



Southeast New England Program 2022 Watershed Implementation Grants Full Proposal Guidance

Full Proposals will be accepted by invitation only following review of Letters of Intent, and must be submitted via RAE's on-line application portal [HERE](#)

Deadline: June 30, 2022, at 4:00 p.m. EDT.

This document provides guidance for applicants who have been invited to submit Full Proposals for 2022 SNEP Watershed Implementation Grants (SWIG22).

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: [HERE](#). 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 SWIG22 RFP:

Review the SWIG22 Request for Proposals (RFP), which may be downloaded [on this 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 information in the RFP.

STEP 3: Update Organization Profile:

First, be sure that your Organization Profile is up to date. Prior to submitting your FP application, you must have completed the process of obtaining an Employer Identification Number (EIN), federal SAM registration, and Unique Entity ID (UEI). 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:

Review the email from RAE requesting your Full Proposal. If the Application Review Committee (ARC) had any comments on your LOI, they will be summarized there.

STEP 5: Full Proposal Application:

Within the FP Application are two subsections:

- Full Proposal Narrative
- 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 are the same as those in the LOI but the word limits have been increased so that you can expand on them as need be. Most of the questions 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 request amount at the top of the form; further down, re-enter the request amount as well as the amount of non-federal match. The form will calculate the total project cost from these figures. Be sure that these numbers agree with the numbers in your uploaded Detailed Budget spreadsheet (more on all this below).
- **Required Uploads:** The portal requires a number of document uploads. All necessary templates and examples can be downloaded via the portal or on the [SNEPWG Applicant & Grantee Resources Page](#). Required uploads include:
- **Detailed budget:** You must upload a detailed project budget, using the spreadsheet template provided. For instructions on developing this table, see “Budget” section, below.
- **Expected Results:** You must also upload an “Expected Results” spreadsheet, using the template provided. See guidance below.
- **Project Impact Model:** RAE and EPA are testing a new “Project Impact Model” this year. Download template with examples, create a new one for your proposal, and upload.
- **Project Description Section:** 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 and concisely address the questions on the application. Where there are

several questions in one field, be sure to address all the questions asked. The “Impact” questions in the project description section may overlap the “Expected Results” spreadsheet somewhat; however the former is your opportunity to describe the overall importance of the project, while the latter will focus more on specific, quantifiable results. The project description questions will not pre-populate from the LOI, but you can copy and paste from your LOI, which will still be accessible on the portal.

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

5.2 Expected Results & Project Impact Model

Download the “Expected Results” spreadsheet via the link on the portal or on the [SNEPWG Applicant & Grantee Resources Page](#), fill in the yellow squares, and upload the completed sheet where indicated. This information will be used to assess the impact and cost-effectiveness of the proposal and for tracking program results. 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 in the Muddy River Conservation Area). Be sure to provide enough description to make the numbers meaningful to reviewers.

Also download the “Project Impact Model” template; complete and upload this document for your project.

Notes on Expected Results, Impact Model & Metrics

1. We recognize that estimates will often be necessary to fill in the metrics fields. Use your best estimate, and provide more information, if need be, in the notes field.
2. If a category or metric doesn’t apply to your project, enter 0. If the quantity is unknown, enter “Unknown.” **Do not enter “N/A” or similar.**
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.
4. 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 expected results, in making funding decisions, using the criteria described in the RFP.
5. Many different kinds of work are eligible for SWIG funding. RAE recognizes that not every project will fit easily within the metrics and impact frameworks provided. Please do your best with it and provide optional comments where indicated to help us improve it in the future.

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 spreadsheet, using the template provided. 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 LOI 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 SWIG22 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 in the SWIG22 Request for Proposals, consistent with the 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 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 Implementation 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 **2022 SNEP Watershed Implementation Grants!**

End SWIG22 Full Proposal Guidance