



## **GLOBALSEAWEEDSTAR RESEARCH AND INNOVATION FUND**

### **GUIDELINES FOR APPLICANTS**

*CREATED: 20/09/2019*

**Call opens: 23 September 2019**

**Call closes: 22 November 2019**

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## 1. Background

GCRF GlobalSeaweedSTAR (GS-STAR; [www.globalseaweed.org](http://www.globalseaweed.org)) is a four year, multidisciplinary programme with a vision to grow the research and innovation capacity of DAC-list countries ([www.oecd.org](http://www.oecd.org)) engaged in seaweed farming for long-term sustainable growth. This programme is supported by UK Research and Innovation - Global Challenge Research Fund (<https://www.ukri.org/research/global-challenges-research-fund>) to the value of £6.2 million.

The programme is led by the Scottish Association for Marine Science (SAMS) and is already in partnership with institutions in the UK, Philippines, Malaysia and Tanzania, but **we want to work with as many other institutions and seaweed producing DAC-list countries as possible.**

The GSSTAR Fund (£900k total) will provide £200k in Travel Grants (up to £2k each) ([https://www.globalseaweed.org/?page\\_id=2381](https://www.globalseaweed.org/?page_id=2381)) and £700k in Research and Innovation grants (from £5k to £50k).

It is envisaged that the GS-STAR Fund will enable rapid reactivity to emerging crises in the seaweed industry and foster further international cooperation between researchers and practitioners in this field to promote the sustainable growth of the global seaweed industry.

The GSSTAR Research and Innovation Fund also aims to establish links beyond the level of the individual researcher and innovation practitioner, opening up opportunities for sustainable, solution-oriented research and innovation collaborations between academic groups as well as with the private and third sector.

## 2. Overview of funding opportunity

The GS-STAR Research and Innovation Grants will provide funding from £5k up to a maximum of £50k to applicants from the UK and DAC-list countries. These grants will be awarded quarterly between July 2018 – July 2021 (subject to availability of funds) and will provide funding for successful proposals that;

- Directly relate to the objectives of the GlobalSeaweedSTAR programme which can be found at ([www.globalseaweed.org](http://www.globalseaweed.org))
- Promote **challenge-led** disciplinary and interdisciplinary research.
- **Strengthen capacity** for research, innovation and knowledge exchange between the UK and developing countries through partnerships.
- Provide an agile **response to emergencies** where there is an urgent research need.
- Any other capacity-building activities that would be broadly aimed at increasing the sustainability of seaweed cultivation in DAC-listed countries, especially along the priority areas identified in the UNU-INWEH/ SAMS Policy Brief (<https://www.sams.ac.uk/t4-media/sams/pdf/globalseaweed-policy-brief.pdf>)

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The GS-STAR Fund is designed to be flexible and responsive to the needs of the global seaweed industry allowing applicants to establish collaborations and to bring in relevant private and third sector partners, including small and medium enterprises (SMEs), non-governmental organisations (NGOs) and other not-for-profit organisations.

### **3. Official Development Assistance (ODA) compliance**

To ensure ODA compliance, you should consider the following aspects when preparing your application:

- Your proposed research should investigate a specific problem or seek a specific outcome which will enhance the economic development and welfare of your or your partners DAC-listed country[ies] in the immediate or longer-term
- The benefit and relevance of the proposed research to your or your partners DAC-listed country[ies] should be clear
- You will need to consider the pathway to achieving impact (during and after the lifetime of the research grant).

Proposals can:

- Focus on a development topic or address an unmet capacity need in a DAC-listed country
- Proposals do not need to be solely relevant to developing countries, but developing countries should be the primary beneficiaries. Secondary benefits to the UK will be evaluated positively.

In all cases, it is the responsibility of the applicant to demonstrate how the research project or activity proposed will meet these criteria. Applicants should not expect reviewers to make assumptions about development impact that is not clearly described within the proposal.

**Failure to demonstrate ODA eligibility will render your application ineligible regardless of other assessment criteria. Please make sure you consider the ODA relevance of your application.**

Agreement of ownership and exploitation of intellectual property generated through project activities must be consistent with the primary aim of addressing development issues.

### **4. Eligibility**

Applicants must fulfil the following criteria in order to be eligible for funding through the GSSTAR Fund:

- Professionals (either academics or practitioners) or registered postgraduate students based in the UK or DAC List countries.
- Actively involved in, or planning to enter, a seaweed-related professional activity (i.e. biological, ecological or socio-economic), which is related to the objectives of the GCRF GSSTAR Programme and the UN Sustainable Development Goals (<https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/?menu=1300>).

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Applicants may only submit one application per funding call.

Applicants that have previously received a GS-STAR Grant are eligible to apply provided all reporting requirements have been fulfilled.

The main applicant can be of any nationality, provided they work either in the UK, or in a DAC-listed country. Co-applicants, if any, can be of any nationality and based in any country

If you do not meet the conditions set out in this document, but think you may be eligible, it is advised that you contact the Fund Manager before developing your application ([GlobalSeaweedSTAR@sams.ac.uk](mailto:GlobalSeaweedSTAR@sams.ac.uk)).

## **5. Funding available and reporting requirements**

The GSSTAR Fund (£900k total) will provide £200k in travel grants (up to £2k each) ([https://www.globalseaweed.org/?page\\_id=2381](https://www.globalseaweed.org/?page_id=2381)) and £700k in Research and Innovation grants (from £5k to £50k).

If available, funds will be disbursed directly to the applicant's institution. If the applicant is not affiliated with a higher education institution full details of funding distribution will be specified in a grant agreement according to approved final budget. Applicants may be asked to adjust their budget if their request does not fit within the funding guidelines.

Typically, an advanced payment of 60% of the GS-STAR Research and Innovation Grant will be made on signature of grant agreement, followed by two payments of 20% dependent on approval of reports by the GS-STAR project management board.

Applicants must complete reporting requirements set out in the grant agreement before any follow up payments will be issued.

Payment ratios may vary for individual proposals, full details of the distribution of funds and reporting requirements will be specified in the grant agreement.

Please note: The GS-STAR Fund requires all payments to be fully reconciled with sufficient evidence before further the interim and final funding is issued.

## **6. Eligible costs**

GS-STAR Research and Innovation Grants **can cover**:

Bespoke training to develop capacity and capability at all career levels (e.g., technicians, technologists, doctoral students, postdoctoral researchers, early and mid-career researchers etc.)

- Development of professional and transferable skills as well as technical and core skills
- Hiring and retention of key staff in the UK and overseas (including research leaders in developing countries as co-investigators)

Research funding to address development challenges, supporting:

- Research staff based in the UK and overseas for collaborative research projects

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- Feasibility, scoping, exploratory, proof of concept studies
- Research costs, e.g., field research costs, consumables, facility access costs etc.
- Sandpits and ideas creation events

Partnership building funding, supporting:

- Seminars and workshops to explore and identify specific areas for cooperation and to enhance the building of partnerships and collaborations
- Secondment/movement of people (including students as appropriate to their research programmes), e.g., between UK and overseas research organisations or between research organisations (UK and overseas) and Industry/3rd sector/Government.

Operational funding, supporting:

- Support costs ,e.g., programme/research managers, administrative support
- Communications and public engagement
- Monitoring and impact evaluation costs

Funding for new PhD studentships is not eligible as part of the GS-STAR Fund although funds may be used to fund research and travel costs for students supported through existing routes. PhD students may apply for small equipment and consumables where appropriate as long as individual items are below £10,000.

Due to the nature of the programme it is recognised that funds may need to be used flexibly to achieve the aims of the award and to respond to new opportunities.

## **7. Ineligible costs**

GS-STAR Research and Innovation Grants **cannot cover:**

- Purchase or rental of standard office equipment (except specialist equipment essential to the research)
- Mobile phone rental or purchase or phone bills
- Tuition Fees
- Attendance at conferences or other events unless this is to present outputs and outcomes of the project (please refer to the GS-STAR Travel-Fund to seek support for this type of activity).

Entertainment costs such as:

- Gifts
- Alcohol
- Restaurant bills or hospitality costs for personnel not directly participating in the project.
- Excessive restaurant costs
- Taxi fares for non-project related activities

Essential and relevant meal costs can only be charged to the grant up to the maximum limit according to HMRC worldwide subsistence rates.(

[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/781249/Worldwide\\_subsidence\\_rates\\_effective\\_6\\_April\\_2019.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/781249/Worldwide_subsidence_rates_effective_6_April_2019.pdf))

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Travel & Subsistence costs must comply with the GlobalSeaweedSTAR Travel Policy available to download at ([https://www.globalseaweed.org/?page\\_id=1562](https://www.globalseaweed.org/?page_id=1562)).

Please contact the Fund Manager ([GlobalSeaweedSTAR@sams.ac.uk](mailto:GlobalSeaweedSTAR@sams.ac.uk)) if you are in doubt which costs GS-STAR Research and Innovation Grants can and cannot cover.

To ensure value for money, the budget requested in your proposal should cover only costs that are **essential**, **appropriate** and **relevant** to the proposal. The proposal should maximise where possible cost share through direct and indirect institutional contributions, in-kind funding, other funding sources, and private sector support.

## **8. Project duration**

The maximum duration of the proposed project is 12 months. Funding, if approved begins from the signature of the Grant Agreement by SAMS Head of Contracts. Formal project start dates will be set in the grant agreement. Expenses incurred prior to the effective start date, including costs incurred in the production of the proposal, cannot be charged to the grant.

## **9. Ethics and research governance**

It is essential that all legal and professional codes of practice are followed in conducting work supported by the GS-STAR Fund. Applicants must ensure the proposed activity will be carried out to the highest standards of ethics and research integrity.

In the online application form, applicants must clearly articulate how any potential ethical and health and safety issues have been considered and how they will be addressed, ensuring that all necessary ethical approval is in place before the project commences.

Please refer to the Research Councils UK 'Policy and Guidelines on Governance of good Research Conduct' (<https://www.ukri.org/files/legacy/reviews/grc/rcuk-grp-policy-and-guidelines-updated-apr-17-2-pdf/>) or contact us at [GlobalSeaweedSTAR@sams.ac.uk](mailto:GlobalSeaweedSTAR@sams.ac.uk) should you require further guidance.

## **10. Diversity**

The GS-STAR Fund is committed to equal opportunities and diversity in all our activities. This includes avoidance of bias due to gender, disability, racial or ethnic origin, sexual orientation, or religious belief. Applicants are therefore encouraged to include participation by researchers from under-represented groups in the teams from under-represented groups in the teams implementing their proposed research.

Without prejudice to excellence, the GS-STAR Fund will seek to achieve a balanced gender and geographical diversity amongst successful applicants.

## **11. Submission process**

The deadline for submission of a completed application including all supporting documentation is 22 November 2019. Proposals submitted after the deadline will not be considered for funding.

Applicants must submit a completed application form.

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In addition to filling in the application form, applicants are required to upload the following documents as described, by the deadline:

- Applicants' CV (up to two sides of A4 each)
- Detailed project budget on template available to download at ([https://www.globalseaweed.org/?page\\_id=1562](https://www.globalseaweed.org/?page_id=1562))
- Letters of support **in English** on headed paper, signed by the Head of Institution, Head of Department or other person with appropriate delegated authority, expressing specific commitment to the proposed project, willingness to receive funding and why the experience and capability of the applicant is particularly suited to the project content.

**All applications must be completed in English.**

## **12. Selection process and due diligence**

Selection begins with an eligibility check by the Fund Manager against the eligibility criteria given in these guidelines.

Eligible proposals then undergo independent external review on the basis of quality, fit to UNU-INWEH/SAMS policy brief (<https://www.sams.ac.uk/t4-media/sams/pdf/globalseaweed-policy-brief.pdf>) UN SDGs and ODA compliance, value for money and pathway to impact.

Proposals are quality assessed by external independent reviewers against the criteria at (Appendix 1), resulting in a total score between 0 and 20. Those receiving a final score from the panel of less than 10, or that score 0 against any one of the four evaluation criteria, will be considered not fundable. However, achieving an average score equal to or above the threshold does not mean the proposal will be funded. The GlobalSeaweedSTAR Executive Board will draw a list of projects recommended for funding, considering country and project-specific priorities, challenge areas and perceived risks.

SAMS, as the institution operating the GS-STAR Fund, bears ultimate responsibility for the responsible use of grant funds. Following peer-review, the top-scoring proposals will therefore be subjected by the Fund Manager to thorough due diligence checks. In line with UKRI guidance, applicants and/or institutions likely to receive funding will be required to comply with the terms set out in the GS-STAR due diligence guidelines available to download at ([https://www.globalseaweed.org/?page\\_id=1562](https://www.globalseaweed.org/?page_id=1562))

**SAMS reserves the right to deny funding to any proposal that is perceived as too risky following due diligence.**

Successful applicants can expect an initial decision on funding within 6 weeks after the call deadline. Projects recommended for funding will then be subjected by the Fund Manager to thorough due diligence checks lasting 6 weeks. Therefore, please keep this in mind when determining the project start date.

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### **13. Data protection**

#### **How we use your information**

The GS-STAR Fund will use the information that you are providing for the purposes of processing your application, making any awards, monitoring and review of any award.

We will share any necessary data on your application with our funders (UKRI), the GlobalSeaweedSTAR Executive & Advisory Board and the external review panel in order to assist on management of the application process; any decision of grants will be made in collaboration with them.

Applicant and/or Organisation details will be held by the GlobalSeaweedSTAR Fund for monitoring and evaluation, reporting and statistical purposes for the reporting period of the programme.

In line with European General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) no personal information will be stored beyond the reporting period of the GS-STAR programme.

### **14. Contractual Requirements**

- The contracting authority is the Scottish Association for Marine Science (SAMS)
- In the event you have any concerns or queries regarding the terms and conditions set out in the Grant Agreement please contact the Fund Manager [GlobalSeaweedSTAR@sams.ac.uk](mailto:GlobalSeaweedSTAR@sams.ac.uk) for clarification. The GS-STAR Fund reserves the right to make any changes to the Grant Agreement.

**By submitting a signed Grant Agreement, you are agreeing to be bound by the terms of these guidelines and the Grant Agreement without further negotiation or amendments.**

### **15. Contact Details**

All queries or comments about the GlobalSeaweedSTAR Fund should be addressed to the email address: [GlobalSeaweedSTAR@sams.ac.uk](mailto:GlobalSeaweedSTAR@sams.ac.uk)

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## APPENDIX 1: ASSESSMENT CRITERIA AND SCORING SYSTEM

Assessment of the quality and relevance of the proposals will be performed by an independent review panel, and the final funding decisions will be made in discussion with the GlobalSeaweedSTAR Executive and Advisory Boards.

Section 1 : Quality	Score 0-5
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The description of the proposed project includes clear, feasible and realistic objectives as well as potential for impact.</li> <li>• Applicants’ clearly articulate specific outputs anticipated from the project and objectives likely to be achieved.</li> <li>• The proposal explains the benefits to the UK or to DAC List countries that will result from the project</li> <li>• There is strong evidence of support from the applicants' institution</li> <li>• If the applicants' institutions are collaborating already, there is clear evidence that the grant would add significant value to the collaboration</li> <li>• The proposal includes a clear and feasible description of arrangements for project management</li> </ul>	<p><b>5 points:</b> Meets all criteria to an exceptional level</p> <p><b>4 points:</b> Meets the majority of the criteria to a high level</p> <p><b>3 points:</b> Meets the majority of the criteria to an adequate level</p> <p><b>2 point:</b> Meets the majority of the criteria to an adequate level</p> <p><b>1 point:</b> Meets some of the criteria to an adequate level</p> <p><b>0 points:</b> Fails to meet any of the criteria to an adequate level</p>

Section 2: Fit to UNU-INWEH/SAMS Policy Brief and UN SDGs	Score 0-5
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The proposal demonstrates a commitment to capacity building.</li> <li>• The proposal demonstrates that the objectives address at least one of the following developing challenges:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Challenge #1: Secure and resilient food systems supported by sustainable aquaculture</li> <li>○ Challenge #2: Resilience and action on short term environmental shock and long term environmental change</li> <li>○ Challenge #3: Sustainable livelihoods supported by strong foundations, infrastructure and gender equality for sustainable economic growth and innovation</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<p><b>5 points:</b> Meets all criteria to an exceptional level</p> <p><b>4 points:</b> Meets the majority of the criteria to a high level</p> <p><b>3 points:</b> Meets the majority of the criteria to an adequate level</p> <p><b>2 point:</b> Meets the majority of the criteria to an adequate level</p> <p><b>1 point:</b> Meets some of the criteria to an adequate level</p> <p><b>0 points:</b> Fails to meet any of the criteria to an adequate level</p>

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Section 3: Pathway to Impact	Score 0-5
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The proposal clearly articulates a plausible pathway for the research to lead to a positive impact on the DAC List country or the UK. The impact can be:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Conceptual: contributing to understanding and influencing knowledge held by researchers, seaweed farmers and policy-makers</li> <li>○ Instrumental: impacts on policies and practices at community, national and international levels</li> <li>○ Capacity Building: strengthening seaweed farmers' capacity to implement sustainable, gender equitable and resilient farming practices; and research institution' ability to conduct high quality research and influence policy-making and practice;</li> <li>○ Connectivity': strengthening national and international community research-policy-practice networks</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<p><b>5 points:</b> Meets all criteria to an exceptional level</p> <p><b>4 points:</b> Meets the majority of the criteria to a high level</p> <p><b>3 points:</b> Meets the majority of the criteria to an adequate level</p> <p><b>2 point:</b> Meets the majority of the criteria to an adequate level</p> <p><b>1 point:</b> Meets some of the criteria to an adequate level</p> <p><b>0 points:</b> Fails to meet any of the criteria to an adequate level</p>

**For proposals that meet the first 3 criteria (Score >0 against criteria 1, 2 & 3), please also score:**

Section 4: Value for Money	Score 0-5
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The proposal represents value for money; all costs are fully justified.</li> <li>• The budget template provided has been completed correctly and in line with GS-STAR guidelines.</li> </ul>	<p><b>5 points:</b> Meets all criteria to an exceptional level</p> <p><b>4 points:</b> Meets the majority of the criteria to a high level</p> <p><b>3 points:</b> Meets the majority of the criteria to an adequate level</p> <p><b>2 point:</b> Meets the majority of the criteria to an adequate level</p> <p><b>1 point:</b> Meets some of the criteria to an adequate level</p> <p><b>0 points:</b> Fails to meet any of the criteria to an adequate level</p>

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