



**Request for Proposal (RFP):
Catalyzing Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion to
Support Oyster Aquaculture and Restoration**

Issue Date: September 13, 2024

**Responses to Questions for
Catalyzing Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion to Support Oyster
Aquaculture and Restoration**

RFP No.: 2024-USCon-01

RFP Title: Catalyzing Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion to Support Oyster Aquaculture and Restoration

Point of Contact (POC): Chip Heil (cheil@pewtrusts.org)

Thank you for your interest in our request for proposals. Below are compiled answers to all questions received. Where questions were similar, they were combined, and we also made edits to language for purposes of brevity and clarity. Please reach out to cheil@pewtrusts.org should you need anything else.

1. For the U.S. West Coast, can this program be used to support those working with either native (Olympias) and/or non-native/naturalized (Pacific Oysters) shellfish species?

Yes, the Catalyzing Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion to Support Oyster Aquaculture and Restoration Request for Proposals (hereafter RFP) is accepting proposals for funding that involve just Pacific oysters, just Olympia oysters, or both Olympia oysters and Pacific oysters.

2. Is this RFP for projects that involve only oysters or all shellfish?

The RFP is accepting proposals for funding that involve all shellfish aquaculture species in the U.S.

3. Is there any preference for proposals targeting specific coastal regions of the U.S., such as the Gulf Coast, Pacific Northwest, or the Chesapeake Bay, where shellfish aquaculture is particularly prevalent?

No, there is no geographic preference. The RFP is open to Respondents in the U.S. as well as in U.S. Territories and Tribal Nations.

4. Are there any specific U.S. legal or regulatory compliance requirements that we need to be aware of, particularly when working with Indigenous communities or handling data related to DEI? Indigenous Cultural and Intellectual Property (ICIP)?

Pew is not to use ICIP for any purpose other than in accordance with the free, prior, and informed consent provided by the relevant ICIP Rights Holders and to attribute the ICIP Rights Holders in any permitted use of ICIP in a manner approved by the ICIP Rights Holders, unless otherwise advised by the ICIP Rights Holders. For any ICIP which is or may be incorporated in the Work Product, the selected Respondent(s) will be held to the same standard. Please see Appendix G in the RFP for further details.

5. Are non-U.S. organizations eligible to respond to the RFP if they partner with U.S.-based industry members or organizations?

Yes, non-U.S. organization are eligible to respond to the RFP if they partner with U.S.-based industry members or a U.S.-based aligned organization with a clear U.S.-based industry partner.

6. Could you please clarify what level of collaboration qualifies as an 'industry partner' and whether it is acceptable to list multiple industry partners?

Industry members include, but are not limited to, shellfish growers, industry associations, and supply chain companies. While Respondents are not required to be an industry member, proposals that are led by industry members will receive full points during their evaluation, with half points being awarded for proposals absent a clearly defined industry partner. We encourage Respondents to list all partners in their proposal, even if that means listing multiple industry partners.

7. Would you provide examples of acceptable "aligned organizations" in case a direct industry partner is not included?

Industry members or an aligned organization with a clear industry partner are eligible to respond to the RFP. An aligned organization could be an entity that supports shellfish aquaculture in the U.S., such as a non-profit organization or workforce development organization.

8. What level of involvement is expected from industry partners in the project? Should they contribute in-kind resources, funding, or active participation in workforce development and diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) initiatives?

Industry members or an aligned organization with a clear industry partner are eligible to respond to the RFP. If an industry partner is not leading the proposal, they should be part of the Respondent leadership team submitting the proposal. The level of their involvement is up to the Respondent's discretion, and we encourage Respondents to detail that level of involvement in their proposal.

9. Are there any preferred or required partnerships or collaborations that Respondents should consider, especially with local communities, governments or other organizations?

Beyond the eligibility requirement that industry members or an aligned organization with a clear industry partner are eligible to respond to the RFP, there are no preferred or required partnerships or collaborations. We strongly encourage Respondents to co-develop their proposals with the partners and/or communities that they intend to work with for effective implementation and long-term success.

10. Is this RFP different than the SOAR Shellfish Growers Resiliency Fund?

Yes. This RFP is different than the SOAR Shellfish Growers Resiliency Fund. The Resiliency Fund is not accepting new proposals currently. For a list of Resiliency Fund projects, visit: <https://www.nature.org/soar>.

11. Are there specific budgetary restrictions or guidelines that Respondents should be aware of when planning their project expenses? Can it include permit registration, rent, electricity etc.

There are no specific budgetary restrictions. That said, proposals will be evaluated based on the criteria listed in the RFP, which include whether the goals and outcomes in the proposal are realistic and can be accomplished within 18 months, whether the funds have been carefully allocated and itemized to the extent practical, and whether all costs have been taken into consideration. We encourage Respondents to clearly state what the goals and expected outcomes are and how they relate to the timeline and budget for the work.

12. Should the Respondent be registered on any particular platform to receive funds?

No.

13. Will the funds be provided up front or is this based on a reimbursement process?

The funds provided as part of this RFP are private philanthropic funds. If a project is selected for funding and depending on the type of project being proposed, the selected Respondent(s) will have an opportunity to determine an appropriate payment structure during the agreement negotiation process.

14. Are there any additional resources or support that Pew and TNC can provide to Respondents during the proposal development process?

Pew and TNC staff will review all proposals. During this proposal evaluation process, there will be an opportunity for Respondents to provide clarifications if requested by Pew and TNC staff. Per the RFP, Respondents may be required to submit additional information during this evaluation process.

15. Is there any flexibility in the project timeline, or are the start and end dates fixed?

There is limited flexibility on project start and end dates. The anticipated start date is February 2025, with funding running for up to 18 months (approx. through August 2026).

16. Can this project serve as a pathway for longer term projects?

The funding made available through this RFP is a one-time opportunity. That said, proposals will be evaluated based on their larger impact on the shellfish aquaculture industry during and beyond the award period, and the ways lessons learned will not only be shared but also involve the communities that are meant to benefit from the projects. It's conceivable that funded projects could attract additional sources of funding, and we highly recommend Respondents look for additional funding opportunities to develop longer-term pathways. Also, while match funding is not required as part of this RFP, the funds being provided are private philanthropic funds and, therefore, are eligible to be used as match toward various public grants.

17. Is there any flexibility in the intellectual property clause in Appendix E?

Yes. If a project is selected for funding and depending on the type of project being proposed, the selected Respondent(s) will have an opportunity to determine appropriate conditions related to intellectual property during the agreement negotiation process.