



# Southeast New England Program 2021 Watershed Grants Full Proposal Guidance

*Full Proposals will be accepted by invitation only following review of Letters of Intent.*

*Full Proposals must be submitted via RAE's [on-line application portal](#)*

**Deadline: July 2, 2021, at 4:00 p.m. EDT.**

This document provides guidance for applicants who have been invited to submit Full Proposals for 2021 SNEP Watershed Grants (SNEPWG21).

Note that request of a Full Proposal does not represent a commitment to fund the project. Full Proposal review is, like Letter of Intent (LOI) review, a competitive process. Funding is limited and we regret that we will be unable to fund all Full Proposals under consideration.

## **How to Complete the Full Proposal Application**

### **STEP 1: Log In:**

First, log back onto the SNEP Watershed Grants online portal: [\[LINK\]](#). There, you will have access to the Organization Profile that you created for the LOI, as well as a card or button to create a new Full Proposal (FP) application for any projects under consideration.

### **STEP 2: Review the SNEPWG21 RFP:**

Review the SNEPWG21 RFP, which may be downloaded on our [SNEPWG Applicant & Grantee Resources Page](#) and provides a full description of the program, its goals and requirements, application evaluation and process, etc. This guidance supplements, but does not replicate, the Request for Proposals (RFP).

### **STEP 3: Update Organization Profile:**

First, be sure that your Organization Profile is up to date. Prior to submitting your Full Proposal (FP) application, you must have completed the process of obtaining an Employer Identification Number (EIN), Dun & Bradstreet Number (DUNS), and federal SAM registration. Be sure to allow ample time to obtain these registrations as they may take a week or more to complete.

## **STEP 4: Review LOI Feedback:**

After updating your Organization Profile, click the “Full Proposal” application card.

In it, you will see two main sections: one for your new FP application, and one to view your completed Letter of Intent (LOI). Scroll to the bottom of the page and click on “LOI Feedback.” Review the comments of the Application Review Committee (ARC), if any, on your initial application. If there are no items in the list, the ARC didn’t provide comments.

## **STEP 5: Full Proposal Application:**

Within the FP Application are three subsections:

- Full Proposal Narrative
- Expected Results
- Full Proposal Budget Form

We recommend you complete them in this order, using the following guidance.

As with the LOI, you can save the FP application forms at any point in the process to leave the portal, and pick up where you left off when you return; and you can continue to make changes prior to submittal. Once submitted, no changes can be made.

### **5.1. Full Proposal Narrative**

The online portal requires you to provide the following information. Most of the fields will populate from your LOI but you should review, update and expand on them as need be. Most are self-explanatory; this document covers only those which require additional guidance.

- **Project Lead Organization:** May be same as Applicant; or may be another organization for which the Applicant is serving as Fiscal Agent.
- **Partner Organizations:** See RFP for information on which organizations qualify as partners.
- **Cost:** Enter the total amount of your grant request and total amount of non-federal match. The form will calculate the total project cost from these figures. It will also show the total request and match immediately below, calculated from the category entries in the Full Proposal budget form. Check to be sure that the request and match amounts from both forms agree, and that they also agree with the numbers in your uploaded Detailed Budget spreadsheet (more on all this below).
- **Detailed budget:** You must upload a detailed project budget, using the spreadsheet template provided via the link on the portal or on the [SNEPWG Applicant & Grantee Resources Page](#). For instructions in developing this table, see “Budget” section, below.
- **Project Description:** The project description follows the same format as in the LOI but with less strict word limits so that the applicant can provide more detail. Clearly address the questions on the application. Where there are several questions in one

field, be sure to address all the questions asked. Under “Impacts,” provide the overall impact of the project – specific performance metrics will be provided elsewhere.

- **Other Uploads:** Upload maps, images and Letters of Commitment as indicated on the portal.

## **5.2 Expected Results**

Follow the instructions on the portal to enter the expected results of your project. This information will be used to assess the impact and cost-effectiveness of the proposal and for tracking program results. Click on the categories that pertain to your project, then enter expected results in each of the individual fields (performance metrics). Note that generally you will be asked to enter a quantity with units specified (for example, “freshwater wetland acres restored”), followed by a “Notes” field to provide essential context for that number (e.g., Atlantic white cedar swamp). Be sure to provide enough backup information to make the numbers meaningful to reviewers.

### **Notes on Expected Results & Performance Metrics**

1. We recognize that estimates will often be necessary to fill in the metrics fields. Use your best estimate, and provide a basis for that estimate in the notes field.
2. If a category or metric doesn’t apply well to your project, or the results are unknown, skip it.
3. Be realistic about what the project will or will not do. Because the ARC has a great deal of experience in these kinds of projects, there is no advantage to overestimating results—if anything, it will benefit your application if the ARC perceives that your estimates are solid.
4. Enter only expected results that will occur during the grant period. For example, if you are requesting SNEP funds to develop a plan to restore 100 acres of wetlands, the result is the plan, not the 100 acres. If you’re ***constructing*** a 100-acre wetland restoration, then the result is 100 acres.
5. Performance metrics will not be used directly for scoring proposals – in other words, a 50-acre wetland restoration project will not automatically be preferred over a 25-acre project of the same cost. The ARC will consider all aspects of your proposal, including performance metrics, in making funding decisions, using the criteria described in the RFP.

## **5.3 Budget Information**

Budget information is entered in three places in the Full Proposal application:

1. Full Proposal Narrative: Enter top-line numbers for grant request and match amounts where indicated.
2. Full Proposal Narrative: Upload detailed project budget where indicated, using the spreadsheet provided and according to the instructions below.
3. Budget Form: Enter request and match by federal cost category only. Provide additional information on each cost category in the notes field provided.

All three of these budget entries must agree. The best way to complete them is to first complete the detailed budget, using the template available for download on the portal within the narrative section. Then just enter the appropriate lines from the detailed budget into the narrative and budget forms where needed.

While the LOI budget was preliminary, the Full Proposal budget will include solidly established costs and cost estimates, and will provide greater detail than the LOI. Applicants may update and amend the project budget for inclusion in the Full Proposal, but the overall cost of the proposal should be generally consistent with that in the LOI.

Only applications that provide clear, complete, and defensible information on project costs will be competitive. In order to determine whether your application is a cost-effective use of SNEPWG dollars, reviewers must be able to easily understand your proposal budget and all its component costs.

**Budget Categories:** Both the detailed budget table and the budget form must break down costs for both Request and Match by federal (SF-424A) cost category (object class). These categories are as follows (additional explanation provided by RAE):

**a. Personnel:** The “Personnel” category includes requests and/or match for salaries **of the applicant (grantee) organization only**. As noted below, salaries of partner organizations should be listed under “Other.” Salaries must be provided at **actual rates** but should factor in anticipated raises (include note to explain calculation).

**b. Fringe Benefits:** Fringe may be calculated on an hourly basis or as a percentage of staff salaries and must be provided at actual rates. Fringe must be separated from salary. The “Fringe” category should include fringe request and/or match for the applicant organization only.

**c. Travel:** Estimate costs for local and long-distance travel for staff of applicant organization only. Use current federal mileage rate and note purpose of travel.

**d. Equipment:** Durable goods with a unit cost in excess of \$5,000. Please include justification for equipment purchase and basis for cost determination: (e.g. Knowledge of the type of equipment including similar equipment purchased previously; market research, etc.)

**e. Supplies:** All other durable and non-durable goods with a unit cost less than \$5,000, including computers. Grants will pay for refreshments as necessary for public meetings, etc., but food and drink costs must be listed as a separate line item. Grants will not pay for alcoholic beverages.

**f. Contractual:** Include all purchases of services (engineering companies, construction companies, etc.). Please list in “Notes” the proposed contract activities along with a brief description of the scope of work or services to be provided, proposed duration, and proposed procurement method (competitive or non-competitive).

**g. Construction:** Do not include this category. Construction activities should be costed under other appropriate categories such as Personnel, Equipment, Supplies, or Contractual.

**h. Other:** Includes partner salaries and other expenses, all volunteer time used as match, and other miscellaneous expenses that don’t fit under the prior categories,

whether requested or provided as match. Partner expenses should be further detailed in the budget notes.

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

**j. Indirect:** See below for guidance on calculation of indirect costs.

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

**Applications must use the budget table template provided**, using the federal cost categories as listed. Add additional line items within categories as necessary but do not alter or delete categories. Provide a separate line under “Personnel” for each individual on the project, and a separate line under “Contractual” for each contract. Show request and match amounts for each line item and cost category.

Note all sources of match and whether they are cash or in-kind, either in the table or budget notes. **Total non-federal match must be at least 33% of request** unless you are requesting a full or partial match waiver. Proposals providing a greater match percentage will receive no additional benefit in scoring. Match percentage is calculated as follows:  
 **$(\text{non-federal match}) \div (\text{request}) \times 100 = \text{match percentage}$** .

A sample budget table is provided at the end of this guidance document. It was developed from the Preliminary Budget table example in the 2021 SNEPWG Request for Proposals, and follows the format provided in the detailed budget template.

**Budget Notes:** In addition to the table, the detailed budget template provides a space to include budget notes as needed, to explain or justify costs or cost bases listed in the budget table. Partner expenses, in particular, should be detailed in budget notes, or brief partner cost tables may be added to the spreadsheet. Notes should include brief description of each personnel function, each contract, and each piece of equipment in the spreadsheet.

#### **Additional Information on Budget Development:**

- Cost bases (methods or formulas for calculating costs) should be included in the “Notes” section under the budget table.
- Salaries and fringe may be calculated on an hourly or percentage basis. If salaries are expected to increase over the period of the grant, factor in such increases to reflect total cost over the period of the grant, and provide a note explaining your calculations.
- RAE recognizes that cost estimates will be necessary in some instances, for example construction contracts that will be competitively bid. Please note cost estimates where used and note the basis for developing such estimates.
- Sub-awards to partner organizations should be listed under “Other,” with a separate line item for each organization. Provide a brief explanation or justification for calculation of partner costs under “Notes” and/or add a brief cost table to the spreadsheet.
- Contracts or sub-contracts awarded to engineering firms, construction firms, and other for-profit businesses must be selected through procedures consistent with Federal requirements (2 C.F.R. 200) as well as the grantee’s own purchasing

procedures. Above certain dollar thresholds, competitive bidding is required. See our [Applicant and Grantee Resources Page](#) for EPA procurement guidance. Where SNEPWG funds continuing contracts (i.e., contracts that were awarded by the grantee prior to the SNEP grant award), RAE will require documentation of competitive selection procedures used in awarding such contracts. Note that contractors (including individual consultants) typically operate in a competitive environment and provide goods and services on commercial terms to many different purchasers. It is not the legal status of an organization (e.g., governmental unit, non-profit organization, institute of higher education, or for-profit organization) that determines whether a transaction is a subaward or procurement contract, but whether the object is to carry out the purposes of the statute authorizing EPA to provide financial assistance.

- Be sure to budget for QAPP development if your project will require one (most SNEPWG-funded projects do, including construction projects). QAPPs may be developed in-house or through a consultant contract – contact RAE for assistance in QAPP planning if need be.
- Volunteer time should be calculated at the national average rate published by [www.independentsector.org](http://www.independentsector.org) and should be listed under the “Other” category in the “Non-Federal Match” column.
- While federal resources may not be counted as match, list any federal funds or resources that are contributing toward the work in the “Leveraging” row of the spreadsheet.
- Passenger vehicle mileage should be calculated at the current federal rate.
- Equipment is generally durable property valued at more than \$5,000 – see 2 CFR 200 for guidance.
- If you anticipate earning program income as part of your project, show the source, estimated amount, and how it will be used.
- Round all costs to the nearest dollar – do not include cents.

### **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 budgeting indirect costs for organizations without or with an approved NICRA.

**Organizations *without* NICRA:** For applicants that have never had a NICRA with a Federal agency, the applicant may use the de minimis indirect cost rate of 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.

**Organizations with Current Approved NICRA:** Use the formula in your 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. **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.

Once you've completed the detailed budget table, fill out the category totals in the Budget Form to complete that section; upload the table where indicated; and make sure the top-line budget numbers in the narrative agree with those in the table and the form. At last, you're done with all of the budget information.

### **Step 5: Review & Submit**

Review each component of your application; make sure all the budget figures agree; make any changes that you'd like; hit "Submit," and you're done! Good luck, and thanks for applying to **2021 SNEP Watershed Grants!**

***Sample budget table next page....***

**Sample Full Proposal Budget Table – Quahogs Unlimited Clean Water Partnership**

Cost Category and Item	Cost Basis	SNEPWG Request	Non-Fed Match	Match Source	Total Cost
<b>a. Personnel (Quahogs Unltd. Only)</b>					
Melanie Mercenaria, Habitat Coordinator	2500 hrs @ \$37.50	\$73,750	\$20,000	Molluska Foundation	\$93,750
Sam McClam, Outreach Coord.	1600 hrs. @ \$30	\$30,000	\$18,000	QU Unrestricted	\$48,000
<b>Total Personnel</b>		<b>\$103,750</b>	<b>\$38,000</b>		<b>\$141,750</b>
<b>b. Fringe Benefits</b>					
Fringe, Quahogs Unltd.	25% of Salaries	\$25,938	\$9500	As above	\$35,438
<b>Total Fringe</b>		<b>\$25,938</b>	<b>\$9500</b>		<b>\$35,438</b>
<b>c. Travel</b>					
Mileage to Outreach Meetings	2000 mi. @ \$0.56	0	\$1120	QU Unrestricted	\$1120
Travel to RAE Summit (2 people)	See Narrative	\$4000	0		\$4000
<b>Total Travel</b>		<b>\$4000</b>	<b>\$1120</b>		<b>\$5120</b>
<b>d. Equipment</b>					
***Starfish Water Quality Probe	See Narrative	\$7000	0		\$7000
<b>***Total Equipment</b>		<b>\$7000</b>	<b>0</b>		<b>\$7000</b>
<b>e. Supplies</b>					
Planting Materials		\$2500	0		\$2500
<b>Total Supplies</b>		<b>\$2500</b>	<b>0</b>		<b>\$2500</b>
<b>f. Contractual</b>					
QAPP Development	See Narrative	\$10,000	0		\$10,000
BMP Construction	See Narrative	\$75,000	\$25,000	O.C. Cap. Bdgt.	\$100,000
<b>Total Contractual</b>		<b>\$85,000</b>	<b>\$25,000</b>		<b>\$110,000</b>
<b>g. (Note: No "Construction" Category)</b>		<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>h. Other</b>					
Bill Bivalve, Director of Public Works, Town of Oyster Creek	160 hrs. @ \$50	0	\$8000	Oyster Creek Gen. Fund	\$8000
Francine Fluke, Sr. Biologist, Friends of Flatfish	450 hrs @ \$45.00	\$10,125	\$10,125	Anemone Foundation	\$20,250
QU & FoF Volunteers	400 hrs. @ \$27.20	0	\$10,880	In-kind	\$10,880
***Tuition, Coop Students, Flounder State	See Narrative	\$5000	\$5000		\$10,000
<b>***Total Other</b>		<b>\$15,125</b>	<b>\$34,005</b>		<b>\$49,130</b>
<b>i. Total Direct</b>		<b>\$243,313</b>	<b>\$107,625</b>		<b>\$350,938</b>
<b>j. Indirect</b>					
Indirect Cost Basis: NICRA Indirect Cost OR Modified Total Direct Cost (See Appx. 5)	MTDC in this example	\$231,313	\$102,625		\$333,938
<b>j. Total Indirect Cost (10% of MTDC in this example)</b>		<b>\$23,131</b>	<b>\$10,263</b>		<b>\$33,394</b>
<b>k. Total Cost (Direct + Indirect)</b>		<b>\$266,444</b>	<b>\$117,888</b>		<b>\$384,332</b>
Non-Federal Match as a Percentage of Request [in this example]: $\$117,888 \div \$266,444 \times 100 = 44\%$					
***Items fully or partially excluded from MTDC calculation – See <b>Appendix 5</b>					

###End 2021 SNEP Watershed Grants Full Proposal Guidance###