



Holomua Marine Initiative Fund

Pāpio Grants

Funding Opportunity

Online Application Deadlines for 2026:

Q1 – Friday, March 20, 2026, 4:00 p.m. HST

Q2 – Friday, May 15, 2026, 4:00 p.m. HST

Q3 – Friday, August 28, 2026, 4:00 p.m. HST

Q4 – Friday, November 6, 2026, 4:00 p.m. HST

OVERVIEW

Background

In 2016, during a meeting of the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) hosted by Hawai'i State, the state responded to the call from the Pacific regional and international community to achieve effective management of nearshore marine and 'āina resources. The Department of Land and Natural Resources Division of Aquatic Resources serves as the lead State agency for achieving nearshore marine management goals of this effort. The Hawai'i Community Foundation contributes to the achievement of effective nearshore marine management goals by serving as a funding mechanism to support strong community engagement and co-management through a pooled fund – The Holomua Marine Initiative Fund.

“The Division of Aquatic Resources (DAR) launched The Holomua Marine Initiative as a way to work with communities to effectively manage our nearshore marine resources around each main Hawaiian island so that our local resources are available and plentiful, today and for future generations. This is a new community-based planning approach to ensure local knowledge is guiding marine resource management planning at every step in the process.

Building on the rich and effective traditional management practices and knowledge of Hawai'i, along with guidance from fishers, cultural and scientific experts and community leaders, DAR has outlined a path built on four pillars:

1. **Place-based planning** aims to identify and develop management strategies for improved marine management in partnership with communities and stakeholders at local to regional scales.
2. **Pono Practices** encourages responsible behavior guided by Hawaiian values and perspectives through education and outreach, statewide rules, strengthened enforcement, and local partnerships to encourage sustainable behaviors and practices in nearshore waters.
3. **Monitoring** measures and documents current conditions, tracks progress following implementation of new management approaches, and uses data to identify areas where management actions need to be further adapted.



4. ***Protection and Restoration*** builds 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.”¹

Created by the Hawai'i Community Foundation (HCF), the CHANGE Framework was developed to better understand and address the most critical, complex challenges facing our community.² For Hawai'i's natural environment to flourish, our people must maintain a reciprocal relationship with 'āina, honoring traditional knowledge and practices that long secured abundance. This shared kuleana can become a thriving and resilient root system interconnecting equitable cultural, spiritual, mental, social, physical, and economic well-being for all life.³ HCF supports the efforts of the Holomua Marine Initiative through this lens of the CHANGE Framework, with the collaborative aim of working with communities to effectively manage our nearshore marine areas and resources.⁴

HCF sees the clear alignment between the vision set forth by the DLNR Division of Aquatic Resources for the Holomua Marine Initiative and HCF's vision for thriving communities, shared kuleana, and a reciprocal relationship with 'āina that honors the knowledge and practices that has long secured abundance.

Purpose

The purpose of this funding opportunity is to provide short-term essential support to high-impact programs and projects that will achieve specific strategic outputs and outcomes that make meaningful contributions to effectively managed nearshore marine areas and resources in Hawai'i with strong community engagement, stewardship and co-management. Additional aims for this funding opportunity include:

1. engaging community-based organizations and non-profits with mission alignment to the Holomua Marine Initiative that have not yet received Holomua Marine Initiative Fund grants;
2. ensuring Holomua Marine Initiative Fund resources are reaching communities not yet engaged with the Initiative;
3. providing a funding opportunity for emerging and established community-based and community-driven organizations that have limited absorptive capacity; and,
4. ensuring Holomua Marine Initiative Fund grants are strategically geographically distributed.

¹ (State of Hawaii, 2026)

² (Hawai'i Community Foundation, 2026)

³ (Hawaii Community Foundation, 2026)

⁴ (Hawaii Community Foundation, 2026)



Grant Focus

The priorities for Papio Grants will include the following focal areas:

- **Capacity:** Projects/programs that strengthen community or organization capacity to deliver programs and results toward effective community co-management of nearshore marine areas. Examples could include (but are not limited to) strengthening technical capacity for ecosystem protection & restoration, leadership and organizational effectiveness, planning and evaluation, management, communications, advocacy, education, traditional knowledge, and cultural competency.
- **Coordination:** Projects/programs that strengthen coordination and collaboration between diverse groups or agencies to support the achievement of Holomua Marine Initiative goals and objectives. Examples could include (but are not limited to) cross-sector collaboration, strengthened coordination between state, county, and community entities, and coordination between communities, resource managers and academia on ecosystem protection & restoration, and biological & socioeconomic monitoring.
- **Data and Monitoring:** Projects/programs that improve data collection, analysis, management, and application to resource management, decision-making, and community awareness and knowledge. Examples could include (but are not limited to) monitoring programs, evaluation of management effectiveness, uplifting and integrating local and traditional knowledge into monitoring and resource management, establishing baselines, development of systems to improve data management, development of intellectual property agreements, and data collection and reporting in collaboration with communities.
- **Engagement:** Projects/programs that strengthen community engagement in effective management of nearshore marine areas. Examples could include (but are not limited to) community-engaged in planning and implementation of ecosystem protection & restoration, education, awareness, and outreach to various stakeholder groups, communications, strategies that broaden inclusivity, and community events that highlight shared core values between nearshore marine resource management and community development aspirations.
- **Governance:** Projects/programs that lead to the achievement of Holomua Marine Initiative policy goals, good governance, and effective management of nearshore marine areas. Examples could include (but are not limited to) development of policy and regulations, adoption of site designations and management regimes such as Community-based Subsistence Fishing Areas (CBSFAs), advocacy, strategic communications, and strategies targeted at ensuring community priorities for effective nearshore marine management are adequately reflected in all levels of decision-making, particularly within government decision-making.

Examples of activities that HCF will consider for funding include but are not limited to:

1. Activities that contribute directly to marine ecosystem protection & restoration.
2. Communications and social media campaigns, outreach activities to decision-makers, formal and informal education activities, and outreach to target communities.



3. Training, workshops, learning exchanges, mentorships, and community events.
4. Developing and implementing methods and protocols for use, protection, and perpetuation of community, traditional, and Indigenous knowledge.
5. Leadership coaching and mentoring, strategic planning, and organizational development activities.
6. Community-invited applied research.
7. Biological, human behavioral, and socio-economic monitoring in collaboration with communities, state agencies and a broad range of partners.
8. Management planning and implementation at site, region, island or statewide levels and evaluation of effectiveness of implementation of management plans.
9. Community-designed and led surveillance and enforcement activities that lead to decrease in rules violations.
10. Promotion and development of innovative entrepreneurial strategies that contribute to effective community co-management of nearshore marine resources
11. Other activities that will achieve specific strategic results towards effectively managed nearshore marine areas in Hawai'i, with strong community engagement, stewardship, and co-management.

ELIGIBILITY & REQUIREMENTS

Applicants must be a non-profit organization with a 501(c)(3) tax-exempt status. Organizations who do not have 501(c)(3) status may collaborate with a fiscal sponsor to apply for this funding opportunity.

Applicants must have completed and submitted all required final reports for any previously awarded HCF Holomua Marine Initiative Fund Pāpio grant.

HCF will prioritize projects and programs from community-based organizations that strengthen community co-management of nearshore marine areas.

HCF will prioritize organizations that have not yet received more than one grant from the Holomua Marine Initiative Fund.

HCF will prioritize applications from organizations that do not have more than one open grant from the Holomua Marine Initiative Fund.

HCF will prioritize projects that impact sites and communities not previously supported through the Holomua Marine Initiative Fund.

Projects centered on research must be community-invited applied research and applicable to effective community co-management of nearshore marine areas.

Proposals from government entities, including state and county, must be developed and submitted in partnership with community organizations to be considered for this funding opportunity.

Proposals from federal entities will not be considered for this funding opportunity.



Grant Term: Requests for projects with a duration of up to 12 months (1 year maximum) will be considered.

Funding: Grant requests for up to a maximum of \$10,000 USD will be considered. HCF anticipates awarding 5-10 grants each quarter. Maximum available funds is \$50,000 USD in total grant awards each quarter. Funding decisions are anticipated to be made within 45 days of each quarterly submission deadline.

Reporting: Grantees will be required to submit a final project and financial report to HCF, and may be required to submit interim progress reports.

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. 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 every 6 months. 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

APPLICATION

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

- **Program Overview:**
 1. Provide general information and characteristics about the program including program title, duration, area of interest, program location(s), ages and genders served, and the CHANGE sector(s) your program most closely aligns with.
 2. For more information about the CHANGE framework, please visit our website <https://www.hawaiicomunityfoundation.org/change>.
 3. 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:**
 1. **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)*
 - What is the organization's experience implementing this program and staff capabilities to conduct the proposed work?
 2. **Problem or Opportunity:** Describe the need or opportunity you are trying to address and why this is critical. *(Maximum 3,000 characters = ¾ page)*
 3. **Program Activities:** Describe the activities that will be completed to address the need/opportunity. Explain why you chose this approach and how it aligns with the goal of effective nearshore marine management with strong community engagement, stewardship, and co-management. Provide a program timeline. Describe how your project aligns with the priority of the fund you are applying. *(Maximum 3,500 characters = 1 page)*
 4. **Expected Results:** Describe what you hope to achieve and how you will measure the effectiveness of your program. *(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. *(Note: Optional budget template is available in HCF Grants Portal accounts under "Resources").*
- **Support Documents & Certification:** Upload any additional required documents as listed in the application guidelines.



ADDITIONAL REQUIRED DOCUMENTS

Please use this space to provide:

1. Workplan for proposed activities (Note: applicants may use workplan template available in the applicant's HCF Grants Portal account);
2. Proposal budget narrative; and,
3. Any strategies or plans that link your program and the needs identified in your proposal (Note: These documents are not required, however, if your organization has these documents, they would be helpful).

FISCAL SPONSORS

- 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>
- Fiscal sponsor's IRS 501(c)(3) determination letter

RESOURCES

Applicants may use the HCF Holomua Marine Initiative Budget Form Template and/or the Workplan Template, which is accessible in HCF Grants Portal accounts under "Resources".

EVALUATION OF PROPOSALS

Proposals will be evaluated against the following criteria:

1. Strategic impact and likelihood of the proposed project to achieve specific targeted outputs and outcomes towards effective management of marine areas and resources.
2. Organization's capacity to deliver proposed project or program, and alignment of organization mission with proposed project or program.
3. Urgency of issue(s) the proposed project or program aims to address and strength of opportunity for project or program to address it.
4. Proven history or convincing likelihood of methods and activities proposed towards achieving effective community co-management towards restoring healthy nearshore marine ecosystems and abundant marine resources in Hawai'i.
5. Partnerships, particularly with communities and community-based organizations, to support the design and implementation of proposed project or program.
6. Achievability and alignment of project or program's expected results with Holomua Marine Initiative goals and objectives.
7. Soundness of funding plan and organizational capacity for fiscal management of funds and resources for proposed project or program.



DEADLINE

Submit your application by clicking the “Submit” button at the end of the application no later than the following deadlines:

2026 Deadlines	Review Periods	Anticipated Decision Dates
Q1 – Friday, March 20, 2026, 4:00 p.m. HST	April, 2026	1-May-26
Q2 – Friday, May 15, 2026, 4:00 p.m. HST	June, 2026	30-Jun-26
Q3 – Friday, August 28, 2026, 4:00 p.m. HST	September, 2026	2-Oct-26
Q4 - Friday, November 6, 2026, 4:00 p.m. HST	November, 2026	11-Dec-26

CONTACT INFORMATION

Please visit the Hawai'i Community Foundation [website](#) Holomua Marine Initiative Fund [webpage](#) for more information about the Initiative

If you have additional questions about this funding opportunity, these guidelines, scheduled information sessions about this funding opportunity, or the Holomua Marine Initiative Fund you may contact:

Tiare Holm by phone at 808-566-5573 or via email at 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://hawaiicf.odoo.com/helpdesk/customer-care-1>.



References

Hawaii Community Foundation. (2026, January 27). *Holomua Marine Initiative*. Retrieved from Hawaii Community Foundation: <https://www.hawaiicommunityfoundation.org/strengthening/holomua-marine-initiative>

Hawaii Community Foundation. (2026, January 27). *Natural Environment*. Retrieved from Hawaii Community Foundation: <https://www.hawaiicommunityfoundation.org/change/natural-resources>

Hawai'i Community Foundation. (2026, January 27). *The CHANGE Framework*. Retrieved from Hawai'i Community Foundation: <https://www.hawaiicommunityfoundation.org/CHANGE>

State of Hawaii. (2026, January 27). *Holomua Marine Initiative*. Retrieved from Department of Land and Natural Resources Division of Aquatic Resources: <https://dlnr.hawaii.gov/holomua/>