

Frequently Asked Questions

General

Q. Is there a page limit on the letters of inquiry?

There is not a strict limit, but we appreciate brevity. Please keep it to no more than two pages.

Q. Would a project that added a small part of a larger project be competitive? For example, adding stewardship and volunteer events to build community support and engagement at a site with an already funded project design?

Yes! Community engagement that builds support for or allows community input on a planned restoration or a climate resiliency project would be competitive. While it is not a requirement for planned projects to have funding already in hand, we are looking for proposals that can demonstrate they are leveraging prior commitments, existing resources, and/or are intended to lead to future funding requests.

Q. Are projects that improve waterways, waterfronts and public spaces adjacent to disadvantaged communities eligible? What about projects that serve people living in disadvantaged communities, for example, an educational or workforce training program located in a nearby community?

A project will be considered eligible if it is located in and/or primarily serving residents of an area identified under any of the four demographic and geographic indicators included in HEP's definition and mapping of disadvantaged communities. Primarily serving is defined as projects in waterways, public parks, and other public spaces immediately adjacent to disadvantaged residential communities or explicitly serving those populations (such as educational or workforce training projects).

Q. Can this proposal be part of a larger project?

Yes! We especially appreciate proposals that can show HEP funds are leveraging other resources now and in the future. It is important for the proposal to articulate how the requested funds will make an important contribution.

Q. Can I apply to more than one of HEP's grant opportunities?

Yes. You can apply or be a community partner in more than one grant opportunity and would not be penalized for submitting multiple proposals. Each LOI or proposal will be evaluated independently by Foundation staff and outside reviewers. For larger grant opportunities, we may reach out directly to the applicants and community partners after the LOI or proposal is submitted and ask them to let us know which proposal is a priority.

Q. Can funding be used to hire new staff?

Yes. Funding can be used to pay salary costs, any fringe benefits and/or indirect costs associated with new and/or existing staff. See the RFP for details on limits on fringe and indirect costs.

Q. What is the difference between the Advancing Habitat Restoration in Disadvantaged Communities and the Building Community Capacity for Climate Resiliency RFPs?

While both RFPs are focused on service to disadvantaged communities and could help advance similar solutions, the Habitat RFP seeks to advance restoration efforts, in particular those that are advancing the Hudson Raritan Estuary Comprehensive Restoration Plan. The Climate Resiliency RFP seeks to advance projects to address the impacts of climate change on water resources, including coastal and stormwater flooding and changes in water quality.

Q. If we have a few potential project ideas, can we run them by you ahead of time to get some initial feedback prior to the LOI due date?

Yes, please send an email to the appropriate contact person at HEP.

Q. Do you have thoughts on how community groups can engage technical and government partners?

If you are looking for partners for your project, we might be able to help you contact the right people. Please send an email to the appropriate contact person at HEP for assistance.

Q. Is regranteeing of funds to other local nonprofits or municipalities that match the criteria of your RFP permissible?

Yes. But ideally these would be going to identified partners and existing partnerships (or to contractors in some cases) and not to fund an open-ended regranteeing process.

Q. Can projects serve multiple locations? For example, a workforce development program active in restoration work in several disadvantaged communities?

Yes! Great to indicate all the communities that will be benefiting from your proposal.

Q. Are institutions of higher education eligible for funding?

Yes, if the projects they propose serve one or more disadvantaged communities or involve students from disadvantaged communities.

Q. Will the webinars be recorded?

Yes. All the informational webinars about the grants will be recorded and posted under their grants on our website: <https://www.hudsonriver.org/grants#hep-grants>

Building Community Capacity for Climate Resiliency RFP

Q. Are projects that focused on other climate issues, such as reducing carbon emissions, eligible?

Proposals should be focused on projects that help build climate resiliency while addressing water quality and related management issues in those communities.

Q. Will the project have to lead to a specific water infrastructure project or resource improvement?

Not necessarily, but ideally the proposal will help identify and move communities and agencies towards resiliency actions.

Q. Can the project funding help to study the creation of a green/stormwater mitigation project?

Yes, if the design and management objective of the green infrastructure project is to help advance climate resiliency, not just water quality concerns.

Q. Are you prioritizing infrastructure solutions over projects that might focus on identifying resource needs or policy solutions? For example, could a proposal focus on reviewing the success or failure of past government actions?

Resiliency progress does not always require green or gray infrastructure. Proposals could assess past government responses but only if that is done as part of an effort to identify how community and government can find solutions going forward.

Q. Are there other plans aside from NYNJHATS and Resilient NJ that would qualify as appropriate for this RFP?

Yes. These are only a couple of many examples of climate resiliency planning efforts that could be a focus. For example, efforts to help implement Long Term Control Plans being advanced by utilities and local government or resiliency efforts being led by county or municipal governments are all appropriate.

Q. Can the final report be the preliminary finding of a data research inquiry? For example, could we propose an engagement process in our disadvantaged community in 2025 that will help frame a research project to be completed later?

Yes! We recognize that resiliency requires a long-term commitment, and this project might be a part of a longer process with multiple funders and milestones. It is important for the proposal to articulate how the proposed project will make a unique and valuable contribution to that effort.