Marine Institute’s online grant management system RIMS, (Research Information Management System). Proposals must be received via RIMS on or before the final closing date specified in the call.

- If you are already registered on RIMS please visit <https://marine.smartsimple.ie/>
To register as a new user for RIMS please email oursharedocean@marine.ie.

7. Evaluation of Proposals

Only completed applications received on or before the closing date specified in the call for proposals will be evaluated for funding. Each application will be examined initially to ensure that it is complete and that it contains adequate information to properly evaluate the research proposal.

A panel of national/international experts established by the Marine Institute’s Our Shared Ocean Team will evaluate eligible proposals. All reasonable measures will be taken to ensure objectivity, fairness, quality and confidentiality.

Eligible proposals will be evaluated using the following criteria:

Criteria	Marks
1. Understanding of the strategic context of the project and the specific research topic	10%
2. Extent to which the project addresses the objectives of relevant national and international marine strategies including benefits and impacts of the project	15%
3. The scientific and technical quality of the research proposal	30%
4. Scientific quality and track record of the project team, and their technical capability to carry out the project	20%
5. Proposed project management plans	15%
6. Costs and value for money	10%

In accepting and evaluating research proposals the Marine Institute does not commit funding to any project or guarantee that funds will be made available to research proposals submitted under any call for proposals.

8. Grant-Aid Rates and Eligible Costs

This call for research proposals is intended to fund good research on a re-imburement basis. Funding is provided for up to 100% of eligible costs for Higher Education Institutes and Public Research Performing Organisations.

Eligible costs are defined as **direct** or **indirect costs** incurred in carrying out the research project. They must fulfil the following criteria:

- They must be **actual**;
- They must be **reasonable** and **wholly necessary** for the project;

Our Shared Ocean – Project Awards

- They must be incurred **during the lifetime** of the project;
- They must be **recorded** in the accounts for the project, which must be maintained during the lifetime of the project and reported on as required by the Marine Institute;
- They must **not be funded from any other source**; and
- They must be **incurred solely to advance the research project**⁵.

The eligible **cost categories** are:

1. Staff Costs (see note below)
2. Consumables (e.g. laboratory supplies, books and specialist publications)
3. Travel and Subsistence
4. Sub-contracts/external assistance (e.g. modelling services, specialist analysis)
5. Publications
6. Equipment
7. Other agreed costs (e.g. software licences)
8. Overheads (see note below)

Each partner requesting grant-aid must complete a budget sheet using the form provided.

Staff Costs

A core principle of this programme is capacity building, with funding provided for new research posts. Accordingly, the programme **does not** support costs associated with existing permanent or core staff within HEIs working on a project. Funding is provided for a suitable qualified researcher, from eligible SIDS if possible, and following applicable Recruitment policies.

Master's students may also be funded (student stipend plus registration fees) at a cost of €42,000 for international students including students from Small Island Developing States (SIDS).

Overheads

Indirect costs (overheads) will be paid a maximum rate of 30% of direct costs minus sub-contracts or external assistance.

Grantees may apply to the Marine Institute to transfer between cost headings during the grant term. All budget reallocations will be subject to approval.

Further information on the above cost categories is provided in **Annex 5**.

Additional funding for travel may be applied for under the *Our Shared Ocean* Mobility and Travel Grants call.

No costs other than eligible costs will be allowed. **Non-eligible costs** include the following:

- any interest, or return on capital employed;
- provisions for possible future losses or charges;
- interest owed;
- provisions for doubtful debts;
- resources made available to a Grantee free of charge;
- unnecessary or ill-considered expenses;
- marketing, sales and distribution costs – products & services;

⁵ If items benefit both the research project and other work the costs shall be eligible only in the proportion that can be attributed as benefiting the project.

- entertainment or hospitality expenses, except such reasonable expenses accepted as wholly and exclusively necessary for carrying out the work under the grant-aid.

9. Researcher Recruitment and Location

If successful, the applicants recruit their researchers following public advertisement and in accordance with normal practice for student and staff recruitment in their institutions.

Researchers appointed can be located in an eligible Small Island Developing State (as detailed in Annex 2), but are not employees of the Marine Institute.

10. Equality, Open Access and Research Integrity

The Marine Institute promotes equality and has published its [Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Policy Statement and Action Plan 2021 to 2023](#) on the Institute's website

The EU principle of gender mainstreaming⁶ applies to the Marine Institute's Marine Research Programme. Applicants are encouraged to take action to encourage female leads on research projects and shall be required to report the ratios of males to females working on projects.

The Marine Institute supports funding for high quality and responsible research with the results widely disseminated. Team members based in Ireland are required to complete the Epigeum online research integrity training provided through their organisation. The Marine Institute will require applicants to report on completion of the research integrity training in annual progress reports and provide copies of the training certificates.

11. Project Supervision and Reporting

The applicants as supervisors play an important role for mentoring and training staff/students, and assisting with their queries to ensure timely completion of the research work programme. Therefore, adequate supervision is essential and this is the responsibility of the supervisors. The supervisors should meet and discuss progress regularly (at least monthly) with the team and report all relevant challenges / opportunities to the responsible Project Monitor as they arise.

The supervisors should ensure that staff/students avail of other training and supports being provided by the HEI.

Continued funding will be dependent on the submission of satisfactory progress reports as specified below.

The project supervisor in the lead partner organisation is required to submit three written progress reports to the to the Our Shared Ocean Programme Manager, after 6, 2 & 18 months. It is the supervisor's responsibility to ensure that these reports are submitted on time.

The timely submission of these reports by the project supervisor is a condition of continued funding support.

⁶ <http://eige.europa.eu/gender-mainstreaming>

Our Shared Ocean – Project Awards

The final report should be submitted within four months of completion of the Project Award (month 22) by the supervisor to the Marine Institute's Our Shared Ocean Team. The final payment of 15% will be withheld pending receipt of the final report.

Outputs (conference presentations, papers, etc.) arising from the project must be submitted to the Marine Institute via RIMS. The Marine Institute publishes details of project outputs from Marine Institute funded research projects on their website including the name and organisation of the applicant.

All public lectures and/or publications given or issued by the project team which arise from work supported by the must contain an acknowledgement of the funding received as specified in the Grant-Aid Agreement.

12. Extension and Termination

The Marine Institute's Our Shared Ocean Team must in all cases approve extensions.

Where extensions are approved by the Marine Institute, the maximum duration of the extension will be for six months.

Circumstances for termination of the Project Award are detailed in the Grant-Aid Agreement (please refer to Annex 6).

Project Awards will automatically cease one month after the submission of the final report and release of the final payment.

13. Freedom of Information Act

Information supplied to the Marine Institute may be disclosed in response to a request under the Freedom of Information Act, 2014. It is the responsibility of the applicant to indicate at the time of making an application which information should not be disclosed and the reasons for non-disclosure. The Marine Institute will consult with applicants about this information before making a decision on any Freedom of Information request.

14. Data Protection

Personal information supplied to the Marine Institute will be stored by electronic means (e.g. database) for use only in connection with applications for grant-aid. The provisions of the Data Protection Act 2018 will be fully complied with.

15. Intellectual Property Rights

It is the responsibility of the applicants to ensure procedures for managing intellectual property are maintained and appropriately applied. This programme provides funds for not-for-profit, public good research. The Marine Institute expects that outputs and findings should be widely disseminated and made publicly available.

However, the Marine Institute acknowledges research outputs with commercial potential may arise during the completion of the work programme. Where the researcher(s) want to restrict access to intellectual property for the purpose of commercialisation of research results, the Marine Institute should be informed in advance. Costs associated with registration of patents, registered designs,

registered trademarks etc. are not eligible costs. Applicants shall be guided by Ireland's National IP Protocol 2019⁷.

16. Application Procedure and Close Date

Applications must be submitted using the appropriate Application Form. An electronic copy of this application form can be downloaded from the Marine Institute's online Research Information Management System (RIMS). The application form includes instructions for its completion.

Only applications made on the appropriate application form will be accepted for evaluation and no other materials are required (except where specified to be included as Annexes). The application forms are structured to capture the information required to evaluate proposals and applicants are requested to adhere strictly to the stipulated headings and word limits.

RIMS will validate that all the mandatory fields of the online application have been completed. If they have not, you will be required to complete them before the application can be submitted. Do not leave submission of your application until the last minute, as you may find errors at this stage that need to be corrected.

The closing date for receipt of proposals is:

NOT LATER THAN 16:00 Hours on Friday, 5th September 2025 (Irish Standard Time)

All applicants will be issued with an acknowledgement of receipt via email shortly after submission.

- Applicants should complete all sections of the application form. Please convert your application to Adobe PDF when complete, and upload the PDF on RIMS.
- Applicants should complete the budget template provided and upload this Excel file on RIMS.
- The declaration form must be signed by the applicant and the VP for Research (or other authorised position) in the lead organisation, and upload with the lead and co-applicant's CVs on the online grant management system (RIMS).

Late applications will not be accepted.

⁷ <https://www.knowledgetransferireland.com/ManagingIP/National-IP-Protocol/>

Annex 1: United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS



Annex 2: Eligible Small Island Developing States (SIDS)

American Samoa #	Fiji	Puerto Rico #
Anguilla #	French Polynesia #	Samoa
Antigua and Barbuda	Grenada	São Tomé and Príncipe *
Aruba #	Guadeloupe #	Seychelles
Bahamas	Guam #	Singapore
Barbados	Guinea-Bissau*	Sint Maarten #
Belize	Guyana	Solomon Islands *
Bermuda #	Haiti*	St. Kitts and Nevis
British Virgin Islands #	Jamaica	St. Lucia
Cabo Verde	Kiribati*	St. Vincent and the Grenadines
Cayman Islands #	Maldives	Suriname
Commonwealth of Northern Marianas #	Marshall Islands	Timor-Leste *
Comoros *	Martinique #	Tonga
Cook Islands #	Mauritius	Trinidad and Tobago
Cuba	Montserrat #	Turks and Caicos Islands #
Curaçao #	Nauru	Tuvalu *
Dominica	New Caledonia #	US Virgin Islands #
Dominican Republic	Niue #	Vanuatu
Federated States of Micronesia	Palau	
	Papua New Guinea	

*LDC

*Non-UN Members /Associate Members of the Regional Commissions

Ref. UN website: <https://www.un.org/ohrlls/content/about-small-island-developing-states>

Funding provided by Irish Aid is Official Development Assistance (ODA), and must be channelled primarily to ODA eligible states. However, Our Shared Ocean is conscious that SIDS are impacted by regional environmental challenges that need to be tackled at a regional scale. Therefore, applications will be accepted from non-ODA eligible countries. Applicants should in these cases demonstrate how they address regional issues, how benefits will accrue to ODA eligible states, and how local and regional capacity development can be implemented via the learnings and outcomes of the study. Additionally, applicants from non-ODA eligible countries are encouraged to build in collaboration with researchers or organisations in ODA eligible countries where possible.

Please email oursharedocean@marine.ie for any queries on eligibility.

Annex 3: Irish Public Research Performing Organisations

- Atlantic Technological University (ATU)
- Bord Iascaigh Mhara (BIM)
- Commissioners of Irish Lights (CIL)
- Dublin City University (DCU)
- Dublin Institute of Advances Studies (DIAS)
- Dundalk Institute of Technology (DkIT)
- Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)
- Geological Survey of Ireland (GSI)
- Inland Fisheries Ireland (IFI)
- *Marine Institute (MI) – see note below*
- Maynooth University (MU)
- Met Éireann
- Munster Technological University (MTU)
- National University of Ireland, Galway (NUI Galway)
- Sea Fisheries Protection Authority (SFPA)
- South East Technological University (SETU)
- Teagasc
- Technological University Dublin (TU Dublin)
- Technological University of the Shannon (TUS)
- Trinity College Dublin (TCD)
- Tyndall National Institute
- University College Cork (UCC)
- University College Dublin (UCD)
- University of Limerick (UL)

The list above includes public organisations who have previously been funded to undertake marine research in Ireland, but this list is not exhaustive and if any applicant is unsure whether they are eligible, then they should clarify with the Marine Institute by sending an email to oursharedocean@marine.ie.

Note: The Marine Institute cannot lead a Project Award submission, but may participate as a partner.

Annex 4: Evaluation Procedure

The evaluation of proposals is managed by the Our Shared Ocean Team. The process aims to be fair and transparent and to provide constructive feedback to applicants. Evaluation of proposals is based on the established principles of **Transparency**, **Equality of Treatment**, **Impartiality**, and **Efficiency and Speed**.

Evaluation is conducted in four steps, as follows:

Step	Undertaken by
1. Eligibility Check	Our Shared Ocean Team
2. Individual Expert Evaluation	Independent Experts
3. Consensus Evaluation	Report compiled by Our Shared Ocean Team from Individual Expert Evaluations

In accepting and evaluating research proposals the Marine Institute does not commit funding to any project or guarantee that funds will be made available to research proposals submitted under any call for proposals.

Criteria	Marks
1. Understanding of the strategic context of the project and the specific research topic <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Understanding of current state of knowledge. ○ Relevance of the proposed research to relevant national and international research priorities. ○ Extent to which the project builds on current knowledge ○ Relevant bibliography/references. 	10%
2. Extent to which the project addresses the objectives of relevant national and international marine strategies including benefits and impacts of the project <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Will the research undertaken address and contribute to the management of future economic, social and environmental well-being in SIDS? ○ Will the research undertaken stimulate the application or use of scientific or technical knowledge and expertise to advance the competitiveness or environmental sustainability of marine businesses in SIDS? ○ Will the research undertaken enable the application of legal and governance knowledge and expertise from relevant disciplines to advance the sustainable development and management of marine resources in Small Island Developing States (SIDS)? ○ Are there references to achieving the UN SDGs and explicit links to the UN Decade of Ocean Science for Sustainable Development? ○ Will the research undertaken develop new research capacity and capabilities in areas that demonstrate high-growth potential? ○ Have the benefits and impacts been clearly demonstrated? 	15%

3. The scientific and technical quality of the research proposal	30%
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Scope and complexity of the research proposal ○ Excellence of the research proposal ○ Originality and degree of novelty in the proposed approach and methodology ○ Competences to be developed by the project ○ Provision of mentoring and training 	
4. Scientific quality and track record of the project team, and their technical capability to carry out the project	20%
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Qualifications of the proposed research team ○ Suitability of the expertise and experience of the proposed research team ○ Participation in other research programmes (past & current) ○ Publication and citation record included in application or CVs 	
5. Proposed project management plans	15%
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Is there a project management plan included showing the roles and responsibilities of all personnel involved? ○ Does the project plan consider gender equality/equal opportunities within the team, including as part of the recruitment/selection process for staff and/or students? ○ Proposed team/work package interaction ○ Is the data management plan included? Does it provide adequate information on data quality management? ○ Are the routes for dissemination of this research demonstrated? 	
6. Costs and value for money	10%
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Do the overall costs seem reasonable? ○ Is the budget allocation between partners reasonable? ○ Are there specific queries relating to individual expenditure items? 	

Successful applicants may be asked to make changes to their proposals during the grant-aid negotiation phase to accommodate the comments of the evaluators,

Evaluation Procedure

The evaluation process is conducted as follows:

1. Eligibility Check

Proposals for funding received by the notified submission date are checked for compliance with the general Eligibility Criteria. These criteria include:

- Is the proposal from an eligible organisation?
- Are all sections of the application form completed correctly - including the declaration by the lead organisation, with appropriate signatures?
- Does the application form contain adequate information to allow the proposal to be properly evaluated?

Applicants whose proposals are considered to be ineligible will be notified and an explanation provided of the reason(s) why their application was considered to be ineligible. Proposals meeting the eligibility criteria will go forward for independent expert evaluation.

2. Individual Expert Evaluation

The Marine Institute maintains a panel of independent expert evaluators (national and international) to assist in the evaluation of all proposals for funding. The names of the experts assigned to individual proposals are not made public. However, the Marine Institute makes available lists of all the experts participating on its evaluation panels at regular intervals.

Proposals meeting the eligibility criteria are evaluated based on their individual merit by a minimum of three individual experts chosen from the Panel of Experts. Where feasible, the same experts evaluate all eligible proposals received for a particular research theme. The experts examine the proposal(s) assigned to them and score and comment on each proposal under each of the **Evaluation Criteria** using an **Individual Evaluation Form**. Applicants are advised of these evaluation criteria in the **Applicant Guidelines**.

3. Consensus Evaluation

Once the individual experts to whom proposals have been assigned have completed their individual evaluations, a draft **Consensus Evaluation Report** is circulated to the evaluation panel for their approval. Consensus agreement by electronic correspondence between evaluators is the preferred route. However, in some instances a **Consensus Meeting** or teleconference may be required to enable joint consideration of proposals by the individual experts. An officer from the Our Shared Ocean Team may act as moderator/rapporteur for each consensus meeting. Their role is to support the process and ensure that the panel evaluation is carried out in a fair and proper fashion.

During the consensus meeting the experts consider each proposal and agree on a final mark for each of the evaluation criteria and an overall mark (score) for the proposal. They justify their marks with constructive and informative comments suitable for feedback to the applicant and agree on an overall **Consensus Evaluation Report**. All applicants, whether successful or unsuccessful, receive a copy of the **Consensus Evaluation Report** for their proposal.

4. Approval

Final approval for funding is provided by the Marine Institute senior management team (CEO, Directors and Board).

Successful applicants may be asked to make changes to their proposals during the grant-aid negotiation phase to accommodate the comments of the evaluators.

Confidentiality and Conflict of Interest

Evaluators are required to read and sign a Declaration of Confidentiality and Conflict of Interest Form. If an expert considers that they may have a vested interest in a proposal or that potential conflict of interest may arise as a result of their participation in the evaluation of any proposal they are asked to declare this and may not participate in the evaluation process. In line with the EU General Data Protection Regulation evaluators are requested to delete all personal information included in the application documentation once the evaluation process is complete.

Annex 5: Cost Categories

1) Staff Costs

A core principle of this programme is capacity building, with funding provided for new research posts. Accordingly, the programme **does not** support costs associated with existing permanent or core staff within HEIs working on a project. Funding is provided for a researcher from an eligible Small Island Developing State (SIDS).

Staff costs are deemed to be the gross salary of eligible researchers together with their employer's contribution to their PRSI and pension costs. Only the costs of the actual hours/days worked by the persons directly carrying out work under the project may be charged. All personnel who are employed on a specific project will be required to maintain and make available timesheets. Such personnel must:

- Be directly hired by the participant in accordance with its national legislation;
- Work under the sole technical supervision and responsibility of the latter, and
- Be remunerated in accordance with the normal practices of the participant.

Person-day costs are limited to the actual salary cost including employers PRSI and statutory pension contributions made on behalf of the employee into a defined pension scheme. This rate must be specified in the budget and is subject to a maximum of 20% of salary. The employer's pension contributions will only be eligible for payment when relevant documentation is provided to the Marine Institute (or its agents) and where these contributions are made to an appropriate pension scheme.

Irish Higher Education Institutes should use the Irish Universities Association (IUA) salary scales for researchers. The starting point will be dependent on the experience and qualifications required for the project.

Costs for remuneration of salary should be taken from the payroll records of the participant and should reflect the total gross remuneration plus the employer's portion of PRSI and pension contributions. Remuneration costs must be calculated individually for each staff member and the use of average salary or pay scale levels (other than as indicated above) is not permitted.

Student costs for Master's and PhD students are eligible as follows:

- International Students - Each Scholarship is costed at €42,000 per annum which includes a student stipend at €25,000; College Fees (receipted up to €12,000) and Research Costs (including Travel & subsistence, publication costs and consumables) up to €5,000 on provision of eligible receipted expenses.

2) Consumables

Consumables usually relate to the purchase, fabrication, repair or use of any materials, goods or equipment and software which:

- Are not placed in the inventory of durable equipment of the participant (fixed asset register);
- Are not treated as capital expenditure in accordance with the accounting conventions and policies of the participant; and

- Have a short life expectancy, certainly not greater than the duration of the project.

The purchase of a personal computer/laptop for staff/students is eligible at a maximum cost of €2,000 per researcher, and must be used solely for carrying out the project work.

Consumable or material costs must be separately identifiable and necessary for the project.

3) Travel and Subsistence

Actual travel and related subsistence costs (including those based on approved mileage and subsistence rates) for personnel working on the project are fully reimbursable and may be charged to the project, provided that the costs comply with the participant's normal practices in this regard. Where such costs are incurred they must be reasonable, separately identifiable, limited to the actual cost and should be a specific requirement for the implementation of the funded project.

Where travel costs are incurred by employees involved in the project and such costs are reimbursed by the participant on the basis of a lump sum or per diem basis then it is the lump sum or per diem payment that is considered to be the eligible cost. All lump sums or per diem payments in this regard must be in keeping with the normal practices of the participant's organisation.

Where individuals are reimbursed for use of their private vehicle for business travel by way of mileage then the relevant rate per mile, destination, number of miles travelled and purpose of journey, must be clearly stated and the necessity for such travel demonstrated to the Marine Institute. In all cases, such rates must not exceed the current civil service or other Revenue Commissioner approved rates and must be in keeping with the participant's normal practices.

Travel costs for researchers from Small Island Developing States attending project meetings in Ireland are eligible and will not require prior approval. However, best value should be obtained for travel and accommodation costs.

4) Sub-contracts/external assistance

In general, participants should ensure that they have the necessary skills within the project team to carry out the work programme. However, this may not be possible in all cases. In particular, where specialist resources are required, it may be necessary to obtain external assistance in the form of sub-contract or consultancy arrangements. These costs may only be charged as external assistance to the project if:

:

- they are incurred in compliance with the conditions set out in the Grant-aid Agreement;
- they do not exceed 20% of the overall grant-aid allocated to the project;
- the subcontracts for external assistance are awarded and concluded in accordance with the normal public procurement regulations in Ireland, specifically that:
 - three quotations must be obtained for all sub-contractors valued at more than €5,000 including VAT, and
 - sub-contracts above €50,000 including VAT must be published on [eTenders](#), which is the Irish Government's electronic tendering platform administered by the Office of Government Procurement;
- they are in accordance with market prices;
- copies, certified by the Grantees concerned, of relevant invoices are attached to the corresponding cost statements; and
- a clear explanation is given as to why the project team could not have included these specialist skills.

Core elements of any project funded may not be subcontracted.

As sub-contracting and consultancy arrangements invariably relate to the production of a service, it should be clear in all consulting or sub-contracting arrangements that any intellectual property arising from such work remains the property of the participant and must be at the entire disposal of the participant.

5) Publications

Costs should be included to cover the preparation and publication of research outputs, e.g. reports, brochures, books and other publications. All publications must acknowledge the funding as per the wording/logos provided by the Marine Institute.

Applicants should include adequate budget for publications, using an estimate of €3,000 per publication as an average cost, with *Open Access* the preferred option.

Patent costs are excluded.

6) Equipment Costs

The cost of apparatus or equipment up to 10,000 Euro can be included in the application, pro-rata based on the expected life-span of the equipment. For example, purchase of 8,000 Euro on a project award of 36 months' duration with a life-span of 60 months, then the allowable cost is 4,800 Euro ($€8,000 \times 36 / 60$).

Equipment costs exceeding 10,000 Euro can only be included in the application with prior approval by the Marine Institute.

7) Other Costs (as agreed)

This allows for specific actual costs, which do not come into any of the above eligible cost categories. They may include costs associated with facilities, software licences, analysis, etc. Such costs may only be claimed subject to prior approval by the Marine Institute.

8) Overheads

A contribution to overheads of a maximum of 30% of modified costs is allowed. Modified costs are defined as all eligible costs excluding sub-contracts/ external assistance and equipment. Costs deemed to be covered by overheads include stationery, interview expenses, advertising costs, etc.

Value Added Tax (VAT)

Where an organisation is not entitled to reclaim the VAT that they incur in relation to their costs then the amounts included in their application for funding and subsequent claims for reimbursement should be the VAT inclusive amount.

DPER Circular on Grant Management

Successful applicants will have to adhere to the relevant requirements contained in circular 13/2014 Management of and Accountability for Grants from Exchequer Funds issued by the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform on 26th September 2014. These requirements, dealing with reporting of grant expenditure, publication of the award details in the grantee's financial statements and disposal of assets, will be detailed in the Grant-Aid Agreement.

Annex 6: Grant-Aid Agreement Template



Irish Aid

An Roinn Gnóthaí Eachtracha
Department of Foreign Affairs



Foras na Mara
Marine Institute

GRANT-AID AGREEMENT

Our Shared Ocean Programme

Project Award

REF: OSO/25/PRO/XXX

TITLE:

THIS AGREEMENT made the **Day of Month 2025**.

BETWEEN

1. **The Marine Institute** of Rinville, Oranmore, Galway, Ireland (hereinafter referred to as "**the MI**"); and
2. **xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx** of Address ("**the Lead Organisation**"). SIDS Lead.
3. **xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx** of Address ("**the Partner Organisation**") Partner 1.
4. **xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx** of Address ("**the Partner Organisation**") Partner 2.

Jointly the Lead and Partner Organisations shall hereinafter be referred to as ("**the Grantees**").

WHEREAS:

- A. The MI (on behalf of Irish Aid/DFA) has agreed, following a competitive and open call for proposals (under the Call for Proposals issued on **Date**), to Grant-Aid the Grantees for their involvement in the project "**Title.....**" (hereinafter referred to as "**the Project**") as defined in the *Our Shared Ocean* Project Awards Applicant Guidelines (a copy of which is set out in Annex 1):
- B. The MI and the Grantees agree that Grant-Aid will be made available to the Grantees on the terms and subject to the conditions set out herein.

1 The Term

- 1.1 This Agreement and the obligations of the Grantees hereunder shall commence on the date of signing hereof and shall continue for a period of 12 - **18 months** unless sooner terminated pursuant to Clause 13. The expected start date is **1 January 2026**, and completion date is **30 June 2027**.

2 The Project

- 2.1 The Grantees agree to appoint a team to undertake research, investigations, literature reviews and other work necessary to carry out the Project as defined in the Applicant Guidelines (Annex 1) and the proposed work-plan as outlined in the Application (Annex 2), subject to the terms and conditions of this Agreement.
- 2.2 In signing this Grant-Aid Agreement, the Grantees, details of which are set out in the Application (Annex 2), agree to carry out and complete the Project subject to the terms and conditions of this Agreement.
- 2.3 The Grantees shall not amend, deviate from or depart from this Agreement except with the written consent of the MI.

3 The Grant-Aid

- 3.1 Subject to the continuing performance by the Grantees of its duties and obligations as set out in this Agreement, the MI agrees to make available to the Grantees Grant-Aid to a maximum of **€100,000** (hereinafter referred to as "the Grant-Aid⁸"). The budget for the **Lead Partner is €xxx and Partner 1 is €xxx** as per the breakdown provided in Annex 3. Any change to the budget must be approved by the MI (see Clause 9.4.2 Budget Expenditure).
- 3.2 Payment of the Grant-Aid will be made by the MI to the following schedule and will be contingent on the successful outcome of agreed milestones & deliverables. The MI will make as payments directly to the Lead Partner, for disbursement to the other Project Partners.
 - 3.2.1 An advance payment of 30% of the total Grant-Aid awarded will be made on the full execution of this Agreement;
 - 3.2.2 Payment of up to 50% on the submission of the annual reports (scientific/technical and financial) due at **Month 6** and **12** and
 - 3.2.3 The final payment of 20% on the submission of final reports (financial and scientific/technical) due at Month **18**
- 3.3 In the event that the Project does not start within six months of the commencement date of this Agreement, no later than **1 July 2026** the award may be cancelled and the advance payment must be refunded to the MI.
- 3.4 Interim and final payments are payable on a reimbursement basis and are conditional on the submission and acceptance of satisfactory interim/final technical and financial reports (supported, where relevant, by vouched receipts) and achievement of agreed milestones.
- 3.5 The Grant-Aid shall be applied exclusively in discharging the costs incurred by the Grantees in carrying out the research in accordance with the budget submitted with the Application.
- 3.6 The Grantees' financial management systems must be open to inspection by the MI, its parent Department and/or the Department of Finance, or their appointees, for the purpose of their financial control and audit procedures.
- 3.7 No amendment to the Budget or in the Grant-Aid shall be permitted except with the written consent of the MI and in accordance with Clause 9 (Modifications).
- 3.8 No expenditure incurred by or on behalf of the Grantees prior to the date of signing this Agreement shall be funded, recovered or reimbursed from the Grant-Aid unless the MI has given specific written consent to the funding of such expenditure under the Project Award.
- 3.9 No expenditure incurred by the Grantees after the completion date of this Agreement shall be recovered or reimbursed from the Grant-Aid.
- 3.10 The Grantees acknowledges that as regards payment of the Grant-Aid, time shall not be of the essence and the Grantees shall not hold the MI, its parent Department or any other party providing or processing funds liable for any delay in making payment of the Grant-Aid or any portion thereof.

⁸ The term 'Grant-Aid' refers to the aggregate of all amounts to be made available by the Marine Institute to the Grantees pursuant to this Agreement, as set out in clause 3.

4 Obligation on the Grantees

The Grantees shall:

- 4.1 Apply the Grant-Aid exclusively to the Project and agree to conduct and complete the research in accordance with this Agreement.
- 4.2 Not abandon or vary the Project without the written consent of the MI.
- 4.3 Ensure that proper books and records (including timesheets) concerning the Project are maintained, including records identifying the expenditure incurred on the Project by the Grantees. Such books and records shall be kept by the Grantees in a safe place for six years after their creation or for three years after the completion of the Our Shared Ocean Programme (2029), whichever is the later.
- 4.4 Furnish the MI with scientific/technical and financial reports according to the requirements and schedule set out in Clause 7 herein.
- 4.5 Take out and maintain sufficient employer liability and public liability insurance to cover the Grantees and all its employees and agents involved in the Project and if so requested by the MI, provide evidence of such insurance.
- 4.6 Abide by and comply with any existing and future publicity measures required by the MI and notified in writing by the MI (see Clause 12 Publicity).

5 Researcher Appointment

- 5.1 In the event that no researchers have been appointed by an agreed date the award may be cancelled and the advance payment must be refunded to the MI.
- 5.2 The Grantees shall comply with standard recruitment practices and guidelines of their institution and the relevant national legislation.
- 5.3 Researchers funded under this award are not employees of the Marine Institute.

6 Project Management

- 6.1 **Dr** (hereinafter referred to as “**the Project Supervisor**”) being the named lead applicant as set out in the Application (Annex 2) shall:
 - 6.1.1 Oversee the Project for the Grantees and ensure that all deliverables are met;
 - 6.1.2 Ensure compliance with technical and financial reporting requirements (Clause 7).
 - 6.1.3 Liaise with the MI on all Project matters;
 - 6.1.4 Act as a focus for information exchange and dissemination of Project results between researchers engaged on the Project and the MI.
 - 6.1.5 In the event that the Project Supervisor leaves the employ of their organisation, then the Grantees shall inform the MI and, in consultation with the MI, nominate a replacement for the remaining term of the Project.
 - 6.1.6 The MI should also be advised in writing of any staff changes within the Project Team, and the effect of said changes on the progress of the Project Plan (see Clause 9.3 also).

7 Reporting Requirements

- 7.1 The Grantees shall provide the MI with financial and scientific/technical reports on an **annual (or six-monthly)** basis.
- 7.2 Progress reports are due one month after the end of the relevant reporting period.
- 7.3 All project reports shall be submitted electronically to the MI, backed up, where necessary, by paper records (e.g. in the case of financial reports).
- 7.4 *Financial Reporting*
 - 7.4.1 Financial reports and certified costs statements shall be submitted annually in a format to be supplied by the MI.
 - 7.4.2 Interim Grant-Aid payments will be made in the form of reimbursement of eligible costs, following submission of financial reports and cost statements, supported by receipts and supporting documentation.
 - 7.4.3 Eligible costs shall be reimbursed where they are adequately justified by the participant.
 - 7.4.4 Cost statements must be approved by the Grantees' Finance Office (or equivalent) and accompanied by a statement of authentication signed by the Finance Office (or equivalent). Each project partner is responsible for submitting their organisation's financial reports.
 - 7.4.5 Financial reports may be subject to independent audit by the MI or its appointed representative. This audit can occur at any stage during, or following, the completion of the Project.
 - 7.4.6 The Grantees shall ensure that accurate accounts of expenditure are maintained, along with appropriate documentation to support and justify the costs and time reported in their cost statements. This documentation must be complete (e.g. include reference material such as purchase order numbers, cheque numbers, etc.) and be accurate.
- 7.5 *Scientific/Technical Reporting*
 - 7.5.1 Interim scientific/technical reports shall be furnished on an annual basis (in a format to be supplied by the MI) and will clearly detail, e.g., progress on the project in relation to the work plan, outputs (publications etc.), difficulties arising, actions planned to overcome these difficulties, data management issues, etc.
 - 7.5.2 A Final Report (in a format to be supplied by the MI) shall be furnished to the MI to describe the objectives, methodologies, outcomes, etc. of the research. A short Abstract (max. 700 words) should also be provided. Finally, a Synthesis Report providing an overview of the work may also be required.
 - 7.5.3 The MI may require the Grantees to provide clarifications and/or make changes to the final report. The Grantees shall co-operate in revising or amending the final report prior to its completion and before signing off by the MI.
 - 7.5.4 The Project Supervisor is responsible for submitting the interim and final scientific/technical reports with input from all the Project Partners.
 - 7.5.5 If deemed suitable the Final Progress Report, or Synthesis Report, may be published by the MI. The MI will endeavour to make all reports (once released) available on its website.
- 7.6 All reports shall carry an acknowledgement of Grant-Aid Funding in a format to be advised by the MI.
- 7.7 The MI requires Grantees to submit financial and scientific/technical reports via their online grant management system.

8 Deductions from and Withholding of Grant-Aid Payments

8.1 In the event that the Grantees fails to comply with any of its obligations pursuant to Clause 4 (Obligation on the Grantees) the MI shall be entitled at any time to demand the repayment of an appropriate proportion of the Grant-Aid already advanced, and/or to reduce by an appropriate amount any future grant payments which may otherwise be due to the Grantees hereunder.

8.2 *Deductions from Grant Payments:*

8.2.1 Where the Grantees fails to comply with financial and technical reporting requirements as outlined hereafter, and detailed in Clause 7 of the Grant-Aid Agreement and its annexes, the MI will make deductions from the Grant-Aid; and

8.2.2 Failure to supply cost statements or certification statements to the MI to enable the certification of expenditure not later than two months after the end of the reporting period for which it is due will result in deductions from the value of stipend claimed. Any queries regarding cost statements from either the MI or its Agent must be resolved within one month. Deductions will be made as follows:

- An initial deduction equivalent to 20% of the value of the stipend claimed for the period will be applied.
- For each additional month that this information remains outstanding, beyond the initial two months, a further deduction equivalent to 10% of the value of the stipend claimed for the period will be applied.

8.2.3 Failure to submit scientific/technical progress reports not later than two months after the end of the reporting period will result in reductions from the value of stipend claimed for that period. A deduction will be made as follows:

- For each month that this information remains outstanding a deduction equivalent to 10% of the value of the stipend claimed for the period will be applied.

8.3 *Withholding of Final Grant Payment:*

8.3.1 An amount of 15% of the MI Grant-Aid will be retained in all cases pending satisfactory completion of the Project. A Project will be deemed to be completed satisfactorily, following the certification of the final cost statement, the submission of satisfactorily completed final reports (signed off by the MI), dataset descriptions (as per Clause 11 Datasets) and any other reasonable documentation as required by the MI (e.g. End of Project Questionnaire). All final documentation must be submitted within two months of the agreed Project completion date. Grantees who do not comply with these requirements may be deemed ineligible to apply for future research grants under this programme.

9 Modifications to the Project

9.1 *Timeframe*

9.1.1 Changes to the timing of individual tasks may be made without prior notice to the MI on condition that all changes are clearly outlined and justified in the appropriate section of the next interim report.

9.1.2 Changes to the overall timeframe of the Project require prior written approval from the MI. Where changes are approved this will not imply any additional cost. Delays, or potential delays, shall be notified to the MI at the earliest opportunity.

9.2 *Work Programme*

9.2.1 Changes to the tasks and work packages (e.g. inclusion/omission of tasks) agreed to in the Grant-Aid Agreement require the prior written consent of the MI. The Grantees should ensure that Project research objectives are not altered or adjusted.

9.3 *Personnel*

- 9.3.1 In the event of Key Project Personnel leaving during the course of the Project the Grantees shall notify the MI in writing immediately. Such notification shall include a proposed solution and arrangements to be put in place by the Grantees to allow the Project to continue and be concluded satisfactorily.
- 9.3.2 The Grantees shall notify the MI of the replacement and ensure that any such replacement personnel have the time commitment, qualifications and competency to undertake the research activities to the standard required by this Agreement and have similar expertise and ability to those of the personnel that they are replacing

9.4 *Budget Expenditure:*

- 9.4.1 Overall expenditure claimed may not exceed that outlined in the total approved award.
- 9.4.2 A written request (i.e. budget reallocation form) to amend the budget must be submitted, and approved by, the MI.
- 9.4.3 The MI may request further information on any changes made, or retrospectively refuse or penalise any changes made where the above conditions have been breached.

10 Monitoring

10.1 *Monitoring*

- 10.1.1 The MI retains the right at its sole discretion to appoint a technical monitor for the full term of the Project and, if necessary, from time to time, appoint a replacement monitor. The technical monitor will act as an agent of the MI. The Grantees shall provide the MI or its technical monitor with any information relating to the Project as the MI may request from time to time.
- 10.1.2 From time to time at the request of the MI, the Grantees shall make its representatives available on reasonable prior notice (not to exceed thirty (30) days) to discuss the progress of the Project or any matters relating to the Project with a representative or representatives of the MI and/or its technical monitor.

11 Datasets

- 11.1 The Grantees shall submit a full description of the dataset(s) produced by the Project to the MI in ISO 19115 standard format for inclusion in the MI's data catalogue, in a template to be provided by the MI. Metadata is additional to any formal project reports, and will be made publicly available.
- 11.2 The Grantees shall provide details of how such datasets will be maintained and how other researchers can access and make use of them⁹.
- 11.3 The Grantees shall address data quality control in each project report.
- 11.4 If requested, the Grantees may be required to provide digital copies of all data to the MI at no additional cost. If requested by the Grantees, datasets will not be made publicly available (other than to the Grantees and MI staff) for a period of 12 months after the publication of the project report, but all datasets may thereafter be made publicly available.

⁹ The MI shall furnish Grantees with Guidelines to assist with data management issues.

12 Publicity

- 12.1 All publications/presentations/publicity arising from this project shall carry an acknowledgement of the MI funding in a format to be advised in writing by the MI.
- 12.2 The Project Supervisor shall provide the MI with electronic copies of all materials accepted for publication (papers, posters, articles etc.).
- 12.3 The Project Supervisor may be requested, and shall be available, to provide an overview/update on the Project for publicity and outreach purposes (e.g. newspapers, trade magazines, radio or television, outreach events). All media releases concerning Projects should be submitted to the MI for agreement prior to issue.
- 12.4 The MI publishes details of research awards and projects that it funds, and also shares information with Government Departments and other Funding Agencies/Authorities in relation to publically funded research. The Grantees agree that information provided to the aforementioned may include the name of the supervisor as stated under Clause 6 above.

13 Termination

- 13.1 This Agreement shall terminate automatically upon the expiry of the term set out in Clause 1 above, unless previously terminated in accordance with Clause 13.2 below.
- 13.2 The MI may terminate this Grant-Aid Agreement upon written notice to the Grantees at any time in the event that:
 - 13.2.1 The Grantees commits any material breach of this agreement and fails to remedy such breach (if capable of remedy) within thirty (30) days of receiving notice from the MI;
 - 13.2.2 The Grantees fails to carry out the research in accordance with the agreement;
 - 13.2.3 The Grantees provides any information (including in relation to expenditure) or report to the MI or its agents which is incorrect or inaccurate; or
- 13.3 In the event that the MI terminates this agreement, any entitlement of the Grantees to receive any outstanding portion of the Grant shall cease automatically and any such termination shall be without prejudice to the right of the MI to claim a complete or partial refund of the Grant or damages for breach of contract or any of its other rights.
- 13.4 The provisions of Clauses 4 (Obligation on the Grantees) and 18 (Indemnity) shall survive the termination of this Agreement.

14 Intellectual Property

- 14.1 Ownership of Background Knowledge/Intellectual Property generated by the Grantees will be retained by the party that generated it. A register of Background IP will be established at the start of the project.
- 14.2 The MI acknowledges that the Grantees will own all rights to Foreground Intellectual Property generated by the Project.
- 14.3 The Grantees are required to take all necessary steps to:
 - 14.3.1 Preserve and protect such Intellectual Property Rights (IPR) including, where appropriate, by applying for patent registration; and
 - 14.3.2 Actively to exploit in a timely fashion any discoveries, inventions or processes resulting from the research, by means of commercial licensing arrangements and otherwise.
 - 14.3.3 Whenever possible, intellectual property shall be managed for the benefit of enterprise development in Ireland.

- 14.4 The Grantees shall be guided by *Inspiring Partnership - The National IP Protocol 2019*¹⁰.
- 14.5 The ownership interest in Intellectual Property generated from work undertaken as part of the Project may not be transferred or assigned without written agreement of the MI. Such agreement shall not be unreasonably withheld.
- 14.6 Where the Grantees has not moved to exploit or commercialise the intellectual property produced by the Project, the Grantees shall, if requested by the MI, appoint the MI as its exclusive agent to exploit the intellectual property on its behalf or to appoint a mutually acceptable third party IP broker. This situation could be anticipated to occur should exploitation or commercialisation not take place within two years of the first identification of the intellectual property.
- 14.7 The Grantees are responsible for ensuring that the research carried out for the purposes of the Project and the final and interim Project reports and any publications arising from the Project shall not knowingly infringe the IPR, including the copyright, of any third party. Subject to Clause 18.1, the Grantees are required to indemnify and keep indemnified the MI against any claims by any third party that the results of the research carried out for the purposes of the Project and the final progress report for the Project infringe that third party's rights.

15 Freedom of Information

- 15.1 Information supplied to the Marine Institute may be disclosed in response to a request under the Freedom of Information Act, 2014. It is the responsibility of the applicant to indicate at the time of making an application which information should not be disclosed and the reasons for non-disclosure. The Marine Institute will consult with applicants about this information before making a decision on any Freedom of Information request.

16 Data Protection Act

- 16.1 Personal information supplied to the MI in relation to the Project Programme will be stored by electronic means (e.g. database) for use only in connection with the Project Programme. The provisions of the Data Protection Act, 1988 and the Data Protection (Amendment) Act, 2018 will be fully complied with. The MI will publish funding call outcomes including Grantees name and organisation on the Marine Institute website.

17 Assignments

- 17.1 This Agreement or the benefit thereof may not be assigned or sub-contracted by the Grantees in whole or in part without the prior written consent of the MI.

¹⁰ <https://dbej.gov.ie/en/Publications/Publication-files/Ireland-National-IP-Protocol-2019.pdf>

18 Indemnity and Cap on Liability

- 18.1 The Grantees shall indemnify and keep indemnified the MI and its parent Department against all costs, loss, damage and expenses sustained by either of them and against any claims that may be brought by any partner, employee, agent, sub-contractor or any third or other party arising out of the Project whether by reason of or on account of the breach default neglect non-performance or non-observance by the Grantees of the terms and conditions of this Agreement or otherwise.
- 18.2 The Grantees' total liability arising under or in connection with this Agreement, whether arising in contract, tort (including negligence) or restitution, or for breach of statutory duty or misrepresentation, or otherwise, shall be limited to the amount of Grant-Aid received by the Grantees (see Clause 3).

19 Governing Law and Mediation

- 19.1 This Agreement shall be governed by Irish law and all disputes arising from this Agreement or the relationship between the parties shall be referred to the Irish Courts, after the parties have aimed to settle their dispute by way of mediation.

20 DPER Circular on Grant Management

- 21.1 The Grantees will have to adhere to the relevant requirements contained in circular 13/2014 Management of and Accountability for Grants from Exchequer Funds issued by the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform on 26th September 2014. These requirements, dealing with reporting of grant expenditure, publication of the award details in the Grantees' financial statements and disposal of assets, are detailed in the Certificate of Assurance that the Grantees will be required to sign and submit with their annual financial reports.

**Project Award
Grant-Aid Agreement**

Reference:

Title:

IN WITNESS whereof the parties hereto have executed this Agreement the day and year first herein WRITTEN

Signed for and on behalf of the **Marine Institute**
Michael Gillooly, Interim Chief Executive Officer

Date: _____

Read and understood by:
(Name) Project Supervisor in Lead Organisation

Date: _____

Signed for and on behalf of Lead **Organisation**
Authorised Officer (Dean of Research/Financial Controller or equivalent)

Date: _____

Read and understood by:
(Name) Scientist in Partner Organisation 2

Date: _____

Signed for and on behalf of **Organisation 2**
Authorised Officer (Dean of Research/Financial Controller or equivalent)

Date: _____

Read and understood by:
(Name) Scientist in Partner Organisation 3

Date: _____

Signed for and on behalf of **Organisation 3**
Authorised Officer (Dean of Research/Financial Controller or equivalent)

Date: _____

Project Award Grant-Aid Agreement

Annexes

1. *Our Shared Ocean* Programme – Direct Funding Project Awards Applicant Guidelines 2023
2. The Application and Declaration
3. Budget
4. Evaluation Report
5. Publicity Guidelines

**ANNEX 1: OUR SHARED OCEAN PROGRAMME – DIRECT FUNDING PROJECT
AWARDS APPLICANT GUIDELINES 2023**

ANNEX 2: THE APPLICATION AND DECLARATION

ANNEX 3: BUDGET

ANNEX 4: EVALUATION REPORT

ANNEX 5: PUBLICITY GUIDELINES

All published materials relating to the project should carry full acknowledgement of Grant-Aid, as follows:

This project is funded by the Department of Foreign Affairs through Ireland's development cooperation programme, Irish Aid, administered and managed by the Marine Institute on behalf of Irish Aid/DFA.

In addition to the above wording, **the two logos** should be displayed:



Advertisements

Advertisements (for Press, Websites and Internal Notice Boards) for posts/research Projects/Projects Grant-Aided under the project should carry full acknowledgement of the Grant-Aid as stated above.

Presentations/Posters

Presentations (PowerPoint Slides) and Posters should carry full acknowledgement of the Grant-Aid as stated above. In a Presentation, this acknowledgement should come at the beginning of the presentation (e.g. after the introductory slide).

Publications

Grey Literature

Internal and Grey Literature Reports should carry full acknowledgement, including the logos on the title page.

Scientific/Technical Literature

The following text should be included in the Acknowledgements Section:

“This project is funded by the Department of Foreign Affairs through Ireland's development cooperation programme, Irish Aid, administered and managed by the Marine Institute on behalf of Irish Aid/DFA.”