



# NFWF

## Long Island Sound Futures Fund (LISFF) 2024 Frequently Asked Questions

### **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 and volunteer time, partner contributions, volunteer time, materials, rentals 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 10/1/2024. Not all match must be secured at the time you apply. If funded, you will be held to the total nonfederal match proposed although the forms of match may change. *Grants require a minimum match contribution valued at 50% of the “Requested Amount” from the LISFF. For example, if you request \$100,000 from LISFF, then the required match is \$50,000.*

### **Q: Is the budget narrative really all that important?**

**A: Yes!** The budget narrative allows proposal reviewers to understand what will be accomplished through grant funds. You will be required to complete a budget narrative if you are selected for funding. If you have not completed budget justification this will 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 2024 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) long-term sustainability (strives to balance current use and future need for energy and natural resources to maintain a healthy economy and environment over time.), 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 the [LISFF 2024 Calculator Resources](#) documents for tools to calculate stormwater, nitrogen and other pollution reductions. 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 need 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. That said, it is helpful where possible to characterize potential reductions.

**Q: Are Notes needed for metrics in proposal?**

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

**Q: Should project partners submit a single proposal or will NFWF consider multiple proposals from the project partners?**

**A:** there may be only one "applicant of record," and if funded "grantee of record." See question below about documenting partnerships.

**Q: Do we need partner letters of support?**

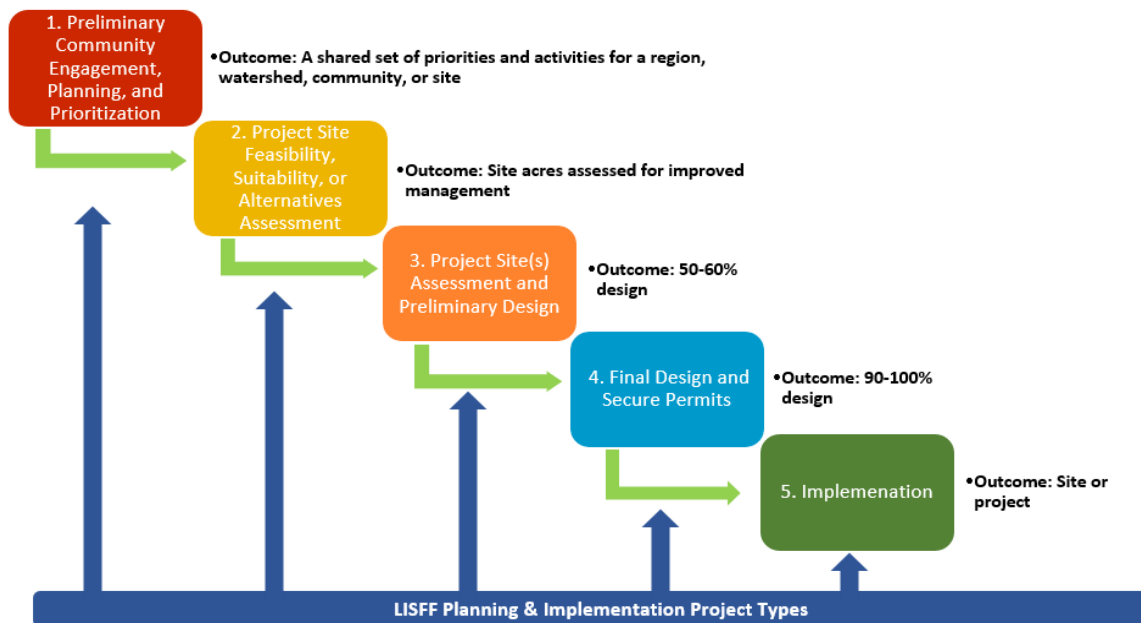
**A:** It is very valuable to document and describe the strength of the partnership assembled to develop or implement the project in a proposal. Reviewers examine letters of support from partner(s) so collecting these letters will make a proposal more competitive. Please look at [LISFF 2024 Letters of Support Best Practices](#) document

**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 a 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. To make your proposal more competitive, make sure to articulate the ultimate potential if a project were to be implemented. Applicants for planning grants should only apply for planning activities that are technically feasible to complete in the allowable time period of a LISFF grant. For example, in many cases it is not technically feasible to complete both a design and build; or to complete multiple planning steps such as a site assessment, alternatives analysis, concept plan and final permitting in 24 months. 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). You can reapply to LISFF at a later date for other planning phases or for actual project implementation.



**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 [LISFF 2024 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, definitely 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 [Victoria.Moreno@nfwf.org](mailto:Victoria.Moreno@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 2024 RFP](#). Please review the list to make certain you are not applying for activities which may not be supported by the grant program.

**Q: Are there examples of prior LISFF grants?**

**A:** Information about prior LISFF grants can be found [here](#).

**Q: Are there resources or guidance to help with proposal development?**

**A:** A [Tip Sheet](#) ... This document is available for quick reference to inform preparation of an application. This is a very useful document. It provides guidance about how to use the Easygrants online system as well as tips for preparing the program and financial elements of a proposal.

**Proposal Labs...** One-to-one sessions to receive feedback and guidance about individual proposal ideas. February 2024 through April 2024 ([Register](#))

**Applicant Webinars...** Group sessions and opportunities for shared learning about preparing a competitive LISFF proposal:

- For CT & NY applicants ([Register](#)) Monday, March 11, 2024 1:00 PM EDT
- For MA, NH & VT applicants ([Register](#))

**One-to-one assistance to applicants to develop project proposals focused on water quality improvement in the upper basin states (non-coastal CT, MA, NH and VT) of the Long Island Sound watershed....** Contact [Throwe Environmental](#) and learn more about LISFF applicant [assistance in the Northeast](#).

**One-to-one assistance to applicants to develop project proposals focused on community resilience to climate change in CT and NY...** Contact a Sustainable and Resilient Communities Extension Professional ([SRC contact map](#)) to learn more about how the Long Island Sound Study supports development of projects to foster increased community resilience to climate change.

**Do you need help writing a grant application in CT and NY?** Apply to the [Long Island Sound Resilience Grant Writing Assistance Program](#)! This funding opportunity is open on a rolling basis to municipalities and community organizations to facilitate the hiring of a grant writing contractor to assist with the development of a grant proposal for sustainability and resilience focused projects that will impact a community(ies) within or partially within the [Long Island Sound Coastal boundary](#) (within Westchester, Bronx, Queens, Nassau, Suffolk counties in New

York and communities in western and eastern Connecticut). Funding is to be awarded up to \$9,950 per application directly to the applicant's selected contractor on a cost reimbursable basis and match is not required. Find all the program details under **Track Two: Long Island Sound Resilience Grant Writing Assistance Program** on the [LISS website](#). Applicants who are looking for assistance with the LIS Futures Fund grant are encouraged to apply to the LIS Resilience Grant Writing Assistance Program by **April 1st, 2024**. For more information, contact: [LISresilience@gmail.com](mailto:LISresilience@gmail.com). For answers to Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) see the [FAQ Document](#).

**For issues or assistance with our online Easygrants system, please contact:**

Easygrants Helpdesk

Email: [Easygrants@nfwf.org](mailto: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.

**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:** Organizations are also encouraged to consider applying to the [Northeast Forests and Rivers Fund](#) which seeks to restore and sustain healthy rivers, forests and grasslands that provide habitat for diverse fish and wildlife populations. Other national grant programs worth considering for funding are the [America the Beautiful Challenge](#) for locally-led ecosystem restoration projects that invest in watershed restoration, resilience, equitable access, workforce development, corridors and connectivity, and collaborative conservation; and the [National Coastal Resilience Fund](#) which seeks to restore, increase and strengthen natural infrastructure to protect coastal communities while also enhancing habitat for fish and wildlife.

**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 wastewater treatment facility upgrade would in most cases not have a education or outreach campaign. A Green Infrastructure/Low Impact Development 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.