Southeast Michigan Resilience Fund
2021 REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

Pre-Proposal Due Date: August 31, 2021 by 11:59 PM Eastern Time
Full Proposal Due Date: November 4, 2021 by 11:59 PM Eastern Time
Grants Awarded: February 2022
Funding Opportunity Webinar Recording: https://nfwf.sharefile.com/d-s4a55cb96850a4fcc93eb413cb6c52dbf

OVERVIEW

Recognizing the need for a coordinated, public-private approach to addressing the stormwater, habitat and public-use issues in the Southeast Michigan region, seven corporate, foundation and government funders have joined together to create the Southeast Michigan Resilience Fund (Fund). The Fund will award grants to help increase the resilience of communities and natural resources in Southeast Michigan by reducing the impact of stormwater, improving water quality, enhancing habitat, and increasing the accessibility and usability of public green space and natural areas. Grants will be awarded in two categories: 1) expanding green stormwater infrastructure and enhancing public space and 2) improving habitat quality, connectivity and accessibility.

Approximately **$1.2 million** is expected to be available for grant awards. Individual grants typically range from $100,000 to $300,000. **Pre-proposals must be submitted online** (easygrants.nfwf.org) **by August 31, 2021 11:59 Eastern Time**.

Administered by the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation (NFWF), the Fund is public-private partnership among Cleveland-Cliffs, the Fred A. and Barbara M. Erb Family Foundation, the Kresge Foundation, the Ralph C. Wilson, Jr. Foundation, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, and the USDA Forest Service.

The Fund was created to provide financial resources that benefit Southeast Michigan communities and wildlife habitats by improving resilience in the face of intensifying environmental stressors related to climate change, development, invasive species, nonpoint source pollution and other factors. By investing in green stormwater infrastructure solutions, the Fund seeks to reduce flooding and other intensifying threats associated with major storm events, while also creating safe, dynamic, and enjoyable public green spaces that improve habitat values for wildlife and quality of life for residents. By restoring the region's unique natural areas, the Fund seeks to enhance the quality and connectivity of habitat for wildlife, improve the ability of these habitats to withstand and absorb the impact of environmental stressors, and make nature more accessible for people.

GEOGRAPHIC FOCUS

To be eligible for funding, projects must be located within the seven-county region of Southeast Michigan including St. Clair, Macomb, Oakland, Wayne, Washtenaw, Livingston, and Monroe counties (depicted geographically in the map below). Additionally, priority will be given to projects that directly benefit and engage low-income communities and communities of color. Projects that are not located in or meaningfully benefit these communities will be less competitive.

PROGRAM PRIORITIES

The Fund will award grants in the following categories:

1. *Expanding Green Stormwater Infrastructure and Enhancing Public Space*
2. *Improving Habitat Quality and Connectivity and Enhancing Public Space*

Each applicant will need to identify one primary category that best describes the proposed project. If a project is expected to yield benefits in both categories, an applicant may also identify a secondary category. Competitive proposals will deliver environmental and social impact, improving habitat, green infrastructure and equitable public access to greenspace while benefiting low-income communities and communities of color. The following sections provide more information on the two funding categories.

Funding Category 1: Expanding Green Stormwater Infrastructure and Enhancing Public Space

Funding in this category will support green stormwater infrastructure (GSI) projects that improve stormwater capture and storage to mitigate the impacts of climate change, including reducing runoff, combined sewer overflows, basement backups, and flooding through nature-based design. Much of the region is covered in impervious surfaces and these threats pose significant risks to communities, with disproportionately severe impacts to low-income communities and communities of color. GSI projects should utilize natural design elements to reduce and treat stormwater where it falls while delivering environmental, social and community benefits. Proposed GSI projects <u>must</u> be designed with a dual purpose, to increase stormwater storage capacity while also enhancing the quality of, access to, and/or use of community green space or natural areas.

Projects seeking funding in this category will install new GSI and/or improve and maintain the function of existing GSI installations. All projects must add or maintain a minimum of 50,000 cumulative gallons of stormwater storage capacity per year to be competitive. GSI project activities may include, but are not limited to, the installation or maintenance of any of the following practices: stormwater wetlands, rain gardens, targeted tree planting, bioswales, pervious surfaces, etc. Competitive GSI proposals will focus the majority of the on-the-ground work on installing and/or maintaining GSI practices that are predominantly vegetative or green, with an emphasis on nature-based design. If projects incorporate structural GSI elements, such as pervious pavement, cisterns, subsurface detention, green roofs, etc. these elements will need to compliment GSI practices that focus on natural vegetative solutions, such as rain gardens. Proposals should also incorporate activities designed to enhance public green space which may include but are not limited to, installing or enhancing trails or paths, passive and/or active recreational opportunities such as benches or play areas with pervious surfaces, community or shared gardens, educational signage, pollinator gardens etc.

Preference will be given to projects of sufficient size and scope to significantly reduce runoff and contaminant discharge (i.e. reduction of nutrients, pollution, and sediment) and increase GSI function at a regional or significant scale (more than 50,000 gallons stormwater storage/year). Proposals seeking funds for improvements to existing GSI projects should outline their authority to access and maintain those sites. Projects that do not include enhancements to public green space or public access will not be considered for funding.

Small, isolated projects (e.g., rain barrels, cisterns, a single parking lot, etc.) without a connection to a larger green infrastructure plan or suite of proposed installations will not be competitive. Proposals are encouraged to utilize native or non-invasive, urban-adapted plant and tree species designed to improve habitat for pollinators and other native wildlife or diversify and sustain the urban canopy. Applicants must include a maintenance plan (see Long term Operation, Maintenance

and Monitoring section) and are encouraged to build in training/capacity needs to maintain infrastructure after the life of the grant. Preference will be given to projects that align with GSI and/or community plans, municipal sustainability, climate resilience, open space plans or approved watershed management plans (see Evaluation Criteria section for more detail).

All applications proposing new GSI installations must report anticipated outcomes in terms of gallons of stormwater storage capacity added (design retention capacity) and estimate the volume of stormwater runoff captured and infiltrated per year (gallons/year). Applications proposing GSI maintenance or enhancement must report anticipated outcomes in terms of gallons of stormwater storage capacity preserved/maintained (design retention capacity) and report the volume of stormwater runoff captured and infiltrated per year (gallons/year) when GSI functions optimally as a result of maintenance activities. Applicants are encouraged to use the EPA stormwater calculator tool, found by clicking here: https://www.epa.gov/water-research/national-stormwater-calculator, to estimate design retention capacity. For tree planting projects, applicants are encouraged to use i-Tree, found by clicking here: https://planting.itreetools.org/ , to calculate gallons of storm water taken up annually by tree planting (use a 20-year tree age for measuring stormwater benefits in i-Tree). To inform selections of native or non-invasive, urban-adapted plants and tree species for GSI installations, consider the following references: SEMCOG Low Impact Development Manual; MSU native plant guide.

Funding Category 2: Improving Habitat Quality, Connectivity and Enhancing Public Space
Funding in this category will support habitat restoration projects, including in-stream, riparian, upland, and wetland habitat, that improve the quality and connectivity of habitats throughout Southeast Michigan. Habitat projects must be designed to restore habitat while also meaningfully improving public access to and/or use-opportunities of natural areas throughout the region.

Projects seeking funding in this category will restore habitats throughout Southeast Michigan to achieve a range of ecological benefits, such as improving water quality in waterways and the Great Lakes, reducing erosion, increasing the complexity, connectivity and quality of habitat, benefiting species of concern, and enhancing biodiversity and supporting healthy populations of native species. Habitat project activities may include, but are not limited to, creation/restoration of pollinator habitat, streambank stabilization, invasive species control, native plant restoration, construction of in-stream structures to improve geomorphological processes and habitat for fish and aquatic organisms. Proposals should also incorporate activities designed to increase connectivity between natural areas and habitats, such as restoring contiguous habitats or parcels adjacent to protected and/or restored natural areas, connecting natural areas via trail systems, greenways, etc., and restoring habitat in strategic locations to provide more ecologically significant and improved access to critical habitats for target species (e.g. migratory birds). Proposals must improve public access and use of natural areas, which may include construction of trails, public access points, and infrastructure enabling use of waterways and habitats, such as paddle craft launches, wildlife viewing areas, education and community engagement activities, etc.

Projects that do not include enhancements to public green space to and/or improve access to or use of natural areas will not be considered for funding. Preference will be given to projects designed to improve habitat for multiple species of conservation concern. Small, isolated projects lacking

strategic relevance for priority species, regional habitat connectivity, or restoration of rare or critical habitats will not be competitive.

PROGRAM FUNDING PRIORITIES FOR ALL FUNDING CATEGORIES

Equity and Inclusion
The Fund desires to support projects that meaningfully engage and benefit low-income and communities of color. The Fund recognizes that these communities are often disproportionately impacted by climate change and associated environmental issues of special concern for the Fund, including stormwater runoff, combined sewer overflows and associated flooding and access to safe public greenspace and natural areas. The Fund will prioritize investments that seek to address these impacts while also meaningfully engaging communities to achieve benefits for the environment and people.

Priority will be given to projects that were developed through community input and co-design processes. Additionally, projects should engage community-level partners (e.g. municipalities, NGOs, community organizations, community leaders) to help design, implement, and maintain projects to secure maximum benefits for communities and ensure public use of project sites, maintenance, and sustainability post-grant award. Projects should also include plans and methods to engage and inform the public about the project's benefits and use opportunities (see Evaluation Criteria – Community Engagement and Education for more details).

Additionally, applicants should plan to report on their approach to tracking and measuring qualitative, diversity, equity and inclusion benefits of the project in the full proposal narrative portion of the application. These outcomes can include but are not limited to measuring the benefits of proposed work on increasing land value, improved access to greenspace and public recreation opportunities, reduction in basement backups and neighborhood flooding, reduction of heat island effect, jobs added or sustained etc. Applicants are encouraged to incorporate tools, such as the Social Vulnerability Index and others, to provide context. Projects receiving awards from the Fund will be asked to report on these outcomes and project-related benefits to low-income communities and communities of color in their annual programmatic reports to NFWF.

Monitoring and Long-Term Maintenance
To help ensure project benefits will be sustained through time, grantees will be required to present or develop plans that innovatively address the project site's operation and management for at least five (5) years after project completion. The plans should describe anticipated actions needed (maintenance schedules and tasks to be completed at scheduled intervals), access to or ownership of equipment needed to maintain project sites, cost estimates, sources of funding to support long-term maintenance plan, long-term partners, parties responsible for implementation and oversight, training needs, and the applicant's and partners' capacity for long-term stewardship of the project site. If applicable, the plan should also describe long-term invasive species management and early detection rapid response (EDRR) protocol. A portion of individual grant awards may be used to support this plan development, and plans must be completed prior to the end dates specified in individual grant agreements.

Where appropriate, applicants are encouraged to direct a portion of requested grant funding to support monitoring activities within the proposed grant period. If you are considering incorporating monitoring into the project and will be requesting funding to support those activities, please contact aislinn.gauchay@nfwf.org for guidance on building this into your proposal and budget.

METRICS

To better gauge progress on individual grants and to ensure greater consistency of project data provided by multiple grants, the Southeast Michigan Resilience Fund has a list of metrics in Easygrants for full proposal applicants to choose from for future reporting. We ask that applicants select only the most relevant metrics from this list for their project (all possible metrics are shown in the table below). *Additional guidance to assist applicants in selecting and reporting metrics and project outcomes is available at https://www.nfwf.org/semichigan.* All grantees should review this document when selecting metrics as a part of their Easygrants application. If you think an applicable metric has not been provided, please contact Aislinn Gauchay aislinn.gauchay@nfwf.org to discuss acceptable alternatives.

Project Activity	Recommended Metrics *Required metric	Additional Guidance
Expanding Green Stormwater Infrastructure	*Volume stormwater storage added	Enter the volume (in gallons) of stormwater storage retained annually through green infrastructure improvements (measured as design retention capacity for a 100-year 24-hour storm). For GSI maintenance/improvement projects, enter volume (in gallons) of stormwater storage preserved annually through GSI maintenance and/or improvements.
	Impervious Surface Removed	Indicate the square feet of impervious surface retrofitted with GSI.
	Square feet of green infrastructure installed	Enter the square footage of impervious surface removed or retrofitted
	# of trees planted	Enter # of trees planted. Note the size (diameter) and species of trees planted
Enhancing Habitat Quality	Riparian restoration - miles restored	Enter the number of miles restored
	Instream restoration -miles restored	Enter the number of miles restored
	Instream restoration - # habitat structures installed	Enter the number of habitat structures installed, replaced, upgraded or repaired
	# passage barriers rectified	Enter number of barriers to aquatic connectivity removed, remediated, or improved
	Miles of stream reopened	Enter miles of stream reopened for fish passage
	Acres of wetland habitat restored	Enter the number of acres restored
	Acres restored (invasive species removed)	Enter the number of acres of invasive species control (this will be a subset of restoration acres; non-cumulative with other acre restoration metrics)
	Pounds sediment avoided (annually)	Enter the amount of sediment prevented from entering system annually

	Pounds phosphorus prevented from entering (annually)	Enter the amount of phosphorous prevented from entering system annually
	Pounds nitrogen prevented from entering (annually)	Enter the amount of nitrogen prevented from entering system annually
Improving Public Access & Community Engagement *(all proposals should select at least two of these metrics)*	Infrastructure - acres of greenspace	Enter the acres of neighborhood green space and habitat created or improved
	Infrastructure - miles trails developed/improved	Enter the number of miles of trails or river walks developed or improved
	Infrastructure - access pts developed/improved	Enter the number of public access points developed/improved
	# of volunteer hours	Enter the # of volunteer hours in this project
	# jobs sustained	Provide number of jobs continued or sustained through the grant. Jobs should be directly engaged in project activities, exist prior to the grant period, and be sustained beyond the end of the grant.
	# jobs created	Provide number of individuals hired by organization or contractor directly working on the project (non-volunteers) during the project period. This reflects the addition of new jobs to the local and regional economy as the result of the work proposed in the grant.
	# people reached	Provide total number of people reached by grant activities throughout the period of performance. People reached should reflect the number of community members (volunteers, local groups, residents) meaningfully engaged in the project design, implementation, or who utilize the project's on-the-ground assets post-implementation. If the applicant will be measuring public use of grant investments post-implementation, please indicate the method of measurement to validate the use estimate (e.g. trail counters, volunteer observations, etc.)

Equity and Inclusion Metrics and Reporting

Additionally, applicants should plan to report on their appraoch to tracking and measuring qualitative, long-term diversity, equity and inclusion outcomes in the full proposal application narrative. These outcomes can include but are not limited to measuring the benefits of proposed work on increasing land value, improved access to greenspace and public recreation opportunities, reduction in basement backups and neighborhood flooding, reduction of heat island effect, jobs added or sustained etc. Applicants are encouraged to incorporate tools, such as the Social Vulnerability Index and others, to estimate and measure such outcomes. Applicants should include a description of how they estimated these outcomes and how they will measure or track the project's impact as the work progresses in the application full proposal narrative. Additionally, projects receiving awards from the Southeast Michigan Resilience Fund will be asked to report on these

outcomes and project-related benefits to low-income communities and communities of color in their programmatic reports to NFWF.

ELIGIBILITY

Eligible and Ineligible Entities
- Eligible applicants include non-profit 501(c) organizations, state government agencies, local governments, municipal governments, tribal governments and organizations, and educational institutions. To be competitive, applicant organizations must demonstrate capacity and experience commensurate with the scale or complexity of the project being proposed and the funding being requested. If the applicant is a government entity or municipality, close partnership with at least one non-profit and/or community organization is required for projects to be competitive.

- Ineligible applicants include federal government agencies, unincorporated individuals, and for-profit businesses. While these entities may not be the primary recipient of grant funds, they may be partners or contractors.

Ineligible Uses of Grant Funds
- **Equipment:** Applicants are encouraged to rent equipment where possible and cost-effective or use matching funds to make those purchases. NFWF acknowledges, however, that some projects may only be completed using NFWF funds to procure equipment. If this applies to your project, please contact the program staff listed in this RFP to discuss options.

- Federal funds and matching contributions may not be used to procure or obtain equipment, services, or systems (including entering into or renewing a contract) that uses telecommunications equipment or services produced by Huawei Technologies Company or ZTE Corporation (or any subsidiary or affiliate of such entities) as a substantial or essential component, or as critical technology of any system. Refer to Public Law 115-232, section 889 for additional information.

- NFWF funds and matching contributions may not be used to support political advocacy, fundraising, lobbying, litigation, terrorist activities or Foreign Corrupt Practices Act violations.

- NFWF 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, GRANT DURATION AND MATCH

Approximately **$1.2 million** is expected to be available for grant awards annually. Individual grants typically range from **$100,000 to $300,000**. Projects should apply the bulk (>70%) of grant funding

to on-the-ground work. Applicants are highly encouraged to apply the remainder of grant funding requested to support activities with significant strategic value, such as community engagement/outreach, education, operations and maintenance, monitoring and evaluation, etc.

Anticipated completion time for funded projects will typically be two years following finalization of a grant agreement. The standard grant period may include a third year in cases with a demonstrated need for additional time to complete critical project activities including but not limited to, final design or engineering, project establishment or maintenance, community engagement/outreach, or monitoring. The project narrative should include a clear timetable or 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 indicated in an application should not precede February 11, 2022.

Projects that meet or exceed a 1:1 match ratio to grant request tend to be more competitive but providing 1:1 match is not required for a project to be eligible or considered for funding. Matching contributions provided in your proposal should represent the total leverage brought to bear for the proposed project and may include cash, in-kind contributions of staff and volunteer time, work performed, materials and services donated, or other tangible contributions to the project objectives and outcomes. The cost of necessary land acquisition or easement may also qualify as leverage for a project involving work at the protected site if the acquisition occurs during the project's period of performance. In addition, eligible indirect costs (that would not be paid with requested grant funding) may be applied as match. More information about using indirect costs as match can be found by [clicking here](#).

EVALUATION CRITERIA

All proposals will be screened for relevance, accuracy, completeness and compliance with NFWF and funding source policies. The Southeast Michigan Resilience Fund advisory team, comprised of the Fund's administrators and funding partners, and a panel of technical reviewers, comprised of subject-matter experts and key stakeholders from state agencies, communities, academia etc., will use the following criteria as a strong basis for project selections. Project selections may also be based on other considerations, such as availability of funding, geographic distribution of projects, and balance among project types and grant size.

Strategic Value
Fund partners will consider the following criteria, listed in order of relative importance, when reviewing proposals and determining which will receive grant funding. Note that this list is not necessarily comprehensive of all factors that considered when reviewing proposals and some criteria might be weighted more heavily than others on a case-by-case project basis.

- **Program Goals and Priorities:** Project contributes to the program's overall goals, and has specific, quantifiable performance metrics to evaluate project success. Project addresses one or more of the program priorities.

- **Technical Merit and Budget**: Project is technically sound and feasible, and the proposal sets forth a clear, logical and achievable work plan, timeline for implementation and budget.

Budget is clear, detailed, cost-effective (see Implementation section below) and appropriate for work proposed. Project engages appropriate technical experts throughout project planning, design implementation and maintenance.

- **Community Engagement and Partnerships:** Project engages relevant communities and local stakeholders (e.g. municipalities, NGOs, community organizations, community leaders) project planning, co-design and post-implementation education and engagement to optimize the public use of and benefits to communities generated by the project. Project substantiates community partnerships and engagement through letters of support or shared investment in the project, demonstrated by including community partner entities as a match source in the proposal or sub-awarding grant funds requested in the proposal budget to community partners.

  Priority will be given to projects that directly benefit and engage low-income communities and communities of color. Projects that are not located in or meaningfully benefit these communities will be less competitive. To be competitive, proposals **must** include a plan to meaningfully engage the community throughout the project timeline, from design to post-implementation. Education or engagement activities may be supported by grant funds and may include, but are not limited to, programming, engagement events, establishing or supporting existing stewardship groups to maintain or enhance the impact of project elements, signage, etc.

  Meaningful community engagement and education efforts may be conducted by the applicant or, preferably, through a partnership-based effort between the primary grantee, community organizations or groups, municipalities, and/or relevant local or regional stakeholders. All projects will be required to submit letters of support from community partners and/or collaborators demonstrating their commitment to the project and engagement in project activities as proposed.

- **Climate Resilience in Design**: Project incorporates planning for increasingly severe and more frequent storm events and other climate-driven threats into their design, location, and/or function. Additionally, projects must identify existing and anticipated impacts of climate change on target communities and/or ecosystems and wildlife identified as the intended beneficiary of the grant funded work. Applicants should further describe how NFWF-funded interventions will help mitigate these impacts and threats to low-income communities and communities of color.

- **Matching Contributions:** Project offers matching contributions that will enhance and leverage the impact of a grant award. While match is not required, projects that meet or exceed a 1:1 match ratio tend to be more competitive.

- **Plan or Strategy Alignment**: Project advances an existing local, regional, watershed, tribal, state or federal plan or strategy. Applicants are encouraged to align their proposed projects with regional and local efforts and demonstrate how they would complement and connect to other previous and ongoing work in the region in the proposal narrative. Types of relevant plans or strategies may include, but are not limited to, watershed plans, municipal or regional domestic action plans, climate action plans, sustainability plans, green stormwater

infrastructure strategies, such as the Southeast Michigan Council of Governments [Green Infrastructure Vision for Southeast Michigan](#), the [Detroit Sustainability Action Agenda](#), the [Michigan Environmental Justice Plan,](#) state wildlife action plans, federal or regional wildlife or natural resource strategies, such as [Lakewide Action and Management Plans](#), [Michigan's Forest Action Plan](#), Joint Venture plans, [U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Midwest Region Coastal Program Strategic Work Plan](#), and other existing local strategies. For more information about relevant strategies and/or resources to support project development, visit https://www.nfwf.org/semichigan.

- **Regional Collaboration & Geographic Distribution of Projects:** The Fund will take the location of proposed project sites into consideration when evaluating proposals to ensure investments represent the regional scope of the Fund and are distributed throughout the region. Projects proposing work that extends to the regional scope, has established communication or collaboration plans to share key findings or project design with regional stakeholders, or connects partners from throughout the region will be more competitive.

Grantee Qualifications
- **Organizational Capacity:** Applicant organization demonstrates capacity and experience commensurate with the scale or complexity of the project being proposed and the funding requested.*

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

- **Past Success:** Project team has a proven track record of success in implementing practices with specific, measurable results.*

- ***Partnerships**: If the organization does not have the capacity or history of successes needed to constitute a competitive application alone, we highly encourage organizations to identify and collaborate with partner organizations to increase capacity and improve project design and outcomes. These partnerships may include multiple organizations needed to implement the project and authentically engage local stakeholders but elevate one higher capacity organization to act as the applicant and pass-through entity for project funding if needed. Partnerships should also ensure additional funds are leveraged and that the project will be maintained after the life of the grant. (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.) If the applicant is a government entity or municipality, close partnership with at least one non-profit and/or community organization is required to make projects competitive.

Implementation & Maintenance
- **On-the-Ground Implementation:** Project will apply the bulk (>70%) of grant funding to on-the-ground work, with the option of using the remaining funds for planning, permitting, final design, engineering, outreach, education, operation and maintenance (if the project's primary focus is improving or maintaining GSI, this would be considered on-the-ground work), or monitoring.

- **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.

- **Timeliness:** Project has completed or nearly completed planning, design and engineering to the extent that on-the-ground implementation can begin shortly after the grant is awarded.

- **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. Plans described in the proposal include how future funding will be secured or partnerships established to implement necessary long-term monitoring and maintenance activities.

- **Regional Connectivity & Scalability:** Project has the potential to catalyze additional efforts in communities or settings throughout Southeast Michigan where it has not been broadly deployed. Additionally, projects with regional scopes and partnerships that seek to improve regional collaboration and advance or establish regional strategies will be more competitive.

OTHER

Budget: Costs are allowable, reasonable and budgeted in accordance with NFWF's Budget Instructions cost categories. Federally-funded 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. Larger match ratios and matching fund contributions from a diversity of partners are encouraged and will 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 may also be asked 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.

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.

Federal Funding: The availability of federal funds estimated in this solicitation is contingent upon the federal appropriations process. Funding decisions will be made based on level of funding and timing of when it is received by NFWF.

TIMELINE

Dates of activities are subject to change. Please check the program page of the NFWF website for the most current dates and information https://www.nfwf.org/semichigan.

Applicant Workshop (Virtual)	August 3, 2021 – 11:00 AM Eastern Time
Pre-Proposal Due Date	August 31, 2021 – 11:59 PM Eastern Time
Full Proposal Invitations Distributed	Early October, 2021
Full Proposal Due Date	November 4, 2021 - 11:59 PM Eastern Time
Review Period	November – February 2022
Awards Announced	February 2022

After project selection, NFWF staff will work with applicants to prepare grant agreements and other necessary paperwork, all of which will be completed electronically using the Easygrants system. Additional information about the grantee's organization and its finances may be solicited during this time. Please note the preparation of grant agreements will require approximately 4 to 6 weeks from the time the NFWF receives the additional required information from the grantee. Once grant agreements are finalized, funds will typically be paid to grantees on a reimbursable basis. Funds may be advanced to qualified grantees on an as-needed basis.

WEBINARS AND WORKSHOPS

2021 Funding Opportunity Webinar Recording: https://nfwf.sharefile.com/d-s4a55cb96850a4fcc93eb413cb6c52dbf
The webinar provides important information about 2021-2022 funding priorities; in-depth review of the proposal narrative and highlighting priority project elements; tips for submitting competitive proposals; and FAQs. Prospective applicants are strongly encouraged to view the webinar prior to submitting an application or participating in the Workshop.

2021 Funding Opportunity Workshop: Live Virtual Event
Fund partners will host a **virtual workshop on August 3, 2021 from 11:00am-12:30pm ET.** At this workshop, NFWF staff will focus on answering attendee questions about the RFP and Fund priorities, assist with proposal development, facilitate a discussion around partnerships to connect applicants with potential collaborators, provide an in-depth review of application requirements, and share insights into crafting competitive proposals. Applicants are strongly encouraged to carefully review the RFP, view the Funding Opportunity Webinar, have a good idea of their proposed project/projects and have initiated the proposal application and downloaded the full proposal narrative in Easygrants prior to participating in the workshop. Register here:
https://attendee.gotowebinar.com/register/3936532419183424016

HOW TO APPLY
All application materials must be submitted online through NFWF's Easygrants system.

1. Go to 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. Please disable the pop-up blocker on your internet browser prior to beginning the application process.

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 at https://www.nfwf.org/semichigan.

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:

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