



## 2024 NEW HAMPSHIRE COASTAL RESILIENCE GRANTS

### Application Instructions and Evaluation Criteria

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#### *Supporting Capacity-Building, Planning, and Design Projects*

The New Hampshire Department of Environmental Services (NHDES) Coastal Program is accepting [Coastal Resilience Grant \(CRG\)](#) applications for community and habitat resilience projects. The applications will be scored and ranked according to the “Evaluation Criteria,” as described in Section E. Applicants with the highest-ranking proposals will be asked to refine scopes of work and budgets for contracting. A final contract is subject to successful negotiation and State of New Hampshire and National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) approval. Funds for this grant opportunity are provided by the NOAA Office for Coastal Management under the Coastal Zone Management Act in conjunction with the NHDES Coastal Program.

#### **A. Purpose**

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The CRG funding opportunity supports projects that (i) build capacity, (ii) advance planning, and (iii) develop designs to increase coastal resilience, including community and/or habitat resilience, in one or more of New Hampshire’s Coastal Zone communities. Coastal Zone communities include Dover, Durham, Exeter, Greenland, Hampton, Hampton Falls, Madbury, New Castle, Newfields, Newington, Newmarket, North Hampton, Portsmouth, Rollinsford, Rye, Seabrook, and Stratham.

For the purposes of the CRG funding opportunity, *coastal resilience* is the capacity of a coastal community or coastal system to adapt in a changing climate—not only measured by the capacity to “bounce back” quickly from shocks and stresses like storms, but also, and perhaps more importantly, measured by the capacity to “leap forward” by fostering sustained and equitable achievement of community goals and ensuring the social, economic, environmental, and cultural wellbeing of all peoples and habitats over the long-term.

#### **B. Eligible Applicants and Project Categories**

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##### **Eligible Applicants**

Eligible applicants include coastal municipalities, quasi-governmental organizations, non-governmental organizations, academic institutions, and state agencies. Applicants and projects based in and composed of communities that have historically received fewer funding opportunities for coastal resilience are strongly encouraged. Projects must take place within one or more of the 17 New Hampshire Coastal Zone communities (See Section A for list of Coastal Zone communities). Applicants may submit multiple proposals. Preference will be given to lead applicant organizations that have never received a CRG award.

##### **Preferred Project Approaches**

All projects must minimize negative impacts to environmental resources and preference will be given to projects that avoid negative impacts to environmental and cultural resources. Preference will be given to projects that focus on coalition-building, protecting and sustaining cultural heritage, environmental justice, inclusive access to the coast, and/or protecting and restoring natural coastal resources. Preference will be given to projects that collaboratively-develop goals, purpose, work plan, products, and outcomes, meaning that projects use inclusive, ethical, and mutually beneficial engagement and share decision-making power. Best practices for inclusive and accessible engagement include but are not limited to providing daycare services, conducting events in specific neighborhoods, providing stipends to enable full participation. Preference will be given to projects that achieve fair distribution of benefits

and burdens, prioritizing benefits for those with highest need. These projects will employ best practices for reaching, building trusting relationships with, sharing power with, and centering priorities of groups of people that have been historically excluded from municipal government and other decision-making spaces. Groups include and are not limited to communities with low incomes, Black communities, Indigenous communities, communities of color, speakers of languages other than English, and people with disabilities.

### **Eligible Project Categories**

Project proposals must align at least one of these three project categories: Building Capacity Projects, Planning Projects, and Design Projects.

- i. **Building Capacity** – Building Capacity Projects seek to increase the neighborhood, grassroots, or community capacity of applicants and their partners to increase resilience by building networks, increasing knowledge, and/or improving access to resources such as funding. At the end of a Building Capacity Project, the project applicant and its partners should be better positioned to engage in sustained work to increase community and/or habitat resilience.

*Building Capacity Project examples include, but are not limited to, creating or supporting a neighborhood group focused on building social cohesion and resilience among neighbors; implementing a grassroots resilience leadership development program; improving the intersectional network of groups working on community issues related to resilience (such as public health, environmental and racial justice, affordable housing, public transportation, business continuity, etc.); supporting or creating a multi-stakeholder municipal committee, grassroots community movement or advisory working group focused on coastal community and habitat resilience; supporting organizational readiness to engage in ethical dialogue with Tribal and Indigenous leaders, building organizational knowledge to advance racial, social, and environmental justice; conducting an inclusive process to develop a community and/or habitat resilience project grant proposal with intention to submit to an available or forthcoming funding opportunity.*

- ii. **Planning** – Planning Projects seek to develop plans, assessments, regulations, or other strategic information that will guide community and/or habitat resilience. The Planning Project should result in a collaboratively-developed planning product that will be used strategically to advance community and/or habitat resilience.

*Planning Project examples include, but are not limited to, collecting and analyzing community and/or environmental data or knowledge to inform a resilience planning effort; conducting a vulnerability and/or needs assessment for a site, asset, neighborhood, community, or region; integrating state and regional best practices or guidance (e.g., [NH Coastal Flood Risk Guidance](#), [Resilient Land Use Guide for New Hampshire](#), [NH Coastal Watershed Conservation Plan](#), [NH Wildlife Action Plan](#) resources, [Menu of Higher Floodplain Regulation Standards](#), [NH Salt Marsh Plan](#), etc.) into local master plans, capital improvement plans, other local plans, or local ordinances and/or processed; integrating higher standards and best practices into land use regulations such as zoning ordinances or site plan review and subdivision regulations to increase community and/or habitat resilience; creating new plans such as emergency response and recovery plans or conservation and habitat restoration plans; improving or creating procedures and/or programs that enable achievement of community and/or habitat resilience goals.*

- iii. **Design**—Design Projects seek to advance designs for site-specific physical resources or assets that will increase community and/or habitat resilience. A Design Project should result in a collaboratively-developed design product that can be considered for funding opportunities that support final design, permitting, and construction.

*Design Project examples include, but are not limited to, convening a design charrette for a vulnerable neighborhood, historic district, or commercial area; developing conceptual design alternatives for a priority habitat restoration or nature-based infrastructure project (e.g., a tidal culvert). CRG funds may not be used to design new hardened shoreline structures (e.g., rip rap, seawalls, revetments), but may be used to design nature-based shoreline stabilization projects (e.g., living shorelines) that mimic the natural environment and improve ecosystem function and value compared to current conditions and consider future conditions. CRG funds may be used to complete up to 75% engineering designs, but they cannot support final engineering designs or permitting costs.*

For additional project inspiration, explore descriptions and details of previously funded projects on the [CRG website](#). Note that funding limits and project types change from year to year, therefore projects funded in a past funding cycle may not be eligible for funding in the current funding cycle.

### C. Funding, Match Commitment, and Project Timeframe

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#### Funding

Total anticipated federal grant funding for all CRG projects is approximately \$100,000. Applicants must request a minimum of \$9,000 and no more than \$30,000 in federal grant funds per project. Federal grant funds and match may not be used for final engineering designs, permitting, or construction costs. Federal grant funds may not be used for equipment purchases that exceed \$5,000.

#### Match Commitment

Match consists of the portion of the project costs/value not paid with federal grant funds and can be any combination of cash and/or in-kind goods and services related to the project (e.g., non-federal salaries, volunteer time). A 4:1 federal grant funds to non-federal match through cash or in-kind services is requested but not required. For example, a project seeking \$20,000 in federal grant funding is expected to provide at least \$5,000 in non-federal match commitment for a total project budget of \$25,000. Applicants may include a justification for reduced or no match commitment, in cases where a reduced match commitment will eliminate any barriers to applying for CRG funding.

#### **How to calculate your match commitment and total project budget:**

*Non-federal match commitment = [federal grant funds requested / 4]*

*Total project budget = [federal grant funds requested] + [federal grant funds requested / 4]*

#### Project Timeframe

Project duration should be 12 to 18 months, depending on the project scope and budget. Projects are expected to begin as early as November 2024 and no later than January 2025. Projects are expected to end between December 2025 and June 2026.

### D. How to Apply and Evaluation Criteria

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Please complete and submit an application using the CRG Application Form. The Application Form and additional resources about the CRG program can also be accessed from the [CRG webpage](#). Applications are due no later than 4:00 PM EDT on Friday, May 31, 2024.

## E. Evaluation Criteria

Eligible applications will be reviewed and evaluated based on the following criteria and point value (total of 50 points).

### Section 1: Lead Applicant Information

Section #	Section topic	Maximum Points	Evaluation Criteria for Scoring Maximum Points
1.1	Organization Name	2	Two points if lead applicant organization has never been awarded a CRG.
1.2	Mailing Address	0	-
1.3	Primary Contact Person	0	-
1.4	Contact Email	0	-
1.5	Contact Phone	0	-

### Section 2: Project Summary

Section #	Section topic	Maximum Points	Evaluation Criteria for Scoring Maximum Points
2.1	Project Title	0	-
2.2	Project Category	0	-
2.3	Project Location/Focus Area	1	Project location/focus area is specific and takes place within the New Hampshire Coastal Zone, as described in Section B. Projects outside the geographic focus of the CRG funding opportunity will be rejected.
2.4	Project Goal	3	Project goal is clear and well-aligned with the purpose of the CRG funding opportunity, as described in Section A.
2.5	Project Summary	2	Project summary is clear, succinct, and summarizes the important details of the project.
2.6	Total Project Cost	0	Refer to Section C for funding availability and thresholds.

### Section 3: Project Purpose and Audience

Section #	Section topic	Maximum Points	Evaluation Criteria for Scoring Maximum Points
3.1	Project Purpose	3	Applicant provides compelling justification for how the project addresses a specific issue, interest, or need related to coastal resilience, who the project is intended to serve, and why CRG funds are important to support the project. Applicant provides compelling explanation for how the project achieves one or more of the following: builds coalitions, sustains cultural heritage, advances environmental justice, advances public access to the coast, and/or promotes protection and/or restoration of natural coastal resources. This section should include an explanation of any past efforts or events that the project is building on as well as a

			description of how the project outcomes will be used/useful beyond the end of the CRG award.
3.2	<b>Environmental Context</b>	4	Applicant describes the importance of the environmental context of the project, including any reference to how that environmental context is expected to change with climate change. Applicant explains how the project minimizes or avoids negative impacts to environmental and cultural resources. See Section B, sub-section “Preferred Project Approaches.”
3.3	<b>Community Collaboration and Engagement</b>	5	Applicant provides a realistic and specific description of the audiences, groups, or people that will be engaged throughout the project, why they will be engaged, and how they will be engaged. Preference will be given to projects that collaboratively-develop goals, purpose, work plan, products, and outcomes, meaning that projects use inclusive, ethical, and mutually beneficial engagement and share decision-making power. See Section B, sub-section “Preferred Project Approaches” for additional guidance.
3.4	<b>Advancement of Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, Justice, and Accessibility</b>	5	Applicant provides a thoughtful explanation of how the project will play a role in advancing diversity, justice, equity, inclusion, and accessibility in and around New Hampshire Coastal Zone communities. Preference will be given to projects that achieve fair distribution of benefits and burdens, prioritizing benefits for those with highest need. These projects will employ best practices for reaching, building trusting relationships with, sharing power with, and centering priorities of groups of people that have been historically excluded from municipal government and other decision-making spaces. See Section B, sub-section “Preferred Project Approaches” for additional guidance.

**Section 4: Project Team, Work Plan and Budget**

<b>Section #</b>	<b>Section topic</b>	<b>Maximum Points</b>	<b>Evaluation Criteria for Scoring Maximum Points</b>
4.1	<b>Project Team</b>	5	Proposed project team brings diverse expertise and demonstrates understanding and respect for partner skills and experience. Reviewers will take into consideration that the lead applicant’s ability to partner will vary based on grant funds requested, and smaller grant projects will most likely have fewer partners.
4.2	<b>Project Work Plan</b>	10	Proposed work plan is thoughtful, realistic, and collaborative. The work plan should include specific activities and, for each activity, a description of the work to be completed, who will complete the work, and estimated timeframe. The work plan should explicitly include a meaningful engagement training activity that

			will enable at least one project team member from the lead applicant organization to participate in four (4) hours of training organized by the NHDES Coastal Program and scheduled for February 2025. The work plan should explicitly include a project management activity as well as interim reports (due every December 31 and June 30 that occur after the start and before the end of the project period) and one final report (due on the final day of the project period, no later than June 30, 2026).
4.3	<b>Project Deliverables and Outcomes</b>	3	Project deliverables and outcomes are tangible and measurable and align with the project goal and proposed work plan. Applicant clearly describes how the project deliverables and outcomes will have impact beyond the project timeframe. Examples of project deliverables include events, outreach products, monitoring data and summary reports, assessment reports, conceptual design plans, draft ordinance language, etc. Examples of project outcomes include 50 coastal residents engaged, three new relationships established with specific community groups, consensus achieved in culvert design, etc. Please share how you will track and report on progress toward outcomes in grant reporting.
4.4	<b>Budget by Activity</b>	2	Proposed budget should be listed for each work plan activity. The amounts of federal grant funds requested for each activity are reasonable, appropriate, and well-justified given the level of work proposed in the work plan. Refer to Section C for more details.
4.5	<b>Budget by Category</b>	1	Provide a breakdown of the proposed budget by the budget categories detailed in the application.
4.6	<b>Non-Federal Match</b>	1	The amount of in-kind and cash match contributions either 1) meets a 4:1 Federal grant funds to non-Federal match ratio or 2) does not meet a 4:1 ratio and is accompanied by a reasonable justification for waiving the match request, as described in Section C.

**Section 5: Supporting Documents**

Section #	Section topic	Maximum Points	Evaluation Criteria for Scoring Maximum Points
5.1	<b>Visual(s)</b>	1	Up to three (3) visuals that contribute additional context about the project. Could be maps, photos, drawings, plans or other visuals. Project partners may use any available sources to create a map image, including the NH Coastal Viewer at <a href="http://www.nhcoastalviewer.org">www.nhcoastalviewer.org</a> . In the comment section, provide a description of the visual(s) and explain why they are relevant to the proposed

			project. If no visual is provided, please provide a reason why no visuals were included.
5.2	<b>Letters of Commitment</b>	1	Letters of commitment are provided from project team partner organizations identified in the application as receiving grant funds and/or providing match. No letter of commitment is required from the lead applicant organization—submittal of the CRG application form will serve as statement of commitment from the lead applicant. If letters of commitment from any key partner organizations receiving funds or providing match are missing, the application will be rejected.
5.3	<b>Letters of Support</b>	1	Letters of support are provided from audiences, groups, or people otherwise engaged in the project and showcase the need or importance of the project.
<b>Total</b>	-	50	-

**F. Timeline**

Informational Webinar: Monday, April 29, 2024 at 10:00 AM – 11:00 AM EDT  
A webinar will be held to describe the funding opportunity, how to submit an application, and answer questions. All are welcome to attend. You must [register for the webinar in advance](#). A recording of the webinar will be posted to the [CRG website](#).

Questions & Office Hours: Questions about this request for applications are welcome. Please contact Kirsten Howard at [kirsten.b.howard@des.nh.gov](mailto:kirsten.b.howard@des.nh.gov) or (603) 559-0020 prior to 4:00 PM EDT on Friday, May 24, 2024 with any questions. Questions and responses will be posted regularly to the [CRG website](#).  
Coastal Program staff will also hold office hours to discuss project ideas, answer questions, and workshop applications on: Tuesday, April 23; Wednesday, May 15; and Tuesday, May 28 from 1-3 PM EDT. Sign up for office hours [at this link](#).

Application Due Date: Friday, May 31, 2024 at 4:00 PM EDT

Award Notifications: Friday, June 28, 2024  
Selected applicants will be invited to negotiate final scopes of work and budgets with NHDES Coastal Program.

Finalized Project Scopes: Friday, August 30, 2024

Project Start Date: Between October 2024 and January 2025, subject to change.  
Projects will begin upon NOAA and New Hampshire Governor and Executive Council contract approval.

Project End Date: No later than June 30, 2026

## G. Terms and Conditions

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By submitting an application form, you agree to the following terms and conditions:

Submittal of a proposal does not commit the New Hampshire Department of Environmental Services (NHDES) to award a contract or pay any costs incurred during the preparation of a proposal. All awards are subject to approval by the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration and NHDES. All awards of \$10,000 or greater and awards of less than \$10,000 to organizations already under contract with NHDES are subject to approval by the New Hampshire Governor and Executive Council and/or NHDES. Awards of less than \$10,000 to organizations that do not have an existing contract with NHDES may not be subject to approval by the New Hampshire Governor and Executive Council. In the event that a project is not under contract or in the contracting process by January 2025, NHDES may rescind the Coastal Resilience Grant offer of funding. NHDES reserves the right to reject any or all of the proposals and to negotiate the scopes of work, timeframes, and requested grant amounts.

## H. Contact

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