

REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS 2026 Small Research Grants

Henry & Theresa Godzala Research Fund

The Rhode Island Natural History Survey seeks proposals for grants from its Henry & Theresa Godzala Research Fund for research that will improve our understanding of Rhode Island's natural history (e.g. biota, ecology, geology, and natural communities and systems). \$3,500 will be distributed in 1 to 4 grants.

Applications for a 2025 grant must follow the format described below and must reach the Survey office by **Monday, March 12, 2026, at 5 p.m.** The intent of this grant fund is to foster research activities of potential importance but of small scale that might not otherwise be undertaken. Therefore, a grant should comprise a significant portion of the overall funding of the proposed project and not be merely an attachment to a much larger pool of funding. Pilot studies, investigations by avocational naturalists, or student research projects fall within the vision of the grants. Grant funds may be used for travel; the purchase of equipment, materials, or analytical services; and/or publication fees. *Grant funds cannot be used to pay indirect costs (overhead).*

Applicants may be affiliated with an academic institution or conservation or science non-profit or may be independent researchers. Staff and board members of the Survey may not apply. Collaborative projects are eligible, but applications should be written with a single, named Principal Investigator. Students should list their advisor and committee members in the text but must make the application under their own names. Investigators may only apply for one year of funding at a time; investigators may make a second application for one subsequent year of funding, but new projects are encouraged.

All grant recipients will be expected to make a short, written report on the use of the grant funds and the results of the project as a whole to the Natural History Survey by close of business on December 1, 2026. This can be a final report if the work is done or an interim report if not, with a final report to follow as appropriate. Submission of an article based on the project to the Survey's bulletin, *Rhode Island Naturalist*, is strongly encouraged. The Survey shall be furnished with one copy of any publication stemming from the research, which will be deposited in the Survey's reference library. Any reports or publications benefitting from a grant shall acknowledge this support by name as: "Henry & Theresa Godzala Research Fund of the Rhode Island Natural History Survey."

To Apply: Applications should be submitted via email to programadmin@rinhs.org, with "Small Grant Program" in the subject line. They must reach the Natural History Survey office by Monday, March 12, 2026, at 5 p.m. Proposals received after that deadline will not be considered.

A complete application should be no longer than 3 pages (≥ 10 pt font, $\geq$ single spaced, ≥ 1 -inch margins) and should include:

- 1) Descriptive title of project.
- 2) Name, phone number, mail and email addresses, and institutional affiliation (if any) of the principal investigator (who will be the primary contact about the grant and project) and any co-investigators.
- 3) Name, phone number, mail and email addresses, and institutional affiliation of the supervisor or committee chair if the investigator is a student.
- 4) Amount requested.
- 5) Concise description of the proposed research including:
 - a) description and timeline of activities;
 - b) description of the importance of the funded activities to our understanding of Rhode Island natural history (its biota, ecology, geology, natural communities and systems);
 - c) explanation of the use of funds requested, including how they fit into a larger project and larger budget, if any;
- 6) if funded, where (payee, account, address, etc.) funds are to be directed. Note: if grant funds are for purchase of larger items or materials, it may be easier, esp. for unaffiliated researchers, for the Survey to purchase them with the grant funds and hand over the items.

Applications will be reviewed by the Science and Data Committee of the Natural History Survey's Board of Directors. Proposals will be assessed on criteria given above, particularly the centrality of the grant to the project, the originality of the project, and its likely contributions to our understanding of Rhode Island natural history. Applicants will be notified of the results of the review on or about April 3, 2026. If the recipient of an award cannot for any reason undertake the research substantially as proposed, he/she should promptly explain any departures from the plan to the Survey in writing and may be asked to return the funds if the activities no longer meet the grant criteria expressed in this RFP.

The **Henry and Theresa Godzala Research Fund** was created in 2019 by a dedicated, longtime Natural History Survey member in honor of Henry and Theresa Godzala, staff of the early NASA space program and lifelong supporters of science. It is funded by the beneficiaries of their estate and by members and friends of the Natural History Survey. Henry Godzala was born in Buffalo, New York, in 1925. He served in the US Army in Europe during 1943–45, after which he studied electronics at the University of Buffalo under the GI Bill. He and his wife Theresa moved to Florida in 1958 to take jobs with NASA at Cape Canaveral. Due to the classified nature of his work, his family knew few details of his duties, but it was known that he traveled extensively to NASA's tracking stations around the world. Theresa's career was as a secretary at NASA. They both retired in the late 1980s after taking part in a major portion of US space exploration history.

To promote ecosystem resilience, the **Rhode Island Natural History Survey** collects, organizes, and disseminates information on Rhode Island's biodiversity and ecosystems. We engage curious observers of all ages—professionals and amateurs, scientists and artists—in field-based experiences that build connections to science, conservation, and the natural world. Founded in 1994, the Survey is a member-supported non-profit that pursues its mission with databases, publications, and public programs including science conferences and the annual Rhode Island BioBlitz.