



Z Grants

Eligibility and Application Criteria

This document lays out everything you need to prepare a complete Z Grants application. Read it fully before you start drafting and reach out to MarAlliance at grants@maralliance.org with any questions at least two weeks before the deadline.

Eligibility Snapshot

Country & residency: You are a national of, and live full-time in, one of the eligible countries for this cycle: Belize, Honduras, Mexico, or Panama.

Occupation or enrollment: You are currently working on the sea, as a tour guide or enrolled in an associate, undergraduate or graduate degree at a local college or university.

Age: You are 35 years old or younger by September 2026.

Encouraged applicants: Children of bona fide small-scale fishers are especially encouraged to apply.

What to Submit

1. Shark and Ray Project Proposal (3 pages maximum) — must focus on shark and ray biology, ecology, education or conservation and include:

Title

Country, location, and target species

Short introduction and justification (200 words)

Objective(s) only include a maximum of 2

Activities linked to the objectives

Your indicators of success and how you will measure these

Project implementation timeline

Budget, following the required format below:

Budget Format

Item	Unit / Time	Local Currency	US\$	Total
PI stipend				
Field assistant(s) stipend				
Field travel				
Supplies				
Printing				
Stakeholder meetings				
Total				

Z Grants are intended for small field projects and local travel and costs. Ineligible costs include international travel or costs associated with conferences. Supplies and equipment purchases are capped at \$300. Stipend coverage is capped at \$500 for the PI/project leader and \$400 for field assistance.

2. Curriculum Vitae / Resume (1 page maximum) — A one-page CV or resume summarizing your education, experience, and relevant field or research work.
3. Proof of Age — You must be 35 years old or younger by September 2026.
4. Fisher Documentation (if applicable) — If you or a parent is a bona fide traditional fisher with at least 5 years of fishing experience, include a copy of the fishing license and identification, plus a letter of recognition from an associated cooperative, fisheries department, or justice of the peace, with clearly stated contact information.
5. Two References —
 - One from a teacher
 - One from an employer or peer who can speak to your character (not a family member, and someone who has known you for at least 3 years)
6. Video (2 minutes or less) — In your native language, explain your project, how it aligns with MarAlliance's mission and programs, and why you need the Z Grant. Videos over 2 minutes will not be considered.

What We're Looking For

Beyond meeting the eligibility and submission requirements, MarAlliance looks for candidates who are:

- Curious
- Good communicators and speakers
- Kind, supportive, community-minded, and diplomatic
- Committed, hardworking, and self-starting
- Passionate about marine science and conservation
- A compelling, well-prepared application and video go a long way.