

Mid-Atlantic Panel on Aquatic Invasive Species



2026 Request for Proposals

Proposal Deadline: March 23, 2026 at 8:00 AM EDT

Program Description: The Mid-Atlantic Panel on Aquatic Invasive Species (MAPAIS) is composed of individuals representing federal and state agencies, regional and academic entities, and private environmental groups from the mid-Atlantic region. Details about the members and the history of MAPAIS are on the website: <http://www.midatlanticpanel.org/>.

MAPAIS Mission: The mission of MAPAIS is to assist state and federal agencies and other stakeholders in developing and implementing strategic, coordinated, and action-oriented approaches to preventing and controlling aquatic invasive species (AIS) in the mid-Atlantic region. The driving force behind the mission is to strengthen cooperation, coordination, and communication on AIS issues within the region and beyond.

Call for Proposals Summary: In 2026, MAPAIS is offering a small grants competition and encourages interested groups and individuals to submit proposals for possible funding. This announcement lists MAPAIS priorities and provides information about the format and timetable for submitting proposals. We encourage broad participation from groups and individuals concerned about AIS issues in the mid-Atlantic region. A proposal submission must address an AIS problem.

Proposal Considerations: The following elements should be considered in the preparation of proposals:

- Activities that will increase public understanding of, and/or compliance with, prevention and/or control of AIS
- Clear description(s) of proposed actions, products, and/or other deliverables
- Relevance to the mission and priorities of MAPAIS
- Regional significance
- Leveraging of other funding sources

Program Priorities: The MAPAIS membership identified the following activities as high priorities for 2026. This is not an exclusive list, and priorities are listed in no particular order. Projects that address other AIS management topics will also be considered.

- *Conduct research on AIS issues in the region such as prevention, early detection, rapid response, and emerging invasions.*
- *Conduct innovative approaches to AIS control/eradication, or control/eradicate a high priority AIS population.*
MAPAIS is not interested in funding routine control projects. However, MAPAIS will consider funding control/eradication projects that can provide innovative tools and lessons to other groups looking to tackle similar issues. MAPAIS will also consider projects targeting unique AIS populations in the region, where eradicating that specific population will have a significant impact on the species distribution (e.g., by removing it from the region). Applicants are encouraged to review the MAPAIS list of [species of special interest](#).
- *Continue to develop vector management strategies for states and the region.*

In late 2009, MAPAIS and Maryland Sea Grant held a workshop on vector management as a mechanism to prevent introductions of invasive species. Recommendations from the workshop included improving management of ship fouling and live bait as well as addressing other ship and live trade pathways (<http://www.midatlanticpanel.org//wp-content/uploads/2016/04/AIS2009Report.pdf>). Proposals are encouraged that develop mechanisms for states and the region to pursue vector management options.

- ***Develop outreach and educational materials for classrooms and specific populations (K-Gray) to prevent the introduction and spread of AIS.***

Control and prevention of AIS requires a major change in human behavior surrounding non-native aquatic species. Mainstreaming AIS education into K-12 classrooms ensures children will learn responsible prevention early in life and spread this knowledge to their communities. Environmental education in AIS is also a subject that encourages the place-based, problem-solving, field activities that are so important to K-12 education. MAPAIS is interested in the development and implementation of lesson plans, textbook chapters, teacher development training, and other educational materials that reflect the standards set by the states and will broadly reach K-12 students in the mid-Atlantic.

Targeting specific populations, such as boaters, anglers, water gardeners, field biologists, etc. will help raise awareness and change behavior to prevent AIS spread. MAPAIS is interested in the development of outreach materials and informational resources that can help raise awareness and change behavior to prevent the spread of AIS.

- ***Encourage states to develop and implement AIS management plans meeting the standards set by the Aquatic Nuisance Species Task Force.***

MAPAIS recognizes that state management plans can provide a catalyst for state and federal funding and resources. The Panel continues to be interested in funding proposals that contribute to the development and implementation of plans (http://www.midatlanticpanel.org/mapais_resources/statemanagementplans/).

Funds Available: Approximately \$43,600 (total) is available to fund projects. U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) funds will be administered by the Chesapeake Research Consortium (CRC), which acts as the Fiscal Agent of MAPAIS as an award between the grant recipient's institution and Fiscal Agent. Projects that document how the funds can work as "seed money" or to leverage other funding are strongly encouraged. However, projects that would simply use MAPAIS funds to "add-on" to existing programs or that do not specifically address MAPAIS priorities are discouraged. Since total funds are limited, MAPAIS may request changes in the project scope of work and budget for funded projects. Total funding available for this program is contingent upon a USFWS grant to MAPAIS.

Project Duration and Award Period: The expected project period for these awards is approximately 10/1/2026 to 9/31/2027. Single year projects are preferred. Two-year projects are allowable but are dependent on the release of second year federal funds.

Eligibility: Any state or local agencies, institutions of higher education, commercial or non-profit organizations, professional, lake, landowner, watershed, tribes, and international organizations are eligible for funding as investigators or cooperators.

Consultation: Before submitting a proposal, applicants are strongly encouraged to discuss proposals with their respective MAPAIS state representative at least one week prior to the proposal deadline. The MAPAIS membership directory can be found at <http://www.midatlanticpanel.org/about-us/panel-members/>.

Cost Sharing and Matching: No cost share/match is required on MAPAIS grant applications. However, demonstration of how MAPAIS funds will leverage other resources or seed potential future proposals may be considered in the review process.

Proposal Format: Proposals must include the following information. Please use 12-point font, 1-inch margins, and single or double spacing. Please submit all documents as one PDF file. Do not include any extra materials (e.g., letters of support) as they will not be included in the review process. **Proposals must adhere to format instructions or they will be returned without review.**

- A. Signature Cover Sheet
- B. Project Summary (1-page maximum)
- C. Project Narrative (4-page maximum)
- D. Budget Table
- E. Budget Justification
- F. Project Timeline
- G. Curriculum Vitae/Resume for each PI/Co-PI (2-page maximum per individual)

A. *Signature Cover Sheet:* Principal Investigators are responsible for routing the proposal through their organization's research administration or grants/contracts officer to obtain all required institutional signatures prior to submission. Please include project PI(s), title, amount requested, start and end dates, appropriate signatures, mailing addresses, email, and telephone numbers.

B. *Project Summary:* Provide the project title at the top of the summary page, and then include an abstract for the project that is no more than 300 words. The abstract should summarize project objectives, methodologies, and rationale clearly and concisely.

C. *Project Narrative (up to 4 pages)*

- 1) Project Description: The project description should detail the activities that are to be accomplished during the budget period of the project. This description should include specific methods or activities that are proposed to accomplish the objective(s).
- 2) Benefits or Results Expected
- 3) Outreach Plan: The proposal must explain how the project results will be disseminated to appropriate audiences.
- 4) Previous MAPAIS funding (1-2 paragraphs): If you have received MAPAIS funding previously, please include the title and brief description of the project, amount of funding you received from MAPAIS, project dates, and the project status.

D. *Budget Table:* Include a table outlining your budget for the project. You should list each line item separately by relevant category. Appropriate budget categories include salaries and wages, fringe benefits, permanent equipment (if greater than \$10,000), expendable supplies and equipment, domestic or international travel, publication and documentation costs, other direct costs, and indirect costs. If indirect costs are requested, a copy of the federal indirect cost rate agreement must be provided or the de minimus (15%) rate may be used if no such agreement exists.

E. *Budget Justification:* Provide a description for each budget line item and how it was calculated. For salaries, provide the number of months of effort, monthly salary or rate, and any associated fringe benefits or rate used when calculating the request.

F. *Project Timeline:* Include project schedule, anticipated milestone, and specific anticipated outcomes of the project, such as publications, educational materials, or workshop reports

G. *Curriculum vitae* (2 pages maximum per individual) for the project lead and co-participants.

Completing and Submitting Your Application: Please combine all written components of the proposal into one PDF file. Submit this combined document electronically to the following e-mail address: mapais-proposals@chesapeake.org by no later than 8:00 AM EDT on March 23, 2026. Late submissions will not be accepted; incomplete applications will be returned without review. Therefore, we encourage early submission. Applicants will receive an email acknowledging receipt of the proposal.

Selection Process:

- All proposals will be screened to determine eligibility and whether projects address program priorities.
- All proposals will be reviewed by expert reviewers, which may include MAPAIS members or other experts. Proposals will be evaluated and ranked according to:
 - Technical merit and feasibility (40%)
 - Relevance to MAPAIS mission and priorities, outreach and impact potential (40%)
 - Applicants' knowledge of the field and previous contributions (20%)
- At the spring meeting, MAPAIS will discuss the individual reviewer scores and comments to develop a list of the most meritorious proposals for funding.
- Projects will be selected based on available funds, requested funding support, technical ranking, and MAPAIS priorities.
- Notice of awards is expected by July 1, 2026.
- Projects selected for funding will be required to work with the Fiscal Agent to complete final budget sheets and budget justifications following funding guidance from MAPAIS.
- Project funding will be made available after MAPAIS receives notice of award from USFWS (likely early Fall).

Grantee Expectations:

- All project leads must submit progress reports on an annual basis and a final report upon project completion. Continuation of funding is contingent on successful project progress and timely submission of annual reports.
- It is expected that award recipients will present final results upon project completion at a MAPAIS meeting. MAPAIS funding should be acknowledged where appropriate in all presentations and deliverables, and in subsequent related or derivative publications.
- MAPAIS reserves the right to divert funds to another project if project benchmarks are not completed according to plan.
- MAPAIS retains the right to use all documents and materials produced under these grants and disseminate them for use by others, unless other written agreements are in place.

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State Representatives: <http://www.midatlanticpanel.org/about-us/panel-members/>