



Irish Aid

An Roinn Gnóthaí Eachtracha
Department of Foreign Affairs



Foras na Mara
Marine Institute



OUR SHARED OCEAN
PROGRAMME



Convict Surgeonfish (Acanthurus Triostegus), Maldives 4549106 © Marco Lijoi Dreamstime.com

Applicant Guidelines for Mobility and Travel Grants Call 2024

NOTE: Support under this call is primarily aimed towards the Small Island Developing States (SIDS) in the Caribbean, Pacific and AIMS (Africa, Indian Ocean, Mediterranean and South China Sea).



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Introduction

As part of the Climate and Oceans focus of [A Better World](#), Ireland’s policy for international development, and the associated national [Strategy for Partnership with Small Island Developing States](#) (SIDS), there is an ambition to build closer partnerships between Ireland and the SIDS. The Our Ocean Wealth Summit in June 2019 provided an important milestone in this effort. Political leaders and UN Permanent Representatives from almost 30 SIDS travelled to Ireland, took part in SeaFest and the Summit, and met Irish political leaders and officials. The Summit addressed shared experiences of island nations and discussed the critical challenges faced by many of the SIDS which are on the front line in dealing with climate change impacts and vulnerable, in particular, to sea-level rise and extreme weather events.

Building on the success of the Summit, the Department of Foreign Affairs (DFA) and the Marine Institute (MI) have established a new programme called ‘Our Shared Ocean’ to support research, knowledge exchange and capacity building in partnership with SIDS. The programme will run from January 2022 to December 2026 with a total investment of €3.8 million funded by the DFA, and administered by the MI.

The *Our Shared Ocean Mobility and Travel Grants Call 2024* is part of a suite of competitive calls that will address specific ocean, climate and sustainable blue economy related challenges faced by SIDS; support the building of scientific and technical capacity to address such challenges; and promote the exchange of knowledge and expertise between Irish institutions and their counterparts in SIDS to underpin longer-term cooperation. Applicants for funding under the *Our Shared Ocean* Programme should address a topic under one of the three themes as outlined in Table 1 below, and also state how their award will contribute to achieving the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (refer to Annex 1) by 2030. and also state how their award will contribute to achieving the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (refer to Annex 1) by 2030 and link to the [UN Decade of Ocean Science for Sustainable Development](#).

Table 1: Themes

1. Oceans and Climate Action	2. Inclusive and Sustainable Blue Economy	3. Marine Policy and Ocean Governance
<p>Adaptation, mitigation and nature-based solutions, socio-economic dimensions and the preservation of marine and maritime related culture.</p> <p>Cultural and Social effects of Climate Change.</p> <p>Biosecurity and managing the impacts of invasive species.</p> <p>Healthy oceans.</p> <p>Ocean observations – role to inform climate services.</p>	<p>Renewable energy, aquaculture, seaweed and fisheries.</p> <p>Value chains and biopharmaceutical research.</p> <p>Promoting entrepreneurship.</p> <p>Coastal communities.</p> <p>Tourism.</p> <p>Skills foresight and planning.</p>	<p>Marine spatial planning and marine protected areas.</p> <p>Maritime law.</p> <p>Financing for enforcement and regulation.</p> <p>Digital tools and data management (e.g. environmental).</p> <p>International cooperation.</p>

Specifically, funding will be awarded for inward or outward travel between Ireland and the eligible SIDS (as listed in Annex 2) for short research visits, attendance at research conferences and workshops, or for training courses.

1. **Research Conferences and Workshops** – for undergraduate and postgraduate students and early-stage researchers from eligible SIDS to present their marine research to audiences at international events. The aim is to network with international marine experts and disseminate their research on the global stage.
2. **Training Courses** – for researchers from eligible SIDS to undertake short training courses in a topic that is beneficial to their marine research. Examples include, but are not limited to, statistics courses, data processing, sampling methodologies, laboratory analyses, commercialisation of research, etc.
3. **Research Visits** – of up to one calendar month for researchers from eligible SIDS to visit Ireland (or from Ireland to eligible SIDS) in order to exchange knowledge, test new technology, train on research methodologies, etc. The aim is to allow mobility of research expertise for the bilateral transfer of knowledge in science and technology towards the development of the marine sector, and to establish international networks between Ireland/SIDS for potential leveraging of marine funding.

Travel Advice

Applicants should check on the latest advice from the Department of Foreign Affairs prior to travel, which is available on their website at <https://www.dfa.ie/travel/travel-advice/>.

What Type / Level of Support is Provided and Who Can Apply?

The awards are designed as a small-scale, flexible scheme to support research dissemination, networking activities and training for the benefit of Small Island Developing States (SIDS).

Applications will be accepted in three purposes, as follows:

1. Research Conferences and Workshops

Description

This award provides for attendance by students and early-stage researchers from eligible Small Island Developing States (SIDS) **to present** their marine research at international Conferences/Workshops. **Note:** Travel is permitted to destinations across the globe, where relevant conferences and workshops are being held. A letter of support from the researcher's supervisor must be included with the application. Where feasible, applicants are encouraged to present at virtual conferences and workshops.

Eligibility

This award is open to:

- Students currently carrying out an undergraduate or postgraduate degree in a marine-related discipline and registered at an academic institution from eligible SIDS. Students may only apply for funding for events taking place up to the final date of their college registration. Proof of support by their Supervisor is required.
- Research Assistants carrying out marine-related research and employed at academic or research institutions from eligible SIDS.
- Early stage Post-Doctoral contract researchers carrying out marine-related research and employed at academic or research institutions from eligible SIDS. Early stage Post-Doc being within six years of PhD award (2018 onwards).
- Small & Medium Enterprises (SMEs) and Other Representative Organisations from eligible SIDS. SME/NGO representatives are not required to present at international conferences/workshops.

Maximum Grant-Aid

- Maximum **2,000 Euro** per award. Minimum application value 500 Euro. Applications under 500 Euro will be deemed ineligible.

2. Training Courses

Description

This award provides for researchers from eligible Small Island Developing States (SIDS) to undertake training courses of a short duration in a topic that is beneficial to their marine research. **Note:** Travel is permitted to destinations across the globe, for attendance at relevant training courses. A letter of support from the researcher's supervisor must be included with the application.

Where feasible, applicants are encouraged to attend virtual training courses.

Eligibility

This award is open to researchers in marine or marine-related research from Eligible SIDS hosted in a **Public or Private** Research Performing Organisation.

Maximum Grant-Aid

- Maximum **2,000 Euro** per award. Minimum application value 500 Euro. Applications under 500 Euro will be deemed ineligible.

3. Research Visits

Description

This award provides for visits by researchers of up to one calendar month for the transfer of knowledge between Ireland and Small Island Developing States (SIDS), to test research methods or technology and to establish new international partnerships in marine research of mutual interest. In the interest of equality and parity the awards under this category will be equally split between Ireland and SIDS. An invitation letter from the host organisation must be included with the application.

Eligibility

This award is open to researchers in marine or marine-related research from:

- Eligible SIDS hosted in a **Public** Research Performing Organisation in Ireland (refer to Annex 3).
- An Irish Public or Private Research Performing Organisation (RPO) hosted in a RPO (Public or Private) in an eligible Small Island Developing State (refer to Annex 2).

Maximum Grant-Aid

- Maximum **6,000 Euro** per award.

Type of Costs Covered

The following is an example of the typical costs covered under this award:

- One return flight (economy class).
- SIDS internal flights from mainland airport to island airport.
- Accommodation costs (best value basis – breakfast or meals may be included).
- Visa and vaccination fees.
- Local public transport for travel.

Please refer to FAQ for further details or contact oursharedocean@marine.ie prior to commencing an application for any clarifications.

General Rules

Individual applicants cannot receive more than **two awards** in any calendar year. There is no limit on applications from the same Organisation, except that applications are capped at **max three awards per Organisation per event**.

Grant-Aid is subject to available funding, which is allocated on an annual basis with a rolling close date (see below). In the event that the annual budget is allocated in full prior to the final submission date of Friday, 1 November 2024 (**for applications to attend events up to 31st March 2025**), a notification to this effect will be posted on the Marine Institute website funding pages <https://www.marine.ie/Home/site-area/research-funding/research-funding/current-funding-opportunities>.

It is important that applicants also read the FAQ document available on the call notification webpage.

How is your Application Assessed?

Applications will be externally assessed by independent evaluators on the basis of three criteria:

- 1) The benefit to the recipient/host institution,
- 2) The likely contribution to relevant national and international strategic objectives, and
- 3) The justification provided in the application (e.g. demonstration of research collaboration and dissemination of findings).

Each of the three criteria have the same weighting. Applicants may be offered support at a lower rate than requested. Applicants will receive notification of the outcome within 15 working days following the relevant close date. Successful applicants will be issued with a letter of award that outlines the grant funding, and requirements and due date for submission of the report and receipts. The letter of award must be signed and returned to the Marine Institute.

What Costs can be Claimed?

- Registration Fees for applicable Conferences, Workshops & Training Courses.
- Return International Flight from SIDS to relevant country. Supporting documentation must include Boarding Pass and payment receipt.
- Accommodation costs with itemised receipts and evidence of best value 3* star basis.
- Return receipted transfer from airport to accommodation.
- Public transport costs to event. Taxis allowable if travel is necessary outside of normal hours and / or if for safety reasons.
- Visa / Vaccinations with receipt.

General Eligibility Conditions for Claiming Actual Costs

The general eligibility conditions include the following:

- Actually incurred by the beneficiary.
- Incurred in the period after the award was granted.
- Incurred in connection with the action as described.
- Identifiable and verifiable, in particular recorded in the beneficiary's accounts in accordance with the accounting standards applicable in the country where the beneficiary is established and with the beneficiary's usual cost accounting practices.
- Comply with the applicable national law on taxes, labour and social security.
- Reasonable, justified and must comply with the principle of sound financial management, in particular regarding economy and efficiency. (i.e. be in line with good housekeeping practice when spending public money and not be excessive).
- Actually incurred by the beneficiary and not estimated or budgeted.
- Definitively and genuinely borne by the beneficiary and not by any other entity or person.
- Identifiable and verifiable, i.e. come directly from the beneficiary entity's accounts, be directly reconcilable with them and supported by documentation.
- The records and supporting documents must show the actual costs of the work, i.e. what was actually paid and recorded in the beneficiary's profit and loss accounts.
- Costs must be calculated according to the applicable accounting rules of the beneficiary's country and according to the beneficiary's usual cost accounting practices.

Record-Keeping

- The beneficiaries must keep records and other supporting documents to prove the proper implementation of the.
- In addition, the beneficiaries must keep adequate records and supporting documents to prove the costs declared can be reconciled to the amounts recorded in their accounts and the amounts stated in the supporting documents.
- The records and supporting documents must be made available upon request or in the context of checks, reviews, audits or further investigations.
- If there are on-going checks, reviews, audits or investigations, beneficiaries must keep records and other supporting documentation until the end of these procedures.
- The beneficiaries must keep the original documents. Digital and digitalised documents are considered originals if they are authorised by the applicable national law. The granting authority may accept non-original documents if they offer a comparable level of assurance.
- Any costs insufficiently substantiated will be ineligible and will be rejected and the grant may be reduced.

Records and Other Supporting Documentation

- The beneficiaries must keep appropriate and sufficient evidence to prove the eligibility of all the costs declared, proper implementation of the action and compliance with all the other obligations under the Grant Agreement. If costs are not supported by appropriate and sufficient evidence, they will be rejected.
- 'Sufficiency' relates to the quantity of evidence; 'appropriateness' relates to its quality. Evidence is considered sufficient and appropriate if it is persuasive enough for the auditors, who assess it according to generally accepted audit standards.
- The evidence must be verifiable, auditable and available.
- The beneficiaries must keep original documents (i.e. documents considered as original under national law) in the format in which they were received or created. Documents received in paper form should be kept in paper form and documents received electronically should be kept in their electronic.

Payment Suspension

- The granting authority may suspend the payments,
 - if the reports (or any of their documents) are incomplete or additional information is required.
 - if it has doubts on the eligibility of the costs included, and additional checks, reviews or investigations are required.

How to Claim Grant-Aid?

Only costs incurred after the award is granted can be funded. An initial payment of 50% will be made on signature of the letter of award. The balance of 50% is payable on completion.

Payments are on a reimbursement basis and will be conditional on:

- The successful achievement of identified targets/goals, including submission of a report detailing the outcome/benefits gained by the Grantee.
- The submission and acceptance of all relevant & itemised receipts from the Beneficiary (keeping of receipts is the Applicant's responsibility). For example:
 - Registration fee – Conference, Workshop etc.
 - Travel Costs: International airfare booking with Boarding Pass.
 - Accommodation – Itemised receipts (Hotel / Air B&B / Hostel) for duration of the event including one night before or after the event if appropriate.
- The claim being submitted to the Marine Institute via the online portal within one month of completion of the event for which support has been provided.
- Awards are made payable to the organisation who incurred the costs as detailed by submitted receipts. Organisations must have a valid tax reference and bank account in their name. Payments cannot be made to Individuals.
- Funding is provided to the named applicant for the specified event and is not transferable.
- Evidence of payment may be sought on a sample basis from the Beneficiary.

Application Procedure & Deadline

Applications should be made via the Marine Institute’s online portal **Research Information Management System (RIMS)**.

To check your eligibility to apply and get access to RIMS, then please email oursharedocean@marine.ie including details of your organisation and your current role.

The Mobility and Travel Grants call will remain open on a two-monthly rolling basis, subject to continued funding availability, and submission deadlines as follows:

1. Friday, 16 February 2024
2. Friday, 19 April 2024
3. Friday, 21 June 2024
4. Friday, 6 September 2024
5. Friday, 1 November 2024 (for events up to 31st March 2025)

The planned budget is 60,000 Euro in 2024 with the expected split of the grants awarded under each category as follows:

Table 2: Indicative Awards

Award Category	Number of Awards	Value € Euro
Research Conferences and Workshops	20	40,000
Training Courses	4	8,000
Research Visits (Ireland & SIDS)	2	12,000
Total	26	60,000

Note: This is for guidance purposes only, the actual awards granted by category may vary.

Applications must be submitted at least one month in advance of the research visit, conference, workshop or training course.

Publicity and Impact

Recipients should tag **@OurSharedOcean** and **@Irish_Aid** for any posts on Twitter relating to their attendance at events funded under this call.

Annex 1: United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS



Annex 2: Eligible Small Island Developing States (SIDS)

American Samoa #	Fiji	Puerto Rico #
Anguilla #	French Polynesia #	Samoa
Antigua and Barbuda	Grenada	São Tomé and Príncipe *
Aruba #	Guadeloupe #	Seychelles
Bahamas	Guam #	Singapore
Barbados	Guinea-Bissau*	Sint Maarten #
Belize	Guyana	Solomon Islands *
Bermuda #	Haiti*	St. Kitts and Nevis
British Virgin Islands #	Jamaica	St. Lucia
Cabo Verde	Kiribati*	St. Vincent and the Grenadines
Cayman Islands #	Maldives	Suriname
Commonwealth of Northern Marianas #	Marshall Islands	Timor-Leste *
Comoros *	Martinique #	Tonga
Cook Islands #	Mauritius	Trinidad and Tobago
Cuba	Montserrat #	Turks and Caicos Islands #
Curaçao #	Nauru	Tuvalu *
Dominica	New Caledonia #	US Virgin Islands #
Dominican Republic	Niue #	Vanuatu
Federated States of Micronesia	Palau	
	Papua New Guinea	

*LDC

#Non-UN Members /Associate Members of the Regional Commissions

Ref. UN website: <https://www.un.org/ohrlls/content/about-small-island-developing-states>

Funding provided by Irish Aid is Official Development Assistance (ODA), and must be channelled primarily to ODA eligible states. However, Our Shared Ocean is conscious that SIDS are impacted by regional environmental challenges that need to be tackled at a regional scale. Therefore, applications will be accepted from non-ODA eligible countries. Applicants should in these cases demonstrate how they address regional issues, how benefits will accrue to ODA eligible states, and how local and regional capacity development can be implemented via the learnings and outcomes of the study. Additionally, applicants from non-ODA eligible countries are encouraged to build in collaboration with researchers or organisations in ODA eligible countries where possible.

Please email oursharedocean@marine.ie for any queries on eligibility.

Annex 3: List of Irish Public Research Performing Organisations

- Atlantic Technological University (ATU)
- Bord Iascaigh Mhara (BIM)
- Commissioners of Irish Lights (CIL)
- Dublin City University (DCU)
- Dublin Institute of Advances Studies (DIAS)
- Dundalk Institute of Technology (DKIT)
- Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)
- Geological Survey of Ireland (GSI)
- Inland Fisheries Ireland (IFI)
- Marine Institute (MI)
- Maynooth University (MU)
- Met Éireann
- Munster Technological University (MTU)
- Sea Fisheries Protection Authority (SFPA)
- South East Technological University (SETU)
- Teagasc
- Technological University Dublin (TU Dublin)
- Technological University of the Shannon (TUS)
- Trinity College Dublin (TCD)
- Tyndall National Institute
- University College Cork (UCC)
- University College Dublin (UCD)
- University of Galway
- University of Limerick (UL)

The list above includes public organisations who have previously been funded to undertake marine research in Ireland, but this list is not exhaustive and if any applicant is unsure whether they are eligible, then they should clarify with the Marine Institute by sending an email to oursharedocean@marine.ie.

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