



# 2024 Ocean State Climate Adaptation and Resilience (OSCAR) Program Information Session

Sue Kiernan, Administrator, RI DEM Office of Water Resources

Bruce Lofgren, RI CRMC

Anthony Hebert, RI Infrastructure Bank

April 15, 2024

# Welcome to the Information Session on 2024 OSCAR Program Request for Proposals (RFP)

The recorded workshop will be posted on the DEM OSCAR Program webpage:

<https://dem.ri.gov/environmental-protection-bureau/water-resources/financial-assistance/oscar-fund-grants>

- Background
- Eligible Organizations & Capacity Requirements
- Eligible Projects
- Eligible Costs
- Project Budget & Schedule Guidance
- How to Apply, Key Dates, & Evaluation Criteria
- Questions & Answers: Please submit Questions via the Zoom Q&A module

# Ocean State Climate Adaptation and Resilience (OSCAR) Fund



- Background: **New** financial assistance program created by legislation adopted in 2021. (RIGL § 46-23.3-2)
- **Jointly administered by CRMC, DEM and RIIB.** Coordinated rulemaking by all three agencies completed in 2023.
- Purpose: To provide financial assistance in the form of grants for projects on public lands that **protect or enhance coastal or riverine habitats to address climate change impacts.** Climate change impacts may include sea level rise, flooding/erosion from more intense storms, etc.
- \$4 million in state funding was allocated to the OSCAR program by the legislature.

# Ocean State Climate Adaptation and Resilience (OSCAR) Fund

Grants will be awarded on a competitive basis pursuant to:

- the [Request for Proposals](#) issued on March 28, 2024 and
- the [Rules and Regulations governing the OSCAR Fund](#)
- <https://rules.sos.ri.gov/regulations/part/830-10-35-1>

Grants will be reviewed by an Advisory Committee with representation from DEM, CRMC, RI State Planning Council (DOA) and RI Emergency Management Agency.

DEM and CRMC will submit a list of ranked approved projects to RIIB. RIIB will execute grant agreements as funding allows.

# Eligible Applicants Must Own or Control Public Land

Any entity which **owns or controls public land** including state and municipal governments, quasi-public agencies. (Federal agencies are ineligible)

Also includes privately held lands dedicated to public use including access to shorelines and riverbanks. The dedication of public use is typically documented through an easement associated with the parcel of land.



# Eligible Projects – Protect or enhance coastal or riverine habitats to address climate change impacts

## Project Requirements:

- \* Be located on public lands (as defined)
- \* Have a meaningful nexus to climate adaptation and resilience
- \* Demonstrate ecological coastal or riverine habitat benefits

*OR*

Demonstrate maintenance and preservation of public access

*OR*

Repairing existing shoreline protection structure in public parks.





# Examples of Eligible Projects

- Reduce vulnerability of low-lying infrastructure on public lands through its removal/relocation with habitat co-benefits.
- Restoration of river and stream floodplains, including streambank stabilization.
- Revegetation including riparian and coastal buffers or wetlands.
- Adaptation of existing public access ways to preserve access under changing climate conditions.
- Redesign/replacement of culverts in a manner that benefits passage for aquatic life.



# Is my project eligible?

There are specific limitations on project eligibilities:

- Projects cannot involve destruction of coastal, estuarine or riverine habitats.
- Projects that fulfill liability for an applicable enforcement action are **ineligible**.
- Projects involving the elevation, repair or replacement or new infrastructure in its existing location experiencing climate change impacts is **ineligible** *except for the redesign, resizing and replacement of culverts and bridge spans at wetland crossings.*
- Construction of roads and bridges is **ineligible** with narrow exception above.
- Construction of new or repairing existing shoreline protection structures, including seawalls, bulkheads, floodwalls, jetties, breakwaters, concrete/stone walls is **ineligible**, **except for repair of such structures in public parks.**



# Project Narrative

Follow format in Attachment B:

## Purpose of the project:

Explain how the project will address climate change impacts. Include information on site location & conditions, including habitat type.

## Project Approach:

Provide concise overview of project.

Typical Project Phases - be clear on status of project planning to date

- Planning, Design – Need a specific project concept
- Final Design and Permitting
- Implementation/Construction

Technical basis for approach – be specific on climate change assumptions as appropriate (design storm sizes etc.)

Consistency with Planning Documents

Measurement of success & expected duration of the project results

# Project Narrative

## Project Tasks:

- Procurement of Services (Competitive bidding /MBE requirements apply)
- Community Engagement/Outreach
- Project Management/Monitoring
- Project Evaluation/Report Writing

## Public Benefits: Describe the benefits expected to result from the project:

- Creation/replacement of habitat losses occurring due to climate change.
- Improve fish and wildlife habitat, including rare and threatened species.
- Improve water quality and enhance beneficial uses of waters being improved.
- Enhance, restore or preserve public access.
- Utilize nature –based solutions.
- Other public benefits including enhanced quality of life.

# Project Narrative

## Environmental Justice:

Yes/No – Identify if you are in a designated EJ area or disadvantaged community. Include the source (mapping tool, etc.) for your designation.

## Project Management Team:

- Roles and responsibilities
- Approach to collaboration/coordination with partners
- Prior experience, in particular with similar-sized projects

## Location Map:

Can be inserted into the narrative or submitted as a separate attachment.

# Project Budget - What costs are allowable?

Eligible expenses may include the costs of:

- Personnel (salary and fringe)\*
- Project Supplies (<\$5,000) and Project Equipment (> \$5,000)
- Construction (costs associated with construction of BMPs including permit fees)
- Contractual services directly related to project implementation (consultants, engineering and design)
- Land acquisition costs (subject to additional assessment & negotiation)
- Indirect expenses – subject to approval

\*With respect to personnel, OSCAR grants will generally not subsidize salaries of existing governmental staff without special justification. Municipal staffing expenses for a project can be allocated as in-kind match.

# Project costs – which costs are NOT allowed?



Examples projects types/costs generally NOT allowed are those focused *solely*\* on:

- Technical assistance
- Education/training
- Research/Experimental technologies
- Technology transfer
- Community planning
- Water quality monitoring
- Routine maintenance activities; e.g. stormwater infrastructure maintenance, maintenance dredging.

*\*Monitoring, education and training activities may be eligible as **tasks** within projects provided they are directly associated with implementing an OSCAR grant project consistent with the purpose listed in Section 1 of the RFP.*



# Project Schedule

The grant awards will be authorized via RIBB grant agreements for a limited period of time.

Projects ready to proceed that will be completed within a **12-24 month** period from execution of the grant agreement will be favored.

With adequate supporting justification, RIBB may consider three-year project time periods for larger, more complex projects.

Projects not promptly initiated or that fall substantially behind schedule may have their grant awards rescinded or reduced.



# Project Budget: How Much Can I Request?

- There are no single maximum grant limits. Keep in mind the total available is about \$4 million.
- Grant awards will be managed on a reimbursable basis as coordinated by RIIB.
- DEM and CRMC will assist RIIB with project oversight.
- RIIB grant agreements will include periodic progress reporting as well as a final report.

# What about match?

**OSCAR grants do not have required match.**

However, match is an indicator of organization's commitment to a project and is considered during project evaluation and ranking. At minimum, in-kind match expenses will be expected to be documented by the grantee as negotiated in a grant agreement.

Match may include:

1. Cash
2. The value of non-cash, in-kind contributions (i.e. value of equipment donated for the project)
3. Value of goods and services directly contributed to the project
4. Volunteer services for project activities and travel costs may be valued as match consistent with rates ordinarily paid by employers for similar work (currently \$31.96 per hour)

# How to Apply: Review RFP Instructions

The application package will consist of four required components & optional additional attachments. Fillable forms are available.

## Required:

- Application Form with Signature (RFP Attachment A)
- Proposal Narrative
- Budget Form ( RFP Attachment C)
- Map depicting project location (Included in narrative or as an attachment)

# How to Apply: Review RFP Instructions

Application Due Date: Friday May 17, 2024 no later than 5:00 p.m.

Applications should be submitted by email to:

[DEM.WaterResources@dem.ri.gov](mailto:DEM.WaterResources@dem.ri.gov)

Please include OSCAR Proposal in the subject line

Grant decisions tentatively expected in June 2024.



# Project Evaluation Criteria

Project Approach	30 points
Climate Impact	20 points
Project Public Benefits	30 points
Environmental Justice	10 points
Applicant Capabilities	<u>20 points</u>
Total	110 points



[This Photo](#) by Unknown Author is licensed under [CC BY-NC](#)

# What Makes a Good Proposal?

- Project is specific and aligns closely with the OSCAR Fund purposes.
- Project is well thought-out with clear roles described for the grantee and any partner organizations.
- Grant applicant has adequate authority to carry out the project.
- Project narrative is concise, clear, and easy to understand.
- Budget is realistic.
- Estimated schedule indicates applicant is ready to proceed.

# Questions ?

OSCAR Program contacts for RFP questions:

Sue Kiernan, Administrator, RIDEM Office of Water Resources

[Sue.Kiernan@dem.ri.gov](mailto:Sue.Kiernan@dem.ri.gov)

401-537-4246

OR

Kimberly Koriath, Chief Resilience Officer

[Kimberly.Koriath@dem.ri.gov](mailto:Kimberly.Koriath@dem.ri.gov)

401-633-4578

