

Applicant Questions and Answers

Related to the NFWF Peer Learning Request for Proposals

February 11, 2026

Timeline

1. *Will NFWF consider an extension to the proposal submission deadline?*

A. No

Submission Logistics

2. *The RFP does not specify page limits for the required documents (Technical Approach, Work Plan, etc.). Do you have a preferred page length or range for these sections to ensure our submission is concise and respectful of the review panel's time?*

A. There are no prescribed page limits for individual proposal sections. Applicants should scale the length and level of detail of each section to the scope and complexity of the work they are proposing. Proposals that address the full RFP should provide sufficient detail to clearly demonstrate the proposed approach and capacity to deliver, while proposals addressing only a subset of the RFP should limit content to the relevant sections and scope. In all cases, applicants are encouraged to be as clear, focused, and concise as possible, providing only the information necessary for reviewers to evaluate the proposed work.

3. *Do you want separate distinct PDFs for each section?*

A. Applicants may submit their proposal either as a single combined PDF or as separate PDFs for each major section (e.g., Technical Approach, Work Plan, Budget), at their discretion. If submitting multiple files, please ensure each document is clearly labeled and organized to facilitate efficient review.

Eligibility

4. *Would a subcontractor to this award be eligible to submit an application for an NCRF grant during the period of this contract? Or would that be a conflict of interest?*

A. The contractor(s) and subcontractor(s) to this award **would not be** eligible to submit an NCRF grant application for the duration of the contract AND one (1) year after the contract end date. Any actual or perceived conflict of interest must be disclosed. Subcontractor(s) must not participate in activities under this contract that would provide them with an unfair competitive advantage, influence funding decisions, or involve access to non-public information related to NCRF grant review or selection. NFWF will assess disclosed conflicts on a case-by-case basis and may require mitigation measures to ensure the integrity of the grant process.

5. *Is our organization conflicted out of submitting a proposal because we have received NCRF funds in the past?*
 - A. No. Organizations that have received NCRF funding in the past are not precluded from submitting a proposal in response to this RFP. Prior participation as an NCRF grantee does not, by itself, constitute a conflict of interest. Applicants should disclose any actual or potential conflicts of interest as part of their proposal. NFWF will review disclosures and determine whether any mitigation measures are necessary, consistent with standard solicitation conflict-of-interest provisions.
6. *Will NFWF consider proposals that focus on a specific geography or region within the overall scope of work? For example, would an offeror be eligible if proposing to address a subset of the national peer-learning program—such as delivering components related to the Great Lake watershed and its associated coastal resilience challenges—where regional expertise and context-specific nature-based solutions could provide higher value to NCRF and CRRC grantees?*
 - A. No. Proposals should not be limited to a specific geography or region. This solicitation seeks support for a national-level effort, and proposals that focus solely on a particular geographic area or watershed do not align with the intent of the RFP. However, NFWF will consider proposals that address a subset of the overall scope of work based on specific tasks or functions, rather than geography. Applicants may propose to lead or support discrete components of the peer-learning program (e.g., organization and facilitation of the convenings, curriculum development and technical content). Proposals should be appropriately scaled to the tasks proposed and clearly articulate how those tasks integrate with and support the broader national-level effort of the program.

Budget/ Funding Sources

7. *Is there a targeted award/budget amount for this program?*
 - A. No. NFWF has not established a targeted award amount, budget range, or funding ceiling for this solicitation. Applicants are expected to propose a budget that is appropriate for the scope of work, level of effort, tasks, and deliverables they are proposing—whether responding to the full scope of the RFP or to specific task-based components. Cost-effectiveness will be evaluated as part of the proposal review. Applicants should ensure that proposed costs are reasonable, well-justified, and aligned with the proposed approach and outcomes. A not-to-exceed cost will be negotiated with the selected contractor(s) at the time of award.
8. *Should the budget include all costs (travel and fees) for participants and facilitators/co-leads/presenters (i.e., NCRF and CRRC grantees, NFWF and OCM staff and partners, experts) to attend the national and regional convenings? Additionally, is the contractor(s) expected to*

handle travel logistics and stipends/labor costs for all these attendees? Similarly, should the proposed budget include convening costs such as location, food, etc.?

- A. Applicants should include in their proposed budget all costs necessary to deliver the tasks and convenings described in their proposal, consistent with their proposed scope of work. This may include convening-related expenses such as venue costs, facilitation, materials, and other direct costs required to successfully implement the proposed activities. Applicants should clearly describe any assumptions regarding participant travel, stipends, or reimbursements, including which costs are included in the proposed budget and which, if any, are assumed to be covered by NFWF or other sources. Proposals should also clearly identify whether the contractor(s) anticipates responsibility for managing logistics and payments associated with convenings, consistent with the proposed approach or not.

9. *Could you please confirm if a resulting agreement have a flow-down of federal terms and conditions and/or reporting requirements? The RFP calls this a procurement solicitation, and I would like to confirm the agreement type to determine our internal review processes.*

- A. Yes, the resulting contractual agreement will have a flow down of federal terms and conditions. Reporting needs and schedules will be determined with selected contractor(s).

10. *For Task 3 and 5, the one National and four Regional/Thematic Convenings: Will attendees be reimbursed for travel expenses and/or provided a participation stipend? If yes, will NFWF handle reimbursement/payment or is the contractor(s) expected to handle reimbursement/payment?*

- A. NFWF has not prescribed a required approach to attendee reimbursement or stipends. Applicants should propose an approach that is appropriate to their scope of work and clearly articulate any assumptions regarding travel reimbursement, stipends, or participant support. Proposals should specify whether such costs are included in the proposed budget and whether the contractor(s) anticipates managing reimbursement or payment logistics as part of their responsibilities.

Scope of Work/Program Clarification

11. *Is there a preference for award winners to create new events specifically for this program? Or can we work to leverage existing/planned regional events?*

- A. Awardees are expected to design and deliver **stand-alone events** specifically for this peer-learning program. Leveraging or embedding activities within existing or pre-planned regional events is not anticipated under this solicitation. The convenings supported through this contract should be purpose-built to advance the program's peer-learning objectives, align with the defined scope of work, and ensure consistency, accessibility, and intentional engagement across NCRF and CRRC grantees.

12. *Does NFWF have any locations in mind for the Fall 2026 event?*

A. Houston, Texas is currently being considered a potential location for the Fall 2026 national convening. However, NFWF remains open to other locations that represent a strong hub of NCRF-funded projects and provide appropriate access, facilities, and learning opportunities.

13. Can NFWF confirm that the online learning modules would be asynchronous and completed at the grantees' own pace?

A. NFWF has not prescribed a required format for the online learning modules. Applicants are encouraged to propose an approach to online learning—including the balance of asynchronous, synchronous, or hybrid elements—that they believe will be most effective for supporting peer learning among NCRF and CRRC grantees. Proposals should clearly describe the proposed learning format, rationale, and how it aligns with the program's objectives, participant capacity, and overall blended learning approach.

14. For Task 3 and 5, the one National and four Regional/Thematic Convenings: What are NFWF's attendance goals? How many NCRF grantees and CRRC grantees do you anticipate the contractor(s) actively engaging in this work?

A. NFWF has not established fixed attendance goals or target participant numbers for the national or regional/thematic convenings. Participation levels will depend on available budget, the scope of work proposed, and will be informed by the information gathering and prioritization at the national convening for the regional/thematic convenings. Applicants are encouraged to propose reasonable and scalable participation assumptions that align with their proposed approach, tasks, and budget. Proposals should clearly describe anticipated levels of engagement with NCRF and CRRC grantees, including how participation may be adjusted over time based on learning needs, demand, and program priorities. Final expectations regarding participation and engagement will be refined in collaboration with the selected contractor(s) during project planning and implementation.

15. The RFP appears to assume that the “collaborative and peer learning program” is primarily intended to transfer knowledge from NCRF grantees to CRRC grantees. As such, is it presumed that programmatic design should not prioritize knowledge transfer from CRRC grantees to NCRF grantees (i.e., simply let such knowledge transfer happen organically, rather than programmatically, throughout the project)?

A. No. The collaborative peer-learning program is intended to support **two-way, reciprocal learning** between NCRF and CRRC grantees. While the primary objective of the program is to advance CRRC projects by drawing on the applied experience and lessons learned from NCRF practitioners, the program is designed to foster meaningful exchange among all participants. Programmatic design should intentionally create opportunities for knowledge sharing, reflection, and learning in both directions. CRRC grantees bring valuable insights, innovations, and context-specific experience that can inform and strengthen NCRF practice, and proposals should reflect this reciprocal learning dynamic while remaining focused on supporting CRRC project success.

16. How do you see the balance between centering NCRF grantee knowledge and bringing in outside expertise in the development and delivery of learning materials in Tasks 3-6?

A. NFWF envisions a balanced approach that centers the applied experience and lessons learned of NCRF grantees while also intentionally incorporating outside expertise, including technical and programmatic expertise from NOAA and NFWF staff, program partners and other subject-matter experts, as appropriate. The peer-learning program should leverage NCRF grantees' on-the-ground experience as a core knowledge asset, while complementing that experience with external perspectives that can provide additional technical depth, emerging research, policy context, or specialized skills. Applicants are encouraged to propose thoughtful approaches for integrating these sources of expertise in ways that are responsive to CRRC grantee needs and aligned with the objectives of Tasks 3–6. Proposals should clearly describe how different sources of expertise will be engaged and sequenced to support effective learning, with the overarching goal of advancing CRRC projects.

17. Apart from considerations of time zone, location, number, and format (virtual/hybrid/in-person) of events/convenings, what else does NFWF consider to factor into “equitable access to learning opportunities across geographies and organizational capacities” among participants?

A. NFWF considers the diverse needs, capacities, resources, and stages of project development across all NCRF and CRRC grantees, recognizing that equitable access requires intentionally accommodating differences rather than applying a one-size-fits-all approach.

18. Are NCRF and CRRC grantees expected to take part in this collaborative peer-learning program as part of their respective grant requirements? Or should the contractor(s) anticipate needing to develop buy-in to encourage grantee participation, with no presumed participation rate?

A. Participation in the collaborative peer-learning program is **not a requirement** of NCRF or CRRC grants. While many NCRF grantees have expressed interest in engaging in peer learning and the contractor(s) will work with CRRC grantees to identified areas where support is needed, participation will depend on grantee interest, needs, and capacity. The contractor(s) should design an engaging, needs-based peer-learning program and encourage participation by leveraging NCRF grantee expertise in ways that are meaningful and low-burden, rather than assuming a fixed or required level of participation.

19. Regarding the following requirement in the SOW, is the expectation to design and build an online learning environment within a learning management system? “The Contractor(s) shall design and implement a cohesive peer learning environment using a blended learning approach.”

A. Yes. NFWF anticipates that the online learning environment would typically be implemented within a learning management system or comparable platform. However, applicants may propose alternative

approaches if they can demonstrate that the proposed solution will effectively support the blended peer-learning objectives, accessibility, and usability needs of NCRF and CRRC grantees.

Task 4

20. *The RFP calls for a set of elements to be provided in the Task 4 blended learning program and environment. Is the expectation that all of these items be included? Or can the list under Task 4 be seen as an illustrative example of tools the contractor(s) may draw on to respond to participant learning needs? For example, if program participants prioritize live learning elements (e.g., webinars, office hours, facilitated discussions, field-based learning, convenings), is building “structured online learning modules aligned to priority NbS for coastal resilience themes” still considered essential?*

A. The elements listed under Task 4 are **illustrative**, not prescriptive. Applicants may propose a tailored combination of tools and learning modalities. Proposals will be evaluated on their overall merit and effectiveness in achieving the goals of the RFP, rather than on the inclusion of every individual element listed under Task 4.

21. *Does NFWF have an existing platform (i.e., the “accessible learning environment” noted in Task 4) for blended learning, asynchronous peer engagement, and continued hosting of resources? Or is the contractor(s) expected to find, develop, and fund this platform (at least through the extent of this work)?*

A. NFWF does **not** have an existing platform for blended learning, asynchronous peer engagement, or long-term resource hosting specific to this effort. The contractor(s) is expected to propose, develop, and support an appropriate platform or solution for the duration of this work.

22. *Can you provide a bit more detail about what is expected for the “field-based learning opportunities” in Task 4?*

A. Field-based learning opportunities are intended to be integrated into the in-person convenings. In particular, the regional/thematic convenings could include site visits or field training components that allow CRRC grantees to learn directly from NCRF projects that are underway or completed, such as through project tours, demonstrations, or practitioner-led discussions on project locations.

23. *Four regional/thematic convenings are referenced in Task 4, and four convenings are referenced in Task 5. Does NFWF want a total of 4 or 8 in-person regional/thematic convenings?*

A. NFWF anticipates a total of **four (4)** in-person regional/thematic convenings.

Task 6

24. *Task 6 community of practice activities also appear in Task 4, yet Task 6 indicates that it is intended to ensure “NCRF-CRRC peer-learning beyond the scope of task 4.” As a point of clarity, is Task 6 describing a community of practice that is simply the execution of program elements designed in Task 4?*

A. Task 6 is not a repeat of Task 4; it is the ongoing community-of-practice function meant to sustain engagement beyond Task 4’s core blended learning program elements. Task 4 creates/manages the blended learning program and platform; Task 6 establishes and facilitates the CoP to extend peer-learning and maintain engagement and resource use after (and between) convenings.

25. *Do you anticipate the contractor(s) needing to utilize external expertise for ongoing community of practice activities (e.g., office hours, live learning clinics in Task 6)?*

A. No. NFWF does not anticipate that the contractor(s) will need to procure additional external expertise specifically for ongoing community of practice activities under Task 6. In principle, the contractor(s) is expected to have established the necessary facilitation capacity through Task 4 and to leverage existing expertise within the NCRF and CRRC grantee networks, as well as NFWF and NOAA partners, to match learning needs as they arise.