



**Ecosystem Health and Sustainable
Fish Populations**
**Social, Economic, and Technology Research to
Inform Policy and Practice**
Request for Preliminary Proposals
2019 Application Guidance

APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS

The Great Lakes Fishery Trust (GLFT) invites preliminary proposals for Great Lakes fisheries projects under its **Ecosystem Health and Sustainable Fish Populations** focus area. This RFP process will be used for the disbursement of up to \$1 million in grants in 2019 in two grant categories: (1) Ecological and Biological Fisheries Research to Inform Management, and (2) Social, Economic, and Technology Research to Inform Policy and Practice.

While the GLFT's core historical investments in research and information have emphasized ecological and biological fisheries research targeted to fishery management agencies, fishery issues also have social and economic components and operate in social and economic contexts. This is particularly apparent with regard to invasive species, which continue to alter the Great Lakes ecosystem profoundly.

This RFP provides submission requirements and application materials for Social, Economic, and Technology Research to Inform Policy and Practice preliminary proposals only. A separate RFP is available at www.glft.org that provides application instructions for Ecological and Biological Research to Inform Management preliminary proposals. If you would like more information about which grant category best fits a proposed project, you may contact GLFT staff at (517) 371-7468 or jbeard@glft.org.

This application guide provides background on this funding category and will assist you with the funding criteria and preliminary proposal requirements. The forms and instructions necessary to guide you through the application process are provided below.

Applications must be submitted through the GLFT's Web-based grant management system.

The Web-based application system will prompt you with the mandatory questions, file uploads, and instructions to guide you through the application process.

To begin, visit the [Apply Now](https://www.gfft.org/grants/apply-now) page on our website (<https://www.gfft.org/grants/apply-now>) where you will find Application Guidance Documents and other useful information to help you complete an application.

Grant opportunities for which the GLFT is currently accepting applications can be viewed by clicking the [Browse Our Active Grant Opportunities button](#), which will take you to a page with online applications. Click on the title of the grant opportunity in which you are interested and follow the instructions to apply.

You will be required to create a user account to submit an application. You will be asked for an e-mail address and password. If you do not have a user account in our system, click on Create an Account and follow the instructions provided. You may then proceed to the grant application.

If you already have an account but do not know your password, click on Forgot Your Password and instructions for changing your password will be sent to your e-mail address.

The GLFT's recent enhancements to our website include more robust access to information. If you have previously submitted a grant application to the GLFT, you may already have a user account based on your e-mail address. If you are unable to sign up for an account using your e-mail address, you may already have an account. If you experience this problem, you may reset your password by clicking the Forgot Your Password link. If you need assistance to set up your account, please contact GLFT staff.

When completing the online application:

- Remember to save your work often
- When uploading a document, click Save to complete the file transfer
- You may leave your work and return at a later time to complete the application
- To return to an online application you have already begun click on the Dashboard button which will appear in the upper right corner of the page after you log in (the Dashboard page will provide access to your applications and/or active projects)
- Make sure your answers to each question are within the text field limits
- Check each field before it is submitted
- Be sure to answer all of the required questions
- The system will not allow an application to be submitted if a *required* question is not answered
- No changes can be made to the application once it is submitted (if an error was made, contact the GLFT staff)

Applicants are encouraged to log in to the site and review the application well in advance of the submission deadline.

SUBMISSION AND AWARD DATES

Applications are due by **Friday, January 11, 2019**, at 5:00 PM EST. Late preliminary proposals will not be accepted.

The GLFT's Scientific Advisory Team (SAT) will review the preliminary proposals and invite a subset of applicants to submit full proposals for funding consideration based upon the criteria identified herein.

APPLICANT ELIGIBILITY

Proposals are encouraged from educational, governmental, tribal, and nonprofit institutions with a 501(c)(3) designation from the IRS. Canadian public and nonprofit organizations also may be eligible, but should contact GLFT staff prior to submitting a preliminary proposal.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

The GLFT will accept questions about our submission and review process as well as our funding priorities via e-mail to jbeard@glft.org. Questions received by January 4, 2019, will be posted to our website with a response so all prospective applicants may benefit from the inquiry and response.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

This grant announcement, further information on the GLFT, descriptions of projects previously funded by the GLFT, and information regarding funding opportunities for other Great Lakes fishery-related projects can be found on the GLFT website at www.glft.org.

MISSION AND GOALS OF THE GLFT'S INVESTMENTS IN FISHERIES RESEARCH

The mission of the GLFT is to provide funding to enhance, protect, and rehabilitate Great Lakes fishery resources to compensate for lost use and enjoyment caused by the operation of the Ludington Pumped Storage Plant. The GLFT pursues these goals through investments in three broad categories: access to the Great Lakes fishery, Great Lakes stewardship, and ecosystem health and sustainable fish populations.

Fisheries research is one element of the GLFT's healthy ecosystems and sustainable fish populations funding stream. The broad goals of these investments are to:

- Create a more resilient and stable fish community
- Increase the sustainable value of the fishery to stakeholders
- Preserve self-sustaining fish populations

Specifically, the key intended outcomes for fisheries research investments are to:

- Enhance the ability of managers/agencies to respond to changes in the fishery and ecosystem
- Build research capacity and management expertise needed to understand and manage the Great Lakes ecosystem for sustainable production of valuable species
- Reduce the cost of fishery management in relation to benefits provided

RESEARCH THEMES

The GLFT pursues its fisheries research efforts through competitive grantmaking within established thematic areas.

Aquatic Invasive Species

The GLFT's **primary interests** in this category are in innovative research, development, or analysis leading to prevention of the introduction of invasive species in the Great Lakes, or the control or suppression of established species. Supported projects may include:

- Research, development, and evaluation of innovative new technologies to curtail new introductions through established vectors (e.g., ballast water), or to control established invasive species
- Explorations of strategies to encourage compliance with, and effective implementation of, those prevention and suppression strategies with a compliance element
- Workshops, conferences, data-sharing efforts, and other relevant capacity-building activities related to the theme

The GLFT does not fund primary eradication of invasive plant species such as phragmites.

Aquatic Connectivity Decision Support Tools

The GLFT's **primary interests** in this category are in the development of desktop decision support tools, or supporting modules, that enable managers and regulatory agencies to evaluate potential social-cultural, biological, and ecological trade-offs of barrier removal projects (dams and road-stream crossings) within and among watersheds.

In 2014, the GLFT convened an aquatic connectivity workshop to identify the types of decision support tools that resource managers and agency regulators would find useful. The workshop identified research needs and information gaps as well as ways to enhance existing tools to support more effective decision making which are summarized in the [*Developing Decision-Support Tools to Enhance Aquatic Connectivity in the Great Lakes Basin: Results of a Workshop Sponsored by the Great Lakes Fishery Trust*](#) proceedings document.

In 2019, the GLFT is soliciting proposals that support the following priorities identified through the workshop:

- Development of a desktop barrier removal decision-support tool or supporting modules to enable managers and regulatory agencies to evaluate potential social-cultural, biological, and ecological trade-offs of removal projects within and among watersheds. Competitive proposals will build off existing platforms of information such as (but not limited to) the Great Lakes Aquatic Habitat Framework, Fishwerks, and the Great Lakes Fishery Commission Barrier Removal Collaboration Suite. Proposals should not duplicate previously funded projects.
 - Supporting modules include but are not limited to:
 - Development of an economic benefits framework and/or module that evaluates connectivity projects from multiple perspectives (such as property values, recreation/tourism, ecosystem system services and others).
- An economic assessment comparing the lifespan and cost of properly and improperly placed road-stream crossing structures that would inform placement of design alternatives.

Socioeconomics of the Fishery

The GLFT's **primary interests** in this category are in efforts that:

- Document the economic (such as tourism, commercial fishing, etc.), environmental, and/or social/recreational/subsistence value offered by various elements of the fishery
- Explore social and economic factors that affect capacity to respond to aquatic invasive species (e.g., social/policy research on current shipping practices or regulations)
- Examine the costs of aquatic invasive species

Particular priority will be placed on efforts that focus on current issues, values, and challenges and are germane to audiences including policymakers, environmental and conservation groups, and commercial interests.

Management of invasive species is a priority for public agencies at the federal, state, and local levels, as well as private and nonprofit organizations throughout the Great Lakes region. The GLFT places particular value on invasive species efforts that consider, and engage thoughtfully with, the existing and emerging plans and goals of the several Great Lakes states, federal agencies involved in Great Lakes fisheries, local and regional authorities, and/or environmental collaboratives and partnerships.

Dissemination of information generated through GLFT investment in social, economic, and technology efforts is critical to these undertakings and will be proactively managed and supported by the GLFT to ensure intended audiences are connected to relevant information.

The GLFT believes in the importance of sharing project information in forms that are accessible, understandable, and digestible by key audiences.

KEY OUTCOMES

The key intended outcomes for the GLFT's investments in social, economic, and technology research are to:

- Build awareness and understanding of the impacts and costs of invasive species
- Leverage new resources to combat invasive species and support the fishery
- Build knowledge and capacity for the suppression of existing invasive species and prevention of new introductions
- Understand the social, economic, and recreational values provided by the fishery

The GLFT believes strongly in the importance of scientific merit when selecting projects for funding. Social and economic research efforts that fail to employ rigorous, valid, and reliable methodology, or to build on existing knowledge, will not be supported, regardless of the quality of fit between the proposed research and Great Lakes information needs.

The next sections will assist you with the preliminary proposal requirements and funding criteria.



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Inform Policy and Practice**
Preliminary Proposal Requirements

The online application will prompt you to provide the following information:

Basic Information

Project title.

Applicant eligibility: Does your organization have a nonprofit status with a 501(c)(3) designation from the IRS (or is a nongovernmental organization that holds charitable status in your country), or is considered to be an educational or governmental (including tribal) organization? (Y/N)

Organization: Some individuals who submit proposals to the GLFT have affiliations with multiple entities. You will be asked to select the organization the grant would be awarded to. If the organization you are submitting a proposal under is not listed, you may add the organization online or contact GLFT staff for assistance. All applications should be submitted by the organization that would receive funding from the GLFT.

Applicant Information and History

Principal investigator (PI) contact information.

Co-investigator(s): If the project includes co-investigators, provide the name, organization, and department for each co-investigator.

Has the PI or co-PI applied to the GLFT before? (Y/N)

Has the PI or co-PI previously received a grant award from the GLFT? (Y/N)

Prior GLFT funded projects summary: If the PI or co-PI has previously received a GLFT grant, provide a brief summary (including the GLFT grant number and title) of the work and identify any publications that resulted from the project(s). (Limit your response to 200 words.)

Active research commitments. List all active research commitments (project title and funder) of the PI and the approximate time commitments to each.

Is this proposal, or a similar proposal, currently under consideration by any other funders? (Y/N)

If so, please identify all entities that are concurrently reviewing the proposal.

Grant Request

Requested amount

Match amount

Project start date

Project end date

Has your organization proposed this project to the GLFT in the past? (Y/N)

Proposal

Project Summary

Briefly explain what the project proposes to accomplish using terminology that would be appropriate to include on the GLFT website to communicate project goals to a general audience. (Limit your response to 75 words.)

GLFT thematic area: Indicate the GLFT thematic area(s) the proposed project would support. The areas are: aquatic invasive species, and socioeconomics of the fishery.

Project Description

1. **Problem Statement.** Explain in quantitative and qualitative terms the importance of the problem relative to Great Lakes fisheries. Describe the problem impacting Great Lakes fisheries **AND** the ability of fisheries managers to resolve it. The problem statement (or needs assessment) is a key element of a proposal. An applicant may include data that support the problem statement. The information provided should be both factual and directly related to the problem addressed by the proposal. (Limit your response to 300 words.)
2. **Project Goal.** Describe the basis for the proposed work and assumptions that will be tested. Please provide documentation of a clear consensus that such efforts are essential to address a critical issue facing fishery managers. For capacity-building projects (e.g., workshops, shared databases, white papers) describe the intended goal of the project. (Limit your response to 300 words.)
3. **Methods and/or Activities.** Describe the activities that will take place in order to achieve project objectives. If relevant, identify any pilot work necessary to substantiate the proposed methodology, describe specific methods that have been successfully applied to other projects, and/or describe alternative research

approaches that were considered and explain why they were rejected. (Limit your response to 300 words.)

4. ***Geographic Focus Area.*** Explain the geographic impact area of the project. All GLFT-funded projects must have benefits directed primarily to the Great Lakes. Projects outside of the Lake Michigan basin are considered if their results and outcomes are transferable to Lake Michigan. Refer to the website for more detail about the Lake Michigan priority. (Limit your response to 100 words.)
5. ***Potential Management Benefits and Outcomes of Proposed Project.*** Describe the impact of your project and its ability to advance management goals of the Great Lakes fishery (e.g., how will fisheries managers, policy makers, and others use information developed by the project, and to what end?). (Limit your response to 200 words.)
6. ***Relationship of the Project to Ongoing Activities.*** Provide information demonstrating that the proposed project will not duplicate existing research activities in the region. Describe how the project may complement existing research efforts. If the project is closely tied to ongoing work, explain how coordination will occur. (Limit your response to 200 words.)
7. ***Prior Experience.*** Provide information that demonstrates your ability to successfully manage grants or projects of similar size and complexity. Identify key members of the project team by name and title. Do not submit curriculum vitae at this time. (Limit your response to 75 words.)

Communications

8. ***Target Audience.*** Describe the resource managers, policymakers, or other stakeholders at the local, state, tribal, and federal levels who will find the outcome of this research most beneficial. (Limit your response to 100 words.)
9. ***Usefulness of Results.*** How will the resource manager, policymakers, and or other stakeholders listed above, be able to use this research to solve problems dealing with the fishery? (Limit your response to 100 words.)
10. ***Distribution of Findings.*** The GLFT is committed to effectively communicating research to resource managers, and has created a set of communication priorities to that end. Those priorities include research dissemination through the following media: academic journals, conferences/workshops, webinars, and email distribution. Please list the specific medium(s) (e.g., ABC Email Listserv, XYZ Conference, etc.) through which the research results will be disseminated. Note: The GLFT will require all funded researchers to seek a presentation before a relevant committee of the Great Lakes Fishery Commission. For those projects that are designed to synthesize and disseminate information from existing research, explain how your project will aid resource managers. (Limit your response to 150 words.)

Project Budget

Enter the following information on the online application form when prompted.

Budget Narrative

Preliminary proposals must provide a budget highlighting category line items listed below and identify other monies that will be raised to support the proposed work. Definitions on the budget categories can be found at www.gfft.org on the Resources page. For the preliminary proposal, provide the cumulative budget information with the amount requested from the GLFT. The expense categories listed below may not be changed. **Note:** According to the GLFT overhead policy for all projects, administrative/overhead costs are limited to 10 percent of the total salaries and wages.

- Salaries
- Fringe benefits
- Materials/supplies
- Other direct expenses
- Contracted services
- Indirect costs (administrative/overhead)
- Amount requested from GLFT
- Matching funds
- Total project cost

Briefly explain how the figures in each budget category were estimated and justify the need for the costs. Projects with financial support from other sources are encouraged. Although matching funds are not required, proposals that include funding from other sources will be favored. If matching funds or in-kind contributions are involved, please: a) Identify the sources and amounts of these and explain for each whether these have been requested, pledged, or secured; b) explain whether the GLFT funds are to be used as a match requirement, and, if so, what percentage of GLFT funds would be used to complete specific items (e.g., 30 percent of needed funds for a task would be from the GLFT, 70 percent from other sources); and c) address contingency plans if pending funding is not realized. (Limit your response to 300 words.)

Review Process

The Scientific Advisory Team, consisting of 12 members representing parties to the Settlement Agreement that established the GLFT (and other fisheries scientists designated under the agreement), will review the preliminary proposals based upon the GLFT's Funding Criteria (see next section) on Tuesday, February 12, 2019. Invited full proposals will be due on Monday, April 15, 2019. Full proposals will be subjected to external peer review and be evaluated by the SAT. The SAT will then make funding recommendations to the Board of Trustees. Grants are targeted for award in August 2019.

Additional Questions

If you have further questions about the funding process, please contact Jonathon Beard, grant manager, at (517) 371-7468.



Funding Criteria

PROJECT SIZE

There are no cost or time limitations on grant requests; however, projects will be evaluated on the cost versus the expected benefits as well as upon the reasonableness of the time requested to complete the project.

WHO CAN APPLY?

Proposals are encouraged from educational, governmental, tribal, and nonprofit institutions with a 501(c)(3) designation from the IRS. Canadian public and nonprofit organizations also may be eligible, but should contact GLFT staff prior to submitting a proposal.

EVALUATION OF PRELIMINARY PROPOSALS

Preliminary proposals will be evaluated on the degree to which they meet the following eight criteria:

- **Project applicants must be a public entity, nonprofit organization, or private educational institution**
Organizations receiving funds and managing a project must demonstrate evidence of current 501(c)(3) tax status with the IRS.
- **Projects must not duplicate ongoing activities in the region or activities funded by alternative sources**
Projects must represent new efforts not currently under way in the Great Lakes region.
- **Projects must target RFP priorities and have measurable outcomes**
Project proposals must address research priorities outlined in the request for proposals and contain measurable objectives and processes for measuring success.

- **Projects must have direct fisheries management implications**

The GLFT funds basic research only when there is a clear consensus that such efforts are essential to address a critical issue facing fishery managers.

- **Projects must have scientific merit**

The GLFT believes strongly in the importance of scientific merit, as determined through an external peer review process and by an independent peer-review panel, when selecting projects for funding.

- **Projects must have benefits directed primarily to the Great Lakes**

Projects must provide benefits to the Great Lakes fishery. Projects with benefits (e.g., findings, protocols, new capacity) directed primarily to the Lake Michigan fishery are of higher priority than projects without significant benefit to the Lake Michigan fishery.

- **Project applicants must have demonstrated an ability to undertake such projects**

Project applicants must be able to demonstrate prior experience in successfully managing similar grants or projects.

- **Projects must be feasible and cost-effective**

Costs should be aligned with potential benefits, and the proposed project timeline realistic given the scope of proposed work.

In addition, preliminary proposals that exhibit the following four attributes will be reviewed more favorably than those lacking these qualities:

- **Highly visible results**

Dissemination of results to resource managers and other appropriate forums or groups should be incorporated into the project proposal. At a minimum, successful applicants will be required to seek the opportunity to present their findings to a relevant audience connected to the Great Lakes Fishery Commission. An additional and broader vision for dissemination of results is encouraged.

- **Management support**

Projects should have demonstrated support from representatives of the management community, and/or be responsive to published priorities of management agencies. Expressions of broader support (e.g., from organizations interested in Great Lakes fisheries, from the scientific community) are pertinent as well.

- **Collaborative approach**

Efforts that involve collaboration between and among researchers and management agencies are preferred.

- **Facilitation of future uses of GLFT funds**

Projects should provide information or results that will help guide future research activities of the GLFT.