

2024 RCPP INFORMATION WEBINAR SERIES

SESSION 3: FUNDING REQUEST

MAY 15, 2024



AGENDA

- Announcements
- Town Hall Webinar Series Overview
- Today's Topic: Funding Request
- Q&A

RCPP Creating Your Proposal Webinar Series



Session 3 Survey

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ANNOUNCEMENTS



Reminder:

The deadline to apply for application assistance for projects that support underserved entities in critical conservation areas is:

Saturday, May 18, 2024

INTRODUCTIONS

USDA AND METAPHASE COLLEAGUES



SARA HENDERSON



BRIE HEBRON



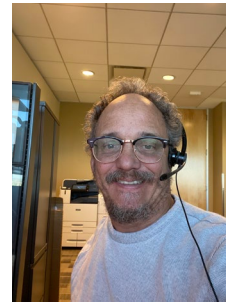
MARIA COLLAZO



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SETH FIEDLER



Your RCPP State Coordinator is the best resource for questions about RCPP.

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CREATING YOUR PROPOSAL WEBINAR SERIES

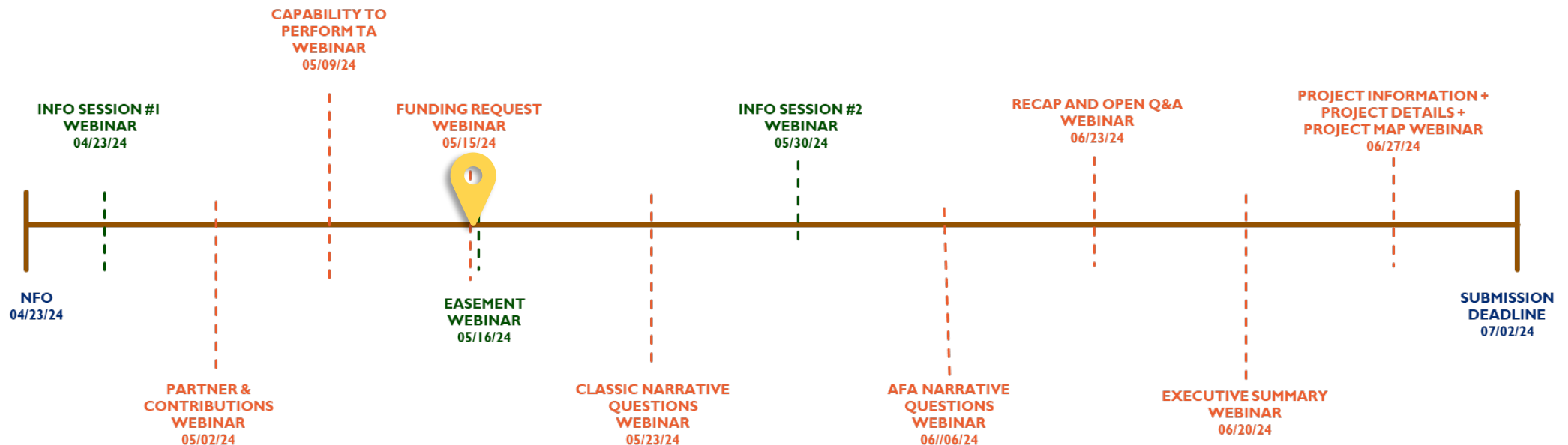
OVERVIEW

PROPOSAL SUPPORT WEBINARS

AN 8-WEEK SERIES TO CREATE YOUR PROPSAL

Each week applicants may choose to attend sessions in the Creating Your Proposal Webinar Series. Each webinar will focus on a specific portion of the proposal, followed by a Q&A session.

Webinar topics flow in the suggested order for proposal work.



WHERE ARE YOU TODAY?

TOPICS COVERED AND REMINDERS

Decision Points

1. **CCA vs State/Multistate Application:** deciding the type of application
2. **Classic vs Alternative Funding Arrangement (AFA):** deciding what type of funding pool will you apply for
3. **Capacity to Perform Technical Assistance (TA):** deciding who will perform technical assistance



Successful RCCP applicants will:

- Bring an array of financial and technical capabilities to projects
- Demonstrate experience working effectively and collaboratively with agricultural producers and landowners
- Propose sustainable and measurable approaches to achieving compelling conservation outcomes

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FUNDING REQUEST

OVERVIEW

FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE (FA)

TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE (TA)

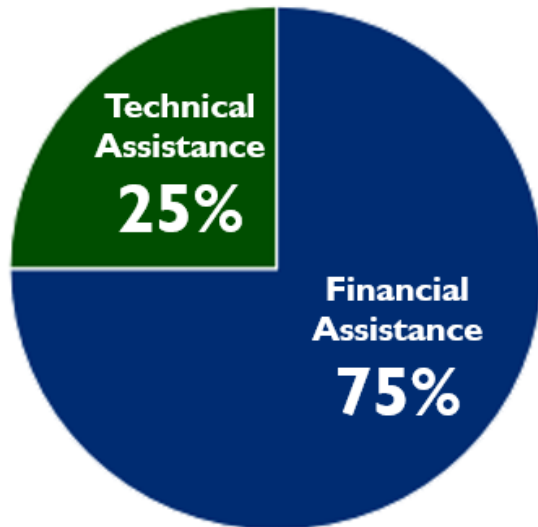
FUNDING REQUEST

OVERVIEW

RCPP funding available for a single project selected under this announcement:

**Minimum
\$250,000**

**Maximum
\$25 Million**



The funding request in your proposal is divided into two sections: Financial Assistance (FA) and Technical Assistance (TA):

- Discuss with your State Coordinator how much TA and FA should be requested
- Include sufficient TA to ensure delivery of all FA activities within a project
- Ensure you are planning for 25% TA and 75% FA (but can request a variance)
- The portal will automatically add NRCS TA to the proposal budget to ensure a 75/25 split between FA and TA activity types and any Partner TA will reduce the amount of NRCS TA



Identify the most realistic and accurate estimates possible



FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE FUNDING REQUEST

FA CONSIDERATIONS FOR FUNDING REQUEST

FA Funding Request is divided into the five potential RCPP activity types:

RCPP Activity Type	Associated Covered Program Authorities
Land improvement / management / restoration	EQIP, CSP, ACEP-Wetland Reserve Easements (WRE) (restoration), HFRP (restoration), Public Law 83-566
Land rental	CRP
Easement (U.S.-held)	ACEP-WRE, HFRP (easement), Public Law 83-566 (floodplain easement); expanded to include land uses other than those traditionally eligible under the covered programs (e.g. grasslands, agricultural lands, riparian areas)
Easement (entity-held)	ACEP-ALE (currently); expanded to include easements on land uses other than those traditionally eligible under the covered programs (e.g., wetlands, floodplains, forest lands)
Public works / watersheds	Public Law 83-566

- Identify a specific funding request amount for each FA activity type included in your proposal.
- US-Held Easements are not available in Alternative Funding Arrangements (AFA).
- If your AFA project requires a specific schedule, you can enter a separate funding request amount for an activity for different years.
- For Classic, you do not need more than funding request amount per FA activity type.

ACTIVITY Type	Fund Year	State	Amount	Description
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FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE FUNDING REQUEST

PROPOSAL NARRATIVE QUESTIONS RELATED TO FA

RCPP Classic

Narrative Question 2

Financial Assistance (FA) is used to pay for conservation activities (e.g., land management, rental, entity-held easements) on private land controlled by eligible producers, or non-private land that will benefit eligible producer operations.

The FA can be delivered through **NRCS contracts with producers**, or *in limited situations* **Supplemental Agreements with partners** to implement eligible conservation activities.

Describe the activity type(s) that will be used to address the project resource concerns and provide a rational for the contracting method(s) that will be used.

FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE FUNDING REQUEST

PROPOSAL NARRATIVE QUESTIONS RELATED TO FA

Applicable to RCPP Classic and AFA

Narrative Question 17

In some circumstances, RCPP funding may be used to purchase non-fixed/portable equipment. If such equipment purchases are proposed for this project, list the type of equipment, the per item cost of each piece of equipment, whether the equipment would be purchased using TA or FA funds and a justification for the equipment purchase(s) as it ties to the proposed conservation benefits of the project.

Narrative Question 18

Would this project benefit from inclusion of specific properties or beneficiaries for RCPP funded FA activities (i.e. are specific parcels targeted for easements, participants' lands targeted for land management, rental or watershed activity)? List all such proposed "pre-selections." Note: inclusion here does not guarantee a future award but may eliminate need for further program competition. If project partners, members or their relatives own any of these properties, document those relationships here.

TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE FUNDING REQUEST

The TA Funding Request is divided into the three types of TA. The proposal must specify the amount of funding requested for each type:

- Partner Implementation Technical Assistance: Partner TA-I
- NRCS Implementation Technical Assistance: NRCS TA-I
- Enhancement Technical Assistance: TA-E

Partner proposal should be based on detailed TA discussions between NRCS lead state and partner, or PPA negotiations will likely change the TA mix.



Before starting your funding request planning, meet with lead state RCPP State Coordinator to discuss the anticipated NRCS and partner roles in providing implementation TA in the project.

TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE FUNDING REQUEST

TA-I CONSIDERATIONS FOR FUNDING REQUEST – CLASSIC VS. AFA

Implementation Technical Assistance (TA-I) is required for conservation planning, practice design, installation and verification, easement contract management, and other needs associated with supporting the implementation of RCPP conservation activities.

RCPP Classic

- TA-I funding defaults to NRCS.
- If project is funded, TA-I may be awarded to qualified partners.
- TA-I activities must be carried out according to applicable Federal Requirements, including:
 - NRCS planning procedures
 - Conservation practice standards
 - Job approval authority

Alternative Funding Arrangements (AFAs)

- Partners are expected to deliver all TA-I required except for NRCS Non-Delegable tasks.



NRCS use RCPP TA funding should support NRCS engagement in a project and must be sufficient to fully support NRCS roles. Coordinate NRCS TA budget in proposal with state coordinator.



TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE FUNDING REQUEST

NRCS NON-DELEGABLE

NRCS Non-Delegable TA Responsibilities

Develop and manage RCPP PPAs and SAs, Classic program contracts, meet NRCS program management responsibilities and process payments

HEL/WC, AGI and NEPA-related decision making.

Eligibility determinations and other producer contract activities.

Project-related communications and coordination activities.

- Non-Delegable responsibilities cover the activities that must be performed by NRCS.
- These responsibilities align to NRCS tasks to ensuring RCPP conservation activities are implemented consistent with Federal and agency statutes, regulations, and policies.



NRCS non-delegable tasks **are not** part of an RCPP project funding request.

TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE FUNDING REQUEST

TA-I CONSIDERATIONS FOR FUNDING REQUEST

Implementation Technical Assistance - Eligible Activities

Pre-application activities related to RCPP producer contracts, watershed activities or easements. This can include completion of inventories or data collection to support environmental evaluations and other NEPA-related activities.

Conservation planning to producers or landowners directly related to installation or management of eligible conservation activities per National Planning Procedures Handbook and Practice Standards, etc. .

Practice design related to land management, rental or watershed activities per Practice Standards and National Engineering Manual, etc.

Assistance with practice installation and verification.

Practice Checkout per NRCS processes/Job Approval Authority.

FA contract support services (i.e., securing and managing contracts for third-party services like engineering studies, surveys, appraisals, etc.).

- Land Management Activities typically have the greatest potential for TA-I to be delegated to an eligible partner.
- For Entity-Held Easements, consistent with ACEP-ALE, most due diligence activities are required partner contributions.
- For US-Held Easements, most TA-I is performed by NRCS and cannot be delegated.
- For Watershed Projects, most TA-I is expected to be performed by an eligible partner according to an approved Watershed Plan.

Technical Assistance Type

State Amount

Description



TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE FUNDING REQUEST

TA-E CONSIDERATIONS FOR FUNDING REQUEST

Enhancement Technical Assistance - Eligible Activities

Develop and manage RCPP agreements with NRCS.

Other RCPP project-related producer outreach and education, including inventories, analyses, and tools needed to inform outreach.

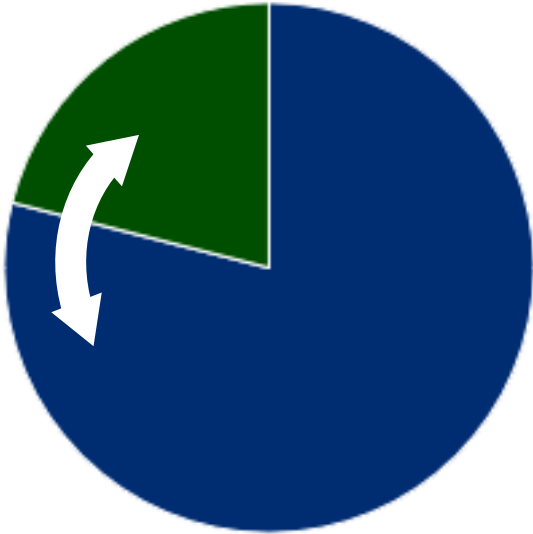
Project-related communications and coordination activities.

Development and calculation of quantifiable project outcomes.

Project management and partnership development to accomplish project goals.

- TA-E can be earned by partners for project-level activities (all field-level and producer/landowner-level conservation implementation activities are funded by TA-I)
- Enhancement activities include project management, outcomes assessment, etc.
- Like other RCPP funding, TA-E payments are only made for verifiable completion of eligible, negotiated tasks associated with active award (i.e. not just PPA)

FUNDING REQUEST VARIANCE



Proposals must adhere to the 75/25 split, but a different allocation of FA and TA funds may be proposed, and if the proposal is selected for funding, may be considered under RCPP waiver processes during PPA negotiation (i.e. proposal selection <> waiver approval).

- If you want NRCS funding to be allocated in a different manner than the proposal (e.g., more than 75% FA, or more than 25% TA) you can request an FA/TA variance when submitting the proposal.
- An FA/TA Variance request will require a justification during proposal submission - Explain the specific project budget that would be most effective for carrying out the goals and objectives of this RCPP proposal and explain why this would be more effective.



TA in excess of 25% maximum is rarely approved and require case specific justification e.g. additional TA-E needed to support delivery of contribution FA for which no alternative TA available.

TA DESCRIPTION AND SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION

As the final step in your funding request, your proposal must document your organization's TA capability and expertise i.e. document past related experience and staff expertise.

CAPABILITY

i.e., the certifications, educational background, and prior experience of individuals assigned to the tasks

CAPACITY

i.e., the time and number of people assigned to the tasks

Required Documents:

- Supporting documents describing the capacity and capability of partners to perform the technical assistance activities
- Documentation reflecting partner cost structure, outlining "valuation methods" proposed for use in tracking eligible tasks and associated costs.
- For watershed activities you must upload an NRCS approved watershed plan

RESOURCES

Support for Your Proposal

- [Your State Coordinator](#)
- [RCPP FY2024 Proposal Guide for Partners](#)

Tools for Working With Your State Coordinator

- [RCPP State Conservationist Questionnaire](#)
- [RCPP Technical Assistance Guidance](#)

Resources Related to Technical Assistance

- [NRCS Planning procedure](#)



Your [RCPP State Coordinator](#) is the best resource for questions about RCPP.



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Q&A

PLEASE SHARE YOUR QUESTIONS IN THE CHAT

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