

5 Helpful tips to CREATE A STRONG LONG ISLAND SOUND SCHOOLS NETWORK APPLICATION



1. Focus on making answers specific, justifiable, attainable, and creative

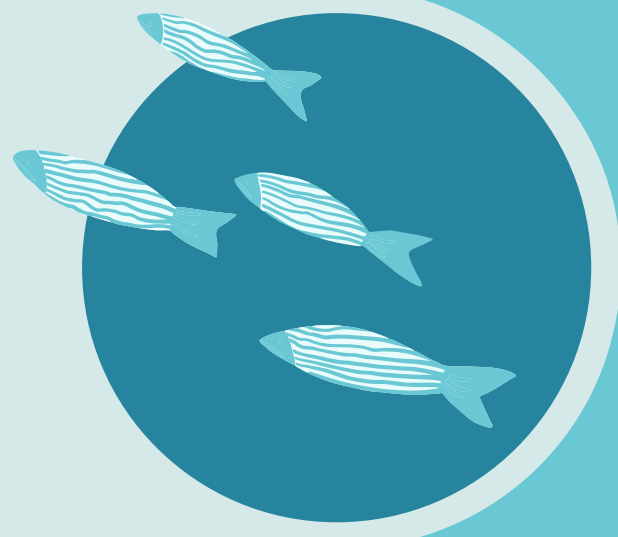
The details of projects are crucial for reviewers to make selection decisions. Think of these questions when answering the prompts:

- Why would this grant be beneficial for your project?
- How many individuals are involved, what are the age ranges?
- Is this an extension of an already existing project?
- Will you be combining schools within the district?
- Why would this be beneficial for your students, community, and school?

2. Incorporate Ocean Literacy Principles

Ocean Literacy Principles must be connected to proposal objectives and overview. To emphasize the importance of our connection to one global ocean. Exemplary projects incorporate multiple aspects of Ocean Literacy.

For details regarding the Ocean Literacy Principles, please [click here](#)



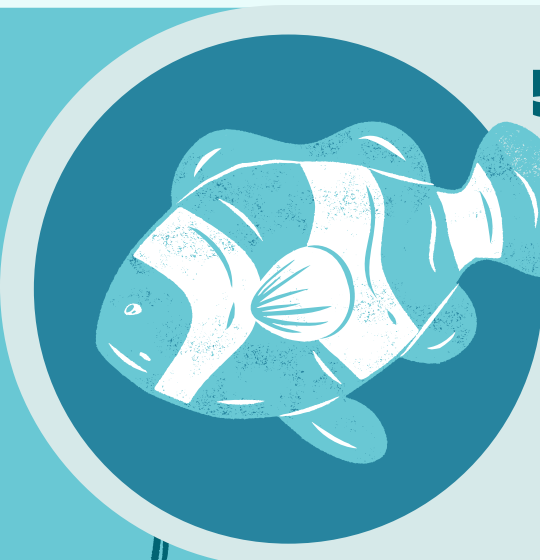
3. Preparing your project

Your proposal must include a basic budget and overview of partnerships. To ensure a project is achievable, all aspects should be researched, such as if permits are required and how partnerships will be included and cultivated to ensure project sustainability beyond the funding period.

We recommend utilizing [Long Island Sound Stewardship Sites](#) for project partnerships.

4. Importance of a Letter of Support

Your letter of support should demonstrate a clear understanding and support of your project ideas. Keep in mind there are word limits to your application responses, but not to support letters so this is where you can share more about your project. Collaborate with your administrator to ensure the strongest possible letter of support.



5. Incorporate multiple disciplines

Projects should be based on the involvement of students and or your community. Individuals often have different interests which can be incorporated to build a strong, inclusive, and well-rounded project plan.

Examples include: World languages, science, math, social studies, arts, technology, physical education

Questions?

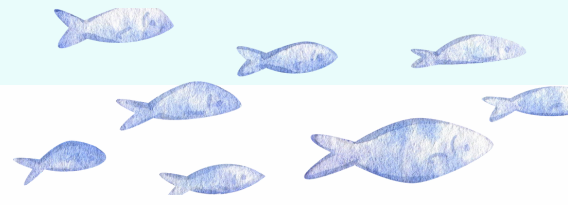
Reach out to diana.payne@uconn.edu, mmarrero3@mercy.edu,
or take a look at our webpage :
<https://seagrant.uconn.edu/focus-areas/long-island-sound-schools-network/>

EXAMPLES OF STRONG PROPOSALS

The following prompts are real short answer questions from the LISSN applications. These examples were unanimously rated as exemplary answers by reviewers and are current LISSN participants. Please keep in mind these answers may be adjusted to keep submissions anonymous

Project Objectives and Measuring Success

- Objectives are clear, measurable, and achievable
- Measures thoroughly assess progress towards objectives
- Include specific connections to Ocean Literacy and project partners



Our objectives include:

1. Introducing pre k-5 students to Long Island Sound through interactions with high school students, educational institutions, community volunteers and non-profit groups in the school and at the shore. High school students take the lead in teaching younger students about the marine environment and host a culminating Marine Science Day at the end of the year.
2. Increasing the number of in-school experiences for elementary students to be introduced to Long Island Sound through activities that are correlated to the Ocean Literacy Standards and NGSS grade level goals. Students will be able to understand the essential Ocean Literacy concepts, communicate about Long Island Sound in a meaningful way, as well as make informed and responsible decisions regarding the ocean. While the activities involved address many of the standards, a common principle that will be addressed, and assessed, will be Ocean Literacy Principle 6 - The Ocean and Humans are Inextricably Interconnected. Activities in school and at the shore will have this, and its sub principles, as their core content. An example of this is the Enviroscape station, where third grade students will use the model to demonstrate potential threats to Long Island Sound due to human activities and ways to avoid or mitigate those actions. Student learning will be assessed through objective questions and reflective pieces. Success will be measured through ongoing student assessment at the high school level. These include content assessments in class, meetings with students to review progress on station development and performance assessments the day of the event. The elementary students will be assessed using reflection pieces and interviews. The overall success will be qualitatively measured through social media response, public feedback and staff and student responses. The committee for the program includes administrators, teachers, parents and representatives of the community groups involved. Assessment of the progress will occur at the monthly meetings and goals and objectives will be developed based on the progress assessments.
3. Increased knowledge of the local marine environment, the threats posed to it, the connections we have to it, and the reasons for protecting it are all part of the goals of the project. This goal directly relates to the impact of this program on the health of Long Island Sound. Students exposed to these concepts early and often (k-12) and through a diversity of experiences, have a greater chance of being responsible citizens in their decisions as they relate to the marine environment and its protection. While this goal is difficult to assess, student responses to questions about activities that harm Long Island Sound can be used as an indicator of success. As suggested in the study *Motivating Individuals to Take Responsible Ocean Action: The Mediatory Effects of Attitude toward the Ocean*, a combination of conceptual understanding and attitude impacts individuals ability to take responsible ocean actions. Another indicator of success is the number of high school students who return as volunteers at the event after being elementary participants. That number has increased from last year to this year and potentially represents a positive change in attitudes toward Long Island Sound and its protection. A quantitative measure that will be used to assess the impact of Marine Science Day participation. The survey will be given to students at the high school. An analysis of results will be done comparing those students that have participated in Marine Science Day and those that have not. (waterford)

Why is this an exemplary example?

Reviewers unanimously agreed that these project objectives are clear, measurable, and achievable. Measures will thoroughly assess progress toward objectives. This answer received a 4, exemplary, by all reviewers.

Project Overview

- Summary of the project (max 300 words) including:
- Overview of plan and specifically how the project will improve ocean literacy within the school community and the school's connection to Long Island Sound
 - How will your project lead to a healthier Long Island Sound?
 - Grade levels, subject areas, and/or community groups to be included
 - Potential community partners

This project will focus on literacy standard 6.D, which investigates how humans have impacted aquatic ecosystems. Although the standard addresses all the ways humans impact aquatic ecosystems we will be focusing on the disposal of single use plastics. A river runs through the the community and out to the Long Island Sound. As an important component of the Long Island Sound watershed the river and beaches along the Sound are places frequently visited by multiple 10th - 12th grade courses taught in the high school. Students will conduct STEAM projects to learn more about the Sound and human impacts on it, as well as creating a series of videos, infographics, and other materials such as music made using a set of “upcycled musical instruments” created by found items during our beach cleanups, which will not only prevent these items from entering our waterways, help demonstrate understanding, but also to help students share what they know to peers and younger students in one of our elementary schools where the older students have partnered with the younger students to act as conservation mentors. The idea is that if they are seen as role models, older students will rise to the challenge of lessening their own plastic use and carbon footprint, while also impacting the younger students while they are at an impressionable age. Students will be partnering with environmental groups such as Citizens Campaign for the Environment (CCE), Atlantic Marine Conservation Society (AMSEAS), community partners such as peers at other schools and a local environmental artist Susan Buroker. While the primary group are 9th - 12th grade science students, other students in the building, staff, and faculty, as well as community members will be invited to participate in our beach cleanups and the collection of items for our “upcycling” STEAM projects. (smithtown)

Why is this an exemplary example?

Reviewers unanimously agreed that this overview clearly and thoroughly describes the project including specifics about which students will be involved and what activities they will enact. Plan engages students in hands-on and field-based activities to learn about Long Island Sound.

EXAMPLES OF STRONG PROPOSALS

(Continued)

What communication strategies will you use to share your work (e.g., newsletters, websites, videos, art projects)?

—clearly describe multiple strategies and audiences to be engaged

Our communication strategies are diverse and inclusive, aiming to reach various stakeholders and engage the broader community. The goal is not only to share our work but also to inspire awareness and participation in the initiatives related to the Long Island Sound. Here are the communication strategies we plan to employ:

1. Newsletters: Regular newsletters will be distributed to parents, staff, and community members. These newsletters will feature updates on ongoing projects, student achievements, and upcoming events related to the Long Island Sound. They will also include informative articles, spotlight interviews, and announcements to keep everyone informed.
2. Dedicated Website: We will establish a dedicated section on our school website specifically focused on Long Island Sound initiatives. This online platform will serve as a central hub for information, featuring project highlights, educational resources, event calendars, and student contributions. Regularly updated content will keep the community engaged and informed.
3. Social Media Platforms: Active presence on social media platforms, such as Facebook, and Instagram, will enable us to share real-time updates, project insights, and student activities. Visual content, including photos and short videos, will be utilized to make our initiatives more accessible and engaging for a wider audience.
4. Video Documentation: Creating video documentation of student projects, field trips, and community engagement activities will be an effective way to showcase our work. These videos can be shared on our website, social media, and during school events, providing a dynamic and visual representation of our efforts.
5. Art Projects and Exhibitions: Student-created art projects related to the Long Island Sound will not only serve as creative expressions but also as communication tools. Art exhibitions within the school and potentially in collaboration with local galleries will draw attention to the importance of environmental conservation and the Long Island Sound initiatives.
6. Student Symposium: The student symposium will be a unique platform for students to present their work and share their experiences. This event, open to parents and the wider community, will allow for direct interaction, fostering a deeper understanding of the projects and their impact.
7. Community Workshops: Hosting community workshops on topics related to the Long Island Sound will facilitate two-way communication. These sessions will provide an opportunity for community members to learn more about our initiatives, ask questions, and actively participate in discussions about local environmental issues.
8. Collaborative Partnerships: Building partnerships with local media outlets, environmental organizations, and community groups will amplify the reach of our messages. Press releases, feature articles, and collaborative events will ensure that our work is communicated through various channels.

These communication strategies are designed to create a comprehensive and inclusive narrative around our Long Island Sound initiatives. By utilizing multiple mediums, we aim to cater to diverse preferences and ensure that our message resonates with students, parents, staff, and the broader community. (jefferson)

Why is this an exemplary example?

This answer clearly and thoroughly describes multiple communication strategies and audiences to be engaged. Having a number of strategies is important to make sure the project is being shared to a wider range of audiences.

How will your school community benefit from being a Long Island Sound School?

—clearly describe specific ways the school community will benefit from being a LISS

Being a Long Island Sound School offers numerous benefits to our school community, encompassing educational, environmental, and community-oriented advantages.

1. Environmental Education: In-Depth Understanding: Our students will gain a profound understanding of the local ecosystem, marine life, and the significance of the Long Island Sound. This knowledge provides a hands-on and immersive learning experience, fostering environmental awareness and appreciation.
2. Stewardship and Conservation: Environmental Stewardship: By being a Long Island Sound School, we instill a sense of environmental stewardship within our students. They become advocates for the protection and conservation of the Sound, contributing to a healthier local environment.
3. Community Engagement: Community Collaboration: Our involvement as a Long Island Sound School fosters collaboration within the community. Engaging in projects and initiatives related to the Sound encourages teamwork and partnerships with local organizations, community members, and other schools.
4. Hands-On Experiences: Field Trips and Activities: As a designated Long Island Sound School, our students benefit from specialized field trips, interactive activities, and access to resources that deepen their connection to the marine environment. These experiences enhance their learning and provide valuable insights into real-world environmental issues.
5. Sense of Place: Local Identity: Designation as a Long Island Sound School strengthens our connection to the local environment. It builds a sense of pride and identity within the school community, fostering a shared responsibility for the well-being of the Long Island Sound.
6. Citizen Science Engagement: Active Participation: Our school community actively participates in citizen science initiatives related to the Long Island Sound. This engagement not only contributes valuable data to ongoing research but also cultivates a sense of responsibility among students, staff, and families.
7. Career Opportunities: Career Paths: Being a Long Island Sound School opens up opportunities for students to explore potential career paths related to marine biology, environmental science, and conservation. It broadens their horizons and connects their education to real-world applications.
8. Enhanced Curriculum: Integrated Learning: Our curriculum is enriched with Long Island Sound-specific content, ensuring that students receive a well-rounded education that includes environmental science, marine biology, and sustainability studies.
9. Community Pride and Involvement: Sense of Belonging: The designation brings a sense of pride to the entire school community. Students, staff, and families become active contributors to the health and preservation of the Long Island Sound, creating a shared commitment to environmental responsibility.

In essence, being a Long Island Sound School brings about a holistic and enriching educational experience, aligning our school community with the principles of environmental stewardship, community engagement, and a profound connection to the local ecosystem. The benefits extend far beyond the classroom, shaping responsible citizens and fostering a deep appreciation for the natural world. (jefferson)

Why is this an exemplary example?

This answer clearly and thoroughly describes specific ways the school community will benefit from being a Long Island Sound School.