



URBAN HARBORS INSTITUTE  
UNIVERSITY OF MASSACHUSETTS BOSTON

## **Request for Proposals for Applied Research to Promote Resilience in Commercial Fishing Communities**

### **I. Background**

The National Working Waterfront Network (NWWN) is a national collective of individuals, businesses, non-profit organizations, higher academia, Sea Grant programs, local governments, communities, and state and federal agencies. Together, these entities work to strengthen and protect working waterfronts across the United States.

The NWWN has partnered with Urban Harbors Institute (UHI), an applied research institute at the University of Massachusetts Boston, focused on addressing ocean and coastal issues through research, policy, and planning. Through this partnership and with funding provided by the Walton Family Foundation, the NWWN and UHI have created an internship program that focuses on applied research to advance the resilience of commercial fishing communities.

**This internship program will be managed through UHI at UMass Boston and will provide three internships during the winter/spring of 2024. Each intern will be eligible to earn up to \$3,000 for their work (funding is dispersed by UHI for NWWN made possible by the Walton Family Foundation).**

This is the third call soliciting requests for proposals to promote research on the resilience of commercial fishing communities. Two internships were awarded in Spring 2022 and three were awarded in Spring 2023. To learn about past intern work and research findings, please visit our website: <https://nationalworkingwaterfronts.com/about/internships/>

### **II. Research Opportunity**

Working waterfronts are not only an integral component of the national economy and well-being, but also inclusive of local coastal communities and their cultural heritage (Ebbin & Trumbull, 2021). The unique appearances and water-dependent activities of working waterfronts from the East Coast to the West Coast to the Gulf Coast and along the Great Lakes is evidence of their collective diversity. Of those working waterfront industries, commercial fisheries alone are a major contributor to coastal livelihoods. In 2019, commercial fishing generated \$165 billion in total sales, \$43 billion in income and approximately 1.2 million jobs nationwide not including recreational fishing that bring in additional revenues to a working waterfront (National Marine Fisheries Service, 2019). In addition to the monetary value of commercial fishing, these communities have a strong place identity and rich heritage inherently adding to the social fabric and cultural value of many working waterfronts. Therefore, the resilience of commercial fishing communities is one crucial aspect to the growth and preservation of many diverse working waterfronts.

However, these waterfronts share common struggles in the face of aging infrastructure, shifting regulations, competing uses, environmental protections, and climate change (Island Institute et al., 2013). These waterfronts also have opportunities such as new federal funding for waterfront improvements, planning initiatives for enhanced infrastructure, and increased interest in locally sourced and sustainable food. Thus, the NWWN and UHI are seeking research project proposals that advance the resiliency of commercial fishing communities in the context of working waterfronts. This “resilience” can be related to a variety of factors including economic development; climate change planning; workforce development; issues related to equity, diversity, inclusion, and allyship; pandemic response; and other topics impacting the viability of commercial fishing communities. This research should NOT focus on federal, state, or municipal fishing regulations or on aquaculture fisheries.

### **III. Eligible Projects**

Successful research project proposals will be those that

1. Address real-world needs and opportunities related to the resilience of commercial fishing communities
2. Are conducted by a graduate student working part-time during the spring of 2023. The timeline for this research is flexible, and must occur between the months of January and June 2023.

### **IV. Eligible Applicants**

The opportunity to submit a proposal is open to any for-profit, non-profit, academic, association/coalition, NGO or government organization with offices in the United States. NWWN membership is not a requirement for eligibility.

The NWWN and UHI are dedicated to practicing commitment to diversity, equity, inclusion, and allyship (DEIA) in the cultivation of partnerships. We encourage and invite research proposals that are focused on addressing DEIA and removing barriers for interns to become part of the next generation of coastal leaders. We are committed to allowing all interns to be comfortable in their identities and participate fully in their research.

### **V. Requirements of Participants**

The applicant must be willing to:

- Participate in virtual meetings with the UHI internship coordinator
- Provide information, supervision, and mentorship to the graduate student
- Allow the results of the research project to be shared by the intern in a NWWN webinar presentation (intern attendance mandatory)
- Allow their results to be shared through the NWWN website and listserv

### **VI. Evaluation Process and Criteria**

Submitted proposals will be reviewed by a panel of members from the NWWN for:

- The project’s methodology and timeline are consistent with the NWWN proposal requirements
- The applicability of the research promoting resilient commercial fishing communities in the context of working waterfronts
- The proposer’s agreement to participate fully, provide supervision to the intern, and allow results to be shared publicly with the NWWN and NWWN’s associated communications

Once projects have been reviewed, a small number of selected applicants will be invited to discuss their proposals with the NWWN evaluation team. The team will make its final decision by December 10, 2022.

Once final projects have been selected, NWWN will issue a call for applications from interested graduate students to serve as interns. NWWN will work with the proposers of the research projects to select the final interns from the pool of candidates.

### **VII. Contact information for questions**

Interested parties may contact Shannon Hogan (internship coordinator) of UHI, at [Shannon.Hogan@umb.edu](mailto:Shannon.Hogan@umb.edu) with any questions or concerns regarding the internship program.

### **VIII. Proposal requirements**

Applicants must submit a single-spaced, two-page research project proposal (in size 11 font or larger) by **October 23, 2023** to [Shannon.Hogan@umb.edu](mailto:Shannon.Hogan@umb.edu) with the subject line “NWWN Applied Research”.

The proposal must include:

1. The contact information (names, titles, affiliations, email addresses, phone numbers, and mailing addresses) for the lead academic partner and/or the lead community/industry partner
2. An explanation of the significance of the proposed research question, specifically addressing how this research question will promote the resilience of commercial fishing communities in the context of working waterfronts.
3. A description of the research methodology and timeline
4. A description of the final deliverable(s)
5. Resumes, not exceeding two-pages, of the lead academic partner and/or the lead community/industry partner (not counted toward the two-page page limit of the proposal).

### **References:**

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- Ebbin, S. A., & Trumbull, N. (2021). Contested Spaces in the New Blue Economy: Competing for Connecticut’s Thames River Working Waterfront. *Geographical Journal*, (August), 1–14. <https://doi.org/10.1111/geoj.12409>
- Island Institute, Maine Sea Grant, National Sea Grant Law Center, Coastal Enterprises, I., Florida Sea Grant, Virginia Sea Grant, & Urban Harbors Institute at University of Massachusetts Boston. (2013). *Sustainable Working Waterfronts Toolkit. Final Report*. 36pp. Retrieved from <http://workingwaterfronts.ning.com/page/toolkit>
- National Marine Fisheries. (2019). Fisheries Economics of the United States 2019 Economics and Sociocultural Status and Trends Series. NOAA Technical Memorandum NMFS-F/SPO-229A. (March) 248. [chrome-extension://efaidnbnmnibpcjpcglclefindmkaj/https://media.fisheries.noaa.gov/2022-07/FEUS-2019-final-v3\\_0.pdf](https://media.fisheries.noaa.gov/2022-07/FEUS-2019-final-v3_0.pdf)
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- Urban Harbors Institute. (2021). Advancing Ocean and Coastal Management. Retrieved from <https://www.umb.edu/uhi>

Walton Family Foundation. (2021). Mission and Vision. Retrieved from <https://www.waltonfamilyfoundation.org/about-us>