

Deadline for Submission: 11 December 2007

The Northeast Consortium invites full proposals for cooperative research programs that involve partnerships between scientists and commercial fishermen. **Unlike previous years, there will be no planning letter phase prior to the full proposal competition.** Research should address issues in fisheries, fishing gear technologies, and/or coastal ocean processes; and should be focused within the Gulf of Maine and Georges Bank ecosystem. Funding is contingent upon the availability and timely release of funds to the Northeast Consortium from the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) Fisheries.

This request for Proposals includes the background, goals, and objectives of the Northeast Consortium; contact information for Northeast Consortium representatives and staff; and general guidelines for submission of proposals. Please see our website (www.northeastconsortium.org) for additional information, including guidelines, required budget format, and descriptions of previously funded projects.

Program Overview

The Northeast Consortium encourages and funds cooperative research and monitoring projects that create effective, equal partnerships among commercial fishermen, scientists, and others. The geographic focus of the Northeast Consortium is the combined ecosystem of the Gulf of Maine and Georges Bank. Commercial fishermen and commercial fishing vessels from New Hampshire, Maine, and Massachusetts are particularly encouraged to participate in cooperative research using these funds.

The Northeast Consortium consists of four research institutions (University of New Hampshire, University of Maine, Massachusetts Institute of Technology, and Woods Hole Oceanographic Institution) that are working together to foster this initiative. Each institution has designated an individual who serves as a representative to the Consortium. The representatives administer the Northeast Consortium funds, interface with stakeholders, and are responsible for funding decisions. A ~25-member Advisory Committee provides programmatic advice and guidance and makes recommendations regarding the selection of projects to the representatives of the Northeast Consortium.

Funding will be administered by the University of New Hampshire on behalf of the Northeast Consortium. Northeast Consortium funds are distributed via an open competition, which is announced through this RFP. Proposals will be evaluated for the importance of the idea and its relevance to the Northeast Consortium's objectives, as well as the technical approach and likelihood of success. The balance of funding for cooperative research activities will be 25% to science/research organizations and 75% to industry (across all awards); projects and budgets should be designed with this balance in mind.

Goals of the Northeast Consortium

- To develop partnerships between commercial fishermen and scientists, educators, and coastal managers.
- To enable commercial fishermen and commercial fishing vessels to participate in cooperative research and the development of selective gear technologies.
- To help bring fishermen's information, experience, and expertise into the scientific framework needed for fisheries management.
- To equip and utilize commercial fishing vessels as research and monitoring platforms.



Request for Full Proposals

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Proposal Concept

Proposals should explain the central concept and the plan of work in sufficient detail to be understandable to a reader knowledgeable about fisheries research, oceanography, and management. Proposals may originate from the commercial fishing community, fisheries managers, oceanographers, or any other interested person and must identify by name all scientists and commercial fishermen involved. The Northeast Consortium encourages projects that allow and promote broad participation among scientists and fishermen. The Northeast Consortium aims to fund projects that are conducted in a responsible manner, in order to minimize any negative environmental impacts, and be consistent with accepted ethical research practices (e.g., use of animals and human subjects in research).

Prior to receiving funding, proposals will be reviewed by the National Marine Fisheries Service for environmental and regulatory impacts. Projects that involve the care and use of animals may require review by an approved Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee (IACUC). These reviews will influence the timing of funding release.

For more information

Descriptions of cooperative research projects funded previously by the Northeast Consortium are available in the project information database on our website: **www.northeastconsortium.org**

Requests for assistance with proposal preparation, submission, Northeast Consortium documents and program information, should be directed to Program Coordinator Laurinda Sousa Smith by phone (603-862-0136) or email (Laurinda.Smith@unh.edu).

Submission of Proposals

Fifteen (15) copies of each Proposal should be sent to:

Laurinda Sousa Smith, Program Coordinator
Northeast Consortium
Institute for the Study of Earth, Oceans and Space
39 College Road, 142 Morse Hall
University of New Hampshire
Durham, NH 03824
Tel: (603) 862-0136 (main office number)
Fax: (603) 862-0243
email: laurinda.smith@unh.edu

Proposals must be received in the Northeast Consortium office by 5:00 pm on 11 December 2007. Late submissions will not be considered. Submitters should take into account mail delivery time; U.S. Mail to Durham may be significantly delayed. Due to the number of letters submitted, it is NOT possible to accept fax or email submissions.

Proposals must include as key participants both one or more scientists (e.g., faculty or staff members at institutions of higher learning or accredited research facilities, or employees of state or federal programs or agencies) and one or more commercial fishermen. All project participants should be specifically identified by name and position, with complete contact information. The Northeast Consortium encourages projects that allow and foster broad participation among researchers and fishermen.

The distribution of funds is via an open competition administered by the University of New Hampshire on behalf of the Northeast Consortium. Funding decisions and recommendations are made by the Northeast Consortium representatives, based on recommendations from a review panel comprised of Northeast Consortium Advisory Committee members and additional reviewers (as needed for disciplinary breadth), including commercial fishermen; scientists; and representatives of governmental, quasi-governmental and non-governmental agencies and organizations.

Proposals must originate from one and only one organization authorized to receive federal research funding. The proposal must designate a project leader (i.e., principal investigator or P.I.), who will accept responsibility for the performance of the project and the administration of the Northeast Consortium award. The activities and budgets for all key project participants must be included in this proposal. Participants can be identified as sub-contractors, service providers, or other designation.

The Northeast Consortium seeks to fund projects that will be conducted in a responsible manner. Cooperative research projects should be designed to minimize any negative impacts to ecosystems or marine organisms, and to be consistent with accepted ethical research practices, including the use of animals and human subjects in research, and include scrutiny of research protocols by an institutional board of review or other appropriate institutional oversight body.

Specific Guidance for Full Proposal Preparation

Project duration: Projects may span more than one year, however, all projects longer than one year will be subject to annual review before subsequent funding is approved. All funding for second or subsequent years is contingent upon the availability and timely release of funds to the Northeast Consortium from the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) Fisheries

Distribution of funds: Cooperative research projects should be designed to meet the following Northeast Consortium target allocation proportion among partners: 25% to scientists (e.g., universities or research institutions) and 75% fishermen (e.g., fishermen, cooperatives, industry organizations). Funds designated for fishermen may include participants' salary and wages, vessel use, travel, equipment, and supplies. Designation of other project participants (including project coordinators, financial agents, etc) as either "science" or "industry" should be carefully justified in the proposal.

Costs for fishing vessel use: Budgeted costs for the use of fishing vessels should be based on actual costs and can include: captain and crew salaries and wages, fuel, vessel depreciation, insurance, permits, and other documented costs. Daily rates above \$2,500 are viewed as exceptional and require detailed documentation. [If desired, documents can be submitted separately from the proposal and proposers can request confidential use solely by Northeast Consortium staff.] Vessel time can be calculated to include preparation, loading, and unloading, and transit to work areas. If possible, participating fishermen should be paid using monitored fixed-price agreements, i.e., based upon a standard or fixed cost per trip or other event. Such arrangements can be made after approval for funding.



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Disposition of catch: Any project for which research will be conducted while fishing, using DAS, and/or intending to land and sell the fish should justify the reasons for this approach in terms of the project goals. When fish are caught during research efforts, the Northeast Consortium encourages the participants to sell the fish. Northeast Consortium policy requires 75% of the proceeds of sale to be returned to the Consortium for subsequent re-distribution through competitive award. 25% of proceeds may be used to provide additional support to the research program. Such proceeds must be used to support cooperative research activities, consistent with agreements made when the project is approved for funding.

Permits: The project leader is responsible for obtaining all appropriate, proper, and necessary permits for the proposed activities. If required, experimental fishing permits (EFPs) must be obtained from NOAA Fisheries prior to beginning field work. If desired Northeast Consortium staff will attempt to assist project leaders in expediting review of projects and obtaining permits, and (upon request) will send copies of approved project proposals directly to NOAA Fisheries. All projects must pass NEPA review before research activities may begin. NEPA review and permit application processes may cause delay in start date of approved projects. This is out of control of the Consortium and P.I's should plan accordingly.

Permanent equipment: Items costing more than \$5,000 are considered to be permanent equipment by the Northeast Consortium. Equipment may be designated to either science or industry in the proposed budget. All equipment will remain in the possession of the designated project participant for the duration of the project, and thereafter, subject to approval, for as long as it is being used for cooperative research. The Northeast Consortium may request reassignment of any equipment that is not being used for cooperative research activities at any time.

Travel: All proposals should include costs of travel for all project participants to the annual Northeast Consortium meeting (Portsmouth, NH). International travel should be carefully and specifically justified in terms of the project goals.

Budget forms: Use of standard budget form is now required. The required form is posted on <http://www.NortheastConsortium.org>. **No substitute budget forms will be accepted.**

Proposal Format Requirements

Proposals must conform to content, format, and length guidelines provided here. All proposals must contain the following sections and elements. There is a strict 15 single-spaced page limit on proposals (sections 2 - 7 below), excluding cover page, literature cited, budget and budget justification, resumes, prior results, and current/pending support. Letters of support will not be considered. Proposals must use 1 inch margins and 12 point font. Fifteen (15) copies of the proposal are required to allow for distribution to reviewers. Copies of the proposals cannot be returned to the proposers.

Cover page: Using the form provided posted on www.northeastconsortium.org, provide names and complete contact information for key participants, name and address of the lead institution, project title, abstract, and yearly and total budget request. The abstract should be a concise summary of the project (no more than 500 words), and should highlight the project goal(s), approach, expected results, and significance. **Please note that the project leader's signature is now required on the cover sheet, indicating the prior agreement to participate of all parties named as participants on the proposal.**

Rationale: Describe the justification or need for the proposed work in terms of the goals of the Northeast Consortium. Refer to the proposal evaluation criteria (below) and explain why this project is important for oceanographic or fisheries management or research, how it will enhance partnership opportunities among scientists and fishermen, etc. Identify any anticipated linkages between this project and other cooperative research efforts, including those funded by other sources.

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Current and pending support: Provide a list of ongoing or proposed research projects (not just cooperative research) in which key participants are involved. For each project, indicate: funding agency or program, title of project, key participants, period of performance, amount of award, and time requested for key personnel.

Evaluation Criteria

Funding decisions for cooperative research projects will be based upon evaluation of proposals according to the following criteria:

- **Importance of the proposed idea for oceanographic and fisheries research and management.** The reviewers will consider whether the project is important to our understanding of oceans and fisheries and/or to our ocean, coastal or fisheries management practices. The proposal should address clear need(s) and important research question(s), and the project should produce results that have a real impact.
- **Technical merit of the proposal and the project as proposed.** Reviewers will consider the feasibility of the project and the likelihood of it being successfully implemented as proposed. The proposal should contain a detailed and understandable experimental design that is appropriate for answering the question(s) posed in the project. The plan of work should be feasible, given the time, effort, personnel and budget, and likely to be successfully completed as proposed. The research should be conducted in a responsible manner that will not do unnecessary harm to ecosystems or marine organisms, or otherwise violate accepted ethical research practices (e.g., use of animals and human subjects in research, institutional review board's review of research protocol, if applicable).
- **Opportunities for partnership between commercial fishermen and researchers.** Reviewers will analyze the quality and extent of the fishermen-researcher partnership(s). Reviewers will consider the extent to which a research topic is of mutual interest to fishermen and scientists, and whether members of both communities are key participants throughout the course of the project, from project design to data collection and analysis to practical application of the results or products. Reviewers will assess whether the proposal allows and fosters broad participation among scientists and fishermen.
- **Impact of the proposed work on an end-user community.** Reviewers will consider the beneficial impacts of the project for fishermen, researchers, and/or fisheries, coastal, or ocean managers. Proposals should clearly identify the deliverables and the end-users. End-users may be included as participants in the project, if appropriate. Reviewers will assess whether the deliverables are useful, reasonable, and valuable, as well as the likelihood of their delivery to the end-users.
- **Experience of the project proposers; available resources for the project.** Reviewers will appraise the experience and expertise of the key project participants, in light of the scientific topic, research methodology, fishing practices, and geographic areas of the proposed study. Reviewers will assess the capacity and availability of the project team, available equipment, and other resources to be used in the project. Reviewers will consider the results and impacts of any previous work, especially any research funded by the Northeast Consortium.
- **Results from prior cooperative research support.** Reviewers will assess the results, deliverable products, and impacts of previously funded projects by the proposers, including: new cooperative partnerships; refined research questions; follow-on funding; peer reviewed publications; other publications for scientific, technical, or general audiences; and/or other impacts.

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Institute for the Study of Earth, Oceans and Space
39 College Road, 142 Morse Hall
University of New Hampshire
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Phone: 603-862-0136

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