



# GUIDELINES FOR APPLICANTS

## OCEAN RESILIENCE INNOVATION CHALLENGE 2023

The Ocean Resilience Innovation Challenge (ORIC) is inviting proposals for financially innovative, community-led solutions that build coastal resilience and reduce ocean risk. This guide provides information to applicants of the 2023 Challenge – ORIC23.

ORIC23 is financially supported by the Swiss Re Foundation and the United States Department of State. It is administered by the ORRAA Secretariat and the Global Resilience Partnership.

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## 1. About ORRAA

Our ocean is in crisis. Ocean heating, pollution, overfishing, rising levels of acidity and biodiversity loss are eroding its sustainability, incurring huge financial cost and loss of ecosystem services to countless communities, societies and businesses around the world. Investing in the Ocean is essential if we are to protect the world's precious coastal and marine natural capital, mitigate climate and financial risks, and build resilience in the communities most at risk. Community-led enterprises are critical to meet this challenge, yet they often struggle to harness the required ocean finance to succeed.

[ORRAA](#) is a multi-sector collaboration connecting the international finance and insurance sectors, governments, non-profits, and stakeholders from the Global South to pioneer finance products that incentivise investment into coastal and ocean Nature-based Solutions. **Our goal, by 2030 is to activate at least \$500million of investment into this space, and in so doing, help build the resilience of at least 250 million climate vulnerable coastal people.**

The heart of ORRAA's mission is focused on building the resilience and adaptive capacity of marine and coastal ecosystems and the coastal communities around the world that rely on them. We do this by driving investment into ocean and coastal Nature Based Solutions (NBS), as well as through the mitigation of risk multipliers like overfishing and pollution. These solutions will enable the Ocean and the communities which depend on it to thrive, creating greater economic security as well as social and cultural resilience for climate vulnerable coastal communities.

To achieve these objectives, ORRAA utilises its Project Portfolio Platform (O3P) to catalyse, scale, and accelerate investment into coastal and marine natural capital. Through Calls for Proposals, the Ocean Resilience Innovation Challenge (ORIC), and broader engagement, O3P surfaces innovative finance and insurance products developed with coastal communities and delivered by ORRAA members and partners. It also develops benchmarks, metrics, and resources to develop ocean resilience solutions.

The full list of projects that ORRAA is supporting is available [here](#).

## 2. The Ocean Resilience Innovation Challenge

The Ocean Resilience Innovation Challenge (ORIC) is a crucial component of ORRAA's platform to build a pipeline of investable solutions. Launched in 2020, ORIC has run two challenge rounds to date, supporting solutions that deliver a genuine impact in local communities, while also mitigating ocean and climate risk. Drawing on the multi-sector expertise of our members and partners, the Challenge surfaces, grows and scales promising solutions, acting as a catalyst to accelerate both locally led innovation and investment to protect the Ocean and the communities whose lives and livelihoods depend on it.

To continue building resilience in the regions that need it most, **ORRAA is launching a third Ocean Resilience Innovation Challenge**, in partnership with the Swiss Re Foundation and the United States Department of State. ORIC is administered by the ORRAA Secretariat and the Global Resilience Partnership.

ORIC23 calls for community-led novel and scalable finance and insurance solutions that build coastal resilience and reduce ocean risk for the people who depend on it. Challenge finalists will receive tailored mentoring and support in developing and promoting their solutions and connecting with potential investors. Selected finalists that graduate from the Challenge and meet pre-agreed criteria will receive next-stage funding of up to US\$ 50,000 to scale their initiatives and improve investment readiness.

Overall, ORIC aims to strengthen the solutions' potential. The ultimate aim is to help them build the resilience and adaptive capacity of the communities and regions most exposed to ocean risk. As more solutions are identified and supported, ORIC will continue to play a role as an incubator to accelerate innovative and scalable community-led enterprises. It will also create a community of learning across the solutions and help build a cohort of coastal resilience leaders around the world.

**ORIC23 will launch on 16 January 2023** with an open and competitive call for proposals. ORRAA is inviting proposals from individual innovators and experienced implementers, as well as start-ups, hubs and accelerators.

**Submit proposals [here](#).**

### 3. Support Provided

Selected initiatives will receive customised support to maximise their potential for impact, scalability, and investability. The Challenge's finalists will benefit from a program of tailored mentoring, communications, and leadership support to make their solution 'funding-ready'. They will also be connected to potential investors and partners from across the ORRAA network.

#### 3.1 Mentoring and Incubation

Finalists will receive up to 24 hours of mentoring support (8 hours per month) over three months by ORIC. Selected finalists that graduate from the Challenge and meet pre-agreed criteria will also be awarded next stage funding after the initial mentoring period and the Leadership Academy, to be used for implementation and scaling over the following 12 months.

The ORIC team draws on a pool of experts and consultants to provide the support required. ORIC uses a framework that takes the solution through a Value Chain Driven Viability Analysis, and a Resilience and Scaling assessment<sup>1</sup>, and then works with the initiative to concurrently develop and deliver a workplan and an action plan. ORIC uses a proven four-step framework to analyse and develop the relevant prescription for any given initiative. This framework has been distilled from several existing and overlapping business tools and models for mapping context, testing viability, customer

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<sup>1</sup> The Value Chain Driven Viability Analysis looks at the existing and potential viability of the solution within the frame of context, problem addressed and internal functions. The Resilience and Scaling assessment looks at what the potential for building resilience is as well as how scalable that model is.

appropriateness, and soundness of an idea. Throughout this process, there is a learning focus, examining what has been suboptimal in analysis, planning as well as execution.

### 3.2 Leadership Academy

At the core of the work with the ORIC finalists is a focus on the people implementing the ideas proposed. The complexity of factors leading to successful implementation requires people who both think independently and work together, often under pressure and in uncertainty. A Leadership Academy will be held to help both individuals and groups to navigate their personal and professional lives. The Academy will explore conscious and subconscious processes and dynamics based on executive management development practices from top business schools. Many of these sessions draw on case studies, examples surfaced through exercises as well as with examples from the participants themselves.

### 3.3 Investment Brokering

As part of the support given to the ORIC finalists there is ongoing networking activity between the initiatives and potential partners. The general thrust of the support given to the finalists is focused on viability testing and improving models, designed to improve the understanding of underlying problems to be addressed, and on the people implementing them. The aim of this support is to develop a set of solutions that are better prepared and equipped to present and pitch their ideas either in one-on-one meetings or at larger pitch sessions. There will be an Investors Forum where ORIC finalists and previous cohorts are given the opportunity to pitch their ideas live or over video-link to potential partners and funders.

### 3.4 Communications Support

There will be tailored communications support that will help ORIC finalists to promote their achievement through a customised social media toolkit that they themselves can deploy through their own channels. Over the time that the Challenge finalists receive support, their stories and journeys will be integrated into overall ORRAA communications.

### 3.5 Monitoring Evaluation and Learning (MEL) Support

Monitoring, evaluation and learning (MEL) support will be provided, including direct support and one-on-one calls. Throughout the mentoring process the assigned mentors and sector experts will keep track of progress. The learning distilled from the mentoring process will feed back into direct support to finalists. Please consult ORRAA's MEL Indicator Guidance, available [here](#).

### 3.6 Financial Awards

In addition to the support described above, there will be next-stage funding of up to \$50,000 for selected solutions that graduate from the Challenge and meet pre-agreed criteria. This will be awarded after the initial mentoring period and the Leadership Academy, to be used for implementation over the following 12 months.

## 4. Eligibility Criteria

Proposals must meet the following criteria to be considered for ORIC23. These criteria ensure that projects supported by ORRAA help to advance its mission to catalyse the investment of at least US\$500 million into coastal and marine natural capital through the development and deployment of financial products that build the resilience of 250 million climate vulnerable coastal people, by 2030.

### 4.1 Proposals Focus

The Challenge is looking for community-led novel and scalable finance and insurance solutions that build coastal resilience and reduce ocean risk for the people who depend on it.

Solutions (which can be projects, initiatives, business models, companies or specific products) must align with ORRAA's Financial Innovation [priority pathway](#).

The proposal must meet the following criteria:

- Be an innovative finance or insurance solution, or business model, that builds resilience to ocean risk in the most vulnerable coastal communities and places.
- Gender, equity, human rights, and biodiversity considerations are included.
- The team has proven conservation or business experience.
- The solution is located or deployed in a country or territory listed in section 4.2.
- The solution offers a potentially profitable revenue model.
- The solution does no harm (i.e., has no negative impacts on communities or ecosystems it is designed to build resilience in).

In addition, proposals must:

- Promote the development of ocean and coastal Nature-based Solutions (NbS) or mitigate risk multipliers, for example, overfishing and pollution.
- Align with and include the priorities and interests of local communities in the Global South.
- Deliver enhanced economic, social, and cultural resilience for climate vulnerable coastal communities.
- Be biodiversity positive, lead to either net zero or climate positive outcomes, and “do no harm” (do not result in negative impacts on communities or the ecosystems they are designed in which to build resilience).

### 4.2 Geographic Focus

Solutions must be located or deployed in one or more of the following coastal countries/territories. Special consideration will be given to projects located or deployed in Small Island Developing States (SIDS) and Coastal Least Developed Countries (LDCs).

**Eligible countries/territories:** Albania, Algeria, Angola, Argentina, Bangladesh, Belize, Benin, Brazil, Cabo Verde, Cambodia, Cameroon, Colombia, Comoros, Congo, Cook Islands, Costa Rica, Cote D'Ivoire, Djibouti, Dominica, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Egypt, El Salvador, Equatorial Guinea, Eritrea, Fiji, Gabon, Gambia, Ghana, Grenada, Guatemala, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Guyana, Haiti, Honduras, India, Indonesia, Jamaica, Jordan, Kenya, Kiribati, Liberia, Madagascar, Malaysia, Maldives, Marshall Islands, Mauritania, Mauritius, Mexico, Micronesia, Montenegro, Montserrat, Morocco, Mozambique, Namibia, Nauru, Nigeria, Niue, Pakistan, Palau, Panama, Papua New Guinea, Peru, Philippines, Saint Lucia, Saint Helena, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Samoa, Sao Tome and Principe, Senegal, Sierra Leone,

Solomon Islands, South Africa, Sri Lanka, Suriname, Tanzania, Thailand, Timor-Leste, Togo, Tokelau, Tonga, Tunisia, Tuvalu, Vanuatu, Viet Nam, Wallis and Futuna

### 4.3 Delivery Partners

To ensure solutions are community-led and driven by local partners, proposals must include organisations from the Global South as lead or supporting partners and should demonstrate how they will build stakeholder engagement to advance their objectives.

### 4.4 Environmental and Social Impact

Proposals must ensure they are underpinned by gender equity, and human rights, and support coastal communities in reducing their exposure or vulnerability to ocean risks by increasing their ability to build resilience in the face of uncertainty. Proposals should accelerate the delivery of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), in particular, SDG14 (Life below Water).

## 5. Application Timeline

The timeline to apply to ORIC23 is summarised below.

1. **The Challenge will open on 16 January 2023.** Prospective applicants can submit their proposals through the ORRAA application portal. If an applicant experiences technical difficulties, please email [ORIC@oceanriskalliance.org](mailto:ORIC@oceanriskalliance.org) for assistance.

Submit proposal [here](#). All submissions must be in English. All submissions must be in English.

#### Information Webinars

The ORRAA Secretariat will host **two information webinars** to present the Challenge's objectives and answer questions from prospective applicants. The webinars will be on:

- 1<sup>st</sup> February 2023 at 0830 GMT
- 1<sup>st</sup> February 2023 at 1500 GMT

Please sign-up for either webinar [here](#).

#### Applicant Questions

If you have specific questions about the application process, please email [ORIC@oceanriskalliance.org](mailto:ORIC@oceanriskalliance.org)

2. The ORIC application window will close on **10 March 2023 at 23:59 GMT**.
3. Proposals will be evaluated by the ORRAA Secretariat using Project Assessment Criteria to determine their impact, innovativeness, potential for scalability, and other key features. For more information about this scoring process, please refer to section 6 in the Guidelines for Applicants. Potential project partners must meet ORRAA Due Diligence to be considered for financial support.

4. ORIC23 Finalists are expected to be announced in April 2023.
5. Proposals that do not meet all the criteria but that are still considered relevant for addressing ocean risk and resilience by the ORRAA Secretariat may be shared with other ORRAA Members and partners that may be a better match for their support. Decisions with regards to such support fall beyond ORRAA’s remit and the ORRAA Secretariat is not responsible for how they may be taken forward.

## 6. How Proposals will be Evaluated

All grant proposals will be evaluated by the ORRAA Secretariat. Project selection and evaluation is also supported by ORRAA co-host, the Global Resilience Partnership.

Proposals will be evaluated using ORRAA’s Project Assessment Criteria. Projects are scored on seven key elements and this information is used to provide benchmark parameters on projects potentially eligible for financial support from ORRAA.

Impact	Innovation	Equity	Scale and systemic change	Team composition & Stakeholder Engagement	Risks	Additionality	TOTAL
20	15	15	15	15	10	10	100

**Impact:** The project demonstrates potential for i) improving the resilience of the most vulnerable people and places in coastal areas, ii) contributing to the environmental sustainability of coastal ecosystems and resources, iii) long term impact, either independently or as part of a larger initiative. Scoring is based on a continuous scale from 0-20:

- 20 - Strong environmental conservation and resilience efforts backed by science and high potential for social impact. The route to impact is clearly described and realistic.
- 15 - Moderate environmental conservation and/or resilience efforts and potential for social impact. The route to impact is clear.
- 10 - Some environmental conservation and/or resilience efforts and potential for social impact. The route to impact is unclear.
- 5 - Low potential for environmental conservation and/or resilience impact.
- 0 - No potential for environmental conservation and/or resilience benefits.

**Innovation:** the project aims to address an existing challenge in a manner that adds value, is sustainable and is practically implementable. Scoring is based on a continuous scale from 0-15:

- 15 - The innovation is completely new and new to the sector.
- 10 - The innovation is new on the continent and new to the sector on the continent.
- 5 - The innovation is new in the country.
- 0 – The project is not innovative by the above metrics.

**Equity:** the project proposal i) demonstrates potential to specifically improve gender equity, and human rights, ii) includes special consideration for vulnerable groups and communities (women, girls, Indigenous groups, people with disabilities, and other vulnerable communities) or low-income

populations, iii) outlines how women, children and other vulnerable groups will benefit. Scoring is based on a continuous scale from 0-15:

- 15 - Transformative. Strong gender equity, and human rights benefits; and involvement of vulnerable groups and communities.
- 10 - Sensitive. Attention to equity and integration of gender considerations.
- 5 - Some benefits for excluded and marginalized groups.
- 0 - No consideration for excluded and marginalized groups.

**Scale and Systemic Change:** The project demonstrates potential to i) be scalable and replicable (sector/geography), ii) lead to wider resilience building through deeper and wider integration into the systems in the focus area and contributes to systemic change. The proposal should describe what the short- and long-term strategies are to ensure results are sustained beyond the project and what the scale-up or exit-strategy is. Scoring is based on a continuous scale from 0-15:

- 15 - The project is highly scalable, replicable, and contributes to systemic change. Scale-up and exit-strategies are clearly described.
- 10 - The project is potentially scalable, replicable and can contribute to systemic change. Scale-up and exit-strategies are unclear.
- 5 - The project is highly context-specific. Low potential for replicability, scalability and systemic change outside of the original context.
- 0 - No potential for scalability, replicability or systemic change.

**Team Composition & Stakeholder Engagement:** the project proposal i) identifies the team composition relevant for developing the idea further, ii) describes the relevant experience, skill sets, networks, and in-depth knowledge of the team, iii) clarifies the ownership of the idea, iv) identifies the critical local stakeholders for project success and strategies to engage them. Scoring is based on a continuous scale from 0-15:

- 15 - The team has strong and relevant conservation, resilience, and business experience. The local stakeholder engagement strategy is clearly described.
- 10 - The team has some conservation, resilience, and business experience. The local stakeholder engagement strategy is low or unclear.
- 5 - The team has little conservation, resilience, or business experience. The stakeholder engagement strategy is unclear or absent.
- 0 - No conservation, resilience, or business experience. No stakeholder engagement strategy.

**Risks:** The project should note risks, both long and short term, which could impede its implementation, and how these risks will be analysed and mitigated. Scoring is based on a continuous scale from 0-10 (NB: Inverse scoring: 10 = low risk, 0 = high risk):

- 10 - Low risk.
- 5 - Medium risk.
- 0 - High risk.

**Additionality:** If a project proposed is part of a larger, pre-existing project, the proposed project must demonstrate clear additionality beyond existing activities, provide synergies with existing work, and not displace other funding. Scoring is based on a continuous scale from 0-10:

- 10 - Very unlikely to be funded and/or implemented without specific support from ORRAA at this juncture.



- 5 - Unlikely to be funded and/or implemented without specific support from ORRAA at this juncture.
- 0 - Very likely to be funded and/or implemented without ORRAA's financial support.

## 7. Project Due Diligence and Safeguarding

Before a solution can be awarded financial support, partners will be required to meet and adhere to ORRAA's due diligence and safeguarding standards.

**Due Diligence:** Any partners that are granted funding must agree to complete an organisational self-assessment, a risk register that is regularly updated, annual audits, financial reports, and narrative reports and evaluations.

**Safeguarding:** Safeguarding in its broad sense means protecting people and the environment from unintended harm. ORRAA undertakes environmental and social safeguard screening for every project to evaluate various social and environmental risks and opportunities, beyond those relating to reducing coastal vulnerability, but also including biodiversity, and climate considerations as well as potential repercussions on the most vulnerable and their livelihoods.

ORRAA expects partners to uphold social safeguards and best practices within their own organisations, as members of the ORRAA community. Environmental principles and processes that are key to ORRAA to ensure the adequate application of environmental and social safeguards are outlined and addressed in the organisational self-assessment that is expected to be completed by any partners that are granted funding. These principles and processes will also be evaluated at periodic stages throughout the course of any funding.

Topics included in this assessment, broadly include, but are not limited to: environmental and social assessment, management and monitoring; protection of natural habitats resettlement, physical and economic displacement; resource efficiency and pollution prevention; indigenous peoples; cultural heritage; labour and working conditions, etc.

ORRAA does not support projects that contradict the mission and policies of its members. ORRAA does not fund projects that involve the resettlement of people. Correspondingly, projects are excluded from funding if they:

- Cause significant adverse environmental and social impacts (which may affect an area broader than the project area) that are sensitive, diverse, or unprecedented; and/or
- Cause adverse environmental and social impacts (which are site-specific and few if any of them are irreversible) on human populations or environmentally or socially important areas

ORRAA will develop a clear and concise process for partners to report any safeguarding issues of concern and ensure that there are gender-appropriate contact points for any such reporting.

## 8. Frequently Asked Questions:

### **How do I apply?**

Please submit your proposals to the Ocean Resilience Innovation Challenge on the ORRAA website, at this [link](#). Applicants can start an application and complete it later. Draft applications will be saved on our system and remain available until the application window closes. Applicants can start an application and complete it later. Draft applications will be saved on our system and remain available until the application window closes.

### **Can I apply to the Challenge multiple times?**

Organisations can submit multiple solutions to the Ocean Resilience Innovation Challenge. However, these solutions must be distinct and cannot be two parts of the same project.

### **Who can apply?**

ORRAA is inviting proposals from individual innovators and experienced implementers, as well as start-ups, hubs, and accelerators.

### **How does the selection process work?**

First, all applications are screened for eligibility. All eligible applications are then reviewed and assessed by the ORIC team. Each eligible application is reviewed by two separate reviewers, one of which is a reference marker. The reference marker reviews all applications. If there is a difference in total marks on any eligible application between any two reviewers of 25 points or more that application is flagged for review and discussed by the assessors. The outcome of that review determines the final score of that application. The assessment review is evaluated against the assessment criteria, with a maximum of 100 points awarded.

### **Who will assess the proposals?**

Proposals are evaluated by the ORRAA Secretariat. Proposals selection and evaluation is also supported by ORRAA co-host, the Global Resilience Partnership (GRP), and our lead science and knowledge partner, the Stockholm Resilience Centre.

### **Who is providing the mentoring and subject matter expertise?**

We recognise that no one knows your innovation as well as you do. The mentors and subject matter experts have extensive experience in mentoring and coaching and are trained in supporting you to develop your idea further. Each mentor has at least 10 years of experience in providing this kind of support. The mentors come from a wide range of backgrounds and include entrepreneurs with a proven track record of innovating and scaling, through to academics and researchers. The mentors will work together in a structured way to provide optimal support to each ORIC finalist.

### **What do we expect from you?**

If your proposal is selected for support, we expect you to fully engage with the process and the mentors assigned to you. If you have any questions or concerns, you can bring these up with ORIC team.

### **What will the finalists win?**

ORIC23 finalists will receive a program of tailored mentoring, communications and MEL support and will be connected to potential partners and/or investors. In addition to this there will be next-stage funding of up to \$50,000 for selected solutions that graduate from the Challenge and meet pre-agreed

criteria. This will be awarded after the initial mentoring period and the Leadership Academy, to be used for implementation and scaling over the following 12 months.

The finalists will receive up to a total of 24 hours of mentoring support (8 hours per month) over three months. Part of the support given to the ORIC finalists includes ongoing networking activity between them and potential partners. There will be an investor forum and pitching session online or in person, where ORIC finalists and previous cohorts are given the opportunity to pitch their ideas live or over video link to potential partners and funders. Additionally, a Leadership Academy will be held and facilitated by subject matter experts. The ORIC finalists will be announced on the ORRAA website and on social media. They will have access to monitoring, evaluation and learning support, including through an online helpdesk, webinars and 1:1 calls.

**If my solution is selected for funding support, how will the implementation of funded solutions be monitored?**

Grant recipients will be expected to comply with various reporting requirements to be mutually agreed during grant proposal process. To learn more about ORRAA’s monitoring, evaluation, and learning (MEL) requirements [here](#).

**How does ORRAA define ocean risk and resilience?**

**Ocean risk** is defined in a 2018 IUCN report as: “a function of exposure to hazards arising from ocean change, and impacts resulting from external or internal vulnerabilities, which may or may not be avoided, reduced or adapted to through pre-emptive action.” Immediate onset risks include tropical cyclones, storm surge events, flooding and inundation. Slow-onset risks include sea-level rise and acidification, food security issues and impacts on human health and declines in biodiversity. Risk Multipliers include pollution, resource exploitation (including overfishing) and land-use change.

**Resilience** is the ability to adapt to changing conditions and either withstand or rapidly recover from disruption - often described as the ability to 'bounce back'. Improving coastal resilience refers to the ability to reduce the vulnerability of coastal communities, their economies and ecologies, even as their exposure and the types of hazards that they face increases. It entails investing in measures that enable adaptation and recovery as a result of informed choices to assess risk, minimize losses, reduce vulnerabilities and adapt to change with a variety of tools, data and services.

ORRAA aims to help coastal communities build resilience through the deployment of finance products designed to invest in nature-based or green infrastructure solutions, resulting in an increase in coastal resilience to effectively protect, restore and sustainably manage natural resources while strengthening capacity for climate adaptation.

**Who do I contact for more information?**

If you have questions about the application process, please email [ORIC@oceanriskalliance.org](mailto:ORIC@oceanriskalliance.org).