



2017 Capacity Building Grants Competition Request for Proposals

I. Introduction

The Climate Resilience Fund (CRF) is accepting Letters of Inquiry (LOI) for our Autumn 2017 grants competition. This RFP details the grants competition focus, provides guidance for establishing applicant qualifications, outlines LOI content requirements, and provides timeline and application instructions.

The overall focus for this grant competition is on ***Climate Adaptation Services – Capacity Building***. Grants will be made available to qualifying organizations seeking support to bolster efforts to increase the resilience of communities and natural systems (ideally both) to the anticipated effects of increased climate variability and change within the topical and geographic areas of focus described below.

- **The topical focus** for this competition is ***preparedness for and adaptation to sea level rise and its associated impacts***.
- **The geographic focus** is ***US Atlantic coastal regions stretching from New Jersey to Georgia***.

LOIs should detail how CRF funds would be used to expand the capacity of institutions or collaboratives that provide climate services to communities and/or resource managers within the described topical and geographic focal areas. Services may include some or all of the following: coordination of a regional collaborative, technical guidance and or trainings for decision-makers, translation of climate science for practical use by planners and decision-makers, development and delivery of decision-support tools, and other related activities. Further details on applicant eligibility and categories of work is provided below.

CRF will make grants in the \$75K-\$150K range for this cycle. Grants will be made for a one or two-year period and require a 100% match from federal, state, or private funding sources (50% of this match can be in-kind contributions).

The grants competition will commence with this general call for LOI's in August. **The Deadline for LOI's has been extended to September 22, 2017.** The review process will continue with a full proposal submission and review in October and November, and conclude with **final decisions taking place in early December, 2017.** Deadline and application instructions, as well as a detailed timeline for the grants competition is included below.

II. Funding Priorities and Criteria

This competition targets organizations working in the ***US Atlantic coastal regions stretching from New Jersey to Georgia on issues related to preparedness for and adaptation to sea-level rise and associated impacts resulting from anthropogenic climate change.***

The 2017 Capacity Building Grants Competition aims to enhance the ability of decision-makers to develop and implement strategies to address anticipated effects of increased climate variability and change. Grants will be provided to successful applicants engaged in climate services development and delivery to build climate resilience of socio-ecological systems within the target geography.

CRF is looking for grantees whose work:

- Meets existing and long-term community or resource manager needs related to climate preparedness or adaptation;
- Is grounded in sound science;
- Is geared to providing actionable and usable science-based guidance to stakeholders and partners;
- Includes meaningful public participation processes;
- Values different kinds of knowledge and expertise;
- Is committed to working with those communities that are most vulnerable to climate variability and change;
- Is scalable and could be not only sustainable but transformative;
- Builds on or creates new partnerships between key regional institutions, federal agencies, local governments, nonprofits, and community groups.

III. Eligibility

This competition is open to U.S.-based charitable institutions with IRS approved 501(c)(3) status. Applicants must be based in, or work in close partnership with, one or more organizations located within the US Atlantic coastal region stretching from New Jersey to Georgia. Applicants must be in good financial and regulatory standing. CRF is unable to accept applications from U.S. federal government agencies, state government agencies, businesses, unincorporated individuals, and international organizations.

Who Should Apply?

This competition targets boundary organizations that work to advance climate adaptation and resilience by bridging the science/policy and practice gap. Nonprofit organizations, university-based institutions, or collaborations of public-private entities with an appropriate nonprofit fiscal agent are encouraged to apply.

Qualifying applicants will demonstrate existing capacity as well as thorough understanding of and expertise related to climate change science, anticipated SLR impacts on social-ecological systems specific to the regions of concern, and climate adaptation strategies, processes, and best practices. Demonstrated experience working with federal agencies, state and regional/local governing institutions, and community groups is required. Organizations that convene regional, cross-jurisdictional and multi-sector collaboratives focused on climate resilience will be highly competitive.

IV. Characteristics of A Successful Grantee

Competitive applicants will possess and demonstrate:

- Previous experience or expertise on issues related to preparedness and adaptation to climate variability and change and associated impacts;
- Work at a meaningful scale – landscape or statewide – or with a significant number of communities or network of resource managers;
- Expertise related to and associated with nature-based climate solutions;
- Commitment to social equity;
- Communications and outreach capacity;
- Successful work with stakeholders and partners on related issues; and
- A history of working successfully with local governments.

V. Application Guidance – Crafting your LOI

LOIs should not exceed 4 pages in length and should be written in size 11 font with 1-inch margins. LOIs should be uploaded to the [CRF-Windward Fund Grantseeker Portal](#). Applicants will be required to create a log-in to the Portal in order to submit an LOI (click on “sign up” link to create a log-in).

LOI Template:

All information noted within this template must be included in all submitted LOIs. Failure to follow these guidelines will disqualify your application.

- 1. Applicant Information: Name; Area of geographic focus; Leadership; Contact Information.**
- 2. Applicant Organization Profile:** Establishes applicant’s eligibility. State mission and briefly describe areas of expertise. Summarize or list existing climate services activities/resources.
- 3. Goal Statement:** Details the climate resilience goals that guide your organization’s work and how it aligns with the focus of this grants competition.
- 4. Climate Change Adaptation Science:** Describes how climate change is already or is expected to impact the region that is the focus of your organizations work. Please cite public documents where appropriate to support your description as endnotes in the required Appendix (see below). How does your organization or collaborative incorporate science into its work?
- 5. Statement of Work:** Describe the climate adaptation strategies, resources, tools and any related activities that are or will be employed to build the adaptive capacity of socio-ecological systems in the focal region.
- 6. Partnerships and Collaboratives:** List all relevant public and private partners, collaborators, and stakeholders that are engaged in the climate adaptation and resilience work described in section 4.

Please attach a Grant Request Appendix to your LOI. The Appendix should include:

- A. Publications Cited in your LOI;**
- B. Draft Budget and Narrative.** Please specify the total funds requested and briefly explain how those funds will be expended (1/2 page or less); and,
- C. Matching Funds Declaration.** Please list all existing or pending sources of support that will be used to meet the 100% match requirement.

How to Apply:

LOIs for this competition must be uploaded via the [CRF-Windward Fund Grantseeker Portal](#). You must create an account before submitting the LOI. Once you create an account, you will be taken to a home screen. You should then follow the “Click to access publicly available grant applications” link, and select the “Climate Resilience Fund Capacity Building Grants LOI” application.

VI. About CRF

The Climate Resilience Fund is a philanthropic collaborative working to advance a positive vision of a climate resilient society and to mobilize the resources for achieving it. We are committed to supporting the development and implementation of knowledge and resources to help steer society in a new direction – one where healthy communities, ecosystems, and sustainable economies coexist and thrive in the context of a changing climate.

CRF operates with a small leadership team with long experience working at the intersection of climate change, conservation, urban sustainability, and with the federal government agencies tasked with addressing the climate crisis. CRF is guided by an advisory board comprised of partner and investor representatives and experts in the fields of climate adaptation, resilience, and philanthropy. CRF is housed at [The Windward Fund](#), a 501(c)(3) that provides back-office administrative, financial management, and legal support for operations.

VII. Application Process and Timeline

Overview of Application Process and Timeline

LOI Submission Deadline	September 15, 2017
LOI Reviews by CRF Staff	Sept. 18 to 25
Finalist Notification Date	September 29, 2017
Final Proposal Guidance and Consultation	<i>Oct. 2-15.</i>
Full Proposals Due	<i>November 9, 2017</i>
Full Proposal Review by Committee and CRF Advisors	Nov. 13-30.
Awards Announced	First week of December, 2017

VIII. Frequently Asked Questions

What is the duration of funding for projects? 12-24 months, beginning in January 2018.

What is the range of funding that can be requested? \$75,000 to \$150,000.

Are matching funds required? Yes. A 100% match is required, but 50% of that match can be from in-kind services, resources, time, etc.

Will multistate or regional level projects be considered? Yes, we encourage applications for projects that address regional, landscape-scale climate preparedness and adaptation needs/issues.

Who will evaluate the proposals and make decisions on the grant awards? All proposals will be evaluated by CRF staff and advisors and a small group of expert, external advisors.

Will pre-proposals that fall outside the funding priorities or geographies be considered? No, proposals are restricted to those priorities outlined in this RFP.

How does the grant proposal process work? CRF utilizes a two-step evaluation process: 1) an open call for pre-proposals (aka, LOIs), and 2) a larger full proposal invited from a select number of pre-proposal applicants.

When will pre-proposal applicants be notified if they have been selected to submit a full proposal? We anticipate notifying all applicants of their pre-proposal's status within four weeks from the LOI deadline. Those invited to submit full proposals will be notified at that time as well.

When will award decisions be made? Final grant awards will be announced no later than the first week of December 2017 (specific date TBD).

Please address additional inquiries to the CRF Info line: info@climateresiliencefund.org Please note that we may be unable to be responsive to every individual email, CRF will collect questions and send out broadcast emails to interested applicants on a weekly basis leading up to the deadline in September.