



MSC Global Fisheries Sustainability Fund: Operating Guidelines

EXTERNAL GUIDANCE

A. Introduction

MSC's vision is of the world's oceans teeming with life, and seafood supplies safeguarded for this and future generations. Our mission is to use our ecolabel and fishery certification program to contribute to the health of the world's oceans by recognising and rewarding sustainable fishing practices, influencing the choices people make when buying seafood, and working with our partners to transform the seafood market to a sustainable basis.

The MSC Global Fisheries Sustainability Fund (GFSF) aims to increase the accessibility of the MSC program for more of the world's fisheries, by working to reduce the barriers and obstacles that fisheries face in achieving the MSC standard.

MSC will control the fund and will select the projects and activities it wishes to fund based on the degree of leverage they provide in increasing the possibility and number of global fisheries that can become certified.

B. GFSF Objectives

The GFSF is to be used at the discretion of the MSC to fund a range of activities satisfying the following objectives:

- Projects addressing information, technology and management gaps and other barriers to certification for key fisheries and fishery management entities by conducting critical fishery science research that maintains the credibility of the MSC standard and program.
- Projects assuring the long-term accessibility of fisheries to the program by building the global capacity of personnel to motivate and assist fisheries in their improvements and gaining MSC certification. Such activities will include the funding of specific capacity building initiatives for developing world and small scale fisheries.
- Projects supporting direct environmental, information and management improvements in Developing World and small scale certified fisheries and fisheries that are seeking or interested in seeking certification, where this funding will have benefits beyond the specific fishery concerned.
- Projects that provide assistance for fisheries applying the BMT (Bench Marking Tool) and other pre-MSC tools such as pre-assessments, action planning and progress tracking.



C. Applications

Applications must be submitted to the Fund Administrator by 30 April each year. This year (2016/2017) this deadline has been set as **13th February 2017**.

Applicants who are able to identify an MSC contact, who may be able to provide further contextual information about the proposed application to the committee, should detail this on the application form. Applicants will not be penalised if they are not able to specify an MSC contact.

An application for funding will comprise:

Full Application Form (to include):

- Name / type of organisation requesting funding
- Stage of engagement in the MSC program (pre-assessment, action plan, certified)
- Fishery type – species / gear type / catch volume
- 3-page maximum narrative description of the project
- Section highlighting the project outputs, KPIs & relevance to GFSF objectives
- Project timeline
- Project budget – including any in kind or actual cash contributions (and whether match funding is secured or pending)
- An outline of any plans to communicate externally about the project

Supplementary Materials:

- CV of the principal investigator(s)
- Paragraph biography and qualifications of all the researchers involved in the project
- If grant is going to an individual rather than an institution, a supporting statement from a referee (i.e. student tutor). If the grant is going to a company or institution, a copy of the latest audited accounts.

Based upon the application, the GFSF Committee will decide whether the information is sufficient to make a decision to award a grant or not, or whether further information will need to be requested to make that decision.

D. Eligibility & award criteria

Who is eligible?

The GFSF will be open to submissions for projects by external organisations, including fisheries and governments, and research scholars. Employees, trustees, agents, current contractors, and relatives of employees or trustees are ineligible.



What are the criteria for application?

The GFSF reserves the right to amend these criteria from time to time in line with the uses of the fund.

General

- All applications must fall within defined uses (objectives) of the fund.
- Applications must be submitted in English.
- Projects should have clear positive benefits for developing world and/or small scale fisheries.
- To maximize the impact of GFSF investment, projects should have scope for broad impact (beyond a single fishery) and a demonstrated path/mechanism for learning transfer.
- If the funding is for a specific fishery (rather than widely applicable research), the fishery in question must be working towards the MSC Standard and any solutions must be broadly applicable to other similar or overlapping fisheries.

Fisheries research

The proposed research must have demonstrable relevance to at least one MSC performance indicator (PI) within the MSC's Fisheries Standard (or must have relevance to requirements in the Chain of Custody Standard). Please clearly indicate PI(s)/relevant requirement in your application.

Training and capacity building grants

Grants may be awarded to provide training to individuals, or groups of persons associated with pre-MSC fisheries, particularly for small scale and developing world fisheries. The training grant will cover costs of training and may also cover costs of obtaining field experience.

- Individuals seeking a training grant award must be associated with a fishery that meets the qualification for pre-MSC fisheries defined below and must have an identified role within a Fishery Improvement Project.

Overarching management, technology and information improvement

The proposal must have broad application and contribute to meeting conditions or activities in action plans in two or more fisheries.

Pre-MSC fisheries

For fisheries having a pre-assessment and intending to work towards MSC certification, grants may be awarded for the development of action plans designed to address gaps identified in an MSC pre-assessment.



How will grants be awarded?

In order to support its decision-making, the GFSF Committee shall consider the following criteria in awarding grants within the parameters of the fund's defined uses:

- Fit to the GFSF criteria
- Potential to bring positive benefits to developing world/small-scale fisheries
- Potential for wider impact (beyond a single fishery)
- Clarity and feasibility of the project outcomes and key performance indicators
- Qualifications and track record of the project team
- Strength and quality of the MSC's potential partnership with the applicant – new partnerships are of particular interest
- Demonstrated enthusiasm for external communications of the project
- To maximize the return on investment and impact of GFSF funding, applications with evidence of matched or additional funding are strongly encouraged

E. Financial administration

The MSC will make endowments to the fund as appropriate, and as approved by the Board of Trustees.

The fund will be open to external contributions of an unrestricted nature. Where a donor wishes to make a donation in support of activities funded by the GFSF (i.e. "I, the donor, wish to contribute to the funding of research attached to fishery XYZ"), the donor's contribution will be shown as a restricted fund in MSCs books.

F. Grant monitoring - grantee reporting & other commitments

Grantees will be obliged to meet the following conditions and commitments:

- All grantees will enter into a Grant Agreement contract, which will set out the terms and conditions of any grant awarded.
- The Grant Agreement will define the grant disbursement schedule and triggers required (i.e. interim reports) to release stage payments.
- In most cases, the grantees will provide a narrative interim report after 6 months, and a narrative/financial interim report after 12 months. Depending on the length and nature of the project, alternative reporting schedules may be agreed and included in the Grant Agreement contract.
- The grantee will submit to the Fund Administrator a narrative executive summary report at the project end date, including an appendix of research data / publications (if appropriate), highlighting the outputs and impacts that have resulted from GFSF



funding.

- The grantee will submit to the Fund Administrator an expenditure account, highlighting how the grant was spent in line with the project budget included in the proposal. The expenditure report to be backed up by supporting documentation for individual transactions.
- The grantee will agree to allow the MSC to publicise the output / impacts arising from the grant (including allowing the publication of research data – if appropriate), and will notify MSC of any potential opportunities for this communication e.g. report publication, events or milestones.
- The grantee will acknowledge MSC's support on all external communications materials associated with the project, with review and prior written approval from MSC's Global Communications Director.



G. Submission of applications

All applications must be submitted in English, by email to the Fund Administrator (GFSF@msc.org) by **13th February 2017**.

MSC will not be responsible for late, lost, incomplete, misdirected or for unauthorized human interventions, theft or destruction or unauthorized access to, or alteration of, applications. MSC is not responsible for any incorrect or inaccurate information, whether caused by any technical or human error, which may occur in the processing of applications, including but not limited to any misprints or typographical errors.

Applicants must be the applicant's original work and must have been solely created by the applicant or the applicant's team. Applicants may withdraw their application by sending written notice to GFSF@MSC.org before the application deadline.

MSC will not retain any intellectual property rights in the information contained in the application. However, applicants grant to the MSC the unrestricted right to use all materials provided or statements made in connection with the GFSF, or chose not to do so, at its sole discretion.

H. Other terms and conditions

Decisions of the Fund Committee are final. MSC will not acknowledge receipt of applications.

As a condition of making an application, applicants agree that any and all disputes which cannot be resolved between and among the parties, and causes of action arising out of or connected with the GFSF shall be resolved individually, without resort to any form of class action, exclusively before a court of England and Wales. In any such a dispute, under no circumstances shall any applicant be entitled to claim punitive, incidental or consequential damages, or any other damages, including legal fees, and all such parties hereby waive all rights to have damages multiplied or increased.

By making an application, applicants agree to release, discharge and hold harmless MSC and GFSF and their respective partners, affiliates, subsidiaries agents, and their employees, officers, trustees, and representatives from any claims, losses and damages arising out of their application or any activities related to their application, and the acceptance and use, misuse, or possession of any grant awarded hereunder.

I. Review

The MSC reserves the right to review and amend the operation of the GFSF at any time. Any amendments to the operation of the fund will be approved by the Board of Trustees.