

REQUEST FOR APPLICATIONS

**STRENGTHENING PARTNERSHIPS AND
ENGAGING NETWORKS: LEVERAGING
COMMUNITIES OF PRACTICE TO BUILD EQUITY
INTO LOCAL EFFORTS**

*The National
Academies of* | SCIENCES
ENGINEERING
MEDICINE

GULF RESEARCH PROGRAM





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Full Proposals must be submitted through the [online application system](#) by 5:00pm Eastern Time, July 20, 2021

Visit the Gulf Research Program on the web for more [information about this funding opportunity](#).

SUMMARY OF THIS FUNDING OPPORTUNITY

The Gulf Research Program (GRP) is developing new programming around health and community resilience that prioritizes the needs and challenges of communities that are disproportionately at risk from the impacts of climate hazards and other disasters. This funding opportunity is an initial step to identify effective methods or approaches to address the inequities experienced by these at-risk communities.¹

Specifically, the GRP is seeking projects from Communities of Practice (CoP)² that work in the area of climate adaptation or disaster resilience to build the knowledge base and capacity of local practitioners, community leaders, and decision-makers who work in the GRP's geographic regions³ to apply an equity⁴ lens to their efforts in order to address the priorities and needs of at-risk communities.

The GRP expects to award three projects under this funding opportunity. Applicants may request up to \$300,000 for projects not to exceed three years.

THE CHALLENGE

Acute shocks—such as hurricanes or oil spills—have a disproportionate impact on at-risk communities already burdened by chronic stressors such as systemic or institutional racism, poverty, environmental degradation, or health disparities. Disasters and climate hazards will continue to have negative, disruptive effects on at-risk communities, making it increasingly difficult for these communities to prepare for, respond to, or recover from future disasters.

To confront this challenge, local practitioners, community leaders, and decision makers who are responsible for helping their communities withstand disasters and build resilience may benefit from additional knowledge, skills, resources, or partnerships to develop and implement equitable solutions to address the priorities and needs of those communities most at-risk.

1. For purposes of this funding opportunities, at-risk communities are those that are vulnerable, underserved, under-resourced, or otherwise marginalized.

2. A Community of Practice (CoP) is “an organized group of professional people who share the same interests in resolving an issue, improving skills, and learning from each other’s experiences” (see Gonçalves L., “Communities of Practice: Everything You Need to Know,” Adapt Methodology, <https://adaptmethodology.com/communities-of-practice/>).

3. The GRP focuses its work on the Gulf of Mexico and other outer continental shelves of the United States where there is hydrocarbon production, and on their coastal zones; specifically, this includes the areas of the Southcentral region of Alaska that are or could be impacted by activities (e.g., drilling, production, or transportation) associated with hydrocarbon production in the offshore. Where appropriate, the GRP’s work may extend farther inland or into adjacent seas.

4. For the purposes of this funding opportunity, “equity” is defined as “the fair treatment, access, opportunity, and advancement for all people, while at the same time striving to identify and eliminate barriers that have prevented the full participation of some groups,” from Kapila, M., Hines, E., & Searby, M. 2016. “Why Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Matter.” The Independent Sector. Available at <https://independentsector.org/resource/why-diversity-equity-and-inclusion-matter/#:~:text=Equity%20is%20the%20fair%20treatment,full%20participation%20of%20some%20groups>. Accessed (May 20, 2021).

PURPOSE OF THIS FUNDING OPPORTUNITY

The purpose of this funding opportunity is to support Communities of Practice (CoP) that work in the area of climate adaptation or disaster resilience to build the knowledge base and capacity of their members to apply an equity lens to their activities in order to address the needs or challenges of communities that are disproportionately at risk from climate hazards or other disasters. The GRP is particularly interested in supporting CoPs whose members engage with communities at the local level.

Each project will produce the following deliverables:

1. A final report that
 - a. Describes the methods or approaches developed and how they were implemented to build the capacity of CoP members to apply an equity lens to their activities.
 - b. Discusses the CoP members who participated in the activities.
 - c. Assesses outcomes of the implemented activity (e.g., how CoP members' awareness, knowledge, skills, motivation, etc. to apply an equity lens was increased, examples of how CoP members applied an equity lens to their work, etc.)
 - d. Describe what other community assets were leveraged to optimize the effectiveness of the GRP grant.
 - e. Summarizes feedback from CoP members about their participation in the activities.
 - f. Discusses successes and challenges in developing and implementing the activities.
 - g. Identifies potential next steps.
2. If applicable, any products developed such as guidebooks, webcasts or webinars, stories, PowerPoint presentations, reports, etc.
3. Semi-annual progress reports that include supporting materials or documents (e.g., agendas, meeting summaries, survey results, etc.) completed during the reporting period.

The GRP will share these deliverables with other communities and organizations interested in methods or approaches that could be used to build the knowledge base and capacity of local practitioners, community leaders, and decision makers to apply and equity lens to their community plans, policies, strategy, or programs.

ELIGIBILITY

The GRP welcomes proposals from organizations that provide fiscal oversight of an existing Community of Practice (CoP), excluding federal agencies, that focuses on climate adaptation or disaster resilience. The applying organization will be referred to as the "applicant" hereafter. The individual who will lead the proposed project will be referred to as "project director" hereafter.

The GRP requires applicant proposals to adhere to the following:

- The CoP membership must include professionals working within the GRP's geographic regions (i.e., coastal areas of the U.S. Gulf of Mexico region or the Southcentral region of Alaska).
- This funding opportunity is for new, distinct activities only. Proposed activities that are part of a broader, existing effort or "project" may be eligible if the proposal clearly demonstrates that the funding request is for new or distinct activities that would not otherwise occur.
- Activities currently under consideration for funding from other sources are not eligible.
- Applicants must have a valid federal tax ID number.

The GRP requires project directors and key personnel in an application to adhere to the following:

- An individual may be proposed as project director in only one application associated with this funding opportunity. If an individual is proposed as project director in any application s/he may also be proposed as key personnel in up to two additional applications.
- An individual not proposed as a project director in any application may be named as key personnel in up to three applications associated with this funding opportunity.

APPLICATION SUBMISSION AND REVIEW

Applications for this funding opportunity will be reviewed through a full proposal process. Project directors should review the application preparation and submission instructions and submit any questions to gulfgrants@nas.edu prior to the submission deadline. The GRP strives to respond to applicants' questions within two business days, but cannot guarantee that applicants' questions will be answered before submission deadlines.

Full Proposal Guidelines

The GRP will only accept proposals submitted via the [online application system](#). Full proposal application materials submitted in any language other than English will not be considered. The GRP may reject, without review, proposals that are not responsive to the Request for Proposal instructions.

The Full Proposal must include the following elements:

- I. Project Team
 - a. Project director
 - b. ORCID (Open Research and Contributor ID)
 - c. Key personnel
 - d. Involvement of project director or key personnel in other applications

related to this funding opportunity

II. Project Details:

- a. Project title
- b. Project key words (up to 10 words)
- c. Community of Practice Overview (e.g., description of the CoP's membership and activities in climate adaptation or disaster resilience, including any activities within or associated with the GRP's geographic regions; description of the CoP members who work in the GRP's geographic regions)
- d. Project description (max. 1,500 words)
 - i. Why is the CoP membership interested in equity?
 - ii. What does the CoP expect to accomplish in each year of the project? What are the proposed methods or approaches to be implemented to increase the capacity among CoP members to apply an equity lens into their community work?
 - iii. What are the anticipated deliverables and potential outcomes of this project?
- e. Project assessment
 - i. What does success look like for your project and how will it be measured?
 - ii. How will the CoP will solicit feedback about the method or approach that was implemented?
 - iii. How will the CoP determine if the proposed activities have increased the capacity of its members to apply an equity lens to their community work?
- f. Data Management Plan. This RFA does not anticipate the generation of data. However, if data is generated, please submit a Data Management Plan in accordance with [GRP's Data Management Policy](#).

III. Proposed Budget

- a. Anticipated Total Project Budget
- b. Anticipated Budget Distribution Among Participating Organizations

IV. Attachments

- a. Required attachments
 - i. **Budget & Budget Justification Form:** [Download](#) the forms and complete it to provide information on the proposed budget. Please note that cost sharing is prohibited.
 - ii. **Resume(s):** A resume is required for the project director and each individual identified as key personnel. Resumes are limited to two pages for each person. Please combine all resumes into a single PDF document before uploading as an attachment. If a resume is longer than two pages, only the first two pages will be considered in peer review.
 - iii. **Collaborators and Other Affiliations Form:** The purpose of this

form is to help the GRP eliminate potential conflicts of interest during reviewer recruitment. [Download](#) the form and complete it to provide information on the following:

1. All persons (including their current organizational affiliations) who are currently, or who have been collaborators (i.e. an individual with whom you work closely to co-design or conduct a project) or co-authors with the individual on a project, book, article, report, abstract, or paper during the 48 months preceding the submission of the application.
2. The individual's own graduate and postdoctoral advisor(s) and their current organizational affiliations.
3. All persons (including their current organizational affiliations) with whom the individual has had an association as a graduate or postdoctoral advisor.

iv. **Current and Pending Support from Other Sources Form:**

[Download](#) the form and complete it to provide information on current and pending support from other sources for the project director and key personnel, if applicable, and upload it to the [online application system](#). The form requests information on the project director's and key personnel's current and pending support from other sources (e.g., ongoing projects and proposals). All current project support from whatever source (e.g., federal, state, local or foreign government agencies, public or private foundations, industrial or other commercial organizations) must be listed. The project proposed for this funding opportunity and all other projects or activities that require a portion of time of the project personnel and other senior personnel must be included, even if they receive no salary support from the project(s). The total award amount for the entire award period covered (including indirect costs) must be shown as well as the number of person-months per year to be devoted to the project, regardless of source of support.

Full Proposal Peer Review Process

Only complete applications meeting the eligibility criteria will be evaluated by external reviewers based on the Merit Review Criteria (see below). Funding decisions will take into consideration the reviewer's evaluations and the program's funding availability, current portfolio, objectives, and goals. The final decision for funding will be made by the National Academies. [Visit our website](#) to see the GRP's conflict of interest and confidentiality policies.

FULL PROPOSAL MERIT REVIEW CRITERIA

Proposals will be evaluated on the basis of four review criteria. The bullets under each criterion should guide applicants in writing their proposals and guide reviewers in evaluating a proposal.

Relevance (35%)

- To what extent does the proposal address the challenge statement and provide a well justified approach to achieve intended outcomes?
- To what extent is the project feasible within the criteria of this funding opportunity?

Engagement and Impact (35%)

- To what extent does the proposal identify and engage appropriate stakeholders?
- To what extent could the anticipated project outcomes potentially be used by other communities, organizations, institutions or groups within or outside of the project community?
- To what extent is the project's assessment appropriate to determine the success of the approach or method?

Project Team (20%)

- To what extent are project team members well-qualified in their experience, knowledge, and skills to ensure the completion of a successful project?

Budget (10%)

- To what extent is the budget commensurate with the proposed activities?

MAKING THE AWARD

Selection Notice

The GRP reserves the right to select all, some, one, or none of the proposals received in response to this solicitation.

When the evaluation of a proposal is complete, the project director will be notified that (1) the proposal has been selected for funding pending contract negotiations, or (2) the proposal has not been selected. These official notifications will be sent via email to the project director identified on the application. If a proposal is selected for award, the GRP reserves the right to request additional or clarifying information for any reason deemed necessary, including, but not limited to, indirect cost information or other budget information.

Award Notice

The GRP transmits award notices to organizations via e-mail. The award is not finalized and the National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine is not obligated to

provide any funding until a signed copy of the award agreement has been received by the Academies.

Grant Periods

Upon receipt of the award notice, the awardee should note the effective date and the expiration date. The effective date is the date specified in the grant notice on or after which expenditures may be charged to the grant. Charging expenditures to the grant prior to the effective date is prohibited. The expiration date is the date specified in the grant notice after which expenditures may not be charged against the grant except to satisfy obligations to pay allowable project costs committed on or before that date. Once an award is made, the effective date cannot be changed. The expiration date may be changed as a result of approval of a request for a no-cost extension. If approved, the GRP will issue an amendment to the grant.

If additional time beyond the performance period and the established expiration date is required to assure adequate completion of the original scope of work with the funds already made available, the awardee may apply for a one-time, no-cost extension of up to six months. A formal request must be submitted to the GRP at least 45 days prior to the expiration date of the grant. The request must explain the need for the extension and include an estimate of the unobligated funds remaining and a plan for their use. This one-time extension will not be approved solely for the purpose of using the unliquidated balances.

Post-award Management

Coordination with GRP: After the award is conferred, grantees shall coordinate with the GRP to formally initiate the project. GRP staff will periodically request status meetings during the project implementation phase to discuss progress and any unanticipated developments that may affect the project outcomes as specified in the grant agreement. These interactions will help ensure successful management of the grant.

Reporting Requirements: After an award is conferred, the grantee shall provide a semi-annual financial report to the GRP to report on grant expenditures to date under the grant. The grantee shall provide a semi-annual written report to the GRP to report on activities being carried out under the grant, including but not limited to project accomplishments to date and grant expenditures. No later than 60 days after the expiration of the award, the grantee shall provide in writing a final grant report. The final grant report shall address the original objectives of the project as identified in the grant proposal, describe any changes in objectives, describe the final project accomplishments, and include a final project accounting of all grant funds.

Data Management: Implementation of a data management plan will be monitored through the annual and final report process. Even when no data or any other information products will be produced, a plan must be submitted that states “No data or information

products are expected to be produced from this project.” Please see the GRP’s [Data Management Policy and Data Management](#) web page for information on this requirement.

Scientific Integrity

A fundamental purpose of the GRP is to facilitate the advancement of knowledge and the application of science to address challenges relevant to the GRP’s mission. All activities of the GRP will be conducted to meet the highest standards of scientific integrity. All grantees have a responsibility to use the funds wisely.

Grant Terms and Conditions

Please review the Grant Agreement prior to submitting an application. It is the policy of National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine to entertain potential modifications to the Grant Agreement only under the most exceptional circumstances. Rather, successful applicants are strongly encouraged to sign the Grant Agreement as presented.

- [View a sample grant agreement if the applicant is a public institution.](#)
- [View a sample agreement if the applicant is a private institution.](#)

BACKGROUND

ABOUT THE GULF RESEARCH PROGRAM

The Gulf Research Program (GRP) is a division of the National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine—a private, nonprofit organization with a 150-year history as an independent advisor to the Nation on issues of science, engineering, and medicine. The GRP was founded in 2013 as part of legal settlements with the companies involved in the 2010 Deepwater Horizon disaster, and received an endowment to carry out studies, projects, and other activities in the areas of research and development, education and training, and monitoring and synthesis.

The GRP seeks to enhance offshore energy safety, environmental protection and stewardship, and human health and community resilience in the Gulf of Mexico and beyond. It focuses its work on the Gulf of Mexico and other outer continental shelves of the United States where there is hydrocarbon production, and on their coastal zones; specifically, this includes the areas of the Southcentral region of Alaska that are or could be impacted by activities (e.g., drilling, production, or transportation) associated with hydrocarbon production in the offshore. Where appropriate, the GRP’s work may extend farther inland or into adjacent seas.

The GRP uses four strategic approaches to “catalyze, implement, and track positive impact in the Gulf of Mexico and beyond”⁵ :

1. Advance science and understanding
2. Bridge knowledge to action
3. Build partnerships and engage networks
4. Monitor for progress and change

THE GRP’S HEALTH AND RESILIENCE PROGRAM

The GRP’s Health and Resilience Program works to put science into action in ways that enhance health, well-being, and resilience across communities in its geographic areas of focus (i.e., the coastal areas of the Gulf region and the Southcentral region of Alaska). Its overarching goals are to:

- Reduce inequities in health and community resilience.
- Advance research and practice related to health and community resilience.
- Promote a culture of health and community resilience.

The Health and Resilience Program uses two complementary frameworks to approach its work:

1. the social determinants of health⁶
2. the six community capitals⁷

Social determinants of health are the conditions in the environment where people are born, live, learn, work, play, worship, and age that affect a wide range of health, functioning, and quality-of-life outcomes and risks. Examples include, but are not limited to, education, employment, environment, health services and systems, housing, income and wealth, public safety, and transportation. The six community capitals—infrastructure, natural, financial, human and cultural, social, and political—represent a community’s assets. Resilience is the “ability to prepare and plan for, absorb, recover from, and more successfully adapt to adverse events.”⁸

5. National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine. 2020. Gulf Research Program: 2020-2024 Strategic Plan, pp. 3-4. Available at: https://www.nationalacademies.org/cache_0f9e/content/4885770000227383.pdf. Retrieved April 24, 2021.

6. National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine. 2017. Communities in Action: Pathways to Health Equity, pp. 116-9. Washington, DC: The National Academies Press. <https://doi.org/10.17226/24624>.

7. National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine. 2019. Building and Measuring Community Resilience: Actions for Communities and the Gulf Research Program, pp. 15-17. Washington, DC: The National Academies Press. <https://doi.org/10.17226/25383>.

8. National Research Council. 2012. Disaster Resilience: A National Imperative, p. 1. Washington, DC: The National Academies Press. <https://doi.org/10.17226/13457>.