

November 2024 – REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

Illinois-Indiana Sea Grant College Program Lake Michigan Science and Monitoring Research Grants: The Illinois-Indiana Sea Grant College Program (IISG) has received Great Lakes Restoration Initiative funding to invest in promising research that addresses Lake Michigan Partnership science priorities for the 2025 Cooperative Science and Monitoring (CSMI) field year. Applicants from anywhere in the Lake Michigan basin are encouraged to apply, and all applicants should make a compelling case for why their work is relevant to the Lake Michigan Partnership science priorities. Funding is competitively awarded following procedures outlined below.

Project Details: Projects should provide a clear statement of work to be conducted, including clear objectives and specific methods and procedures that will be implemented to accomplish project objectives during the period of proposed work. In addition, proposed research projects should demonstrate fit with the Lake Michigan CSMI science priorities (https://iiseagrant.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/11/LakeMichigan_2025_CSMI_PrioritiesList.pdf). For this RFP, IISG is especially interested in funding research that addresses the Lake Michigan Partnership science priorities related to nearshore dynamics and overwinter sampling.

IISG is seeking to fund project that will address one or more of the following priorities to characterize very nearshore habitat (i.e. from shoreline to 20-m depth).

- 1) Improve understanding of winter season physical processes (e.g., shelf ice, ice dams, open water ice cover) and the impacts on nearshore habitat and/or food webs.
- 2) Investigate understudied but potentially important components of the food web, including nearshore (including shallow shoreline areas) and under-ice community structure, dreissenid veliger abundance and energy density during critical periods (e.g., first feeding post-yolk sac larvae) for key fish species.
- 3) Measure and assess tributary sediment transport and nutrient dynamics on in-lake conditions (chemical and physical integrity) and determine impacts on lower trophic level productivity, both nearshore and offshore, as well as during winter and shoulder seasons.

All proposed research projects should fit at least one of these topic areas. While IISG will prioritize projects that address multiple interests, projects in any of the above topic areas are eligible for funding.

Types of Research: For this RFP, IISG anticipates funding projects that use a variety of experimental techniques, including but not limited to field or laboratory studies, and modeling efforts. PIs can find examples of previously funded research projects at <https://iiseagrant.org/research/research-projects/>.

Research funded by IISG serves as a strong basis for education, outreach, or extension programs; thus, applicants are strongly encouraged to identify clear end users or otherwise demonstrate connections to user groups who will benefit from their research. PIs may be able to discuss their

project ideas with IISG extension and education staff members to review the potential for proposed research to have maximal societal impact and/or identify potential user groups.

Funding Amounts: Projects can request up to \$75,000 per year for two years (maximum \$150,000 total). IISG anticipates funding one project via this call. No match is required.

Funding will be provided for up to two years beginning July 1, 2025, or the date of the award, and projects should be completed by June 30, 2027. While IISG does not anticipate delays in project start dates, at times, federal budgeting activities delay receipt of funds by IISG and subsequent flow of funds to successful PIs. Any anticipated delay in funds will be communicated by IISG to successful PIs so that workflows can be adjusted accordingly.

PI Eligibility: We encourage individuals from all disciplines to apply to this RFP. Investigators from educational or research institutions including universities, museums, and NGOs, are eligible to serve as PIs for these funds. Researchers from around the Lake Michigan basin are welcome to apply.

IISG encourages submissions by early career scientists and/or persons who have partnered with, or plan to mentor, early career scientists. IISG also encourages all applicants to make research plans that will effectively center on underrepresented racial and ethnic groups, people with disabilities, and/or people from economically or educationally disadvantaged backgrounds that have limited their ability to pursue a career in STEM. This could include recruitment of students or personnel from these underrepresented groups.

Proposal Review and Feedback: Proposals will be reviewed by at least three external-to-IISG (but potentially still in Illinois or Indiana) subject experts using the following criteria. Subject expert reviewers will be required to declare any conflicts of interest.

Based on the entire application package, please rate the following on a scale of 1 to 5, 5 being best:

- Does the work fit within the scope of the thematic areas of the RFP?
- Is the work scientifically significant?
- Will the work fill important knowledge and data gaps?
- Will anticipated results lead to positive societal impacts?

Proposal Submission Deadline: A proposal template can be found at <https://iiseagrant.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/03/Guidelines-for-the-Project-Summary-and-Plan-of-Work.pdf>. Plan of Work documents should be a maximum of 10 pages and supporting documents (Project Summary, References, Vitae, Current and Pending Support and Letters of Support) do not count towards the page limit. A fully executed budget and budget justification should be submitted with proposals and PIs should plan to budget for the negotiated federal indirect cost rates for their home institutions. Applicants should submit materials via <https://esg.iiseagrant.org/> by 11:59 p.m. Central Time on February 6, 2025. Applications should be submitted to the "IL-IN SG 2025 Lake Michigan CSMI competition." Late applications will not be accepted unless the applicant has contacted IISG staff

members before the deadline to make them aware of potential issues, (e.g., computer, power, or internet issues). IISG reserves the right to refuse late applications if the program determines that individual circumstances do not warrant an extension. IISG staff members will only be available to answer questions until 5:00 pm Central Time on February 6, 2025.

Funding recommendations are based on external review but are ultimately made at the discretion of the IISG director. Provided that enough proposals are of sufficient quality and scientific rigor, priority will be given to projects that address one or more areas of special interest, as described above.

Proposal Review Timeline

February 6, 2025: Proposals due in program office

May 30, 2025: Notification of funding, accompanied by panel and peer reviews

July 1, 2025: Project initiation (subject to the availability of funds)

Questions regarding eligibility or submission requirements may be directed to Paris Collingsworth at pcolling@purdue.edu.