**STATE OF MAINE REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS**

**RFA SUBMITTED QUESTIONS & ANSWERS SUMMARY**

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| **RFP NUMBER AND TITLE:** | **RFA #202207107 Community Action Grant** |
| **RFP ISSUED BY:** | Governor’s Office of Policy Innovation and the Future |
| **SUBMITTED QUESTIONS DUE DATE:** | August 11, 2022, no later than 11:59 p.m., local time |
| **QUESTION & ANSWER SUMMARY ISSUED:** | August 16, 2022 |
| **PROPOSAL DUE DATE:** | September 20, 2022, no later than 11:59 p.m., local time |
| **PROPOSALS DUE TO:** | Proposals@maine.gov |

**The following includes questions received by email as well as questions asked and responses given verbally during the RFA informational webinar on August 3rd, 2022. Additionally, several relevant questions have been re-posted here from the Service Provider Grant webinar on July 12th, 2022.**

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|  | **RFP Section & Page Number** | **Question** |
| Sec C-1, p. 5 | Could you clarify that for a community to apply for a Community Action Grant that they must have a municipal resolution? I think I misinterpreted that they could alternatively supply a letter of support from their select board or from the municipality. |
| **Answer** |
| If the community is an incorporated municipality, an enacted resolution must be part of the submitted enrollment materials. Tribal Governments are required to submit a letter of commitment from the tribal chief with the enrollment materials. Only if the community is unincorporated or a plantation or a township, there are alternatives to a resolution provided in the RFA.  |

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|  | **RFP Section & Page Number** | **Question** |
| Sec. C, p. 5  | If we apply for a future round, would the town council in place at that time have to adopt a new resolution for our enrollment status to remain valid?  |
| **Answer** |
| Once we have a community’s enacted resolution on file, and as long as that resolution hasn’t been repealed it is still valid for the purposes of the Community Resilience Partnership. |

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|  | **RFP Section & Page Number** | **Question** |
| Sec C-1, p. 5 | Do the enrollment steps need to be taken in a certain order? |
| **Answer** |
| While we have suggested an order to the steps, the municipal resolution may be passed at any time during the enrollment process. The two self-assessments, in most cases, should be completed prior, or as part of, to the community workshop(s) so that the workshop participants can provide feedback on the self-assessment results and suggestions for prioritizing future activities. |

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|  | **RFP Section & Page Number** | **Question** |
| Sec C-1, p. 5 | Please say more about the second self-assessment–the List of Community Actions. Is this the list from Maine’s climate action plan? |
| **Answer** |
| The List of Community Actions is aligned with the state’s climate action plan. It is not a list directly from the plan, although it looks similar to activities that the state is doing. We have tried to translate some of the state’s activities to an appropriate activity for communities to consider.  |

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|  | **RFP Section & Page Number** | **Question** |
| Sec C-1, p. 5 | What is the expectation for the List of Community Actions? Is it that the community review that list of actions and identify which ones apply to the grant application that we’re submitting?  |
| **Answer** |
| The community should go through the List of Community Actions and check off activities that have been completed. You may want to indicate activities that are in progress or might be considered for the future. For the information that you submit with your enrollment package, we are most interested in what has already been completed. During the community workshop(s), participants can provide feedback on the self-assessment results and suggest priorities for future activities. |

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|  | **RFP Section & Page Number** | **Question** |
| Sec C-1, p. 5 | If we have completed our climate action plan at the community level, would a list of those actions that came out of that community action plan satisfy the self-assessment requirements? |
| **Answer** |
| Completing the two self-assessments is required enrollment activity and, specifically, to use the List of Community Actions spreadsheet. If the community has completed a climate action plan, you it may check off that item on the List of Community Actions and use the plan to inform responses to the two self-assessments. Communities are encouraged, if applicable, to use preexisting plans to help form their list of priority actions. |

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|  | **RFP Section & Page Number** | **Question** |
| Sec C-1, p. 5 | Does the Community Resilience Self-evaluation need to be updated for those communities that are looking for second round grants? |
| **Answer** |
| The two self-assessments do not need to be updated for each grant round or application. Both self-assessments will need to be updated once every two years in order for the community to stay active in the Partnership.  |

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|  | **RFP Section & Page Number** | **Question** |
| Sec C-1, p. 5 | If a community has already joined a service provider group, does it need to submit a separate partnership application? |
| **Answer** |
| If a community has joined a service provider group, meaning it is working with a service provider organization under a Service Provider Grant to help that community enroll in the Partnership, then that service provider will help the community submit the enrollment materials. The community will then need to apply for a Community Action Grant in order to receive funding for a project, and the service provider should be providing assistance, if needed, for applying and writing the Community Action Grant application.  |

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|  | **RFP Section & Page Number** | **Question** |
| Sec. D, p. 5 | How long do you expect the program to run? |
| **Answer** |
| The funding for this program is in the state budget. We have funding allocated for the grant round this fall and a follow-up round in the winter/spring of 2023. Funding for grant rounds beyond next spring will come from the state’s subsequent biennial budgets.  |

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|  | **RFP Section & Page Number** | **Question** |
| Sec. G, p. 8 | Follow-up requirements in this grant process are the quarterly reports and the formal case study, and I think that’s it, right? And then every two years the municipality must fill out a new self-assessment if they want to stay enrolled? |
| **Answer** |
| That is correct. |

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|  | **RFP Section & Page Number** | **Question** |
| Sec. G, p. 8 | Is there a reporting template available to view online?  |
| **Answer** |
| We do not post the reporting template online. It will be attached to the draft contract that we send to the community if the grant award is made. You have an opportunity to review it at that point. The template asks for each quarter how much of the funding has been expended to date, and how much progress are you making towards the deliverables cited in your proposal. A second question asks the community to describe any circumstances that may be either accelerating or slowing progress toward the project outcomes.  |

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|  | **RFP Section & Page Number** | **Question** |
| Sec. G, p. 8 | Is there any help available for towns post-grant submittal to keep abreast of reporting progress?  |
| **Answer** |
| There is help available for communities after submitting a grant application. Once enrolled in the Partnership, a community has access to a Regional Coordinator. A list of the Regional Coordinators is available on the Community Resilience Partnership website.The Regional Coordinators are intended to help enrolled communities think about future projects, including helping research grant opportunities and develop project concepts. We have tried to keep the reporting requirements manageable for the Community Action Grant. We provide a template for reporting, and there are probably only about two questions that must be answered each quarter. If a community needs assistance with reporting for the Community Action Grant, they should contact Brian Ambrette at GOPIF.  |

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|  | **RFP Section & Page Number** | **Question** |
| Sec. G, p. 8 | The Town Manager here asked if there are any commitments or requirements that the Town would be making in the grant application that would affect our bond compliance. Are there any hidden requirements like a certain percentage of the money being spent in minority-owned firms or any kind of specific requirements like that we would want to consider relative to our bond compliance rules? |
| **Answer** |
| We have tried to be as transparent as possible in the RFA documents and the informational webinar. During the webinar we discussed the quarterly reporting and a final case study. Those requirements will be discussed in more detail in the contracting document once the grant has been conditionally awarded.Maine’s prevailing wage rates will apply to these grants 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. |

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|  | **RFP Section & Page Number** | **Question** |
| Sec. H-2, p. 8 | Talk about social vulnerability a bit, please. |
| **Answer** |
| There is a link on the Community Resilience Partnership website to the Maine Social Vulnerability Index (SVI). The index is a way of categorizing communities across the state that looks at socioeconomic and demographic information and tries to assess how vulnerable or how difficult it might be for a community to recover from a climate change or a natural disaster impact. It divides the state into three categories–high, medium, low–and we use that Social Vulnerability Index to a) understand how we’re delivering funds to different types of communities across the state, and b) award points in the application scoring process for medium and high vulnerability communities. The document on the website lists out all of Maine’s communities, and which SVI category they fall into -- high, medium or low.  |

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|  | **RFP Section & Page Number** | **Question** |
| Sec. H-4, p. 8 | Could you share some case examples of preferred approaches to community engagement and equity considerations for different types of projects?  |
| **Answer** |
| We do not have those case studies yet. We anticipate receiving case studies from the first round’s grantees in another six to eight months as those grants are wrapped up and produce final case studies. This is a new program so stay tuned for case studies from our current grantees. |

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|  | **RFP Section & Page Number** | **Question** |
| Sec. H-5, p. 9 | Is the budget worksheet provided in the application form only for applicants pursuing the cost-share option? |
| **Answer** |
| The budget worksheet is for all applicants, regardless of whether or not there is a cost share. If the cost share does not apply to your application, you may leave the “Other Funds” column blank. |

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|  | **RFP Section & Page Number** | **Question** |
| Miscellaneous | Do you have an example of how a new Comprehensive Plan Committee can acquire new resources to develop a Climate Action Plan chapter? |
| **Answer** |
| The Community Resilience Partnership can provide grants to support climate planning as part of a community’s comprehensive planning. The Municipal Planning Assistance Program at the Department of Agriculture, Forestry, and Conservation provides technical assistance and information to support comprehensive planning. |

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|  | **RFP Section & Page Number** | **Question** |
| Miscellaneous | I saw on the Coastal Community Grant website that it said they are going to release those to time with this round of grants to potentially allow those two to work together, and I wondered if you had any more information about that. |
| **Answer** |
| The current plan from the Department of Agriculture, Conservation, and Forestry regarding the Coastal Community Grant is to release the information about that program around the time the awards are being made for the Community Action Grant. The reason being that because Community Action Grant funds come from the state budget, they would be eligible as matching funds for a community’s application to the Coastal Communities Grant. The two programs are staggered a little bit so that communities can potentially take advantage of the matching opportunities.  |

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|  | **RFP Section & Page Number** | **Question** |
| Sec. G, p. 7 | [*Repeated from the Service Provider Grant webinar on July 12*] Oxford County owns the airport, but it’s based in Oxford, Maine. Could we team up with Oxford to possibly get some funding? |
| **Answer** |
| That would be addressed in the Community Action Grant webinar on August 3rd. Counties are not eligible for funding from the Community Action Grant. There could be an opportunity for the county to partner with an enrolled town in which the property is located.  |

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|  | **RFP Section & Page Number** | **Question** |
| Sec. D, p. 5Sec. M, p. 12 | [*Repeated from the Service Provider Grant webinar on July 12*] For the Community Action Grants, you mentioned there are two liberalizations this grant round, one is for the two to five communities, now the cap is $125,000, which is great news, and you mentioned one other thing I didn’t catch it. |
| **Answer** |
| We’ll cover this in more detail in a couple weeks, but the changes for the Community Action Grant, that the cap for collaborative grants for the Community Action Grant have been lifted to $125,000, and like the Service Provider Grant, we’ve added additional scoring points for medium and high SVI communities. |