

Helpful hints for filling out Grant Applications Submitted to the NOAA Restoration Center

Important Notice Regarding Proposal Submission

Forms and Budget Guidance

Form 424

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Example Budget Narrative

The information provided below is intended to **supplement**, not replace, the instructions provided in federal grant application forms and the Federal Funding Opportunity. This information should decrease common errors and confusion when filling out federal grant applications submitted to the NOAA Restoration Center. The Grants.gov Contact Center is open 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, to help you with issues regarding Grants.gov and can be reached by email support@grants.gov or call 1-800-518-4726.

Important Notice Regarding Proposal Submission

Please register with Grants.gov as soon as possible. This is a one-time, multi-step process that may take several weeks. Instructions are available at <http://www.grants.gov> under “Applicants” and “[Organization Registration](#).”

You must download a [compatible version](#) of Adobe Reader to successfully navigate the Grants.gov pages and complete your application on Grants.gov; you can download the program and application before the registration process is complete.

If, due to technical difficulties, you are not able to submit through Grants.gov, please print your Grants.gov application and attachments, **sign the forms** (at the locations where it says ‘will be completed upon submission’), and submit them by the post-mark deadline. In the event Grants.gov is experiencing technical difficulties, you may need to submit a paper copy of the application and the deadline for submission cannot be extended for you even under such circumstances.

Please remember there is always the possibility for human or computer error during the Grants.gov submission process. If you are submitting through Grants.gov, do not wait until after your local post office or delivery service has closed on the due date to submit your online application.

Receipt of reply [messages from Grants.gov](#) verifying acceptance or rejection of your application can take up to 48 hours.

When you attach documents to the Grants.gov application, we recommend you convert all your attachments to PDF. Funding opportunities often suggest the order of

attachments, and page limits, so please adhere to those. Please avoid creating PDF “portfolios” or “bundles.” Any attachment that contains a file within a file cannot be read by the reviewers.

To ensure that your application package will be successfully submitted to the NOAA, we recommend you adhere to the following guidelines:

- Limit application package (including attachments) to 200MB.
- Attached file names should be 50 characters or less, and should not use special characters (including periods (.), spaces, accent marks, &, -, *, %, /, #, etc.).
- Do not attach documents with the same name.
- Remove any security protections from your file.
- Use Adobe Reader, not Professional, to submit your application.

If you encounter submission problems, [Grants.gov technical support](#), is available 24 hours a day, except federal holidays. You will NOT receive “permission” to submit a late application from NOAA or Grants.gov staff due to technical difficulties.

Forms and Budget Guidance

Form SF-424

Make sure this form reflects the full requested award period and the full requested dollar value from this competition (NOT all your federal funds), if your request covers multiple years. Start dates are the first of the month, and end dates are the last day of the month. When asked for your project title, please choose a short, descriptive name including a location, if possible. *Do not* use a generic name such as “Coastal Habitat Restoration Project.” This form asks for two contacts within your organization. The “person to be contacted on matters involving this application” is a project manager or primary investigator (field #8f). The document is signed and submitted by the Authorized Representative (field #21). The Authorized Representative should be the person designated as Authorized Organization Representative in Grants.gov by your organizations’ E-business Point of Contact during the registration process. Only the Authorized Representative will receive official communications concerning your application.

Budget Form SF-424A

A complete budget consists of the SF-424A and a budget narrative for the project (see below). Section B (Budget Categories) of the 424A is the portion of this form most helpful to proposal reviewers. Please enter whole dollar amounts on this form.

Lobbying Form CD-511

This form requires an award number. Please enter “N/A” as you don’t yet have an award number.

Budget Narrative

All applications must have a detailed budget narrative explaining and justifying the federal and the non-federal expenditures by object class. The budget narrative must

accurately describe the budget breakdown of Section B (Budget Category) of the SF-424A form. For clarification and simplicity, it is best to discuss each expense by object class in the order they appear on the SF424A. Indicate whether or not expenditures are federal or non-federal in nature. Include the dollar amounts in the discussion and how the dollar amounts were derived. A spreadsheet with federal and matching expenditures can also be included but is not required. Matching funds must be available and used during the stated project period and cannot be used to match other awards.

The following are highlights from the [Budget Guidelines](#), provided by NOAA's Grants Management Division, to help you formulate your budget narrative.

Object Class:

- a. Personnel: include salary, wage, and hours or % of time committed to project of each person by job title
- b. Fringe Benefits: should be identified for each individual. Must be described in detail if the rate $\geq 35\%$ of the associated salary.
- c. Travel: provide a breakdown of travel costs including destination, duration, type of transportation, estimated cost, number of travelers, lodging, mileage rate and estimated number of miles, and per diem.
- d. Equipment: Equipment is any single piece of non-expendable, tangible personal property $\geq \$5,000$, that has a useful life of $>$ one year (i.e. ATV, hydro-seeder).
- e. Supply: can be any supplies needed for the restoration or administration work. Purchases less than \$5,000 per item are considered by the federal government as a supply.
- f. Contractual: list each contract or subgrant as a separate item, give cost breakdown and describe products/services to be obtained by the contractor.
- g. Construction: only charge construction costs for construction of buildings (i.e. green house, educational center). All other project related construction costs should be contractual labor.
- h. Other: list items, cost, and justification for each expense
- i. Total direct charges
- j. Indirect charges: To use line (j) to claim indirect charges a Federally Negotiated Indirect Cost Rate Agreement must already be established, or the applicant may use the 10% *de minimus* rate. A copy of the indirect cost agreement should accompany your application. Indirect costs can be incorporated into other line items as direct costs (i.e. Other, Personnel) as long as they are justified in the budget narrative and meet all OMB prescribed cost principles including being reasonable, necessary, allocable, and allowable. See 2 CFR Chapter II, [Part 200.414\(f\)](#).
- k. Totals of direct and indirect charges

Example Budget Narrative

Personnel (Federal Share), \$68,600

John Doe, project manager, will provide 750 hours of work at \$36/hr for overall project management, supervision, and reporting. Total: \$27,000

Alice Doe, technician, will provide 2080 hours of work at \$20/hr for technical support, field work, and pre- and post- project monitoring. Ms. Doe's work will occur over 36 months. Total: \$41,600

Personnel (Non-Federal Share), \$31,600

The County will provide contract and construction management services, carried out by Alice Jones. Ms. Jones will provide 500 hours of work at \$50/hr. Total: \$25,000

Administrative support that includes accounting, filing, developing outreach materials and coordinating volunteers will be the carried out by Mary Smith, administrative assistant. Ms. Smith will dedicate 300 hours at \$15.00/hr to this effort. Total non-federal in-kind match: \$4,500

Fifty volunteers will be recruited to plant riparian vegetation along Thompson Brook. It is estimated that the volunteer work will take 4 hours per person for a total of 200 volunteer hours at \$10.50 / hr. Total non-federal in-kind match: \$2,100

Fringe Benefits (Federal Share), \$10,290

The fringe benefit rate is 15% of salary. \$4,050 covers benefits for John Doe and \$6,240 for Alice Doe. Fringe benefits go toward FICA, medical and dental insurance, retirement and disability. Total: \$10,290

Fringe Benefits (Non-Federal Share), \$4,425

Fringe benefits for Mary Smith and Alice Jones, 15%, to cover health insurance, FICA, retirement and disability. Total: \$4,425

Travel (Federal), \$2,230

Travel funding will be required for the project manager and biologist to travel to and from the Thompson Brook site to conduct field work and supervise construction activities. Mileage expenses will be charged at \$0.50/mile and total mileage (10 round trips) for the project is estimated to be 2000 miles. Total: \$1,000

Alice Doe, biologist, will be presenting papers on the project progress, techniques and completion at a major fisheries restoration conference. Estimated airfare (\$800),

lodging (2 nights, \$100/night, total lodging \$200), food (\$40/day, total \$80), and car rental and gas (\$150). Total conference travel: \$1,230

Travel (Non- Federal) - none

Equipment (Federal) - \$7,000

A portion of the cost of a hydroseeder is requested. The total purchase price of this equipment, used, is \$20,000, but this cost is split between several sources of funds. The cost to rent this equipment at \$800/week for this project will be approximately \$8,000. We are requesting \$7,000 towards the purchase of this equipment, which will continue to be used for habitat restoration after the completion of this project. This purchase represents a savings over estimated rental costs and will allow for long-term use for future restoration activities.

Equipment (Non-Federal) - \$13,000

The remaining cost of the hydroseeder (see above) will be covered by other non-Federal sources of funds.

Supplies (Federal), \$ 28,000

Purchase and use of expendable field supplies including – stream flow gauges, maps, sampling equipment, and health and safety equipment. Total: \$5,000

Interpretive/Education exhibit design and construction. Total: \$1,500

Native plants/trees will be purchased to revegetate the riparian area around the project site. A breakdown of the number, sizes, and costs is attached. Total: \$20,000

A laptop computer will be purchased to record monitoring data in the field prior to and after completion of the project. Data will be recorded and analyzed using the laptop computer. Total: \$1,500

Supplies (Non-Federal), \$4,000

The applicant will purchase \$3,000 in software for the lap-top computer to collect and analyze data. Total: \$3,000

The applicant will purchase \$1,000 in supplies related to volunteer management including those for health and safety of volunteers. Total: \$1,000

Contractual (Federal), \$540,000

Contractors will be hired to carry out construction activities associated with the Thompson Brook project. This includes funding for the project engineer, heavy equipment rental, heavy equipment operators, and project materials. Costs are estimated from 70% design plan and a full project budget is available in the appendices. The total

construction costs are estimated at \$950,000, and our request is for half those costs. Total \$475,000

A contract will be awarded to State University. Dr. John Smith will implement pre- and post-restoration monitoring of fish populations in the marsh. Total: \$65,000

Contractual (Non-Federal), \$660,000

The County will purchase a bottom-less arch culvert to be installed at the project site. Total \$185,000

The County will provide half the construction costs described in the federal request and in the full project budget in the appendices. Total: \$475,000

Other (Federal), \$57,147¹

Costs of indirect administrative personnel include 4% of salary and fringe for the Executive Director, Development Director, and Administrative Assistant. Total: \$6,580.

Rent and Occupancy are allocated proportionally to the FTEs paid under this application for a 36 month period. Total: \$45,500

Phone and Electronic Communications are allocated proportional to the FTEs paid under this application for a 36 month period. Total: \$5,167

Other (Non-Federal) - none

Total Direct Charges: Federal: \$ 713,267

Non-Federal: \$ 713,025

Total Indirect Charges: Federal: \$0

Non-Federal: \$0

Total Charges: Federal: \$ 713,267

Non-Federal: \$ 713,025

¹ This example shows how applicants may choose to describe their Facilities and Administration costs in the "Other" section, described as itemized direct costs, if they do not choose to use the 10% de minimum indirect cost rate or their federally negotiated rate.