



HAWAI'I COMMUNITY  
FOUNDATION

# Holomua Marine Initiative

## Funding Opportunity

### Strengthening Community Advocacy

**Online Application Deadline: 4:00 p.m. HST, Friday, October 24, 2025**

#### **Background and Overview**

In 2016, the State launched the Sustainable Hawai'i Initiative, a multi-pronged effort to ensure a healthy environment and economy for Hawai'i's people. As part of this effort, the Department of Land and Natural Resources (DLNR) committed to effectively manage Hawai'i's nearshore marine resources and ecosystems.

Hawai'i has led the nation in its contributions towards the achievement of international conservation goals of protecting and effectively managing marine resources and ecosystems. Through the Holomua Marine Initiative, DLNR has outlined how its Division of Aquatic Resources (DAR) will work in partnership with communities to build on effective traditional management practices and knowledge, along with guidance from fishers, cultural and scientific experts, and community leaders, to effectively manage Hawai'i's nearshore marine areas.

#### **Holomua Marine Initiative Vision and Goal**

[DAR's vision for the Initiative](#) is "for healthy marine ecosystems and abundant nearshore resources that allow the people of Hawai'i to enjoy coastal waters, support livelihoods, and feed Hawai'i's families". DAR's goal for the Initiative is "effectively manage Hawai'i's nearshore marine resources through holistic management strategies and partnerships centered around community priorities, cultural practices, and local knowledge".

DAR has identified four pillars to achieving shared nearshore marine management goals.

1. **Place-Based Planning:** Identify and develop management strategies for improved marine management in partnership with communities and stakeholders at local to regional scales.
2. **Pono Practices:** Encourage responsible behavior guided by Hawaiian values and perspectives through education and outreach, rules, strengthened enforcement, and local partnerships.

3. **Monitoring:** Measure and documents current conditions, tracks progress following implementation of new management approaches, and uses data to identify areas where management actions need to be adapted.
4. **Protection and Restoration:** Build on existing strategies to prevent damage to fragile nearshore ecosystems from invasive species, disease, and environmental damage events and expands efforts to restore and enhance impacted areas.

The Initiative carries forward commitments made by public and private organizations that launched the [Aloha+Challenge](#), a statewide commitment to achieve Hawaii's sustainability goals and framework to implement the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals, and by partners who issued the [Promise to Pae'āina](#), which is a collective commitment for measurable change in Hawai'i's ocean.

Created by the Hawai'i Community Foundation (HCF), the CHANGE Framework strives to create a shared movement to solve Hawai'i's greatest challenges. Through a common set of data, the Framework identifies Hawai'i's strengths, gaps, and opportunities so that efforts can be aligned to take collective action. HCF puts the Framework into action by supporting networks that encompass a broad range of partners who are working to achieve a shared goal and have a commitment to equity. HCF supports the efforts of the Holomua Marine Initiative through this lens of the CHANGE Framework.

## **PURPOSE**

The purpose of this funding opportunity is to strengthen the capacity for effective advocacy in community organizations and programs in Hawai'i that make meaningful contributions to achieving the collective goal of the Holomua Marine Initiative, which focuses on effectively managed nearshore marine resources in Hawai'i with strong community co-management.

## **GRANT FOCUS**

The primary focus of this opportunity is to provide capacity support and training for communities in Hawai'i on a range of topics that will help to further their abilities to advocate for policy goals that underpin effective management of marine resources and ecosystems. The types of training support to be provided may include but are not limited to:

- Exploring and identifying community and organizational advocacy goals;
- Understanding of the legislative process and opportunities therein to have positive impact on local and state decision-making;
- Strengthening advocacy knowledge and skills, including the preparation and delivery of testimony, understanding the rules related to advocacy and lobbying, etc.;
- Agreeing on advocacy pathways to support community-identified advocacy goals;
- Collaborating with partners to support community-identified site-specific and state-wide advocacy goals; and,
- Articulating how place-based advocacy priorities connect to collective efforts to achieve effective nearshore marine management.

## **ELIGIBILITY & REQUIREMENTS**

Applicants must fall into one of three (3) following categories:

- a nonprofit organization in the State of Hawai'i with a 501(c)(3) tax-exempt status;
- a community group with a geographically delineated area of responsibility, i.e., residents of a community, lineal descendants of a moku or ahupua'a, concerned citizens of an area, etc. in the state of Hawai'i;
- or a community group with a marine use or activity focus, i.e., fishers group, limu hui, dive association, etc.
- Existing and former HCF Holomua Marine Initiative grantees, partners, and applicants who are engaged with the Holomua Marine Initiative network will be prioritized for award.

Groups that are not an organization with 501(c)(3) status must have valid fiscal sponsors with 501(c)(3) status to submit the application and manage the grant funds on their behalf. Fiscal sponsors must be based in the state of Hawai'i.

1. Organizations with any past due HCF final reports are not eligible to apply. To ensure eligibility, submit any outstanding final reports to HCF, or request a no cost extension, no later than the submission deadline for this funding opportunity.
2. Matching resources of a minimum 50% are required and may consist of cash or other grants, in-kind services and/or volunteer time. Sources of match need to be identified in the proposal and in progress or final reports.

Applicants agree to the following requirements of this funding opportunity:

- Commit to working collaboratively with the HCF Marine Advocacy Cohort Convenor - on activities that contribute to strengthening organization and community capacity to advocate for decisions that supports the goal of effectively managed nearshore marine areas with strong community engagement;
- Commit to participating in a one-year program of gatherings, learning sessions and exchanges, and targeted capacity building activities as part of a cohort of communities collectively working toward strengthening advocacy (HCF anticipates virtual learnings sessions weekly from December-April and bi-monthly June-December, one-on-one coaching/mentoring office hours as needed or requested, and at least one in-person activity, event, or gathering);
- Identify at least two participants from the applicant organization or community group who are in key positions of organization and program leadership to represent the group in cohort gatherings, events, and activities for the one-year period.

## **Funding**

Grant requests for up to 10% of current annual operating budgets or no more than \$10,000 USD will be considered. HCF anticipates awarding 20-25 grants. Awards will be used for participation in a one-year Community Advocacy Cohort, December 2025 through December, 2026.

## **Grant Term**

Grant requests for a duration of 12 months (1 year) will be considered.

## Reporting

Grantees will be required to submit a final report and financial report to HCF.

## TIMELINE/KEY DATES

Description	Date
Funding Opportunity (FO) Release	September 10, 2025
Virtual Information Session*	September 26, 2025
Application Deadline	October 24, 2025
Anticipated Notification Time Frame	December 5, 2025

*[\\*To register for the virtual information session, please click this link.](#)*

## APPLICATION PROCESS

### Online Application

This application is available for online submission through the Hawai'i Community Foundation's Grants Portal. New users may register for an account here

[https://hawaiicf.smartsimple.com/s\\_Login.jsp](https://hawaiicf.smartsimple.com/s_Login.jsp). Registered users may log in to their account to submit an application. Please give yourself adequate time before the submission deadline to access the system and familiarize yourself with the application process and requirements.

Please reference our [Applicant User Guide](#) for further instructions.

### Instructions

- Only complete and timely applications will be accepted.
- The online application has fillable boxes with character limits. The character counts in MS Word may not match the character counts in the application. If you cut and paste your work into the application, please be sure your text fits the space provided.

## ORGANIZATION PROFILE

As part of the online application your organization profile must be certified prior to submission of grant applications and must be certified annually. Information needed to complete your organization's profile includes, but is not limited to, the following:

- IRS 501(c)(3) determination letter (not required if previously applied to the Foundation or if applying through a fiscal sponsor)
- Number of full-time, part-time, or regular volunteer staff
- Organization Mission
- Service Location(s)
- Types of services provided (including age, gender, and target populations served)
- Financial Statements
  - Annual Operating budget for current year
  - Income statement (or profit/loss statement) for the most recently completed fiscal year

- Balance sheet for the most recently completed fiscal year
- Audited financial statements are preferred but not required
- Local units of national organizations must submit local unit financial information
- Board of Directors List (currently dated)
- If you are using a fiscal sponsor, please be sure that they complete their organization profile including the certification requirement prior to the Funding Opportunity Application Deadline.

## APPLICATION

The application consists of 4 tabs. Information needed to complete your application includes, but is not limited to the following:

- **Program Overview:**
  - Provide general information and characteristics about the program including program title, duration, program location(s), ages and genders served, and the CHANGE sector(s) your program most closely aligns with.
  - For more information about the CHANGE framework, please visit our website <https://www.hawaiicommunityfoundation.org/change>.
  - If you have a fiscal sponsor, you will be asked to identify your fiscal sponsor. Please note, your fiscal sponsor must first be registered in the Grants Portal prior to submitting your application.
- **Program Information:**
  - **Organization Description:** Describe the history and mission of the organization/program as well as your organization's vision and aspirations. *(Maximum 2,500 characters = ¾ page)*
  - **Program Summary:** Summarize your advocacy aims and indicate how they are linked to your organization's mission and make strategic impact on achieving effective marine management with strong community engagement. What advocacy skills are you interested in learning about to support that work? *(Maximum 2,500 characters = ¾ page)*
  - **Problem or Opportunity:** Describe the advocacy need or opportunity you are trying to address and why this is critical. *(Maximum 3,000 characters = ¾ page)*
  - **Program Activities:** Describe any advocacy efforts or activities you are interested in exploring in support of your organization's mission and achieving effective marine management with strong community engagement. How would you like to apply the advocacy skills are you interested in learning about to support your work? *(Maximum 3,500 characters = 1 page)*
  - **Expected Results:** Describe what you hope to achieve through stronger advocacy skills, and how you would measure the positive impact of advocacy efforts. *(Maximum 3,500 characters = 1 page)*
- **Budget:** Provide your total program budget, amount requested through this application, and upload a copy of your program's budget, showing income and expenses, indicating sources of income that are pending and secured.

- **Support Documents & Certification:** Upload any additional required documents as listed in the application guidelines. If you are using a fiscal sponsor, please be sure that they certify your application prior to submission.

## ADDITIONAL REQUIRED DOCUMENTS

Please use this space to provide:

1. list of partners engaged with the Holomua Marine Initiative network;
2. proposal budget narrative; and,
3. any organizational strategies or action plans that link your program and the needs identified in your proposal to the goal of effectively managed marine resources with strong community engagement. (Please Note: These documents are not required, however, if your organization has these documents, they would be helpful).

## FISCAL SPONSORS

Please reference our [External User Guide](#) for more information regarding fiscal sponsorship.

- Fiscal sponsors must have an account in the portal. Their profile must include their IRS 501(c)(3) determination letter and up-to-date financial documents.
- Required Documentation to be uploaded to the application:
  - Resolution by fiscal sponsor's board of directors authorizing fiscal sponsorship
  - Fiscal sponsor's agreement form

*Both forms can be found at: <http://www.hawaiicommunityfoundation.org/grants/fiscal-sponsor-materials>*
- Starting July 28, 2025, fiscal sponsors will be required to certify the application before it can be submitted by the applicant. To do so, the applicant must invite the fiscal sponsor to collaborate on the draft application. Please reference this [video](#) and our [External User Guide](#) on how to invite collaborators. The fiscal sponsor as a collaborator can then check the Fiscal Sponsor certification box under Supporting Documents & Certification.

## RESOURCES

Applicants may use this [LINK to an HCF Holomua Marine Initiative Budget Form Template](#).

## EVALUATION OF PROPOSALS

Proposals will be evaluated against the following criteria:

1. Organization's mission and capacity to deliver projects or programs, and alignment of organization mission with the goal of effective nearshore marine management with strong community engagement.
2. Urgency of problem or opportunity to be addressed if awarded.
3. Partnerships, particularly with the Holomua Marine network, communities and community-based organizations, in place to support and contribute to the organization's projects and programs.
4. Strategic impact of proposed activities and expected results.
5. Soundness of organizational capacity for fiscal management of funds and resources for its projects and programs.

## **INFORMATION SESSION**

A virtual information session about this funding opportunity, the HCF Grants Portal, and procedures for creating an account in the HCF system and submitting a proposal will be conducted on September 26, 2025 at 11:00AM. Those who intend to participate should [register HERE using this link.](#)

## **DEADLINE**

**Submit your application by clicking the “Submit” button at the end of the application no later than 4:00 p.m. HST, Friday, October 24, 2025**

## **CONTACT INFORMATION**

Please visit the Holomua Marine Initiative [website](#) for more information about the Initiative  
If you have additional questions about this funding opportunity, these guidelines, or the Holomua Marine Initiative you may contact:

Tiare Holm by phone at 808-566-5573 or via email at [tholm@hcf-hawaii.org](mailto:tholm@hcf-hawaii.org)

Neighbor Islands may call our toll-free number at 1-888-731-3863

For technical assistance with the online application process, please submit a support ticket at <https://www.hawaiicommunityfoundation.org/web/support-tickets>.