GENERAL INFORMATION

1. **Can one entity (or applicant) be included in multiple letters of intent and applications?**
   A: Yes, any eligible entity can serve as lead for or participate in multiple applications. Applicants should carefully consider whether they have the capacity to execute multiple efforts concurrently.

2. **Under what authority is NOAA providing these funds?**
   A: Section 40001 of the Inflation Reduction Act (Public Law 117-169); Section 310 of the Coastal Zone Management Act (16 U.S.C. 1456c), titled “Technical Assistance;” the Digital Coast Act (Public Law 116-223); the National Climate Program Act (Public Law 95-367); and the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA, Public Law 117-58).

3. **Are these awards being made as grants or cooperative agreements?**
   A: Cooperative agreements, as described in 31 U.S.C. 6305 and 2 C.F.R. 200.1, meaning NOAA expects to be substantially involved in many aspects of the awards.

4. **Will NOAA be issuing additional funding opportunities through the Climate Resilience Regional Challenge?**
   A: This grant program is being funded through a single appropriation from the Inflation Reduction Act (Section 40001) and there will only be one competition.
5. **How are these funding opportunities different from the other habitat conservation and restoration funding opportunities NOAA is providing through the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act/Bipartisan Infrastructure Law?**

A: Funding from both the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law and the Inflation Reduction Act contribute to NOAA’s Climate-Ready Coasts initiative. NOAA is making transformational project-level investments in restoration and conservation under the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law through several opportunities, including our Transformational Habitat Conservation and Resilience Grants, funds targeted to our coastal zone management and National Estuarine Research Reserve programs, and through the National Coastal Resilience Fund, which NOAA administers in partnership with the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation.

The Climate Resilience Regional Challenge will fund a broader, more holistic range of adaptation actions that include, but are not limited to, a focus on restoration and conservation. The challenge also adds its unique focus on building enduring capacity for resilience and adaptation within and across regional networks. The actions anticipated under this program, such as policy and regulatory changes and increasing local capacity, extend beyond the focus, and in some cases, the geographic scale, of the opportunities under the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law, and are expected to be complementary and deliver compounding benefits. The investments in capacity-building and regional collaboration, and emphasis on underserved communities, tribes, and others, will help build an even stronger pipeline of projects that can be supported through the National Coastal Resilience Fund, Community Based Restoration Program, and Coastal Zone Management Act programs, over the long term.

6. **How is the Climate Resilience Regional Challenge different from the National Coastal Resilience Fund?**

A: The National Coastal Resilience Fund is a public-private partnership administered by NOAA and the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation. This grant funding helps restore, increase, and strengthen natural infrastructure, which in turn protects coastal communities and enhances fish and wildlife habitat. The Climate Resilience Regional Challenge funds a broader range of adaptation actions and supplements investments being made through the National Coastal Resilience Fund.

7. **How is the Climate Resilience Regional Challenge different from the Climate-Ready Workforce funding opportunity?**

A: The Climate Resilience Regional Challenge is broadly focused on advancing local adaptation efforts in coastal regions through regional coordination and on-the-ground project implementation. The Climate-Ready Workforce focuses on end-to-end recruitment into high quality jobs that enhance climate resilience by leveraging cross-sector partnerships, relevant training, and wraparound services (such as transportation and stipends). Projects funded under Climate-Ready Workforce will measurably increase the number of skilled professionals supporting equitable, local adaptation efforts, including those funded by the Climate Resilience Regional Challenge and other Bipartisan Infrastructure Law and Inflation Reduction Act investments.
ELIGIBILITY INFORMATION

8. **Who is eligible to apply?**
   A: Eligible entities include coastal states or territories, counties, cities, or other political subdivisions of a coastal state, including special purpose units of a coastal state or local government engaged in economic or infrastructure development activities; the District of Columbia; institutions of higher education; and public or private non-profit organizations or associations, including those acting in cooperation with officials of a political subdivision of a coastal state, regional councils of government, and regional planning councils. Tribes (tribal governments) and tribal organizations are eligible. Institutions of higher education (as defined in subsection [a] of section 101 of the Higher Education Act of 1965 [20 U.S.C. 1001(a)]) are eligible.

9. **Can NOAA partners, such as state coastal management programs, Sea Grant college programs, and National Estuarine Research Reserves, apply?**
   A: Yes, NOAA partners that are state agencies or institutions of higher education are eligible and can be applicants or collaborators.

10. **Which states are considered coastal?**
    A: Coastal states are defined in the Coastal Zone Management Act (16 U.S.C. 1453[4]) as any state of the United States in, or bordering on, the Atlantic, Pacific, or Arctic Ocean, the Gulf of Mexico, Long Island Sound, or one or more of the Great Lakes. The District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, the U.S. Virgin Islands, Guam, the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, American Samoa, and former Trust Territories of the Pacific Islands (Freely Associated States), including Federated States of Micronesia, Republic of the Marshall Islands, and Republic of Palau, are eligible.

11. **My community is in a coastal state, but we are not right on the coast. Are we eligible?**
    A: There is no prohibition against any community in any coastal state from participating in any proposed effort. All communities in all coastal states are eligible. However, applicants should closely review the evaluation criteria to determine how the proposed effort will be evaluated. For example, letters of intent will be scored on the “extent the proposed effort prepares the region for implementation of future actions and/or directly reduces risk to coastal communities, infrastructure, economies, and ecosystems from weather and climate impacts.” The stronger the economic, social, and/or environmental benefits to coastal communities and/or coastal ecosystems, the more likely it is that the project will be evaluated favorably.

12. **Are activities outside of the United States eligible?**
    A: No. Foreign governments are not eligible to apply for funding. International non-governmental organizations are eligible to participate as partners (either funded or unfunded) if they are conducting projects in one or more of the eligible coastal states and territories.
13. **Are other federal agencies allowed to receive funds?**
   A: Federal agencies and employees are not allowed to receive funds, but may serve as collaborative partners. If federal agencies are partners, applicants are expected to provide details in the application regarding the planned level of federal engagement. Examples may include, but are not limited to, serving in a review capacity, providing technical assistance, and participating in task teams, work groups, and leadership teams.

14. **Can the same organization be awarded both Track One and Track Two funding for two different projects?**
   A: Yes, the same organization can submit separate letters of intent for different projects and be selected for funding under the same or different tracks. The selection factors described in the Notice of Funding Opportunity allow NOAA to distribute the funds across a diverse range of locations for a diverse range of purposes. If both proposals score highly, and both projects have similar geographic and topical focus, it would be less likely that both projects would be selected for funding.

15. **Are both federally and non-federally recognized tribes eligible?**
   A: Yes. Federally recognized tribes and tribal organizations are eligible. Non-federally recognized tribes are eligible if they are non-profit organizations. The term “tribe” is synonymous with “tribal government” and means any American Indian or Alaska Native tribe, band, nation, pueblo, village, community, component band, or component reservation, individually identified (including parenthetically) in the list published most recently as of the date of enactment of the Notice of Funding Opportunity (25 U.S.C. 5131). The term “tribal organization” means the recognized governing body of any Indian tribe; any legally established organization of American Indians that is controlled, sanctioned, or chartered by such governing body, or is democratically elected by the adult members of the American Indian community to be served by such organization, and which includes the maximum participation of American Indians in all phases of its activities (25 U.S.C 5304). While tribal organizations are eligible to apply on behalf of one or more tribes, they must document tribal approval prior to commencing proposed activities (per 25 U.S.C. 5304). Non-profit organizations are eligible to apply, including state-recognized tribes, Native Hawaiian entities, or other non-profit organizations serving the needs of Indigenous Peoples.

16. **Are Alaska Native corporations eligible to apply?**
   A: Yes, Alaska Native corporations are eligible for this competition.
17. Can Track Two be used for both planning and implementation of projects? For construction activities, is there any preference for or discouragement against proposing efforts to plan, design, permit, and construct if it can be completed in the five years?

A: The primary focus of Track Two is on implementation, but all activities allowed under Track One (regional scale coordination, engagement, planning, advancement of equitable outcomes, and capacity-building) can also be conducted under Track Two. Construction and any other proposed activities, regardless of where the applicant is starting, must be implemented within five years, which is the maximum duration of our grants. There is no preferential consideration of ambitious efforts; however, the “Scientific and Technical Merit” evaluation criteria for this funding opportunity assess whether the proposed activities are achievable within the identified time frame and offer a realistic timeline.

18. Are there any activities that cannot be funded through this program?

A: The placement of sand on beaches for renourishment is not eligible for funding under this announcement. In addition, the construction of shoreline stabilization structures are not eligible for funding under this announcement, unless they are part of a hybrid green and gray adaptation action. Shoreline stabilization structures are hard structures used to create rigidity and include breakwaters, riprap, jetties, breakwaters, seawalls, and revetments.

The following activities will also not be considered for federal funding: 1) activities that alleviate the liability associated with legally required mitigation for the adverse effects of an activity regulated or otherwise governed by local, state, or federal law; 2) activities that constitute compensatory restoration for natural resource damages under federal, state, or local law; and 3) activities that are required by a separate consent decree, court order, statute, or regulation.

19. Is the strategic placement of dredged sediment eligible for funding in Track Two?

A: Constructed nature-based solutions are eligible. This could include subaqueous or terrestrial placement of sediment as part of a nature-based solution (e.g., dunes, living shorelines, horizontal levees). Placement of sand on beaches solely for renourishment is ineligible.

20. Would a proposal be competitive if the majority of the requested funding is for the collection of geospatial data?

A: The percentage of funding dedicated to any one type of activity is not considered in the evaluation criteria. To be competitive, projects must be responsive to all of the program priorities (e.g., risk reduction, regional collaboration, equity, enduring capacity).

21. Could a plan for the management of publicly owned bluffs be eligible for Track One?

A: Yes, planning is an eligible activity in Track One and Track Two. To be competitive, the proposed activities must align with the program priorities (risk reduction, regional collaboration, equity, enduring capacity). NOAA would expect the planning effort to be at a regional scale, responsive to known climate risks, include engagement with disadvantaged communities, and complement other related activities to move communities closer to implementation of resilience and adaptation actions.
22. **Would coastal tribal hatcheries be eligible under Track Two funding?**
   A: Tribes and tribal organizations are eligible to apply. Specific activities related to tribal hatcheries may or may not be eligible. For example, construction of new facilities and/or buildings is not an eligible activity. However, the construction of natural or hybrid green and gray infrastructure to protect tribal fish hatcheries would be eligible. Applicants interested in tribal hatcheries should consider NOAA’s Inflation Reduction Act programs related to Climate Resilient Fisheries and Tribal Priorities. More information can be found on the NOAA Inflation Reduction Act website.

23. **Is the hiring of personnel to manage and implement proposed activities an eligible use of funds?**
   A: Yes, costs associated with hiring full- and part-time employees is an eligible activity. NOAA expects many applicants will need to increase staffing to ensure successful implementation of proposed activities. Associated costs should be minimized to the greatest extent practicable.

24. **Would the relocation of a sewer pump station in a floodplain be eligible for Track Two? This would affect one jurisdiction, but not necessarily an entire region.**
   A: Proposals that do not address all four program priorities (risk reduction, regional collaboration, equity, enduring capacity) are not likely to score well. NOAA encourages applicants to bundle activities into an integrated suite of regional resilience actions that ensure benefits at the community level while collectively addressing the program priorities. To be eligible, any proposed activity that includes retrofit or construction of infrastructure must include green (natural) features. For additional information on green and gray infrastructure approaches, please refer to the Digital Coast natural infrastructure resources page and USACE Engineering with Nature website. Technical assistance with natural infrastructure can be requested by emailing resiliencechallenge@noaa.gov.

25. **What types of educational activities are eligible for funding in either track?**
   A: Professional education and training activities are encouraged to address the enduring capacity priority. Other education-related activities (e.g., fellowships, internships) are eligible and are encouraged to support workforce development efforts. Education activities that do not directly support the program priorities of building enduring capacity for adaptation and resilience or contributing to workforce development are not likely to score well.
26. **How are regional collaboratives defined?**
   A: For the purposes of this competition, a group of entities that apply together are considered a regional collaborative. More specifically, regional collaboratives are defined as groups composed of collaborators and partners that are unified by a common vision for how to significantly increase the resilience of their region. They are led by or include locally oriented institutions and governments, and share adjacent or overlapping geographical interests or administrative boundaries, or benefit from the same natural, social, economic, or infrastructure systems. The collaborators and partners that comprise the regional collaborative should have a clear, shared sense of the need for action and willingness to engage in a collaborative process that links diverse interests to achieve shared goals in a regional setting. Collaboratives should include or engage with representatives from the relevant jurisdictions and sectors to collectively address weather and climate impacts. Regional collaboratives must identify the geography that they represent, and the identified geography must be exclusively in coastal states and territories or otherwise enable U.S. coastal communities to prepare for weather and climate impacts, consistent with the Inflation Reduction Act (e.g., in the District of Columbia or in areas impacting coastal waters). Collaborators and partners are not required to be physically located in coastal states.

27. **Does NOAA expect applicants to establish regional collaboratives similar to the ones on the program website?**
   A: The regional collaboratives referenced in the program website are meant to serve as examples. Applicants should determine the most appropriate form and function needed to address the program priorities in their respective region. Applicants to Track One should come together as a regional collaborative to develop a unified vision for increasing resilience at a regional scale. Applicants for Track Two funding may be a regional collaborative as defined for Track One, or the applicant can be a single entity. Regardless, all entities interested in applying for Track Two funding should be committed to working closely with relevant partners, including representatives of marginalized, underserved, and underrepresented communities.

28. **Does an applicant have to be a regional collaborative to apply?**
   A: A regional collaborative is a group of individuals or entities with a unified vision for resilience that can apply to this funding opportunity together, and may or may not be a legal entity. Applicants can apply for funding to develop and/or enhance existing regional collaboratives under either track. Applicants to Track One must either be an existing regional collaborative or propose to develop a new collaborative. Applicants to Track Two are not required to be a regional collaborative. All applicants to both tracks should strive for significant collaboration at a regional scale that is inclusive of tribes and/or disadvantaged communities.

29. **Are there any required outcomes or products for new or existing collaboratives applying to Track One?**
   A: No, there are no required outcomes or products. However, within two years of receiving funding, the applicants should be able to demonstrate that a regional collaborative effort is functional, and progress toward implementation is being made. The Notice of Funding Opportunity includes examples of outcomes or products that would reflect progress.
30. Can funding under Track One support one grant for multiple regional collaboratives, and include activities to build bridges between regions?
A: Yes, as long as each regional collaborative can achieve significant, tangible resilience and adaptation outcomes for their region with the funding available from NOAA. NOAA encourages all applicants, whether proposing efforts to initiate or support single or multiple regional collaboratives, to ensure the proposed activities address the program priorities (risk reduction, regional collaboration, equity, enduring capacity), facilitate the implementation of regional resilience actions, and ensure benefits at the community level. Activities to transfer knowledge to other regions are also encouraged. Applicants may propose the majority of activities in one region and activities to transfer knowledge to one or multiple regions.

31. I am interested in applying for funding, but I only have one specific activity in mind. I am looking for partners to propose similar or related efforts in a regional context. Who can help me find potential partners?
A: The Office for Coastal Management can provide technical assistance during the application phase, and can connect applicants with NOAA partners and other regional contacts. Applicants can send an email to request assistance to resiliencechallenge@noaa.gov.

32. How large or small can a region be? Can the region cover a large area that is also a single jurisdiction?
A: The applicant-specified region should be of a size and scope that can facilitate the implementation of resilience and adaptation actions at a regional scale and provide direct benefits to local communities. A region may include multiple coastal jurisdictions, and tribes working together within a single coastal state, county, municipality, or coastal watershed. Alternatively, a region may include multiple parts of geographically connected states or tribal lands facing similar weather and climate impacts. Although there is no specific minimum or maximum size by geographic distance or number of jurisdictions, the region must be in eligible coastal states and territories, and may be made up of or include tribal lands. NOAA encourages applications that benefit tribal lands and/or tribal priorities. Applicants should be able to demonstrate, with the amount of funding requested from NOAA, significant, tangible resilience and adaptation outcomes that benefit the specified region as a whole and within individual coastal communities.

PROGRAM PRIORITIES

33. What types of weather and climate impacts can be addressed by proposed projects? Does an applicant need to focus on impacts of both extreme weather and climate change?
A: The impacts of drought, extreme heat, sea level rise, floods, wildfires, and other future weather and climate impacts can be addressed through this program. For all proposals to both tracks, the greater the benefits to coastal populations, ecosystems, and economies, the more likely the proposal is to score well. Applicants are not required to focus on both weather and climate impacts; one or both are sufficient.
34. **Can Track One activities include scientific investigations into resilience evaluation and enhancement?**
   A: The NOAA Climate Resilience Regional Challenge does not support research activities. However, the development and implementation of performance measurement, evaluation, and reporting mechanisms are eligible. If innovative approaches to performance measurement are proposed, the primary purpose should support the program priorities (risk reduction, regional collaboration, equity, enduring capacity), and not for the sole purpose of conducting research.

35. **Is the capitalization of a revolving loan fund or other type of fund that provides grants for climate resilience an eligible activity for Track Two?**
   A: Yes, the capitalization of public revolving loan funds or other types of grant-making funds that support climate resilience activities are eligible. Any funds that are passed through as sub-awards must comply with all relevant federal regulations. All proposed activities must be completed within the period of performance of the federal award.

36. **Is the development of new forecast models for flood risk assessment eligible within Track One?**
   A: Climate risk and vulnerability assessments are eligible Track One activities. Applicants could propose a new forecast model if it is necessary to complete a risk assessment, and should describe why the new model is needed. Applicants proposing the development of new tools and models should review the evaluation criteria to ensure associated costs are necessary and reasonable.

37. **Is this program concerned with social and cultural impacts of climate change in coastal areas, or just economic and environmental factors? If so, is there a preference for addressing either or all?**
   A: NOAA is concerned with climate change impacts to people, the economy, and the environment. Adaptation actions to address climate impacts on social and cultural systems, as well as on natural systems and the economy, are encouraged. There is no additional weight given to any specific type of climate impact, and all applicants should ensure risk reduction outcomes are tangible and measurable.

38. **What types of scientific expertise and services does NOAA have that applicants can leverage to build climate resilience in coastal communities?**
   A: NOAA’s programs and network of partners collectively provide a broad range of scientific expertise and services related to climate adaptation for coastal areas. National-scale platforms like NOAA’s Digital Coast and the U.S. Climate Resilience Toolkit provide free online access to NOAA and other partner resources, including adaptation-related data, tools, training, case studies, and scientific reports. In addition, NOAA has a network of regional, state, and place-based programs that support climate adaptation in coastal areas. To request additional assistance with identifying specific expertise and resources specific to your region and needs, email resiliencechallenge@noaa.gov.
LETTER OF INTENT APPLICATION PROCESS

39. **What is a letter of intent?**
   A: A letter of intent is a preliminary, non-binding indication of an organization’s intent to submit an application. In order to submit an application, applicants must receive an invitation from NOAA based on the information provided in the letter of intent.

40. **Can applicants submit multiple letters of intent?**
   A: Yes. There is no restriction on the number of letters of intent for any eligible entity. Applicants submitting multiple letters of intent must use a unique project title for each letter. Applicants may submit them together, in one email, or via multiple emails. Each letter of intent must apply to only one track. Applicants must clearly identify the track that should be used to evaluate the letter of intent (Regional Collaborative Building and Strategy Development, or Implementation of Resilience and Adaptation Actions).

41. **I submitted a duplicate letter of intent or application package on Grants.gov. How do I withdraw that letter of intent or application?**
   A: The applicant should send an email to the email address provided in the Notice of Funding Opportunity (resiliencechallenge@noaa.gov) and provide details regarding the letter or application that should be withdrawn. In the case of a full application, the applicant should provide the Grants.gov tracking number of the package they are asking to be withdrawn.

42. **Is a letter of intent required, or just recommended, in order to submit a final application?**
   A: The letter of intent is required for this competition. Only applicants that have submitted a letter of intent AND have been invited to submit an application will be considered for funding.

43. **For the letter of intent, the criteria include a factor to evaluate “connections with or intent to connect with NOAA’s partnerships.” Who are NOAA’s partners, and what does NOAA expect to see in the letter of intent?**
   A: Examples include, but are not limited to, state coastal management programs, National Estuarine Research Reserves, Sea Grant college programs, Regional Climate Centers, Climate Adaptation Partnerships (formerly known as Regional Integrated Sciences and Assessments, or “RISAs”), Integrated Ocean Observing System regional associations, and NOAA’s Coral Reef Conservation Program partners. This network of partners includes a vast range of information, resources, and services related to climate resilience and adaptation. NOAA encourages applicants to leverage and build upon previous investments made by NOAA partners. NOAA encourages applicants to describe either their anticipated engagement with NOAA partners, or their outreach to NOAA partners, as part of the application process. Letters of support from NOAA partners are not required.
44. **How can the private sector assist public agencies and nonprofits that are seeking these funds? Can private companies be included as a sub-recipient in the letter of intent or proposal?**

A: NOAA encourages the private sector to support public agencies and nonprofits that apply. Private sector entities should initiate conversations with potential applicants to determine if their expertise is needed. Private sector entities can receive funding through sub-awards from award recipients, and may be identified in the letter of intent, or listed as “to be determined.” The name of any identified qualified contractors and methods of selection should be included in the budget narrative for full applications. NOAA anticipates the private sector to support applicants with program and project management, risk assessment, planning, engineering, construction, and other professional services.

45. **The letter of intent template requests that applicants describe anticipated NOAA technical assistance needs. Will applicants score higher or lower if they ask for technical assistance?**

A: Technical assistance needs and associated requests are not considered during the evaluation process. NOAA asks for technical assistance needs to assess what kinds of services are needed to improve internal planning.

**FULL APPLICATION PROCESS**

46. **I need help with my application on Grants.gov. Can NOAA help me?**

A: NOAA does not operate the application submission process on Grants.gov. We recommend you review the resources available at Grants.gov, including the support section and applicant FAQs. Applicants may also direct their Grants.gov-related questions to support@grants.gov.

47. **Can pre-award costs be considered using these funds?**

A: Per 2 CFR 200.458, NOAA authorizes award recipients to expend pre-award costs up to 90 days before the performance start date at the applicant’s own risk. Pre-award costs more than 90 days before the start of the award may also be considered, but require prior approval from NOAA. This does not change the period of performance start date. Pre-award costs should be considered and discussed during pre-award negotiations between the applicant and NOAA representatives. Such costs are allowable only to the extent that they would have been allowable if incurred after the date of the federal award, and only with the written approval of the federal awarding agency. This could include proposal preparation costs (as defined at 2 CFR 200.460) that are not covered in indirect costs. Pre-award costs will be a portion of, not in addition to, the approved total budget of the award. All costs incurred before NOAA makes the award are at the recipient’s risk.
48. Are letters of support from NOAA’s partners required? What about letters of support from NOAA programs?
A: No, letters of support from NOAA partners are not required, although applicants are encouraged to connect with relevant NOAA partnerships and place-based programs in their regions as part of the application development process. Efforts or plans to connect with NOAA partnerships and place-based programs should be described in the letter of intent. To learn more about and connect with NOAA’s network of regional, state, and place-based partners specific to your region, please send us an email at resiliencechallenge@noaa.gov.

Letters of support from NOAA employees are not allowed and will not be included among the application materials considered by merit reviewers. If an applicant requests technical assistance from NOAA or has other involvement with current NOAA programs or staff as part of an application, the applicant should describe the nature and extent of the desired roles and responsibilities within the application. The specific roles and responsibilities for NOAA involvement will be negotiated with successful applicants as part of the award development process.

49. Is there a page limit to the application?
A: There are page limits for various aspects of the application package. Page limits assume an 11- or 12-point font and one-inch margins, and may use single spacing. Applicants should number pages in their full proposal and any appendices.
- PDF 1. Project Summary (three-page limit)
- PDF 2. Project Narrative (25-page limit)
- PDF 3. Budget Narrative (no page limit)
- PDF 4. Supplemental Materials and Appendices (50-page limit recommended)
- PDF 5. Letters of Support and Collaboration (no page limit)

50. How long do applicants have to spend the funds? What is the award period of performance?
A: NOAA anticipates that the period of performance for awards under both tracks will be 36 to 60 months. The maximum period of performance for any award is 60 months. Under extenuating circumstances, no-cost extensions beyond the initial period of performance can be requested and will require approval by NOAA.

51. How will NOAA ensure geographic distribution of selected awards?
A: All proposals will be evaluated and scored to create a ranked list. The selecting official shall consider the geographic area of the highest scoring proposals and may recommend applications for funding out of rank order to ensure geographic distribution nationally. The selecting official may also select high-scoring proposals out of rank order according to other selection factors, which are listed in the Notice of Funding Opportunity.

52. When can successful applicants begin their projects?
A: Awards are anticipated to begin on or after October 1, 2024.
KEY TERMS

53. How is resilience defined?  
A: “Resilience” is the ability of a coastal community to prepare and plan for, absorb impacts of, recover from, and more successfully adapt to weather and climate impacts.

54. What is meant by “transformational resilience”?  
A: “Transformational resilience” refers to the process and associated actions that result in dramatic, positive changes in a coastal community’s ability to prepare and plan for, absorb impacts of, recover from, and more successfully adapt to weather and climate change impacts.

55. What is a resilience hub?  
A: Resilience hubs are defined by the Urban Sustainability Directors Network as community-serving facilities augmented to support residents, coordinate communication, distribute resources, and reduce carbon pollution while enhancing quality of life. Hubs provide an opportunity to effectively work at the nexus of community resilience, emergency management, climate change mitigation, and social equity, while providing opportunities for communities to become more self-determining, socially connected, and successful before, during, and after disruptions. For the purposes of this competition, resilience hub(s) must use pre-existing facilities. Funding cannot be used to construct new buildings, although upgrades to existing facilities are allowable.

56. Do supported resilient hubs have to be at public facilities?  
A: Resilience hubs in existing facilities should be located in places community members trust, find welcoming, and can access conveniently. The facility should be resilient and provide services before, during, and after an event. Funding under this solicitation can be used for operating costs associated with the resilience hub. Regardless of whether the facility is owned by a public or a nonprofit entity, funding recipients must have a lease for the expected life of the proposed resilience hub, and the facility must provide public access for the duration of the lease. Construction of new facilities is not eligible for funding under this competition.

57. How does NOAA determine if a community is marginalized, underserved, or underrepresented?  
A: NOAA relies on applicants to describe specific populations and communities they intend to engage, and how they are marginalized, underserved, or underrepresented. Several national tools and resources are listed in the Notice of Funding Opportunity that applicants can use to identify and assess populations and communities based on U.S. census data. NOAA also values local knowledge of community characteristics that are not reflected in national tools, especially in places where the data may not be complete or available.
58. What is knowledge transfer? And what are some examples of knowledge-transfer activities that regional collaboratives may want to consider?
A: Knowledge transfer is the sharing or disseminating of knowledge from one entity to another for problem solving. In the case of this competition, knowledge transfer may entail organizing, creating, capturing, and sharing knowledge gained by the proposed activities to others to ensure its future use, both inside the region and elsewhere. Appropriate activities for knowledge transfer may include, but are not limited to, the development of informational products, tools, training, or risk communication and outreach. It may also include improving access to data and information related to current and future environmental, economic, and social conditions, and building capacity to integrate this information into sound planning and decision-making.

BUDGET

59. How much funding can each proposal request? Is there a minimum funding amount per proposal?
A: Through Track One, the minimum requested amount is $500,000 and the maximum requested amount is $2 million. The typical Track One award amount is anticipated to be $1 million. Through Track Two, the minimum requested amount is $15 million, and the maximum requested amount is $75 million. The typical Track Two award amount is anticipated to be between $25 and $50 million.

60. Are matching funds required?
A: Pursuant to the Inflation Reduction Act, Public Law: 117-169, Section 40001, there is no non-federal matching requirement for this funding.

61. Is the amount of funding requested a consideration in the evaluation criteria?
A: No, the amount of funding requested is not a consideration in the evaluation criteria. The evaluation criteria does consider the extent to which the estimated costs are realistic and commensurate with the project needs and time frame. In cases where funding may not be available to cover all costs, NOAA may negotiate the funding level for proposed activities selected for funding.

62. Will applicants score higher if their proposal includes a non-federal match, even though it is not required?
A: Non-federal matching resources (cash or in kind) are not required, nor are they part of the evaluation criteria. If non-federal resources are voluntarily committed, they must be tracked and reported throughout the period of performance.
63. Is there a cap on the percentage of overhead for institutions?
A: Yes, for entities with an established indirect cost rate with the federal government, the rate is capped at the amount set forth in the negotiated agreement. If an award recipient does not have a current negotiated (including provisional) rate, the indirect costs are capped at 10 percent of modified total direct costs, unless subject to an exception. Non-federal entities may use this de minimis rate indefinitely, but may choose to negotiate an indirect cost rate at any time. This de minimis rate option is not available to state and local governments and tribes. Applicants with a negotiated indirect cost rate may reduce the indirect cost rate to demonstrate leveraging of resources, which will be evaluated as part of project costs.

TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

64. Are applicants required to use the digital resources included on the program website?
A: The online resources included on the program website are meant to help applicants better understand the program priorities (risk reduction, regional collaboration, equity and inclusion, and enduring capacity). The resources serve as a starting point, but are not meant to be comprehensive. The resources include both documents and tools, and are binned by program priority and listed in alphabetical order. NOAA does not expect applicants to use all resources or cite specific resources within their letter of intent or application.

65. What mechanisms are available for geospatial data and services acquisitions associated with funded proposals?
A: If an applicant plans to acquire geospatial data or services as part of their proposed work, NOAA’s Office for Coastal Management can assist in the efficient acquisition of these services via the NOAA Coastal Geospatial Services Contract. Applicants are strongly encouraged to use this contract because it is an efficient way to acquire these services and can eliminate the need for the applicant to go through their own contracting processes. NOAA’s Office for Coastal Management can provide guidance, cost estimation, development of geospatial specifications, statement of work development, vendor negotiation, acquisition, data access, and dissemination.

If the applicant chooses to use NOAA’s technical assistance and contracting mechanism, the proposal should fully describe the requirement as stated in the Notice of Funding Opportunity and reiterated here:

“Applicants proposing geospatial data acquisitions should include information about the type, timing, and location of the data to be collected within the Project Narrative and estimated cost within the Budget Narrative. Estimated costs should not be included in the standard NOAA budget forms (SF424, SF424-A/B, SF424-C/D) given the proposed acquisition will take place outside of the grant award if the proposal is selected for funding.”

If an applicant chooses to use their own contracting or acquisition mechanisms, they should describe that fully in their proposal and budget narrative, and request that funding in the standard NOAA budget forms (SF424, SF424-A/B, SF424-C/D).
66. **How is technical assistance defined, and what types of technical assistance will be provided by NOAA?**

A: Technical assistance is defined as targeted, customized support to help and empower individuals and organizations to build their knowledge, ability, or capacity to achieve specific goals and outcomes. Examples of technical assistance during the application period include:

- instruction on the eligibility of specific activities, as well as on navigating the application process;
- direction on accessing and interpreting climate data, models, and tools, including geospatial and socioeconomic information;
- guidance on mechanisms for geospatial data and services acquisitions associated with funded proposals;
- connection to subject matter experts and resources within and outside of NOAA;
- introductions and suggestions for regional contacts as potential partners; and
- discussions of technical assistance opportunities to support a funded proposal.

Visit the Climate Resilience Regional Challenge [technical assistance webpage](#) for more information.

**LAND ACQUISITIONS**

67. **For land acquisition projects, which entities can hold title to land (fee simple or easement interest) acquired through infrastructure funds?**

A: Land acquisition projects funded under this competition must provide for non-federal public ownership (fee-simple title or easement interest) by a non-federal public entity or ownership by a private entity whose organizational purpose or goal is conservation, restoration, or preservation of land and natural resources. Non-federal public ownership includes state agencies, federally recognized tribal governments, local governments, or entities eligible for assistance under section 306A(e) of the Coastal Zone Management Act (16 USC 1455a[e]), provided that each has the authority to acquire and manage land for conservation purposes.

68. **Could multiple land acquisitions be included in one proposal?**

A: Yes. NOAA recommends that applicants limit the scope to acquiring no more than three separate parcels within a single proposal. Properties containing multiple parcels covered under a single appraisal, title report, and survey plat could count as one parcel (e.g., a subdivided property with the same landowner).
69. Can an applicant submit a proposal for an acquisition that needs to close ahead of when the award will be issued? For example, if the acquisition closes in June, can the applicant use bridge funding to pay for it, and use Inflation Reduction Act funds (if selected) to pay themselves back?
A: The cost of land acquisition may be reimbursed as a pre-award cost if the acquisition occurred between the selection date (the date that the NOAA selection official recommends a list of projects for funding) and the start date for an approved grant award. Reimbursement of funds is subject to NOAA’s approval of due diligence documents; closing on a property prior to the award start date is at the applicant’s risk.

70. Would acquisitions that include areas that would be developed for public access (e.g. docks, boardwalks, kiosks) be eligible?
A: Yes. To be competitive, land acquisitions and any subsequent development activities must align with the program priorities, including risk reduction. Acquisitions that provide co-benefits are encouraged, including providing passive public access to coastal areas for recreation. Acquisition of land for active recreation, such as sports facilities, water parks, playgrounds, or similar uses, are ineligible, except for at a de minimis scale. Construction and retrofit of public access infrastructure, including the restoration of boardwalks, boat ramps, bridges, bathrooms, or walkways, is eligible for funding under this competition, if consistent with the program priorities.

71. Can funding be used as part of a collection of funding sources to buy a property (i.e., for larger and thus more expensive properties), or must an applicant fully acquire the property without other contributing funds?
A: Yes, applicants can leverage different funding sources to acquire a property. Separate funds will need to be tracked separately and clearly. Applicants must clearly document other funding sources and amounts, and what percentage of the property’s acreage the NOAA funding is allocated to.

72. When acquiring property with federal funds, are purchase prices limited to fair market appraised value? Or are these funds allowed for purchases that exceed such appraisals?
A: NOAA supports acquisitions at fair market appraised value and up to five percent over the appraised value, in limited circumstances, if sufficient written justification and demonstration of an attempt to negotiate at appraised value is provided. Above that five percent, NOAA does not allow funds to be used to purchase over the appraised value. However, if the recipient wants to contribute their own funds to make up the difference between appraised value and purchased price, then that would be allowable, although NOAA still discourages transactions that could distort market values.

73. Can funds be used for conservation easements (i.e., less than fee-simple land acquisition)?
A: Yes, funding can be used for the acquisition of less than fee-simple easement interest in a property if the conservation easement will be held by an eligible public entity or a private entity whose organizational purpose or goal is conservation, restoration, or preservation of land and natural resources.
74. **Would collaboration between several land trusts to acquire critical coastal land be an eligible activity?**
   A: Yes, land acquisitions are eligible. One entity would need to apply on behalf of the others and sub-award funds. For the project to be competitive, it must also address all program priorities.

75. **Would migrating or relocating a town be eligible, including purchase of land and construction of facilities?**
   A: Planning, designing, or preparing for implementation of community-led relocation efforts are eligible. The construction of new facilities is not an eligible activity within this program. The acquisition of land for conservation and/or for the purpose of constructing or restoring natural infrastructure is also eligible. However, acquired land purchased with funds from this program must be held for conservation in perpetuity. Development activities on land acquired with funds from this program, including the construction of facilities, must be consistent with conservation purposes.

76. **If there is Indigenous cultural significance to a land acquisition project, does that satisfy the requirement for co-benefits under Track Two?**
   A: Yes, the protection and/or preservation of culturally significant resources would be considered a co-benefit of a proposed land acquisition.