



# OCEAN STEWARDSHIP FUND – INNOVATION FUND (IF)

## GUIDANCE FOR APPLICANTS

Expressions of Interest (EOIs) are welcome to propose research projects for the MSC's Innovation Fund in 2020-21. The Innovation Fund is part of the MSC's [Ocean Stewardship Fund](#) and aims to support key areas of research for the MSC. This year, £100,000<sup>1</sup> has been dedicated to support research into best practice approaches and improvements that will ensure observers working in fisheries around the world can carry out their work safely. The deadline for EOIs is **23:59 GMT on 9 November 2020**.

### 1) Aims of the Innovation Fund

- a) The Innovation Fund aims to support priority areas of research for the MSC. This year's theme aims to contribute to global efforts to identify best practice approaches and improvements that will ensure that observers working in fisheries around the world can carry out their work safely.
- b) The MSC wants to see better and safer working practices for at-sea observers, who play a vital role in legal and sustainable fisheries management. The MSC is aware of the risks that observers face as they carry out their work and is keen to support other organisations working on solutions that can improve observer safety.
- c) The MSC is looking for innovative research that has the potential to make a practical difference for the safety of observers at sea. The MSC expects the research it supports to be able to deliver real change and not just report on the problem.

### 2) Who can apply?

- a) The Innovation Fund is open to Expressions of Interest (EOIs) from external organisations, including academic institutions, independent researchers, NGOs or fisheries around the world. Submissions must be made by a named individual who will be responsible for that project.
- b) MSC employees, trustees, agents, current contractors, and relatives of employees or trustees are ineligible.
- c) Applicants must be able to accept the Innovation Fund Grant Agreement and OSF Privacy Policy, which can be found on the [Innovation Fund web page](#).

### 3) What kind of projects will the Innovation Fund support?

Projects must be no more than two years in duration and can involve a wide range of activities including:

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<sup>1</sup> Funding and priorities may vary from year to year

- i) research into dynamics of observer-crew relationships and improvements that can be made to ensure observers' safety as they carry out their work
  - ii) identification of best practice (e.g. monitoring protocols that reduce conflict between observer and crew)
  - iii) research to increase affordability of technologies (cameras, sensors, etc.) that can reduce the need for at-sea observers
  - iv) development of IT and digital infrastructure, including automation of data review
  - v) interoperability of monitoring systems
  - vi) standards for e-monitoring systems and methods
  - vii) innovative processes to enhance observer voice.
- b) The MSC is not being prescriptive in the approaches or tools that can be used but expects research to be able to deliver change not just document the problem.

#### **4) What does the Innovation Fund cover?**

- a) Up to £50,000 is available per project to support project costs, which can include (but are not restricted to):
- i) the cost of personnel to undertake all or part of the project
  - ii) costs involved with data collection
  - iii) costs involved with holding a meeting or workshop or meeting such as travel, catering and venue hire
  - iv) hire or purchase of essential equipment
  - v) fixed asset costs (up to £5,000 of the total grant request to cover essential assets such as a computer, software etc.)

#### **5) How would the funding be disbursed?**

- a) The Grant Agreement contract will define the grant disbursement schedule and triggers required (i.e. interim reports) to release stage payments.

#### **6) What should the Expression of Interest include?**

- a) EOIs must be in the form of a letter no more than two pages in length and submitted in English to [OSF@msc.org](mailto:OSF@msc.org). The deadline for EOIs is **23:59 GMT on 9 November 2020**.
- b) The letter must include the following:
- i) name and organisation of the project lead
  - ii) project title
  - iii) project summary, including:
  - iv) context of the project and the particular issue it will address
  - v) aims and objectives
  - vi) materials and methods proposed
  - vii) expected results/outcomes
  - viii) potential impact of the project
  - ix) project timeline (up to two years)
  - x) total funding required from the MSC
  - xi) contact details for further information.



## 7) How will Expressions of Interest be assessed?

- a) All EOIs will be assessed using standardised appraisal criteria by the MSC in consultation with external advisers.

## 8) What happens if the Expression of Interest is successful?

- a) The MSC will notify shortlisted proposers by **23 November 2020** and invite them to submit a full proposal of their project to MSC by **23.59 GMT on 29 January 2021**. This proposal will be reviewed by the MSC's Executive Committee, which has the authority to make the final decision with respect to which proposals are funded.
- b) Successful proposers will be notified in **March 2021** and then required to enter into a Grant Agreement contract, which will set out the terms and conditions of the grant awarded. A copy of the Innovation Fund Grant Agreement can be found on the [Innovation Fund web page](#).

## 9) Dissemination of personal data

- a) Innovation Fund proposers are strongly advised to read the OSF Privacy Policy (which can be found on the [Innovation Fund web page](#)) before submitting their EOI.
- b) All submissions will be stored on MSC's secure servers and internally reviewed to help MSC shortlist for the next stage of application.
- c) Proposers have the right to obtain a copy of their personal data that MSC holds, and to require MSC to correct errors in the personal data if it is inaccurate or incomplete. They also have the right at any time to require that MSC deletes their personal data. To exercise these rights, or any other rights under applicable laws, please contact [OSF@msc.org](mailto:OSF@msc.org).

## 10) Further questions

- a) Please email any further questions to [OSF@msc.org](mailto:OSF@msc.org).