

Request for Concept Papers: Programs and projects designed to advance the Blue Economy

Thanks to the support of Senator Michael Rodrigues and the Healey-Driscoll administration, UMass Dartmouth has received \$8 million in federal pandemic relief funding to support campus Blue Economy¹ Initiatives. These funds have been allocated to support relevant strategic investments and advance state efforts to ensure our region can equitably benefit from the substantial opportunities presented by the blue economy, with special attention to the Gateway Cities of Fall River and New Bedford.

Figure 1 provides an overview of UMass Dartmouth's Blue Economy Initiatives, which is designed to include relevant programming and engagement from a diverse range of academic disciplines and programmatic areas.

Figure 1 - UMass Dartmouth's Blue Economy Initiatives: An Overview



This call for concept papers follows a similar request for proposals calling for capital requests earlier this spring that draws on these same funds. UMass Dartmouth faculty and staff are invited to submit internal proposals for funding to support relevant projects and programs that:

- Promote technology transfer and commercialization,
- support regional business development and entrepreneurship,
- enhance regional economic competitiveness and resilience,
- extend equitable access to jobs and career paths in blue economy sectors,
- expose students to meaningful career-relevant experiences and pathways, and
- increase the pipeline of skilled professionals in known areas of the blue economy.

¹ For more details on the regional "blue economy", see Borges, D. & Goodman, M. et.al. (2017). [Navigating the Global Economy: A comprehensive analysis of the Massachusetts maritime economy](#). and Goodman, M., Borges, D., & et. al. (2019). [Charting the Course: A Regional Assessment of the Marine Science and Technology Sector in Southeastern New England](#).

Given the central importance of advancing environmental justice and protecting marine and coastal resources and ecosystems, concept papers that address these issues – specifically as they relate to the actual or expected impact of “blue economy” industrial activities -- are welcome.

Purpose:

The objective of this call for concept papers is to inform the institutional allocation of funding the campus has received to support UMass Dartmouth’s Blue Economy Initiatives.

The blue economy encompasses a wide range of industries, including marine renewable energy, marine technology, aquaculture, coastal tourism, and the fishing and seafood processing sectors of the regional economy, among others². Campus Blue Economy initiatives aim to increase the university’s role and positive impact on the regional economy by making strategic investments in programs and projects that advance, support, and promote equitable and sustainable regional outcomes.

Eligibility:

This request for concept papers is intentionally broad and eligible proposals will inform campus allocations of available funds. All UMass Dartmouth faculty and staff are encouraged to submit concept papers. Interdisciplinary collaboration and creative concepts are strongly encouraged.

Process and Submission Details:

Please limit concept papers to no greater than three (3) pages in length, exclusive of any essential appendices, which should include a current 2-page CV for the author(s).

Up to \$3 million in funding is available to help underwrite relevant project and program expenses through calendar year 2026. Proposal budgets may not exceed \$500,000 unless a compelling case can be made that a larger budget can be justified.

Deadlines: Concept papers will be reviewed on a rolling basis with a deadline of June 28, 2024, at 5 pm EST. Concepts that show the greatest promise for advancing these goals will be invited to submit brief proposals and requests for funding support with the goal of committing all available funding no later than September 15, 2024. Concept papers should be submitted through InfoReady - <https://umassd.infoready4.com/#applicationGrid/1938488>.

The Provost will make funding decisions in consultation with the Chancellor’s Office.

Not sure if your idea/interests are a good fit? To discuss your concept or if you have any questions, you are encouraged to contact:

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² Ibid.