

RESEARCH DEVELOPMENT FUND

APPLICATION GUIDANCE NOTES 2026



BACKGROUND & PURPOSE

Sail Training International (STI) is seeking to support small research programs (preferably non-profit researchers) - to engage in, or finalise, research into sail training, its associated programs and outcomes, maritime heritage, and/or education at sea, that could help support the development of sail training locally and internationally

The STI Trustees are keen to ensure that the funding achieves one or more of the following aims:

- To demonstrate the short- and long-term effectiveness of a sail training program or intervention.
- improve the development and delivery of sail training programs to improve trainees' personal, social, or educational development outcomes.
- improve the capacity to develop positive international connections between sail training participants.
- enhance the developing and understanding of maritime heritage.
- demonstrate replicable models of innovation and good practice in sail training.
- improve sustainable management and outcomes of sail training programs.
- encourage effective partnerships between sail training operators and other agencies/partners/organisations working with young people over the long term.
- Identify new and innovative outcomes of sail training programs.
- Provide credible evidence of how sail training program outcomes have been achieved.
- Greater understanding of the impact of sail training activities on the environment (and / or ways to reduce impacts)

The scheme is under the ultimate management of the STI Funding Committee, who have the final say in deciding whether and where to provide funding.

The following rules for disbursement of moneys have been agreed:

- Funding will be for research projects that are yet to be completed and can be completed within 12 months of the grant award.
 - **Note:** projects needing more than 12 months may be considered on a case-by-case basis.
- All applications will be considered on a case-by-case basis.
- All funding granted will be to a maximum of 50% of the total project cost.
- If no proposals are of sufficient quality the Trustees reserve the right not to fund any projects.

STI has set aside a total of GBP £10,000 to be awarded in grants for research projects to be completed before October 2026 (see below). Grant requests may be for any amount up to GBP £10,000.

GRANT TIMELINE

Deadline for Expressions of Interest	31th July 2025
Expression of Interest assessment deadline	30th August 2025
Deadline for Applications	30th September 2025
Grant decisions announced	November 2025
Research Paper Submitted by	14th October 2026

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ELIGIBILITY

- Applicants are to be non-profit research individuals or non-profit research organisations.
- Applications may be submitted by individuals, sail training operators, schools, National Sail Training Organisations or land-based agencies/organisations seeking to engage in sail training related research over the ensuing 12 months.
- Applicants must conduct research without discrimination on the basis of race, religion, gender, sexual orientation, age, or disability.
- Successful applicants will be required to complete a final research report detailing the outcomes and lessons learned from the project and an overall evaluation of the project.
- Applicants must agree to a copy of the final report being made available to the STI community through the STI Research library.
- Successful applicants may be invited to present their research at the following annual STI Conference.

GRANT FUNDS MAY BE USED FOR

- Implementation of a new research project.
- Continuation of an existing research project due to be completed in the ensuing 12 months.
- Personnel, facility, supplies, equipment, and other direct expenses essential to achieving the outcomes of the research.
- Staff or volunteer training essential to conducting the research.
- Justified indirect costs relating to the research project (maximum 10% of total funding requested)

EXPRESSION OF INTEREST PROCESS

If you are interested in applying but are unsure if your project meets the funding criteria, you can submit an Expression of Interest (EOI) initial application for the Research Development Fund.

The EOI will collect a few details about the proposed project for review by the Funding Committee. This form gives you the chance give a simple overview of your planned research project before submitting a full application form. The Funding Committee will be in contact to advise if the project meets the funding criteria and should continue with the full application form, or if they require further information about the project.

PLEASE NOTE: Submitting an EOI does not guarantee funding for the project.

PLEASE NOTE: You can submit a full application without submitting an EOI.

PLEASE NOTE: If your EOI application is successful, you will still need to submit a full application.

APPLICATION FORM

Please note that asking to submit a full application does not guarantee funding.

You will be asked to upload the following documents with your application:

- A copy of evidence of your not-for-profit status signed by an authorised notary of the organisation.
- A copy of the proposed research budget outlining the proposed expenditure highlighting where the development funds will be used.

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EVALUATION CRITERIA FOR APPLICATIONS

Applications are evaluated by the Funding Committee who will determine the extent to which they meet the following criteria:

- The proposed project's alignment with the stated objectives above.
- The potential benefit of the proposed results and outcomes to the sail training community.
- The capacity for the project to proceed should the funds not be granted.
- Overall value for money for STI and the sail training community.
- Evidence the project will be completed by the due date.
- Sound proposals for demonstrating outcomes and evaluating the project.

END OF PROJECT RESEARCH PAPER

The final research paper should be submitted to Sail Training International by the deadline above.

If findings or facts gained from this research project are published elsewhere, Sail Training International should be acknowledged.

All materials and findings submitted to STI are provided free of charge.

STI reserve the right to use any such material for marketing and promotional purposes.

Please Note: All materials should be provided according to data protection requirements and copies of signed disclaimers and permissions for anyone captured on photo or video should be available.

PAYMENT OF GRANT

Successful applications will be funded in the following stages:

50% on approval of grant and confirmation funding

25% on confirmation the project has begun and the 1st set of deliverables has been achieved. *Please email Alison.weston@sailtraininginternational.org with your update.*

25% on receipt by STI of a completed project report which must be submitted within 6 weeks of project completion.

IMPORTANT - SUBMISSION DATE

Online Expressions of Interest no later than 31st July 2025

Full Applications no later than 30th September 2025

If you have any questions about your proposed project and completing the application, please contact: murray.henstock@sailtraininginternational.org

If you have any questions about the project administration and financing, please contact: alison.weston@sailtraininginternational.org

If you have any questions about marketing materials required as part of project funding, please contact: Sam.leonard@sailtraininginternational.org

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Members: the national/representative sail training organisations of Australia & New Zealand, Belgium, Bermuda, Canada, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Ireland, Italy, Japan, Latvia, Lithuania, Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Portugal, South Africa, Spain, Sweden, UK, USA

Probationary Members: Czech Republic, Hungary, Brazil