
RI DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT OFFICE OF WATER RESOURCES



Announcement of Request for Proposals (RFP)

NOVEMBER 25, 2019

Wastewater Treatment Facility Resilience Fund (WWTFRF)

All proposals due January 30, 2020

The Rhode Island Department of Environmental Management (RIDEM) is pleased to announce the availability of grants to assist in the implementation of projects that enhance the climate resilience of government-owned wastewater treatment facilities in Rhode Island. Specifically, through this Request for Proposals (RFP), RIDEM is seeking grant proposals for projects that will harden, relocate, repair/replace, and/or provide redundancy to government-owned wastewater treatment facilities (and/or critical equipment/components within) to protect these facilities from hazards/impacts related to climate change. State funding to support this RFP will be available from proceeds of state environmental bond referendums approved by voters in 2018 (Green Economy and Clean Water Bond). Grants will be awarded on a competitive basis pursuant to this RFP.

1. Purpose of Available Grants & Grant Categories

Approximately \$5,000,000 in WWTFRF grant funds is expected to be available. The funds will provide grants to municipal and quasi-state entities for the protection of wastewater collection and treatment infrastructure from natural hazards (floods, sea-level rise, etc.) related to climate change.

As enumerated in various reports and in the 2017 RIDEM study “Implications of Climate Change for RI Wastewater Collection & Treatment Infrastructure” (or “Study”), Rhode Island is already experiencing increased natural hazards related to climate change. The Study also identified site-specific risks to Rhode Island's nineteen wastewater treatment works and associated collection systems—which by intent and design are located in low-lying areas. RIDEM has subsequently begun requiring owners of wastewater infrastructure to both further evaluate risks and propose strategies and projected costs for protecting these systems. While state and local entities have made progress to date to protect such infrastructure, investments in resilience will help meet a growing need. These investments will thus help protect public health and the economy, which relies on clean water for industries, such as tourism and shellfishing. Because of its vital importance, wastewater infrastructure is considered a "lifeline" sector in the RI Emergency Management Agency's Critical Infrastructure/Key Resources program

Based on feedback from the wastewater sector, WWTFRF grants will be awarded from either of the two sub-funds provided below:

Wastewater Treatment Facility Resilience Fund – Small Projects Sub-fund

This Sub-Fund shall provide fifty percent (50%) matching grant funds up to \$250,000 for projects estimated to be \$500,000 or less. Matching funds shall come from applicant's own financial resources, force account work, or financing provided by the RI Infrastructure Bank.

Wastewater Treatment Facility Resilience Fund – Large Projects Sub-fund

This Sub-Fund shall provide fifty percent (50%) matching grant funds up to \$1,250,000 for projects estimated to be greater than \$500,000. Matching funds will come from the RI Clean Water State Revolving Fund (CWSRF) program and the applicant/project must comply with all CWSRF rules. Matching funds may also come from other financing programs administered by the RI Infrastructure Bank.

Proposed project for either sub-fund should address at least one the four following categories:

- a. Hardening—Includes, but not limited to, protection from the effects of flooding or other natural hazards by constructing walls, dikes, etc.; or waterproofing equipment by installing submersible pumps, water resistant electrical enclosures, general waterproofing; or installing floodproof doors/windows; or temporary flood barriers; or other projects that would offer protection from hazards related to climate change.
- b. Relocating—Includes, but not limited to, reducing the risk of flooding or other natural hazards by elevating equipment or relocating systems or equipment to higher points on or off site.
- c. Repairability/Replaceability—Includes, but not limited to, improving operational resilience through the construction of new or physically enhancing existing systems for faster replaceability or repair in the event of damage caused by flooding or other natural hazards.
- d. Redundancy—Includes, but not limited to, maintaining the ability to maintain forward flow and treatment through the construction of multiple or backup systems.

Proposed projects submitted for funding should be consistent with:

- Approved local hazard mitigation plans or updated hazard mitigation plans that have been formally submitted to the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) for review and approval;
- RIDEM's "Guidance for the Consideration of Climate Change Impacts in the Planning and Design of Municipal Wastewater Collection and Treatment Infrastructure;" and/or
- TR-16 Guides for the Design of Wastewater Treatment Works (published by the New England Interstate Water Pollution Control Commission.)

2. Applicant Eligibility – Who can apply?

The authorized representative of any publicly owned wastewater treatment facility or wastewater collection system is eligible to apply for a WWTFRF grant. In general, project applicants should be the entity that legally controls the affected project area. Private consultants are not eligible to receive grant awards directly on behalf of other governmental entities.

Applicants must demonstrate administrative capacity to manage their grant funds and comply with applicable state and, if applicable, federal fiscal requirements including accounting, record-keeping, procurement and reporting procedures. All grants are reimbursement based, thus the grantees must incur the cost and submit documentation to RIDEM for reimbursement. Applicants must also

demonstrate ability to manage their project, document match and report on progress of deliverables specified in a grant agreement.

Compliance Actions Pertaining to Grant Applicants

It is RIDEM's policy that financial assistance shall neither directly or indirectly benefit parties whose willful action or inaction has resulted in damage to the environment. At the Director's discretion, RIDEM may restrict, delay or limit funding due to the occurrence of criminal, civil enforcement actions or compliance matters. To be eligible for grants, applicants must disclose any existing violations and compliance actions related to their proposal. This includes issuance of any Notice of Intent to enforce.

3. Project Eligibility - What types of projects are eligible?

RIDEM is seeking proposals from applicants that are ready to commit to initiating and managing their projects in a timely manner. The category of grant being sought will determine what types of activities or projects that are eligible. In general, eligible projects fall into categories that either:

- Serve to protect infrastructure from hazards (Hardening and/or Relocation);
- Serve to better allow normal plant operations in the event that hazards impact the facility (Redundancy);
- Or that provide a quicker return to operations if infrastructure sustains damage from climate/natural hazards (Repairability/Replaceability.)

See Table 2 for guidance regarding specific project types, which are outlined below:

Hardening: Often the most common approaches to infrastructure protection, hardening, or "hardening in place," refers to enhancements made to existing equipment or physical systems that will better protect said equipment/physical systems from natural hazards such as flooding, wind (and associated aerial debris), power outages, storm surge, lightning, etc. Such enhancements are designed and constructed to either strengthen structures from the forces of floods, waves, and wind, etc., or to outright prevent such impacts.

Relocating: Often a more costly method of protecting infrastructure from natural hazard impacts, relocation involves either the physical relocation of components (or entire physical systems) to either a new geographical location ("horizontal relocation") or the in-place elevation of components or systems to higher elevations ("vertical relocations). The RIDEM will consider costs of both horizontal or vertical relocations that involve physical construction. Costs associated with the purchasing of land will not be considered for this or any other category but may be credited as a source of match funds.

Redundancy: This category of project will propose enhancements to physical systems or components that will allow forward flow and some level of wastewater treatment in the event of the onset of natural hazards that threaten (locally or system-wide) wastewater collection and treatment infrastructure. RIDEM expects that proposed enhancements will include, but not be limited to, upgrades or new installations that will achieve more resilient/available standby power, chemical feed, and bypass pumping. In accord with TR-16 and best management practices, redundancies that prioritize collection system containment and forward flow, primary treatment, and disinfection will be ranked higher than other projects, although the RIDEM encourages redundancies within all elements of a wastewater treatment system.

Repairability/Replaceability: In the event that natural hazards do result in some level of damage to

wastewater collection or treatment infrastructure, this category will include proposed projects that will improve a system's ability to return to normal operations.

Table 2. Eligible Projects related to Grant Funding Source

Grant Type	Primary Project Objective	Example Projects	Restrictions
Hardening	Protection from the effects of flooding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Constructing walls, dikes, berms, or other protective structures, etc. • Waterproofing equipment by installing submersible pumps, water resistant electrical enclosures, general waterproofing, etc. • Installing floodproof doors/windows or temporary flood barriers. 	
Relocating	Reducing the risk of flooding/hazards through new construction that physically relocates a treatment facility, collection system component(s), or portions thereof	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Elevating equipment in place • Relocating systems or equipment to higher points on or off site. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Purchase of land.
Redundancy	Ensuring the ability to maintain forward flow and treatment through the construction of multiple or backup systems.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The installation of multiple standby power units, portable or otherwise, and/or necessary connectivity components for improved, faster initiation of electrical power. • Installation of axillary fuel and/or chemical storage and feed systems, especially for disinfection. • The purchase of temporary bypass pumps with assurances of proper long-term availability through scheduled testing/use and suitable storage. 	
Repairability/ Replaceability	Improving operational resilience through the construction of new or physically enhancing existing systems for faster replaceability or repair in the event of flooding or other damage.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The permanent installation of sewer-line bypass pumping connections • Updating SCADA control systems for faster and/or more precise system controls. • Updating equipment with newer, more readily available replacement components. • The copying and offsite storage/backup of critical physical or electronic records, such as sewer system maps. 	

RIDEM welcomes the opportunity to help applicants determine whether a project would be eligible for a grant, and to provide guidance in preparing a project proposal. For assistance, contact the individual listed on page 7.

4. Eligible Grant Expenses – What costs are allowable?

Eligible expenses may include the costs of project-specific personnel salary and fringe, travel, supplies, construction, and contractual services. With respect to personnel, RIDEM generally will not subsidize salaries of existing governmental staff, but rather encourages such expenses to be allocated as match. Restrictions on the use of funds are noted in Table 2.

Projects *solely* focused on activities such as technical assistance, education, training, technology transfer, community planning and water quality monitoring will *not* be considered eligible. Research, water quality assessment, and routine maintenance of existing structures are also not eligible activities.

RIDEM and the State of Rhode Island take no responsibility for project work done outside the term or scope of a valid grant agreement or prior to full approval of an agreement. Applicants should NOT anticipate any funding for work that is done before approval of a grant agreement. Agreements are not valid until the Rhode Island Department of Administration issues the appropriate encumbrance (i.e., purchase order or PO release). All agreements must be signed and dated by an authorized agent of the sponsor and DEM.

5. Project Time Periods

The grant awards will be authorized via grant agreements for a limited period of time. Due to greater emphasis being placed on the timeliness of expenditures, projects that will be completed within a **one to two-year time period** will be favored. With adequate supporting justification DEM will consider three-year project time periods for larger, more complex projects. Projects not promptly initiated or that fall substantially behind schedule once underway may have their grant awards rescinded or reduced. DEM encourages applicants to take into consideration and to plan adequate time for procurement and obtaining permits or other approvals in their project schedule.

6. Match Requirements

“Match” refers to funds or services used to conduct a project that are not borne by grant funds. All project match must: (1) relate directly to the project for which the match is being applied; (2) be reasonably valued; and (3) be supported by documentation. Match is an indicator of local commitment to a project and is considered in proposal eligibility and ranking.

Match may include: (1) cash; (2) the value of noncash, in-kind contributions (e.g., value of equipment donated for use the project); or (3) the value of goods and services directly contributed to the project. Examples of actions that might be used as eligible match include the following:

- Cost or value-per-hour rate multiplied by the number of hours performing work associated with the project proposal tasks, such as labor to install resiliency measure(s), bid or subcontract development, development designs of resiliency measure(s) and permit reviews, including attending meetings pertaining to such, conducting public meetings or similar work relating to the project but not directly funded by the grant;
- Cost of materials, supplies or equipment rentals used for the project; and
- Cost of construction of approved resiliency measure(s) (including labor, equipment and materials).

WWTFRF grants are provided in 50% to 50% grant to match ratio, per the specifications of each sub-fund. The applicant must provide match in an amount equal to or exceeding the requested grant amount.

7. Preparing the Proposal for Final Approval

For projects that are selected, DEM may request the applicant to modify project proposals based on comments received during project evaluations and the selection process. The applicant must submit the revised project proposal/scope of work to the DEM prior to final approval. DEM will conduct a final review of the proposal in coordination with appropriate agencies and, if satisfied that all review comments have been adequately addressed, the final proposal or scope of work will become the basis for the grant agreement that will be executed to formalize the grant award.

8. Public Workshops **January 9, 2020 10:00 a. m. – Noon** **January 13, 2020 2:00 p.m. – 4:00 p.m.**

Two public workshops to review the RFP process and clarify guidance for potential grant applicants have been scheduled as follows:

Date: **January 9, 2020**
Time: 10:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.
Location: Town of Bristol Council Chambers
Burnside Building, Second Floor, Court Street, Bristol

Date: **January 13, 2020**
Time: 2:00 p.m. – 4:00 p.m.
Location: RIDEM Headquarters, Room 300
235 Promenade Street, Providence

9. Updated RFP Information

During the application period, as the need arises, DEM may post additional information concerning this RFP and funding opportunity on its website. This may include clarification of commonly asked questions. Potential applicants are advised to periodically check the DEM website on the financial assistance page of the DEM Office of Water Resources located at:
<http://www.dem.ri.gov/programs/benviron/water/finance/index.htm>

10. Proposal Evaluation Criteria

Project proposals will receive an initial screening by representatives of the RIDEM Office of Water Resources for basic eligibility criteria. To be awarded a grant, applicants must possess adequate fiscal and project management capabilities. Past performance on prior DEM grants will be taken into account when assessing organizational capacity to effectively manage a project. Eligible proposals will be referred to an interagency review committee(s). The interagency review committee will evaluate the

eligible proposals consistent with ranking criteria developed in conjunction with rules governing the WWTFRF and applicable federal requirements in order to make recommendations subject to final decision by the RIDEM Director.

Ranking criteria address the following categories:

Existing Conditions	Up to 23 rating points available over four sub-categories
Future Conditions Assessment	Up to 5 rating points available in this category
Environmental Co-Benefits	Up to 17 rating points available in this category
Technical Merit and Likelihood of Success	Up to 25 rating points available in this category
Consistency with Approved Studies/Plans; e.g. DEM’s Implications of Climate Change for RI Wastewater Collection & Treatment Infrastructure report; Resilient Rhody: An Actionable Vision for Addressing the Impacts of Climate Change In Rhode Island; local Wastewater Facilities Plan; Summary/assessment of input from facility operations and maintenance staff	Up to 30 rating points available in this category.
Readiness to Proceed	Up to 5 rating points available in this category.

11. How to Apply - Final Submittal Deadline – Thursday January 30, 2020

Note: If you are unsure about whether the project you are interested in is eligible for funding under this RFP, please contact DEM as indicated below for further guidance. DEM can also address questions concerning your eligibility as a potential applicant, eligibility of certain project costs and issues regarding the technical merit of water pollution abatement strategies. You are encouraged to contact the DEM-OWR as indicated below for feedback in advance of filing a proposal.

Final proposals must be received by RIDEM **no later than 4:00 p.m. on Thursday, January 30, 2020.** The proposal must include mandatory application forms (Form A and Form B), a narrative project description and other supporting materials as appropriate; e.g. site map, letters of support, photographs, etc. Refer to Appendix A for details and final application forms.

DEM encourages that proposals be sent electronically (Microsoft WORD format). Hard-copies will also be accepted.

All proposals must be submitted to the following application recipient:

William Patenaude
Principal Engineer
Rhode Island Department of Environmental Management
Office of Water Resources
235 Promenade St.
Providence, RI 02908
(401) 222-4700 x 7264 or
bill.patenaude@dem.ri.gov

Wastewater Treatment Facility Resilience Fund Grant Timelines	
Announcement of RFP	November 25, 2019
Public Workshops (See Section 8, page 6 above)	January 9 & 13, 2020
Final Grant Proposals Due to RIDEM – Office of Water Resources	4:00 pm EST January 30, 2020
Review of Proposals/ Announcement of Grant Awards	March 30, 2020 (estimated)
Projects can be initiated after grant agreements are formally executed. DEM expects projects to be completed within 12-24 months of the project start date specified in the grant agreement.	

12. Project Administration

12a. Grant Agreements - It is anticipated that grant awards will be announced in the early spring 2020. Development of grant agreements will follow with projects starting at various times. For projects selected to receive grants, DEM may request the applicant to modify the project scope of work based on comments received during project evaluations and the selection process as part of developing and finalizing the grant agreement.

Grant recipients must enter into an agreement with DEM to establish mutually agreeable terms for completing the project. Items in the agreement include, *but are not limited to*:

- Scope of work including tasks, schedules and deliverables. (The approved project proposal is usually incorporated as the scope of work.);
- RIDEM and grantee responsibilities, including interim and final reporting requirements;
- Statement of the project’s total budget, matching budget, and grant budget;
- Statutory and regulatory requirements for contracting such as competitive bidding, fair-share allotments, i.e., minority-owned and women-owned business enterprises (MBE/WBE);
- Requirements for subcontracting;
- Project payment schedule and payment terms;
- Record-keeping and reporting; and
- Operation and Maintenance plan.

Payments will be made on a reimbursement basis in accordance with the payment schedule and terms contained in the project agreement. Reimbursement is tied to performance targets and payments are not scheduled more frequently than once a month.

Grant recipients may be required to provide regular progress reports to RIDEM. Grantees will be required to report information to support public reporting of the employment supported by the project. Projects are expected to be completed in the timeframe of the grant agreement. Timeframes will be negotiated in the range of 12-24 months. **Time extensions will not be granted without specific and appropriate justification.**

12b. Pre-project and Pre-contract Costs - **RIDEM and the State of Rhode Island take no responsibility for project work done outside the term or scope of the grant agreement or prior to full approval of a grant agreement. Applicants should NOT anticipate any funding for work that is done before approval of a grant agreement.** Agreements are not

valid until the Rhode Island Department of Administration issues the appropriate encumbrance (i.e., purchase order). All agreements must be signed and dated by an authorized agent of the sponsor and RIDEM.

- 12c. Procurement - The expenditure of funds pursuant to these grants is subject to state law governing procurement, including requirements for competitive bidding, prevailing wage, and goals for participation by minority or woman business enterprises (MBE/WBE). In general, where consultant, engineering or construction services are to be obtained, a competitive process is required. Where a municipality has retained engineering or consultants under a prior competitive solicitation, DEM *may* allow that arrangement to be utilized for a project, provided adequate documentation is provided that the services sought were within the anticipated scope of services under the original solicitation, and that the manner of pricing is consistent with applicable requirements. RIDEM reserves the right to review and approve the award of any contract or subcontract.
- 12d. Indirect (Overhead) Costs - Indirect costs are costs that are not readily attributable with a specific project; e.g. rent, heat, utilities, etc. Indirect costs are subject to the review and approval of the DEM Office of Management Services. Entities proposing to use an indirect rate must have a State- approved current rate. In general, DEM will not authorize indirect rates that exceed 15%.
- 12e. Permitting - Many grant projects will require a permit from RIDEM or CRMC or review by another governmental agency to proceed. Applicants should consider the time needed to acquire permits and other agency reviews and plan projects accordingly. Failure to obtain and comply with permits is generally considered a material breach of a grant agreement and may jeopardize project funding.
- 12f. Fiscal Assurances - Sponsors will be subject to fiscal assurances per terms of the project agreement. Fiscal assurances include but are not limited to the audit requirements established by the State of Rhode Island.

Appendix A: Final Application Content & Forms

Your completed application should include the following:



FORM A: Required Applicant and Project Information



FORM B: Budget Detail



Narrative Description



(if applicable)

Site/Location Map



(recommended)

Other Supporting Material
(pictures, data, letters of support, etc.)

INSTRUCTIONS FOR NARRATIVE PROJECT DESCRIPTION

A narrative project description is required. In general, the description should require no more than 3-6 pages. The narrative should address the following elements.

Purpose: Provide a brief, clear statement of the project purpose, including as applicable:

- Flooding problem to be mitigated (including the nature of the flooding problem to be mitigated, the waterbody or waterbodies involved, the properties affected, and the frequency and severity of flooding, current or anticipated);
- Design flooding interval (e.g. 100-year flood plus 3 feet);
- Other hazard to be mitigated (with specifications, as appropriate or available, such as current or anticipated return frequencies);
- Type of category the resiliency measure falls under (Hardening, Relocation, Repairability/Replaceability, or Redundancy)

Project Approach and Tasks:

- Provide a concise overview of project approach and identify and describe major tasks.
- Provide a rationale for the selection of the technical approach to the resiliency project. (Each task should be associated with an output; e.g., final engineering plans, construction phase, etc.)
- Describe how facility operations and maintenance staff have been consulted on the necessity of the proposed project. Include herein a summary of said staff input, concerns, and/or suggestions, if any, and if/how such input was evaluated and adopted.

Management and Coordination:

- Describe who will manage the project; how contracting and subcontracting will be done;
- Describe if and how other agencies and organizations will participate in the project, including letters of commitment or support if available;
- Characterize current organizational capacity;
- Describe past project management experience.

Note: The narrative should be clear on who is responsible for each major task.

Maintenance: Identify the general requirements and responsibility for long-term maintenance.

Public Outreach /Public Participation: If applicable, describe how the project results will be shared via public outreach and/or if any public participation is anticipated.

Final Products & Measurable Environmental Results:

- Describe expected outputs such as progress and final reports;
- Describe any ancillary of your resiliency measure. Results and/or benefits must be documented in both quantitative and qualitative terms.

General Schedule & Milestones

- Estimated schedule (typically 1-2 years from the time the project contract is signed) and key milestones.

Form A: Required Applicant and Project Information

1 Project Title						
Project Title						
2a Applicant Information						
Organization						
Contact Name						
E-mail		Phone				
Street address						
2b Signature of Applicant (REQUIRED)						
Authorized Agent Signature				Date		
Name						
Title						
3. Grant Application Category Amount Requested (fill in all that apply)						
WWTF Resilience Fund – Small Projects Sub-Fund	\$					
WWTF Resilience Fund – Large Projects Sub-Fund	\$					
Total Grant Amount Requested	\$					
4. Project Management <input type="checkbox"/> Same as above (2a)						
(List the person(s) responsible for managing this project)						
Full Name						
Title			Organization (if different from 2.a)			
Email		Phone		Fax		
Street Address						
5. Project Location Site specific <input type="checkbox"/> Larger project area <input type="checkbox"/>						
Street address or description of project area						
Flood Hazard Zone: 100 - Year <input type="checkbox"/> 500 - Year <input type="checkbox"/> V - Zone <input type="checkbox"/>						
Resilience Category: Hardening <input type="checkbox"/> Relocating <input type="checkbox"/> Repairability/Replaceability <input type="checkbox"/> Redundancy <input type="checkbox"/>						
6. Source of Match						
Applicant's Funds <input type="checkbox"/>		Third Party Funds <input type="checkbox"/>		In-kind Services <input type="checkbox"/>		
Please Attach Project Location Map						

Form B: Budget Detail

Table A: Project Tasks¹, Deliverables, Schedule, and Estimated Costs

Task #	Description and Task	Deliverables	Schedule ²	Requested Amount	Non-federal Match	Total Task Cost
Totals						

1. Tasks must include progress and final reports.
2. Please express as the month number in which the task is expected to be completed from start of project (i.e., Month 2)

Table B: Project Costs by Budget Category

Budget Category						Requested Grant Amount	Match Amount	Total Cost of Category
1. Salary and Fringe¹								
Name	Title	Salary	Percent Time Charged to Project	Fringe (as percent of salary)	Total Salary Cost			
2. Indirect Costs²								
3. Supplies³								
4. Equipment⁴								
5. Travel and Training⁵								
6. Contractual⁶								
7. Construction⁷								
8. Other⁸								
Totals								
To request reduced match, enter the reduced match in the non-federal match column in this row. (no less than 25% of total projects costs required)								

Specify sources of match: Amount from other federal sources: \$ _____

Amount from non-federal sources: \$ _____

1. Include salaries and fringe benefits paid for work performed on the project. "Salary" should include the rate per hour by position. "Fringe benefits" are employment benefits given in addition to wages or salary, such as health, retirement, etc. Grant funds are typically not used to pay municipal employee's salaries; these expenses should be used as match.
2. Indirect can only be charged by those entities that have negotiated an indirect rate with the State of RI in advance.
3. Includes expendable items, such as office, field and lab supplies, film, postage, equipment costing less than \$1,000, books, etc
4. Includes any items of equipment costing more than \$1,000.
5. Includes transportation costs incurred during work, such as tolls, costs of using vehicle (vehicle costs = number of miles x mileage rate)
6. Includes procured services not provided by grantee, such as consultants, engineering and design services, etc. You must identify tasks and outputs for each contractor. If contractual work has not yet been bid, provide estimated costs.
7. Includes costs associated with construction of BMPs, including permit fees.
8. Includes costs not described by previous categories.