



Long Island Sound Resilience Grant Writing Assistance Program

Request for Proposals (RFP)

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Opportunity Announcement: The Long Island Sound (LIS) Resilience Grant Writing Assistance Program is open on a rolling basis until all the available funding has been allocated. Yearly updates may be made to the program.

**It is recommended that Applicants apply to the Grant Writing Assistance Program as soon as you decide to pursue a grant opportunity or as soon as the grant opportunity opens.*

Applications are due 6 weeks in advance of the opportunity due date, to allow for administrative processing in addition to time to prepare your grant proposal.*

[FAQ Document](#) & [Flow Chart](#) For answers to Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ).

[Long Island Sound Resilience Resource Hub - Funding Database](#) Find a grant opportunity through the new Funding Database that the Grant Writing Assistance Program can be used to apply for.

[Contractor List](#) This list is intended to assist interested applicants with identifying a selected grant preparation and writing support Contractor. It is the responsibility of the Applicant to talk with one or more Contractors to determine the best fit for the project.

Program Summary

Long Island Sound Resilience Grant Writing Assistance Program

NYSG and CTSG will provide grant preparation and writing capacity to NY and CT communities that are pursuing funding for sustainability and resilience-focused projects. This program aims to help communities develop successful sustainability and resilience-focused project grant proposals and for municipalities and community organizations to develop capacity for navigating the funding landscape.

With funding from US EPA through the Long Island Sound Study (LISS), New York Sea Grant (NYSG) and Connecticut Sea Grant (CTSG) announce a funding opportunity open to municipalities and community organizations to facilitate the hiring of a grant preparation and writing support service provider (hereafter referred to as the “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](#). See Eligibility section for more details. The intent of the program is to reduce staffing and capacity barriers that municipalities and community organizations may face when applying for competitive funding opportunities. Funding is to be awarded up to \$9,950 per Application directly to the Contractor on a cost reimbursable basis. Match is not required.

Application Instructions

Applications will be accepted on a rolling basis until all available funding is allocated. To apply, you may: (1) Fill out and submit the online [Application Google Form](#) (2) Fill out and attach the [Application Document](#) via email to LISresilience@gmail.com; or (3) Fill out and send the [Application Document](#) by mail (mailing address on Application). For reference, see [Example Application](#).

Goal and Background

The work of the LISS Sustainable and Resilient Communities Work Group and dedicated NYSG and CTSG Sustainable and Resilient Communities Extension Professionals (SRC EPs) has shown that for communities across New York (NY) and Connecticut (CT), obtaining funding is one of the main barriers to planning, designing, and implementing sustainability and resilience-focused projects. We have also heard that there is a lack of capacity, expertise, and resources to prepare and apply for funding. Moreover, additional support for identifying, conceptualizing, and developing projects is needed to implement more sustainability and resilience-focused projects.

To address these barriers, the SRC EPs have established two Programs – the Long Island Sound Resilience Grant Writing Assistance Program and the Long Island Sound Resilience Planning Support Program to assist communities within the Long Island Sound coastal boundary across New York (NY) and Connecticut (CT). These Programs address the main barriers. See more information about the Programs on the [LIS Resilience Resource Hub](#).

Program Description

Communities that participate in this Long Island Sound Resilience Grant Writing Assistance Program can receive support for grant preparation and writing. This support may include, but is not limited to:

- Budget preparation
- Cost-benefit analysis
- Writing and narrative development
- Mapping
- Proposal preparation and submission

Projects eligible for this program should help foster a sustainable and resilient Long Island Sound. Projects should advance a community's efforts to anticipate, absorb, accommodate, and recover from the effects of natural disturbances (e.g., sea level rise, storms and other extreme events, and human impacts), while promoting social, environmental, and/or economic well-being for all communities, particularly those communities with environmental justice concerns.

Projects in the Planning, Design, and Implementation phase are eligible under this program. [The 2020 LISS Comprehensive Conservation and Management Plan Implementation Actions \(IA\)s of focus for the Long Island Sound Resilience Assistance Programs](#) are linked here for your reference. The type of projects eligible for this program must advance one or more of the IAs listed and examples include:

- Sustainability/Resilience Plans/Watershed Plans
- Green Infrastructure, stormwater management, and low-impact development
- Improvements to infrastructure to increase resilience to sea level rise, storm surge, and intense storms and flooding (Generally excluding repair or construction of seawalls, groins, jetties, and bulkheads)
- Right-Sizing of Culverts/Dam Removal
- Nature-Based Approaches (This may include living shorelines, wetland restoration, shellfish reef restoration, eelgrass restoration, etc. Beach nourishment on its own is generally excluded).
- Retreat, Relocation, and/or Land Acquisition to protect habitat in the floodplain
- Public Engagement and Knowledge, relating to the advancement of sustainable and resilient communities

It is recommended that the Applicant consult with the grant opportunity contact(s) to get prior feedback on the project and suitability of the project for the grant opportunity.

Funding and Duration

Funding will be awarded up to \$9,950 per Application directly to the Contractor on a cost reimbursable basis (awards have typically been between \$5,000 - \$9,950). Match will not be required. Eligible entities who apply for funding through this program (hereafter referred to as the "Applicant") can submit multiple Applications. Each Application should focus on one discrete project.

Multiple Grant Opportunity Applications

Funding is to be awarded up to \$9,950 per Application. An Application should focus on one discrete project identified by the Applicant. Grant preparation and writing support activities can include applying to multiple grant opportunities for a discrete project identified by the Applicant, but the total award to a given Contractor for that discrete project shall not exceed \$9,950. Contract services supported through the LIS Resilience Grant Writing Assistance Program should not commence before a purchase order (PO) is established with your Contractor and must be completed by the submittal date of the targeted grant proposal(s). Funding availability is subject to US EPA award terms and conditions.

Grant Opportunities with Pre-Proposals

Applicants may use funds to apply for two-step grant opportunities that require a pre-proposal and invite selected Applicants to apply via full proposals. If a pre-proposal prepared using funds for the LIS Resilience Grant Writing Assistance Program is not invited to submit a full proposal, the Contractor (with the Applicant's approval) can ask to modify the PO and apply for another grant opportunity for that same project. In order to modify the grant opportunity, the Applicant will need to request approval from the SRC Team for the newly selected grant and any updates to the project scope.

Eligibility

This opportunity is open to municipalities, intermunicipal councils/organizations, nonprofits, non-governmental Organizations (NGOs), Private Voluntary Organization (PVOs), Community Based Organizations (CBOs), Academic entities, and Federally and State recognized Tribes/Nations as well as unrecognized indigenous communities in need of grant preparation services 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, western Connecticut, and eastern Connecticut)- See Figure 1. Eligible Applicants must identify the Contractor that will provide the grant preparation services on their behalf when they apply. Funding will be provided directly to the selected Contractor who is listed as an eligible Contractor with Cornell University in NY or University of Connecticut in CT. Funding may not be awarded directly to municipalities. Additionally, the eligible Applicant and Contractor should confirm that the intended grant awardee is eligible for and can accept the targeted grant(s) they intend to apply for.



Figure 1: LIS coastal boundary in pink.

Review and Feedback Process

- An Open Feedback Period will be available to interested Applicants (prior to Application submission), which may involve follow up phone calls/emails with Applicants to determine eligibility and provide feedback. Watch one of the [virtual information sessions](#) that were held in November 2023.
- Applications will be reviewed based on the below Evaluation Criteria by NYSG and CTSG SRC EPs on a rolling basis in the order in which the Applications are submitted.
- Application award determination/feedback (awarded funding, not awarded funding, or the SRC EPs need more information in order to make a determination) will be provided to all Applicants in writing, generally within one week of Application submission.
- Following award notification, it generally takes between 3-5 weeks to establish the PO with the Contractor. See Award section below for detail on award/contracting process.

Evaluation Criteria

Applications will be reviewed based on the below Evaluation Criteria and feedback will be provided on all Applications in writing.

1. Demonstration of project need and goal is well defined, and supports the advancement of sustainable and resilient Long Island Sound communities. Projects should advance a community's efforts to anticipate, absorb, accommodate, and recover from the effects of natural disturbances (e.g., sea level rise, storms and other extreme events, and human impacts), while promoting social, environmental, and/or economic well-being for all communities, particularly those communities with environmental justice concerns.
2. Project is in alignment with one or more of the [The 2020 LISS Comprehensive Conservation and Management Plan Implementation Actions \(IA\)s of focus for the Long Island Sound Resilience Assistance Programs](#).

3. Demonstration of the project impact on a community within or partially within the [Long Island Sound coastal boundary](#) (within Westchester, Bronx, Queens, Nassau, Suffolk counties, western Connecticut, and eastern Connecticut).
4. Clarity and completeness of the required information, including the grant preparation and writing support funding request/budget detail.
5. Applicant has the authority to implement projects related to the proposed work.

Conflict of Interest Statement: While Applicants are encouraged to reach out to their SRC EP for guidance, to avoid any perceived conflict of interest SRC EPs will not help write or review prepared grant proposals prior to submission to a targeted grant opportunity. In the case that the SRC EPs participate in the review of grant proposals supported by the LIS Resilience Grant Writing Assistance Program, the SRC EPs will not write a letter of support and the evaluation will be completed objectively, based on the scientific or technical merits or other relevant aspects of the proposal.

Award and Reimbursement

Once an application is selected for funding through the LIS Resilience Grant Writing Assistance Program, the selected Applicant (hereafter referred to as the “Awardee”) will be sent an Acceptance of Assistance Letter by NYSG/CTSG that outlines the agreement and expectations of the Awardee, Contractor, and NYSG/CTSG. Once signed by NYSG/CTSG, NYSG (Cornell University)/CTSG (University of Connecticut) will contract directly with the Awardee’s selected Contractor (depending on whether the community is located in NY or CT).

The funding requested and scope of the contract with the selected Contractor will be identified by the Awardee and depend on the specific grant preparation and writing capacity/needs and the grant opportunity that the Awardee is pursuing, recognizing that some grant proposals are more involved than others.

Award and Contracting Process

Cornell University/University of Connecticut will establish a purchase order (PO) with the Awardee’s selected Contractor. Generally, the registration and contracting process takes 3-5 weeks. **To reduce the amount of time between the award and contract, an applicant’s selected grant preparation and writing support Contractor is encouraged to follow the necessary steps to register in advance of an Application submission.**

- I. Cornell University/NY Award and Contracting Process:

The applicant and applicant’s selected Contractor are encouraged to review the requirements for becoming a service provider for Cornell at: <https://www.dfa.cornell.edu/procurement/suppliers/doing-business/service-provider>. A service is an activity in which labor is the major factor and not merely incidental to the production, acquisition, and/or delivery of a good. The procurement of services has unique requirements.

According to Internal Revenue Service guidelines, Cornell must determine if an individual or entity providing the service should be classified as an employee or an independent Contractor. To comply with this IRS requirement, service providers are asked to complete a [Service Provider Questionnaire](#) each time they are hired to perform services. If Cornell engages you as an independent Contractor, the following must occur **prior** to the services being performed:

- a. You will receive a contract for services which must be signed and returned.
- b. If you are a new Contractor for Cornell, you will receive an email invitation to register as a Cornell Contractor using our online registration tool; your taxpayer identification number will be collected at this time.
- c. Depending on the nature of the service(s) provided, you may be required to provide proof of insurance. Please see Cornell's [insurance requirements](#).
Basically, Cornell requires:
 - i. Commercial general or professional liability – depends on the type of service.
 - ii. Auto liability – when a vehicle is used as part of the services for other reason than your personal transportation.
 - iii. Worker’s compensation – when a Contractor has employees.
 - iv. Cyber risk – for software development or installation; electronic storage (including cloud computing); or hosting, using, or accessing Cornell data.
- d. After the steps above have been completed, Cornell will issue a PO for the services, which will include the executed contract for services.

Upon completion of services, per the instructions on the PO the Contractor will be instructed to submit an invoice.

II. University of Connecticut/CT Award and Contracting Process:

The Applicant and Applicant’s selected Contractor are encouraged to review the requirements with the purchasing procedures used by The University of Connecticut: <https://purchasing.ubs.uconn.edu/vendor-guide/>.

If a selected Contractor is not previously registered with The University of Connecticut as a supplier, then you will receive an email invitation to register, using the University’s online registration tool.

Once the supplier registration process is completed, a PO will be issued for the services, which will include the executed contract for services.

Upon completion of services, per the instructions on the PO the Contractor will be instructed to submit an invoice.

Awards under this funding opportunity are administered as a Cost Reimbursable Award (CRA) and Contractors must submit invoices, with Awardee approval in writing, to Cornell University/University of Connecticut for reimbursement. Fund dispersal to the Contractor will

take place in compliance with Cornell University/University of Connecticut's policies and procedures. In all cases, the final required deliverables of the contract are 1) a copy of the submitted proposal for the targeted grant opportunity(ies) and 2) written confirmation of the submission of the proposal(s) to the targeted grant opportunity(ies). **Note all grant proposals in our records will be kept confidential.*

US EPA Funding

This project has been funded wholly or in part by the United States Environmental Protection Agency under assistance agreement LI-96244521 and LI-96244522 to New York Sea Grant, Cornell University and assistance agreements LI-00A00578 and LI-00A01412 to Connecticut Sea Grant, University of Connecticut. The contents of this document do not necessarily reflect the views and policies of the Environmental Protection Agency, nor does the EPA endorse trade names or recommend the use of commercial products mentioned in this document. Funding is subject to [Uniform Guidance \(2 C.F.R. Part 200\)](#).

Appendix A: Funding Calendar

Annual Funding Opportunities are displayed on this calendar. For more information and to find a grant opportunity see the [Long Island Sound Resilience Resource Hub - Funding Database](#).

