

FINAL

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

1. **Question:** Is there a matching requirement?

Answer: Yes, there is a matching requirement of 15% of the requested grant funds. You can find more information about the match on pages 4 and 23 of the RFA.

2. **Question:** Does the match have to be cash, or can it be in-kind (or a combination of both)?

Answer: Either cash or in-kind (or a combination of both) can be identified as match contribution.

3. **Question:** What is the project period of the grant?

Answer: The project period is two years, anticipated December 1, 2021 through November 30, 2023.

4. **Question:** Can the same applicant apply for more than one grant?

Answer: Yes, but there is a limit of up to three applications per applicant. Multiple applications cannot be for the same project or project location. Note the award limit condition in the RFA. Under this condition, applicants will be eligible to receive one award until all qualifying awards are made at one per grantee. In the event funding remains, 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.

5. **Question:** Is there a way to print the application to review it before starting an application online?

Answer: No, you are only able to view the application after starting it in the Grants Gateway.

6. **Question:** Is there a partnership request list, or a list of municipalities looking for assistance or partners?

Answer: No, there is no such list available.

7. **Question:** In terms of calculating the 50% cap on water quality monitoring expenses, is the cap limited to expenses directly related to monitoring (such as monitoring equipment, supplies, and staff time to do monitoring), or does it also include expenses that would be considered more indirect, such as time to write the QAPP, time to coordinate and plan for the monitoring, or time to analyze and write up results?

Answer: Any expenses related to monitoring, whether direct or indirect, will be considered toward the 50% cap on monitoring expenses. It is recommended to identify which costs are associated with monitoring as separate line items in the budget, so that the allocation is clear.

8. **Question:** Are there any set-asides or preferences for applicants to include collaborations with Service-Disabled Veteran Owned Businesses?

Answer: There are no set-asides or preferences for applicants with regard to Service-Disabled Veteran Owned Businesses.

FINAL

9. Question: Is staff salary/fringe related to application preparation allowable as match?

Answer: Any costs related to application preparation are not eligible as match (or grant).

10. Question: Please clarify the estuary staff engagement requirement. Does this requirement mean that applicants should discuss the project before submission and include that as step 1 of the timetable, or is this requirement meant to indicate that once an award is given applicants are expected to consult with estuary staff prior to beginning grant activities?

Answer: Estuary Staff Engagement is meant to indicate that once an award is given applicants are expected to consult with estuary staff prior to beginning grant activities, and at any other appropriate points within the project scope.

11. Question: In reference to “Watershed assessment and monitoring projects are meant to address unassessed waterbodies, or confirm or resolve uncertainty (e.g., suspected impairments) in the DEC’s Priority Waterbody List/Waterbody Inventory listed waterbody segments” on page 12 of the RFA, what methods can be used by external partners to inform the PWL/WI? Can applicants use the existing protocols (like the PEERs program) while the new protocols are in the process of being developed? Can you provide advice on how to handle this timing? We want to make sure the project we are proposing is in line with the new protocols.

Answer: Applicants must follow the QA policy statement as stated. For external monitoring to be used for assessments, data must be:

- Accompanied by a Quality Assurance Project Plan (QAPP) or a Data Usability Analysis Report (DUAR)
- Analyzed by a [NYS Department of Health \(DOH\) Environmental Laboratory Approval Program \(ELAP\)](#) accredited Lab, and 40 CFR Part 136 analysis methods are used where applicable
- Reflective of parameters with a water quality standard or a Supplemental Indicator identified in the CALM

Applicants are encouraged to incorporate NYS DEC coordination in Work Plans and budgets to ensure the monitoring meets DEC regulator program needs and requirements.

12. Question: We are looking at a project that includes several parcels of private land. Does property need to be public to be eligible?

Answer: The Local Stewardship Planning RFA does not carry a requirement that property be public in order to be eligible.

13. Question: What rates should be used for volunteer hours?

Answer: If there is an established rate for the task which a volunteer is undertaking, particularly if it is a specialized task, you would use the established rate for the budget. You can refer to rates at https://www.bls.gov/oes/current/oes_ny.htm. Otherwise, you can use the hourly rate published by Independent Sector <https://independentsector.org/value-of-volunteer-time-2020/>. Independent Sector publishes an average hourly rate for the US, and also for individual states, including New York State (NYS). As of the date of publishing this FAQ, the hourly rate for NYS was not yet available. The average rate for the US may be used, but typically the NYS rate is a little higher, so it may be beneficial to wait for the rate for NYS (expected in April 2021).

FINAL

UPDATE: The Independent Sector has published the NYS hourly volunteer rate as \$33.17 per hour.

14. Question: Are salary and fringe benefits eligible?

Answer: Salary and fringe benefits eligible for grant and match. However, administrative costs outlined in the RFA are not eligible for grant reimbursement.

15. Question: Does a specific contractor need to be identified in the budget at the time of application? Do we need to complete the RFP process by time of application submission?

Answer: It isn't required to have specific contractors identified at the time of application submission. The RFP process can be included as a Task in the Work Plan. If a consultant is unknown at this time you would indicate "TBD" for the name of the contractor, and the budgeted amount.

16. Question: Is there a way to share the application with other individuals within our organization?

Answer: The only way to view the entire application (including uploaded attachments) is by logging into the Grants Gateway and navigating through the Forms Menu. The Grants Gateway has a user role that is "view only" and that would have to be assigned to other users so they can view the application online. The only other alternative is you can use the "Print Application" function to generate a summary of what has been completed, but you will not have access to click on or view attachments from that screen. So, you could use the Print Application function to print to a PDF file to share content that has been typed into fields of the application.

17. Question: Regarding Project Type 3, the RFA specifies that "projects that develop municipal, inter-municipal, or regional plans" are eligible activities. Does this mean that the applicant must be a municipality? If not, and if an eligible non-profit 501 c 3 organization is the applicant, does this funding category require that the proposal include any specific commitments by a municipal partner to adopt or use the proposed connectivity plan?

Answer: The applicant does not need to be a municipality. The applicant can be an eligible non-profit. Letters of support would be the vehicle to substantiate municipal (or other partner) support, and any commitments.

18. Question: Is it possible for subcontractors to the entity who has been awarded a grant to charge on a fee-for-service basis? Or would this have to be accomplished another way?

Answer: It is allowable for the subcontractor to charge on a fee-for-service basis.

19. Question: Can funding from the Hudson River Valley Greenway (HRVG) be used as match in the application?

Answer: Project costs paid from other state and/or federal funding sources are not eligible. So, funding from the HRVG cannot be used for match in this application.

FINAL

20. Question: The RFA shows a project period of December 1, 2021 through November 30, 2023 for the timeline, but the Grants Gateway shows May 1, 2021 through April 30, 2023. Which date range should we use for the timeline?

Answer: Unfortunately, there is an error in the Program Question description in the Grants Gateway that cannot be corrected. The RFA has the correct dates of December 1, 2021 through November 30, 2023, so please use those dates.

21. Question: Can you confirm the reporting dates for contracts will be July 30, October 30, January 30, and April 30?

Answer: Yes, those dates are the deadlines for grant reporting.

22. Question: Does a municipality have to pass a resolution prior to apply for the grant?

Answer: There is no requirement for a resolution to be passed.

23. Question: Does a municipality have to pass a resolution prior to apply for the grant?

Answer: There is no requirement for a resolution to be passed.

24. Question: Please confirm that for the application, on the Match Worksheet we just have to identify the source for (cash) match. We do not have to have the cash in hand.

Answer: You are able to propose donations in the match worksheet without having those donations in hand at time of application.

25. Question: Do you have a sample letter of support or sample municipal resolution that can be used as a guide for this grant opportunity?

Answer: Yes, see the following sample, which can be modified as needed.

Example Letter:

To Whom It May Concern:

The [Name] Town Board enthusiastically supports the [Name] Conservation Advisory Council's (CAC) application for technical assistance from the NYSDEC Hudson River Estuary Program to help [create/update] a Natural Resources Inventory (NRI).

Information about the Town's natural resources – groundwater, streams, mineral resources, wetlands, farmland, habitats, plants, and wildlife – can inform land use planning and decision-making and serve as an education tool.

The NRI will be prepared by members of the CAC under the guidance of the NYSDEC Hudson River Estuary Program, which will help facilitate data acquisition and management and supervise a GIS intern to create a series of resource maps at no cost to the Town. [Some information about the CAC's qualifications to oversee the project].

FINAL

Thank you for considering the Town of [Name]'s application to support this worthy project.

Sincerely,

Signature

Example Resolution:

WHEREAS, the [Name] Conservation Advisory Council ("CAC") has requested that the Town Board authorize the CAC to apply for a Natural Resources Inventory ("NRI") technical assistance opportunity from the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation ("NYSDEC") Hudson River Estuary Program, and

WHEREAS, an NRI contains information about a town's natural resources – groundwater, streams, mineral resources, wetlands, farmland, habitats, plants, and wildlife – that can inform land use planning and decision-making and serve as an education tool, and

WHEREAS, the NYSDEC Hudson River Estuary Program will provide guidance and facilitation on the steps to create a basic NRI, facilitate data acquisition and management, and supervise a GIS intern to create a series of resource maps at no cost to the Town, and

WHEREAS, members of the CAC have committed to volunteer for the project and will be responsible for public outreach, local research, map review, and writing the NRI report,

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED as follows:

1. That the Town Board of [Name] does hereby agree to participate in the application for the NRI technical assistance opportunity and authorizes the CAC on behalf of the Town to work with NYSDEC to help [create/update] a Natural Resources Inventory.