



Department of  
Environmental  
Conservation

# **GUIDELINES AND APPLICATION INSTRUCTIONS**

New York State  
Department of Environmental Conservation  
**Hudson River Estuary Program**

*Round 24  
2018 Hudson River Estuary Grants  
for  
Local Stewardship Planning*

*NYS Grants Gateway Application ID No.:  
DEC01-HRER24-2018*

**Application Due Date: (3:00 P.M. EST, July 11, 2018)**

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## Introduction

The New York State Department of Environmental Conservation is pleased to announce funding for planning projects that implement priorities of the Hudson River Estuary Action Agenda to conserve, restore and revitalize the estuary and its ecosystem.

Applications must be submitted through the NYS Grants Gateway (<https://grantsgateway.ny.gov>). Paper applications will NOT be accepted. Applicants are strongly encouraged to submit their applications prior to the application deadline. Late applications will not be accepted. For more information about Grants Gateway, please visit the Grants Reform website (<http://www.grantsreform.ny.gov/Grantees>) or contact the Grants Reform Team at: [grantsreform@its.ny.gov](mailto:grantsreform@its.ny.gov). The Grants Reform help desk/hotline can be reached at (518) 474-5595.

Grant application information is also available on the Department's website at [www.dec.ny.gov/lands/5091.html](http://www.dec.ny.gov/lands/5091.html).

## Timetable of Key Events

Event:	Date:
Application Period Begins	May 11, 2018
Question & Answer Period Ends	July 5, 2018
Applications Due	July 11, 2018; 3:00 p.m. EST
Award(s) Announced By (anticipated)	Approximately October 2018

## Applicant Eligibility

For the purposes of this grant program, the following entities are considered eligible applicants: Governmental Entities, Municipalities, and Quasi-Governmental Entities, including but not limited to Counties, Cities, Towns, Villages, or Indian nation or tribe recognized by the state or the United States with a reservation wholly or partly within the boundaries of New York State, or any combination thereof, Public Benefit Corporations, Public Authorities, Municipal Corporations, Soil and Water Conservation Districts, School Districts, and Community Colleges, and 501(c)(3) not-for-profit corporations whose projects are located within the eligible geographic boundaries defined in this RFA.

For this grant opportunity, a "Not-For-Profit Corporation" (NFP) is subject to New York State's Not-For-Profit Corporation Law and is qualified for tax-exempt status under Section 501(c)(3) of the Federal Internal Revenue Code, has an IRS 501(c)(3) determination letter to be incorporated in New York State and is current in their charities reporting requirements with the Office of the Attorney General.

Individuals and unincorporated groups are not eligible for this grant opportunity. However, an eligible applicant may apply on behalf of an individual or unincorporated group as a fiscal sponsor. The fiscal sponsor accepts responsibility of the grant, and serves as a fiscal conduit for a DEC-funded project, receiving and disbursing funds related to the grant, and administering the requirements throughout the DEC grant process, including final reporting of grant activity.

For Multi-Partner and Inter-Municipal Projects: If a proposed project involves a cooperative agreement or partners, only one eligible, designated lead applicant must submit the application for grant funding. The lead applicant must assume the responsibility for the project application, performance of work consistent with this RFA, and the State of New York Master Contract for Grants (MCG). Letters substantiating the collaboration from each partner are required. These letters are to be uploaded to the Grants Gateway in a single PDF (see "Applicant Partners" on page 13).

## **Grant Opportunity General Information and Conditions**

### **1. Funding**

Approximately \$350,000 is available from the NYS Environmental Protection Fund.

### **2. Proposed Project Timeframes**

All projects must have defined objectives, tasks, and deliverables accounted for in performance measures that can be completed and invoiced within a two-year contract period/term. Applicants should not begin their projects or incur costs until a MCG has been fully approved by DEC, and if applicable approved by the Attorney General and the State Comptroller. Time extensions beyond the contract term end date will be determined by the DEC based upon written justification from the Grantee. Applicants should not submit an application if they do not anticipate their project can be completed within the specified contract term.

### **3. Minimum and Maximum Award Amounts**

The minimum grant amount is \$10,500. The maximum grant amount is \$50,000.

### **4. Application Limit/Award limit**

Applicants may submit up to three (3) applications. Multiple applications may not be for the same project or project location. Additionally, applicants who submit more than one grant application will only be eligible to receive one grant award in this grant round, unless additional funding remains after all qualifying grant awards are made (at one per grantee). Additional grants for qualifying projects will be awarded to an entity already receiving a grant award in this grant round, starting with the next highest scoring application, in accordance with the scoring criteria on page 18.

### **5. Eligible Project Locations**

Eligible projects for grant funding must be located within defined geographic boundaries of the Hudson River Estuary watershed (see map in Appendix I). "Hudson River Estuary" refers to the legislatively designated Hudson River Estuarine District established in Environmental Conservation Law §11-0306, which extends from the Troy dam to the Verrazano Narrows and includes Upper New York Bay to Kill Van Kull and the East River to Hell Gate, focused on the tributaries that flow into any of these waters. The map of eligible boundaries may also be viewed at [www.dec.ny.gov/docs/remediation\\_hudson\\_pdf/hregrantmap.pdf](http://www.dec.ny.gov/docs/remediation_hudson_pdf/hregrantmap.pdf). A searchable Google Maps version is also available for download at: <http://www.dec.ny.gov/pubs/103459.html> (Data Set titled "Hudson River Estuary Grant Program boundaries" listed under the "Misc. Environmental Maps" Section).

### **6. Match Requirement and Expenditures**

Match is the portion of project expenditures not paid for with grant funds. Match can be from local and/or in-kind contributions. Local sources can include funding from other non-state and/or non-federal grant sources or from project partners. In-Kind contributions are non-cash donations provided by non-state and/or non-federal third parties, which can include equipment, supplies, services, and other expendable property. Matching share contributions must support the objectives outlined in the work plan.

Eligible sources of match funds cannot come from other New York State or federal funding sources. Applicants will be required to provide the sources of all matching funds using the Match Worksheet in the Grants Gateway.

For this grant opportunity, applicants must match at least 15% of the grant funding amount.

### **7. New for this Grant Round**

- Revisions were made to the eligible project types. Review descriptions of project types carefully.

- Planning for conservation and stewardship of natural scenery and natural vistas is not an eligible project type for this grant round.
- A Quality Assurance Project Plan (QAPP) is required for any project that includes monitoring. See #17 page 16 for further information on this requirement. *No more than 50% of the grant request may be allocated to monitoring expenses.*

## 8. Inquiries & Designated Contact Information

For general information on completing this application and for clarification of application requirements, contractual terms and procedures, contact:

Susan Pepe, Hudson River Estuary Program Grants Coordinator  
[HREPgrants@dec.ny.gov](mailto:HREPgrants@dec.ny.gov)

Include **2018 Stewardship RFA** in the **subject line** of the email. Questions regarding this grant opportunity will be accepted by the DEC until C.O.B. July 5, 2018. All questions, and answers, will be uploaded in the Grants Gateway application for all applicants to view.

## 9. Department of Environmental Conservation Oversight

The Department of Environmental Conservation reserves the right to:

- Award additional and available funding for scored and ranked projects consistent with this grant opportunity.
- Partially fund an application if the partially-funded portion can be demonstrated to meet the criteria for this RFA.
- Reject any or all applications in response to the RFA at the agency's sole discretion.
- Reduce an award from the amount requested in the application, so long as the reduced funding does not jeopardize the viability of the project to proceed at the reduced funding level.
- Reduce an award from the amount requested in the application, should the project budget contain costs considered ineligible under this grant program.
- Award an agreement for any or all parts of the RFA in accordance with the method of award, or withdraw the RFA at any time at DEC's sole discretion.
- Award to the next highest scoring application in the event a grantee fails to negotiate a grant contract with DEC within 60-90 days of a grant award.
- Monitor the progress of all grant awards and withdraw grant funding, if the grantee fails to make significant and timely progress on the project or fails to receive the necessary permissions and permits for the project.

## 10. Application Submission

Applications must be submitted through the NYS Grants Gateway (<https://grantsgateway.ny.gov>). Paper applications will NOT be accepted. Applicants are strongly encouraged to submit their applications prior to the application deadline. Late applications will not be accepted.

All Applicants must be **Registered** with Grants Gateway to submit an application. In addition to registration, **not-for-profits** must also be **Prequalified** at the time and date that the application is due. If you are not Prequalified at that time and date, your application will not be considered. For more information about Grants Gateway and Prequalification, please visit the Grants Reform website (<https://grantsreform.ny.gov/Grantees>) or contact the Grants Reform Team at: [grantsreform@its.ny.gov](mailto:grantsreform@its.ny.gov). The Grants Reform help desk/hotline can be reached at (518) 474-5595.

**PLEASE DO NOT DELAY IN BEGINNING AND COMPLETING THE  
PREQUALIFICATION PROCESS.**

THE STATE RESERVES 5 DAYS TO REVIEW SUBMITTED  
PREQUALIFICATION APPLICATIONS. PREQUALIFICATION  
APPLICATIONS SUBMITTED TO THE STATE FOR REVIEW LESS  
THAN 5 DAYS PRIOR TO THE DEADLINE FOR THIS APPLICATION  
MAY NOT BE CONSIDERED.

APPLICANTS SHOULD NOT ASSUME THAT THEIR  
PREQUALIFICATION INFORMATION WILL BE REVIEWED IF THEY  
DO NOT ADHERE TO THIS TIMEFRAME.

### **Applicant Prequalification**

Pursuant to the New York State Division of Budget Bulletin H-1032, dated June 7, 2013, New York State has instituted key reform initiatives to the grant contract process which require nonprofits to register in the Grants Gateway and complete the Vendor Prequalification process in order for applications to be evaluated. Information on these initiatives can be found on the Grants Reform Website.

All Applicants must be Prequalified in the Grants Gateway at the time and date that the application is due. Applications received from nonprofit Applicants that have not registered and are not Prequalified in the Grants Gateway by the application due date and time listed at the beginning of this document cannot be evaluated. If you are not Prequalified at that time and date, your application will not be considered. **Such applications will be disqualified from further consideration.**

Below is a summary of the steps that must be completed to meet registration and Prequalification requirements. The Vendor Prequalification Manual on the Grants Reform Website details the requirements and an online tutorial is available to further explain the process.

**PLEASE NOTE: The information included here regarding Prequalification is not intended to be exhaustive, and Applicants should visit the Grants Reform website (<https://www.grantsreform.ny.gov/Grantees>) or contact the Grants Reform Team ([grantsreform@its.ny.gov](mailto:grantsreform@its.ny.gov)) for more information about Grants Gateway and Prequalification. The Grants Reform help desk/hotline can be reached at (518) 474-5595.**

#### **1. Register for the Grants Gateway**

- On the Grants Reform Website, download a copy of the [Registration Form for Administrator](#). A signed, notarized original form must be sent to the NYS Grants Reform Team at the address provided in the instructions. You will be provided with a Username and Password allowing you to access the Grants Gateway.
- If you have previously registered and do not know your Username please email [grantsreform@its.ny.gov](mailto:grantsreform@its.ny.gov). If you do not know your Password please click the Forgot Password link from the main log in page and follow the prompts.

#### **2. Complete your Prequalification Application**

- Log in to the Grants Gateway. **If this is your first time logging in**, you will be prompted to change your password at the bottom of your Profile page. Enter a new password and click SAVE.
- Click the *Organization(s)* link at the top of the page and complete the required fields including selecting the State agency you have the most grants with. This page should



be completed in its entirety before you SAVE. A *Document Vault* link will become available near the top of the page. Click this link to access the main Document Vault page.

- Answer the questions in the *Required Forms* and upload *Required Documents*. This constitutes your Prequalification application. Optional Documents are not required unless specified in this document.
- Specific questions about the Prequalification process should be referred to your agency representative or to the Grants Reform Team at [grantsreform@its.ny.gov](mailto:grantsreform@its.ny.gov). The Grants Reform help desk/hotline can be reached at (518) 474-5595.

### 3. Submit Your Prequalification Application

- After completing your Prequalification application, click the **Submit Document Vault** link located below the Required Documents Section to submit your Prequalification application for State agency review. Once submitted the status of the Document Vault will change to *In Review*.
- If your Prequalification reviewer has questions or requests changes you will receive email notification from the Gateway system.
- Once your Prequalification application has been approved, you will receive a Gateway notification that you are now Prequalified to do business with New York State.

Once you are Prequalified, please check the status of your document vault on a regular basis to ensure that none of your documents expire prior to the application due date. Refer to Grants Reform Guide entitled [Monitoring and Updating Your Organization's Prequalification Status](#). **Expired documents will lead to the loss of Prequalification status.**

**Applicants are strongly encouraged to begin the prequalification process as soon as possible in order to participate in this grant opportunity.** Please do not delay in beginning and completing the prequalification process. The State reserves 5 days to review submitted Prequalification applications. Prequalification applications submitted to the State for review less than 5 days prior to the application deadline may not be considered. Applicants should not assume that their Prequalification information will be reviewed if they do not adhere to this timeframe.

If you are not yet registered with Grants Gateway, there are many resources available to help you understand how to register and become Prequalified:

- [The NYS Grants Reform Website](#)
- [Video: Grants Gateway Registration](#)
- [New York State Prequalification System for Grants Contract Vendors: A Resource Manual and Users Guide for Not-for-Profit Vendors](#)
- [Biweekly Document Vault webinars. All information can be found on the Grants Reform website - Training Calendar](#)

The Grants Reform Team offers regular live webinars for anyone who is interested in additional information about Grants Gateway, the Prequalification process, or submitting online applications. Learn more including times and dates for these webinars: <http://grantsreform.ny.gov/training-calendar>. Any additional technical training related to this application will also be posted to the training calendar.

You can also contact the Grants Reform Team for additional assistance:

Phone: (518) 474-5595; Email: [grantsreform@its.ny.gov](mailto:grantsreform@its.ny.gov)



# Grant Application Requirements and Conditions

## 1. Project Objectives

This Hudson River Estuary Grant RFA for Local Stewardship Planning seeks to assist Hudson Valley municipalities and organizations build their capacity to implement the Hudson River Estuary Action Agenda and provide the following benefits:

*Hudson River Estuary Action Agenda:*

- Clean water;
- Resilient communities;
- A vital estuary ecosystem;
- Estuary fish, wildlife and their habitats;
- Natural scenery; and
- Access for education, recreation and inspiration.

The Estuary Program provides training and technical assistance to improve local stewardship, so the river and its ecosystem continue to provide these benefits. This RFA is designed to help local organizations and communities build on that technical assistance to advance six types of local projects and programs through planning, feasibility studies and/or design:

- Planning for Hudson River shoreline communities to adapt land uses and decision-making to factor in adaptation to climate change, flooding, heat, drought, and sea-level rise projections.
- Planning to make water infrastructure more resilient to flooding and/or sea-level rise
- Planning to use green infrastructure practices as a means to reduce combined sewer overflows.
- Watershed management planning within a Hudson River tributary, a tributary sub-watershed, or source-watershed
- Planning for conservation of natural resources by creating a natural resources inventory, open space inventory/index, open space plan (OSP), or open space funding feasibility study

Throughout this RFA, the word “plan,” as used to describe a deliverable, is deemed to include the following plans and planning processes:

- Plans
- Feasibility studies
- Assessments
- Inventories
- Designs and related permitting activities
- Development of regionally-applicable guidance documents, handbooks or fact sheets that help people adopt conservation best management practices.

## 2. Minimum Eligibility (Pass/Fail criteria)

### Level 1 Review:

- The applicant must be eligible, as shown on page 3 of this RFA. A not-for-profit organization must also be prequalified in the Grants Gateway by the application due date to be determined eligible under this grant opportunity.
- The project must be located within the defined geographic boundaries of the Hudson River Estuary.
- Projects must implement one of the eligible project types identified in this RFA.
- Quality Assurance requirements for sampling are demonstrated to be met, or are not applicable.
- The uploaded project time line indicates completion of project objectives, tasks and deliverables on or before November 30, 2020.

- All project funding sources are eligible and at least 15% in eligible match is identified.
- If applicable, letters of collaboration that include the “Lead” applicant designation are provided from all applicant partners.
- Application completeness: The application is broken out into four sections in the Grants Gateway: Program Information, Expenditure Budget, Work Plan, and Pre-Submission Uploads. To be eligible, applicants must complete all of these sections and upload the required documentation. See the checklist on the last page of the RFA as a reference.

### **3. Project Types (Program Question 2)**

Funding must be used to implement one of the following project types to meet the above Project Objectives. Applicants will identify the project type number for the Program Question.

#### **(1) Planning for Hudson River shoreline communities to adapt land uses and decision-making to factor in adaptation to climate change, flooding, heat, drought, and sea-level rise projections**

Applicants may apply for projects in communities on the shoreline of the Hudson River estuary to develop or support the development of municipal and inter-municipal plans that will help them communities adapt to climate change, including heat, drought and flooding related to sea-level rise and storms, through local home rule, using ecologically-sound principles that conserve natural resources while also protecting human life and property. Projects may include funding for temporary staff, shared among municipalities, to complete one or more projects outlined below. Eligible projects are:

- Developing community or intermunicipal vulnerability assessments and/or resilience plans, or detailed components of such plans, with specific recommendations to address heat, drought and flooding.
- Collaborative projects involving two or more shoreline municipalities to adopt best management practices that address, at a minimum, natural resources and environmental conditions.
- Feasibility studies or designs for climate-adaptive strategies that address heat, drought, flooding and sea-level rise.
- Implementation of recommendations from a waterfront resilience task force, NY Rising Plan or other vulnerability assessment that addresses natural resources and environmental conditions in one or more municipalities.
- Plans/designs for climate-resilient land uses, nature-based shoreline treatments or other measures that address risk from sea-level rise, flooding, extreme heat, and/or short term drought.
- Guidance documents, tools and/or related training to promote local best management practices that address, at a minimum, natural resources and environmental conditions for this project type.
- Planning for identification and conservation of local wetland migration areas and conservation of natural shoreline.
- Analysis or implementation of potential changes to local zoning or policies that address, at a minimum, natural resources and environmental conditions for this project type.
- Evaluation of future climate and planning scenarios that address, at a minimum, natural resources and environmental conditions for this project type.

Additional information on waterfront flooding, including guidance documents and examples of plans and tools for decision-making, can be found at <http://www.dec.ny.gov/lands/39786.html>.

Points for coordinated planning: Applicants who demonstrate that they are implementing an adopted Climate Smart Communities pledge through adaptation actions outlined in the Climate Smart Communities Certification Program ([http://www.dec.ny.gov/docs/administration\\_pdf/certman.pdf](http://www.dec.ny.gov/docs/administration_pdf/certman.pdf)), or are implementing a Greenway Plan, Local Waterfront Revitalization Plan, or an adopted Watershed Plan will receive points for coordinated planning in the scoring.

## **(2) Planning to make water infrastructure more resilient to flooding and/or sea level rise**

Applicants may apply for projects that will inventory, review and/or assess options for the design, operation and maintenance of municipal water supply, wastewater, or stormwater infrastructure at risk of flooding. Projects must aim to help reduce flood risk as well as assess factors that may affect the practicality of these options, and should identify any environmental benefits and trade-offs, such as impacts to water quality and habitat.

Projects could include mapping, an inventory of infrastructure assets, and planning to help reduce flood risk. Assessment of options to mitigate risk may include: adaptation, relocation, building, decommissioning, innovative approaches, etc.

Practicality factors may include: zoning codes, ordinances and municipal plans, population and economic development projections, long term risk of flooding and sea level rise, lifespan of infrastructure, public opinion, efficiency in timing of upgrades, energy efficiency and renewable energy generation, value of existing at-risk feasibility property for other uses, cost-benefit analyses, potential relocation areas, engineering feasibility, etc.

Infrastructure and facilities to be studied must focus on water resources and may include: wastewater treatment plants; sewer collection systems including pump stations; on-site wastewater or septic systems; or water supply systems and distribution lines.

Points for coordinated planning: Applicants who demonstrate that they are implementing an adopted Climate Smart Communities pledge through adaptation actions outlined in the Climate Smart Communities Certification Program ([http://www.dec.ny.gov/docs/administration\\_pdf/certman.pdf](http://www.dec.ny.gov/docs/administration_pdf/certman.pdf)), or are implementing a Greenway Plan, Local Waterfront Revitalization Plan, or an adopted Watershed Plan will receive points for coordinated planning in the scoring.

## **(3) Planning to use green infrastructure practices as a means to reduce combined sewer overflows**

Applicants may apply for projects that plan for or design “green infrastructure” to reduce stormwater flows that contribute to combined sewer overflows (i.e. construction practices that mimic natural systems to reduce stormwater runoff and recharge ground water). When used in areas with combined sewer systems, green infrastructure can reduce sewage overflows, improve water quality and help reduce urban heat stress.

Eligible projects must be aimed at reducing stormwater flows that contribute to combined sewer or sanitary sewer overflows and may include:

- Prioritizing locations and green infrastructure projects that would improve stream and/or estuary water quality;
- Mapping and/or modeling sewer systems and opportunities to remove stormwater from the system;
- Undertaking feasibility studies or designing green infrastructure practices in strategic locations;
- Recommending local policy changes to improve green infrastructure implementation.

Projects are encouraged to take into account system-specific information and show how green infrastructure could reduce sewage overflow volumes or occurrences. Applicants should indicate how green infrastructure implementation would relate to Long Term Control Plans or other regulatory

requirements. Additional information on green infrastructure can be found at [www.dec.ny.gov/lands/58930.html](http://www.dec.ny.gov/lands/58930.html).

Points for coordinated planning: Applicants who demonstrate that they are implementing an adopted Climate Smart Communities pledge through adaptation actions outlined in the Climate Smart Communities Certification Program ([http://www.dec.ny.gov/docs/administration\\_pdf/certman.pdf](http://www.dec.ny.gov/docs/administration_pdf/certman.pdf)), or are implementing a Greenway Plan, Local Waterfront Revitalization Plan, or an adopted Watershed Plan will receive points for coordinated planning in the scoring.

#### **(4) Watershed and source water management planning**

Applicants may apply for projects to inform or develop a new watershed plan, update an existing watershed plan, or conduct planning to implement priorities in existing watershed plans. The applicant may define the size of the watershed area as appropriate, whether a tributary of the Hudson River, a subwatershed of a tributary, or a source of drinking water. There is no established minimum or maximum area for purposes of this RFA. Plans and projects may focus on a specific topic or concern within a watershed, or they may be more comprehensive.

Projects related to an existing watershed planning or management initiative must refer to the existing watershed plan or assessment, demonstrate collaboration with the local watershed group, and obtain a letter of support from that group. New watershed plans must demonstrate local support. Source water plans should also include support from the county health department and the municipal water supplier.

Potential projects include the following:

- Building capacity of a local watershed constituency;
- Assessing and characterizing watershed conditions;
- Developing a watershed management plan.

*As part of the response for Program Question 4 (Project Objective and Conservation Impact), applicants should describe how the project will help them to implement strategic projects to improve or maintain water quality, quantity, and stream health.*

All projects that have a water quality assessment and monitoring component must use a laboratory certified by the New York State Department of Health (NYSDOH) under the Environmental Laboratory Approval Program (ELAP) for the analysis of environmental samples collected within New York State. Additionally, such projects shall include a Quality Assurance Project Plan (QAPP) to ensure that proper sampling methods are being followed, and that traceable, reproducible results are generated. For more information, including Work Plan requirements for the QAPP, see #17 on page 16. *No more than 50% of the grant request may be allocated to monitoring expenses.*

Applicants are encouraged to refer to the following resources when developing an application:

- NYS DEC, Nine Element Watershed Plans: <http://www.dec.ny.gov/chemical/103264.html>
- NYS DEC, Nine Element Watershed Plan Reviewer Guidance: [http://www.dec.ny.gov/docs/water\\_pdf/9ereviewer.pdf](http://www.dec.ny.gov/docs/water_pdf/9ereviewer.pdf)
- NYS DEC and NYS Department of State, Watershed Plans: Protecting and Restoring Water Quality: <http://www.dos.ny.gov/opd/programs/pdfs/Guidebooks/watershed/WatershedPlansGuidebook%20wo%20secretary.pdf>
- NYS Department of Health, Environmental Laboratory Approval Program (ELAP): <https://www.wadsworth.org/regulatory/elap>
- NYSDEC Lower Hudson River Waterbody Inventory/Priority Waterbodies List:

<http://www.dec.ny.gov/chemical/36740.html>

- NYS Source Water Assessment Program reports (contact the appropriate county health department): [https://www.health.ny.gov/contact/contact\\_information/](https://www.health.ny.gov/contact/contact_information/)
- NYS DEC Hudson River Estuary Program, Clean Water for the Hudson River Estuary: <http://www.dec.ny.gov/lands/5098.html>

Points for coordinated planning: Applicants who demonstrate that they are implementing an adopted Climate Smart Communities pledge through adaptation actions outlined in the Climate Smart Communities Certification Program ([http://www.dec.ny.gov/docs/administration\\_pdf/certman.pdf](http://www.dec.ny.gov/docs/administration_pdf/certman.pdf)), or are implementing a Greenway Plan, Local Waterfront Revitalization Plan, or an adopted Watershed Plan will receive points for coordinated planning in the scoring.

**(5) Planning for conservation of natural resources by creating a natural resources inventory, open space inventory/index, open space plan (OSP), or open space funding feasibility study**

Applicants may apply for projects to develop a natural resource inventory (NRI), an open space inventory/index (OSI), an open space conservation plan (OSP), or an open space funding feasibility study (or a combination as appropriate for the applicant) for a municipality, county, watershed, or region.

- A NRI compiles, describes, and maps important natural resources in a municipality, county, watershed, or region, and can be a stand-alone plan or included in a municipal comprehensive plan, open space plan, conservation plan, or a watershed plan.
- An OSI uses the NRI to identify and map local open areas, and lists them in priority order for acquisition or preservation.
- An OSP identifies priorities and strategies for conserving open space values, and can be a stand-alone plan or included in a municipal comprehensive plan.
- An open space funding feasibility study evaluates public financing options for a municipality to preserve priority open spaces and natural areas that have been identified in a community's OSP.

Depending on the needs and interests of the community, the NRI, OSI, and OSP can be developed individually or in combination. Communities may choose which resources are included in the inventory or plan; however, to be eligible for this RFA, inventories/plans must include the following:

- Water resources
- Habitats and wildlife
- Natural areas important for climate resilience.

Applicants are strongly encouraged to use or refer to Creating a Natural Resources Inventory: A Guide for Communities in the Hudson River Estuary Watershed to develop their applications ([www.dec.ny.gov/lands/4920.html](http://www.dec.ny.gov/lands/4920.html)) and/or New York State's Local Open Space Planning Guide ([http://www.dos.ny.gov/lq/publications/Local\\_Open\\_Space\\_Planning\\_Guide.pdf](http://www.dos.ny.gov/lq/publications/Local_Open_Space_Planning_Guide.pdf)), and if applicable, should refer to any existing municipal inventories or plans that will provide foundations for the grant project, or which are proposed to be updated. Applications should also include a process for public participation and/or education to engage stakeholders and build support for implementation.

Feasibility studies should ascertain optimal financing mechanisms for open space conservation for a particular municipality, and explore the likelihood of success. The study should include recommendations to officials on the appropriate timing of introducing a financing initiative, framing associated language, and selecting the most appropriate finance tool and funding request level to meet community conservation goals.

Points for coordinated planning: Applicants who demonstrate that they are implementing an adopted

Climate Smart Communities pledge through adaptation actions outlined in the Climate Smart Communities Certification Program ([http://www.dec.ny.gov/docs/administration\\_pdf/certman.pdf](http://www.dec.ny.gov/docs/administration_pdf/certman.pdf)), or are implementing a Greenway Plan, Local Waterfront Revitalization Plan, or an adopted Watershed Plan will receive points for coordinated planning in the scoring.

#### **4. Project Objective and Conservation Impact (Program Question 4)**

Describe the objective for the proposed project, including methods, deliverables, and the need for the project. Explain how completing this work would help you make future decisions and why. Projects must set the stage for future implementation of conservation projects. Projects that do not address future implementation will be assigned to Tier 4\* - see scoring criteria starting on page 18. Higher points will be awarded to projects that have a regional conservation impact.

For purposes of this RFA, “regional” is defined as two or more municipalities (including counties and boroughs).

#### **5. Project Timeline (Program Question 6)**

Applicants **MUST** provide a timeline for meeting project objectives and identified tasks between December 1, 2018 and November 30, 2020.

Project expenditures prior to Master Contract for Grants (MCG) start date and after the MCG end date are not eligible for reimbursement or match.

#### **6. Applicant Partners (Program Question 8)**

The Applicant Partner is a collaborator who has a significant role in the conduct of the project, and is fundamentally a co-applicant for the grant. Projects involving an Applicant Partner (i.e. multi-partner and inter-municipal projects, page 3) require letters substantiating the commitment to collaborate that include the designation of a “Lead” applicant from each partner. A single PDF file of all letters should be uploaded to meet this requirement, if applicable for your project.

#### **7. Key Stakeholder Engagement (Program Question 9)**

Projects should demonstrate effective engagement of local and regional stakeholders, and at a minimum, must include those whose support is crucial to project success. Stakeholders may consist of, but are not limited to, county and local planning officials as well as organizations, community or watershed groups, property owners, or individuals whose contribution, approval, endorsement, etc. is integral to successful conduct of the project. Applicants are encouraged to engage a variety of local, county, or state appointed or elected officials in their application process to generate awareness of the project and its objectives.

For this program question, applicants must demonstrate how stakeholders will be engaged in the project, including specific role(s) of the stakeholder (to provide information/data, provide feedback, act as a liaison for other projects, help prioritize or evaluate options, etc.). Wherever possible, applicants should strive to employ multiple methods of outreach when engaging stakeholders. Relevant stakeholder engagement should also be included in the work plan component of the Grants Gateway, where applicable.

Brief letters indicating such support from key stakeholders will improve the scoring of an application (higher points are available for applicants submitting such letters). Support letters from the government body offering the grant, or institutions or organizations who are fiscal sponsors and/or will provide services under the grant, will not be considered and no points will be awarded. If letters are submitted, the letters must be submitted at the time of application. Applicants will be asked in the Grants Gateway to upload, in a single PDF file, a copy of all letters of key stakeholder support.

*It is strongly urged for applicants to fully address this application requirement. Failure to earn any points*



*for this Program Question will result in the application being ranked “Low” (tied to Bonus Points for Minimum Standards [page 15]). Also see Application Evaluation, Scoring and Selection starting on page 18 of this RFA.*

#### **8. Engagement of Hudson River Estuary Staff (Program Question 11)**

At a minimum, project timelines must include consultation with Estuary Program Staff for project management purposes as step one in the time line (e.g. a project kick-off meeting). Additionally, applicants are strongly encouraged, but are not required, to invite Estuary Program staff to attend stakeholder meetings and to provide technical assistance in the planning process. An invitation for such additional participation should be included as a step in the project timeline schedule and deliverables (see Program Question 6) to qualify for additional points. Estuary Program staff may choose to participate, or not, in response to the invitation, as time allows. Please note that engagement of Estuary Program staff is not a substitute for stakeholder engagement by the applicant.

Should an award be made, applicants will be required to connect with the applicable Estuary Program Project Manager (to be assigned during the contracting stage) before work is started on the project.

#### **9. Implementation Commitment (Program Question 13)**

The applicant must demonstrate how the proposed plan/project or best practices will ultimately be implemented or adopted after completion. How will the results of the project be used in future decision-making? Identify and describe the commitment to use the results, and how implementation/adoption will be attained. If known, include information about funding sources that will be earmarked for implementation. Outreach or training to help people utilize the proposed plans, designs or guidance may be included, and is encouraged where applicable.

*It is strongly urged for applicants to fully address this application requirement. Failure to earn any points for this Program Question will result in the application being ranked “Low” (tied to Bonus Points for Minimum Standards [page 15]). Also see Application Evaluation, Scoring and Selection starting on page 18 of this RFA.*

#### **10. Knowledge, Skills and Experience (Qualifications) (Program Question 14)**

Applicants must possess the knowledge, skills, and/or track record to successfully implement the project. Priority is given to applicants with excellent qualifications or a track record with this type of project.

*It is strongly urged for applicants to fully address this application requirement. Failure to earn any points for this Program Question will result in the application being ranked “Low” (tied to Bonus Points for Minimum Standards [page 15]). Also see Application Evaluation, Scoring and Selection starting on page 18 of this RFA.*

#### **11. Project Cost Effectiveness (Program Question 15)**

The cost-effectiveness of the proposed project will be evaluated as provided in the Application Review and Scoring Standards in Appendix III. The answer to this question, as well as the information provided in the Expenditure Budget will be used to determine scoring for cost effectiveness. Applicants that provide more match above the minimum 15% may be eligible for additional points for cost effectiveness (see Appendix III, page 32). Applicants are encouraged to provide quotes from vendors/contractors for the work to be completed to help justify cost effectiveness.

*It is strongly urged for applicants to fully address this application requirement. Failure to earn any points for this Program Question will result in the application being ranked “Low” (tied to Bonus Points for Minimum Standards [page 15]). Also see Application Evaluation, Scoring and Selection starting on page 18 of this RFA.*



## **12. Bonus Points for Minimum Standards for Key Stakeholder Support, Qualifications, Implementation Commitment, and Cost Effectiveness (Program Questions 9, 13, 14, 15)**

Applicants receiving points for all of these program questions (do not score zero points on any of these questions) will receive **84 bonus points**. *Failure to earn these bonus points will result in the application being ranked "Low" (see Application Evaluation, Scoring and Selection starting on page 18 of this RFA).*

## **13. Statewide Priority (Program Questions 16-18)**

### **• Alignment with Regional Economic Development (REDC) Strategies**

Governor Andrew Cuomo directed the establishment of Regional Economic Development Councils (REDCs) to analyze the most significant business clusters in their respective areas. Any grants awarded by the State of New York shall take into consideration the recommendation of the relevant REDC or the Commissioner's determination that the proposed project aligns within the regional strategic priorities of the region where the proposed project is located.

For Program Question 16, provide a brief narrative describing the economic benefits of the proposed project and how the project aligns with the strategies of the REDC plan for the project's region (cite specific sections of the respective REDC plan, as applicable). The narrative must be included with the Application to receive points in the application review. If not applicable to your project, you must answer "N/A" for Program Question 16.

Each region has a unique plan. Visit <http://regionalcouncils.ny.gov/> for information on your region's Economic Development Council.

### **• Priority for Environmental Justice (EJ) Projects**

DEC demonstrates a commitment to Environmental Justice (EJ) and remedies for communities that may be burdened by negative environmental consequences. Environmental justice is defined by the DEC as the fair treatment and meaningful involvement of all people, regardless of race, color or income, with respect to the development, implementation and enforcement of environmental laws, regulations and policies. A proposed project that is located in an EJ community or will directly benefit an EJ community, or a project that gives appropriate consideration to under-served urban neighborhoods (all potential neighborhoods whose demographic, geographic, or economic characteristics impede or prevent their access to adequate canopy cover and other benefits of trees) will receive points in the evaluation of an application. Maps of EJ areas in New York State are available at:

<http://www.dec.ny.gov/pubs/103459.html>.

To qualify for EJ points, your application must include the following details:

- a. To demonstrate location in an EJ area - The exact street location(s) where the project is to be implemented (no P.O. Box) or where the benefit will be provided; or
- b. To demonstrate location in an underserved neighborhood - A brief description of how the project will benefit underserved populations that experience disproportionate adverse environmental impacts such as pollution from multiple industrial facilities, sub-standard water quality, concentrated diesel emissions from bus depots, or other heavy vehicle traffic, adverse health effects related to environmental impacts (high asthma), lack of access to green benefits such as open space, environmental education or parks, or other such impacts.

### **• Coordinated Planning**

Applicants who demonstrate that they are implementing an adopted Climate Smart Communities pledge through adaptation actions outlined in the Climate Smart Communities Certification Program

([http://www.dec.ny.gov/docs/administration\\_pdf/certman.pdf](http://www.dec.ny.gov/docs/administration_pdf/certman.pdf)), or are implementing a Greenway Plan, Local Waterfront Revitalization Plan, or an adopted Watershed Plan will receive points for coordinated

planning in the scoring.

#### **14. Additional Points**

- **New Hudson River Estuary Program partner (Program Question 19)**

Applicants that have not previously received a Hudson River Estuary grant are encouraged to apply and will receive points for being a new partner. Estuary Program records will be used in conjunction with the answer to this program question to make this determination.

- **Bonus points for applicants who do not have open (uncompleted) grants with the Estuary Program** (Awarded based on Hudson River Estuary Program records as of the RFA deadline)

In order to help new applicants to receive grants and to encourage speedy completion of grants, bonus points are available for applicants who do not have an open, uncompleted grant with the Estuary Program. To determine if the applicant has an open grant or not, an applicant with an existing grant must have submitted its final report and invoice and have received confirmation of completion by the deadline date for which this RFA is due.

#### **15. Expenditure Based Budget**

Applicants must complete an itemized budget in the NYS Grants Gateway that provides details of the proposed project-related expenses. Budget detail must clearly distinguish between expenses to be claimed under the State grant share and expenses comprising the match. The itemized budget should also include appropriate level of information for the breakdown of costs for each budget item (depending on the budget category this information is provided in the budget detail and/or budget narrative). Eligible and ineligible costs are identified in this RFA. A project's reasonableness of costs is at least 20% of the evaluation factor in the scoring of the application; therefore, attention to budget accuracy will increase your project score.

#### **16. Work Plan**

Applicants must complete a work plan in the NYS Grants Gateway that provides a clear overview of the project. Applications must include proposed project objectives, tasks associated with meeting each objective, and the performance measures associated with each task (performance measures should include desired project outcomes or deliverables). The work plan should include anticipated time frames in meeting project objectives, tasks and deliverables. Time frames must be consistent with the timeline applicants are required to upload in the Grant Gateway for Program Question 6.

Note: A Work Plan 'worksheet' is available for applicants in the Grants Gateway (under Pre-submission Uploads). The 'worksheet' can be downloaded and used as a tool to help applicants organize their proposed project objectives, tasks and performance measures. A completed 'worksheet' should NOT be uploaded back into the Grants Gateway. The intent of the 'worksheet' is to assist applicants in developing their application work plan in the Grants Gateway.

#### **17. Quality Assurance (Required for Water Quality Assessment and Monitoring projects)**

For projects that involve the assessment or monitoring of water quality all monitoring and measurement activities conducted in the field or laboratory shall be:

- a. Performed in accordance with an effective Quality System for planning and assessing environmental measurements and tests, and for conducting required quality assurance and quality control procedures to promote and maintain the accuracy and reliability of environmental measurements and test results. Quality System Documentation includes a Quality Assurance Project Plan (QAPP) based on guidance provided by the USEPA Guidance for Quality Assurance Project Plans (QA/G-5 May 2006) or a similarly structured and purposed protocol;
- b. Performed by a laboratory certified by the New York State Department of Health (NYSDOH) under the Environmental Laboratory Approval Program (ELAP) pursuant to Section 502 of the

Public Health Law. This requirement shall not apply to specific parameters when ELAP has not issued a certificate for the specific parameter; and

- c. Performed in a manner that ensures all requisite quality control and calibration requirements of the method are met including field testing, sample collection, preservation, and record keeping. When the method does not detail requirements for any or all of these items, the basic quality assurance and quality control requirements defined in 40 CFR Part 136.7 shall be followed.

The QAPP may be submitted at time of application (see Program Question 25). If the QAPP is not submitted as part of the application, QAPP development must be included as the first Objective/Task in the Work Plan. Example language for this Work Plan requirement is shown in Appendix II. The QAPP will need to be approved by the DEC's Quality Assurance Officer before the project may proceed under the grant contract.

Costs related to QAPP development may be included in the budget as needed. *No more than 50% of the grant request may be allocated to monitoring expenses.* A template for the QAPP is provided in the Pre-Submission Uploads section of the Grants Gateway.

#### **18. Historic Preservation Review Requirements (if applicable to your project)**

For projects that involve properties listed on the State or National Registers of Historic Places, all work undertaken as part of a grant-assisted project must conform to the Secretary of the Interior's Standards and Guidelines for Archaeology and Historic Preservation.

Questions about or proposals for listing on the State or national Register should be directed to the OPRHP National Register Unit at (518) 237-8643. To ensure the public benefit from the investment of state funding, preservation covenants or conservation easements will be conveyed to the State (OPRHP) for all historic property grants.

## Application Evaluation, Scoring and Selection

All applications will be reviewed and scored by a review team in accordance with the evaluation and scoring criteria contained in this RFA. **Applicants are strongly encouraged to read and address the Application Review and Scoring Standards in Appendix III in the process of developing an application.** Knowledge of the scoring criteria is valuable for designing and proposing a relevant and quality project. Scoring consists of:

### Step 1: Application and Project Eligibility Determination

Pass/Fail criteria – please refer to the Application Evaluation and Scoring Standards in Appendix III.

### Step 2: Project Evaluation, Scoring and Selection

If your application meets all eligibility pass/fail criteria it will be further evaluated and scored by a review team in accordance with the Evaluation and Scoring Standards contained in this RFA. These include:

- Evaluation of the project type, methods, budget and applicant qualifications;
- Assessment of the project impact, and priority project eligibility.

All eligible applications will be individually evaluated and scored by at least 3 technical review team members. Technical reviewer scores will be averaged and statewide priority points will be added to the average score to determine a final composite score. Based on the average score for project objective and impact (Program Question 4 in the Grants Gateway and evaluation criteria #1 in Appendix III of this RFA), applications will be assigned to one of four tiers.

Tiers are determined as follows:

Primary Project Objective Score Thresholds by Tier		
Tier Number	Lowest Average Score	Highest Average Score
Tier 1	21.0	30.0
Tier 2	10.0	20.9
Tier 3	3.0	9.9
Tier 4	0.0	2.9

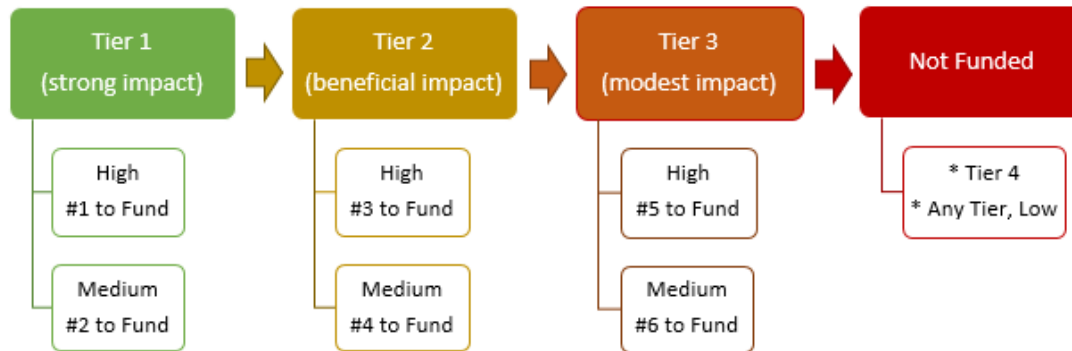
Applications will then be ranked within each tier as high, medium, or low based on the final composite score.

Ranks within Tiers are determined as follows:

Tier Number	Rank		
	High	Medium	Low
Tier 1	250.0 – 200.0	199.9 – 157.0	≤156.9
Tier 2	235.0 – 185.0	184.9 – 142.0	≤141.9
Tier 3	225.0 – 175.0	174.9 – 137.0	≤136.9
Tier 4	N/A	N/A	N/A

Tier placement and rank will be used to determine which projects receive funding. Applications will be selected for funding based on the highest to lowest scoring projects within each rank for high and medium ranking projects as follows: Applications in Tier 1 will be the priority for funding, followed by Tier 2, and then Tier 3. Tier 4 (applications not addressing future implementation of conservation projects and/or projects that duplicate work already completed based on public information) and

applications ranking low, regardless of tier (applications that do not meet minimum standards) will NOT be funded. Based on the scoring and evaluation process, these projects are deemed to be sufficiently flawed and should not be implemented with state funds. The Department may, at its discretion, decide to fund only one grant project if multiple applications are received for the same project.



**Award limit** – Applicants will only be eligible to receive one grant award in this grant round (the applicant’s highest scoring application) regardless of tier, rank, and score of subsequent qualifying applications (up to 3 applications can be submitted by a single applicant). However, in the event additional funding remains after all qualifying grant awards are made (at one per grantee), additional grants for qualifying projects will be awarded to an entity already receiving a grant award in this grant round, starting with the next highest scoring application. In the event there is a tie among remaining applications submitted by same organizations, the tie breaker will be addressed as described in the following paragraph.

**Tie breaker** – If there is a numerical tie in an application’s final score, the application that scores the highest in “Project Objectives and Methods” in the evaluation criteria will determine placement on the ranked list. If a tie remains, the application that scores the highest in “Project Success Factors” in the evaluation criteria number will determine placement on the ranked list. If there is a numerical tie between multiple applications within a funding category, the application that scores the highest in Cost-Effectiveness will determine placement on the ranked list. If a tie remains, the order applications were received will determine placement on the ranked list, with the earliest application placing highest.

## Grant Program Payment

Advance payments of up to 25% of the awarded grant amount may be available to not-for-profit grantees once a Master Contract for Grants (MCG) has been fully approved by all applicable State agencies. Only not-for-profits are eligible to receive advance payments under State Finance Law.

Project costs eligible for reimbursement and project match must be incurred between the MCG term start and end dates. Costs incurred prior to the MCG term start date or after the MCG term end date will not be considered eligible for grant reimbursement or match. Copies of supporting cost documentation (paid invoices, receipts, cancelled checks, etc.) must be audited and approved by the DEC for costs to be eligible for grant reimbursement.

## Eligible and Ineligible Expenditures

### Eligible Project Expenditures

- Personal Services: Staff salaries including fringe benefits, directly devoted to the project. Itemize salaries according to job title and roles/responsibilities on the project. Grantees will be required to document time worked, tasks, pay ratio and payment.
- Contractual Services: The value of services provided by responsible professional and technical personnel and consultants (i.e. engineering and architectural services, surveys, plans and specifications, research, design and development of a project, consultant and legal services directly related to a project, feasibility study for a facility, archaeological field work, report writing, curation of artifacts and interpretation, etc.) Equipment and other non-property rentals directly required to implement the project.
- Supplies and materials: Directly needed to implement the project.
- Equipment: Equipment that is directly necessary to implement the project.
- Travel: Travel costs directly required to implement the project (within New York State only).

### Ineligible Project Expenditures

- Indirect costs: Overhead or operating expenses (space, rent, utilities, etc.).
- Travel: Out-of-state travel costs, and any travel not directly required to implement the project.
- Administrative salaries: Administrative salaries are NOT eligible for grant reimbursement, but may be used as match funds. For the purposes of this RFA, administrative salaries are defined as follows:
  - Preparation of equal employment opportunity and women and minority business enterprises documentation.
  - Preparation of quarterly narrative and expenditure reports.
  - Preparation of payment reimbursement request forms and backup cost documentation.
  - Preparation of Final Report upon project completion.

- State and/or federal funding: project costs funded from other state and/or federal funding sources are not eligible for grant reimbursement.

***Budget limitation: For projects that include monitoring, no more than 50% of the grant request may be allocated to monitoring expenses.***

## **Match Requirement and Expenditures**

Applicants must provide **15% in match funds based on the amount of grant funds.**

Formula: Requested Budget x 15% = Required Match

### **Eligible Forms of Match**

- Cash: Includes other grants from non-state or non-federal funding sources.
- Personal Services: Staff salaries devoted to the project, including fringe benefits expenses. Itemize salaries according to job title or job assignment on the project. Grantees will be required to document time worked, tasks, pay ratio and payment.
- Contractual Services: The value of services provided by responsible professional and technical personnel and consultants (i.e. engineering and architectural services, surveys, plans and specifications, research, design and development of a project, consultant and legal services directly related to a project, feasibility study for a facility, archaeological field work, report writing, curation of artifacts and interpretation, etc.).
- Supplies and materials: The current market value of items warehoused (not yet installed); use value current at time items were obtained.
- Volunteer Labor: Skilled and professional labor can be computed at the job rate. Unskilled labor and work performed by professionals or skilled laborers in an area outside of their area of expertise must be computed at the minimum wage (For example, a lawyer donating legal services may compute the value based on the standard billing rate, but the same lawyer donating time painting walls must calculate the value using minimum wage).
- Equipment: Compute the value according to its fair market value in the project location.
- Administrative Salaries: Administrative salaries must be documented and identified by task, and must fall within the grant contract term to be eligible as match. For the purposes of this RFA, administrative salaries are defined as follows:
  - Preparation of equal employment opportunity and women and minority business enterprises documentation.
  - Preparation of quarterly narrative and expenditure reports.
  - Preparation of payment reimbursement request forms and backup cost documentation.
  - Preparation of Final Report upon project completion.

Applicants must clearly identify administrative salaries to be used towards match in the personal services detail section of the expenditure budget.



## **Ineligible Forms of Match**

- Indirect costs: Overhead or operating expenses (space, rent, utilities, etc.).
- Travel costs: Out-of-state travel costs, and any travel not directly required to implement the project.
- Other State or Federal funding: Project costs paid from other state and/or federal funding sources.

## **Grant Program Reporting**

Quarterly Narrative Reports must be submitted in narrative form, no later than 30 days from the end of the calendar quarter. The reports will summarize how the project progressed toward meeting project objectives and deliverables during the respective quarter.

Quarterly Expenditure Reports, detailed by object of expense as defined in the MCG Attachment B-1 Expenditure Based Budget, must accompany the quarterly Narrative Reports, no later than 30 days from the end of the calendar quarter. These reports must correlate to subsequent vouchers submitted for payment.

Quarterly MCG payment reimbursement requests will be accepted prior to submission of a final closeout reimbursement request. Approved project design, required permits and landowner permissions must be in place to submit a reimbursement request.

Final Report must be submitted and approved by the DEC prior to the release of the final contract payment to the Grantee. The Contractor must submit the Final Report no later than 60 days after the end of the contract period. The Final Report should report on all aspects of the program and detail how the use of grant funds were utilized in achieving the goals set forth in the approved MCG Attachment C Work Plan. Copies of appropriate documents (i.e. inventory and/or management plan) must be submitted and approved by the DEC.

A DEC on-site inspection may be required to confirm all work was completed in accordance to the approved project work plan (including the installation of interpretive signage, if applicable, at the project site).

Any project involving volunteer time will be required to report the number of volunteers and the number of volunteer hours in their project quarterly status reports. The total number of volunteers and volunteer hours for the entire project must be reported in the Final Report.

Projects already receiving funds from another NYS or Federal assistance grant program are not eligible to receive funding for the same project activities identified in this RFA.

## **What to Expect If You Receive an Award**

### **1. Notification of Award**

Applicants selected to receive a grant award will be notified by email and in an official DEC award letter. The NYS Grants Gateway will also provide you with an award status.

**IMPORTANT NOTE:** By accepting an award, applicant agrees to abide by all MCG terms and

conditions. Any changes to the terms and conditions will not be accepted and may affect applicant's award.

## **2. State of New York Master Contract for Grants (MCG)**

Applicants selected to receive a grant award will be required to execute a MCG **within 60 - 90 days** from the time of their award notification. Failure to submit timely required MCG documents could cause a grantee to lose their grant award. Applicants should review and be prepared to comply with all MCG terms and conditions should grant funding be awarded. The MCG and attachments can be reviewed and/or downloaded in the Grants Gateway HRE application under the screen named 'Contract Document Properties'. The MCG and attachments include:

- MCG Face Page
- Standard Terms and Conditions (NYS standard terms and conditions)
- Attachment A-1 Program Specific Terms and Conditions (*Agency and Program specific terms and conditions*)
- Attachment A-2 Federally Funded Grant Terms and Conditions (*optional*)
- Attachment B-1 Expenditure Based Budget (*project expense categories and detail*)
- Attachment C Work Plan (project objectives, tasks and performance measures)
- Attachment D Payment and Reporting Schedule (claims for reimbursement and grant reporting provisions)

**IMPORTANT NOTE:** Project related costs must be incurred within the term of the MCG to be considered eligible for reimbursement or match. Contract payments will not be approved or processed by the DEC until a MCG is fully approved by the DEC, and as applicable the Attorney General and the State Comptroller. All contracts must be approved by the contract start date of which will be determined at the time of an official award.

## **3. Applicants (referred to as “Contractor” following award of Grant Contract) Should Be Prepared to Comply With the Following MCG Requirements:**

### **a. Insurance Requirements**

Contractor will be required to carry appropriate insurance as specified in the MCG or Letter of Agreement, Attachment A-1 Program Specific Terms and Conditions, and agree that each project consultant, project contractor and project subcontractor secures and delivers to the contractor appropriate policies of insurance issued by an insurance company licensed to do business in the State of New York. Policies must name the contractor as an additional insured, with appropriate limits, covering contractor's public liability and property damage insurance, contractor's contingency liability insurance, "all-risk" insurance and workers' compensation/disability benefits coverage for the project.

### **b. Permit Requirements (if applicable)**

Contractors agree to obtain all required permits, including but not limited to, local, state and federal permits prior to the commencement of any project related work. The Contractor agrees that all work performed in relation to the project by the Contractor or its agents, representatives,

or contractors will comply with all relevant federal, state and local laws, rules, regulations and standards, zoning and building codes, ordinances, operating certificates for facilities, or licenses for an activity.

**c. State Environmental Quality Review Documentation**

With respect to the project, the Contractor certifies that it has complied, and shall continue to comply with all requirements of the State Environmental Quality Review Act (SEQRA). The Contractor agrees to provide all environmental documents as may be required by the DEC. The Contractor has notified, and shall continue to notify, the DEC of all actions proposed for complying with the environmental review requirements imposed by SEQRA.

**d. Vendor Responsibility Questionnaire**

Not-For-Profit contractors and/or subcontractors are subject to a vendor responsibility review by the State to ensure public dollars are being spent appropriately with responsible contractors. A vendor responsibility review may include a contractor and/or subcontractor to present evidence of its continuing legal authority to do business in NYS, integrity, experience, ability, prior performance, and organizational and financial capacity. To enroll in and use the NYS VendRep System, see the VendRep System instructions available at <http://www.osc.state.ny.us/vendrep/enroll.htm>, or go directly to the VendRep System at <https://portal.osc.state.ny.us>

**e. Iran Divestment Act**

As a result of the Iran Divestment Act of 2012 (Act), Chapter 1 of the 2012 Laws of New York, a new provision has been added to the State Finance Law (SFL), § 165-a, effective April 12, 2012. By entering into a Contract, the Contractor certifies that it is not on the “Entities Determined To Be Non-Responsive Bidders/Offerers Pursuant to The New York State Iran Divestment Act of 2012” list (“Prohibited Entities List”) posted on the OGS website at: <http://www.ogs.ny.gov/about/regs/docs/ListofEntities.pdf> and further certifies that it will not utilize on such Contract any subcontractor that is identified on the Prohibited Entities List. Additional detail on the Iran Divestment Act can be found in the MCG, Attachment A-1 Program Specific Terms and Conditions.

**f. Minority/women Business Enterprises (M/WBE) and Equal Employment Opportunities (EEO) Requirements**

The Department is required to implement the provisions of New York State Executive Law Article 15-A and 5 NYCRR Parts 142-144 (“MWBE Regulations”) for all State contracts with a value (1) in excess of \$25,000 for labor, services, equipment, materials, or any combination of the foregoing or (2) in excess of \$100,000 for real property renovations and construction.

Applicants subject to executing a future NYS Master Contract for Grants agree, in addition to any other nondiscrimination provision of the MCG and at no additional cost to the Department, to fully comply and cooperate with the Department in the implementation of New York State Executive Law Article 15-A. These requirements include equal employment opportunities for minority group members and women (“EEO”) and contracting opportunities for certified minority and women-owned business enterprises (“MWBEs”). Contractor’s demonstration of “good faith efforts” pursuant to 5 NYCRR §142.8 shall be a part of these requirements. These provisions shall be deemed supplementary to, and not in lieu of, the nondiscrimination provisions required by New York State Executive Law Article 15 (the “Human Rights Law”) or other applicable federal, state or local laws.

Failure to comply with M/WBE and EEO requirements may result in a Department finding of non-responsiveness, non-responsibility and/or a breach of contract, leading to the withholding of funds or such other actions, liquidated damages or enforcement proceedings.

Please refer to the NYS Master Contract for Grants - Article IV (J) and Attachment A-1 Program Specific Terms and Conditions - Article X, to review M/WBE and EEO requirements. Required M/WBE and EEO related forms can be found at <http://www.dec.ny.gov/about/48854.html>

- The local government is responsible for designating someone to serve as their Affirmative Action representative. The governing body should make this designation through official means.
- A list of certified M/WBE enterprises can be obtained via the internet from the NYS Department of Economic Development at <https://ny.newnycontracts.com/FrontEnd/VendorSearchPublic.asp?TN=ny&XID=9885>
- Contracts which meet the established M/WBE-EEO thresholds require the Contractor to submit Quarterly Reports, [http://www.dec.ny.gov/docs/administration\\_pdf/quarterlyversion7.pdf](http://www.dec.ny.gov/docs/administration_pdf/quarterlyversion7.pdf), detailing payments made by the Prime Contractor to NYS Certified M/WBEs.
- The following M/WBE-EEO “Fair Share” goals are established as follows:

Minority and Women Owned Business Enterprise (MWBE) Overall Participation Goals:

Construction/Engineering – 20%  
Commodities – 20%  
Services/Technologies – 20%

Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) Participation Goals

EEO Minority Workforce Participation Goals (DEC Regions 1- 9) 0%

EEO Female Workforce Participation Goals (DEC Regions 1-9) 0%

DEC M/WBE Compliance  
NYS Department of Environmental Conservation  
Bureau of Contract and Grant Development/MWBE Program  
625 Broadway, 10th Floor  
Albany, New York 12233-5028  
Phone: (518) 402-9240  
Fax: (518) 402-9023

#### **4. Procurement of Contractors/Subcontractors**

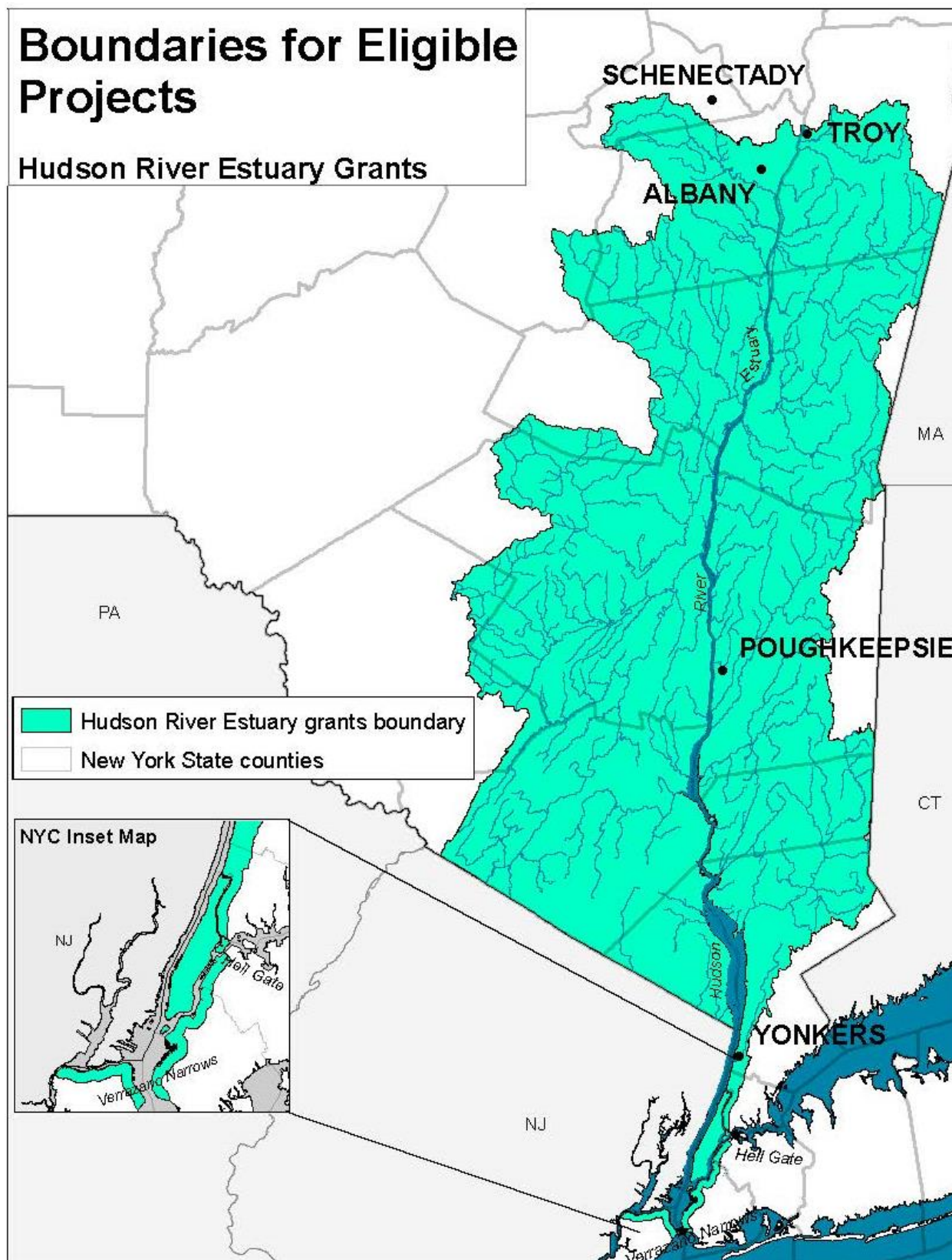
Municipalities must comply with General Municipal Law Sections 103 (competitive bidding) and 104-b (procurement policies and procedures). Not-for-profit corporations must follow procurement policies that ensure prudent and economical use of public money. Failure to comply with these requirements could jeopardize full reimbursement of your approved eligible project costs.

#### **5. Americans With Disabilities Act**

In the event the monies defined herein are to be used for the development of facilities, outdoor recreation areas, transportation or written or spoken communication with the public, the Contractor shall comply with all requirements for providing access for individuals with disabilities as established

by Article 4A of the New York State Public Buildings Law, Americans with Disabilities Act, and relevant sections of the New York State Uniform Fire Prevention and Building Code. Standards for certain Recreation Facilities are found in the 2010 ADA Standards for Accessible Design while others are found in the Architectural Barriers Act Accessibility Guidelines for Outdoor Recreation Areas <https://www.access-board.gov/guidelines-and-standards>.

## Appendix I: Map of Eligible Project Locations





## Appendix II: Budget and Work Plan Guidance

### BUDGET

#### General:

Eligible expenditures for grant and match are noted on pages 20-22 of this RFA.

**The following item should be included in the budget (as applicable):**

- Projects that include monitoring:

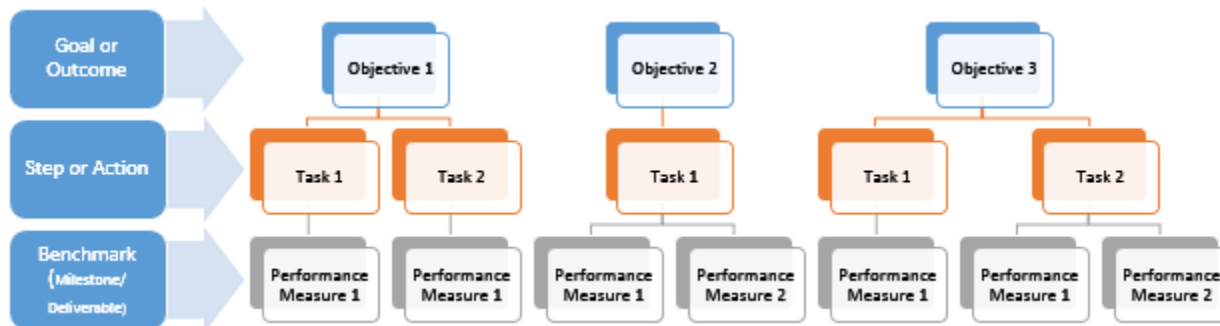
A QAPP is required for all projects that include monitoring. Funds may be allocated toward QAPP development if a QAPP is not submitted at time of application.

***No more than 50% of the grant request may be allocated to monitoring expenses.***

### WORK PLAN

#### General:

The Work Plan is an outline of the project plan and consists of Objectives, Tasks, and Performance Measures. Objectives are essentially the goals or outcomes of the project. Tasks are the detailed steps or actions required to meet the Objective. Performance Measures are the benchmarks used to determine if the corresponding task is achieved (often a milestone or deliverable that will identify task completion). The majority of the detail should be included at the task level.



The Work Plan must be input using the Work Plan functionality in the Grants Gateway. Editing the Work Plan, such as re-ordering objectives and tasks, is limited in the Grants Gateway. You are encouraged to develop the Work Plan outside of the Grants Gateway to mitigate the need to make more substantial edits.

A Word Document template, 'Work Plan Worksheet', is available for download under the 'Pre-Submission Uploads' area of the application in the Grants Gateway. The Worksheet can be used to help organize proposed project objectives, tasks and performance measures. A completed Work Plan Worksheet should NOT be uploaded back into the Grants Gateway. The intention of the document is to be a tool for application development only.

The Work Plan Summary should be a brief Statement of Work that provides an overview of the project. Although the Grants Gateway allows a large number of characters for a response, please keep the summary succinct and brief. The bulk of the information about the project should be input



in the Work Plan Detail as Objectives, Tasks, and Performance Measures.

**The following items must be included in the Work Plan:**

All projects:

At a minimum, consultation of Hudson River Estuary Program Staff must be included in the Work Plan for project management purposes. It is strongly encouraged to incorporate opportunities for Estuary Program staff to attend stakeholder meetings and to provide technical assistance in the planning process.

Projects that include monitoring:

A QAPP is required for all projects that include monitoring. If a QAPP is not submitted at time of application (see the Pre-Submission Uploads for the template), then QAPP Development must be included ***at the beginning of the Work Plan***. Example as follows:

OBJECTIVE	TASKS	PERFORMANCE MEASURES
1: Develop QAPP for DEC Review and Approval	a. Draft and Submit QAPP - Draft a QAPP and submit it to DEC's Quality Assurance Officer for review and approval.	i. QAPP Submitted - QAPP is submitted to DEC's Quality Assurance Officer for review and approval.
	b. Approved QAPP - As needed, work with DEC's Quality Assurance Officer to modify QAPP until it is approved.	i. QAPP approved - QAPP is approved by DEC's Quality Assurance Officer, and the remaining Work Plan Objectives can move forward.

## Appendix III: Application Evaluation and Scoring Criteria

### PROJECT PASS/FAIL CRITERIA: a “Fail” to any statement will disqualify the application

#### Level 1

- The applicant is eligible as provided on page 3 of this RFA. A not-for-profit organization must also be prequalified in the Grants Gateway by the application due date to be determined eligible under this grant opportunity.
- Location: The project must be located within the defined geographic boundaries of this RFA (see map in Appendix I).
- The project implements one of the specified eligible project types.
- Quality Assurance requirements for sampling are demonstrated to be met, or are not applicable.
- The uploaded project timeline/schedule demonstrates completion of project objectives, tasks and deliverables within a two-year contract term.
- All project funding sources are eligible, and at least 15% in eligible matching funds is identified.
- If applicable, letters of collaboration that include the “Lead” applicant designation are provided from all applicant partners.
- Application is complete and all required paperwork is submitted.

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### PROJECT OBJECTIVES AND TYPE .....maximum 30 points

#### Project Objective and Conservation Impact (maximum 30 points):

1. How well does the project, its location, statement of need, methods, and deliverables impact the objective of this RFA: to prepare plans, designs, studies, etc. that will lead to the implementation of conservation in the eligible project type for which it is submitted?
  - Project as scoped (location, method, deliverables, budget details) clearly addresses the RFA objective for the project type and the plan, if implemented as described, is likely to have a strong conservation impact:  
Regional \* .....30 Points  
Non-Regional.....25 Points
  - Project as scoped (location, method, deliverables, budget details) clearly addresses the RFA objective for the project type and the plan, if implemented as described, is likely to have a beneficial conservation impact:  
Regional \*].....15 Points  
Non-Regional.....10 Points
  - Project as scoped (location, method, deliverables, budget details) clearly addresses the RFA objective for the project type, but conservation impact is modest (regional\* or non-regional).....5 Points
  - Application meets one or more of the following:
    - (i) one or more aspects of the methodology is flawed in some way that affects meeting the primary RFA objective;
    - (ii) application may have an impact, but it does NOT address how the proposed project will create a plan or set the stage for future implementation of conservation projects resulting from the plan;
    - (iii) the project duplicates work in progress or already completed by others based on public information; and/or
    - (iv) the proposed project method, statement of need, and/or deliverables are insufficiently described to determine objective or impact.....0 points

*\* For purposes of this RFA, “regional” is defined as two or more municipalities (including counties and boroughs)*

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**PROJECT SUCCESS FACTORS.....maximum 56 points**

**Stakeholder Engagement and Implementation Commitment (maximum 18 points):**

2. How well does the project engage key stakeholders (local & regional) whose support is needed for the project to succeed and for planning to be implemented?
  - Application identifies key stakeholders necessary for success of planning the project as well as implementation of project results, explains robust engagement and their role(s)/how they will be engaged, and is demonstrated with letters of support describing how they will be involved in supporting the project, including local, county, or state elected officials.....18 points
  - Application identifies key stakeholders necessary for success of planning the project as well as implementation of project results, explains robust engagement and their role(s)/how they will be engaged, and is demonstrated with letters of support describing that involvement, BUT does not include support letters from local, county, or state elected officials.....10 points
  - Acceptable engagement strategies are demonstrated and key stakeholders are identified, indicating project success is likely; however letters are not provided, or letters are provided, but robust stakeholder engagement process is not well articulated in the narrative of the letters.....5 points
  - Known, crucial key stakeholders are not engaged, or stakeholder engagement appears insufficient to assure project success.....0 points

**Engagement of Hudson River Estuary Program Staff (maximum 12 points):**

3. How are Hudson River Estuary Program Staff engaged in the proposed project?
  - Project timeline demonstrates early consultation with Estuary Program staff and offers an invitation to attend stakeholder meetings and to provide technical assistance in the planning process.....12 points
  - Project timeline only demonstrates early consultation with Estuary Program staff, or invitation to participate is late in the process.....6 points
  - Hudson River Estuary Program Staff engagement is vague or not defined.....0 points

**Implementation Commitment (maximum 16 points):**

4. How well has the applicant demonstrated that the results of the plan or project will be adopted or implemented once the plan is complete?
  - Project includes a defined path for the results of the project to be used; commitment to use the results is clearly demonstrated; and/or legitimate funding sources for the implementation are identified.....16 points
  - Plans to use the results are broadly defined, and are likely to be implemented.....8 points
  - Project is an assessment or inventory with no identified path to implementation.....3 points
  - No implementation commitment is identified.....0 points

**Knowledge, Skills and/or Experience (maximum 10 points):**

5. Does the applicant demonstrate the knowledge, skills, and/or track record to successfully undertake a project of this nature?
  - Exceptionally well qualified and/or superior track record for this type of project.....10 points
  - Very well qualified and/or established track record for this type of project.....8 points

- Qualified and/or satisfactory track record.....5 points
- Not well qualified and/or has a poor track record.....0 points

**PROJECT COST EFFECTIVENESS.....maximum 50 points**

6. How well does the budget demonstrate value for cost? Cost effectiveness will be evaluated from the standpoint of both cost match, balance, and value. Applicants may compare the project costs to other similar work and explain the balance of expenses across budget categories. If applicable, provide justification for costs that exceed what is customary for the work to be completed. To sufficiently respond to this question, applicants are encouraged to upload documentation to support specific budget items, such as standard government wage rates, current market prices for equipment, and cost-estimates from potential contractors / vendors.
- Exceptional value for the cost: Projects that meet both of the following two criteria will score 50 points:
    - Project provides 30% match or more, and
    - Budget is well-balanced, and does not contain any extraneous expenses. Cost to benefit ratio is appropriate for the complexity and size of the project. Anticipated benefits are at a scale and cost equivalent to the fair market value of the proposed budget.
  - Cost-effectiveness is reasonable: Budget is well-balanced, and does not contain any extraneous expenses. Cost to benefit ratio is appropriate for the complexity and size of the project. Anticipated benefits are at a scale and cost equivalent to the fair market value of the proposed budget. (35 points)
  - Project is not cost effective: Budget is unreasonable, not cost-effective, is confusing, extraneous, excessive or not well aligned with the project purpose. Budget does not conform well to project deliverables and/or expenses are unrelated to project objectives (0 points)

**Bonus points for meeting minimum standards for key stakeholder support, implementation commitment, qualifications, and cost effectiveness (maximum 84 points):**

7. Does applicant receive points in key stakeholder support, implementation commitment, qualifications, and cost effectiveness?
- Yes.....84 points
  - No.....0 points

**STATEWIDE PRIORITY POINTS.....maximum 15 points**

**Regional Economic Development Plan:**

8. Has the applicant demonstrated the project implements part of a Regional Economic Development Council (REDC) Plan?
- If yes, add.....5 points

**Environmental Justice:**

9. Will the proposed project benefit a designated Environmental Justice Community and has the necessary EJ application information been provided?
- If yes, add .....5 points

**Coordinated Planning:**

10. Has the applicant demonstrated that the proposed planning project helps accomplish one of the

following: (i) implementing an adopted Climate Smart Communities pledge through adaptation actions outlined in the Climate Smart Communities Certification Program ([http://www.dec.ny.gov/docs/administration\\_pdf/certman.pdf](http://www.dec.ny.gov/docs/administration_pdf/certman.pdf)), (ii) implementing a Greenway Plan; (iii) implementing a Local Waterfront Revitalization Plan; or (iv) implementing an adopted Watershed Plan??

- If yes, add.....5 points

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**ADDITIONAL POINTS.....maximum 15 points**

**Map of Project Location:**

11. Is a clear map depicting the entire area of the project location uploaded for Program Question 1?

- If yes, add.....5 points

**New Partnerships:**

12. Is the applicant an organization or municipality or watershed group that has not previously received a Hudson River Estuary grant?

- If yes, add .....5 points

**Open/Current Grant Workload (uncompleted grants) with the Estuary Program:**

13. Applicant doesn't have any open or current grants with the Hudson River Estuary Program.

- If yes, add.....5 points

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**TOTAL ELIGIBLE POINTS.....250 points**

## Appendix IV: Application Checklist

Use this checklist to ensure applicant eligibility, project eligibility, and proper application completion. Incomplete or ineligible applications will not be evaluated for funding.

- **PASS/FAIL CRITERIA**

**(Check the following boxes (☐) to indicate the item is addressed in the application, or is N/A)**

1. ☐ Applicant is registered in the Grants Gateway as an eligible applicant for this program.
2. ☐ *NOT-FOR-PROFIT ORGANIZATIONS*: Applicant is prequalified in the Grants Gateway by the application due date.
3. ☐ Project is located within the defined geographical boundaries of the Hudson River Estuary.
4. ☐ Project implements one or more of the specified eligible project types.
5. ☐ ELAP requirements are met, or are not applicable, for projects that propose sampling.
6. ☐ Project timeline indicates completion between December 1, 2018 and November 30, 2020.
7. ☐ All project funding sources are eligible and at least 15% in eligible match has been identified.
8. ☐ If applicable, letters of collaboration are provided for all applicant partners.
9. ☐ Application is complete in the Grants Gateway (make sure to “Check Global Errors”).

- **GRANTS GATEWAY FORMS (Program Information, Expenditure-Based budget, and Work Plan)**

**(Check the following boxes (☐) to indicate the item is addressed in the application, or is N/A)**

1. ☐ Program Information: Project site information is provided, and ALL program-specific questions are answered and applicable/required documents are uploaded for each question. (Mandatory)

**Mandatory uploads:**

- a. ☐ Program Question 6: A project timeline, showing project start date of December 1, 2018 with a completion date of November 30, 2020. Engagement of the Estuary Staff should be included as an element in the timeline.

**Optional uploads, as applicable:**

- a. ☐ Program Question 1: Location map showing the project area.
  - b. ☐ Program Question 9: Letters of support as evidence of stakeholder engagement.
  - c. ☐ Program Question 15: Documentation (i.e. vendor quotes) for cost-effectiveness.
  - d. ☐ Program Question 25: QAPP for monitoring projects (uploaded under Pre-Submission Uploads)
2. ☐ The expenditure-based budget is completed, including justifications for all budget items.
  3. ☐ The work plan is provided with clear objectives, tasks, and performance measures.

- **MANDATORY UPLOADS (found in Pre-submission Uploads section in the Grants Gateway)**

1. ☐ This *Application Checklist* is completed and uploaded into the Grants Gateway.

\* ☐ **CHECK ALL DOCUMENTS AFTER UPLOADING TO ENSURE THE CORRECT DOCUMENT IS UPLOADED.**