



Connecticut

Delaware

Maine

Maryland

Massachusetts

New Hampshire

New Jersey

New York

Pennsylvania

Rhode Island

Vermont

Washington D.C.

West Virginia

2018 REQUEST FOR Mini-grant Proposals

Submission Deadline:

June 29, 2018

by 4 p.m.

(Local Time at College Park, Maryland)

**In Cooperation with
USDA**

National Institute of Food and Agriculture (NIFA)

TO: POTENTIAL APPLICANTS FOR NRAC FUNDING UNDER THE MINI-GRANTS PROGRAM

NRAC Mini-Grants RFA

The Northeastern Regional Aquaculture Center (NRAC) is inviting mini-grant proposals for project funding consideration. The NRAC selection criteria, review process and proposal submission guidelines are described later in this notice.

There will be one round of applications under this program in 2018. **The deadline for submitting mini-grant proposal is Friday June 29 at 4:00 p.m. for electronic copy** (Local Time in College Park, Maryland). **A hard copy may be requested by NRAC if proposal is approved for funding.** Mini-grant proposals will be reviewed by members of the NRAC Technical Industry Advisory Committee and the Executive Committee. Successful proposals are expected to receive funding approximately three months following the application deadline and approval from the Board of Directors.

This round of proposal development and project funding will use funds available from NRAC's grant award from the United States Department of Agriculture, National Institute of Food and Agriculture (NIFA). NRAC will fund mini-grant proposals in areas described elsewhere in this notice. Research and/or Extension priority areas are recommended to NRAC by representatives of the aquaculture industry in the Northeast through an industry-driven committee process. NRAC provides funding for projects, which are regional in nature and rely on in-place equipment and facilities to achieve objectives. Indirect costs (overhead), "brick and mortar" construction funds and student tuition remission costs are **not** allowed.

GENERAL CRITERIA FOR NRAC FUNDING

In addition to technical and industry merit (and the specific evaluation categories listed on page one), research and project proposals are judged against **four criteria**. **YOUR PROPOSED RESEARCH OR PROJECT MUST:**

- 1. SUPPORT COMMERCIAL AQUACULTURE INDUSTRY DEVELOPMENT** in Washington D.C. or the twelve Northeastern states. Your project must be relevant to the needs of the aquaculture industry and/or provide evidence of potential economic benefit to the industry.
- 2. HAVE THE ASSISTANCE, SUPPORT, OR ENDORSEMENT OF INDUSTRY** in the Northeast. Funded or non-funded industry collaborators are encouraged; letters of endorsement from industry members or associations can provide additional evidence of the value of the proposed project.
- 3. IDENTIFY ROLE OF COLLABORATORS:**
The role of all collaborators and cooperating, non-funded participants must be defined.
- 4. MEET BUDGET REQUIREMENTS:**
Any costs not allowed by USDA for NRAC projects are also not allowed to be claimed as matching funds (e.g., indirect costs or overhead, tuition remission, capital costs). Matching funds or cost sharing funds are not required but if necessary should be shown on the budget sheet.

Please CALL NRAC (301) 405-6917, email ssadams@umd.edu, or consult NRAC's Website at <https://agresearch.umd.edu/nrac> if you have any questions regarding these issues, for assistance in building regional teams, or in developing extension/outreach programs.

NORTHEASTERN REGIONAL AQUACULTURE CENTER REQUEST FOR MINI-GRANT PROPOSALS

Background and Authorization

The NORTHEASTERN REGIONAL AQUACULTURE CENTER (NRAC) currently located at the University of Maryland was created in 1987 to “support aquaculture research, development, demonstration and extension education to enhance viable and profitable U.S. aquaculture production which will benefit consumers, producers, service industries, and the American economy”. NRAC is one of five Regional Aquaculture Centers established by the U.S. Congress and administered by the U. S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) National Institute of Food and Agriculture (NIFA). NRAC is supported by yearly grants from USDA, which is authorized under Federal legislation (Agriculture and Food Act of 1981, Title IV, Subtitle L, §1440, Pub. L. 97-98) to coordinate efforts in the implementation of the National Aquaculture Act of 1980.

NRAC supports research, extension education, development, and demonstration projects aimed at increasing aquaculture production, profitability, and processing. The NRAC comprises the geographical region of Connecticut, Delaware, Maine, Maryland, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New York, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, Vermont, Washington D.C., and West Virginia. Qualified individuals within the region associated with any state agricultural experiment station, college, university, other research institution or organization, federal agency, private organization or corporation are eligible to participate.

There is approximately \$50,000 available this year from NRAC to fund relevant and selected projects within the mini-grants program. NRAC will fund projects for up to one year with a maximum total funding of up to \$20,000 per request. **Ideally, successful proposals are expected to receive funding within 3 months of the application deadline.** NRAC expects to fund one or two projects with each announced RFA (contingent upon funding). Mini-grant funding priorities (described on page 4) are established at Industry and Technical committee meetings sponsored by NRAC. Targeted research, extension, and demonstration areas are reviewed by NRAC's Technical and Industry

Advisory Council (TIAC) and are ultimately approved by NRAC’s Board of Directors and USDA, NIFA.

Proposal Submission Guidelines

Mini-grant Proposals: NRAC encourages short proposals to present ideas, objectives and working procedures on relevant industry problems.

Proposals should be straightforward and concise. One original of the Proposal with original signatures by the PC (Project Coordinator) or PI (Principal Investigator) must be single-sided and submitted to NRAC. An electronic copy in a single WORD or .pdf document must be submitted via e-mail to ssadams@umd.edu or on a disk. The budget page must be submitted using the NRAC Mini-grants EXCEL template and/or must be contained in the proposal document.

The following format must be strictly adhered to or the proposal will be considered incomplete and removed from funding consideration:

1. A separate title/signature page;
2. The proposal body (not to exceed three [single-sided] pages, in a font not smaller than Times Roman 12 point; margins - top 1", sides and bottom, 0.5" minimum) describing the project in the categories “**Why, What, Where, Who, How and When**”;
3. A separate one-page budget summary budget (using Word or Excel), if not presented within the proposal document. Matching funds or cost-sharing funds are not required but if included should be shown on the budget sheet.
4. A separate budget justification narrative for each line in the budget is required.
5. **One page only** vita (resumé) for each researcher or cooperator.

Proposal Evaluation Criteria: Proposals will be judged by the NRAC Technical and Industry Advisory Committees in four categories:

1.	<i>Relevancy of the project to the needs of the aquaculture industry</i>	up to 30 points
2.	<i>Benefits and potential economic impact to the aquaculture industry</i>	up to 30 points
3.	<i>Overall scientific and technical approach</i>	up to 20 points
4.	<i>Overall probability of the team accomplishing the objectives considering qualifications of participants and adequacy of requested funding.</i>	up to 20 points
Total		up to 100 points

The NRAC TIAC will use point totals to rank proposals. All proposals will be judged for technical merit and relevance to industry needs by members of the NRAC TIAC.

Individuals submitting proposals *are not assured of funding by NRAC*. Ultimate approval for funding of proposals will be by the NRAC Board of Directors and by the US Department of Agriculture, National Institute of Food and Agriculture (NIFA).

Regionality and Outreach: NRAC normally requires that all proposals have regional involvement (as defined as having participants in two or more states within the NRAC region). **This requirement has been suspended for the mini-grant program; however, the proposal must still have multi-state regional relevance, application, impact and/or importance.** Dissemination of project results to targeted audiences is strongly encouraged as is discussion of extension aspects with members of the Northeastern Regional Extension Project. In addition, a clear statement on anticipated outcomes (e.g., change in knowledge, documented adoption of recommended practice, changes in societal behavior toward aquaculture).

Mini-grant focus areas of eligibility: NRAC is interested in funding selected projects dealing with the research or extension that fall within the following criteria:

- a) Projects of an urgent nature and would not otherwise be practical within the existing NRAC RFA process.
- b) Projects of limited scope that do not necessarily fall within the current industry research priority areas. This criteria will be of a secondary priority but will be fully considered.

Examples of fundable projects might include: specialized (and timely) workshops that address pressing industry needs, pilot field studies, proof of concept principal research, economic or spatial planning studies and technology transfer activities.

Proposals with strong industry support and evidence of industry partnership are favored. Furthermore, although not a requirement, evidence of strong industry, academic or governmental matching resources are encouraged.

Special Considerations: The NRAC program will not pay indirect costs (i.e., overhead) to participating institutions, and will not pay student tuition remission costs. NRAC expects applicants to have equipment and facilities in place; NRAC will not pay for brick-and-mortar costs.

Regulations applicable to NRAC grants include the USDA Uniform Federal Assistance Regulations, 7 CFR Part 3015 and Special Terms and Conditions thereto. All individuals funded by NRAC are

NRAC Mini-Grants RFA

required to submit the NIFA-2008 Form (Assurance Statement).

Project Coordinator (PC) and Principal Investigators (PI): One PC (the lead PI) must be identified for each project. The PC's institute is the recipient of the NRAC award, and issues subcontracts to the PIs of the project. The PC coordinates and monitors the activities and progress of all PIs, maintains communication among participants, is responsible for overall project reporting to NRAC, is the main contact person on the overall project, and is fiscally responsible to NRAC for the overall project. Each PI is fiscally responsible to the PC's institution for their subcontract, and is responsible for reporting data and deliverables in a timely manner to the PC. An individual may be a PC or PI on more than one proposal.

All funded individuals will be required to provide a signed letter of intent to participate in the project in their indicated capacity.

If vertebrate animals are involved in the project submission an approved Institutional Animal Care and Use Protocol must be on file at the PC's home institution or organization.

Conflict of Interest: NRAC encourages the participation of the best qualified researchers, extension personnel and industry members throughout the Northeastern Region. While NRAC does not intend to exclude Board or TIAC members from involvement on funded projects, there are certain restrictions that are detailed in NRAC's Conflict of Interest Guidelines. These guidelines are posted on the NRAC Website and can be obtained from the NRAC office.

Submission deadline: Electronic copy of proposals must be received by NRAC no later than 4:00 P.M. (local time in College Park, Maryland) Friday June 29, 2018. Handwritten or Facsimile transmission copies, as well as proposals received after the deadline, will not be considered. A hard copy may be requested by NRAC if the proposal is approved for funding. Proposals that fail to follow the guidelines and enclosed format will also not be considered. All inquiries and submissions should be addressed to:

Sharon S. Adams ssadams@umd.edu

Written submissions if you so choose to send can be mailed to:

NRAC Coordinator/MGRFA 2018
Northeastern Regional Aquaculture Center/NRAC
University of Maryland
2113 Animal Sci./Agric. Engineering Building #142
College Park, Maryland 20742-2317

Additional information about NRAC is available on the NRAC Web site at:

<https://agresearch.umd.edu/nrac>

**NRAC Mini-Grants Proposal
Title Page**

Project Title: _____

Project Duration (months): _____

Total Funding Requested from NRAC: \$ _____

States with Participants in Project (circle / list):

CT DE ME MD MA NH NJ NY PA RI VT WV Wash, DC / Other: _____

Project Coordinator (Lead Principal Investigator) (name/position/institution/address/phone/fax/email):
(one name only)

Principal Investigator(s) (name/position/institution/address/phone/fax/email):

Cooperating, Non-funded Participant(s) (name/position/institution/address/phone/fax/email):

Project Coordinator's Signature: _____ **Date:** _____

NRAC Mini-Grants Proposal

Description of Project Categories and Body of Proposal

- 1.0 WHY:** Justify the problem or issue addressed by the proposed project.
- 2.0 WHAT:** State the objectives of the project and their relationship to the problem or issue described above.
- 2.1 Describe the product, process, or program that will result from successful accomplishment of the project objectives.
 - 2.2 Identify and describe the end-users and beneficiaries of the project results.
 - 2.3 Indicate what measurable economic benefits will result from the use of the product/process/program.
- 3.0 WHERE:** Identify the states and region (e.g., Chesapeake Bay) and describe the environment (land-based system, freshwater, nearshore, etc.) where the project results will be immediately applicable. Where else may the results be transferred to and applied?
- 4.0 WHO:** Describe who will be involved in the project and their respective roles and responsibilities. Attach a one page vita of each funded participant.
- 5.0 HOW:** Describe how the project will be carried out and achieve the objectives defined above. Describe the supporting facilities that will be made available to the project. How will project results be evaluated? How will the results or products be transferred to industry or public entities?
- 6.0 WHEN:** Indicate desired starting and completion dates (months) for the proposed project (i.e., account for seasonality of data collection). Provide a clear time line for completion of objectives with due dates specified for all products. Strong justification for the immediacy of the project is expected. **Project timeline must not exceed one year.**
- 7.0 BUDGET SUMMARY:**

NRAC will not pay for indirect costs (overhead), student tuition remission, and capital costs. These may not be included as a component of matching funds. Matching funds or cost sharing funds are not required but if included should be shown on the budget sheet or presented within the content of the proposal.

Funds Requested

	Funds Requested from NRAC	Matching Funds
Salaries and Wages		
A. Principal Investigators	_____	_____
B. Research Assoc./Postdoctorates	_____	_____
C. Graduate/Prebaccalaureate Students	_____	_____
D. Other Professionals (<u>not</u> consultants)	_____	_____
Fringe Benefits	_____	_____
Non-expendable Equipment	_____	_____
Materials and Supplies	_____	_____
Travel	_____	_____
Publication Costs/Page Charges	_____	_____
Other Direct Costs	_____	_____
Lab Analyses	_____	_____
Consultant Services	_____	_____
Subcontracting	_____	_____
Phone/Fax/Photocopy/Postage	_____	_____
TOTALS	_____	_____
(Enter these values on the title/signature page)		

8.0 BUDGET JUSTIFICATION:

Please provide a short narrative for each budget line indicating details such as time expended (and rates) for personnel, equipment and travel costs, etc.

9.0 VITA (RÉSUMÉ) GUIDELINES:

Name

Address

Phone

Fax

Email

EDUCATION

B.S. (Institution, Year)

M.S. (Institution, Year)

Ph.D. (Institution, Year)

POSITIONS

List each position on a separate line from newest to oldest.

SCIENTIFIC AND PROFESSIONAL ORGANIZATION

List alphabetically each organization on a separate line.

SELECTED PUBLICATIONS

List relevant publications from newest to oldest.

10.0 OTHER FUNDING:

Are you applying for funds for this work to other agencies? _____

If yes, which/how much?

CHECKLIST FOR SUBMISSION OF MINI-GRANTS PROPOSALS

Proposal Format:

- Margins (minimum): top 1", sides and bottom 0.5"
- Font not smaller than: Times Roman 12 pt.
- Separate title page
- Body: limited to 3 (single sided) pages
- Budget and budget justification
- Résumé/vita: 1-page per participant

Did You Include the Following?

- Vita (résumé) for each researcher or cooperator
- Industry letters of support (optional, but suggested)
- One Electronic copy submitted as a single WORD or PDF document.. Must arrive by deadline.

DO NOT:

- Include bibliography and /or reference material
- Submit in binders or folders
- Include a cover