

Managing protected areas in a changing ocean Request for Proposals



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RFP Topic: Managing protected areas in a changing ocean
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Important dates:

Issuance of RFP	October 24, 2022
RFP Informational Webinar	November 7, 2022
Deadline for submission of LOI (optional)	November 30, 2022
Competition Q&A Webinar	December 14, 2022
Deadline for submission of Proposals	January 23, 2023
Anticipated start date of awarded agreement(s)	July 1, 2023 or later
Required end date of awarded agreement(s)	June 30, 2025 or earlier

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1. Introduction

About The Pew Charitable Trusts

The Pew Charitable Trusts (“Pew”) is a global charitable and educational organization that applies a nonpartisan, rigorous, analytical approach to improve public policy, inform the public, and invigorate civic life. Pew partners with a diverse range of donors, public and private organizations, and concerned citizens who share its commitment to practical, fact-based solutions and goal-driven investments to improve society. Pew is a nonprofit organization and section 501(c)(3) public charity, with offices located in Philadelphia, Washington DC, Brussels, and London, and staff that span other regions of the United States, the European Union, and Australia. For more information about Pew, please visit www.pewtrusts.org.

About the Lenfest Ocean Program

Based at The Pew Charitable Trusts, the Lenfest Ocean Program (LOP) is a philanthropic effort supporting scientific research that is useful to those managing and making decisions about the ocean environment¹. Scientific research provides critical information required to maintain sustainable ocean ecosystems and communities. This research is more likely to be useful if it directly informs conservation and resource management questions and knowledge gaps. The Program invests substantial time and resources to develop projects with grantees that consider the end users and to support grantees’ engagement with decision-makers and stakeholders throughout the life of a supported project.

2. Approach to Grantmaking

The Lenfest Ocean Program’s focus on research that is designed to be useful and usable guides our grantmaking decisions as well as outreach and engagement strategies undertaken in projects. The projects that we support work closely with the people and partners who can use the results of the research throughout the life of the project. This includes engaging at the project inception to ensure that the research questions are aligned with the needs of the intended users and methods are well-suited to the context in which applicants work, and continuing to follow-up with key audiences throughout the project.

Successful projects in this RFP will pay particular attention to ensuring the involvement of managers, stakeholders, and other potential partners or community groups through engagement activities that should be built into the proposed work. Our grantmaking decisions and project development process is guided by a list of criteria and questions that can be found on our website², and is illustrated further in Landrum et al. 2022.³

¹ For more information and publications about the Lenfest Ocean Program go to:

<https://www.lenfestocean.org/en/about-us/resources>

² <https://www.lenfestocean.org/en/about-us/research-focus>

³ <https://www.frontiersin.org/articles/10.3389/fmars.2021.809953/full>

3. Scope of Work

Background

Changing ocean conditions due to climate variability and change, such as increasing temperature, ocean acidification, and deoxygenation, among others, are already impacting marine ecosystems worldwide. Although spatial protections in coastal and ocean waters⁴ are an important management tool that can help support healthy and productive ecosystems and provide social and ecological benefits, they are not immune to these impacts. However, there is limited information and guidance about how established MPAs should consider the changing climate in their management. To that end, the Lenfest Ocean Program requests proposals focused on developing and providing usable information about managing protected areas in a changing ocean.

The Program has identified four topical priorities for which applicants may submit proposals for research grants or planning grants (more information below). All proposals, regardless of the grant type, should include substantial discussion about how the project will fill the information needs of partner stakeholders, practitioners, and/or managers and the engagement activities and approaches the project team will use over the course of the project. Proposals should allocate sufficient budget and time towards these activities. The Lenfest Ocean Program considers decision-maker and stakeholder engagement in the identification of the research questions and research methods to be a critical component of research and planning activities and as such, discussion of engagement plans and partnerships should be woven throughout the project narrative.

There are no geographic limits on where projects can be located, rather applicants should ensure their proposal speaks to why the location or region they propose to work in is well-suited to this call for proposals and how individuals in that region are involved. The Program encourages applicants to consider equity as they develop their project ideas, which includes but is not limited to determining where they will work, who they will partner with, and how the proposed work seeks to address local needs.

Additionally, there are a number of existing tools and approaches that could be applied to the challenge of managing MPAs in a changing ocean and any work proposed should consider these. If applicants are considering work to develop a new tool or approach to incorporating climate guidance in MPA management, the proposal should include justification for why existing tools would not be applicable to their project and a new approach is needed.

Finally, there is growing interest in the potential of MPAs to sequester carbon and be used as a tool for climate mitigation. While these are important areas of research, they are outside of the scope of our current efforts.

⁴ Hereafter we will use the term marine protected areas (MPAs), however we recognize that other terms may fit this description and this should be interpreted broadly.

Project Types

The LOP will accept proposals for either of two types of projects, a research grant or a planning grant. Applicants may elect to apply for both types of projects, however the LOP will *not* award more than one grant to an investigator or investigator team.

Research grants should be at most 2-year projects that undertake research activities and provide new information useful to MPA management. Research grants should involve active engagement with partners and stakeholders as described elsewhere in the RFP. They are expected to effectively articulate the specific research questions, plans for how research would be conducted, and plans for how engagement will be integrated throughout the process.

Planning Grants are intended to be 1-year projects that undertake participatory planning activities, relationship building, or stage-setting surrounding a specific topic or question that will advance on the challenge of managing protected areas in a changing ocean. Planning grants are not anticipated to undertake research; however, they do need to have goals and outcomes that relate to understanding and identifying research needs, use of information, and/or knowledge gaps in a specific regional or sectoral context.

Specific details of what should be included in proposals for research and planning grants are in section 7 of this RFP.

Topical Priorities

The LOP is interested in proposals that aim to address or advance work on one or more of the following themes:

- 1. Monitoring ecosystem changes to inform management responses:** Research or planning activities in this category could include work to develop scientific capabilities and approaches for detecting early signs of major ecosystem change in MPAs and, importantly, to develop an understanding of how management could respond in those situations. This would advance understanding of how to monitor for climate impacts in MPAs, identifying thresholds based on monitoring findings that would trigger a management response, and developing management options that could be applied in such cases. Activities proposed should go beyond solely including a monitoring component in order to be considered.
- 2. Incorporation of climate change considerations into MPA management:** Research or planning activities proposed in this category should work to provide tangible demonstration of how climate impacts can be considered in MPA management. This could include applying existing tools and guidance to incorporate climate change into MPA management, assessing what adaptation actions or management responses are available for a given MPA or network of MPAs, or other related activities.
- 3. Social-ecological impacts of climate change and their intersection with MPA management:** Proposed research or planning activities in this theme could look at the intersection of the social-ecological system(s) associated with an MPA or MPA network

and the effects of climate change. For instance, climate change impacts on MPAs can have consequences for the communities and people who rely on the MPAs for tourism, fishing, or other livelihoods and food. On the other hand, climate impacts on communities adjacent to or associated with MPAs may have effects on the MPA itself through changes to resource use. We are seeking proposals that advance understanding of these and related research gaps in ways that address needs on the ground and engage the people and communities involved through meaningful collaboration.

4. Enabling conditions for MPA governance and adaptation under climate change:

Research or planning activities proposed in this area could advance understanding of what key components of MPA governance are important enabling conditions for managing for climate change and how MPA management could be adapted to achieve effective, equitable, climate-informed outcomes.

4. Eligibility Criteria

Research and planning grant proposals to this competition are expected to align with the Scope of Work above. Please review the information below before submitting a proposal.

In order to receive funds, grant host institutions must be in good financial standing and be able to fulfill the following requirements:

- submit audited financial statements for the last three years;
- have an annual operating budget of at least three times the proposed total grant amount;
- be able to accept and administer the award on behalf of the grantee;
- agree to no greater than 10% indirect rate on salaries and benefits; and
- pass Pew’s financial due diligence review.

Additionally, the Lenfest Ocean Program cannot support:

- Any efforts at lobbying, advocacy, or related legal analysis
- Institutions from countries without U.S. diplomatic relations or the ability to conduct financial transactions with U.S. institutions
- Individuals with current funding from The Pew Charitable Trusts (as of the start date for this RFP)

If you have questions about your eligibility to apply to this Request For Proposals please contact info@lenfestocean.org.

5. Request For Proposal Process and Timeline

Letter of Intent Submission

Applicants may submit an optional Letter of Intent (LOI). LOIs must be submitted electronically to info@lenfestocean.org by 17:00 ET on Wednesday, November 30, 2022. Submissions must

include the LOI as a Microsoft Word or PDF format document and should use the subject line “[PI last name] – LOI.”

Proposal Submission

All proposals must be submitted electronically to info@lenfestocean.org. Proposals must be received by 17:00 ET on Monday, January 23, 2023. Submissions must include the proposal (PDF or Microsoft Word document format) and budget spreadsheet using the Microsoft Excel template provided in Appendix C. Please include “[PI last name] - RFP submission” in the subject line of your email. Proposals received after the specified time and date will be considered late and will only be considered at the discretion of the Lenfest Ocean Program. The Lenfest Ocean Program does not require proposals to have gone through university budget approval or to submit supporting financial documents at this stage of the grantmaking process; however, applicants should follow the requirements of their home institutions.

By submitting a proposal, each respondent grants the Lenfest Ocean Program/Pew and its designees the right to duplicate, use, disclose, and distribute all submitted materials (and information contained therein) for the purposes of evaluation and review. In addition, each respondent guarantees that (1) it has full and complete rights to all information and materials included in the proposal, and (2) all such materials are not defamatory and do not infringe upon or violate the privacy rights, copyrights, or other proprietary rights of any third party. Additionally, each respondent agrees to defend, indemnify, and hold harmless Lenfest Ocean Program/Pew with respect to any claims or losses arising from the aforementioned guarantees.

Each respondent further agrees that any submission to Lenfest Ocean Program/Pew (including, without limitation, all materials and information contained therein) will become the property of Lenfest Ocean Program/Pew (not including any of respondent’s intellectual property rights contained in such submission), and Pew is not required to return any submitted materials to any respondent.

Opportunities for more information:

1. Webinar – The Lenfest Ocean Program will host a webinar on Monday, November 7, 2022 to share information about the RFP. The webinar **will be recorded** and the recording will be posted online at [lenfestocean.org](https://us02web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_aurFmt4nQWqzR-f-ujfMAw). Register for the webinar at: https://us02web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_aurFmt4nQWqzR-f-ujfMAw
2. Q&A Webinar – The Lenfest Ocean Program will host an open session online to allow applicants to ask questions about the competition. **This will not be recorded.** The office hours session will take place on Wednesday, December 14, 2022 at 2pm Eastern Time. Register to attend the office hours at: <https://us02web.zoom.us/meeting/register/tZYtd-mqqDIqHND7vBfvthr8JaBAaspDV6ER>

6. Letter of Intent Content (optional)

The Letter of Intent (LOI) is a short (maximum 2 page, 12pt font) written statement explaining the project and how it will help to inform decision-making. The letter of intent is not required in order to submit a full proposal. The purpose of the LOI process is to provide feedback to applicants on the relevance of their proposed work to the scope of work described in this call for proposals. The decision of whether to submit a full proposal rests with the applicant regardless of the outcome of the LOI review and final proposal evaluation will not take the LOI into account. Applicants will receive feedback on their LOI within two weeks of the LOI deadline.

To the extent possible, the narrative should be free of technical jargon. Please refer to the Program's [Grant Criteria Guidance Questions](#) and visit the Program's [Research Focus](#) webpage to inform your submission. The Letter of Intent should include the following information:

- Project Lead(s) and Institution(s)
- Project Title/Topic
- Project Type proposed (research grant or planning grant)
- Brief Project Overview (max 200 words) - Please include a brief description of the project and its significance across the science-policy landscape, including the project's approach, research methods, and/or data sources.
- Application to marine resource management and/or decision making (max 100 words) – Please provide a brief description of the management or decision-making landscape.
- Research question(s) - Please include a list of proposed research questions that will be investigated (research grants only). For planning grant proposals, please articulate the specific topic or question that the planning activities will aim to address.
- Key Audiences (max 100 words) – Please include a list of potential stakeholders who would directly (or indirectly) use this new information and briefly describe the utility/need of this information for each potential end user.

7. Proposal Content

I. PROJECT NARRATIVE

The project narrative is a short, written statement explaining the project and how it will help to inform decision-making. This narrative should be concise, not to exceed 10 pages (single-spaced, 12 pt font) for research grants. Length requirements will be enforced and submissions that exceed these requirements will not be considered.

Where relevant, instructions specific to a research grant or planning grant are noted below. To the extent possible, the narrative should also be free of technical jargon. Please refer to the Program's [Grant Criteria Guidance Questions](#) and visit the Program's [Research Focus](#) webpage to inform your submission.

A. Project Description

Project Type. Specify whether you are applying for a research grant or planning grant

Purpose. Summarize the purpose and relevance of the project in one sentence.

Background. Briefly describe the project, detailing the significance of the problem, the information gaps the project would seek to address, and why the project is salient and timely.

Context. A. Briefly describe the management or decision-making landscape, including why the proposed research is critical for identified users and/or decisions, and how the research would be useful (timely, appropriate scale, stakeholder driven, etc.). B. Describe any current engagement related to this project with decision-makers, other scientists, or stakeholders. This could include a description of engagement with potential stakeholders to refine the research questions; how the design of the project will encourage the use of the research results; or a discussion of how new information could be used to inform decisions.

Research Question(s). List the specific research question(s) that this project is designed to answer, as well as the associated hypotheses. For planning grants, this section should include specific topic or question that the planning activities will aim to address.

Research Methods and Analyses. Describe the research approach and how it will address the project's research question(s). This section should include an overview of the specific research methodology and analyses that are proposed for each research question and any other major activities. For planning grants, this section should describe the specific planning activities to be undertaken, including how participants in planning activities will be identified and selected, what types of activities will be considered, and any other relevant details.

Data Sources. List and describe any potential sources of data that will be needed to address the research question(s). Please include whether these data sources are publicly available, already in-hand, or would require additional action to purchase and/or acquire. If any of the data sources are considered sensitive data (e.g. personally identifiable information, information that must be kept confidential) please indicate how you will protect such data in accordance with applicable legal and regulatory requirements.

Challenges. A. Describe any potential scientific limitations to the proposed research and/or methods, and how the project design takes them into account. B. Describe any potential barriers that may limit the project's usefulness to decision-making.

References: Please list any references included in the project description.

B. Outcomes

Measurable Deliverables. Provide a bulleted list of specific measurable deliverables you expect to accomplish within the grant period, including any specific products or events that will result from this grant. These deliverables will be lifted from the final proposal and used in internal decision-making documents, so they need to be able to stand alone and should be phrased in plain language. Below are specific types of deliverables that should be included in all projects:

- Research grants should have deliverables that describe the research to be conducted and scientific outputs.
- Research and planning grants should both have deliverables that describe the engagement activities to be conducted.
- Planning grants should include the following deliverable: Upon completion of the planning grant, provide an oral report to Lenfest Ocean Program staff and partners on the activities and outcomes (details on what this entails will be shared with awardees at a later date).
- All grants should include the following deliverable: Work with Lenfest Ocean Program staff and partners on outreach and communications.

Project Timeline. Please include estimated dates for achieving the deliverables. Grants may not end past June 30, 2025. Planning grants are expected to be one year in duration.

C. Other Considerations

To contribute to our project development process and spur discussion about your project and approach, please include information on the following areas of consideration.

Consideration of Climate: The Lenfest Ocean Program encourages grantees to consider the implications of climate variability and change to their work from a variety of potential angles, even if the project is not directly focused on climate impacts. If applicable, discuss any likely challenges that may arise due to the impacts of climate variability and change—whether from a policy/decision-making or a scientific standpoint. For example, a project proposing to build a stock assessment model for a species that is shifting due to climate change would use this section to discuss how those impacts may affect the model and how the research is designed to be robust to those effects. Similarly, a project proposing research on coastal restoration could discuss the potential impacts of sea level rise on the research plan and approach.

Consideration of Inclusion, Diversity, Equity, and Transparency: The Lenfest Ocean Program believes that inclusion, diversity, equity, and transparency are foundational for developing useful and usable scientific research. This section is intended to help us understand how you are planning to incorporate these concepts into the project's design and execution. The Lenfest Ocean Program defines these concepts as follows:

1. **Inclusion** – fostering an open, diverse, welcoming, and accessible environment that integrates dialogue among people with unique backgrounds, circumstances, needs, perspectives, and ways of thinking and/or knowing
2. **Diversity** - seeking and embracing ideas and individuals across multi-dimensional attributes, including age, race, ethnicity, national origin, gender identity, sexual orientation, disability, culture, religion, education level, income, and socioeconomic status
3. **Equity** – expanding and strengthening scientific research and relationships with all communities, especially individuals and communities whose perspectives, knowledge, and wisdom have been overlooked, underrepresented, and/or undervalued
4. **Transparency** - distributing and communicating research goals, methods, results, and products to broad audiences in an equitable, open, and accessible manner

Please provide a brief description of how you are considering the above areas in your proposed work (e.g., research questions, methods and analyses, planned engagement with stakeholders, project budget, etc.). For example, have you considered participation from diverse groups of stakeholders in your research and engagement, especially under-represented communities? Similarly, if you are employing expert opinion in your research methods, how will you ensure that a diversity of types of expertise and knowledge systems are included in your approach? *Please focus your responses on the specific information needs, decision-making context, and audiences that are relevant to the proposed project.*

D. Expertise

Personnel. Identify and summarize the qualifications of the project team needed to carry out the work, including the project director, other principal staff and outside collaborators or consultants.

Organization Information. Provide no more than two short paragraphs on your organization’s history, scope, and mission.

II. PROJECT BUDGET

The concept paper’s project budget should include project expenses and a descriptive budget narrative. The budget should be itemized for each year in which support is requested. Use the attached excel file (Attachment C) and budget definitions below (Attachment D).

For research grants, the Lenfest Ocean Program expects proposals for up to 2 years of work not to exceed \$400,000 in total. For planning grants, the Program expects proposals for 1 year of work and a \$100,000 total award amount.

A. Project Expenses

The Lenfest Ocean Program limits the amount of indirect costs it will support to no more than 10% of salaries and employee benefits for investigators at the host institution that are covered directly by the Lenfest Ocean Program.

The Lenfest Ocean Program limits employee benefits to no more than 32% of employee salaries.

The Lenfest Ocean Program encourages budgets to include compensation for individuals outside of the project team that play a significant role as advisors or stakeholders, especially if their participation contributes to inclusion, diversity, equity, and transparency for the project and its potential impact.

Note that the Lenfest Ocean Program cannot pay for costs incurred prior to the date that a project is approved by the Lenfest Ocean Program.

The final proposal budget must use only the categories included in Appendix B.

Please round all expenses, including line items, and annual and project totals, to the nearest dollar amount.

B. Budget Narrative Spreadsheet Template Appendix A.

The detailed budget narrative of project expenses should include both dollar amounts and a description of how those amounts were determined. Describe in detail who, what, where, when and why.

8. Evaluation of Proposals

Proposals will be reviewed by a selection panel made up of Lenfest Ocean Program and Pew Research and Science staff with expertise related to the priority topics in this RFP. Proposals will be evaluated on the following criteria, weighted by the percent in parentheses:

Scientific/Technical/Research (25%): The technical merit of proposed work will be assessed based on whether the research methods or approaches to planning activities are feasible, technically sound, relevant to the Scope of Work for this RFP, and have clear goals that can be realized by the work proposed.

Usable Science (25%): This criterion assesses whether the proposed research or planning activities align with the management context which the research is intending to inform, address the needs of identified audiences and decision-makers, and that the project outputs are likely to be usable by key project audiences.

Engagement (25%): The engagement criterion will be assessed based on whether engagement activities described in the proposal are appropriate and well-suited to the project goals and have a sound approach that is feasible. Additionally, this criterion will consider whether individuals or entities that would use the information resulting from the project are involved in the project and/or there is a plan to include them.

Project Team/Qualifications (15%): This criterion evaluates whether the project team has demonstrated the appropriate skill set(s) to conduct the proposed research and activities and achieve project deliverables. This also includes expertise and experience with the engagement approaches they are proposing.

Budget (10%): The budget criterion assesses whether the proposed budget is realistic and commensurate with the project needs. The proposal will also be assessed for whether it adequately budgets for the proposed engagement activities.

Additional considerations:

In addition to the five primary evaluation criteria above, the Lenfest Ocean Program will also consider the following areas when making the final award selections:

- Balancing funded projects across geographies, types of projects, and types of institutions
- Avoiding duplication of similar efforts
- Considering diversity, equity, inclusion, and transparency

Appendix A: Budget Narrative Template

Download the Microsoft Excel budget narrative template at:

<https://www.lenfestocean.org/en/research-projects/managing-protected-areas-in-a-changing-ocean>

Appendix B. Budget Definitions

A. Revenue

The Lenfest Ocean Program: Include the amount of support requested from the Lenfest Ocean Program for each year.

B. Expenses

1. *Salaries:* Include all staff salaries allocated to the project. Identify each position, salary and amount of time devoted to the project per year.

2. *Employee benefits:* Include related benefits allocated to the salaries listed above. Identify percentage of salary expenses. The Lenfest Ocean Program limits employee benefits to no more than 32% of employee salaries.

3. *Other labor costs:* Include the cost of non-salaried labor such as internships, stipends, and graduate student tuition payments.

4. *Consultants:* Include all fees and expenses paid for consulting and professional services. Generally, consultants provide services to help with a phase of the project but are not directly involved in the fulfillment of grant deliverables. Where possible, identify individual consultants and subcontractors, and provide a detailed breakdown of how the budget was derived (e.g. percentage of salary, benefits, and travel costs contained within the subcontract).

5. *Conferences/meetings:* Include facility, lodging, honoraria, and other expenses. Identify purpose and attendees.

6. *Travel:* Include all air and rail fares, and auto allowances for project staff, consultants, and conference attendees. List the purpose, number of trips and destinations.

7. *Supplies:* Include office supplies, subscriptions, books, and other materials.

8. *Equipment:* The expenses in this category include all equipment purchases over \$500 and equipment maintenance costs. Identify each item and cost of equipment to be purchased. Identify equipment being maintained and its relevance to the project.

9. *Indirect Costs:* This includes rent, utilities, etc. The Lenfest Ocean Program limits the amount of indirect costs it will support to no more than 10 percent of salaries and employee benefits for investigators at the host institution that are covered directly by the Lenfest Ocean Program.

10. *Other:* Include any items not listed above. Identify the components and the methods of allocating expenses included in this category.

11. Printing & Publications – The Lenfest Ocean Program requires that all publications produced as part of Lenfest-funded projects are published as open access articles in peer-reviewed journals. Please build in sufficient funds to cover any potential open access costs.