International Atlantic Salmon Research Board

ICR(09)10

Guidelines on Submitting Proposals for Research, Workshops, Symposia and Other Activities for Support by the IASRB

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Background

The North Atlantic Salmon Conservation Organization (NASCO) is the inter-governmental organization charged with conserving, restoring, enhancing and rationally managing salmon in the North Atlantic Ocean. In 2000, in response to concerns about increased marine mortality of salmon, NASCO established the International Atlantic Salmon Research Board (IASRB). The objective of the IASRB is to promote collaboration and cooperation on research into the causes of marine mortality of Atlantic salmon and the opportunities to counteract this mortality. The Board has established and maintains an inventory of research relating to the mortality of salmon at sea which is available on the Board's website, www.salmonatsea.com. Having reviewed this inventory, the Board decided that its initial research priority was studies into the migration and distribution of salmon at sea in relation to feeding opportunities and predation. A major international programme of cooperative research, the SALSEA Programme, was adopted by the Board in 2005 and offers a unique opportunity to increase understanding of how Atlantic salmon use the ocean; where they go; how they use ocean currents and the ocean's food resources; and what factors influence migration and distribution at sea. SALSEA contains a comprehensive mix of freshwater, estuarine, coastal and offshore elements. In 2008, a major marine survey programme was initiated composing three components: SALSEA Merge (in the North-East Atlantic), SALSEA North America and SALSEA West Greenland.

Proposals for Research

The Board has already funded, or has committed to fund, major international research projects, workshops and symposia related to improving understanding of mortality of Atlantic salmon at sea. In addition, it has endorsed other initiatives. Proposals submitted to the Board in support of the SALSEA Programme will be evaluated by the Board's Scientific Advisory Group in relation to a number of criteria including relevance to IASRB priorities, the extent of collaborations, value added and potential to be successful. Proposals for research, workshops, symposia or other activities may be submitted to the Board that:

- seek only endorsement by the Board; or
- seek funding support from the Board.

In the case of research projects, initially the Board seeks to endorse or support research focussing primarily on:

- practical studies of the distribution and migration of salmon in the sea (including studies of by-catch in pelagic fisheries; studies involving large scale tagging and tracking and development of sampling technologies);
- studies of biological processes (e.g. environment, food, predation, growth, parasites and diseases) relating to the marine phase of the life-cycle (including freshwater influences on subsequent marine survival).

The Board will give priority to major multi-disciplinary and collaborative research projects but will also consider smaller projects and support for workshops and symposia. Where funding is provided from the Board it may be in full or on a partial or matching basis.

Application Procedure

1. Research projects and other activities seeking endorsement by the Board.

Proposals seeking endorsement by the Board should be submitted to the Secretary of the IASRB at the address below. A detailed proposal is not required for applications seeking only endorsement by the Board. However, the following information is required:

- Project title
- Name(s) and CVs of leading Scientist(s) and details of cooperating Organizations
- Project summary (including objectives, dates, methods, costs,)
- Perceived relevance to SALSEA Programme

The Board will advise applicants of the outcome of the evaluation within a period of 8 weeks of receipt of the application. It is possible that the Board may additionally be able to assist the applicant in identifying potential sources of funds.

2. Applications seeking funding from the Board

Proposals to the Board should be sent to the Secretary at the address below no later than 31 December each year. These proposals will be evaluated by the Board's Scientific Advisory Group and a decision will be taken by the Board at its Annual Meeting in early June. It should be noted that at present the Board has very limited funds to support proposals. However, the Board may be able to approach possible funding sources to seek support for projects that are considered to be of particular relevance to the SALSEA Programme. In the case of proposals for research projects, the applicant should provide the information detailed in Annex 1. In the case of proposals concerning workshops or symposia, the information detailed in the four bullet points in paragraph 1 above should be provided in the first instance together with details of how the output from the workshop or symposium will be disseminated.

Contact Details

Proposals for research should be supported by the Board should be submitted to:
Dr Peter Hutchinson
Secretary of IASRB
NASCO
11 Rutland Square
Edinburgh
EH1 2AS
UK

e-mail: hq@nasco.int

Guidance on Applications for Research Proposals Seeking Funding by the Board

1.   Project title

Give the application a brief title which describes the work to be done.

2.   Applicant – Institution/company responsible for the project

As a general rule, an institution or company should be the formal applicant, with legal responsibility for ensuring that the conditions attached to an allocation of funds are met.

3.   Project Leader

This should be the name of the technical expert responsible for the project.

4.   Project summary

Provide a brief summary of the project description, with an emphasis on describing the objectives of the project, the most important R & D challenges and the potential for application of the project results. The project summary will be made publicly available via the Board's inventory. For this reason, the text should be capable of being understood by non-experts, and should not exceed 200 words.

5.   Principal goal and sub-goals

Describe the results that are expected to be obtained in the course of the project period. Formulate individual demonstrable sub-goals which lead to the principal objective.

6.   Milestones – timetable

Indicate milestones for the principal activities that fulfil the main objectives and sub-goals of the project (e.g. data-acquisition, field-work, main activities in study plan and final report). Check off these milestones by date (or possibly include a calendar or time grid). Use keywords – maximum of 45 characters. A more detailed timetable may be provided in the project description.

7.   Cost plan

The cost plan for the project should be summarized and preferably broken down into sub-costs (e.g. capital costs, contracts or services, consumables, travel and subsistence).

Personnel costs and indirect costs

Personnel costs and indirect costs cover salary, social security and indirect costs such as rent, secretarial help, telecommunications and computing costs, etc.

The "Project total" should show the same amount each year as the total in section 8: "Finance plan".

8.   Finance plan

The finance plan should show how the costs shown in the cost plan are to be financed and the amount sought from the Board.

Own funding

This refers to the applicant's institution's input of own resources such as cash, personnel, infrastructure/goods/equipment into the project.

Other public-sector funding

This refers to public-sector grants such as direct support from ministries, the grants from the State Fund for Regional and Industrial Development, regional support schemes, funds from agricultural or fisheries agreements, local authority industrial development funds, etc.

Other private funding

This includes financial support from cooperating companies, trade organizations, private funds, etc. State-owned companies that operate as commercial concerns are also regarded as sources of private funding in this respect.

9.   Active partners

Enter national and international partners who will participate actively in the project. Provide names of persons, universities, institutes, companies, programmes, bodies, etc. Confirmation provided by such partners of their participation in the project should be enclosed with the application. Enter the name of the doctoral fellowship or student supervisor if he or she is not the project manager.

10. Project publication plan

The Board considers that dissemination of information about the projects it supports is very important. Provide brief details of goals, target groups and type of information to be provided.

11. List of enclosures

List all documents enclosed with the application as backup and possibly confirmation of the skills and background of the proposers.

12. Signatures

The Board requires the signatures of the project manager and of a representative of the institution or company responsible for the project and may want to further develop the requirements regarding project manager and institution. If possible, candidates for fellowships or research positions should sign when their names have been confirmed.

Project description

The project description should provide more details of individual points in the application form and offer a basis for academic evaluation of the project proposal. The project description must not exceed 10 pages (including the list of references). (Recommended norm: A4 page format, 12pt Times New Roman font, single line spacing and 2cm margins). A distinction should be made between background material and planned activities. For the application to be considered, the project description must provide information on the following topics, where relevant.

Familiarity: The applicant must document good familiarity with the field of research concerned, both nationally and internationally.

Problem: The problem must be clearly formulated and satisfactorily limited in scope. It must be demonstrated that the project involves an expansion of existing knowledge, and/or that this knowledge provides a basis for further research in the field.

Method: It must be demonstrated that the methods and theories to be used are appropriate for the solution of the problem involved, or that there are good prospects of developing the necessary methods and theory. Analytical methods, including any statistical methods needed to evaluate the significance of the results, should also be described.

Objectives: Concrete, testable main objectives that provide a description of the expected results of the project must be formulated, as well as a set of sub-goals that will lead to the principal objectives.

Ethics: The project description must describe how ethical considerations are taken into account, where appropriate.

Implications for the environment: An assessment must be provided of whether the results of the project will have significant effects (whether positive or negative) on the physical environment. If such is the case, the project description must describe whether there is a need for research related to the environmental consequences, and whether the project has defined objectives or sub-goals that aim to shed light on the environmental implications.

Research Fishing: If the proposal includes research fishing, details should be provided of the purpose of the research fishing; the dates of research fishing; the area in which research fishing will take place; the name, registration, call sign and a description of any participating vessel; the type and amount of gear to be used and the estimated total weight and number of salmon to be retained.

Timetable: A more detailed timetable than that shown in item 6 may be drawn up. At least one milestone must be identified.

Information: Describe plans for information dissemination and user contact, including purpose, target groups and form of information dissemination, and, if appropriate, usefulness and application potential.

Resources: Information should be provided (directly as well as indirectly via the project manager/group of researchers) regarding the resources available to the project.

Professional position: Describe the position of the project with respect to the institution's or company's range of activities, and any co-operation or co-operative agreements with other projects or institutions.

Information regarding professional competence

Project managers should submit their CV with a list of relevant publications for the last 5 years (maximum of four pages).

Specifically named persons for whom fellowships or positions are being sought must document their competence by submitting a CV and a list of publications of a maximum of 4 pages (the applicant should prioritise the information provided if necessary), as well as copies of relevant references and certificates. In applications for doctoral fellowships that are to be dealt with a brief presentation of the supervisor's or project manager's research supervision experience during the previous five years should be provided, stating the number of candidates who have completed their doctoral or master's degree. Similar supervisor information is required for all applications for studentships. Candidates for post-doctoral fellowships who have not completed their doctorate must provide a list of the articles that will be included in their doctoral dissertations.

Project managers who lack qualifications as senior lecturer/associate professor must document their competence in the same way as the persons for whom studentships are being sought.

Costs and financing
The process of evaluating project applications requires information regarding costs and financing, including the company's or institution's own contribution of resources.

Experts

The Board may wish to be able to consult referees proposed by applicants in addition to their own appointed experts when handling applications.

Please list the names, titles and addresses of three persons with a thorough knowledge of the applicant's field of research, who may be consulted as referees.