Delaware Sea Grant College Program
Request for Proposals
Funding Period February 1, 2022 through January 31, 2024
Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

These Frequently Asked Questions have been assembled to assist researchers with meeting the requirements of the 2022-2024 Delaware Sea Grant College Program Request for Proposals (RFP). Please review the requirements carefully and contact Christian Hauser (hauser@udel.edu), the Associate Director of the Delaware Sea Grant College Program if you have additional questions.

What is this updated requirement for a Data Management Plan?

The NOAA Data and Publication Sharing Directive for NOAA Grants, Cooperative Agreements, and Contracts ("The Directive"), which applies for all projects funded under this competition, has been updated from previous funding cycles. The full text is available at:
https://nosc.noaa.gov/EDMC/documents/Data_Sharing_Directive_v3.0.pdf

It reads in part that:

> *NOAA Programs shall strive to ensure that environmental data produced as a result of NOAA-funded Grants, Cooperative Agreements, or Contracts are made publicly accessible, in a timely fashion (typically within 2 years), free of charge or at no more than the cost of reproduction, and that any exceptions or extensions are explicitly justified on a case-by-case basis.*

What are 'environmental data'?

From The Directive:

> *Environmental Data are defined by NOAA Administrative Order (NAO) 212-15: Management of Environmental Data and Information as recorded and derived observations and measurements of the physical, chemical, biological, geological, and geophysical properties and conditions of the oceans, atmosphere, space environment, sun, and solid earth, as well as correlative data such as socio-economic data, related documentation, and metadata. Digital audio or video recordings of environmental phenomena (such as animal sounds or undersea video) are included in this definition. Numerical model outputs are included in this definition, particularly if they are used to support the conclusion of a peer-reviewed publication. Data collected in a laboratory or other controlled environment, such as measurements of animals and chemical processes, are included in this definition.*

My data are strictly social science, independent of environmental data. Are these considered "environmental data"?

No, per guidance provided from the National Sea Grant Office.

Who will determine if my data are visible, accessible and independently understandable?

The person generating the data will have first responsibility for this determination. Common data quality standards in your scientific discipline may help you decide if the data are understandable. Ultimately, others who use your data will know whether they are visible, accessible and understandable to them. If there are concerns with data access or understandability, they can be reported to NOAA, who will do an independent check.

What are examples of law, regulation, policies or security requirements that may limit my ability to share data?

Policies applicable to protection of personally identifiable information, critical infrastructure information or proprietary trade information as well as regulations related to export control may impact your ability to share data, among other items.

Is journal publication of the data sufficient to meet the requirement?

In most cases, yes. Please be mindful of the fact that all environmental data collected are subject to sharing, so if you gather data that are not included in your publication be sure to provide for their access. Web appendices may be considered as a mechanism for making data publicly available, but must adhere to the publisher's guidelines and restrictions. Technical documents may fulfill the data sharing requirement effectively and should be considered.

Does this policy mean that I must make my data available immediately, even before publication?

Not necessarily. The expectation is that all data will be made available after a reasonable length of time, or within two years of the end of your award; in many cases this will be after the project support. Please be prepared to describe your environmental data and how you will make it available in your final project report to Delaware Sea Grant, even if you have not yet published.

How much detail must I include for my Delaware Sea Grant pre-proposal?

Not much. Let us know that you intend to comply with the requirement, and if you can be specific about long-term archiving and access that is helpful, but not necessary.

How much detail must I include for my Delaware Sea Grant full proposal?

As much detail as you can provide with the space provided. If you participate in a data archiving effort in a national center please include the name, contact information, and intended date of submission. If you will be handling data requests personally, indicate:
- How and when you will make the data available (e.g., Excel spreadsheets, PDF files, etc.)
- How you will ensure access to the data beyond the duration of project funding
- Your plans for archiving data. We encourage you to consider contacting NOAA's National Oceanographic Data Center to provide for long-term storage.

Will my Plan be reviewed during technical review of the full proposals?

Yes. Your Data Management Plan as part of our review process. It will constitute a portion of your proposal rating.

How will "the public" know my data even exists?

Delaware Sea Grant will include on its website a statement that environmental data generated through the funded research projects will be made available. The website will direct interested parties to the lead researchers and DESG Associate Director. If your data will be included in a national archive we will direct the inquiry to the proper facility, noting your anticipated timeline for submission if possible.

What reporting requirements will be associated with this Data Management Plan?

The required annual and final technical reports will include questions regarding your environmental data. If those templates are completed you will have fulfilled the reporting requirement.

Will Delaware Sea Grant require me to supply my data to the office upon completion of my research?

No. The Delaware Sea Grant office will work to ensure funded PIs comply with data access requirements (e.g., are responsive to inquiries for access to data), or submit their data to national data archives if archives exist for the type of data being generated (e.g., NOAA National Oceanographic Data Center at: www.nodc.noaa.gov; NSF-supported Biological Oceanography-Chemical Oceanography Data Management Office at www.bco-dmo.org; NSF-supported Consortium of Universities for the Advancement of Hydrologic Science, Inc. at www.cuahsi.org). At this time we do not anticipate providing archival support through the Delaware Sea Grant Office.

I am not collecting any environmental data/information. What should I do?

A statement indicating you are not collecting any data/information will be appropriate for your Data Management Plan.