**STATE OF MAINE**

**Governor’s Office of Policy Innovation and the Future**

**RFA# 202305099**

**Community Resilience Partnership
Service Provider Grant**

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| **RFA Coordinator** | All communication regarding the RFA must be made through the RFA Coordinator identified below.**Name:** Brian Ambrette **Title:** Senior Climate Resilience Coordinator**Contact Information:** brian.ambrette@maine.gov |
| **Informational Webinar** | **Date:** June 1, 2023 **Time:** 1:00 p.m., local time**Location:** virtual webinar (Zoom)Please click the link below to join the webinar: <https://mainestate.zoom.us/j/83358170217?pwd=ZTBJT3N2d1lMK0I2SW0wYW1ZRDdMdz09>  |
| **Submitted Questions**  | All questions must be submitted, by e-mail, to the RFA Coordinator no later than **June 2, 2023** at 11:59 pm and must include **“RFA# 202305099 Questions”** in the subject line of the e-mail. |
| **Application Submission Period** | *Applications must be received by the Division of Procurement Services by:***Initial Submission Deadline: June 23, 2023**, no later than 11:59 p.m., local time. Applications must be submitted electronically to the Division of Procurement Services at proposals@maine.gov and must include **“RFA# 202305099 Application – [Applicant’s Name]”** in the subject line of the e-mail.  |

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**RFA TERMS/ACRONYMS with DEFINITIONS**

The following terms and acronyms, as referenced in the RFA, shall have the meanings indicated below:

| **Term/Acronym** | **Definition** |
| --- | --- |
| **Department** | Governor’s Office of Policy Innovation and the Future |
| **RFA**  | Request for Application |
| **State**  | State of Maine |
| **Service Provider Grant** | Grant to a service provider to provide assistance to a Group of communities in Maine to prepare for and enroll in the Community Resilience Partnership and then to apply for grant funds to implement priority climate and energy projects. |
| **Community** | A municipal government, Tribal Government, plantation, township, or unorganized territory in Maine. |
| **Group** | Two (2) to five (5) communities covered by a single application for grant funding. |
| **Community Action Grant** | Upon enrollment in the Community Resilience Partnership, communities are eligible for Community Action Grants for projects that reduce energy use and costs, transition to clean energy, and make communities in Maine more resilient to climate change.Please see the Community Action Grant RFA# 202305100 for more information. |

**Community Resilience Partnership Service Provider Grant**

**RFA# 202305099**

**Details and Instructions**

## Application Purpose and Background

The Governor’s Office of Policy Innovation and the Future (Department) is seeking applications for Service Provider Grants as defined in this Request for Application (RFA) document. A Service Provider Grant is a grant to an eligible service provider to provide assistance to a Group of two (2) to five (5) communities in Maine to prepare for and enroll in the new [Community Resilience Partnership](https://www.maine.gov/future/climate/community-resilience-partnership) and then apply for grant funds for priority climate and energy projects. This document provides the Application to be used for submittal, instructions for submitting applications, the procedure and criteria by which the awarded Applicants will be selected.

The Community Resilience Partnership provides grants and assistance to municipal governments, Tribal Governments, plantations, townships, or unorganized territories in Maine (“Communities”) for projects that reduce energy use and costs, transition to clean energy and make communities in Maine more resilient to climate change. Communities – those that have already taken significant climate action as well as those considering their early steps – are eligible for Community Action Grants upon completion of [program enrollment](https://www.maine.gov/future/climate/community-resilience-partnership/join) requirements.

Service Provider Grants, provided through this RFA, enable organizations to provide assistance to Communities to prepare for and enroll in the Community Resilience Partnership and then apply for grant funds to undertake priority projects.

## General Provisions

1. From the time this RFA is issued until award notification is made, all contact with the State regarding this RFA must be made through the RFA Coordinator identified on the cover page of this RFA. No other person/State employee is empowered to make binding statements regarding this RFA. Violation of this provision may lead to disqualification from the application process, at the State’s discretion.
2. The Applicant will take careful note that in evaluating its application submitted in response to this RFA, the Department will consider materials provided in the application and internal Departmental information of previous contract history, if any, with the Applicant. The Department also reserves the right to consider other reliable references and publicly available information in evaluating the Applicant’s experience and capabilities.
3. Following announcement of an award decision, all submissions in response to this RFA will be public records, available for public inspection pursuant to the State of Maine Freedom of Access Act (FOAA) ([1 M.R.S. § 401](http://www.mainelegislature.org/legis/statutes/1/title1sec401.html) et seq.).
4. All applicable laws, whether or not herein contained, shall be included by this reference. It shall be the Applicant’s responsibility to determine the applicability and requirements of any such laws and to abide by them.

## Eligibility to Submit Applications

In order to be considered for Grant funding under this application process, Applicants must meet the following requirements:

1. Eligible service provider organizations include regional planning organizations, councils of governments, regional economic development organizations, county governments, non-profit organizations, academic institutions and cooperative extension programs, and for-profit enterprises. Municipalities are also eligible to apply for Service Provider grants and will need to demonstrate experience and capacity (see Section H3, below).
2. Service Provider Applicants must recruit two (2) to five (5) Communities as part of the application for a Service Provider Grant.
3. Communities cannot be enrolled previously in the Partnership.
4. Unorganized territories, townships, and plantations are eligible. Letters of support should come from the board of assessors, UT supervisor, or county manager as appropriate. A letter of support from the Maine Land Use Planning Commission is strongly encouraged.
5. Applications must include a letter of support from each community in the proposed Group. Letters of support should indicate the community’s intention to enroll in the Partnership and its understanding of the enrollment requirements. Letters of support for each community, and other project partners as appropriate, must be included with the application package. Do not send letters separately.

An organization may submit no more than one (1) Service Provider Grant application per grant round. However, an organization would be permitted to participate as a subcontractor on multiple Service Provider Grant applications and is expected to demonstrate through the application the capacity to do so effectively.

A Community may participate in no more than one (1) Service Provider Grant application per grant round.

## Number of Awards

The Department anticipates making multiple awards as a result of this RFA process.

Funding for the Community Resilience Partnership is provided in the State biennial budget. For this round of Service Provider Grants, up to $400,000 has been allocated. The Department may award all, part, or none of this allocation at its discretion.

1. **Contract Terms**

Contracts resulting from this RFA will be for twelve (12) months. Please see Section G under Activities and Requirements below.

The expected start of the grant performance period is on or around August 1, 2023.

1. **Future Grant Rounds and Application Submittals**

Pending availability of funding, the Department anticipates future grant rounds to occur at approximately 8-10 month intervals. A potential schedule of future rounds would be:

Round 4: Winter-Spring 2024

Round 5: Fall-Winter 2024

Applicants may apply only once per grant round but may apply to subsequent grant rounds as desired.

**Community Resilience Partnership Service Provider Grant**

**RFA# 202305099**

**Activities and Requirements**

1. **Grants**

Desired outcomes from the Service Provider Grants are:

1. new enrollment in the Community Resilience Partnership program by each of the recruited communities;
2. a list of priority climate and energy projects for each community and collaborative projects for the Group; and
3. assistance to communities in seeking a Community Action Grant or other funding for those priority projects.

Once the Service Provider Grant funds are awarded, communities within the service provider’s Group will have up to twelve (12) months to complete the enrollment process and submit for enrollment in the Partnership. However, many communities will find it possible to meet the enrollment requirements in six (6) months, in time for the next Community Action Grant deadline.

All funded Service Providers will be required to provide quarterly updates, project deliverables, and a brief project case study that communicates lessons learned.

1. **Application Components**

A complete and scoreable application for funding will include the following components. Specific descriptions of each component are included in the application.

1. **General Information / Service Provider and Group Eligibility**

Applicants must complete the following documents as part of their application:

1. Application Cover Page
2. Debarment, Performance and Non-Collusion Certification
3. General Information / Service Provider and Group Eligibility
4. **Community Group Composition**

Additional application scoring points are available for communities with a population of less than 4,000 people, communities with high and medium social vulnerability, and Tribal Governments.

Applicants should refer to the following sources to complete the Community Group Composition section of the application form:

* Maine Social Vulnerability Index (SVI) [categorization information](https://www.maine.gov/future/sites/maine.gov.future/files/inline-files/SVI%20Communities%20Map%20and%20List_2021-12-01_1.pdf)
* Community Resilience Partnership regions:

Region 1: York, Cumberland, Sagadahoc, Lincoln, Knox, and southern Oxford Counties (including Brownfield, Denmark, Fryeburg, Hiram, Lovell, Porter, Stoneham, Stow, Sweden).

Region 2: Waldo, Hancock, and Washington Counties.

Region 3: Androscoggin, Oxford, Kennebec, Franklin, and Somerset Counties.

Region 4: Piscataquis, Aroostook, and Penobscot Counties.

1. **Capacity, Expertise, and Previous Experience**

Applicants must demonstrate expertise and experience across climate resilience, clean energy, and emissions reduction. Applicants are strongly encouraged to consider partnerships or subcontractors that fill gaps in in-house expertise and experience in these areas.

1. **Scope of Work**

Applicants must provide a scope of work that identifies and describes the tasks necessary to achieve the RFA’s desired outcomes stated in section G above.

Applicants must also describe how they will assist their Group of Communities to enroll in the Community Resilience Partnership by:

1. Adopting a municipal resolution, or for Tribal Governments providing a letter from the Tribal Chief, (sample municipal resolution available [here](https://www.maine.gov/future/climate/community-resilience-partnership/join)) that establishes or designates a committee of community stakeholders or a position in municipal government or Tribal Government to coordinate activities to reduce energy use and costs, invest in renewable energy, and make the community more resilient to climate change;
2. Completing the Community Resilience Self-Evaluation (available [here](https://www.maine.gov/future/climate/community-resilience-partnership/join)) and the List of Community Actions (available [here](https://www.maine.gov/future/climate/community-resilience-partnership/join)) to identify activities that have already been accomplished and potential next steps.
3. Holding a community workshop(s) to: a) review results of the two (2) self-assessments and b) prioritize projects for implementation.

Maine’s climate response must ensure shared benefits across diverse populations of Maine people. The scope of work should include robust community engagement (for example, inclusive planning processes so that diverse community voices are able to participate). Climate change impacts will create the greatest hardships for already marginalized communities, and Maine must identify and promote solutions to help the people most vulnerable to climate impacts.

Applicants must describe how they will assist their Group of municipalities and Tribal Governments to apply for a Community Action Grant or other funding source for priority climate and energy projects.

1. **Budget Proposal & Cost Share**

Applicants must provide a Budget Narrative and Budget Form detailing the cost of the grant and where specific funds will be allocated.

Applicants may request up to $10,000 per community in the Group. Applicants may request up to an additional $2,500 for each community with [high social vulnerability](https://www.maine.gov/future/sites/maine.gov.future/files/inline-files/SVI%20Communities%20Map%20and%20List_2021-12-01_1.pdf) or community with a population of less than 4,000 people.

For all Service Provider Grants, a 15% cost share (“match”) is required of the Applicant. In-kind match is permitted. In-kind match is the value of any real property, equipment, goods, or services contributed to the grant that would have been eligible costs. In-kind match is counted only for the period of the grant award.

Costs incurred prior to the grant award period are not eligible to be included in the budget nor as match.

**Community Resilience Partnership Service Provider Grant**

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**Key Process Events**

## Informational Meeting

The Department will host a virtual Informational Meeting concerning the RFA. See the RFA cover page for the date, time, and web link for the meeting.

The purpose of the Informational Meeting is to answer and/or field questions, clarify for potential Applicants any aspect of the RFA requirements that may be necessary and provide supplemental information to assist potential Applicants in submitting responses to the RFA. Although attendance at the Informational Meeting is not mandatory, it is strongly encouraged that interested Applicants attend.

## Submitting Questions about the Request for Applications

Any questions must be submitted by e-mail and received by the RFA Coordinator identified on the cover page of this RFA, as soon as possible but no later than the date and time specified on the RFA cover page. Submitted Questions must include the subject line: “RFA# 202305099 Questions”. The Department assumes no liability for assuring accurate/complete/on time e-mail transmission and receipt.

Question & Answer Summary: Responses to all questions will be compiled in writing and posted on the Division of Procurement Services [Grant RFPs and RFAs](https://www.maine.gov/dafs/bbm/procurementservices/vendors/grants) website. It is the responsibility of all interested parties to go to this website to obtain a copy of the Question & Answer Summary. Only those answers issued in writing on this website will be considered binding.

## Amendments to the Request for Applications

All amendments (if any) released in regard to this Request for Applications will be posted on the Division of Procurement Services [Grant RFPs and RFAs](https://www.maine.gov/dafs/bbm/procurementservices/vendors/grants) website. It is the responsibility of all interested parties to go to this website to obtain amendments. Only those amendments posted on this website are considered binding.

## Application Submission

* 1. **Applications Due:** Applications must be received no later than 11:59 p.m. local time, on the date listed on the cover page of the RFA. E-mails containing original application submissions, or any additional or revised application files, received after the 11:59 p.m. deadline will be rejected without exception.

If the need arises, the Department may reopen this RFA.

1. **Submission Instructions:** Applications are to be submitted electronically to the State of Maine Division of Procurement services, via e-mail, to proposals@maine.gov by the date and time shown on the cover parge of this RFA.
	1. Only applications received by e-mail will be considered. The Department assumes no liability for assuring accurate/complete e-mail transmission and receipt.
	2. E-mails containing links to file sharing sites or online file repositories will not be accepted as submissions. Only e-mail applications that have the actual requested files attached will be accepted.
	3. Encrypted e-mails received which require opening attachments and logging into a proprietary system will not be accepted as submissions. Please check with your organizations Information Technology team to ensure your security settings will not encrypt your proposal submission.
	4. File size limits are 25MB per e-mail. Applicants may submit files across multiple e-mails, as necessary, due to file size concerns. All e-mails and files must be received by the due date and time listed above.
	5. Applicants are to insert the following into the subject line of their e-mail submission: “**RFA# 202305099 Application – [Applicant’s Name]**”.
	6. Applications are to be submitted as a single, typed, PDF or Word file and contain the completed application form (found on p.14) and all relevant attachments.

**Community Resilience Partnership Service Provider Grant**

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**Application Evaluation and Selection**

## Scoring Weights and Process

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| **Scoring Criteria** | **Total Points Available** |
| **Criteria 1: General Information/Service Provider and Group Eligibility**  | Pass/Fail |
| **Criteria 2: Community Group Composition*** 2 points for each high SVI or small (less than 4,000) population community or Tribal Government.
* 1 point for each medium SVI or medium (between 4,000 and 10,000) population community.
 | 10 points |
| **Criteria 3: Capacity, Expertise, and Previous Experience** | 35 points |
| **Criteria 4: Scope of Work** | 35 points |
| **Criteria 5: Budget Proposal** | 20 points |
| **Total Points** | **100 points** |

An evaluation team, composed of qualified reviewers, will judge the merits of the applications received in accordance with the criteria defined in the RFA.

For applications that demonstrate meeting the eligibility requirements in Criteria 1, the evaluation team will use a consensus approach to evaluate and score the remaining Criteria sections shown above. Members of the evaluation team will not score those sections individually but, instead, will arrive at a consensus as to assignment of points for each of those sections.

1. **Selection and Award**
	1. The final decision regarding the award of the contract will be made by representatives of the Department subject to approval by the State Procurement Review Committee.
	2. Notification of conditional award selection or non-selection will be made in writing by the Department.
	3. Issuance of the RFA in no way constitutes a commitment by the State of Maine to award a contract, to pay costs incurred in the preparation of a response to the RFP, or to pay costs incurred in procuring or contracting for services, supplies, physical space, personnel or any other costs incurred by the Bidder.
	4. The Department reserves the right to reject any and all applications or to make multiple awards.
2. **Appeal of Contract Awards**

Any person aggrieved by the award decision that results from the RFA may appeal the decision to the Director of the Bureau of General Services in the manner prescribed in [5 M.R.S.A. § 1825-E](http://www.mainelegislature.org/legis/statutes/5/title5sec1825-E.html) and [18-554 Code of Maine Rules Chapter 120](https://www.maine.gov/dafs/bbm/procurementservices/policies-procedures/chapter-120).  The appeal must be in writing and filed with the Director of the Bureau of General Services, 9 State House Station, Augusta, Maine, 04333-0009 within 15 calendar days of receipt of notification of conditional contract award.

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**Application**

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Applicants must use the embedded application document to complete their application. The application document can be accessed by double clicking on the icon above.