

## **SUMMARY CLARIFICATIONS FOR**

### **Mid-Atlantic Collaborative Fisheries Research**

(see page 3 for original RFP)

**Administered by:** Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission  
**Program Name:** Mid-Atlantic Fishery Management Council 2016-2017 Collaborative Fisheries Research Program  
**RFP Closing Date:** February 12, 2016, 6:00 p.m. eastern standard time  
**Point of Contact:** Andrew Loftus  
ASMFC/MAFMC Collaborative Research Funding Coordinator  
[aloftus@andrewloftus.com](mailto:aloftus@andrewloftus.com)  
(410) 295-5997

The following is a summary of questions received and responses regarding the Request for Proposals issued by the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission for the Mid-Atlantic Fishery Management Council 2016-2017 Collaborative Fisheries Research Program.

**Q. Is there a cap on the amount of indirect costs that can be applied?**

A. There is a 25% cap on the percentage of funds that can be allocated to cover indirect costs, sometimes referred to as Facilities and Administrative costs. Indirect costs must be listed as a separate line item in the budget. Applicants are encouraged to keep indirect costs to a minimum.

**Q. Are special permits necessary for conducting research?**

**What if the proposed research project requires collecting fish out-of-season, fishing in restricted areas, or using gear not currently approved for the fishery?**

A. Researchers participating in this program must obtain the appropriate vessel documentation consistent with experimental fishing regulations at 50 CFR 600.745 and 50 CFR 648.12. Vessels conducting certain types of research activities that require relief from fishery regulations may be required to obtain an Exempted Fishing Permit (EFP) or other permit. If an exemption from Federal regulations is proposed, a list of the specific regulations to be exempted and a brief justification for each regulation to be exempted must be included in the proposal. Should an applicant submit a request for an EFP to NMFS, the completed application should be received by NMFS at least 60 days before the requested start date of the proposed research. EFP application guidance is available from the Sustainable Fisheries Division, Greater Atlantic Regional Office and in the Research Documentation Guidance document, available at:  
<http://www.greateratlantic.fisheries.noaa.gov/aps/permits/forms/efploaeeaapossessionloaguidance.pdf>

Application for funding can be made while the permit process is being completed, but no funds will be disbursed until evidence of such permit is provided. All landings made under these permits, for sale or research, must be reported per the instructions provided by NMFS. It is the responsibility of the project sponsor/principal investigator to be aware of the need for any permits and obtain them through appropriate channels!

**Q. Are ASMFC Commissioners and MAFMC Council Members prevented from submitting proposals?**

A. ASMFC Commissioners can submit proposals; Individual MAFMC Council Members cannot since the deliberative body making the recommendations for funding is a committee of the Council. This restriction was put in place to reduce real or perceived conflicts of interest. However, all organizations, even if they employ Commissioners or Council Members (except federal organizations), are eligible to submit proposals. State agencies, NGO's, universities, and private companies for which ASMFC Commissioners or MAFMC Council Members work can apply for funding as well as others(consult RFP).

**Q. Although federal agencies or federal employees are not eligible for funding, can they still be part of a funded project?**

A. Federal employees/entities may participate in research projects but may not receive any funds provided under this program. Since the program funding originates with federal dollars no dollars can then flow back to the federal government for salaries or federal expenses. It would be perfectly legitimate for federal entities to partner with an eligible entity (university, NGO, etc.) with grant funds supporting that entity and federal employees contributing labor, additional expenses, etc. Federal support should be identified in the proposal as "in kind" or "outside funding support."

**Q. Regarding priority #5 (*Determine mesh selectivity for summer flounder and/or black sea bass*), does this refer to fishery trawls, research trawls, or fishery traps (for black sea bass)?**

A. The intent of priority #5 is to focus on selectivity of commercial trawl gear. While the committee may give consideration to a well-developed proposal that addresses black sea bass trap configurations, priority will be given to projects which focus on commercial trawl gear.

**Q. Do I have to report my data?**

A. All projects should expect to report results within 45 days of the conclusion of the project. Presentation (in-person or remote) to the MAFMC should be expected. Successful projects that are designed to generate data that will ultimately be merged with other governmental databases will be required to submit the data in electronic form in accordance with protocols of the Atlantic Coastal Cooperative Statistics Program (ACCSP) and/or other appropriate database formats.

**Q:You haven't included a species or fishery for which additional research is needed. Will you consider proposals for items other than those listed in the RFP?**

A. No. The MAFMC Collaborative Research Committee has evaluated and prioritized research needs for the 2016-2017 funding cycle, resulting in the priorities listed in the RFP. Projects falling outside of the scope of these priorities will not be considered. However, we encourage you to raise the need for additional research to through the appropriate MAFMC species committee for possible inclusion in future RFP's.

## **REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS**

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**IMPORTANT: Periodically check [www.grantquestions.com](http://www.grantquestions.com) for updated questions and answers about this RFP!**

#### **Purpose**

The Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission (ASMFC) is requesting proposals for collaborative research projects to receive funding under the Mid-Atlantic Fishery Management Council's (MAFMC) 2016-2017 Collaborative Fisheries Research Program. The goal of this initiative is to enhance the science used in the management of Mid-Atlantic fisheries and to facilitate collaboration among scientists, fishermen, and other fishery stakeholders. Approximately \$600,000 is available to support an anticipated 3-6 research projects. Priority will be given to proposals that include a strong collaborative component.

#### **Research Priorities**

The MAFMC has identified the following collaborative research priorities for 2016-2017 to address specific gaps in knowledge needed for management of stocks under its management authority. Proposals **must** address at least one of these priorities in order to receive consideration:

1. Investigate NEFSC trawl survey efficiency, catchability, and availability relative to **summer flounder, scup, black sea bass, spiny dogfish**, and/or **Atlantic mackerel**. Projects which investigate calibration of an industry vessel relative to the NEFSC trawl survey will be prioritized.
2. Investigate abundance and/or distribution of **Atlantic mackerel** beyond the depth range of current NEFSC trawl surveys.
3. Develop innovative supplemental surveys (proof of concept) to derive fishery-independent indices of abundance for **golden tilefish** and **blueline tilefish**. Projects should focus primarily on development and evaluation of methodology, not on the collection of long-term data. The Council is particularly interested in projects which include video survey options.
4. Determine the discard mortality rate by gear type for the recreational **summer flounder** and/or **black sea bass** fisheries. Special consideration will be given to projects that address discard reduction.

5. Determine mesh selectivity for **summer flounder** and/or **black sea bass** to quantify selectivity at a range of mesh sizes, shapes, and configurations.
6. Develop and/or evaluate innovative approaches for avoidance or monitoring **river herring** and/or **shad** catch in small mesh fisheries.
7. Collect sex-specific fishery-dependent data for **summer flounder** and compare against sex-specific data collected annually from the federal trawl survey, state trawl surveys, and the northeast area monitoring and assessment program trawl survey.

### **Program Details**

This initiative is administered by the ASMFC with funding provided by the MAFMC. Projects funded under this program will be expected to deliver specific results to address questions outlined in one or more of the priorities described above and by December 2017. Projects which promote broad participation among researchers and stakeholders are encouraged.

Eligible applicants include nonprofits, private organizations, individuals, and state, local, and Native American tribal governments. Federal agencies and institutions are not eligible to receive assistance under this program. Additionally, employees of any Federal agency or Regional Fishery Management Council, individual MAFMC Council Members are not eligible to submit an application under this program. If you have any questions contact Andrew Loftus at [aloftus@andrewloftus.com](mailto:aloftus@andrewloftus.com); (410) 295-5997.

Projects should be scheduled to conclude no later than December 15, 2017 and applicants should expect to report results within 45 days of the conclusion of the project. Presentation (in-person or remote) to the MAFMC should be expected. Peer reviewed publications are encouraged following completion of the project and presentation of findings.

### **Evaluation Criteria and Process**

Proposals will be reviewed by MAFMC staff and Collaborative Research Committee who will score projects based on the evaluation criteria. Proposals will be evaluated for the importance of the idea and its relevance to the program objectives, as well as the technical approach and likelihood of success. Funding will be awarded to the applicants who demonstrate the qualifications and experience to develop a project and produce high-quality, specific results for the priority research area addressed.

Proposals will be evaluated and ranked according to the following criteria:

- **Relevance** – Project addresses one or more of the research priorities outlined in this RFP. Proposal must provide a clear description of the research priority(s) that will be addressed and a description of how the data gathered from the research will be used to enhance the understanding of the fishery resource or contribute to the body of information on which management decisions are made. The proposal should demonstrate that products will be accessible and useful in conservation and resource management decision-making.
- **Scientific and Technical Merit** – Project is technically sound and feasible, and the proposal sets forth a clear, logical and achievable work plan and timeline. A clear description of the research methods to be used should be included.

- **Budget** – Proposed budget is reasonable and appropriate to the scope of the work. Expected costs are described in detail as shown in Appendix A.
- **Applicant Qualifications** – Applicant and project team members possess the necessary education, experience, training, facilities, and administrative resources to accomplish the project.
- **Stakeholder Involvement** – Inclusion of stakeholders (e.g. commercial and recreational fishermen, industry, NGOs, and other affected individuals and groups) is strongly encouraged. If applicable, proposals should describe which stakeholders will be involved and what their roles will be.
- **Matching funds.** Special consideration will be given to projects that involve additional outside funding and/or in-kind contributions.

Successful applicants will receive award notification in late March, 2016.

### **Submission of Proposals**

**Deadline:** Proposals must be received by February 12, 2016, 6:00 pm eastern standard time.

**Submission:** Proposals should be submitted in electronic format (Adobe PDF format preferred; MS Word accepted) to Andrew Loftus, ASMFC/MAFMC Collaborative Research Funding Coordinator, via email [aloftus@andrewloftus.com](mailto:aloftus@andrewloftus.com).

**Format:** Proposals must be in the following format. Supplemental materials not fitting into these sections should be included as appendices.

Layout: single spaced, 12 point font minimum, 1” margins.

1. Cover Page-1 page
  - Applicant legal name (organization/institution/agency)
  - Applicant Federal Employment Identification Number (FEIN)
  - Applicant contact (for matters related to the administration of the proposal/award)
  - Address
  - Email
  - Phone
  - Applicant type (nonprofit, education institution, government, private)
  - Principal Investigators (if different from above), email, and phone.
  - MAFMC Research Area Being Addressed.
  - Proposed Start Date
  - Proposed End Date (no later than December 15, 2017)
  - Amount being requested under this proposal.
2. Executive Summary-2 pages maximum.
  - Research priority area being addressed
  - Brief overview of methods
  - Measurable outcomes

3. Main Proposal-5 pages maximum
  - Introduction/background (max 1 page)
  - Goals/objectives (specific and measurable)
  - Methods
  - Specific results expected
  - Time frame/work plan (include benchmark dates for key progress)
  - Elements of collaboration with the fishing community, industry, and other stakeholders if applicable.
4. Budget – 1 page. Specific Line Items (see appendix A for format)
  - Equipment (items with a life span greater than project time frame)
  - Supplies (items consumed during project)
  - Travel (include brief description of travel in main proposal work plan)
  - Project personnel (including fringe)
  - Administrative personnel (including fringe)
  - Indirect
  - Subcontracts (including payments to vessel operators/vessel leasing)
  - Total amount requested under this proposal
  - Other funds being sought (names and amounts), if applicable
  - Other funds already committed/acquired (names and amounts), if applicable
  - Total project costs
5. Statement of qualifications and staffing plan – 1 page
6. Curriculum Vitae (2 pages max for each project staff)
7. Appendices

**Questions:** Questions should be addressed to Andrew Loftus, ASMFC/MAFMC Collaborative Research Funding Coordinator, [aloftus@andrewloftus.com](mailto:aloftus@andrewloftus.com); (410) 295-5997.

## Appendix A. Example Budget Table

Item	Total Cost	ASMFC/MAFMC Requested	Other Funding
Travel	\$1,500		\$1,500
Administrative Coordinator Salary/fringe to monitor contracts	\$3,000		\$3,000
Principle Investigator Salary/fringe	\$50,000	\$26,000	\$24,000
Research Assistant salary/fringe	\$5,000	\$4,000	\$1,000
<u>Contracted Services</u>			
Vessel Leasing and Operation	\$15,000	\$5,000	\$10,000
Contractual Labor	\$30,000	\$17,000	\$13,000
Design and Permitting	\$1,000		\$1,000
Supplies	\$5,000	\$5,000	
<b>Total Costs</b>	<b>\$110,500</b>	<b>\$57,000</b>	<b>\$53,500</b>