



**STATE OF MAINE REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS
RFA SUBMITTED QUESTIONS & ANSWERS SUMMARY**

RFA NUMBER AND TITLE:	202111178 - Community Resilience Partnership Community Action Grant
RFA ISSUED BY:	Governor's Office Office of Policy Innovation & the Future
SUBMITTED QUESTIONS DUE DATE:	January 18, 2022, no later than 11:59 p.m.
QUESTION & ANSWER SUMMARY ISSUED:	December 23, 2021
PROPOSAL DUE DATE:	March 22, 2022, no later than 11:59 p.m.
PROPOSALS DUE TO:	Proposals@maine.gov

Provided below are submitted written questions received and the Department's answer.

	RFA Section & Page Number	Question
1	Section D, p9	Is there an application form we should use to apply?
	Answer	
	Yes, a Community Action Grant Application Form is posted with the RFA document on the Procurement Service website.	

	RFA Section & Page Number	Question
2	n/a	For communities that need help with grant writing, is there a pool of grant specialists available to small communities?
	Answer	
	Under the Service Provider Grants, the service providers are expected to help communities in their group apply for Community Action Grants during the Service Provider Grant period. Communities that need assistance should consider working with a Service Provider . Additionally, the Regional Coordinator RFP aims to build capacity in each of four regions to assist communities with identifying, applying for, and managing other federal and state grant opportunities.	

	RFA Section & Page Number	Question
3	n/a	Can several small towns who have been meeting monthly for a while hold a joint community workshop, or do they have to hold individual town meetings? Any insights for how they can learn from each other?
	Answer	
	Community workshops conducted as part of the enrollment process may be held individually or jointly. The outcomes must include a list of priorities for each individual community and may include joint collaborative priorities.	

RFA Section & Page Number	Question
4	<p><i>GOPIF received the following questions about the eligibility of specific projects:</i></p> <p>One project being contemplated would develop preliminary engineering estimates for two piers that need to be rebuilt for resiliency. Is it safe to assume that project could fit under the “vulnerability of infrastructure” category (G1 or G2)? And is it safe to assume this would fit in the category of no match required?</p> <p>We have designed a no-till potato planter to reduce fuel needs in potato production, reduced tillage means reduced CO2 emissions, and reduced non-point source pollution by keeping the soil in the field. There are 55,000 acres of cropland that is bare for nearly 6 months of the year and soil erosion is estimated to be roughly 1-2 tons per acre per year. The River is paying the price. Any suggestions?</p> <p>Would raising municipal buildings or moving them out of the floodplain be an eligible activity?</p> <p>Would funding of a local sewer project be an eligible project?</p> <p>The 'G5' action on the list notes to "(identify vulnerable road crossings and) apply for DEP improvement funds." So could the Community Action Grant be applied to the construction or engineering costs to improve the infrastructure?</p>
Answer	
<p>GOPIF is unable to comment on the eligibility of specific projects. Applicants may wish to consult the List of Community Actions for ideas for eligible projects. There are two types of Community Action Grants:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) No-match grants to support implementation of one or more activities in the List of Community Actions available here (link) that are aligned with the state’s climate action plan, Maine Won’t Wait (link). 2) Grants to support other community-defined climate and energy implementation priorities that do not appear on the List of Community Projects. <p>In cases where another state funding program already exists for a certain project type, GOPIF will want to see that the other source has been considered and is included in the overall project budget.</p>	

	RFA Section & Page Number	Question
5	n/a	If towns are interested in possibly applying to the Community Action Grant program at some point in the future, but not within the first year, should they enroll in the partnership now or wait until closer to the time they wish to apply?
	Answer	
	When to enroll is a decision best made at the community-level with consideration of town or select board meeting schedules and grant deadlines.	

	RFA Section & Page Number	Question
6	Section C, p5	I don't see any language in the RFAs that suggest that working on one grant (RFA) precludes an organization from working on the other grant (RFA). Could you confirm that my organization could propose to work on tasks listed in both the Community Action Grant RFA and the Service Provider RFA?
	Answer	
	An organization may submit one (1) Service Provider Grant application per round and, if applying on behalf of a community, one (1) Community Action Grant per round. An organization is permitted to participate as a subcontractor on multiple Community Action Grants and Service Provider Grants and should demonstrate capacity to do so effectively.	

	RFA Section & Page Number	Question
7	Section C, p5	Can a municipality apply for their own grant as well as be part of a group grant in the same grant round?
	Answer	
	A community may participate in only one (1) Community Action Grant application and award at a time.	

	RFA Section & Page Number	Question
8	Section C, p5	Can communities that enroll in the program as a group apply for grants individually? Likewise, can communities that enroll in the program individually apply for a grant collaboratively?
	Answer	
	Regardless of whether a community enrolls in the Partnership on its own or with the assistance of a service provider, it may then apply for Community Action Grants individually or as part of a multi-community application.	

	RFA Section & Page Number	Question
9	Section C, p5	Does every community need to work with a service provider to join the Partnership?
	Answer	
	Communities may choose to complete the enrollment requirements on their own at any time, or choose to work with a service provider if they want the extra expertise and capacity.	

	RFA Section & Page Number	Question
10	Section C, p5	Eligibility calls for “designating a committee or employee to coordinate activities...” If a town uses contractors to provide capacity because they are unable to hire staff, could that contractor serve as the designated point person to lead/ facilitate a committee? Or in conjunction with a committee? Must it be an EMPLOYEE OR a COMMITTEE? Could it be a contractor hired to work with a committee?
	Answer	
	The preference is that a municipal official or employee be the designated point of contact. However, if this not possible, the municipal resolution may designate a contractor to represent the community to the Partnership and detail the specific roles and authorities it grants to the contractor and the duration of that role.	

	RFA Section & Page Number	Question
11	Section C, p5	If communities have completed and adopted a climate action plan, can they submit that as equivalent documentation for enrollment?
	Answer	
	Yes. The community will still need to complete the Community Resilience Self-Assessment and the List of Community Actions and pass a municipal resolution or obtain a letter from a tribal chief. The community will need to submit documentation that the planning process engaged the community and generated a list of priorities. Documentation should include workshop agendas, participant lists, a description of the workshop outcomes, and the plan’s priority action items.	

	RFA Section & Page Number	Question
12	Section C, p5	If a community has 100+ page green plan with designated recommendations and priorities I'm assuming that satisfies some of the enrollment requirements. The plan was developed as a result of two dozen public forums surveys, etc.
	Answer	
	The community will still need to complete the Community Resilience Self-Assessment and the List of Community Actions and pass a municipal resolution or obtain a letter from a tribal chief. The community will need to submit documentation that the planning process engaged the community and generated a list of priorities. Documentation should include workshop agendas, participant lists, and a description of the workshop outcomes.	

	RFA Section & Page Number	Question
13	Section C, p5	Where do school districts fit into the RFA? I see a reference to school districts in the list of pre-approved measures.
	Answer	
	Municipal and tribal governments are eligible to apply for Community Action Grants. School districts may be a partner on a grant application.	

	RFA Section & Page Number	Question
14	Section C, p5	If a project were to support a regional school district/system, would all the towns apply together?
	Answer	
	Yes, the towns would be the applicants and the school district might be a partner to the application. Any towns listed on the application would need to be enrolled in the Partnership.	

	RFA Section & Page Number	Question
15	Section C, p5	I live in a retirement community. Is a mechanism for us to become officially involved since we are not a town or a tribe?
	Answer	
	Municipal and tribal governments are eligible to apply for Community Action Grants. A retirement community may be considered a stakeholder group that participates in the community workshops.	

	RFA Section & Page Number	Question
16	Section C, p5	Who is meant to complete self-evaluations?
	Answer	
	It is up to the community's officials to determine whether staff, a committee, or the service provider completes the two self-assessments. The required language in the municipal resolution will reference those assessments so the community may desire to have a municipal representative involved in completing the assessments.	

	RFA Section & Page Number	Question
17	Section C, p5	Can a municipality pass a resolution before it has performed a self-evaluation and public workshop?
	Answer	
	Yes, in which case the resolution should set a timeline (for example, within 60 days) for conducting those two activities and generating the list of priority actions.	

	RFA Section & Page Number	Question
18	Section D, p5	Can more than one Community Action Grant application be submitted?
	Answer	
	A community may be included in only one application per round.	

	RFA Section & Page Number	Question
19	Section D, p5	Can a municipality apply for their own grant as well as be part of a group grant in the same grant round?
	Answer	
	Communities are limited to one grant application per round.	

	RFA Section & Page Number	Question
20	Section D, p5	Community Action Grants are available for up to 5 communities as a group. The Regional Coordinators Pilot is designed to help 12-15 communities. Can a group of 6-11 communities apply for a Community Action Grant?
	Answer	
	There are no restrictions on the number of communities that may apply jointly for a Community Action Grant. The award cap of \$100,000 will apply for all multi-community proposals.	

	RFA Section & Page Number	Question
21	Section D, p5	Do the grant caps of \$50,000 for individual communities and \$100,000 multi-community proposals apply for both the no-match and match grant options?
	Answer	
	Yes, the caps apply to both no-match and match options.	

	RFA Section & Page Number	Question
22	Section D, p5	One concern that I have is that the towns with better planning capacity and more resources will be better able to meet the application criteria and move forward with funding opportunities. How are you planning to ensure that all municipalities have a fair shake at funding regardless of planning capacity?
	Answer	
	The Service Provider Grants are available for exactly this reason, to assist those communities with limited capacity. There will be additional rounds of Community Action grants available. Further, to achieve an equitable geographic distribution of regional provider investments, GOPIF's intent is to select at least one (1) Service Provider proposal from each of five regions during each grant cycle. See the Service Provider Grant RFA for descriptions of the regions.	

	RFA Section & Page Number	Question
23	Section D, p5	How competitive are these community grants? Is there a certain limitation on the amount of grants you'll give?
	Answer	
	For the first round, \$1,050,000 has been allocated for awards under the Community Action Grant. Competitiveness will depend on how many applications are submitted. See the Community Action Grant RFA document for scoring criteria.	

	RFA Section & Page Number	Question
24	Section E, p5	Are the community action grants to be spent in 12 months with project closure reporting requirements?
	Answer	
	Contract terms for Community Action Grants will be up to two (2) years, as determined by the Applicant's proposal.	

	RFA Section & Page Number	Question
25	Section E, p5	Will projects that result from this RFA have to pay prevailing wage rates both for these grants and for future implementation efforts?
	Answer	
	Maine's prevailing wage rates will apply to these individual grants and future implementation efforts if the individual projects meet the definition of "Public works" in 26 MRS §1304(8). The laws regarding Maine's prevailing wage can be found here Title 26 MRS Chapter 15 .	

	RFA Section & Page Number	Question
26	Section A, p6	Reading the requirements for Community Action Grants, I note that towns will be allocated to one of three Tiers. Tier 2 is for "communities with either populations from 4,000 to 10,000 or a state tax assessment of less than \$25 million." My town has a population of about 9,000 but a state tax assessment of about \$2 billion. Would we be allocated to Tier 2 or Tier 3?
	Answer	
	<p>In this case, the town would be classified as Tier 2 based on the population size below 10,000. Criteria for the Tiers are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tier 1: Communities with populations less than 4,000. • Tier 2: Communities with either populations from 4,000 to 10,000 or a state tax assessment of less than \$25 million. • Tier 3: Communities with populations greater than 10,000 and state tax assessments higher than \$25 million. <p>Note: GOPIF uses Maine State Treasurer's state revenue sharing projections for state tax assessment values: www.maine.gov/treasurer/revenue-sharing/projections.</p>	

	RFA Section & Page Number	Question
27	Section B, p7	Do you have a template for the municipal resolution authorizing the program?
	Answer	
	Yes, a model resolution with required and optional language is provided on the Partnership Website .	

	RFA Section & Page Number	Question
28	Section B, p7	Will a resolution already passed for a declaration of a climate emergency qualify as a resolution for enrollment?
	Answer	
	The resolution should contain the specific language listed in the municipal resolution guidance on the website. In this case, the community could decide to pass a new resolution or to amend the existing resolution to include that language.	

	RFA Section & Page Number	Question
29	Section B-2, p7	Can a municipality submit a grant for two somewhat unrelated projects on the List of Community Actions (for example, EV charging stations and completing the flood resilience checklist)?
	Answer	
	Yes, communities may apply for more than one activity from the List of Community Actions in a single application. However, communities may not submit more than one application per round.	

	RFA Section & Page Number	Question
30	Section B-2, p7	Will the List of Community Actions be updated overtime or stay the same as the program develops?
	Answer	
	The List of Community Actions may change over time as new resources and practices become available.	

	RFA Section & Page Number	Question
31	Section B-4, p8	If a community has received funding to implement a resilience-based infrastructure project but is still looking for non-federal match, could a community apply for a Community Action Grant to help provide that match? And if yes, would this require a percentage match since it doesn't fall under the action list?
	Answer	
	Funds awarded under the Community Action Grant may be used as local cost-share for federal grants. If the work being supported is not on the List of Community Actions, the match requirement for the Community Action Grant will apply.	

32	RFA Section & Page Number	Question
	Section B, p9	I would like to share the transcript with our Conservation Commission. How do I download the transcript?
Answer		
A video recording of this webinar and a summary of the Q&A will be posted to the Partnership website (https://www.maine.gov/future/climate/community-resilience-partnership). We will not post a transcription due imperfections in the transcription software.		

33	RFA Section & Page Number	Question
	Section D, p9	What's the estimated date of award of Community Action Grants?
Answer		
The Community Action Grants deadline is March 22nd. We anticipate making award decisions in April.		

34	RFA Section & Page Number	Question
	p11	How will you evaluate the proposals for funding?
Answer		
See page 11 of the Community Action Grant RFA document for scoring criteria.		

35	RFA Section & Page Number	Question
	n/a	Do you see the state creating networking opportunities so communities can learn from each other?
Answer		
Each Community Action Grant award contract will include reporting lessons learned and brief case study so that communities can learn from each other's projects. In addition, we hope to offer a venue for service providers and communities to share best practice and lessons learned with their peers.		