



# Coordination and Collaboration in the Resilience Ecosystem

## A Request for Applications

June 2022

The Climate Resilience Fund (CRF) is accepting applications for the annual *Coordination and Collaboration in the Resilience Ecosystem* (CCRE) competitive grants competition. This Request for Applications includes important background information for applicants, including the CCRE's programmatic goals, thresholds for consideration, evaluation criteria, application instructions, and competition timeline. The CCRE is made possible by the generous support of our partners at the Doris Duke Charitable Foundation and the NOAA Climate Program Office.

The deadline for submission of applications is Friday, July 22, 2022, at 5 pm ET.

### 1. Introduction

In 2022, the CCRE Program will provide grants to train climate service practitioners so they can support efforts to scale up and accelerate equity-centered adaptation planning across the U.S. Up to twenty (20) \$10,000 grants will be made available on a competitive basis to organizations that are interested in learning to utilize the U.S. Climate Resilience Toolkit's (CRT) [Steps to Resilience](#) to help communities plan and prepare for climate-related impacts proactively.

The Steps to Resilience Training will prepare practitioners to lead communities through climate resilience planning processes that integrate principles of equity, prioritize nature-based solutions, feature finance-ready principles, incorporate measures of success, and utilize a new Practitioner's Guide developed by the CRT team. Development and coordination of training will be led by the CRT team (including contractors with UNC-Asheville's National Environmental Modeling and Analysis Center (NEMAC) and Fernleaf).

Trainees will be pre-qualified as practitioners for NOAA's Climate Smart Communities Initiative (CSCI)\*, which will be administered by the Climate

#### Why apply?

Increase your knowledge and leadership skills for climate resilience planning and action

Opportunity for inclusion in the Climate Adaptation Services Registry

Pre-qualify as a practitioner for the Climate Smart Communities Initiative

Resilience Fund and is expected to launch in FY2023, if funding becomes available. The CSCI intends to provide financial resources for regional and community-based climate resilience in hundreds of communities over the ensuing four years of the Initiative, include additional training opportunities, and will connect climate service practitioners with communities seeking increased capacity in planning for and responding to the impacts of climate change.

[Trainees will also have the opportunity to be included as vetted practitioners listed on the Climate Adaptation Services Registry](#), a resource for communities that are seeking expertise and assistance with climate resilience planning and action.

*\*A note on CSCI's funding status: In May 2022, NOAA's Climate Program Office (CPO) notified the Climate Resilience Fund in writing that it had concluded its FY22 Climate-Smart Communities Initiative (CSCI) competition and that the proposal and team led by CRF was the winner of that competition. However, due to insufficient funds in FY22, NOAA/CPO was unable to award the grant. NOAA/CPO is unable to make a public announcement of an award until after it has the funds and the clearance to offer the award to CRF, and after CRF has officially accepted the award. NOAA/CPO further informed CRF that, pending the availability of funds in FY23, it plans to make the award and launch the CSCI in the 3rd or 4th quarter of FY23. Regardless of the timing and funding of CSCI, we expect that the Steps to Resilience Training will be useful to practitioners who wish to improve their knowledge and capacity for climate resilience planning and implementation. There is ever-increasing demand from communities across the U.S. and beyond for support and expertise as they wrestle with the impacts of climate change.*

## 2. Context and Values for this Competition

The CCRE Program is unique in that each year the Climate Resilience Fund and its partners in the NOAA Climate Program Office work to actively solicit input from the community of practitioners whom we serve. We do so through a series of engagements with members of the Resilience Ecosystem\*. More detail on the history of these engagements is available in Section 10, below.

[This year's solicitation targets the top two priorities identified by participants at this year's CCRE workshop: \(1\) building capacity for climate resilience in communities, and \(2\) training climate service practitioners.](#)

Participants also prioritized the need for:

- building networks and collaboration,
- attracting new and novel partners to the Resilience Ecosystem,
- incentivizing participation of community-based organizations,
- communicating the social and economic benefits of climate resilience, and
- mainstreaming best practices for climate resilience planning and implementation.

The training offered through this solicitation will address these topics alongside the Steps to Resilience. Trainees will have the opportunity to apply to work directly with local communities that participate in NOAA's Climate Smart Communities Initiative, expected to begin in FY2023, or in support of other resilience planning efforts in communities across the nation.

*\*We define the Resilience Ecosystem as the open and inclusive community of public and private entities that are working to sustain and evolve science-based tools, information, and expertise that can help city planners, resource managers, businesses and others build resilience to climate-related impacts and extreme events.*

### 3. What's New and Different in 2022

It is important for prospective applicants to fully understand changes to the CCRE program for 2022 because they will have a significant impact on both the selection of grantees and the requirements that will be placed upon grantees that are selected.

- In 2022, CRF will provide approximately twenty (20) grants of \$10,000 to organizations wishing to designate staff to undertake a training on implementing the CRT Steps to Resilience in community-based climate resilience planning and implementation. This funding is designed to cover costs for a single staff member to attend a series of six (6) virtual half-day training sessions and time for study projects in between, with a total estimated commitment of 60-70 hours over the 6-month grant period. Organizations may apply to send up to three (3) staff members to the training and request a \$10,000 grant for each attendee.
- CRF has contracted with partners to provide training for selected grantees. Grantees will be engaged by our contractors to organize scheduling and participation in the training sessions. Training will be based upon the new Practitioner Guide for the Steps to Resilience, currently under development at NOAA, and build on tested practices for climate resilience detailed in four technical papers developed by CCRE grantees from the 2021 CCRE program. Copies of those papers are available for download [here](#).
- The 2022 competition will utilize an abridged application. This competition will require only responses to a short questionnaire, rather than a lengthy project proposal. Applicants will be asked to describe their organizational mission, experiences in, or desire to, provide climate advisory services to communities, and to provide bios for staff members who will participate in the Steps to Resilience training program.
- Successful applicants will demonstrate experience collaborating with (and/or intent to collaborate with) one or more U.S. communities to support development, prioritization, or implementation of climate resilience plans and activities. Preference will be given to applicants with experience engaging at-risk frontline populations, traditionally disenfranchised or marginalized communities, and/or communities of

color. In solidarity with the federal government's Justice40 initiative, CRF aims to direct at least 40% of grant funds to support practitioners affiliated with BIPOC-led organizations or organizations with strategic intent or history working directly with underserved communities.

- The deliverables required of grantees are simply completion of the Steps to Resilience training, response to a survey about the training experience, and creation of a profile to be considered for inclusion in the [Climate Adaptation Services Registry](#).

The above structure constitutes a departure from the design of previous CCRE competitions and is likely to raise questions. Questions are anticipated and answered in the FAQ section at the end of this document. Further inquiries are welcome and should be directed to [info@climateresiliencefund.org](mailto:info@climateresiliencefund.org). Prospective applicants are also encouraged to review the short CCRE Application for this competition available by creating an account on [CRF's online application portal](#).

#### 4. Thresholds for Consideration by the 2022 CCRE Program

Applications submitted for this competition must meet the following requirements:

- The applicant or applicant organization is a 501c3 nonprofit organization, academic institution, or for-profit entity currently engaged, or seeking to engage, in the provision of climate services to communities in need of increased capacity to plan for and respond to the impacts of climate change.
- The applicant organization has staff members willing and available to participate in a 6-session training course to be held between November 2022 and April 2023 that will be administered by a CRF contractor.
- The applicant or applicant organization has existing relationships with a U.S. community or communities in need of assistance with climate resilience planning, prioritization, and implementation of resilience actions.
- The applicant or applicant organization seeks to become a member of the [Climate Adaptation Services Registry](#) and a qualified provider to communities that are selected for the forthcoming NOAA Climate Smart Communities Initiative.

#### 5. Evaluation methods

CRF employs an objective, data-driven evaluation process. Applications will be reviewed by a panel of expert reviewers who assess and score each using criteria listed below. Scores are aggregated and applications ranked accordingly. The review panel meets to apply values lenses and ultimately determine final recommendations for inclusion in the training program. Final selections are drawn from these recommendations based on overall fit with the CCRE program's objectives and its priorities for advancing and evolving the Resilience Ecosystem.

Applications will be evaluated in accordance with the criteria outlined below:

- **Qualifications:**
  - The applicant demonstrates experience or expertise in applied climate science and understanding of climate risk and vulnerabilities to communities.
  - The applicant possesses relevant experience and expertise required to lead and convene community members, stakeholder organizations, government entities, and others through a collaborative planning process.
  - The applicant intends to apply principles and best practices learned in the Training by supporting resilience planning processes, engagement, prioritization, and implementation in one or more U.S. communities.
  
- **Deliverables:**
  - The applicant endeavors to participate in and complete the Steps to Resilience Training, create a profile for consideration by the Climate Adaptation Services Registry, and respond to a survey providing feedback to the trainers on content and presentation of the training program.
  
- **Values Lenses:**

In addition to the specific criteria outlined below, CRF and our partners will ask CCRE reviewers to consider all applications through our shared values lenses. Specifically, this means that CCRE reviewers will give priority consideration to applicants who:

  - Hope to meaningfully incorporate or address issues of equitable solutions for mitigating climate risk, prioritize diverse and/or disadvantaged communities, or engage community leaders meaningfully in co-production of resources, services, or priorities for action.
  - Look to advance or prioritize nature-based strategies and solutions to support community resilience.

## 6. Grant Size and Matching Requirements

The limit for grant requests is \$10,000, which must be used to offset staff time for participating in the Steps to Resilience Training. There is no requirement for match funding on these grants.

## 7. Applicant Eligibility

This competition is open to U.S.-based charitable institutions and universities with IRS approved 501(c)(3) status, and for-profit entities. Applicants must be in good financial and regulatory standing.

CRF is unable to make grants directly to U.S. federal government agencies, state and local government agencies, unincorporated individuals, and international organizations.

Prospective applicants from for-profit entities or individuals unaffiliated with an organization may partner on an application with a nonprofit organization or University that serves as the lead applicant, or via a 501(c)(3) fiscal sponsor.

## 8. Competition and Grant Timeline

Application Submission Deadline	July 22, 2022
Evaluation by CRF Staff and Advisors	July-August 2022
Awards Announced	September 2022
Funding Available	October 2022
Training Sessions Begin	November 2022 -March 2023
Adaptation Registry Profile Created	April 2022
Participant Survey Completed	April 2022

## 9. Application Instructions

Online applications are due July 22, 2022, at 5 pm ET.

All applications must be submitted via [CRF's online portal](#). Applicants will be required to submit supporting documentation including organizational budget, participating staff bios, certification of 501(c)(3) status (if applicable), and audited financial statements or IRS 990 forms (if applicable).

Organizations may apply for funds to send up to (3) staff members or affiliates to the Training. A separate application should be submitted for each staff member or affiliate.

## 10. Frequently Asked Questions

**What is the duration of funding?** The grant period for these awards begins in October 2022 and ends in April 2023.

**What is the range of funding that can be requested?** CRF expects to provide twenty grants each in the amount of \$10,000, with a total of \$200,000 available in 2022. Organizations may request up to three (3) grants of \$10,000 each to support up to three (3) staff members' time to complete the training and deliverables.

**Are matching funds required?** No.

**What types of organizations are eligible to apply?** CRF is able to accept applications from U.S.-based 501(c)(3) nonprofit organizations, universities, and for-profit entities. Prospective applicants from the private sector may serve as subcontractors on an application with a nonprofit organization, or university that serves as the lead applicant, or via a 501(c)(3) fiscal sponsor.

**Can overhead or indirect costs be included in a grant request?** No, but funding provided is considered general support and can be utilized at the discretion of the grantee.

**When will the final grants be awarded?** Final award decisions will be made in September 2022, with funding disbursements anticipated in October 2022.

**Who will evaluate the applications and make decisions on the grant awards?** All proposals will be evaluated by CRF staff, volunteer Advisory Board members, and a group of external advisors.

**Will concepts that fall outside the funding priorities be considered?** No, applications are restricted to those priorities outlined in this RFP. CRF is not currently accepting proposals outside of this solicitation. Information about future grant opportunities will be posted on the [CRF web site](#) and is distributed via our email list, which can be joined using the sign up box at the bottom of our home page.

**How does the grant proposal process work?** CRF utilizes an open call for applications followed by an evaluation period, and finally an announcement of awards.

**What should I expect if I receive a grant?** We anticipate issuing grant agreements and funding in October 2022. Grants will be provided for a term ending in April 2023. The agreement will specify all requirements and responsibilities of both grantee and grantor. Reporting requirements will entail completion of a profile for consideration by the [Climate Adaptation Services Registry](#) and a survey at the end of the grant period.

**What is the Climate Adaptation Services Registry?** The Registry serves as a searchable database of qualified, vetted climate practitioners that can support myriad planning and implementation needs in communities wrestling with the impacts of climate change. Grant recipients will be participating in a first-of-its-kind training and their feedback will help inform and improve future trainings for other cohorts of applicants.

**What is the Resilience Ecosystem?** We define the Resilience Ecosystem as the open and inclusive community of public and private entities that are working to sustain and evolve science-based tools, information, and expertise that can help city planners, resource managers, businesses and others build resilience to climate-related impacts and extreme events.

**How is the CCRE program connected to the Resilience Ecosystem?** The CCRE Program provides grants to qualifying organizations for projects that improve, combine, align, or scale

existing resources, services, and tools to support climate adaptation and resilience planning and implementation.

From its inception, CRF and our partners have sponsored annual engagements that are designed to support and inform the CCRE Program's investment priorities. These events are structured to help develop among members of the Resilience Ecosystem a shared understanding of the state of climate adaptation practice, and to identify and align field-wide priorities for enabling its growth and evolution.

No two-years of the CCRE program grants have been the same because our priorities are derived from fieldwide priorities aggregated through those convenings with the Resilience Ecosystem of practitioners. Each of these CCRE convenings has built on previous efforts. Through these engagements with the Resilience Ecosystem community, CRF and our partners solicit expertise and experience to inform our grantmaking priorities. This mechanism has become a central component of the CCRE as a result. We believe the CCRE is unique as a grantmaking program that sources its funding priorities directly from the community of practitioners whom it serves.



CCRE events (2017-2021): The 2017 National Adaptation Forum Town Hall event; January 2018 Resilience Ecosystem Workshop (REW1); 2019 National Adaptation Forum, grantee showcase, and workshop; the 2020 (virtual) Resilience Ecosystem Workshop 2 (REW2); and the 2021 CCRE Advisory Meeting, and the 3<sup>rd</sup> Resilience Ecosystem Workshop held in May 2022.

Our collective goals for the CCRE are twofold:

- Help catalyze the growth of the climate adaptation and resilience field in service of the Resilience Ecosystem's [Theory of Change](#), which was developed with input from Resilience Ecosystem members at the 2020 Workshop and aspires to bring planning and implementation of equitable climate adaptation solutions to scale.
- Advance a shared strategy for supporting local decision making in pursuit of climate resilience progress in hundreds of communities across the country to lay the necessary foundation for larger public and private investments to support implementation of on-the-ground climate adaptation action in the future.

CRF and our partners have compiled a series of [outcome summaries and datasets](#) detailing the gaps, priorities, and creative solutions proposed by the Resilience Ecosystem community over the past five years.

Please address inquiries to the CRF Info line: [info@climateresiliencefund.org](mailto:info@climateresiliencefund.org).

### About the Climate Resilience Fund

CRF is a philanthropic collaborative working to advance a positive vision of a climate resilient society and to mobilize the resources for achieving it. We are committed to supporting the development and implementation of knowledge and resources to help steer society in a new direction – one where healthy communities, ecosystems, and sustainable economies coexist and thrive in the context of a changing climate.

CRF operates with a small leadership team with long experience working at the intersection of climate change, conservation, urban sustainability, and with the federal government agencies tasked with addressing the climate crisis. CRF is guided by an advisory board comprised of partner and investor representatives and experts in the fields of climate adaptation, resilience, and philanthropy. CRF is housed at Multiplier, Inc., a 501(c)(3) that provides back-office administrative, financial management, and legal support for operations.

[www.climateresiliencefund.org](http://www.climateresiliencefund.org)



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## Sample Application for Participation in the Steps to Resilience Training

The questions below are a preview of the grant application, which should be submitted using [CRF's online application portal](#). Please create an account, login, and complete your application online.

### CCRE 2022

#### Application Instructions

All applicants must answer questions to the best of their ability and provide necessary supporting documentation. Some questions are optional. If question is not relevant to experience, please indicate as such in your answer. Incomplete submissions will be removed from consideration. Contact [info@climateresiliencefund.org](mailto:info@climateresiliencefund.org) with questions or technical issues with the application.

#### Section 1

##### Applicant Organization Information

- a. **Applicant Organization Name:**
- b. **Organization Mailing Address:**
- c. **Organization's Primary Contact** - Include name, email, phone:
- d. **Organization's Authorized Representative** (signatory) - Include name, email, phone:
- e. **Organization Profile.** State mission and briefly describe areas of expertise and focus:
- f. **Organization web site:**

## Section 2

### Training Participant Information and Biography

- a. **Participant Name:**
- b. **Email:**
- c. **Phone:**
- d. **Location** (City, State):
- e. **Gender** (optional):
- f. **Ethnicity** (optional):
- g. **Primary area(s) of expertise:**
- h. **Brief personal bio** (500 words or less):

## Section 3

### Statement of Interest

Please provide a brief explanation how you would aspire to apply principles learned in the Steps to Resilience training to support communities either locally or nationally (250 words or less).

## Section 4

### Relevant Experience of Training Participant

- a. **Years of experience as a climate services practitioner** (if any):
- b. **Other trainings.** List any other climate, sustainability, or leadership-related trainings the applicant has participated in previously (250 words or less):
- c. **Description of climate science background,** applied or academic (if any):
- d. **Experience convening planning or engagement processes.** Describe any experience leading and convening community members, stakeholder organizations, government entities, and others through a collaborative planning process (250 words or less).
- e. **Partners and Collaborators.** List any organizations and/or government entities you have worked with on climate resilience issues and describe your role (250 words or less).

**f. Significant climate hazards faced by jurisdictions with which you've worked:**

Climate-related hazards (select all that apply)\*

- Water Scarcity/Drought risk
- Wildfire risk
- Flood risk
- Sea level rise (tidal or storm-surge risk)
- Soil degradation/erosion
- Public health - Extreme heat risk
- Public health - Infectious disease risk
- Public health - Air pollution
- Biodiversity loss
- None
- Other (please specify)

**g. Experience working with vulnerable populations.** Please describe your experience and commitment to prioritizing resilience planning efforts based on the needs of residents who would struggle to prepare for or recover from climate related impacts or disasters. For example, low or moderate income frontline communities and communities of color that may be least equipped to respond to climate-driven issues (250 words or less).

**Vulnerable populations with which you've worked in the past** (select all that apply)\*

- Women and girls
- Children and youth
- Elderly
- Indigenous
- Marginalized/minority communities
- People with Disabilities
- Low-income households
- Outdoor workers
- Frontline workers
- Do not know
- None
- Other (please specify)

**h. Nature-based solutions.** Please describe your experience working with nature-based solutions to climate change, if any (250 words or less).

**i. Application of training.** Describe where and how the applicant intends to apply principles and practices learned in the Step to Resilience Training by supporting resilience planning processes, engagement, prioritization, and implementation in one or more U.S. communities (250 words or less).

## Section 5

### Instructions for Submitting Application and Required Supporting Documents

Two additional documents, your IRS 501c3 confirmation and Audited financial statements/IRS 990 form, should be submitted as separate attachments to your email. Please submit your application via [CRF's online application portal](#) no later than 5 pm PT, July 22, 2022.

#### Supporting documents for upload:

- CV or resume of training participant
- Current year organizational budget for applicant organization.
- List of Board Members and Affiliations.
- Letters of support from partners and/or stakeholders (optional).

#### Additional documents to be submitted as separate files:

- IRS 501c3 letter (if applicable)
- Most recent audited statements or IRS 990 form (if applicable)