



## SEA Alliance: Change on the Water Fund

### 1. Fund context:

The SEA Alliance is a pre-competitive collaboration of retailers and seafood businesses aiming to strengthen human rights due diligence carried out in the global seafood supply chain, and to support individual and collective action to address human rights risks where these are identified.

Without prejudice to their individual business agendas, the SEA Alliance offers the potential for like-minded businesses to share intelligence, agree common approaches to identifying and managing human rights risks, and carry out joint advocacy activities, with the overall aim of using their collective leverage to bring about positive change in labour standards and human rights in domestic and global seafood supply chains.

In 2021, the SEA Alliance received funding from the Packard Foundation to increase industry leadership and SEA Alliance member alignment on human rights risks and increase confidence and knowledge to address these risks. Funding from this grant was allocated to seed fund this “Change on the Water Fund”. The long-term aim is to scale-up this funding through further donor grants and member-matched funding.

The “Change on the Water Fund” is one of a number of SEA Alliance focus areas as outlined in the SEA Alliance Strategy and Work Plan. This is published and updated on the SEA Alliance website: [SEAA](#).

### 1. Fund Purpose/objectives

- To accelerate change at fishery level and explore common indicators for measuring change.
- To pilot a collaborative model for addressing human rights issues that acknowledges shared responsibility for supply chains.
- To prove the concept that interventions in supply chains can address human rights risks and benefit fisheries, in order to facilitate more access to funding (philanthropic and from within businesses).
- To support improvements that help ensure the human rights of seafood workers are protected and respected, including in the following areas:
  - a) Access to effective grievance mechanisms;
  - b) Responsible recruitment;
  - c) In-depth human rights due diligence at fishery level (linked to a programme of improvement);
  - d) Gender equality and inclusion;
  - e) Training on workers rights;
  - f) Ensuring decent work at sea.
- To share learning on the level of success of different approaches with a view to encouraging uptake of replicable and scalable approaches.

### 2. Fund eligibility

#### 3.1 Applicant eligibility:

- Open to members of the SEA Alliance and their partners.
- Applications must involve collaboration between two or more SEA Alliance participating companies, with one entity acting as the lead applicant (and signatory of the funding agreement). Inclusion of additional stakeholders in projects is encouraged to demonstrate wider ownership of the activity, but responsibility for project delivery lies with SEA Alliance members.
- Members may be involved in multiple applications but may only apply as the “lead applicant/s” on one application per funding round.
- Applicants must demonstrate capability to manage any grant and capacity to deliver each project they are involved with.



### 3.2 Project eligibility:

- All applications must not contravene Competition Law.
- Applications must demonstrate they meet one or more of the Fund purpose/objectives.
- Geographic scope is limited to the fisheries SEA Alliance members are sourcing from at the time of application.
- Applicants should propose a length of time for their project based on what is reasonable and will deliver the best results; for successful projects, timelines will be agreed in the terms of funding. All projects should be able to demonstrate ongoing impact beyond the funding period.
- The Fund will not accept: applications which demonstrate a partisan political stance; one-off events/reports where there is no commitment to a wider piece of work that will deliver impact beyond the lifetime of the funded project; or programmes promoting religious beliefs, fundraising activities, support for individuals, or the delivery of ongoing services.
- The Fund is positive about learning and encourages sharing about the challenges of implementation alongside the successes. Where projects are unsuccessful due to the low capacity, capability or commitment of the applicant businesses, future funding applications may be declined if the panel is not confident these issues have been resolved.

### 3.3 Financial eligibility:

- SEA Alliance members or other stakeholders in the project must provide matched funding representing at least 25% of the total project cost.
- Funds received from this fund must be spent as per the period of time in the agreed terms of funding.
  - Where there is a deadline for funds to be spent, for example set by donor funding restrictions, this will be made clear as part of the application process and applicants must be able to spend any allocated funds during this timeframe.
  - Match funding provided by members are only required to adhere to the time limits set by the project terms of funding.
- The Fund acknowledges the overhead costs of delivering projects and expects these to be reflected in the applicants budgets. However, no general overhead fee can be applied.
  - Any requests for support to cover ongoing running costs must be justified in the budget (e.g. staff salary costs where no additional cost is being incurred due to the project).
  - Capital costs can be included, however the application must demonstrate how any long-term costs associated with this expenditure will be met.
- Applicant companies are responsible for any VAT recovery relating to their application.
- We are a living wage funder, all costs relating to salaries or consultant fees must reflect payment of the relevant local living wage, where this has been calculated.

### 3. Our Funding Principles;

- **Safeguarding** – the safeguarding of fishery stakeholders, including fishers is paramount. All applications must demonstrate how any vulnerable/at risk stakeholders will be protected from reprisals and potential adverse impacts throughout and beyond the project.
- **Accountability** –
  - to stakeholders - those the project is focused on, including fishers themselves. Demonstration of accountability and ownership of the inputs, and outputs of the proposed project by these stakeholders is important.
  - for findings – The Fund supports the principle of working with stakeholder to resolve any identified issues. If a project identifies human rights abuses all efforts must be made to mitigate risks, investigate and remedy abuses before any exit from the supply chain is considered.

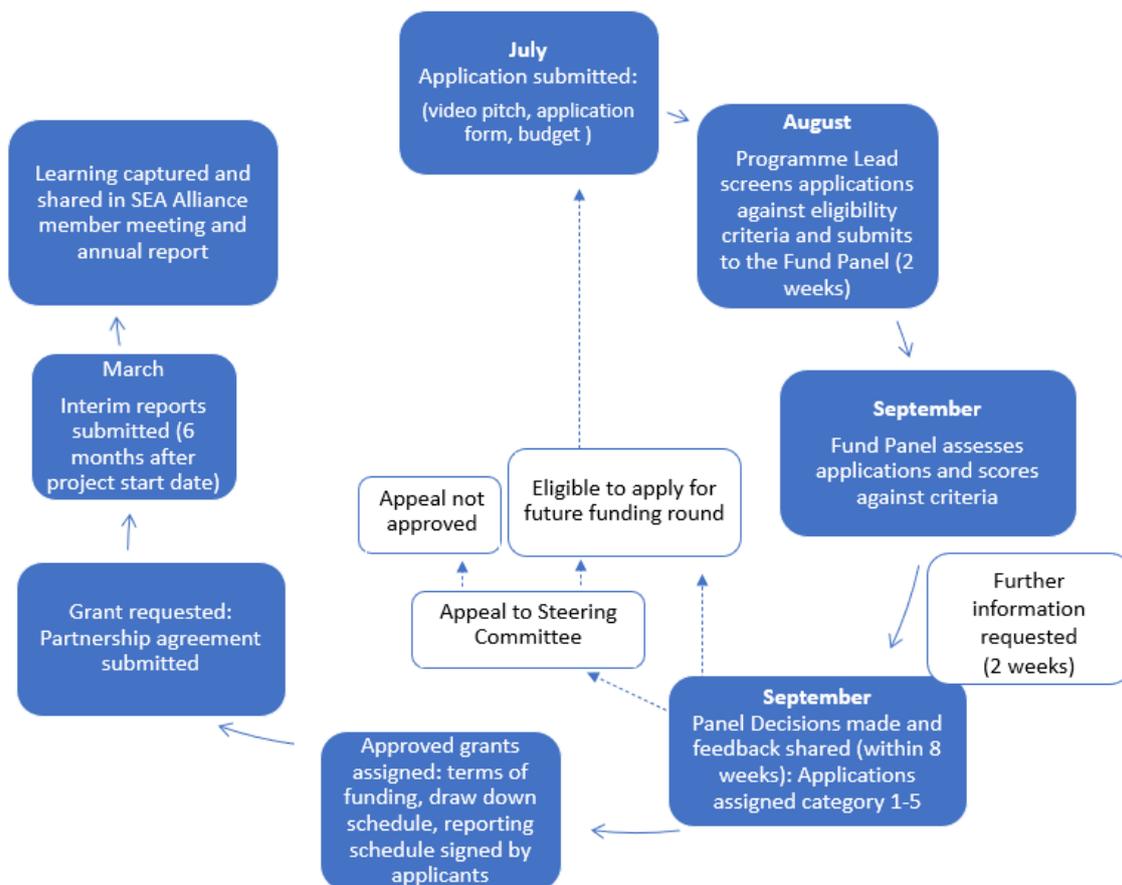


- **Outcome orientated** – the focus of The Fund is on change and impact. Projects need to demonstrate the *outcome or change* that will result from their activities whether these are short, medium or long term.

**Note:** For investigative, or scoping activities (e.g. human rights risk assessment) applicants must explain the wider piece of work this is part of, and also outline the planned follow up that applicants are committed to ensure it will deliver impact at fishery level in the longer-term. Applicants will be requested to demonstrate, after the end of the project, if the project progressed as per the commitments made in the application.

- **Commitment** - Applicants who are forward thinking and are engaged in progressing the prevention, mitigation and remediation of human rights risks.
- **Innovation** – applications that seek to try new approaches which have the potential to address human rights risks.
- **Openness to sharing learning** with other SEA Alliance members – what worked well and what could be improved.
- **Transparency** - in use of funds and reporting (further requirements below).
- **Legal compliance** – all projects must comply with local and international law.

#### 4. Application Process



Applications for funding can be made twice a year, in January and July, subject to availability of funding.

Applicants must submit the following;

- Video project pitch
- Proposal form
- Budget template



Following the approval of an application, a partnership agreement outlining the roles and responsibilities of the members involved in the application must be submitted with the first request to transfer the grant.

Formats, or guidance on the above documents are available at the end of this document in the appendices.

#### 4.1. Application timeline and decision principles

- Application form (max. 2 pages) and video presentation (5-10mins) submitted to Head of the SEA Alliance by the submission deadline.
- The Head of the SEA Alliance collates applications and shares them with The Fund Panel within two weeks of the submission deadline. The Head of the SEA Alliance will identify any applications which fall outside eligibility criteria for the Fund Panel to confirm ineligibility.
- The Fund Panel assesses all applications together and score all applications against The Fund criteria.
- There is a two-week period in which the panel can request and receive additional information from applicants. This may be by email, or a call with the Head of the SEA Alliance; all additional information must be received in writing from the applicant. This process is wholly focused on gathering information on the project, The Fund Panel does not make recommendations on how to improve projects eligibility during the application process.

If it is not possible to provide the requested information in the time period, the application will be eligible to be submitted in the next funding round.

- When the Fund is fully, or over-subscribed, the Fund Panel will use their discretion on which applications to approve, considering the following factors;
  - the scoring of applications – impact scoring will take priority.
  - the balance of the project's contribution to the different Fund objectives.
  - the balance of the projects between scoping/research activities and implementation activities at fishery or aquaculture farm level.
  - the range of projects and their contribution to learning for the SEA Alliance.

The panel is not obligated to allocate all of the Fund if the portfolio of potential projects does not reflect the full range of Fund purpose/objectives.

- Where applications meet criteria but are not allocated funding because of oversubscription the applicants are able to re-apply in future funding rounds.

All applicants are informed of the outcome of their application within 8 weeks of the submission deadline by the Head of the SEA Alliance. Applications fall into 5 categories;

- **Does not meet eligibility criteria** – not considered for Funding
- **Requested information not submitted within deadline** - re-apply with additional requested information in next funding round
- **Meets Funding criteria**, application approved
- **Does not meet Funding criteria**, application not approved
- **Meets criteria**, application not approved, eligible to re-submit application (e.g. Fund is oversubscribed)

Each applicant will receive a copy of the scoring and panel feedback. The Panel feedback focuses on meeting the fund criteria, the Panel does not give guidance on how to improve projects on the feedback form. Applicants are welcome to meet with the Head of the SEA Alliance for feedback. Incorporating the



feedback of the Head of the SEA Alliance or the Panel does not guarantee success in future funding rounds.

#### **4.2. Appeals:**

All applicants have the right to appeal the decision of the Fund Panel. Appeals should be sent to the SEA Alliance Secretariat (cc: Head of the SEA Alliance) for consideration by the SEA Alliance Steering Committee.

- Appeals will be considered at the next SC meeting and feedback given within two weeks.
- Appeals will be agreed by consensus, or by a vote where required.
- The votes of Fund Panel members who are members of the Steering Committee do not contribute to the Steering Committee's decision.
- Where appeals are upheld applications will be automatically re-submitted for the next Funding round.

#### **4.3. Accessing allocated funding:**

For successful applicants, the written confirmation of funding will come from the Head of the SEA Alliance and include the agreed terms of funding, funding draw down schedule and reporting schedule. This must be signed by the lead/s companies and returned to the Head of the SEA Alliance within two weeks.

The Head of the SEA Alliance will inform Seafish finance of the names of companies and projects to receive Funding. Seafish is responsible for making payments to successful applicants and projects and confirming receipt of funding.

Requests to draw down funds from Seafish must be accompanied by;

- a copy of the application approval confirmation from the panel
- signed funding agreement, including payee details and the payment schedule

Payments will only be made into bank accounts in the names of stakeholders on the partnership agreement.

#### **4.4. The Fund Panel membership:**

The Fund Panel consists of four SEA Alliance members and the Head of the SEA Alliance as co-ordinator. It is recommended that at least two members of the Fund Panel are members of the SEA Alliance Steering Committee. One of the four panel members is to be nominated as Chair.

- SEA Alliance members are invited to participate in the Fund Panel by the Steering Committee, with recognition of the need to reflect the perspectives of the different SEA Alliance companies (retailers, suppliers, food service) as much as possible.
- Fund Panel members cannot assess or be involved in discussions about applications they are associated with.
  - Any direct or indirect association must be declared when applications are received.
  - Where there is a conflict of interest, the panel member will recuse themselves and the remaining three panel members will make decisions on the application. Where more than one panel member has a conflict of interest the first will be replaced by the Head of the SEA Alliance, others will be replaced by another Steering Committee member. A quorum of three is required to make decisions on applications.

The Head of the SEA Alliance's role is to support the Fund Panel through the organisation of applications, reports, communication to applicants and the SEA Alliance participating companies, collating of learning and the contents for the annual report. The Head of the SEA Alliance does not have a decision-making role on the allocation of the Fund unless a panel member has a conflict of interest and is unable to review specific applications.



#### **4.5. Panel Transparency/Accountability:**

For transparency a list of all projects supported and Funding allocated will be shared with SEA Alliance members. The use of The Fund is accounted for in the SEA Alliance annual financial reports, without providing specific information on the location or fishery where projects are implemented.

For accountability The Fund Panel will report on impacts and learnings from The Fund in the SEA Alliance annual report including case studies. All company names or other identifying factors will be anonymised in this external report, where this is requested by applicants.

#### **4.6. Reporting and use of data**

Reports on progress are to be submitted to the Head of the SEA Alliance as per the agreed reporting schedule and format which aligns with the dates of the Fund Panel meetings (six monthly). Applicants must, on request provide updates as requested outside of this schedule to determine the project is being delivered as agreed; requests for additional information outside the reporting schedule will be kept to a minimum (e.g. short verbal/written update rather than a formal report).

Indicators used in reporting must include a measurement of the change the project has delivered (the outcome), not just activities completed.

Applicants are expected to be open to sharing learning confidentially with the wider SEA Alliance members through the provision of a case study for example at a webinar (Chatham House rules).

All information and data provided remains the property of the applicants. The SEA Alliance may use this data to support activities within its workplan, as part of case studies in the SEA Alliance annual report, and in any reporting to funders. All use of data by the SEA Alliance will anonymise the applicants and fishery unless agreed otherwise with the applicants. Concerns about confidentiality should be noted on the application form.

#### **5. Applicant obligations:**

- To act in good faith in use of the grant as per the purposes outlined in the application.
- To seek written approval from the Fund Panel via the Head of the SEA Alliance for all changes in expenditure of greater than +/- 10%.
- To inform the Head of the SEA Alliance in good time of any changes that compromise the ability of the applicant to deliver the project as agreed.
- To keep accurate records detailing use of the grant to be provided on request.
- To promptly report any serious incidents<sup>1</sup> which occur as part of the project which could affect the applicant businesses, project stakeholders, the Fund, and SEA Alliance materially, or reputationally.

We reserve the right to request repayment of all or part of the grant with 14 days notice if;

- There is a breach of any of the Fund terms and conditions outlined in this document.
- The applicants are unable to deliver the project as agreed.
- Funds have not been used solely for the projects activities.
- Applicants outsource activities to third parties who are not named in the partnership agreement without written approval.
- Funds have been used for activities that contravene Competition Law.
- There is a balance of funds remaining at the end of the project.
- The applicant businesses cease trading or an insolvency situation arises.
- Actions within the project, or applicant businesses could damage the reputation and integrity of the SEA Alliance.

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<sup>1</sup> We follow the Charity Commissions definitions of serious incidents [How to report a serious incident in your charity - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/how-to-report-a-serious-incident-in-your-charity)