



2023 NEW HAMPSHIRE COASTAL RESILIENCE GRANTS

Application Instructions and Evaluation Criteria

Supporting Capacity-Building, Planning and Design Projects

The New Hampshire Department of Environmental Services (NHDES) Coastal Program is accepting [Coastal Resilience Grant \(CRG\)](#) applications for community and habitat resilience projects. The applications will be scored and ranked according to the “Evaluation Criteria,” as described in Section E. Applicants with the highest-ranking proposals will be asked to refine scopes of work and budgets for contracting. A final contract is subject to successful negotiation and State of New Hampshire and National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) approval. Funds for this grant opportunity are provided by the NOAA Office for Coastal Management under the Coastal Zone Management Act in conjunction with the NHDES Coastal Program.

A. Purpose

The CRG funding opportunity supports projects that (i) build capacity, (ii) advance planning, and (iii) develop designs to increase coastal resilience, including community and/or habitat resilience, in one or more of New Hampshire’s Coastal Zone communities. Coastal Zone communities include Dover, Durham, Exeter, Greenland, Hampton, Hampton Falls, Madbury, New Castle, Newfields, Newington, Newmarket, North Hampton, Portsmouth, Rollinsford, Rye, Seabrook and Stratham.

For the purposes of the CRG funding opportunity, *coastal resilience* is the capacity of a coastal community or coastal system to adapt in a changing climate — not only measured by the capacity to “bounce back” quickly from shocks and stresses like storms, but also, and perhaps more importantly, measured by the capacity to “leap forward” by fostering sustained and equitable achievement of community goals and ensuring the social, economic, environmental, and cultural wellbeing of all peoples and habitats over the long-term.

B. Eligible Applicants and Project Categories

Eligible Applicants

Eligible applicants include coastal municipalities, quasi-governmental organizations, non-governmental organizations, academic institutions and state agencies. Applicants and projects based in and composed of communities that have historically received fewer funding opportunities for coastal resilience are strongly encouraged. Projects must take place within one or more of the 17 New Hampshire Coastal Zone communities. (See Section A for list of Coastal Zone communities.) Governments and organizations may be involved in more than one application but may only submit one proposal as the lead applicant. Preference will be given to lead applicant organizations that have never received a CRG award.

Eligible Projects and Project Categories

Across all project categories, strong preference will be given to projects that focus on coalition-building, protecting and sustaining cultural heritage, environmental justice, inclusive access to the coast, and/or protecting and restoring natural coastal resources. All projects must minimize negative impacts to environmental resources and strong preference will be given to projects that avoid negative impacts to environmental and cultural resources. Across all project categories, preference will be given to projects that collaboratively-develop products and outcomes, meaning that projects integrate inclusive, ethical, and mutually beneficial engagement and decision-making structures. These projects will employ best

practices for reaching, building trusting relationships with, and centering priorities of groups that have been historically excluded from municipal government and other decision-making spaces. Groups include but are not limited to communities with low incomes, Black communities, Indigenous communities, communities of color, speakers of languages other than English, and people with disabilities. Best practices for inclusive engagement include but are not limited to providing daycare services, conducting events in specific neighborhoods, providing stipends to enable full participation.

Project proposals must align at least one of these three project categories: Building Capacity Projects, Planning Projects and Design Projects.

- i. **Building Capacity** – Building Capacity Projects seek to increase the neighborhood, grassroots, or community capacity of applicants and their partners to increase resilience by building networks, increasing knowledge, and/or improving access to resources such as funding. At the end of a Building Capacity Project, the project applicant and its partners should be better positioned to engage in sustained work to increase community and/or habitat resilience.

Building Capacity Project examples include, but are not limited to, creating or supporting a neighborhood group focused on building social cohesion and resilience among neighbors; implementing a grassroots resilience leadership development program; improving the intersectional network of groups working on community issues related to resilience (such as public health, environmental and racial justice, affordable housing, public transportation, business continuity, etc.); supporting or creating a multi-stakeholder municipal committee, grassroots community movement or advisory working group focused on coastal community and habitat resilience; supporting organizational readiness to engage in ethical dialogue with Tribal and Indigenous leaders, building organizational knowledge to advance racial, social, and environmental justice; conducting an inclusive process to develop a community and/or habitat resilience project grant proposal with intention to submit to an available or forthcoming funding opportunity.

- ii. **Planning** – Planning Projects seek to develop plans, assessments, regulations, or other strategic information that will guide community and/or habitat resilience. The Planning Project should result in a collaboratively-developed planning product that will be used strategically to advance community and/or habitat resilience.

Planning Project examples include, but are not limited to, collecting and analyzing community and/or environmental data or knowledge to inform a resilience planning effort; conducting a vulnerability and/or needs assessment for a site, asset, neighborhood, community, or region; integrating state and regional best practices or guidance (e.g., [NH Coastal Flood Risk Guidance](#), [Resilient Land Use Guide for New Hampshire](#), [NH Coastal Watershed Conservation Plan](#), [NH Wildlife Action Plan](#) resources, [Menu of Higher Floodplain Regulation Standards](#), etc.) into local master plans, capital improvement plans, other local plans, or local ordinances and/or processed; integrating higher standards and best practices into land use regulations such as zoning ordinances or site plan review and subdivision regulations to increase community and/or habitat resilience; creating new plans such as emergency response and recovery plans or conservation and habitat restoration plans; improving or creating procedures and/or programs that enable achievement of community and/or habitat resilience goals.

- iii. **Design** — Design Projects seek to advance designs for site-specific physical resources or assets that will increase community and/or habitat resilience. A Design Project should result in a collaboratively developed design product that can be considered for funding opportunities that support final design, permitting, and construction.

Design Project examples include, but are not limited to, convening a design charrette for a vulnerable neighborhood, historic district, or commercial area; developing conceptual design alternatives for a priority habitat restoration or nature-based infrastructure project (e.g., a tidal culvert). CRG funds may not be used to design new hardened shoreline structures (e.g., rip rap, seawalls, revetments), but may be used to design nature-based shoreline stabilization projects (e.g., living shorelines) that mimic the natural environment and improve ecosystem function and value compared to current conditions and consider future conditions. CRG funds may be used to complete up to 75% engineering designs, but they cannot support final engineering designs or permitting costs.

C. Funding, Match Commitment, and Project Timeframe

Funding

Total anticipated federal grant funding for all CRG projects is approximately \$200,000. Applicants must request a minimum of \$10,000 and no more than \$70,000 in federal grant funds per project. Federal grant funds and match may not be used for final engineering designs, permitting, or construction costs. Federal grant funds may not be used for equipment purchases that exceed \$5,000.

Match Commitment

Match consists of the portion of the project costs/value not paid with federal grant funds and can be any combination of cash and/or in-kind goods and services related to the project (e.g., non-federal salaries, volunteer time). A 4:1 federal grant funds to non-federal match through cash or in-kind services is requested but not required. For example, a project seeking \$40,000 in federal grant funding is expected to provide at least \$10,000 in non-federal match commitment for a total project budget of \$50,000. Applicants may include a justification for reduced or no match commitment, in cases where a reduced match commitment will eliminate any barriers to applying for CRG funding.

How to calculate your match commitment and total project budget:

Non-federal match commitment = [federal grant funds requested / 4]

Total project budget = [federal grant funds requested] + [federal grant funds requested / 4]

Project Timeframe

Project duration should be 12 to 18 months, depending on the project scope and budget. Projects are expected to begin as early as November 2023 and shall begin no later than January 2024 otherwise CRG funds awarded to the applicant will be forfeited. Projects are expected to end between December 2024 and June 2025.

D. How to Apply and Evaluation Criteria

Please complete and submit an application using the [CRG Application Form](#). The application form and additional resources about the CRG program can also be accessed from the [CRG webpage](#). Applications are due no later than 4:00 PM EDT on Friday, May 26, 2023.



E. Evaluation Criteria

Eligible applications will be reviewed and evaluated based on the following criteria and point value (total of 100 points).

Section #	Section topic	Maximum Points	Evaluation Criteria for Scoring Maximum Points
Section 1: Lead Applicant Information			
1.1	Organization Name	3	Three points if lead applicant organization has never been awarded a CRG.
1.2	Mailing Address	0	-
1.3	Primary Contact Person	0	-
1.4	Contact Email	0	-
1.5	Contact Phone	0	-
Section 2: Project Summary			
2.1	Project Title	0	-
2.2	Project Category	0	-
2.3	Project Location/Focus Area	1	Project location/focus area is specific and takes place within the New Hampshire Coastal Zone, as described in Section B. Projects outside the geographic focus of the CRG funding opportunity will be rejected.
2.4	Project Goal	3	Project goal is clear and well-aligned with the purpose of the CRG funding opportunity, as described in Section A.
2.5	Project Summary	2	Project summary is clear, succinct, and summarizes the important details of the project.
2.6	Total Project Cost	0	Refer to Section C for funding availability and thresholds.
Section 3: Project Purpose and Audience			
3.1	Project Purpose	10	Applicant provides compelling justification for how the project addresses a specific issue, interest, or need related to coastal resilience, who the project is intended to serve, and why CRG funds are important to support the project. This section should include an explanation of any past efforts or events that the project is building on as well as a description of how the project outcomes will be used/useful beyond the end of the CRG award.
3.2	Environmental Context	10	Applicant describes the importance of the environmental context of the project, including any reference to how that environmental context is expected to change with climate change. Applicant provides compelling explanation for how the project achieves one or more of the following: builds coalitions, sustains cultural heritage, advances environmental justice, advances public access to the coast, and/or promotes protection and/or restoration of natural

			coastal resources. Applicant explains how the project minimizes or avoids negative impacts to environmental and cultural resources. See Section B, sub-section “Eligible Projects and Project Categories.”
3.3	Community Engagement	10	Applicant provides a realistic and specific description of the audiences, groups, or people that will be engaged throughout the project, why they will be engaged, and how they will be engaged. See Section B, sub-section “Eligible Projects and Project Categories.”
3.4	Advancement of Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, Justice, and Accessibility	10	Applicant provides a thoughtful explanation of how the project will play a role in advancing diversity, justice, equity, inclusion, and accessibility in New Hampshire Coastal Zone communities.
Section 4: Project Team, Work Plan and Budget			
4.1	Project Team	10	Proposed project team is diverse and demonstrates understanding and respect for partner skills and experience. Reviewers will take into consideration that the lead applicant’s ability to partner will vary based on grant funds requested, and smaller grant projects will most likely have fewer partners.
4.2	Project Work Plan	20	Proposed work plan is thoughtful, realistic, and collaborative. The work plan should include specific activities and, for each activity, a description of the work to be completed, who will complete the work, and estimated timeframe. The work plan should explicitly include a project management activity as well as interim reports (due every December 31 and June 30 that occur after the start and before the end of the project period) and one final report (due on the final day of the project period, no later than June 30, 2025).
4.3	Budget by Activity	5	Proposed budget should be listed for each work plan activity. The amounts of federal grant funds requested for each activity are reasonable, appropriate, and well-justified given the level of work proposed in the work plan. Refer to Section C for more details.
4.4	Project Deliverables	5	Project deliverables align with the project goal and proposed work plan. Applicant clearly describes how the project deliverables will be used beyond the CRG timeframe. Examples of other project deliverables include events, outreach products, monitoring data and summary reports, assessment reports, conceptual design plans, draft ordinance language, etc. Some deliverables may be listed as outcomes (e.g., 50 coastal residents engaged).
4.5	Non-Federal Match	1	The amount of in-kind and cash match contributions either 1) meets a 4:1 Federal grant funds to non-Federal match

			ratio or 2) does not meet a 4:1 ratio and is accompanied by a reasonable justification for waiving the match request, as described in Section C.
Section 5: Supporting Documents			
5.1	Map	1	Up to one (1) map is provided that contributes additional context about the project. Project partners may use any available sources to create a map image, including the NH Coastal Viewer at www.nhcoastalviewer.org .
5.2	Photo(s)	2	Up to two (2) photos are provided that contribute additional context about project.
5.3	Letters of Commitment	4	Letters of commitment are provided from project team partner organizations identified in the application as receiving grant funds and/or providing match. No letter of commitment is required from the lead applicant organization—submittal of the CRG application form will serve as statement of commitment from the lead applicant. If letters of commitment from any key partner organizations receiving funds or providing match are missing, the application will be rejected.
5.4	Letters of Support	3	Letters of support are provided from audiences, groups, or people otherwise engaged in the project and showcase the need or importance of the project.
Total		100	

F. Timeline

- Application Webinar: Monday, March 20, 2023 at 11:00 AM EDT
A webinar will be held to describe the funding opportunity and answer questions. All are welcome to attend. [Register for the webinar.](#)
- Emailed Questions Deadline: Please contact NHDES Coastal Program Resilience Coordinator Kirsten Howard at kirsten.b.howard@des.nh.gov or (603) 559-0020 prior to 4:00 PM EDT on Friday, April 28, 2023, with any questions about this RFP. All questions and responses will be posted by Friday, May 5, 2023 to the [CRG website.](#)
- Application Due Date: Friday, May 26, 2023 at 4:00 PM EDT
- Award Notifications: Friday June 16, 2023
Selected applicants will be invited to negotiate final scopes of work and budgets with NHDES Coastal Program.
- Finalized Project Scopes: Monday, July 31, 2023
- Project Start Date: Between October 2023 and January 2024, subject to change.
Projects will begin upon NOAA and New Hampshire Governor and Executive Council contract approval.
- Project End Date: No later than June 30, 2025

G. Terms and Conditions

Submittal of a proposal does not commit NHDES to award a contract or pay any costs incurred during the preparation of a proposal. All awards are subject to National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration and Governor and Executive Council approval. NHDES also reserves the right to reject any or all proposals and to negotiate the scopes of work, timeframes, and requested grant amounts.

H. Contact

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