

Resilient Communities

2020 REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

Pre-Proposal due date: February 18, 2020 by 11:59 p.m. Eastern time.

OVERVIEW

Wells Fargo and NFWF have partnered to create the Resilient Communities program. This \$3 million per year program aims to help communities in the United States and territories, prepare, strengthen and bounce back more quickly after a disaster. Through preparedness and by taking advantage of natural and nature-based features like wetlands, resilient shorelines, urban tree canopies, natural forests and healthy upstream watersheds, communities can accrue quality of life benefits today. In addition, these projects enhance fish and wildlife resources and avoid or reduce risk to life, and costly and devastating impacts from events such as sea-level risk, floods, droughts, fires and more.

In 2020, Wells Fargo and NFWF will invest approximately \$3 million total in these three categories:

Category 1: Adaptation through conservation projects

Grants in this category support highly impactful and visible conservation projects.

Category 2: Community capacity building and demonstration projects

Grants in this category help multiple communities understand, organize and take action to address risks and opportunities through preparedness and adaptation.

Category 3: Adaptation focused on affordable housing and small businesses

Grants in this category support projects that advance scalable, nature-based resilience solutions benefiting affordable housing and/or small businesses in communities vulnerable to impacts from natural disasters.

PROGRAM PRIORITIES

Competitive proposals will address one or more of the following priorities:

- Yield measurable and sustainable benefits for natural habitats while also providing measurable and enhanced community benefits to improve resilience,
- Serve vulnerable low- and moderate-income communities that tend to be disproportionately impacted by stressors,
- Bridge rural and urban community resilience needs with focus on the interconnectedness of natural systems and community well-being including equity, social inclusion and cohesion,
- Support American Indian/Alaska Native/Native Hawaiian communities in the US whose livelihoods and economies rely on their self-determined management of water, land and other natural resources,
- Broadcast successes or lessons learned to advance resiliency work in other communities.

PROGRAM DETAILS

Category 1: Adaptation through conservation projects

Approximately \$1.5 million is available. Grants in this category will range from \$200,000 to \$500,000 to support highly impactful and visible conservation projects that help prepare for fire, floods, droughts and/or sea-level rise nationwide. Projects may include elements of each project type and may occur anywhere in the United States.

Examples include:

Restoration of wetlands, coastal habitats and other ecosystems to help communities address floods, storm events and sea level-rise. Project types include:

- Dune habitat restoration
- Wetland restoration
- Bird and wildlife habitat restoration
- Living shorelines
- Aquatic migration connection

Conservation of critical land and creation of natural infrastructure to address water quantity issues such as floods and droughts. Project types include:

- Cover crops and permaculture
- Nutrient management
- Green stormwater infrastructure and urban tree canopy
- Invasive species management
- Stream buffer enhancements

Management of forests, fuels management, habitat restoration and conservation easements for healthy forest ecosystems. Projects include:

- Forest restoration
- Forest management
- Habitat restoration
- Conservation easements
- Fuels management

Category 2: Community capacity building and demonstration projects

Approximately \$750,000 is available. Grants in this category will range from \$200,000 to \$500,000 to support highly-impactful and visible projects that help communities understand, organize and take action to address risks and opportunities through improved resilience brought about by enhanced natural features and capacity building. These projects should address multiple cities and communities. Projects that only address one city will not be considered.

These projects must center on the following activities in multiple communities:

- Support organizations that build capacity to help cities plan for enhanced resilience through nature-based infrastructure or other improvements. Successful projects may

include programs such as community fellows, ambassadors and support for collaborative projects or workshops that occur in multiple communities.

- Engage community partnerships to enhance preparedness and resilience through natural resource improvements such as those described in the above examples. .
- Improve community or neighborhood resilience through enhanced natural features and infrastructure, particularly in vulnerable communities that tend to be disproportionately impacted by stressors.
- Engage community partnerships to enhance emergency financial preparedness and resilience through helping community members establish financial plans using resources such as the [Emergency Financial First Aid](#) kit
- Engage multiple communities to share project outcomes, lessons learned to encourage dialogue between cities engaged in the project and increase the visibility of these projects nationwide

Category 3: Affordable housing and small businesses adaptation

Approximately \$750,000 is available. Grants in this category will range from \$100,000 to \$500,000 to support highly-impactful and visible projects that advance scalable resilience solutions that benefit multi-family affordable housing and/or encourage small business preparedness in order to maintain and/or increase jobs and economic activity in communities impacted by the project.

Projects should focus on adaptation strategies for affordable housing and small business districts that use nature-based solutions such as increasing tree canopies, pocket parks, community green spaces, storm water bioretention, green schoolyards and/or fire resistant landscaping. These projects will improve community resilience through enhanced natural and nature-based infrastructure. Projects should directly engage the local community in outreach and education on the benefits of nature-based adaptation and preparedness. Projects that introduce innovative solutions will be prioritized.

Proposals submitted in any category should:

- Identify strategic importance of project from a resilience standpoint, including identification of the core issue(s) project addresses
- Address how the proposed project has engaged community stakeholders in the identification of the issue and proposed solution
- Describe the communities the proposed project will benefit – e.g. historic, rural, underserved, low- to moderate income, etc.
- Describe how project may address the needs of under resourced communities
- Articulate key natural feature and/or green infrastructure enhancements central to achieving project outcomes
- Provide measurable and meaningful social, economic and environmental outcomes
- Demonstrate regional value or replicability and strong public/private partnerships
- Articulate measures implemented or project aspects that enhance sustainability of project investments
- Identify highly-visible project sites and activities to build support for activities and outcomes
- Indicate whether the proposed project involves the use of volunteers

- Implement or be complementary to, an established conservation and/or watershed management plan and demonstrate that the agency or organization that developed the plan is a partner in – or at least is supportive of – the project
- Identify how your organization leverages diverse suppliers
- Disclose the members and diversity of your board of directors or equivalent
- Leverage other public and private funding to increase the overall project outcomes
- Be ready to begin implementation within six months of the grant award and achieve predefined outcomes within a 24 month grant period

PROJECT METRICS

To gauge progress on individual grants and to ensure greater consistency between the monitoring data provided by multiple grant projects, the Resilient Communities program has a list of metrics in Easygrants for grantees to choose from for reporting. Applicants must select one to two of the relevant metrics in each of three categories (social, economic and environmental) from this list for your project. If you do not believe an applicable metric has been provided, please contact Chloe Elberty at chloe.elberty@nfwf.org or 202-595-2434 to discuss acceptable alternatives.

Project Activity	Unit of Measurement	Description and Additional Guidance
Social		
Building capacity and project scalability	# Organizations engaged	Number of collaborations developed, partnerships organized and managed to promote leadership among women and diverse populations. Enter number of nongovernmental organizations engaged, list those organizations and describe the outcome of the engagement.
Outreach and education	# of people reached	Enter the number of people reached by outreach or technical assistance activities, describe the type of outreach and demographics of target audiences
Incentives	# of certified diverse suppliers	Enter the percentage of total project cost spent with certified diverse suppliers. Enter the number of certified diverse suppliers with which you spent project dollars. Identify the % of total project cost by dividing the certified diverse grant amount by the total project cost. Certified diverse supplier: A “diverse supplier” is a business that is at least 51%

		owned, managed and controlled by a diverse person or group. Diverse suppliers must be certified by a third party certification organization. We recognize diverse supplier certifications from local, state and federal agencies as well as organizations like the NMSDC, WBENC, USPAACC, USBLN, NGLCC, United States Department of Veterans Affairs.
Volunteer participation	# volunteers participating	Enter the number of volunteers participating in projects - Provide number of community members directly engaged in project. If volunteers include youth (up to age 18) or veterans, specify # youth or # veterans.
Building capacity	# of individuals increased knowledge and training	Number of individuals that attain sufficient knowledge, skills, motivation and/or access to resources to enable them to become resiliency leaders. Include the hours of training and participant demographics
Other	# social impact	Quantify any other applicable social benefits
Economic		
Jobs	# jobs created # jobs retained	Enter the number of jobs created - Provide number of individuals hired by organization or contractor directly working on the project (non-volunteers)
Green infrastructure	\$ cost avoided	Enter estimated cost avoidance from “greener” infrastructure projects – e.g. savings from lower cost of insurance, etc. anticipated annually
Building institutional capacity	# FTE with sufficient training	Provide # full-time employees provided with capacity-building or training through the project
Other	# economic impact	Quantify other economic benefits
Environmental		
Trees planted	# trees planted	Enter the number of trees planted that support “greener” infrastructure and habitat management
Removal of invasive plants	#Acres restored	Provide number acres restored and type of invasives removed
Wetland restoration	#Acres of wetland restored	Enter the number of acres of wetland restored
In-stream habitat	#Instream miles restored	Enter instream miles restored that restore

		habitat
Fuel break management	#Acres of public land under improved management	Enter the number of fuel break acres under improved management. This may include new fuel break development or maintenance of existing fuel breaks. Describe those improvements.
Erosion control	#Lbs of sediment prevented from entering the system annually	BMP implementation for nutrient or sediment reduction. Enter the amount of sediment prevented from entering the system annually
Reforestation and restoration of forest vegetation	Acres forest vegetation restored	Enter acres restored through practices such as revegetation, thinning, mortality removal or prescribed burns
BMP implementation for stormwater runoff	#Cubic meters of stormwater prevented	Provide volume of stormwater captured by new green infrastructure practices. This includes BMPs for stormwater management.
Other	# environmental impact	Quantify other environmental benefits

ELIGIBILITY

Eligible and Ineligible Entities

- Eligible applicants include non-profit 501(c) organizations, local governments, state government agencies and federally recognized tribes in the US.
- Ineligible applicants include U.S. Federal government agencies, businesses, educational institutions, unincorporated individuals and international organizations.

Ineligible Uses of Grant Funds

- NFWF funds and matching contributions may not be used to support political advocacy, fundraising, lobbying, litigation, terrorist activities or Foreign Corrupt Practices Act violations.
- Funds may not be used to support ongoing efforts to comply with legal requirements, including permit conditions, mitigation and settlement agreements. However, grant funds may be used to support projects that enhance or improve upon existing baseline compliance efforts.

FUNDING AVAILABILITY AND MATCH

The Resilient Communities program will award approximately \$3 million in grants to projects in 2020. Each grant will range from \$100,000 to \$500,000 depending on category and will be awarded to eligible entities working to help communities become more resilient. This program has one round of applications per year and awards approximately 9 to 12 grants annually.

Project Period

Projects should last up to 24 months from the start date. NFWF requires programmatic and financial reports from all awards made under this funding opportunity at least once per year. Projects may be a discrete part of a longer-term project, provided there are definable outcomes for the proposed phase of the overall effort. The project narrative should include a clear timetable, annual milestones and outcomes and a schedule for project completion.

Project start and end dates should define the period during which all proposed work is accomplished, all requested funds are spent and all matching funds are spent or applied. The start date may be back-dated up to one (1) year prior to the award date to allow work directed to the project to be applied as matching contributions.

MATCHING CONTRIBUTIONS

The ratio of matching contributions offered is considered during the review process, and projects are required to meet or exceed a 1:1 match ratio to be competitive. Matching contributions must be non-federal in nature and may include in-kind contributions of staff and volunteer time, work performed, materials and services donated, cash or other tangible contributions to the project objectives and outcomes. The cost of recent land acquisition or easement may also qualify as match for a project involving work at the acquired site.

Additionally, partner contributions can serve as matching contributions and grantees for this grant program commonly use a large amount of in-kind matching contributions to reach this threshold by utilizing their community partnerships to generate match. Applicants are highly encouraged to contact NFWF for assistance in determining what qualifies as in-kind or any other matching contributions.

In addition, if not paid with requested grant funding, indirect costs may be applied as match by an applicant with a federally approved indirect rate.

To be eligible, matching contributions typically must be:

- Not paid by the Federal government under another Federal award
- Verifiable from the grantee's records
- Not included as contributions for any other award
- Necessary and reasonable for accomplishment of project or program objectives
- Allowable costs based on the program and funding source guidelines
- Committed directly to the project and used within the period of performance

EVALUATION CRITERIA

All proposals will be screened for relevance, accuracy, completeness and compliance with NFWF and funding source policies. Proposals will then be evaluated based on the extent to which they meet the following criteria.

Program Goals and Priorities – Project contributes to the Program’s overall habitat and species conservation goals and has specific, quantifiable performance metrics to evaluate project success. Project addresses one or more of the program priorities.

Technical Merit – Project is technically sound and feasible, and the proposal sets forth a clear, logical and achievable work plan and timeline. Project engages appropriate technical experts throughout project planning, design and implementation to ensure activities are technically sound and feasible.

Cost-Effectiveness – Project includes a cost-effective budget that balances performance risk and efficient use of funds. Cost-effectiveness evaluation may include, but is not limited to, an assessment of either or both direct and indirect costs in the proposed budget. The federal government has determined that a de minimis 10% indirect rate is an acceptable minimum for organizations without a NICRA, as such NFWF reserves the right to scrutinize ALL proposals with indirect rates above 10% for cost-effectiveness.

Transferability – Project has potential and plan to transfer lessons learned to other communities and/or to be integrated into government programs and policies.

Communication – Project includes a detailed plan to communicate information about the project to appropriate audiences.

Funding Need – Project establishes a clear need for the funds being requested, and demonstrates that activities would not move forward absent funding.

Conservation Plan and Context – The project advances an existing conservation plan or strategy.

Monitoring – Project includes a plan for monitoring progress during and after the proposed project period to track project success and adaptively address new challenges and opportunities as they arise.

Long-term Sustainability – Project will be maintained to ensure benefits are achieved and sustained over time. This should include how future funding will be secured to implement necessary long-term monitoring and maintenance activities.

Past Success – Applicant has a proven track record of success in implementing conservation practices with specific, measurable results.

Partnership – An appropriate partnership exists to implement the project and the project is supported by a strong local partnership that leverages additional funds and will sustain it after the life of the grant. Identify proposed partners, if known (including potential or contemplated subawards to third party subrecipients of the applicant), the roles they will play in implementing the project and how this project will build new or enhance existing partnerships. (Note: a project partner is any local community, non-profit organization, tribe and/or local, state and federal government agency that contributes to the project in a substantial way and is closely involved in the completion of the project.)

OTHER

Budget – Costs are allowable, reasonable and budgeted in accordance with NFWF’s [Budget Instructions](#) cost categories. Projects must be in compliance with [OMB Uniform Guidance](#) as applicable.

Matching Contributions – Matching Contributions consist of cash, contributed goods and services, volunteer hours and/or property raised and spent for the Project during the Period of Performance. Matching fund contributions from a diversity of partners are encouraged and may be more competitive during application review.

Procurement – If the applicant chooses to specifically identify proposed Contractor(s) for Services, an award by NFWF to the applicant does not constitute NFWF’s express written authorization for the applicant to procure such specific services noncompetitively. When procuring goods and services, NFWF recipients must follow documented procurement procedures which reflect applicable laws and regulations.

Publicity and Acknowledgement of Support – Award recipients will be required to grant NFWF the right and authority to publicize the project and NFWF’s financial support for the grant in press releases, publications and other public communications. Recipients will also be required by NFWF to provide high-resolution (minimum 300 dpi) photographs depicting the project.

Receiving Award Funds – Award payments are primarily reimbursable. Projects may request funds for reimbursement at any time after completing a signed agreement with NFWF. A request of an advance of funds must be due to an imminent need of expenditure and must detail how the funds will be used and provide justification and a timeline for expected disbursement of these funds.

Compliance Requirements – Projects selected may be subject to requirements under the National Environmental Policy Act, Endangered Species Act (state and federal) and National Historic Preservation Act. Documentation of compliance with these regulations must be approved prior to initiating activities that disturb or alter habitat or other features of the project site(s). Applicants should budget time and resources to obtain the needed approvals. As may be applicable, successful applicants may be required to comply with additional Federal, state or local requirements and obtain all necessary permits and clearances.

Quality Assurance – If a project involves significant monitoring, data collection or data use, grantees will be asked to prepare and submit quality assurance documentation (www.epa.gov/quality). Applicants should budget time and resources to complete this task.

Permits – Successful applicants will be required to provide sufficient documentation that the project expects to receive or has received all necessary permits and clearances to comply with any Federal, state or local requirements. Where projects involve work in the waters of the United States, NFWF strongly encourages applicants to conduct a permit pre-application meeting with the Army Corps of Engineers prior to submitting their proposal. In some cases, if a permit pre-application meeting has not been completed, NFWF may require successful applicants to complete such a meeting prior to grant award.

Communications – Applicants may be required to:

- Work collaboratively with NFWF and Wells Fargo on external communication activities – e.g. news releases, social media, etc.
- Attend an annual meeting with other Resilient Communities grantees to share successes and lessons learned. Wells Fargo will host the meeting.

TIMELINE

Dates of activities are subject to change. Please check the www.nfwf.org/resilientcommunities for the most current dates and information.

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| ✓ Applicant Webinar (click here to register) | January 15, 2020 |
| ✓ Pre Proposal Due Date | February 18, 2020 |
| ✓ Full Proposal (Invited) Due Date | April 28, 2020, 11:59 pm, Eastern Time Zone |
| ✓ Review Period | May 2020 – August 2020 |
| ✓ Awards Announced | September 2020 |

HOW TO APPLY

All application materials must be submitted online through National Fish and Wildlife Foundation's Easygrants system.

1. Go to <https://easygrants.nfwf.org> to register in our Easygrants online system. New users to the system will be prompted to register before starting the application (if you already are a registered user, use your existing login). Enter your applicant information.
2. Once on your homepage, click the “Apply for Funding” button and select this RFP’s “Funding Opportunity” from the list of options.
3. Follow the instructions in Easygrants to complete your application. Once an application has been started, it may be saved and returned to at a later time for completion and submission.

APPLICATION ASSISTANCE

A PDF version of this RFP can be downloaded [here](#).

A Tip Sheet is available for quick reference while you are working through your application. This document can be downloaded [here](#).

Additional information to support the application process can be accessed on the NFWF website's [Applicant Information](#) page.

For more information or questions about this RFP, please contact:

Chloe Elberty
Coordinator, Community Stewardship
202-595-2434
Chloe.Elberty@nfwf.org

For issues or assistance with our online Easygrants system, please contact:

Easygrants Helpdesk
Email: Easygrants@nfwf.org
Voicemail: 202-595-2497

Hours: 9:00 am to 5:00 pm ET, M-F.

Include: Your name, proposal ID #, e-mail address, phone number, program you are applying to and a description of the issue.