



NFWF

Long Island Sound Futures Fund (LISFF) 2023 Frequently Asked Questions March 6, 2023

Q: What is eligible for match and how far back can we count it?

A: Match must be nonfederal in source and may include in-kind and cash contributions e.g., volunteer hours, staff time, partner contributions etc. All match should be in support of, or directly contribute to, activities associated with the proposed work. Past expenditures on the project cannot count towards the match. Match may be secured and expended only during the start and end date of the project which cannot be before 10/1/2023. Not all match must be secured at the time you apply. If funded, you will be held to the total proposed match although the forms of match may change. *Grants require a minimum matching contribution valued at 25% of the “Requested Amount” from the LISFF. For example, if you request \$100,000 from LISFF, then the required match is \$25,000. Matching contributions may include cash, in-kind contributions of staff and volunteer time, work performed, materials.*

Q: Is the budget narrative really all that important?

A: Yes! The budget narrative allows reviewers to understand what will be accomplished through grant funds, and what portion of the project will be covered by matching funds. You will be required to complete a budget narrative if you are selected for funding, and this can delay contracting. Save yourself some time and include the budget narratives from the beginning!

Q: How do we set context of our project activities in a proposal?

A: Please reference in a proposal...

- The [Long Island Sound Comprehensive Conservation and Management Plan 2020-2024 Update](#) (CCMP) in the proposal. The Long Island Sound Futures Fund invests in projects under three CCMP themes 1) Clean Waters and Healthy Watersheds, 2) Thriving Habitats and Abundant Wildlife, and 3) Sustainable and Resilient Communities.
- CCMP [Implementation Actions](#) (IAs) associated with each theme. We have created a crosswalk document with types of projects by CCMP theme with referenceable IAs and relevant metrics. See [LISFF 2023 Metrics and Implementation Tracking Guidance](#).
- *Where relevant...* CCMP has three cross-cutting principles which may be addressed as a result of your project activities: 1) resilience to climate change, 2) sustainability, and 3) environmental justice. Incorporate any cross-cutting principle(s) of the CCMP into a proposal.

Q: What are the geographic boundaries of the LISFF and boundaries relevant to specific project type(s)?

A: Please see the interactive [Long Island Sound Watershed Map](#) for boundaries. Remember...

- **Habitat restoration projects** *must* fall within the *Long Island Sound Coastal Watershed boundary in Connecticut (CT) and New York (NY)*.
- **Resilience, water quality and fish passage projects** may be in any portion of the *Long Island Sound Study Area in CT and NY*.

- **Education and outreach projects** may be in any portion of the *Long Island Sound Study Area in CT and NY*. Projects may also occur in communities outside this boundary in those states as long as content concerns the health and living resources of the Sound.
- **Nitrogen/nutrient prevention projects** may occur anywhere in the Sound watershed of CT, NY, Massachusetts (MA), New Hampshire (NH), and Vermont (VT) as shown in the *Long Island Sound Watershed map*.

Q: There are a few metrics we'd like to select that really showcase the potential impact of our project, but they seem complicated to calculate such as prevention or reduction of nitrogen/nutrients. Where do we begin?

A: Metrics should be reasonable, achievable, and tell a story about your project. Take a look at "[Calculator Resources](#)". Document describes a variety of clean water calculators.

Q: For planning grants, how much do we need to know about potential N loading at this point? Do we have to have site specific data?

A: Here are some approaches... discuss in the proposal narrative... 1) estimated levels of N via research (e.g., N loading in soil and estimated erosion control/sedimentation equivalences) and 2) what you know about how much the site is currently loading into a local waterway. In a planning grant your metric is # plan. At this point you don't have a project metric with specific lbs. of N prevention occurring because the project is not yet ready for installation.

Q: Are Notes needed for metrics in proposal?

A: Yes! Please for all metrics - add NOTES! They help provide a clearer picture of your project for reviewers.

Q: Should project partners submit a single proposal or will NFWF consider multiple proposals from the project partners? Do we need partner letters of support?

A: Yes! It is very valuable to document and describe the strength of the partnership assembled to develop or implement the project in a proposal. That said, there may be only one "applicant of record," and if funded "grantee of record." Reviewers examine letters of support from partner(s) so collecting these letters will make a proposal more competitive. Please look at [Letters of Support Best Practices](#).

Q: What other kinds of letters would be valuable to collect to document project impact?

A: Please look at [Letters of Support Best Practices](#). Document describes different types of letters including... 1) partnership and where relevant match, 2) technical feedback about proposal from state, local or federal agency, 3) letters of permission from landowner or property owner to deliver project at a specific location, and 4) from representatives of targeted constituencies.

Q: What about design and planning? Can we request funding for these kinds of activities?

A: Yes! Design and planning are eligible projects. To make your proposal more competitive, make sure to articulate its ultimate potential and that the proposal shows how there is future possibility for the project, that the groundwork is underway, and partners and agencies have been contacted. Consider the amount of time to complete phases of planning and only ask for the phase you will be able to complete in the period of project performance (start and end date).

Q: Are there educational materials and resources which may be used to teach people about Long Island Sound?

A: New curriculum development is not an eligible activity for funding under LISFF. Please review the document for existing, useful [LISS Educational Resources](#). There are also contacts for information about these resources in the document.

Q: What is a Quality Assurance Project Plan (QAPP)? What types of projects will trigger the requirement to prepare a QAPP? Can I ask for time and funds to develop a QAPP? How much time will it take to develop a QAPP and review and approval by EPA?

A: *What is a QAPP?* A blueprint for proposed data collection or data use.

A: *When is a QAPP required?* Collection of New Primary Data; Existing Secondary Data use (new use for data collected for a different purpose, whether by the same or different groups); Water or other Environmental Media Monitoring; Modeling; GIS/Spatial Analysis; Data associated with Assessment, Development or Design of Project Plans (e.g., fish passage, nitrogen prevention/reduction, green infrastructure, habitat restoration, resilience), Development or Design of Watershed or Community Plans (e.g., watershed, hazard mitigation/resilience), and surveys/workshops.

A: *Can I ask for time and funds to develop a QAPP?* Yes. Put QAPP development in both LISFF budget and in LISFF narrative within timeline and methods.

A: *How much time will it take to develop a QAPP and for review and approval by EPA?* Plan to submit a QAPP *at least* four months in advance of data collection. That said, the timing of review, comment and by NFWF and for EPA review and approval is dependent upon the quality of the draft QAPP submission and may involve several iterations. For more information go to... [LISFF Quality Assurance Project Plan Guidance](#) and [EPA QA](#). Contact LISFF@nfwf.org if you have any questions about QAPP requirements.

Q: What are ineligible activities for LISFF funding?

A: You can see the full list in the [LISFF RFP](#), but here's a short list... 1) Research, 2) New educational curriculum, 3) Fellowships and/or tuition support or reimbursement, 4) Marketing efforts serving to generally promote the applicant organization and its initiatives, 5) Land acquisition, 6) One-off efforts to treat or control invasive plants without an existing or planned for long-term stewardship and maintenance plan, 7) General monitoring to assess conditions or to identify pollution sources, 8) Aquatic invasive species control, and 9) Funding for food, t-shirts and promotional items (e.g., key chains, coffee mugs, pens etc.).

Q: Are there resources to help with proposal development?

A:

- *In the upper basin states (MA, NH, VT) and non-coastal CT...* courtney@throwe-environmental.com
- *Send in ideas for feedback...* [LISFF Feedback Form](#) and/or email to LISFF23@nfwf.org
- *In coastal zone of NY & CT...* [Long Island Sound Study Extension Professionals](#)
- *Grantwriting assistance...* Apply to the [Long Island Sound Resilience Grant Writing Assistance Program](#)! For more information, contact: LISresilience@gmail.com

Q: Will NFWF have other grant programs for projects within the Long Island Sound watershed that may fall outside of the scope of this RFP?

A: There are other NFWF programs that overlap with the LISFF geographically and release RFPs at various times during the year.... [New England Forests and Rivers Fund](#) seeks to sustain healthy forests and rivers that provide habitat for diverse bird populations, as well as freshwater and diadromous fish populations... [America the Beautiful Challenge](#) seeks locally led ecosystem restoration projects that invest in watershed restoration, resilience, equitable access, workforce development, corridors and connectivity, and collaborative conservation... the [National Coastal Resilience Fund](#) seeks to restore, increase and strengthen natural infrastructure to protect coastal communities while also enhancing habitat for fish and wildlife... [Five Star and Urban Waters Restoration Program](#) seeks to support community stewardship of local natural resources, preserving these resources for future generations and enhancing habitat for local wildlife. Grants seek to address water quality issues in priority watersheds, such as erosion due to unstable streambanks, pollution from stormwater runoff, and degraded shorelines caused by development. Please also be sure to review the opportunities carefully to see if the categories could be a good fit.

Q: What's in LISFF's focus on engagement? How heavily weighted is a robust engagement program?

A: Engagement is not required. It is generally driven by type of project and what makes sense to deliver project outcomes/results. For example, a WWTF upgrade would in most cases not have a education or outreach campaign. A GI/LID project installation might have education and outreach activities associated with its delivery such as articles, signs, stewardship days, social media posts etc. A planning project may seek to inform the community in that case a campaign might involve meetings, articles, social media posts. A technical assistance project may want to transfer lessons learned or build commitment to shared vision for conservation in the community or with a specific constituency. In that case education and engagement activities may be conducted to develop that shared vision and offer shared learning opportunities.