



Long Island Sound Community Impact Fund

2026 Grants - (LISCIF26)

Request for Applications

Release Date: September 2, 2025

Letters of Intent (Lols) are Due: November 21, 2025, by 4:00 pm EST.

Lols will be accepted by on-line submission only. Apply using the LISCIF26 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 2025. (All times are EST). To participate, see the **LISCIF26 RFA Page: <https://estuaries.org/liscif/>**.

- **[Tuesday, September 9 – 10:00 am EST](#)**
- **[Wednesday, September 17 – 1:00 pm EST](#)**

Contents of this Request for Application (RFA):

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About the Long Island Sound Partnership (LIS Partnership)

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 Partnership](#), the Sound serves as an integral part of the regional economy, generating billions annually via boating, commercial and sport fishing, swimming, and beachgoing.

The Long Island Sound Partnership 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:

- Clean Waters and Healthy Watersheds: Restore and maintain water quality in Long Island Sound and its watershed.
- Thriving Habitats and Abundant Wildlife: Restore and protect the health and resilience of habitats and wildlife in Long Island Sound and its ecosystems.
- Sustainable and Resilient Communities: Empower Long Island Sound communities to plan for and respond to environmental challenges in ways that prioritize well-being for all.
- Informed and Engaged Public: Inspire and empower the public to appreciate, value, and protect Long Island Sound and the waters that flow into the Sound.

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 Partnership](#). The purpose of LISCIF is to provide technical and financial assistance to communities for addressing environmental issues and to 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.



This is the third round of LISCIF funding. Up to \$1,200,000 in competitive funding will be awarded to support projects in New York and Connecticut. Project proposals must incorporate [Actions](#) of the [Comprehensive Conservation and Management Plan](#) (CCMP).

Geographic Focus

For the purpose of LISCIF, the LIS Partnership 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 LIS Partnership 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. RAE will select LoIs for further consideration as Full Proposals in consultation with an independent advisory committee and EPA. 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 LoIs, 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 **LISCIF26 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 **LISCIF26 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 **LISCIF26** 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 2, 2025:	RFA Release Date
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• <u>Tuesday, September 9, 10:00 am EST</u>• <u>Wednesday, September 17, 1:00 pm EST</u>	Virtual Information Sessions *Information sessions and technical support webinars will be recorded and uploaded to the LISCIF website.
Dates TBA	Technical Support Webinars related to elements in LOIs and Full Proposals: (Registration for the webinars listed below can be found here: https://estuaries.org/liscif/events-and-trainings/) <ul style="list-style-type: none">○ <i>Project Design & Building Partnerships</i>○ <i>Grant Writing – Building a Strong Narrative</i>○ <i>Creating a Budget – How to Create a Federal Budget</i>
November 21, 2025, 4:00 pm EST:	Letters of Intent (LoIs) Due
Week of January 12, 2026:	Notification of LOI scoring + RAE will request a Full Proposal from qualifying applicants
March 13, 2026, 4:00 pm EST:	Full Proposals Due
Week of April 27, 2026:	Notification of Awards
May – June 2026:	Development and Executions of Grant Agreements / Grant Announcement Events in Connecticut & New York
July 1, 2026:	Expected Award Date / Project Start Date
July 31, 2028:	Latest date for completion of work
August 31, 2028	Final Reporting due

4. **Awards:**

Source of Funds

This project has been funded by the United States Environmental Protection Agency to Restore America's Estuaries. 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 2026, RAE will award up to **\$1,200,000** in federal funds through **LISCIF26**. Typical awards will range from about \$5,000 to \$100,000.

Funding Priorities

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

For 2026, **LISCIF's** main funding themes are:

- Clean Waters and Healthy Watersheds
- Thriving Habitats and Abundant Wildlife
- Sustainable and Resilient Communities
- Informed and Engaged Public

The Long Island Sound Community Impact Fund aims to build capacity for organizations located in communities affected by environmental and human health risks. The Fund seeks to provide technical assistance for communities and support proposals which ultimately improve access to the Long Island Sound, while reducing overall environmental health risks. Eligible projects and activities will be community-driven and address one of the funding priorities below:

Funding is available for:

- Projects that result in quantifiable pollutant prevention or reduction.
- Restoring habitat within the Important Coastal Habitat Types targeted by LIS Partnership.
- 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: [LISCIF26 Project Case Studies, Examples of Impact Models & CCMP Actions](#)



Projects funded in previous rounds of funding, in 2024 and 2025, based on CCMP theme and program priorities can be found here:

- [2024 LISCIF Grant Recipients ~ Restore America's Estuaries](#)
- [2025 LISCIF Grant Recipients ~ Restore America's Estuaries](#)

Period of Performance

The expected award date of **LISCIF26** subawards is July 1, 2026. Work must be completed by July 31, 2028. Projects should be “ready to go” upon award and must begin incurring costs against the grant within the first three months (first reporting period) following award.

Eligibility Requirements

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.

Projects funded under LISCIF must be completed within the LIS geographic region (see region map: [ArcGIS - Interactive LIS Partnership 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 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 LIS Partnership National Estuary Program Map](#)). As such, all 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 **LIS Partnership/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 **LISCIF26 RFA Page**:

<https://estuaries.org/liscif/>. Projects will use metrics established by the [CCMP](#), under its [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 15% 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. **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. 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 LIS Partnership region, and to connect with regional and national



practitioners aligned with **LISCIF-funded** projects. Recipients should plan to attend LISCIF's Annual Learning Exchange and future in-person events, 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 **LISCIF26**:

- **Research and Monitoring:** **LISCIF26** 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:** **LISCIF26** 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:** **LISCIF26** 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:** **LISCIF26** will not fund conventional gray infrastructure projects using well-established technologies or methods (e.g., installation of sewer lines).
- **Private Construction:** **LISCIF26** 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:** **LISCIF26** 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 is a process in which RAE pre-funds early-stage activities that organizations don't have the working capital to finance. 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 **LISCIF26 RFA Page:** <https://estuaries.org/liscif/> is the primary on-line resource and portal for prospective **LISCIF26** applicants.

Other resources that may be helpful in developing **LISCIF26** applications are:

- [**Comprehensive Conservation and Management Plan \(CCMP\)**](#)
- [**CCMP Actions**](#)
- [**LISCIF26 Project Case Studies, Examples of Impact Models & CCMP Actions**](#)

For questions about this RFA, contact Shahela Begum, Restore America's Estuaries, [**sbegum@estuaries.org**](mailto:sbegum@estuaries.org)

For additional assistance, schedule one to one appointments at:
[**https://calendly.com/liscif/shahela**](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

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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 LISCIF26 RFA Page: <https://estuaries.org/liscif/>. LoIs will be accepted beginning September 2, with a deadline for submittal by 4:00 p.m. EST on Friday, November 21, 2025.

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, title, 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. This must be created before the award is finalized.
- 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 Proposal

- 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
- 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 if applicable.

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 [Action\(s\)](#) does the project align with? (Refer to additional resources and examples in the [LISCIF26 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. Demonstrate how this project will be community-led.
- **Capacity Building:** LISCIF funding is intended to build capacity. How will **LISCIF26** funding build capacity for your Tribe, organization, municipality, or institution?
- **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, 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 and expertise 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 Attachments

- **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.

Section 7: Proposal Budget + Certification

- **Proposal Budget:** A budget table is also required of all proposals. Use the Excel budget template in **Appendix 5** as a workspace. The application portal will have a section where you will input line items and costs for your budget. The total will be calculated automatically and must reflect your requested amount for funding. Register for Budget training and access resources on the **LISCIF** webpage: <https://estuaries.org/liscif/events-and-trainings/>
- 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 **LISCIF26 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 receipt 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, provide a final budget, and incorporate any feedback from the LoI stage.

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. More information on each of these can be found on the **LISCIF26 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.

Regional Impact & Learning: RAE intends to select awards among qualified applicants and allocate 2026 grant funding between Connecticut and New York, and will balance considerations of geographic mix, types of technical approaches, and the quality of proposals received in selecting proposals for funding.

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.

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 **LISCIF26 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.

2026 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 **LISCIF26 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 mix 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. Cost Effectiveness: 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. Mix 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 representation of communities across the Long Island Sound region and that LISCIF builds capacity across the region. As part of achieving region-wide impact, RAE will continue to develop a broad portfolio of LISCIF projects by funding various kinds of organizations and types of projects, including organizations, areas and project types that have not been funded in previous rounds. RAE intends to allocate 2026 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.

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 as described in (2 C.F.R. 200.320), 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, 2026. Grantees are invited to participate, as able, 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 LIS 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 LIS, 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)

Projects funded by the Long Island Sound Community Impact Fund (LISCIF) may 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 Disadvantaged Business Enterprises.

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: LISCIF26 Application Budget Example



The next page is an example of a LISCIF application budget. To develop your budget, download the Excel template from the **LISCIF26 RFA Page: <https://estuaries.org/liscif/>**. Refer to the instructions in this RFA to complete the budget and input it within the application portal. 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 Coastal & Estuarine 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
LISCIF26 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 15% or NICRA)	15% (no NICRA)		
Total Indirect Cost (MTDC x 15% or NICRA)	\$5,580.00		
k. Total Cost (Direct + Indirect)	\$42,780.00		\$42,780.00
*** 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 LISCIF26

