



Long Island Sound Community Impact Fund

2025 Grants - (LISCIF25)

Request for Applications

Release Date: September 9, 2024

Letters of Intent (LOIs) are Due: November 22, 2024, by 4:00 pm EST.

LOIs will be accepted by on-line submission only. Apply using the LISCIF25 RFA Page: <https://estuaries.org/liscif/>. For all inquiries related to this RFA, contact: Shahela Begum, Restore America's Estuaries, sbegum@estuaries.org

Virtual Information Sessions will be held on the following dates in 2024. (All times are EST). To participate, see the LISCIF25 RFA Page: <https://estuaries.org/liscif/>.

- [Tuesday, September 17 – 11:00 am EST](#)
- [Tuesday, September 24 – 1:00 pm EST](#)

Contents of this Request for Application (RFA):

1. **Program Information**
2. **How to Apply**
3. **Schedule**
4. **Awards**
5. **Use of Funds**
6. **Ineligible Uses of Funding**
7. **Working Capital Advance**
8. **Additional Resources**

Appendices:

1. **Letters of Intent**
2. **Full Proposals**
3. **Decisions**
4. **Requirements of Funded Projects**
5. **LISCIF Budget Table Example**

1. **Program Information:**



About the Long Island Sound Study (LISS)

The Long Island Sound is an estuary located between Connecticut and New York. It is one of the most densely populated estuaries in the United States, with 9 million people residing within the watershed. According to research conducted by the [Long Island Sound Study \(LISS\)](#), the Sound serves as an integral part of the regional economy, generating billions annually to the regional economy via boating, commercial and sport fishing, swimming, and beachgoing.

The Long Island Sound Study formed in 1985, is a bi-state partnership of federal and state agencies, user groups, concerned groups, and individuals dedicated to protecting and restoring this vital estuary. The goals of the program are: improving water quality and reducing contaminant and nutrient loads, restoring and protecting habitat and wildlife, supporting sustainable and resilient communities, and incorporating sound science and inclusive management. It is a critical priority to restore and protect the Sound, so it can continue to provide a diverse ecosystem, commercial opportunities, climate resiliency and recreational access to all people.

About Restore America's Estuaries (RAE)

Restore America's Estuaries (RAE) is a national organization, dedicated to the protection and restoration of bays and estuaries as essential resources for all people. RAE manages and administers the Long Island Sound Community Impact Fund grant program to provide financial assistance, capacity building opportunities and trainings, and hosts an Annual Learning Exchange.

About the Long Island Sound Community Impact Fund (LISCIF)

The Long Island Sound Community Impact Fund (LISCIF) is a partnership among Restore America's Estuaries, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, and the [Long Island Sound Study](#) (LISS). The purpose of LISCIF is to provide technical and financial assistance to communities with environmental justice concerns to address environmental issues and improve the quality and accessibility of the Long Island Sound. Technical assistance will be provided through LISCIF and is available to communities/organizations even if one does not submit a proposal for funding.

EPA provides funding for LISCIF through the [Bipartisan Infrastructure Law](#). Projects funded by LISCIF will help meet the [Justice40 Initiative](#) goal that "40% of the overall benefits of these Federal investments flow to disadvantaged communities that are marginalized, underserved, and overburdened by pollution." The EPA defines environmental justice as, "the fair treatment and meaningful involvement of all people regardless of race, color, national origin, or income, with respect to the development, implementation, and enforcement of environmental laws, regulations, and policies. This



goal will be achieved when everyone enjoys: (1) The same degree or protection from environmental and health hazards, and (2) Equal access to the decision-making process to have a healthy environment in which to live, learn, and work.”

This is the second round of LISCIF funding. Up to \$1,500,000 in competitive funding will be awarded to support projects in New York and Connecticut. Project proposals must incorporate [Implementation Actions](#) of the [Comprehensive Conservation and Management Plan](#) (CCMP).

Geographic Focus

For the purpose of LISCIF, the LISS geographic region refers to the Long Island Sound watershed area within New York and Connecticut.

An interactive map of eligible project area can be found at: [ArcGIS - Interactive LISS National Estuary Program Map](#)

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. Additional resources can be found on the **LISCIF25 RFA Page**: <https://estuaries.org/liscif/>.

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



Letters of Intent and Full Proposals must be submitted through the online portal accessed via the **LISCIF25 RFA Page**: <https://estuaries.org/liscif/>. If you cannot access the online portal, please contact Shahela Begum, sbegum@estuaries.org.

In addition to the guidance provided in this document and on the **LISCIF25** web page, virtual information sessions will be held on the dates noted below, with recordings available on the page. Attending informational sessions is highly encouraged as they will cover eligibility guidelines, program priorities, and review the application process. Additionally, prospective applicants may request individualized assistance from RAE by contacting Shahela Begum, sbegum@estuaries.org. Schedule one to one appointments at: <https://calendly.com/liscif/shahela>

3. **Schedule (all times Eastern Standard Time):**

- **September 9, 2024:** RFA Release Date
- **Virtual Information Sessions** (Recordings of past webinars and links to register for upcoming events can be found here: <https://estuaries.org/liscif/events-and-trainings/>):
 - [**Tuesday, September 17, 11:00 am EST**](#)
 - [**Tuesday, September 24, 1:00 pm EST**](#)
- **Technical Support Webinars:** (Recordings of technical support webinars listed below can be found here: <https://estuaries.org/liscif/events-and-trainings/>)
 - *Project Design & Building Partnerships*
 - *Grant Writing – How to Build a Strong Narrative*
 - *Budgeting & Staffing – How to Ensure the Project is Financially Viable*
 - *Budgeting Q&A*
- **November 22, 2024, 4:00 pm EST:** Letters of Intent (LOIs) Due
- **Week of January 13th 2025:** Notification of LOI scoring + RAE will request a Full Proposal from qualifying applicants
- **March 14, 2025, 4:00 pm EST:** Full Proposals Due
- **Week of April 28th 2025:** Notification of Awards
- **May – June 2025:** Development and Executions of Grant Agreements / Grant Announcement Events in Connecticut & New York
- **July 1, 2025:** Expected Award Date / Project Start Date
- **July 30, 2027:** Latest date for completion of work.
- **August 31, 2027:** Final Reporting due.

4. **Awards:**



Source of Funds

The source of **LISCIF** funding is federal through The Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act, P.L. 117-58, 2021 (IIJA), also known as the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (BIL), providing funds to the EPA Long Island Sound Geographic Program for fiscal years 2022-2026. However, all grants under **LISCIF** will be awarded, overseen, and administered by RAE, which is responsible for sub-awardee selection, funding, and oversight.

Anticipated Awards

In 2025, RAE will award up to **\$1,500,000** in federal funds through **LISCIF25**. Typical awards will range from about \$5,000 to \$100,000.

Funding Priorities

LISCIF's funding priorities are aligned with the [CCMP](#) themes and [Implementation Actions](#):

For 2025, **LISCIF's** main funding themes are:

- Clean Waters and Healthy Watersheds
- Thriving Habitats and Abundant Wildlife
- Sustainable and Resilient Communities
- Sound Science and Inclusive Management

Eligible projects and activities will be community-driven and address challenges/risks faced by communities experiencing environmental justice issues.

Funding is available for:

- Projects that result in quantifiable pollutant prevention or reduction.
- Restoring habitat within the [Important Coastal Habitat Types](#) targeted by LISS.
- Projects that foster a diverse balance and abundant populations of fish, birds, and wildlife.
- Public engagement, knowledge, and stewardship.
- Projects that enhance community resilience and sustainability.
- Planning and design that set-the-stage for implementation of water quality projects, eligible habitat restoration projects and resilience projects.
- Community-based science projects.
- Data management and integration projects.



- Other similar activities that the applicant proposes, and EPA approves, that are consistent with section 119 of the Clean Water Act.

Examples of projects based on CCMP themes and implementation actions can be found here: [LISCIF Project Case Studies, Examples of Impact Models & Implementation Actions](#)

Projects funded in the first round of funding, in 2024, based on CCMP theme and program priorities can be found here: [2024 LISCIF Grant Recipients ~ Restore America's Estuaries](#)

Period of Performance

The expected award date of **LISCIF25** subawards is July 1, 2025. Work must be completed by July 30, 2027. Projects should be “ready to go” upon award and must begin incurring costs against the grant within the first reporting period following award.

Eligible Applicants

Eligible Applicants include non-profit organizations, Tribes, state, county, local governments, and their subdivisions, and academic institutions.

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

Subaward projects funded under LISCIF must be completed within the LIS geographic region (see region map: [ArcGIS - Interactive LISS National Estuary Program Map](#)) or, in the case of outreach and education, include communities in Connecticut and New York that use the Long Island Sound for recreation, sustenance, or economic activities.

Applicant activities and subaward projects funded under LISCIF must address common challenges and the priorities identified above under “Funding Priorities”.

Proposals should target communities experiencing or affected by adverse and disproportionate environmental and human health risks or harms, including affected underserved communities within the LIS geographic boundaries (see region map: [ArcGIS - Interactive LISS National Estuary Program Map](#)). As such, all subaward projects should be community driven or community led.

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

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 each will be evaluated independent of other proposals.

Land Control, Permissions & Private Property

Most **LISCIF**-funded projects take place on public land or waters; however, **LISCIF** may fund work on private land or buildings where there is a clear public purpose in support of the **CCMP**, and where the applicant can provide an assurance of lasting impact – for example, through a long-term operation and maintenance agreement, conservation easement, deed restriction, or other agreement with the landowner.

Applicants that are not the sole property owner must, prior to award, demonstrate permission from landowner(s) for any access, alteration and use necessary to complete the project. This may take the form of partnership commitments, letter of permission, etc. Environmental permits do not need to be approved prior to award, but the applicant must demonstrate a clear understanding of permitting requirements and schedules in the application.

As with projects on publicly owned property, project sites on private land must include permanent signage acknowledging **LISS/EPA/RAE** funding.

Achievement of EPA LISCIF Project Metrics

Upon completion of a **LISCIF-funded** project, applicants will be required to summarize results using the **LISCIF** metric framework on the **LISCIF25 RFA Page**: <https://estuaries.org/liscif/>. Projects will use metrics established by the **CCMP**, under its **Implementation Actions**. Projects need only report on the subset of metrics directly relevant to the funded work. As needed, RAE will assist grant recipients in assessing the results of the work, for inclusion in the final report.

5. Use of Funds:

LISCIF funding may be used for typical project costs, including salary, fringe, contractual support, equipment, supplies, travel, and indirect costs. All grant payments will be made on a reimbursement basis. See **Section 6** for ineligible uses of funds.

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 modified 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 **LISCIF**.



Tools & Equipment

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

Conferences and Travel

Applicants are encouraged to budget for travel to share lessons and results of projects throughout the LISS region, and to connect with regional and national practitioners aligned with **LISCIF-funded** projects. Subawardees should plan to attend LISCIF's Annual Learning Exchange, held locally within the region, in either Connecticut or New York. An example of an appropriate national forum is RAE's Tech Transfer Workshop or biennial Coastal & Estuarine Summit. Registration information and other details will be posted to [RAE's website](#) when available. Applicants are encouraged to include airfare, hotel, and registration for this and/or other conferences and meetings in proposal budgets.

6. Ineligible Uses of Funding:

LISCIF may not be used for certain purposes under this solicitation. However, **LISCIF** can fund eligible components of a larger project that may include ineligible components funded by other means.

The following uses of funding are ineligible for **LISCIF25**:

- **Research and Monitoring:** **LISCIF25** will not fund proposals in which the primary purpose is research or monitoring; however, research and monitoring may be funded 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.
- **Actions Legally Required:** **LISCIF25** will not fund actions required to settle a formal enforcement action or included in a court order; nor will it fund actions required as mitigation measures under a state, local, or federal permit for a specific project.
- **Routine Maintenance:** **LISCIF25** will not fund 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 CCMP goals, and where applicants can describe a realistic pathway to implementation.



- **Conventional “gray infrastructure” projects:** LISCIF25 will not fund conventional infrastructure projects using well-established technologies or methods (e.g., installation of sewer lines).
- **Private Construction:** LISCIF25 will not fund new construction or retrofitting of buildings or facilities serving primarily private purposes, including residential, commercial, and institutional properties.
- **Land Purchase:** Purchase of land or real estate will not be funded.
- **Lobbying:** LISCIF25 will not fund proposals that involve any attempts to influence the outcomes of any Federal, state, or local election, referendum, initiative, or similar procedure, through in-kind or cash contributions, endorsements, publicity, or similar activity.

7. **Working Capital Advance:**

In the LOI and Full Proposal, applicants have the option to request a Working Capital Advance. Working Capital Advance can cover initial expenses, enabling the subrecipient to complete the project activities and objectives effectively without an undue financial burden. The Working Capital Advance will also enable the subrecipient to be in an improved financial position to handle a cost-reimbursement payment method for the remainder of disbursements. The Working Capital Advance will only cover the first two months upon starting the project. Subrecipients must provide detailed documentation of expenditures at the end of the two months. If funds from the two-month budget are not spent, the subrecipient will inform RAE why the funds were not spent and RAE will determine if the funds need to be returned or spent on another part of the project.

Reimbursable costs are costs in the approved subgrant agreement budget and follow the cost principals of the 2 CFR Part 200, Uniform Guidance. Disbursements are subject to funding availability and obligations under the agreement between the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and RAE.

8. **Additional Resources:**

The LISCIF25 RFA Page: <https://estuaries.org/liscif/> is the primary on-line resource and portal for prospective LISCIF25 applicants.

Other resources that may be helpful in developing LISCIF25 applications are:

- [Comprehensive Conservation and Management Plan \(CCMP\)](#)
- [CCMP Implementation Actions](#)
- [LISCIF Project Case Studies, Examples of Impact Models & Implementation Actions](#)



For questions about this RFA, contact Shahela Begum, Restore America's Estuaries, sbegum@estuaries.org

For additional assistance, schedule one to one appointments at: <https://calendly.com/liscif/shahela>

Thanks for your interest in the Long Island Sound Community Impact Fund.

We look forward to receiving your Letter of Intent!

End RFA; 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 via the online portal found on the LISCIF25 RFA Page: <https://estuaries.org/liscif/>. LOIs will be accepted beginning September 9, with a deadline for submittal by 4:00 p.m. EST on Friday, November 22, 2024.

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

Section 1: Applicant Information

- Name of Applicant Organization (organization requesting LISCIF funding)
- Role of Applicant Organization (may be project leader or fiscal agent)
- Project Leader: Name, organization, email, phone
- Application Point of Contact

Section 2: Organizational Fiscal Information

- Employer Identification Number (EIN)
- Federal System Award Management (SAM) registration status and current expiration date. A SAM account can be created at no cost at sam.gov
- Applicant organization Unique Entity ID (UEI). The UEI will be automatically generated by your SAM account.



- Note: EIN SAM information and UEI 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 <https://estuaries.org/liscif/grant-resources/> under “Applicant and Grantee Resources.”
- Organizational Budget

Section 3: Project Overview

- Name of Project (limit 150-word count)
- Brief Description of Project (limit 200-word count)
- Project Phase (select all that apply)
 - Pre-Implementation: Includes planning, design, data-gathering, permitting, modeling, etc.
 - Implementation: Activities that alter the physical or social environment: construction, installation, capacity-building, etc. May include execution of a conference or trainings where the primary purpose of the project is informational.
 - Post-Implementation: Includes post-construction monitoring and evaluation, tech transfer of successful approaches, etc.
 - Peer-to-Peer Learning Project as described in RFA.
 - Other: If other, describe. (limit 30-word count)
- Attach a Map of the General Location (New York, Connecticut, Long Island Sound watershed)
 - A map or maps of the proposed project area is required for all proposals except those which are region-wide in scope. Attach a single PDF file, standard letter size, 3 pages max., 10 MB max.
- List of Partner Organizations with brief descriptions of roles

Section 4: Cost Information

- Amount of Request
- Indicate need for Working Capital Advance.

Section 5: Project Description

The online form provides space to clearly address the following questions. Each response is subject to a 250-word limit.

- **Problem:** Describe the problem or threat to the Long Island Sound’s coastal and watershed ecosystems that the proposal seeks to solve.
- **Impact:** Clearly explain how the proposed work will address the problem identified. What is the ultimate impact of the work, and how will it be sustained? Use both quantitative and qualitative measures as appropriate.
- **Alignment with the CCMP:** How does the proposal align within the themes and goals of the [Comprehensive Conservation and Management Plan](#)? Which theme(s) and



Implementation Action(s) does the project align with? (Refer to additional resources and examples in the **LISCIF25 RFA Page**: <https://estuaries.org/liscif/>).

- **Stakeholders:** Who will benefit from this project? Describe the communities, individuals or organizations that will benefit directly or indirectly. Will the project serve historically overburdened and underserved communities or groups? Demonstrate how this project will be community-led.
- **Work Plan:** Clearly describe the scope of work of your proposal. List the principal tasks, and provide the deliverables and period of performance for each.
- **Outreach Approach:** Describe your approach to outreach for the project, including principal tasks, products, and schedule. Describe your intended audiences, and how you will communicate with each. Audiences may be community, professional, regional, elected officials, etc.; most projects will benefit by targeting multiple audiences.
- **Area of Work:** Describe the specific place in which the work will occur.
- **Area of Direct Impact:** Describe the watershed of the project and any other geographic areas that will be directly affected by the work when completed.
- **Project Team:** Describe the core project team and the role of each individual.
- **Real Estate Control and Permissions:** Applicants must state whether any kind of real estate permissions or authorizations will be needed to complete any stage of the project for which funding is requested. If so, documentation of permission will be required with the Full Proposal.

Section 6: Required Uploads

- **Map:** A map or maps of the proposed project area is required for all proposals except those which are region-wide in scope. Attach a single PDF file, standard letter size.
- **Proposal Budget:** A budget table is also required of all proposals. Use the Excel budget template in **Appendix 5**. There are recorded trainings available on budgeting on the **LISCIF** webpage: <https://estuaries.org/liscif/events-and-trainings/> . Once complete, save the budget table as a single PDF document. Ensure that the table is no more than one page wide. It must be legible at letter size – avoid unnecessary blank rows or columns that lead to tiny print in the PDF document.

Section 7: Certification

- Signature of responsible individual (name, job title, organization).

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 requires 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 the **LISCIF25 RFA Page**: <https://estuaries.org/liscif/> and follow the links to the online application. Applications must be submitted via this portal.

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 Shahela Begum as soon as possible at sbegum@estuaries.org to ensure acceptance of your application.

All applications must meet the deadlines listed above and must be complete 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 RFA, 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, and to provide a final budget.

The Full Proposal application requires applicants to complete a brief project impact model, and to identify expected project results based on established LISCIF performance metrics



as indicated in the [Implementation Actions](#). More information on each of these can be found on the **LISCIF25 RFA Page**: <https://estuaries.org/liscif/>.

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.

End Appendix 2

Appendix 3: Decisions

LOIs and Full Proposals will be reviewed by the LISCIF Application Review Committee, an independent advisory committee of individuals with expertise in environmental management, ecological restoration, and community development. RAE will consult with the Application Review 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 request 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. Feedback on LOIs will be provided to both applicants, those accepted and not accepted.

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.

2025 Review Framework

LOIs and Full Proposals will be reviewed utilizing six major criteria: (Refer to scoring and evaluation documents in the additional resources section of the **LISCIF25 RFA Page**: <https://estuaries.org/liscif/>).

1. Potential Impact: Alignment with LISCIF priorities and the potential of the proposal to have a significant positive impact on the Long Island Sound'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 and administrative capacity, experience and past performance. The quality and diversity of the project partnership, with priority given to projects that establish or strengthen crosscutting 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 Long Island Sound’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: RAE will select among qualified applicants to achieve the desired outcomes of the LISCIF program. For example, RAE will target geographic distribution of current LISCIF investments to ensure that the entire Long Island Sound Study region is fairly served by the LISCIF program, and that LISCIF builds capacity in areas and communities of need. As part of achieving region-wide impact, RAE will continue to develop a broad portfolio of LISCIF projects by funding diverse kinds of organizations and types of projects, including organizations, areas and project types that have not been funded for the first round. RAE intends to allocate 2025 grant funding approximately equally between Connecticut and New York, and will balance considerations of geographic diversity, diversity of technical approaches, and the quality of proposals received in selecting proposals for funding. In selecting LISCIF25 awards, RAE will seek to meet stated goals of the President’s [Justice40 Initiative](#).

Final scoring and evaluation notes will be provided to applicants on request. Scoring and evaluation criteria for LOIs and Full Proposals can be found on the **LISCIF25 RFA Page:** <https://estuaries.org/liscif/>

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

This information is relevant to applicants once their final application has been accepted.

Reporting Requirements

Grantees must submit quarterly progress reports as well as a final report. Report requirements include cost tracking, programmatic reporting, and tracking of performance metrics. 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 Long Island Sound Community Impact Fund (LISCIF) 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 (in-person or virtual) in Spring, 2025. Grantees are expected to participate in at least one of these events.

Collaboration & Technology Transfer

Grantees will be required to participate in an Annual Learning Exchange meeting during the period of the award, to be held within the LISS region or online. Travel funds for these meetings may be included in proposal budgets. Grantees may be asked to participate in other regional LISCIF events aimed at sharing progress and results with organizations throughout the LISS, including LISCIF conferences and workshops.

Sharing of Data & Results

Grantees are required to 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 financial records and programmatic progress of all grantees.

Reimbursement

Reimbursement requests shall be submitted at least quarterly and at most monthly. As noted elsewhere, applicants must begin incurring costs against the grant within the first reporting period following the award.

Quality Assurance Project Plans (QAPPs)

Many projects funded by the Long Island Sound Community Impact Fund (LISCIF) will require a Quality Assurance Project Plan (QAPP) approved by EPA Regions 1 and 2 prior to starting activities in relation to the QAPP. This includes all projects that collect or utilize environmental data (including use of secondary data), water-quality models, or similar tools and information for decision-making. This also includes most construction projects.

RAE will recommend a preferred provider of QAPPs to grantees that don't have a provider. Draft QAPPs must be submitted 60 days prior to beginning work that triggers a need for a QAPP such as data collection, data use or 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, and again, must be approved before any relevant work begins. RAE will assist grantees in coordinating QAPP submittals to EPA.

Requirements for QAPPs can be found at:

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.

Utilization of Small, Minority, and Women's Business Enterprises (MBE/WBE).

Funded projects will be required to comply with the requirements of EPA's Disadvantaged Business Enterprise (DBE) Program for procurement activities, contained in 40 CFR, Part 33. Annual reporting requirements will be provided upon award.

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: LISCIF25 Application Budget Example

The next page is an example of a LISCIF application budget. To develop your budget, download the Excel template from the **LISCIF25 RFA Page**: <https://estuaries.org/liscif/>. Refer to the instructions in this RFA to complete the budget and upload it with your application. Contact RAE if needed for additional assistance.



LISCIF Proposal EXAMPLE Budget Table (for illustration purposes only)

Federal Cost Category and Item	LISCIF Request	Eligible for Modified Total Direct Costs (MTDC)	Total Cost
a. Personnel (Staff of Grantee Organization Only)			
Staff Member Name or Title, # of Hours, Rate per Hour			
Habitat Coordinator, 500 hours @ \$40.50	\$20,250.00	\$20,250.00	\$20,250.00
Total Personnel	\$20,250.00	\$20,250.00	\$20,250.00
b. Fringe Benefits (Percentage for each staff listed in Personnel x total requested)			
Habitat Coordinator Fringe at 20%	\$4,050.00	\$4,050.00	\$4,050.00
Total Fringe	\$4,050.00	\$4,050.00	\$4,050.00
c. Travel (Event, number of trips, miles x rate, flight, hotel, conference registration, per diem)			
Habitat Coordinator + one staff travel to RAE Summit (see budget narrative for details)	\$2,500.00	\$2,500.00	\$2,500.00
Total Travel	\$2,500.00	\$2,500.00	\$2,500.00
d. Equipment			
		NA	\$0.00
***Total Equipment	\$0.00	NA	\$0.00
e. Supplies (List each supply on its own line, quantity, cost per item)			
100 Water Quality Testing Kits at \$60 each	\$6,000.00	\$6,000.00	\$6,000.00



Table Continued Next Page
LISCIF25 Budget Table Template Continued

Total Supplies	\$6,000.00	\$6,000.00	\$6,000.00
f. Contractual (List each contract on its own line)			
QAPP Contractor, 30 hours at \$80 per hour	\$2,400.00	\$2,400.00	\$2,400.00
Contractor to create community engagement website, 50 hours at \$30/hour	\$1,500.00	\$1,500.00	\$1,500.00
Total Contractual	\$3,900.00	\$3,900.00	\$3,900.00
g. Note: No "Construction" Category			
h. Other (subawards, printing, rentals, participation stipends)			
Printed outreach materials, based on local print shop	\$300.00	\$300.00	\$300.00
Signage, 2 signs at \$100	\$200.00	\$200.00	\$200.00
Total Other	\$500.00	\$500.00	\$500.00
i. Total Direct	\$37,200.00	\$37,200.00	\$37,200.00
j. Indirect Rate (List 10% or NICRA)	10% (no NICRA)		
Total Indirect Cost (MTDC x 10% or NICRA)	\$3,720.00		
k. Total Cost (Direct + Indirect)	\$40,920.00		\$40,920.00
*** Items fully or partially excluded from MTDC calculation – See Appendix 5			



Add Budget Notes to the Excel spreadsheet as needed here.

End Appendices

Thanks for your interest in LISCIF25

