



Southeast New England Program 2021 Watershed Grants Request for Proposals

Release Date: March 1, 2021

Letters of Intent are Due: Friday, April 16, 4:00 p.m. Eastern Time

Letters of Intent will be accepted by on-line submission only, beginning March 15, 2021.

Register and apply at www.snepgrants.org

For all inquiries related to this RFP, contact Thomas Ardito, Restore America's Estuaries, tardito@estuaries.org, and see www.snepgrants.org **for updates and more information.**

Virtual Application Workshops will be held on the following dates in 2021. All times Eastern. To register, see www.snepgrants.org:

- **Tues., Mar. 16, 10:00 a.m.**
- **Thurs., Mar. 18, 1:00 p.m.**
- **Tues., Mar. 24, 10:00 a.m.**

Contents of this Request for Proposals (RFP):

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1. Program Information

About SNEP

Clean water, healthy watersheds, and vibrant coastal ecosystems are essential to the communities of Southeast New England – a foundation of our region’s prosperity and quality of life. In Rhode Island and Massachusetts, natural systems generate billions of dollars in value through beach-going, fishing, tourism, marine trades, drinking water supply, and many other uses. Yet despite recent improvements, water pollution and ecosystem degradation threaten our most important natural assets. In order to strengthen and sustain prosperous, resilient communities throughout coastal Southeast New England, action is needed to reduce water pollution and to restore coastal and watershed habitats.

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), through its Southeast New England Program (SNEP), has established a vision for our region’s environment in 2050. The [SNEP Strategic Plan](#) describes three main goals for achieving this vision:

- A resilient ecosystem of safe and healthy waters;
- Thriving watersheds and natural lands; and
- Sustainable communities.

The plan outlines five priority actions for achieving these goals:

1. Increase local capacity;
2. Increase available solutions;
3. Ensure diverse representation;
4. Demonstrate ways to address common challenges; and,
5. Increase community leaders’ understanding of the benefit of restoration projects.

The [SNEP Strategic Plan](#) provides more information on SNEP’s approach to achieving resilience and sustainability in Southeast New England.

About SNEP Watershed Grants

SNEP Watershed Grants (SNEPWG) is a partnership between EPA and Restore America’s Estuaries (RAE), a national coalition of non-profit coastal conservation organizations. The purpose of **SNEP Watershed Grants** is to support the goals of the SNEP strategic plan by providing funding to implement SNEP priority actions.

In 2021, **SNEP Watershed Grants** expects to award \$1.75 million in competitive grant funding to projects, programs, and partnerships that restore coastal and watershed ecosystems throughout Southeast New England, while improving technical and institutional capacity to address pressing coastal issues.

Geographic Focus

For purposes of this grant program, Southeast New England is defined as lands, watersheds, waters, and islands from Westerly, RI, to Pleasant Bay, MA, on Cape Cod, including the waters of Narragansett Bay and Buzzards Bay, and their watersheds as far north as Worcester and Brockton, MA. It includes all major rivers and river drainage basins

flowing into coastal waters of Rhode Island, Buzzards Bay, and the South Shore of Cape Cod. It also includes Martha's Vineyard, Nantucket, Block Island, and the Elizabeth Islands. All work funded by RAE's **SNEP Watershed Grants** must be implemented within this geographic region, which is located entirely within Rhode Island and Massachusetts and is referred to as the "**SNEP Region**" in this RFP. An interactive map of the **SNEP Region** can be accessed on the [EPA SNEP web page](#).

2. How to Apply

RAE will select grantees through a two-step application process: an open Letter of Intent (LOI), followed by invited Full Proposals. Both steps are competitive; RAE's request for a full proposal does not guarantee funding of that proposal.

Any eligible organization may submit an LOI or multiple LOIs. In consultation with an independent advisory committee and EPA, RAE will select LOIs for further consideration as Full Proposals. In some cases, RAE may suggest changes to the scope of work or budget in the LOI, to be included in the Full Proposal.

Full Proposals will be accepted by invitation only, following RAE evaluation of LOIs. Similar to the process for LOI proposals, RAE will select full proposals for funding in consultation with an independent advisory committee and EPA. RAE may elect to partially fund proposals, or may request other project modifications prior to finalizing awards.

LOI requirements are provided in **Appendix 1**, while **Appendix 2** describes requirements of Full Proposals. **Appendix 3** outlines the process by which RAE will evaluate and select LOIs and Full Proposals. **All applications must be submitted on-line** via www.snepgrants.org

In order to be considered for funding, LOI and Full Proposal applications must meet the requirements outlined in this RFP and appendices, including federal grant requirements incorporated by reference.

Letters of Intent and Full Proposals **must be submitted through the online portal** at www.snepgrants.org. Submissions sent by email or other means will not be accepted.

3. Schedule (all dates 2021 unless noted otherwise; all times Eastern)

- **Mar. 1:** RFP Release Date
- Virtual Application Workshops: See Page 1
- **Apr. 16, 4:00 p.m.:** Letters of Intent (LOIs) Due
- **Week of May 17:** Full Proposal requested if selected; others notified
- **Jul. 2, 4:00 p.m.:** Full Proposals Due
- **Week of Aug. 16:** Notification of Awards
- **September Date TBA:** Grant Announcements
- **Oct. 1:** Expected Grant Start Date
- **Dec. 31, 2023:** Latest date for completion of work.

4. Awards & Match

Source of Funds

The source of **2021 SNEP Watershed Grants** is federal funding through EPA (CFDA 66.129 - Southeast New England Coastal Watershed Restoration Program). However, all grants under this program will be awarded, overseen and administered by RAE.

Anticipated Awards

In 2021, RAE will award approximately \$1.75 million in federal funds through **SNEP Watershed Grants**. Typical awards will range from \$50,000 to \$350,000. Projects of exceptional impact may be funded up to \$500,000. Smaller grants will be considered in limited instances: as contributions to projects with other sources of funding; for pilot-scale projects; and for **Peer-to-Peer Learning Projects** as described below. RAE expects to fund 5 – 15 awards in 2021. In combination with prior grant rounds, **2021 SNEP Watershed Grants** will continue the development of a diverse portfolio of projects throughout the SNEP region, led by a variety of organizations and using a range of approaches to accomplish SNEP priorities.

Funding Priorities

SNEP Watershed Grants' funding priorities are aligned with the SNEP vision, goals and priority actions described above and in the [SNEP Strategic Plan](#).

Examples of proposals that support SNEP vision, goals and priorities include those which:

- Establish or support sustainable partnerships;
- Provide multiple benefits for communities and the environment;
- Foster environmental equity;
- Restore coastal and watershed habitats such as rivers, salt marshes, seagrass, and wetlands;
- Foster coastal resilience and adaptation to changing climate and environmental conditions;
- Reduce nutrients and nutrient impacts on coastal ecosystems;
- Restore or improve urban landscapes with nature-based solutions;
- Develop, implement or communicate innovative approaches;
- Develop sources or methods of sustainable financing for clean water and other environmental improvements;
- Develop or implement holistic environmental plans, including watershed-based planning and action.

Peer-to-Peer Learning Projects

In addition to the larger projects described above, RAE will consider smaller grants that advance local and peer-to-peer learning regarding the restoration of clean water and healthy coastal ecosystems. Examples include workshops or training series, major symposia, partnership development, etc. Such projects will typically be in the \$10,000 to \$20,000 range. RAE is particularly interested in funding special projects that share knowledge and experience developed through SNEP programs and projects with stakeholders and practitioners throughout the SNEP region.

Projects of Exceptional Impact

RAE encourages applications for region-wide projects and programs of exceptional impact and will consider applications for such projects up to \$500,000.

Partial Awards

In general, RAE will seek to fund proposals in their entirety. In some cases, however, RAE may elect to partially fund proposals, or may request other project modifications prior to finalizing awards.

Non-Federal Match

Funded projects must provide an additional **33% of the requested amount in non-federal matching funds**. For example, a request of \$100,000 must be accompanied by a commitment of at least \$33,000 in non-federal match, for a total project cost of \$133,000. Matching funds may be cash or in-kind. State, municipal, and private funding, as well as volunteer time, are all eligible sources of match.

Match Waiver Request

Applicants may request full or partial waiver of the non-federal match requirement. Funding for waivers is limited and will be provided on an as-needed basis as funds allow, at the discretion of RAE, in order to facilitate application by under-represented organizations and others that would otherwise have difficulty participating in the program. Organizations requesting match waivers will be asked to describe the need for the waiver in the LOI and Full Proposal.

Period of Performance

The expected date of award of **2021 SNEP Watershed Grants** is October 1, 2021. Following award, the project period may be up to 27 months, ending no later than Dec. 31, 2023. Projects should be “ready to go” upon award.

Eligible Applicants

Eligible applicants are municipalities, state agencies, tribes, regional planning organizations, state or municipally-chartered commissions, other subdivisions of state and local government, 501(c)3 non-profit organizations, and academic institutions.

Organizations need not be located within the SNEP Region to be eligible for funding, but the funded work must take place within the region with the primary purpose of benefitting the SNEP Region.

Federal agencies are not eligible recipients of funding, but may be included as partners in proposals submitted by eligible recipients.

Public-private partnerships are encouraged, consistent with federal competitive procurement requirements noted in **Appendix 4**.

SNEP Steering Committee members are eligible to apply for and receive **SNEP Watershed Grants** if they meet all other criteria. RAE utilizes established procedures to avoid conflicts of interest in the award of **SNEP Watershed Grants**.

Multiple Applications & Projects

Organizations may submit multiple LOIs or applications either as a lead organization, or as a partner on another organization's application. Multiple applications must be submitted separately and will be evaluated independent of other proposals.

Coordination with Other Grant Rounds

RAE will consider applications that are linked to prior SNEP-funded projects (for example, construction funding for projects designed with prior grants; or further assessment or monitoring of projects constructed with prior funding); however, each application in each year will be evaluated independently, and funding decisions will be based on evaluation results for that particular round of funding, including considerations of geographic diversity and project type. Similarly, applicants may submit **SNEPWG21** applications on the expectation of applying for future **SNEP Watershed Grants**; the award of a 2021 grant, however, does not represent or imply commitment toward funding in future grant rounds.

Coordination with Other Programs

RAE encourages coordination with other state, local, private and federal programs, including the National Estuary Program; state-funded water quality, habitat and resilience programs; and initiatives of private foundations. Although federal funds may not be used as match, applicants are encouraged to include federal agencies and federally-funded organizations in project partnerships.

SNEP Network

The [SNEP Network](#) provides municipalities and other organizations with training, technical assistance and capacity-building to achieve healthy watersheds, sustainable financing, and long-term climate resilience through ecological restoration and stormwater management. SNEP Watershed Grants will consider implementation grants to complement the scope or continue the work of Network-supported partnerships, programs and projects.

Organizations with early-stage ideas for SNEP funding may contact the SNEP Network to request support in project development, which may position the project for future grant funding from SNEP or other sources.

5. Use of Funds

SNEPWG21 funding may be used for most project costs, including salary, fringe, contractual support, equipment, supplies, travel, and indirect costs. All grant payments will be made on a reimbursement basis.

Indirect Costs

For organizations without a federal negotiated indirect cost rate agreement (NICRA),

indirect costs will be reimbursed at a rate up to 10% of the total direct costs. For organizations with a current NICRA approved by any federal agency, indirect costs will be reimbursed according to the NICRA formula. In all cases, indirect costs will be factored into consideration of the cost-effectiveness of the proposal. **Appendix 5** explains calculation of indirect costs for SNEP Watershed Grants.

Tools & Equipment

Under this program, RAE will consider funding tools and equipment such as hardware, software, monitoring devices, durable equipment, and heavy equipment, where such investments support the implementation of SNEP goals and objectives. RAE is particularly interested in funding tools and equipment that support partnerships and build local or regional capacity to achieve SNEP goals. Equipment is defined as durable goods with a unit cost in excess of \$5,000.

Conferences and Travel

Applicants are encouraged to budget for travel in order to share lessons and results of projects throughout the SNEP region, and to connect with regional and national practice aligned with SNEPWG-funded projects. An example of a national forum for SNEP Watershed Grants is RAE's biennial National Coastal and Estuarine Summit, expected to be held in Fall 2022 at a location and date to be announced. Applicants are encouraged to include airfare, hotel and registration for this conference in proposal budgets.

6. Ineligible Uses of Funding

SNEP Watershed Grants may not be used for the following purposes under this 2021 solicitation. However, **SNEPWG** can fund eligible components of a larger project that may also include ineligible components funded by other means.

In 2021, the following uses of funding are ineligible for SNEP Watershed Grants:

- **Research and Monitoring:** In 2021, **SNEP Watershed Grants** will not fund proposals in which the primary purpose is research or monitoring. **SNEPWG** will, however, fund research and monitoring as part of a larger grant, where the purpose of the research or monitoring is to assess results and outcomes of the grant-funded activity. Applicants should be clear regarding the role of any research or monitoring activities within the context of the larger project.
- **Social Surveys and Questionnaires:** **SNEP Watershed Grants** will not fund social surveys or questionnaires; nor can the costs of such instruments be included as match. If your project utilizes social surveys or similar instruments, they must be off budget, with costs paid by separate funding sources.
- **Actions Legally Required:** Actions required to settle a formal enforcement action or included in a court order; or specified as a required mitigation measure under a state, local, or federal permit for a specific project. Similarly, **SNEPWG** cannot fund work that falls under the existing mandated responsibilities of an individual state or local government (e.g., development of TMDLs or MS4 permits). **SNEPWG** can,

however, fund the cost of securing permit approvals as part of a larger grant-funded project.

- **Routine Maintenance:** Work involving only routine activities to maintain stormwater infrastructure, other facilities, land or waterbodies.
- **Plans or studies that lack a clear environmental impact or path to implementation:** Plans and studies will be considered for funding only if they are directly relevant to, and provide results that inform, the achievement of SNEP goals.
- **Conventional “gray infrastructure” projects** using well-established technologies or methods (e.g., installation of sewer lines).
- **Private Construction:** Projects that involve new construction or retrofitting of buildings or facilities serving primarily private purposes, including residential, commercial and institutional, among others.
- **Land Purchase:** Purchase of land or real estate, although purchase of land or easements may be used as match if essential to the funded work.

7. Additional Resources

Additional information is available at www.snepgrants.org, including:

- Link to online submission portal (beginning Mar. 15);
- Registration links for virtual application workshops;
- Information on prior grant awards;
- Updates to this RFP if necessary;
- Subscription link – subscribe for updates.

Other resources that may be helpful in developing applications are:

- [SNEP Strategic Plan](#)
- [SNEP Network](#)

For questions about this RFP, contact Thomas Ardito, Restore America’s Estuaries, tardito@estuaries.org

*Thanks for your interest in SNEP Watershed Grants.
We look forward to receiving your Letter of Intent!*

End RFP; Begin Appendices

Appendix 1: Letters of Intent

Letters of Intent (LOIs) allow RAE to provide preliminary review of project ideas, in order to determine whether a full proposal will be requested and to provide comments to applicants.

The LOI must be submitted online via www.snepgrants.org. LOIs will be accepted beginning March 15, with a deadline for submittal by 4:00 p.m. on Friday, April 16, 2021.

The following provides a guide to the content of the LOI that must be submitted via the on-line portal.

Organization Profile

- Application Point of Contact
- Applicant Organization
- Fiscal Information
 - Employer Identification Number (EIN)
 - Dun & Bradstreet Number (DUNS Number)
 - SAM registration information
- **Note: EIN, DUNS and SAM registration are not required for submittal of the LOI, but are required for the Full Proposal. Applicants can note that these items are “pending” when submitting the LOI. As it may take several weeks to complete these registrations, be sure to allow sufficient time to obtain them prior to the Full Proposal deadline. Registration links may be found at www.snepgrants.org**

Project Information

- Name of Project (limit 100 characters)
- General Location (Rhode Island, Massachusetts or Interstate)
- Brief Project Summary (limit 100 words)
- Project Lead Organization (may be same as Applicant; or Applicant may be serving as Fiscal Agent for another organization)
- Project Leader & contact information

Cost

- Amount of Request
- Amount of Non-Federal Match
- Total Project Cost
- Match Percentage (Match ÷ Request x 100)
- Organizations requesting a full or partial waiver of the non-federal match requirement (33%) will be asked to describe the reason for the request.

Certification

- Signature of Organizational Leader
- Is this a Peer-to-Peer Learning Project as described under “Awards” in the RFP?

Project Description

The online submission portal provides space to clearly address the following questions. Each question is subject to a 200 word limit:

- **Problem:** What is the problem or threat to Southeast New England’s coastal and watershed ecosystems that the proposal seeks to solve?
- **Scope of Work:** Summarize the workplan, including principal tasks and realistic schedule. Clearly explain how the proposed work will address the problem described. Describe the deliverables clearly and concretely. What is the geographic scope of the project?
- **Project Team:** List project partners and briefly describe the role of each partner. Note that partners are those directly involved and contributing to the project, not simply supporting it. Partners may be funded under the grant and/or be match contributors. Federal agencies may be off-budget partners.
- **Outreach & Communications:** Provide a brief outreach plan; describe your target audience(s). Who are your stakeholders and how will you inform them about the project? Will this project serve community members, including historically underrepresented groups? Consider all community, professional, and regional audiences – how will you communicate with each of these groups about the project?
- **Impact:** Describe what, ultimately, will be the impact of the work, how it aligns with SNEP priorities, and how it will be sustained. Use both quantitative and qualitative measures as appropriate. Describe local and regional impacts.

Budget Page

The online submission portal requires completion of a Letter of Intent Budget. The LOI Budget is a critically important component of the LOI. It should demonstrate to reviewers that your proposal is well-planned and will be cost-effective, and that you have realistically considered the costs of completing the work.

If the LOI is accepted for further consideration, the LOI Budget will serve as the basis for the budget in the Full Proposal, at which point it will likely be updated and amended. Therefore, the LOI Budget may approximate all costs.

The online submission portal requires applicants to list requested costs and match according to the standard federal cost categories. These are as follows:

- a. Personnel
- b. Fringe Benefits
- c. Travel
- d. Equipment
- e. Supplies
- f. Contractual

g. Construction: Not included in the LOI. Construction activities in SNEP Watershed Grant proposals should be listed under other appropriate categories such as Personnel, Equipment, Supplies, or Contractual.

h. Other

i. Total Direct: Sum of Categories (a) – (h), above.

j. Indirect

k. Total: Sum of Direct (i) and Indirect (j), above.

Purpose of Cost Items:

For each budget category, the online submission portal requests a brief description of the purpose of costs and match listed within that category (100 word limit). For example:

- Under “Personnel,” list the individuals and job titles whose salary will be paid by the grant (for the applicant organization only), and the work they will be doing under the grant;
- Under “Fringe,” note the rate that will be applied to the salaries above;
- Under “Contractual,” list the functions and purposes of expected contracts;
- Under “Other,” list funding for individual partners, and the uses of that funding;
- In all cases, note the source of non-federal match funding.

Appendix 2 provides more information on budget categories and requirements, while **Appendix 5** describes calculation of indirect costs. **Appendix 6** provides a sample LOI budget. Round all costs to the nearest dollar.

Budget Note: Quality Assurance Project Plans (QAPPs)

Funded projects that collect or utilize environmental data, water-quality models, or similar tools and information for decision-making, including most construction projects, are required to develop a Quality Assurance Project Plan (QAPP). If your project will require a QAPP, be sure to include costs for developing the QAPP in your budget. More information on QAPPs is provided in **Appendix 4**, or contact RAE for assistance.

How to Submit a Letter of Intent

Go to www.snepgrants.org and follow the links to the online portal. Applications will be accepted through the online portal only.

When you submit your application, you will receive a reply acknowledging receipt of the submittal. Save or print the reply for your records.

If you do not receive confirmation of receipt by the end of the first business day following the deadline, **you must** contact Thomas Ardito as soon as possible at tardito@estuaries.org to ensure acceptance of your application.

All applications must meet the deadlines listed above, and must be complete as directed at the time of submittal. In the event of documented transmittal problems, corrupted files, or other technology problems, RAE will make every effort to accept applications that were submitted correctly, but not received due to problems outside the

control of the applicant. However, to minimize the chance that a proposal cannot be accepted, we encourage applicants to submit proposals with sufficient time to rectify these kinds of problems prior to deadlines.

LOIs that omit required elements or which do not adhere to specified page limits will not be accepted or evaluated. RAE reserves the right to accept or reject any proposal on the basis of its sole determination that the proposal meets, or does not meet, program goals, objectives and requirements.

RAE may request additional information from applicants prior to inviting full proposals.

End Appendix 1

Appendix 2: Full Proposals

As described in the RFP, Restore America's Estuaries will review all applicants' LOIs and select those which will be further considered for funding. These applicants will be invited to submit a Full Proposal. Full Proposals will be accepted by invitation only and must be submitted via an online portal that will be provided to selected applicants.

The format of the Full Proposal is similar to that of the Letter of Intent, but provides the opportunity to describe the project and answer questions in more detail. The Full Proposal also requires a detailed budget table, to clearly describe proposal costs and match.

RAE may request that the applicant make changes to the proposal as described in the LOI, in order to submit a Full Proposal. In other cases, the proposal may evolve as more information becomes available. The scope and budget of a Full Proposal need not be identical to that described in the LOI, but should be substantially similar.

RAE will provide complete information for submitting a Full Proposal to selected applicants, and will host workshops for applicants to assist in developing the Full Proposal.

End Appendix 2

Appendix 3: Decisions

LOIs and Full Proposals will be reviewed by an independent advisory committee of individuals with expertise in environmental management and ecological restoration. RAE will consult with the advisory committee and EPA prior to selecting LOIs for further consideration, or Full Proposals for funding. Following initial decisions, RAE may request additional information from applicants, or changes to project scope and budget, prior to approving the next step.

Following the review of LOIs, RAE will invite Full Proposals from applicants whose proposals have been selected for further consideration, and will notify applicants whose LOIs have not been selected.

Following the review of Full Proposals, RAE will notify applicants whether they have been selected for a full award, partial award, or not selected. Awards are not final until grant agreements have been executed.

2021 Review Framework

LOIs and Full Proposals will be reviewed utilizing six major criteria:

- 1. Potential Impact:** Alignment with SNEP priorities and the potential of the proposal to have a significant positive impact on Southeast New England's coastal and watershed ecosystems, including water quality, either directly (for example, through on-the-ground improvements) or indirectly (for example, through plans or studies that enable subsequent action).
- 2. Applicant & Team Capability:** The potential of the applicant to successfully complete the project, as indicated by technical capacity, experience and past performance. The quality and diversity of the project partnership, with priority given to projects that establish or strengthen cross-cutting or regional partnerships among multiple organizations. Projects that are "ready to go" are preferred for funding.
- 3. Capacity-Building:** The potential of the proposal to significantly advance regional knowledge and practice to restore, protect and understand Southeast New England's coastal ecosystems, by building either technical or institutional capacity. Projects that develop or build upon watershed plans or other comprehensive approaches are encouraged.
- 4. Innovation:** Proposals that pioneer, improve or operationalize emerging technologies or methods, and those that test or demonstrate the effectiveness of new or underutilized approaches.
- 5. Budget:** Cost-effectiveness of the proposal relative to expected results; fiscal performance and capacity of the applicant; quality of budget proposal, with sufficient detail, solid cost justification, and realistic cost expectations.
- 6. Diversity of Awards:** The geographic distribution of current and prior SNEP investments, to ensure that the entire SNEP region is fairly served by the program, and that SNEP Watershed Grants builds capacity in areas and communities of need. RAE will continue to develop a broad portfolio of SNEPWG projects by funding diverse kinds of organizations and types of projects, including organizations, areas and project types that have not been previously funded. RAE intends to allocate 2021 grant funding approximately equally between Rhode Island and Massachusetts, and will balance considerations of geographic diversity, diversity of technical approaches, and the quality of proposals received in selecting proposals for funding.

Final scores and evaluation notes will be provided to applicants on request.

While RAE works closely with the advisory committee and EPA in evaluating applications, final selection and funding decisions will be made at the sole discretion of RAE.

End Appendix 3

Appendix 4: Requirements of Funded Projects

Reporting Requirements

Grantees must submit semi-annual progress reports as well as a final report. RAE will provide grantees with the format of interim and final reports upon award. Information in grantee reports will be used by RAE and EPA in public communication materials and performance reports.

Procurement Requirements

The source of SNEP Watershed Grants is federal funding. Therefore, funded projects must adhere to federal requirements regarding contracting, sub-awards, and purchases. These include multiple bids for procurements above \$10,000 (2 C.F.R. 200), good-faith efforts to employ Disadvantaged Business Enterprises (40 C.F.R. 33.301), and Davis-Bacon prevailing wage requirements for construction activities (2 C.F.R. 200).

For more information on budget categories and procurement requirements associated with this funding, applicants should refer to:

Best Practice Guide for Procuring Services, Supplies, and Equipment Under EPA Assistance Agreements

online at:

<https://www.epa.gov/grants/best-practice-guide-procuring-services-supplies-and-equipment-under-epa-assistance-agreements>

Award Announcements

Grants will be announced at one or two public events (real or virtual) in September 2021. Grantees are required to participate in these events.

Collaboration & Technology Transfer

Grantees are required to participate in two SNEP Grantees' meetings during the period of the award, to be held within the SNEP Region. One will be a technical working session held approximately six months after grant awards, and the second will be an annual partnership and technology transfer meeting to report on their work. Travel funds for these meetings should be included in proposal budgets. Grantees may be asked to participate in other regional SNEP events aimed at sharing progress and results with organizations throughout Southeast New England, including SNEP symposia.

Sharing of Data & Results

Grantees must make project data (including monitoring and modeling data), results, and other project information publicly available and readily transferable within one year of project completion. Should this present a problem with proprietary or personal information, contact RAE to discuss in advance of application. Additionally, applicants are expected to share project information and results at the collaboration and technology transfer meetings described above.

Audits

Applicants with independent audits or audited financial statements must make them available to RAE within one month of receipt. RAE conducts periodic on-site audits of all grantees.

Reimbursement

Project costs will be reimbursed on the basis of documented, incurred expenses. Reimbursement requests shall be submitted at least quarterly and at most monthly.

Quality Assurance Project Plans (QAPPs)

Most projects funded by SNEP Watershed Grants will require a Quality Assurance Project Plan (QAPP) approved by EPA Region 1 prior to beginning work. This includes all projects that collect or utilize environmental data, water-quality models, or similar tools and information for decision-making. **This also includes most construction projects.** Draft QAPPs must be submitted at least 30 days prior to beginning data collection or use in order to provide sufficient time for review. Grant recipients are responsible for development of an approved QAPP and must identify within the proposal the means by which they plan to complete the QAPP (for example, through contractual support or in-house). **QAPPs, if required, must be approved within one year of grant award.** RAE will assist grantees in coordinating QAPP submittals to EPA.

Requirements for QAPPs can be found at:

www.epa.gov/quality

www.epa.gov/quality/region-1-quality-systems-documents

Applicants unfamiliar with the QAPP development and approval process may contact RAE for assistance in QAPP planning prior to proposal submittal.

Acknowledgement of SNEP Watershed Grants and EPA

Grantees must acknowledge **SNEP Watershed Grants** and **EPA** as sources of project funding in all external communications materials – press releases, webpages, public and technical presentations, etc. RAE will provide acknowledgement guidelines and materials with grant agreements.

Land Control, Permissions, & Private Property

Proposals must demonstrate sufficient authority to perform the work proposed. If the applicant is not the sole property owner, this may take the form of partnership commitments, letter of permission, etc. Permits and access agreements do not need to be completed prior to award, but the applicant must demonstrate a clear understanding of permitting and access requirements and schedules in the application. RAE will fund work on private property only where there is a clear public benefit and where the applicant can provide an assurance of lasting impact – for example, through a conservation easement, deed restriction, or other agreement with the private landowner. As with projects on publicly owned property, project sites on private land must include signage recognizing SNEP/EPA funding.

Other Federal Cost Requirements

Costs under this grant must be reasonable, allowable, allocable, and necessary to the supported project in accordance with 2 CFR Part 200, Subpart E and must adhere to the general procurement standards set forth in 2 CFR 200.318 and “Consultant Fee Cap” set forth in 2 CFR 1500.9.

End Appendix 4

Appendix 5: Indirect Costs

SNEP Watershed Grants will reimburse grantees for reasonable indirect costs related to the execution of funded projects. The calculation of indirect costs and amount of reimbursement depends on the type of organization, and whether it has an approved, current Negotiated Indirect Cost Rate Agreement (NICRA) on file with a federal agency. The following guidance summarizes the process for calculating indirect costs for organizations with or without an approved NICRA.

5.A. Organizations with Current Approved NICRA: Use the guidance in the NICRA to calculate indirect costs. Organizations may charge less than the full authorized NICRA rate to a SNEP Watershed Grant in order to devote more grant funding toward direct costs; in such cases the organization may apply the difference (foregone indirect cost) toward match if it is from eligible non-federal sources. Organizations with an approved NICRA will be required to provide RAE with a copy of the current NICRA, and to provide RAE with updates as they are approved by the federal agency.

5.B. Organizations without NICRA: For applicants that have never had a NICRA with a Federal agency, the applicant may use an indirect cost rate up to 10% of Modified Total Direct Costs (MTDC). MTDC (as defined under 2 C.F.R. §200.68) **includes** all direct salaries and wages, applicable fringe benefits, materials and supplies, services, travel, and the first \$25,000 of each subaward or subcontract (regardless of the period of performance of the subawards and subcontracts under the award). MTDC **excludes** equipment, capital expenditures, charges for patient care, rental costs, tuition remission, scholarships and fellowships, participant support costs, and the portion of each subaward or subcontract in excess of \$25,000. Procurement contracts are not covered by this restriction.

Organizations seeking to charge the 10% indirect cost rate must calculate MTDC in order to calculate the allowable indirect cost. See sample budget in **Appendix 2**.

Note: Organizations **with** an approved NICRA **should not calculate MTDC**. Rather, show the NICRA base cost, calculated NICRA indirect cost, and the portions of the NICRA indirect cost for which the applicant is requesting reimbursement or which it is applying as match.

End Appendix 5

Appendix 6: Sample LOI Budget Table

A budget table is not required for submittal with the LOI, but will be required with Full Proposals. The following sample budget table may be useful to applicants in developing budgets for the LOI and Full Proposal.

Sample LOI Preliminary Budget Table – Quahogs Unlimited Clean Water Partnership

Cost Category and Item	SNEPWG Request	Non-Fed Match	Total Cost
a. Personnel			
Habitat Coordinator, Quahogs Unlimited	\$75,000	\$25,000	\$100,000
Outreach Coordinator, Quahogs Unltd.	\$25,000	\$20,000	\$45,000
Total Personnel	\$100,000	\$45,000	\$145,000
b. Fringe Benefits	\$30,000	\$15,000	\$45,000
c. Travel	\$2000	\$1000	\$3000
d. Equipment	0	0	0
e. Supplies	\$2000	0	\$2000
f. Contractual			
QAPP Development	\$10,000	0	\$10,000
BMP Construction	\$50,000	0	\$50,000
Total Contractual	\$60,000	0	\$60,000
g. (Note: No “Construction” Category)	0	0	0
h. Other (Partners, tuition, etc.)	0	0	0
Public Works Dir., Town of Oyster Creek (Partner)	0	\$8000	\$8000
Senior Biologist, Friends of Flatfish (Partner)	\$10,000	\$10,000	\$20,000
Volunteers	0	\$10,000	\$10,000
Total Other	\$10,000	\$28,000	\$38,000
i. Total Direct	\$204,000	\$89,000	\$293,000
j. Indirect: 10% of Direct (this example) OR NICRA	\$20,400	\$8900	\$29,300
k. Total Cost (Direct + Indirect)	\$224,400	\$97,900	\$322,300
Non-Federal Match as Percentage of Request [in this example]: $\$97,900 \div \$224,400 \times 100 = 44\%$			

End Appendices