



## SEA Alliance: Change on the Water Fund March 2024

### 1. Fund context:

The SEA Alliance is a pre-competitive collaboration of retailers and seafood businesses working 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.

Since 2021, the SEA Alliance has 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. This funding has been used to fund a number of innovative projects. Match funding has been provided by SEA Alliance member companies and other parties.

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 on the SEA Alliance website: [SEAA](#).

### 1. Fund Purpose/objectives

- To accelerate change at fishing fleet and aquaculture producer level and explore common indicators for measuring change.
- To pilot a collaborative model for addressing human rights and labour issues that acknowledges shared responsibility for supply chain partners.
- To prove the concept that interventions in supply chains can address human rights risks and benefit the seafood sector, in order to facilitate more access to funding (philanthropic and from within businesses).
- To support improvements that help ensure the human and labour rights of seafood workers are protected and respected, with a priority in, but not limited to, the following areas:
  - a) Grievance and worker voice mechanisms – supporting implementation and understanding to strengthen the effectiveness of mechanisms
  - b) Recruitment practices – making recruitment ethical and responsible
  - c) Due diligence at fishing fleet and aquaculture producer level (linked to a programme of improvement) and fishery/aquaculture assessments
  - d) Diversity and anti-discrimination
  - e) Capacity building and and/or training on any aspects related to worker's rights
  - f) Ensuring decent work at sea.

Through the Change on the Water Fund we want to support a collaborative model for addressing human rights issues that acknowledges shared responsibility for supply chains. Our aim is 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

#### 2.1 Applicant eligibility:

- Open to members of the SEA Alliance and their partners.
- All applications must be a collaboration between at least two interested parties and involve at least one SEA Alliance member (but it can be more).



- One entity must act as the lead applicant (and signatory of the funding agreement). The lead applicant does not need to be a SEA Alliance member, but the SEA Alliance member should be closely involved in the project, and ultimately the responsibility for project delivery lies with the SEA Alliance member(s).
- SEA Alliance members may be involved in multiple applications, but may only apply as the lead applicant on one application at a time.
- Applicants must demonstrate capability to manage any grant and capacity to deliver each project they are involved with.

## 2.2 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 and aquaculture supply chains that 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.

## 2.3 Financial eligibility:

- SEA Alliance members and other stakeholders in the project must provide matched funding representing at least 25 per cent 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.
- 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 stakeholders to resolve any identified issues. If a project identifies human rights abuses all efforts must be made to mitigate risks, and 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.
- **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.
- **Diversity, inclusion and equity** – we support projects that demonstrate a commitment to diversity, equity and inclusion, and we refer to the definitions of these used by the Packard Foundation (<https://www.packard.org/about-the-foundation/vision-mission-and-values/diversity-equity-inclusion-definitions/>)

**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 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.

### 4. Application Process

We have a rolling application process. The amount of funding available through the Change on the Water Fund is finite. Until the funds are fully allocated applications can be submitted at any time during the year.

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 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 and video presentation (5-10mins) submitted to Head of the SEA Alliance.
- The Head of the SEA Alliance collates applications and shares them with the Fund Panel. The Head of the SEA Alliance will identify any applications which fall outside eligibility criteria for the Fund Panel to confirm ineligibility.
- The Applicant will be informed when their application will be reviewed by the Fund Panel.
- The Fund Panel will assess each application individually and score all applications against the Fund criteria.
- There is a two-week period in which the panel can request 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. This requested information must be provided within a specified time period.
- As the Fund moves towards being 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.

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 five categories;

- **Does not meet eligibility criteria** – not considered for funding.
- **Requested information not submitted within timeline indicated**
- **Meets Funding criteria**, application approved.
- **Does not meet Funding criteria**, application not approved.
- **Meets criteria but** application not approved, because the Fund is oversubscribed.

On request each applicant will receive a copy of the scoring and panel feedback. The Panel feedback focuses on meeting the fund criteria. The Fund 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 applications.

#### 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.



#### **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. The successful Applicant is responsible for collecting and managing the match 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 and SEA Alliance Secretariat as co-ordinators. It is recommended that at least one member of the Fund Panel is member 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 where funding has been allocated will be shared with SEA Alliance members. The use of the Fund is accounted for in the SEA Alliance financial reports to funders, 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).

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> occurring as part of the project which could affect the applicant businesses, project stakeholders, the Fund, or 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)