

## National Coastal Resilience Fund FAQ

7/15/2018

NFWF strives to provide clear and complete information to all applicants. This includes the Request for Proposals, tip sheets, webinar, and other materials on our website at [www.nfwf.org](http://www.nfwf.org). We urge you consult these resources to find answers to your questions. Many general questions about NFWF grants may be found at <http://www.nfwf.org/whatwedo/grants/applicants/Pages/faqs.aspx>. Most of the questions that we received to date regarding the National Coastal Resilience Fund were covered during our July 12 webinar. A recording is available for review at [www.nfwf.org/coastalresilience](http://www.nfwf.org/coastalresilience) under 'Applicant Information'. We have developed this FAQ to address a number of unique questions that are not addressed in other resources.

### Webinar Recording

*Q. Will a recording of the webinar be made available?*

A. Yes, the recording is available at [www.nfwf.org/coastalresilience](http://www.nfwf.org/coastalresilience)

*Q. Will the slides be available?*

A. The slides are available in the recorded webinar at [www.nfwf.org/coastalresilience](http://www.nfwf.org/coastalresilience). Use the scroll bar in the recorded webinar to see the slides you would like to review again so you have this verbal context as well.

*Q. Is there a version of the resilience hub map referenced in the webinar exist for applicants to peruse?*

A. Soon! We hope to have this tool available to applicants next calendar year.

### Funding Availability

*Q. Will funding be available through this program next year?*

A. Yes, pending availability of funds.

*Q. How much of the \$30M is expected to be awarded in 2018?*

A. We will allocate the full amount if there are enough meritorious projects to do so.

*Q. Are there 'caps' for funding by project type or line item within a project?*

A. No, the RFP provides the expected range of awards – but these are not considered a hard 'cap'.

*Q. Is there a funding percentage cap for monitoring in implementation projects?*

A. No. It should be the amount needed to address the metrics listed for one year post construction. Some projects may be selected for a broader monitoring program – but this request would come post award and would have additional monitoring funds available.

*Q. Is there a limit on the amount you'd like to see go to community engagement for the project planning & design grants in addition to the implementation ones?*

A. No.

Q. *Is there a niche for smaller proposals (i.e. <100K) that are competitive in part because they are smaller funding levels?*

A. No. The National Coastal Resilience Fund will provide grants that advance projects of a scale necessary to have significant community and wildlife benefit.

### Period of Performance

Q. *What is the Period of Performance?*

A. The Period of Performance is the time between the start and end date of your project for which all activities of the scope of work (and request and match budgets) must be included. Expenses incurred outside of the start and end dates cannot be reimbursed or counted as match.

Q. *What is the greatest possible period of performance?*

A. For this funding opportunity, a project cannot have a start date prior to June 1, 2018 or an end date after June 1, 2022. Any expenses incurred prior to an official award letter and signed contract are taken solely at the risk of the applicant.

Q. *When will funds be available?*

A. This will depend on how complete your application is, the grants policies and routing at your organization and how responsive you are to modification requests. Funds are only disbursed to grantees who have a signed grant agreement with NFWF. Notifications are expected in November 2018, therefore, the soonest funds are likely to be available is January 2018. February or March would be safer start dates if your project is flexible.

### Eligible Organizations

Q. *Are regional councils of government (planning districts that cover multiple local governments) or Joint Ventures eligible as long as funding is not going to a federal entity?*

A. Yes, as long as the applicant is not legally considered a federal entity; however, note that several of these questions indicated that the funding would go to a non-federal partner. In such cases, NFWF may question why the non-federal partner is not the applicant, referring to priority placed on the project by a regional council or Joint Venture and/or including letters of support from such entities in the application package.

Q. *Does "commercial organizations" in the eligibility list include for-profit companies?*

A. Yes.

Q. *If someone was unable to participate in the webinar can they still apply?*

A. Yes.

Q. *Is a project that provides resiliency for a private company (i.e., port facility) eligible?*

A. Yes.

- Q. *Can projects take place on federal lands – i.e. can federal property be enhanced/benefit even if no federal salaries are supported? If so, are these lands prioritized over private lands?*
- A. Yes, and there should be a letter of support from the land-owner/managing entity. No, projects on federal lands are not prioritized over projects on lands owned by other entities, however the nature of protection of the property where the project is to take place (federal, state, local, easement, etc.) may weigh into the sustainability criteria for the project.

### Partners

Q. *Can you please provide more information on Shell's involvement in the program?*

A. Shell Oil Company is providing project funding support under this program.

Q. *What will NOAA's role be in the program moving forward?*

A. NOAA administers and provides oversight to a significant amount of funds for this program which drives many of the federal requirements for sub awardees. NOAA staff are also engaged throughout the process through consultation for priorities and goals for the development of the fund and in proposal review (in addition to other reviewers).

### Matching Contributions

Q. *Can we use RESTORE Act, HUD, CZMA, NSF, etc. funding as non-federal matching funds?*

A. Information about NFWF matching fund requirements, including a description of acceptable sources of matching funds, is available at <http://www.nfwf.org/whatwedo/grants/applicants/Pages/faqs.aspx>. In general, if funds originated as a federal appropriation it is unlikely to be acceptable as match. If you are unsure if a will qualify as match, we recommend identifying alternative sources, if available.

Q. *Are territorial match waivers possible for insular area applicants?*

A. No.

Q. *At what point should matching be secured?*

A. Matching funds must be secured and expended within the period of performance. However, a low amount of matching funds secured at the time of application may impact competitiveness and can impact the amount of funds available for invoicing should a grant be awarded. Larger match ratios and matching fund contributions from a diversity of partners are encouraged and will be more competitive during application review.

Q. *What percentage of match can be in-kind?*

A. Up to 100% of match may be in-kind.

Q. *Can match from on-going projects, phases or parts of projects or contracts be applied?*

A. ONLY if the activities and expenses are incurred during the period of performance and are directly part of the Scope of Work of this proposal. If you have secured phase I of a two-phase construction project and phase I will be completed in the period of performance then include phase I in the scope of work even

though the request would be for phase II. This would be the same for a 0-30% design and then a 30-100% design. All costs necessary for the implementation of the project are eligible provided all other match rules apply (non-federal, etc.).

*Q. Is property use / value eligible for match funds?*

A. Only if purchase of the property (i.e. easement or acquisition) is necessary to complete the scope of work. Match/in-kind costs are those that you would have needed to pay for to complete the project scope of work but are not in the requested budget. So for example, permission to improve someone's land may not equate to a value; however, an easement indicating a landowner will not build a sea-wall or a donation of land or interest in land on which habitat restoration would occur could be used as match.

### Metrics

*Q. Does NFWF already have a standardized set of monitoring metrics to capture benefits of community protection and habitat?*

A. Metrics continue to be developed for this program. For now please use the ones listed in the RFP and we will share other metrics with awarded projects when they become available. If you have metrics you feel would be helpful or important please add them to the metrics section of your narrative.

*Q. How can an additional tracking metric be added to the drop down menu?*

A. We are not accepting additional program level metrics at this time – please add any further metrics you feel are important to the metrics section of your narrative. If you think an applicable metric has not been provided, please contact Michelle Pico, [pico@nfwf.org](mailto:pico@nfwf.org) to discuss acceptable alternatives.

*Q. What are metrics for Planning and Design?*

A. Please see the metrics section in the RFP – they are the first metrics listed and are labeled “Planning and Design” in the far-left column. If applicable, Planning and Design projects may also use metrics provided under the heading “Outcomes.”

*Q. There is no metric for living shorelines. Will this restoration type be competitive? Should we list the acres of marsh/dune that are protected by the living shoreline?*

A. Yes, use the metrics that are provided to characterize the habitat protected or enhance, if possible. Competitiveness will vary by region for these types of projects.

### Uploads/EZG Qs

*Q. Can the photo uploads be as a pdf with captions, descriptions?*

A. No. We request photos so that we have high quality visuals that we can use to communicate about your grant if you are awarded funds.

*Q. If we didn't have to undergo an A-133/Single Audit, do we upload a statement to that effect?*

A. Depending on your organization type, you may not find this document as a requirement in your uploads section. If it is not listed and/or does not apply it should not validate as needed. However, if it prevents you from submitting then yes, upload a document stating it is not needed and why in 1 to 2 sentences.

Q. *Is there a way to print a preview of the application questions?*

A. Yes, there is a great deal of information on the application, indirect costs, etc. that can be found at <http://www.nfwf.org/whatwedo/grants/applicants/Pages/home.aspx> . One of these links will give you a list of all application 'fields' so you can print <http://www.nfwf.org/whatwedo/grants/applicants/Pages/full-proposal-summary.aspx>. You will need to go to the Uploads Section to print out the narrative templates that are specific to this program.

Q. *The tip sheet states Proposal Narrative must be no more than 8 pages but the Narrative instructions say 10.*

A. The full proposal narrative may be up to 10 pages; the tip sheet has been updated.

### Permitting

Q. *For implementation projects, must permits be in hand?*

A. We are looking for 'shovel ready' projects that are ready to start in 2019. Projects that have permits in hand may be more competitive, and it is expected that most viable projects will be well into the permitting process by the proposal due date. However, there may be cases where most of the work needed has been completed but permitting applications are awaiting full funding. This should be explained as part of your application.

### Project Eligibility Questions

Q. *Are innovative design approaches to enhance coastal resilience with natural infrastructure only eligible as part of project implementation?*

A. No, this would apply to both categories.

Q. *Will pilot level projects be eligible if what they are testing can be applied to a larger-scale?*

A. Yes, they are eligible, but their competitiveness may still be evaluated based on impact.

Q. *Would funds for a Watershed Management Plan be eligible under the Planning/Design option?*

A. No, we are looking for specific project planning and design – not broader planning documents.

Q. *How does the "ready to go" standard apply to planning and design proposals?*

A. Project has been identified in some process/plan and prioritized to meet resilience needs.

Q. *Would research on innovative designs be appropriate for the Design grant?*

A. Research as part of a design grant to test/learn about an innovative approach may be included.

Q. *Will habitat assessment (area, boundaries, site suitability) be considered under planning?*

- A. It depends...the distinction is **project** planning. So if a planning document prioritized a management action to address a community threat for a general area and your proposal includes an assessment of the best place to site the project and determine the best scale/boundaries of the project to achieve the necessary protection results – then yes. If the purpose of the habitat assessment is to help to identify priorities for future projects, then no.
- Q. *If we are pursuing funding for a project that requires both planning/design funding, as well as construction funding, must we submit them as separate proposals in both planning and implementation categories?*
- A. Combined requests for both planning and implementation activities will NOT be considered. NFWF will not fund projects (or multiple applications) that seek funding for both planning/design and implementation/construction for the same project in the same year.
- Q. *For a multi-site application such as your culvert example: could 2 of the culverts be for planning and another be for construction or do all projects need to be either planning or construction?*
- A. The application will force you to choose between design **or** construction. So each proposal can only contain activities for one or the other.
- Q. *Can you define what you consider large and small scale?*
- A. This will vary by region and by threat type. What is the scale of the project needed to provide protection or at least significantly lessen the risk from the threat you are trying to address? A small pocket wetland in the middle of a town might double the available habitat for a rare bird or fish – but what community protection will it provide? A similar acreage of dunes however might have significant benefits to both the community and wildlife.
- Q. *Will the number of acres/miles restored be factored into the scoring criteria?*
- A. Yes. We will be looking for greatest impact for our dollar and the scale of the project will likely factor into that.
- Q. *Is a project that includes coastal habitat benefits, and community resiliency benefits, but not specifically "storm resiliency" benefits, eligible?*
- A. Please review the RFP carefully. In general, NFWF will make investments to advance identified priorities for restoring and strengthening natural systems so they can protect coastal communities from the impacts of storms and floods and enable them to recover more quickly, while also enhancing habitats for important fish and wildlife populations. The RFP contains more specific information about project priorities.
- Q. *Can you elaborate a bit more on community benefits?*
- A. Benefits may include, but are not limited to: reduced risk to key community assets (hospitals, power plants, evaluation routes, etc.), reduced risk to property, or other such benefits to communities and infrastructure. Desirable community benefits vary greatly depending upon the geographic context and applicants should consult any regional planning efforts that address coastal risks and resilience.
- Q. *How important is stakeholder and community outreach and engagement?*

- A. This will likely be project dependent. Support and buy-in from community leaders and affected landowners can be critical to project success. Projects may also provide an important opportunity to engage key stakeholders and improve, skills, knowledge or support for resilience efforts. There is no specific weighted scoring for outreach and engagement – but all things equal it may increase the value of a project.
- Q. *Would living shoreline feasibility studies be considered as planning projects? Such a study would be a necessary early step for further planning and design.*
- A. Yes. The goal of this category is to get a project ready for implementation.
- Q. *Are oyster reefs considered aquaculture?*
- A. Restoration of oyster reefs is an eligible project. If those projects support production as well as providing community and habitat benefits, that will be considered by reviewers.
- Q. *Will my project to do [wastewater collection systems and pump stations, artificial reefs, water quality improvements, dredging, hardened shoreline, seagrass restoration, large canal networks, living shorelines, aquaculture, etc.] be competitive??*
- A. This question was received numerous times regarding a wide variety of project types, including those listed in brackets. The types of projects that will be competitive will vary by region, as will the threats they are seeking to address. Please review the RFP carefully and if you feel your project meets the general requirements then we strongly recommend you first complete the one-page summary. If you feel that your project has an impact in each of the categories in the one-page summary then make your case for your approach in your proposal.