



REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

Coastal Ecosystems for People

Submission Deadline: October 3, 2025 at 11

The Lindblad Expeditions-National Geographic (LEX-NG) Fund is supported by travelers aboard National Geographic Explorer to support projects that help us better understand and protect our world's oceans, restore critical marine ecosystems, and protect the regions visited by the fleet, and beyond. The Fund supports inspirational, passionate project leaders who share a deep wonder of our world. In 2025, the LEX-NG Fund will support new projects that focus on our planet's critical ecosystems: help protect coastal areas by lessening the impact of coastal erosion, storms, and flooding; kelp forests that support communities and wildlife; seagrass meadows improve water quality by removing harmful nitrogen; and mangroves that many communities around the world rely for their livelihoods. Protection, management, and restoration of these ecosystems can help maintain carbon-related benefits – blue forests can also act as carbon sinks by capturing and storing carbon, acknowledged as climate solutions, due to their carbon sequestration and climate adaptation potential per hectare as terrestrial forests.

The situation is now critical. Seagrass meadows decline by an estimated 7% annually; 50% of the world's kelp forests have degraded in the same time frame. All of these losses are attributable to climate change. National Geographic Expeditions are in search of exciting, innovative new projects aimed at reversing these trends and shining a light on these ecosystems. This RFP will support projects with a primary discipline of Science; applications for Storytelling and Education are also encouraged.

Opportunity Overview

This competitive call for applications seeks to fund ambitious projects focused on conservation, restoration, and education (e.g., seagrass meadows, kelp forests, or coastal salt marshes). This presents a powerful opportunity for strengthening the expedition journeys. Through the LEX-NG Fund we will support projects that center the needs, interests, and knowledge of the communities being visited, complementing National Geographic-Lindblad's existing work in building unique cultural experiences for our guests. This opportunity will prioritize blue forests in National Geographic-Lindblad Expeditions (NG-LEX) destinations: Arctic, Baja California, United Kingdom and Ireland, the Caribbean, Central American, Galápagos, and the Pacific. (for more information, please review the **Regions of Interest document**). Proposals for projects that focus on the fleet are also encouraged.

Who Should Apply

proposed project, your experience and passion, there are no minimum academic or experiential requirements – we only expect that you are passionate and knowledgeable about your project's subject matter (which should be related to blue forests). Applicants are encouraged to design projects to be implemented in communities where they already have existing connections or a track record of work. If the applicant does not have existing connections or a track record of work in the proposed location(s), they are strongly encouraged to include local collaborators.



Eligibility

- Project must primarily focus on conservation, restoration, or research related to blue forests (such as marshes).
- Project must have a primary discipline of Science, and a primary focus area of Ocean; applications for
- Projects focused on blue forests in locations that overlap with NG-LEX voyages (please review the [Re](#) preferred, but not required.
- Candidate must be willing to provide project information that can be shared with travelers aboard N
- Candidate must be over the age of 18.
- The individual responsible for carrying out the project should be listed as the project leader.
- Most projects will be awarded as Level I grants. Level I (LI) project budgets may not exceed US\$20,000 (the expected average budget for a LII project under this opportunity is US\$50,000 to US\$75,000).
 - Level I: If you are working to establish yourself in your field, hope to gain experience leading projects in your community, and have not yet received a grant from the National Geographic Society, you may apply. This is for individuals who may be earlier in their career.
 - Level II: If you are more established in your field, have previously received a grant from the National Geographic Society, you may apply for a Level II Grant. You are not required to have previously received a grant from the National Geographic Society.
- Projects awarded at Level I must be completed within one (1) year of receipt of funding. Projects awarded at Level II may receive extensions. Extensions may be granted due to extenuating circumstances, on a case by case basis.
- Applicants are encouraged to design projects to be implemented in communities where they already have existing connections or a track record of work. If the applicant does not have existing connections or a track record of work in the proposed location(s), they are strongly encouraged to include local collaborators.
- Application and all required reporting must be completed in English.
- Application materials must be complete enough to be able to assess candidate's skills and experience.
- Strong applications will include an achievable goal, as well as meaningful collaboration with local stakeholders.



Benefits

- Up to \$20,000 in funding for Level I grants, up to \$100,000 in funding for Level II grants. See [here](#) for
- Membership in the Explorer Community and eligibility for a variety of future funding, learning and n
- Potential opportunities to be featured on LEX social media channels, and/or in the LEX-NG Fund Ann Report can be found [here](#)).
- Potential guest speaking opportunities aboard NG-LEX vessels.

Webinars

National Geographic Society will host a one-hour informational webinar dedicated to the Coastal Ecosy 9am to 10am EDT. During this webinar, we will share information about the RFP and answer questions fr

We will also host additional office hours on September 8 from 11am to 12pm EDT, and Monday, Septemb will sign up for ten minute one-on-one blocks).

If you are interested in joining the webinar or the office hours, please complete [this form](#) and we will ser

Applications

Candidates must submit an application through the National Geographic Society website. The RFP op EDT (October 4 at 3:59 AM UTC). We expect to announce awards in December 2025. For more detailed strong applications, consult our [Frequently Asked Questions](#) document. If you have questions that are at funding@ngs.org with "Coastal Ecosystems RFP" in the subject line.

Please note: this form requires you to log into or create a National Geographic Society account.

APPLY NOW

Photo credits: Brian Timmer, Michael Eko

impact



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