

Helpful hints for filling out NOAA Grant application forms for The FY2011 Open Rivers Initiative Project Grants: FFO# NOAA-NMFS-HCPO-2011-2002644

The information provided below is intended to **supplement**, not replace, the instructions provided in the federal grant application forms and the Federal Funding Opportunity. This information should decrease common errors and confusion when filling out federal grant applications for the NOAA Open Rivers Initiative Project Grants. Please call or email Tisa.Shostik@noaa.gov, 301-713-0174 x 184, if you have any questions.

Important Information 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 www.grants.gov under “For Applicants” and “Get Registered” and at http://grants.gov/assets/Organization_Steps_Complete_Registration.pdf. Please pay special attention to step 4, as we’ve noticed many applicants miss that step.
- 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 (even where it says ‘will be completed upon submission’), and submit them by the post-mark deadline.
- 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.
- 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.
- Receipt of reply messages from Grants.gov verifying acceptance or rejection of your application can take up to 48 hours.

Application Content and Form Guidance:

- Applications submitted through the Grants.gov website should include a maximum of four (4) files in addition to the Federal Application forms: 1) the project summary and narrative, 2) the budget justification, 3) design plans, if applicable, and 4) all other attachments combined, including resumes, restoration plans, maps, and support letters.
- PDF files are the preferred format. Information about converting documents to PDF files is available on the grants.gov website under “Download Software” under “Applicant Resources.”
- **Form SF-424 – Application for Federal Assistance**
 - Make sure this form reflects the full dollar value requested and match proposed.
 - 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 “Open Rivers Initiative 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. The document is signed and submitted by the Authorized Representative. This should be the person designated as Authorized Organization Representative in Grants.gov by your organizations’ E-business Point of Contact during the registration process. The Authorized Representative will receive official communications concerning your application.
- **Form SF-424A- Budget Information of Non-construction Programs**
 - It is particularly important to include an accurate and thorough budget. A complete budget consists of the SF-424A and a budget narrative for the project.
 - The following link provides [Budget Guidelines](http://www.habitat.noaa.gov/pdf/budgetguidlines.pdf) for filling out the SF-424A form (<http://www.habitat.noaa.gov/pdf/budgetguidlines.pdf>).
 - This form is critical to proposal reviews; as such please ensure it is filled out thoroughly.
 - Use column 1 for federal requests and column 2 for non-federal match. Please enter whole dollar amounts on this form.
- **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 (see above) 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. Describe in detail if the rate is greater than 35 % of the associated salary.
 - c. Travel: all travel costs must be listed here. Provide a detailed breakdown of travel costs for trips over \$5,000 or 5 % of award. Include 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 that costs \$5,000 or more per unit and that has a useful life of more than one year (i.e. truck, copy machine).
 - e. Supply: can be any supplies needed for the restoration or administration work associated with the project. A detailed explanation is required for total supply costs over \$5,000 or 5% of the award. 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. Provide a detailed cost breakdown and describe products/services to be obtained by the contractor. Contingency costs are not allowed.
 - 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: In order to claim indirect charges on line (j), a Federally Negotiated Indirect Cost Rate Agreement (NICRA) must already be established. Applicants will be limited to the amount of indirect costs stated in the FFO, but amounts in excess can be used as match. A copy of the indirect cost agreement should be included in your application. If the applicant does not have a current negotiated rate and plans to seek reimbursement for indirect costs, documentation necessary to establish a rate must be submitted within 90 days of receiving an award. If no agreement has been arranged, indirect costs can be incorporated into other line items (i.e. fringe benefits, other) as long as they are justified in the budget narrative and meet all OMB prescribed cost principles.
- k. Totals of direct and indirect charges

Example Budget Narrative:

Personnel (Federal Share), \$24,750

John Doe, project manager, will provide 750 hours of work at \$25/hr for overall project management, supervision, and reporting. Total: \$18,750

Alice Doe, biologist, will provide 300 hours of work at \$20/hr for technical support, field work, and pre and post project monitoring. Total: \$6000

Personnel (Non-Federal Share), \$21,600

The County will provide contract and construction management services at 15% of the project contract costs. Total: \$15,000

Administrative support that includes accounting, filing, developing outreach materials and coordinating volunteers will be carried out by Mary Smith, administrative assistant. Mary 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), \$3,713

The fringe benefit rate is 15% of salary. \$2,813 covers benefits for John Doe and \$900 for Alice Doe. Fringe benefits go toward FICA, medical and dental insurance, retirement and disability. Total: \$3,713

Fringe Benefits (Non-Federal Share), \$675

Fringe benefits for Mary Smith, 15%, to cover health insurance, FICA, retirement and disability. Total: \$675

Travel (Federal), \$3,045

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 \$0.33/mile and total mileage (10 round trips) for the project is estimated to be 2000 miles for a total cost of \$660

Travel funding will be required for volunteers to travel and transport vegetation to the Thompson Brook site. Fifty volunteers will be transported in five rental vans (\$55/day) for three days totaling \$825. Mileage expense will be charged at \$0.33 /mile for an estimated round trip of 200 miles / van. (Mileage total: \$330). Total rental and mileage: \$1155

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) - none

Equipment (Non-Federal) - none

Supplies (Federal), \$ 8,200

Purchase and use of expendable field supplies including – stream flow gauges, maps, sampling equipment, and health and safety equipment. Total: \$1,000

Flyers and posters will be made to recruit volunteers. Total: \$200

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

Native plants/trees will be purchased to revegetate the riparian area around project site. Total: \$3,000

A laptop computer will be purchased to record fish counts and fish passage data in the field prior to and after completion of the barrier removal. Data will be recorded and analyzed using the laptop computer. Total: \$2,500

Supplies (Non-Federal), \$5,000

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 gloves, fertilizer, buckets, rakes, insulated water coolers, and other supplies necessary for volunteers to plant trees and riparian plants. Total: \$2,000

Contractual (Federal), \$100,000

One local contractor, J.P. Smith and Associates Environmental Consultants , has been hired to carry out construction activities associated with barrier removal - includes funding for project engineer, heavy equipment rental, heavy equipment operators, and project materials. Costs estimated from 70% design plan.

Contractual (Non-Federal) - \$113,000

The County will purchase a bottom-less arch culvert to be installed at the project site. Total \$105,000

The County will provide management and redirection of traffic flow. Total: \$8,000

Other (Federal) - none

Other (Non-Federal), \$1000

The applicant will cover the cost of cell phones, office phones, and local and long-distance charges for arranging and coordinating volunteer involvement. Total: \$1000

Total Direct Charges: Federal: \$ 139,708

Non-Federal: \$ 141,275

Total Indirect Charges: Federal: \$0.00

Non-Federal: \$0.00

Total Charges: Federal: \$ 139,708

Non-Federal: \$ 141,275