



POLICY ON GREAT LAKES STEWARDSHIP PROPOSALS

Program Goals and Eligible Activities for Funding

The goal of the Great Lakes Fishery Trust's (GLFT) Great Lakes Stewardship grant category is to increase awareness and understanding of the ecology of the Great Lakes so residents can be advocates for strategies that support long-term sustainability of the Great Lakes fisheries and become stewards of the Great Lakes. We are particularly interested in efforts that work to achieve the following outcomes:

- **Increase people's understanding of the environment at the ecosystem or watershed level and promote taking action based on such understanding**

Stewardship involves both knowledge and action. Applicants that propose to focus on one to the exclusion of the other must describe a plan to collaborate with others to ensure the goal of developing environmental stewards is addressed and achieved. The GLFT prioritizes efforts that use evidence-based practices and strategies to foster changes in behaviors that affect the Great Lakes and its ecosystems.

- **Promote environmental stewardship through direct experiences with natural resources**

Direct experiences with natural resources can be powerful motivators to action and are an effective way to engage people in learning. The GLFT prioritizes efforts that incorporate outdoor experiences.

The GLFT will pursue this goal and these outcomes through investments in:

1. **Place-based stewardship education (PBSE):** PBSE is a method of teaching and learning that extends the walls of the classroom into the local community and landscape through experiential, hands-on learning for studying natural, built, and social environments.
2. **Fishing education:** Fishing education opportunities include angling activities with stewardship components to increase participation in fishing while also encouraging participants to think and engage beyond angling to broader environmental and stewardship considerations.

3. **Youth leadership programs (including camps):** Youth leadership programs focus on evidence-based practices to grow ecological consciousness in youth through teaching about the natural world and encouraging participants to be young leaders, longtime conservationists, and Great Lakes stewards.

This document provides guidance for prospective applicants seeking grants in this category.

Funding Criteria

- **There must be a clear connection between the specific goals of the project and the overall goal of this grant category.**

Projects must focus on educating Michigan residents about the Great Lakes in a way that causes them to actively protect the Great Lakes ecosystem.

- **The trust prefers to invest in efforts that engage underserved communities and/or marginalized groups.**

Projects and approaches that engage and/or provide direct access to natural resources for underserved communities and/or marginalized groups in Michigan are encouraged.

- **Priority will be given to projects that have stewardship benefits primarily directed to the Lake Michigan basin of the Great Lakes.**

Projects must provide clear and lasting benefit to the Great Lakes and their users. Priority will be given to projects focusing on Lake Michigan and its stewardship by Michigan residents. Some projects may involve residents of other Great Lakes states in addition to those living in Michigan. For those projects that involve residents of other Great Lakes states in addition to Michigan, the applicant must explain how the proposed effort will enhance stewardship throughout the Great Lakes basin, particularly Lake Michigan.

- **Projects must involve sufficient support and collaboration of individuals and/or organizations and complement/enhance (but not duplicate) existing stewardship efforts in the Great Lakes basin.**

Projects must not duplicate ongoing activities in the region or activities funded by alternative sources. Instead, projects should build upon or otherwise advance existing work and demonstrate support and engagement of key entities involved (e.g., the scientific community, organizations interested in the Great Lakes or its fisheries, and/or organizations focused on education). Projects should also strengthen and broaden partnerships among people or organizations.

Applicants must describe how project efforts are both linked to and supported by the work of other organizations in the community or region, and how the proposed work will be sustained beyond the life of the grant.

If a project is conducted in an area served by a Great Lakes Stewardship Initiative (GLSI) regional hub, priority will be given to projects that document a connection to that hub. For a list of GLSI hubs, see <http://greatlakesstewardship.org/how-we-work/>.

- **Education projects targeting youth or teachers must align with, or contribute to, the current state educational standards, even if the proposed efforts are not seated in formal education.**

Efforts focusing on preK–12 students must be aligned to, and cognizant of, Michigan’s educational priorities and processes, including content standards and standards for teacher professional development. Applicants that propose to engage preK–12 students during the school year through a link to a formal preK–12 program or informal education must describe how their work aligns with and supports the applicable Michigan academic standards.¹

Applicants that propose to work with preK–12 teachers must describe how their efforts align with and support the *Michigan’s Professional Learning Policy: Standards for Professional Learning*.²

- **Project results must be effectively communicated.**

Plans for effectively disseminating the results of the project to key/target audiences must be incorporated into the project proposal. The messages and communication channels used in the project must be appropriate to the needs of the target audience(s).

- **Proposals must have an integrated plan to evaluate their efforts.**

The evaluation should be clearly linked to the project’s goals and should focus on outcomes and impacts, not just the number of participants. Evaluation should also provide information or insights that will help guide future grant activities of the Great Lakes Fishery Trust. Successful evaluation often represents at least 10 percent of the direct costs of the budget.

- **Proposals must include a sustainability plan.**

Except for work that is of an obvious, one-time nature, applicants should present a clear plan for sustaining the effort beyond the GLFT grant’s ending date.

- **Projects must have large benefits relative to the GLFT investment requested.**

Benefits can be measured in various ways (e.g., number of participants who are meaningfully involved or the impact on the resource) depending upon the nature of the proposed work.

1. The Michigan academic standards for various subjects are available at the Michigan Department of Education’s website: <https://www.michigan.gov/mde/0,4615,7-140-28753---,00.html>

2. *Michigan’s Professional Learning Policy: Standards for Professional Learning*—https://www.michigan.gov/documents/mde/PL_Standards_2012_pdf_11_7_12_470728_7.pdf

- **Applicants must have the capacity to administer and complete the proposed project.**

Applicants must demonstrate experience in successfully managing grants and executing projects of a scope and depth comparable to those of the proposed project.

- **The trust prefers to invest in efforts that rely on established infrastructure and/or processes and have the support of other funders.**

The trust has less interest in projects proposing to develop new resources, materials, organizations, or systems, particularly where such developments will require future maintenance and support and long-term funding has not been identified. However, new approaches for addressing new or persistent issues are encouraged.

Ineligible Project Activities

The GLFT will **not** provide funding for the following activities:

- Projects that do not meet all of the funding criteria listed above
- Development of new or modification of existing Great Lakes curricula, unless a strong case can be made for the need for said curricula
- Projects that do not align with the trust’s investment priorities of PBSE in communities and preK–12, fishing education, and youth leadership programs (including camps)

Applicant Eligibility

Project applicants must be a public entity, nonprofit organization, or private educational institution. Nonprofit organizations receiving funds and managing a project must demonstrate evidence of current 501(c)(3) tax status with the Internal Revenue Service.

Approved by the GLFT Board of Trustees on March 8, 2022.