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**Sea-Changers Marine Conservation Social Fund -**

**Guidelines for Applicants**

Sea-Changers are proud to launch a new funding stream to support community-based projects which, whilst primarily achieving marine conservation outcomes, also have intended benefits for participants’ health and well-being and / or benefits for disadvantaged communities[[1]](#footnote-1). The 2021 Fund totals £13,000 and is made possible by a single donation to Sea-Changers.

1. **Overview**

**Sea-Changers’ Main Grants Fund**

Our main grant fund projects achieve one or more of the following objectives:

1. To **address the root causes** of marine conservation threats and challenges in the UK.
2. To **prevent or reduce negative impacts** on UK coastal and marine environments and/or species.
3. To **add to the body of knowledge** about marine conservation threats and challenges in the UK and ways to overcome them.

**The Sea-Changers Marine Conservation Social Fund**

While the Social Fund may support any of the above three objectives, **its unique emphasis will be that it will additionally support or enhance** participants’ health and well-being and / or deliver benefits for disadvantaged communities, through marine conservation activity.

It is well documented that engagement with blue spaces can have a hugely positive impact on well being[[2]](#footnote-2). It is equally proven that volunteering has both individual and community cohesion benefits[[3]](#footnote-3). We are keen to fund projects that will achieve marine conservation outcomes, alongside with social, health and /or well-being benefits for the targeted individuals and communities that participate.

The aim of the Social Fund will therefore be:

***“To support socially beneficial marine conservation approaches and solutions.”***

Sea-Changers recognises that this fund represents a new endeavour and that measuring clear outcomes for individuals and communities may be challenging. It is important to Sea-Changers that there is learning from both successes and failures and we will therefore want to be sure that all grant applications explain how the success or failure of the project being applied for, will be judged and measured.

As is the case with all of our grants Sea-Changers is particularly interested in grassroots projects which galvanise community action and in projects which increase the number of people taking action for marine conservation.

We expect that the fund may well be directed at the following kinds of projects:

* Marine conservation education and engagement projects - e.g. campaigns or activities reaching out to and including those who do not access / engage with the sea and educating them about marine conservation issues and what they can do to help.
* Citizen science and / or practical / direct action projects – particularly where they engage disadvantaged communities and where they can show increased community cohesion / engagement and personal / health benefits of volunteering.

We are particularly interested in funding **pilot programmes** that, following careful evaluation, might be continued, expanded and / or replicated with additional funding in future years (subject to Sea-Changers securing such funding).

We expect to fund 3-4 projects in 2021 so grant requests should be in the region of £3,000- £4,000.

1. **Who can apply**

Sea-Changers welcomes applications from a wide range of UK based organisations including: charities and ‘not-for-profit’ organisations and community groups. We actively encourage applications for projects that may be formed through **partnerships between marine conservation organisations and social welfare organisations.** Partnerships must have a lead partner who will be the main contact with Sea-Changers and who will be responsible for successful delivery of the project.

1. **Evaluation criteria**

The Social Fund applications will be judged against the following criteria:

**Potential for impact on coastal and marine environments and / or species**

* Does the application explain the potential / expected / hoped for impact on the coastal and marine environment and / or species and is this impact significant?
* Does the application explain how success or failure of the project will be judged and evaluated? How will learning be shared?

**Potential for impact on disadvantaged people or communities**

* Does the application explain how it will measure impacts on the targeted community or individuals?
* Does the application explain how they will reach out to the target community or individuals?

**Value for Money**

* How well justified is the sum proposed?
* Is it good value for money and is there good leverage?
* Are there other ways for the funding to be obtained?

**Deliverability and Scalability**

* Is the application convincing in terms of deliverability? Does it outline clear timescales?
* Have partners or potential partners to support projects been included and are they ‘on board’ / is this a joint bid?
* If the project is a success is there wider applicability?

1. **What don’t we fund?​**

* Projects that have a political aim.
* Applications solely to fund administrative or core operating costs.
* Retrospective projects or funding requests.
* Individuals or causes that will benefit only one person.

1. **The application and evaluation process**

**Applying**

* Download and complete the Marine Conservation Social Fund Application Form from Sea-Changers’ website.
* Ensure you read through the guidelines above and that your application meets the outlined criteria.
* Complete and return the application form by email to [info@sea-changers.org.uk](mailto:info@sea-changers.org.uk)
* If, as part of the project, any/all organisations involved will be working with children or adults at risk, you must send an up-to-date copy of their Safeguarding Policy with your application.

**The timescales for the Marine Conservation Social Fund 2021 are as follows:**

* **Deadline** for receipt of applications – **5.00pm on the 31st October 2021**
* Announcement of outcomes and payments made – 10th December 2021
* Implementation of projects - 2022

**Evaluation**

All successful applicants would be asked to provide data and feedback on the outcomes achieved through the funding received, as a condition of receiving a grant.

We will send an evaluation form for you to complete but we would also ask that you consider in your application how you will evaluate your project at all stages of implementation.

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1. Throughout this document we mean ‘communities’ in its widest sense – not exclusively geographic or place-based communities. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. <https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/928136/Social_benefits_of_blue_space_-_report.pdf> [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. <https://www.bl.uk/britishlibrary/~/media/bl/global/social-welfare/pdfs/non-secure/u/n/d/understanding-how-volunteering-creates-stronger-communities.pdf> [↑](#footnote-ref-3)