PROJECT NARRATIVE TEMPLATE

GUIDANCE TO APPLICANTS

In addition to the separate application elements entered into the Council’s Restoration Assistance and Award Management System (RAAMS), all grant applications under the Council Selected Restoration Component and the Spill Impact Component of the RESTORE Act must include a detailed Project Narrative and a separate Budget Narrative. Both the Project Narrative and the Budget Narrative will become part of your grant or interagency agreement. It is recommended that applicants begin preparing their RAAMS application by ***first*** completing the project and budget narrative documents. These documents can then be used as references for entering the summary-level information requested in other areas of the RAAMS application. Note: Additional application elements (e.g., Executive Summary) can refer to the additional details included in the project and budget narratives.

**Applicants are encouraged to contact Council Staff with any questions that arise during development of these documents. Please contact the RAAMS Help Desk (504-444-2540,** [**raams\_techsupport@restorethegulf.gov)**](mailto:raams_techsupport@restorethegulf.gov))**, and you will be promptly referred to the appropriate Council staff member.**

Detailed instructions for completing the Project Narrative are included below.

*NOTES:*

* *This Project Narrative Template is provided to applicants/recipients as general guidance. The elements in this document have currently been identified as information needed for all project or program narratives. However, every project or program is unique, and additional information may be required for the application to be approved for funding. Additional detailed information supporting the project or program budget is provided in the Budget Narrative. Any overlap between these two documents is intentional and considered necessary by Council Staff. You may summarize information in one narrative document and direct the reader to refer to more detailed information in the other narrative document.*
* *Applicants are not limited to only the information requested in the Project Narrative template. The template below highlights the primary elements necessary for a complete Project Narrative for a generic project. Additional information and Project Narrative sections can be provided if necessary to justify or more clearly explain project details.*
* *Please refer to the* [*Council’s Recipient Proposal and Award Guide*](https://www.restorethegulf.gov/gcerc-grants-office/gcerc-grants-resources) *for additional requirements that may be associated with specific types of activities such as construction or land acquisition.*

**Information included in the Project Narrative is required to:**

* Ensure the activity for which the grant or Interagency Agreement (IAA) is being sought fully corresponds to the associated activity as described in the Funded Priorities List (FPL).
* Demonstrate “use of best available science” as required for project implemented with RESTORE Act funding.
* Provide the detail needed to ensure full transparency and accountability.

**Project Narrative:**

***Project Title***

* Project Title should match the title in the FPL.
* If the Project is part of a larger project or program, provide some additional identifying information, but ensure that the information coding is consistent between project/program components.

***Methodology / Approach***

* Brief purpose/objective of this project. This does not need to be more than a paragraph long, and could be drawn from any combination of the FPL fact sheet, the abstract, and the executive summary.
* Scope of work (What and How) - Describe the scope of work for the proposed activity; if proposing a program, rather than a project or activity, provide specific tasks regarding the program’s activities and operations. (The applicant should contact Council Staff for further guidance prior to combining several small projects or activities into a single program).
* Roles and responsibilities (Who) - Describe roles and responsibilities of key organizations, including sponsoring Council members organization(s), partners, subrecipients, contractors, (if known at this time), and any important co-funder(s) for the project. Note that details regarding expertise, specific individuals, etc., will be captured in the corresponding budget narrative and the detailed budget in RAAMS.

*Roles and Responsibilities Table: (For example only; this table is optional and provided only as tool for illustrative purposes)*

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| *Organization/*  *Agency/Company* | *Role* | *Duties* |
| *NOAA* | *Sponsoring Council Member and IAA Federal Servicing Agency* | *Prepare application, project oversight, prepare environmental assessment, ESA consultations, prepare and submit monitoring reports to Council* |
| *Estuaries Foundation* | *NOAA Subrecipient* | *Due diligence, acquisition of property, initial landowner* |
| *USFWS* | *Partnering Council Member and Co-funder* | *Additional funds provided under Migratory Bird Program.*  *Long-term landowner under Oystercreek Refuge, long-term management and maintenance, monitoring* |
| *NFWF* | *Co-funder* | *Additional funds provided under Gulf Benefit Fund* |
| *Texas Parks and Wildlife Department* | *Partner* | *Construction oversight, permitting assistance, recipient of NFWF funding.* |
| *(Unknown)* | *NOAA Contractor* | *Engineering and design* |

* Location (Where) - Note that although maps and GIS files are required for all projects, general narrative location information is needed in the narrative as well.
  + Provide a general description of the location of the activities and any areas that will be benefitted, if applicable.
  + Can indicate that more detailed descriptions (including Congressional Districts, Maps, etc.) are provided elsewhere in the RAAMS application.
* Project/Program Duration (When) – Include anticipated start date, end date, and duration of activities under the award, including applicable post-implementation monitoring.
* Approach (How) - Provide any additional details needed to fully describe how the scope of work will be implemented to achieve the objectives and outcomes.
* Supporting Information (Why) - Provide support for the methodology/approach selected; this should normally not be more than a paragraph. Include how and why this activity and approach, at this location, is based on the *Best Available Science* as defined in the Act. The RESTORE Act defines best available science as science that—(A) maximizes the quality, objectivity, and integrity of information, including statistical information; (B) uses peer-reviewed and publicly available data; and (C) clearly documents and communicates risks and uncertainties in the scientific basis for such projects”). The project narrative should refer to how best available science (e.g. scientific review processes, technical expertise, and/or data) will be/were utilized to develop and inform proposed project activities, design, and inform adaptive management.

***Risks and Uncertainties***

* Discuss the possible operational risks.
* Discuss the possible ecological risks if applicable (e.g., not reaching desired ecological outcomes, inadvertent harm to the environment).
* Discuss the possible material risks (e.g., legal, environmental compliance/regulatory, operational, budgetary, or unknowns).
* Discuss mitigation strategy(s) for each identified risk in order to implement and/or maintain the proposed activity.
* Discuss adaptive management strategy(s) if applicable.
* If applicable, discuss how the project or program will be operated and maintained (1) during the award period, and (2) after the award has closed. Include how these activities would be funded.

***Leveraged funds***

* This section is optional, and should be included in the narrative when the applicant deems it helpful in providing a full description of the relationship between this project and other activities funded under the RESTORE Act or with other funding beyond what is requested in RAAMS.
* Types of leveraging that could be summarily described in this section include:
  + - Co-funding: Funds that are required for the project to be completed (for example, if the sponsor does not receive the leveraged funds, then the project cannot be completed).
    - Adjoining: Funds that are leveraged based on geographic location where ecosystem benefits are leveraged.
    - Building on other sources: Building upon prior or other investments that have been made in the past or present (it's the type of leveraging that can't necessarily be captured in adjoining).
* Note: Detailed information regarding any co-funding must be included in the budget in RAAMS and should be described in the Budget Narrative.

***Milestones/Milestone Type Budget Summary***

* Provide, in narrative format, details of the information summarized in the milestones table (see associated Milestones Template available on the [Grants Office Resources](https://www.restorethegulf.gov/gcerc-grants-office/gcerc-grants-resources) web page).
  + This should include a description of milestones associated with each milestone type, any deliverables, and the costs expected to be incurred to reach each milestone/deliverable.
  + Information provided should be detailed enough to provide the reader a clear understanding of the work to be conducted, support the scope of work, and justify the budgeted costs.
* The budgeted amounts for each task or activity should incorporate all associated costs – personnel and fringe benefits, travel, supplies, equipment, applicable portions of a contract, indirect costs, etc.; however, they do not have to be detailed to that level.
  + For example, if a milestone for the project is to perform an endangered species survey, the costs associated with that activity would include any in-house costs associated with performing the survey, the contractual costs to complete the survey, any travel necessary to do the survey, and associated indirect costs. The total estimated cost must be provided for each task. Ideally, additional cost details, such as the estimated contractual costs, should also be specified. In this example, the deliverable of a survey report would also be included in the description.
  + Costs such as project oversight can be incorporated into each functional task or activity, or can be set up as discrete tasks to be completed over some reasonable time period.
  + NOTES:
    - The sum of the budgets for each milestone type, task or activity **must** equal the total funds requested in the application.
    - In RAAMS, these functional tasks or activities, timelines and associated costs are summarized in the Milestones section of the application.
    - There should be a relationship between this milestones budget, timelines associated with it, and the cash drawdown projections included in RAAMS and described in the budget narrative.
    - See the [Council’s Recipient Proposal and Award Guide](https://www.restorethegulf.gov/gcerc-grants-office/gcerc-grants-resources) or the [RAAMS Users’ Guide](https://www.restorethegulf.gov/gcerc-grants-office/gcerc-grants-resources) available on the [Grants Office Resources web page](https://www.restorethegulf.gov/gcerc-grants-office/gcerc-grants-resources)[[1]](#footnote-1) for the list of milestone types (areas of effort) associated with the entry of Milestones in RAAMS.
    - See the Milestones Template for additional information on preparing milestones for entry into RAAMS.

***Metrics***

* + Provide, in narrative format, details of the metrics selected and entered separately in the Metrics Section of the RAAMS application. Please describe the metrics, why they have been selected, and how they are related to the project milestones.
  + Metrics should be:
    - Objective
    - Quantifiable, and
    - Include Outcome Targets (i.e., Success Criteria from ODP template).
* Describe, briefly, the monitoring strategy and methodology for metrics. Please note, additional details regarding metrics monitoring and methodology will be captured in the Observational Data Plan submitted with your application. However, a general description of the metrics and how they are related to project milestones should be provided here. Please coordinate the information included here with the technical staff member preparing the Observational Data Plan for your application.
* The list of metrics available for selection are listed [here](https://restorethegulf.gov/sites/default/files/GO-Res_metrics_initial_ver20160411.pdf) and on the [Grants Office Resources web page](https://www.restorethegulf.gov/gcerc-grants-office/gcerc-grants-resources).

***Environmental Compliance***

* + The purpose of this section is to provide environmental compliance information that was not provided in the environmental compliance checklist for this application. For example, for applications that seek funding for environmental compliance activities, please briefly describe what those activities entail and how they will be conducted. For applications seeking implementation funding, please describe how any outstanding environmental requirements will be identified and addressed. In the budget narrative, please make sure that there is a corresponding budget line item for any environmental compliance activities that would be conducted by this project or program.

1. The Council Grants Office Resources web page is available at the following link - <https://www.restorethegulf.gov/gcerc-grants-office/gcerc-grants-resources>. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)