**Release date: November 18, 2021**

**Lake Champlain Basin Program Announcement**

**Request for Education and Outreach Proposals to Implement *Opportunities for Action***

The Lake Champlain Basin Program (LCBP), in partnership with NEIWPCC is pleased to announce a Request for Proposals for services to further the mission of the LCBP and address the tasks outlined in our guiding document, [*Opportunities for Action*](http://plan.lcbp.org). The total request for each project may range from $15,000 – $50,000.

The proposal should be a five-page document to introduce the project, adhering to the format requirements below. After review of the submitted proposals next spring, the proposals will then be reviewed by the Lake Champlain Steering Committee in April. Recipients will be notified in May 2022. Successful projects will begin **after October 1, 2022.**

All awards are subject to available funding.

**LCBP seeks proposals for projects that address strategies and tasks outlined in the Informed and Involved Public chapter of *Opportunities for Action*.** For this funding cycle, LCBP is also interested in receiving proposals on the following outreach topics: road salt reduction programs, climate change impacts in the Lake Champlain watershed, septic system maintenance, and bringing scientific programs into local communities.

We anticipate these projects will be supported with funds awarded to NEIWPCC on behalf of the Lake Champlain Basin Program by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and the Great Lakes Fishery Commission. This Request for Education and Outreach Proposals is available on the [LCBP RFPs webpage](https://www.lcbp.org/about-us/grants-rfps/request-for-proposals-rfps/).

**PROPOSAL DEADLINE NOTICE:** Only Microsoft Word-compatible submissions will be accepted and must be submitted via [**the online form at this link**](https://form.jotform.com/213186501198153)by:

**12 pm (noon) EST on January 21, 2022**

**Late or incomplete proposals will not be considered.**

**Lake Champlain Basin Program**

**Request for Education and Outreach Proposals to Implement *Opportunities for Action***

**Overview of Lake Champlain Basin Program and NEIWPCC**

Congress designated Lake Champlain as a resource of national significance with the Lake Champlain Special Designation Act of 1990. The Special Designation Act also established the Lake Champlain Basin Program (LCBP) and authorized it to receive direct support from the U.S. EPA under the Clean Water Act. LCBP coordinates and funds efforts that benefit the Lake Champlain Basin’s water quality, fisheries, economy, wetlands, wildlife, recreation, and cultural resources, and works in partnership with government agencies, private organizations, local communities, and individuals from New York, Vermont, and Québec. These efforts are guided by the comprehensive management plan [*Opportunities for Action: An Evolving Plan for the Future of the Lake Champlain Basin*](http://plan.lcbp.org/).

Since 1992, [NEIWPCC](http://www.neiwpcc.org) has served as the primary program administrator of LCBP at the request of the Lake Champlain Steering Committee, and administers the program’s personnel and finances. NEIWPCC is a regional commission that helps the states of the Northeast preserve and advance water quality. NEIWPCC engages and convenes water quality professionals and other interested parties from New England and New York to collaborate on water, wastewater, and environmental science challenges across shared regions, ecosystems, and areas of expertise.

1. **Grant award process**

LCBP issues this annual request for proposals that address any education and outreach strategy identified in *Opportunities for Action,* a long-term management plan for the Lake Champlain Basin and that contributes toward the LCBP [mission](https://www.lcbp.org/about-us/what-we-do/mission/). Proposals will be evaluated through a competitive process. Grant award recipients will be selected from the pool and **successful projects will begin after October 1, 2022**.

Applicants may request up to $50,000. Please note that if an applicant is asked to submit a full proposal, the total request amount in the full proposal must be equal to or less than the total request in the proposal unless written consent is obtained from LCBP. *If your project concept requires less than $15,000, you may respond to our Local Implementation Small Education and Outreach Grants Request for Proposals by January 14, 2022.* Please visit <http://lcbp.org/grants> or contact LCBP for information on other grant opportunities.

Questions and answers regarding this request will be hosted on the [LCBP Grants webpage](https://www.lcbp.org/about-us/grants-rfps/request-for-proposals-rfps/pre-proposal-faqs/).

Please feel free to contact Colleen Hickey, Education and Outreach LCBP Education and Outreach Technical Coordinator ([chickey@lcbp.org](mailto:chickey@lcbp.org)) with any questions.

1. **Priorities for funding**

**For 2022 proposals, LCBP seeks projects that address any strategies or tasks outlined in the Informed and Involved Chapter of *Opportunities for Action* (**[**http://plan.lcbp.org**](http://plan.lcbp.org)**).** For this funding cycle, LCBP is also interested in receiving proposals on the following outreach topics: road salt reduction programs, climate change impacts in the Lake Champlain watershed, septic system maintenance, and bringing scientific programs into local communities.

1. **Eligibility**

Eligible organizations include public or private schools or other educational institutions; and municipalities including municipal boards, commissions, or committees in the United States and Canada; 501 (c)(3) nonprofit organizations or citizen groups such as watershed associations working in coordination with such an organization that applies on their behalf and will manage the grant funds; Natural Resources Conservation Districts (VT) and Soil and Water Conservation Districts (NY). Private businesses, individuals, and state or federal government agencies may collaborate with one of the above groups, but are not eligible to be the primary applicant. Regardless of organization type, eligible applicants must have a Unique Entity Identifier (“UEI”) number.   
  
The official identifier for doing business with the U.S. Government will be changing from using a DUNS number to a SAM.gov created Unique Entity Identifier (“UEI”) number. Contractors will no longer need to go to a third-party website (Dunn & Bradstreet) to obtain their identifier. Instead, they will register for a their UEI through the System for Award Management (SAM) at <https://www.sam.gov/portal/SAM>. This SAM-generated number will become the official identifier for doing business with the U.S. Government and NEIWPCC/LCBP.

In April 2022, the federal government will stop using the DUNS number to uniquely identify entities registered in the System. All NEIWPCC/LCBP Contractors will be required, as part of the contract process, to submit their UEI as part of the agreement process. The DUNS number will no longer be used as a unique entity identifier and only the Sam.gov created number will be accepted.

State, provincial, and federal government entities are not eligible to apply.

The successful applicant will be responsible for the completion of all project tasks, though subcontracted work may be permitted by the LCBP Project Officer upon written request. All work must be geographically focused within the Lake Champlain Basin. Applicants may submit more than one proposal.

1. **Timeframe for projects**

The successful applicants will complete the project according to the following schedule. Please note that this schedule is subject to change.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Full proposals due to LCBP | 12pm (noon) EST  January 21, 2022 |
| Applicants notified of funding decisions | May 2022 |
| Detailed project workplan due | August 2022 |
| Project start date | October 2022 |
| Project deliverables and final report due | Up to 24 months after start date |

1. **Summary of Other Requirements for Selected Projects**

Upon selection of full proposals for funding, successful applicants should be aware of these additional requirements for all LCBP-funded projects:

1. Following initial notification of the award, a workplan must be approved by LCBP before a contract agreement can be executed and the work begun. Compensation cannot begin until the workplan is approved and a contract is executed. The workplan will detail the logistical elements of the project, including deliverables and project timeline. Information about the LCBP grant process, workplan development guidelines, and reporting requirements can be found on the LCBP website at: <http://www.lcbp.org/about-us/grants-rfps/grant-toolkit/>. The successful applicant will enter into a contract with NEIWPCC in order to complete the work and will be compensated upon completion of workplan deliverables.
2. If a project includes collection of any primary or secondary data or involves a modeling effort, it will require a Quality Assurance Project Plan (QAPP). Once the grant agreement has been executed, the contractor must develop a QAPP to be approved before the beginning of any data collection or secondary data analyses. More information about LCBP Quality Assurance Plans can be found at: <http://www.lcbp.org/about-us/grants-rfps/grant-toolkit/qapp/>. A QAPP generally takes four weeks for approval following submission. If you think you will need a QAPP, please contact Colleen Hickey at [chickey@lcbp.org](mailto:chickey@lcbp.org) as soon as possible.
3. The successful applicant will prepare brief quarterly reports documenting progress on each objective and task in the project. A final report fully documenting the project results will be required at project completion.
4. When approved, the final report will be edited for content and style in consultation with the successful respondent. Some content of this report may also be used for future LCBP or NEIWPCC public outreach materials.
5. All materials and work products, regardless of physical form or characteristics, produced as a result of this project shall be made available to LCBP, NEIWPCC, and appropriate funding agencies in a suitable file format. LCBP, NEIWPCC, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, and Great Lakes Fishery Commission shall have an unrestricted right to use any materials, software, maps, studies, reports, and other products or data generated using assistance funds or specified to be delivered. The contractor shall not obtain, attempt to obtain, or file for a patent, copyright, trademark or any other interest in any such materials, or work products without the expressed, written consent of LCBP and NEIWPCC, and subject to any other approvals required by state or federal law. Reports and other deliverables will credit LCBP, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, Great Lakes Fishery Commission, and NEIWPCC as funding partners for any work completed under the project contract.
6. GIS data produced under this project must adhere to the requirements of EPA’s National Geospatial Data Policy (see <http://www.epa.gov/geospatial/docs/National_Geospatial_Data_Policy.pdf>). Specifically, the selected contractor must provide documentation for all produced data, including source information for each digital data layer and specific information about the data layer itself, (e.g., method used, geographic extent of data layer, file format, date of creation, staff contact, description and definition of data fields and their contents, related files, if any, and description of data quality and quality assurance methods used). The EPA Metadata Editor (EME) was developed to simplify and standardize metadata development and is a recommended tool for streamlining production of required metadata. The EME and related training materials can be downloaded from <https://edg.epa.gov/EME/>. Specific technical guidance on geospatial deliverables and acceptable formats can be found at <https://www.epa.gov/geospatial/epa-region-2-gis-deliverables-guidance>. GIS data produced under this project will be submitted to LCBP and NEIWPCC as a final deliverable.
7. NEIWPCC requires its contractors to maintain workers compensation and liability insurance. Contractors must submit proof of adequate insurance coverage on an annual basis for the duration of the project. The Contractor shall, at its sole expense, obtain and maintain in force, and shall require any subcontractor or assignee to obtain and maintain in force, both for the benefit of the Commission, the following kinds and amounts of insurance:
   * Workers’ Compensation Insurance. The policy shall cover the obligations of the Contractor in accordance with the Workers’ Compensations Law and Disability Benefits Law covering all operations under the Contract, whether performed by it, or by its subcontractor.
   * Liability and Property Damage Insurance. Unless otherwise specified, each policy shall have limits not less than: $2,000,000 combined (Bodily Injury & Property Damage); $3,000,000 aggregate, single limit per occurrence.
8. LCBP encourages groups to budget costs that are associated with the project as direct expenses, including personnel costs, travel, project supplies, mailings, phone costs, office supplies, etc. Use of some grant funds for indirect costs is also allowable, subject to both the provisions of OMB Circular A-87 and LCBP approval. If you need further guidance, contact the LCBP or refer to [OMB Circular A-87 (Revised)](https://obamawhitehouse.archives.gov/omb/circulars_a087_2004/#atta). Sections D, E, and F of Attachment A provide an overview of direct and indirect costs. For projects in response to this RFP, the indirect budget should not exceed 10% of the direct project budget, and indirect offered as match should similarly not exceed 10% of direct match contributed, unless a higher federally negotiated indirect rate is in place. The LCBP/NEIWPCC Indirect Policy can be found here: <http://www.lcbp.org/about-us/grants-rfps/grant-toolkit/>
9. LCBP grant funds **cannot be used** to produce for-profit products or to cover costs associated with regulatory compliance or direct fundraising efforts. LCBP grant funds also cannot be used for land purchases, endowment funds, lobbying or legislative advocacy of any kind, or for the purchase of food or beverage or for entrance fees into facilities.
10. Grant applicants are required to follow the small purchase method which is a relatively simple and informal method (procurement procedure) for purchasing supplies, equipment, and services that cost more than $10,000 and less than $250,000. This procurement procedure is applicable to proposals submitted in response to this RFP if the primary applicant is not a for-profit organization. The purpose is to ensure fair and open competition for purchases supported by LCBP/federal funding. If the applicant plans to use LCBP funding to obtain supplies, equipment or contractual services to complete its proposed workplan, then it must follow federal procurement regulations:
    * + - Procurement of supplies and services that do not exceed $10,000 may be made without soliciting competitive quotes if the price is considered reasonable.
        - Procurement of supplies, equipment and services that are greater than $10,000 and do not cost more than $250,000 require that the recipient obtain multiple price quotes through a documented competitive process. Good faith efforts to obtain services from disadvantaged business enterprises should also be made, including contacting the small business administration and minority business development agency to inform them about the opportunity for businesses to submit price quotes as part of the competitive process. At least three price quotes for the contract work must be secured. The selected item or service does not need to be the lowest cost if it does not meet your requirements or you can otherwise demonstrate that the higher price offers the “best value.” Justification must be provided for the outcome of the bid process. This process may take place prior to the submission of a proposal for LCBP funds.
11. ADDITIONAL COVID-19 SAFETY REQUIREMENTS

LCBP and NEIWPCC are committed to providing a working environment that keeps all staff as safe as possible and promotes the well-being of our community. All RFP applicants who may come into close contact with LCBP and NEIWPCC staff are required to be fully vaccinated. Close contact may occur during the course of a project with a QAPP (via a QAPP audit), during project planning meetings, during project implementation, or other occasions. While some of these may occur virtually, please note that we reserve the right to audit a project at any time. Applicants must be prepared to show proof of vaccination prior to any close contact with our staff. Accepted proof of vaccination includes the original vaccination card, a printed copy of the vaccination card, or a digital photograph of the vaccination card. To protect confidential information, we will not maintain copies of these documents, and any records provided will be discarded.

In addition, NEIWPCC requires all individuals who participate in NEIWPCC-funded events to be fully vaccinated in order to attend. Any events hosted with funding from LCBP and NEIWPCC must follow this pandemic policy.

This policy also applies to the contractor’s subcontractors.

Staff working on LCBP and NEIWPCC-funded projects for any contractor that will be entering into a new agreement, or amending an existing agreement with NEIWPCC, must be vaccinated for COVID-19.  See <https://neiwpcc.org/about-us/working-with-neiwpcc/contractor-guidance/> for more information.

1. **Proposal Evaluation and Selection Criteria**

Submitted proposals will be judged according to the following criteria:

1. (25 points) Merit of the project and the extent to which the project will result in tangible products or pollution prevention benefits that might be measured.
2. (20 points) Extent to which the project will inform adults or students about Lake Champlain issues, specifically topics to advance goals identified in [*Opportunities for Action*](https://www.lcbp.org/about-us/how-we-work/opportunities-for-action/)(2017 edition), the [mission of the LCBP](https://www.lcbp.org/about-us/what-we-do/mission/), including LCBP’s mission for diversity, equity, and inclusion. Extent to which the project encourages hands-on activities for citizens or reaches new audiences.
3. (20 points) Extent to which objectives and tasks are well defined, support the project concept, and are feasible within the proposed schedule. Outputs should demonstrate task completion.
4. (10 points) Knowledge and experience with education and outreach related to the Lake Champlain basin and capacity of the applicant to successfully complete the project.
5. (10 points) Multi-jurisdictional projects are strongly encouraged. Extent to which the applicant demonstrates the commitment to work with other partners and/or leverage other funding sources to achieve pollution prevention project goals. Extent to which the project enhances other education and outreach efforts in the basin (VT, NY, and QC). Projects taking place on private land should demonstrate a clear benefit to the surrounding community.
6. (5 points) Ability of the project to gauge or evaluate success of the outreach programming in this grant in terms of effecting personal or societal behavioral change, to improve the water quality of Lake Champlain.
7. (10 points) Appropriateness and clarity of the proposed budget, relative to project objectives. The total funding request must be within the scope of the grant category. Vague or inflated budgets will not be competitive. Clarity and conciseness of proposal, adherence to format, and relevance to RFP. Non-federal in-kind or cash match is not required, though match will be considered favorably during budget review and may make proposals more competitive.
8. **Available Funds and Match Requirements**

This request for proposals is in anticipation of LCBP fund appropriations for the fiscal year **beginning October 1, 2022**. Funds are anticipated to be available for projects to begin as early as October 2022. All awards are subject to available funding and LCBP is not obligated to issue any funds under this request. While matching funds and in-kind support are not required, proposals that include match or in-kind support often are considered more competitive in the grant review process.

**VIII.** **Period of Performance**

Work is expected to begin no earlier than **October** **2022** and, in most cases, should be completed within 18-24 months after the start date. Funding may be available for longer-term projects if justified for project outputs and outcomes.

1. **Schedule and Requirements for Proposal Submission**
2. Please follow the format outlined in the attached Education and Outreach Proposal Format Requirements.
3. Only Microsoft Word-compatible submissions will be accepted and must be submitted no later than 12pm (noon) EST on **January 21, 2022** via [**the online form at this link**](https://form.jotform.com/213186501198153).
4. **Contact Information**

Please direct all inquiries to:

Colleen Hickey,LCBP Education and Outreach Coordinator

[chickey@lcbp.org](mailto:chickey@lcbp.org) or (802) 372- 3211

# **Education and Outreach Full Proposal Format Requirements**

Proposals should adhere to the following format and should not exceed a **5-page maximum length** (font size 12), NOT including budget information, references cited, letters of commitment from matching partners, letters of commitment from landowner partners, and brief investigator resumes (one page per investigator). General letters of support will not be accepted.

Proposals will be evaluated using the criteria listed above under SECTION VI.

**TITLE:** Concise and descriptive.

**POINT OF CONTACT:** Name, position, organization, address, telephone, fax, and email of the person who will be the point of contact.

**AUTHORIZED REPRESENTATIVE:** Name, position, organization address, telephone, fax and email of the person who is authorized to sign the contract.

**TRACKING INFORMATION:** Federal Tax Identification Number, Unique Entity Identifier (“UEI”) number, and Certified Disadvantaged Business Enterprise (DBE): (Yes or No)

**NEIWPCC’s COVID-19 POLICY:** Confirm you have read and understand NEIWPCC’s COVID-19 policy as stated within the RFP.

**ONE-SENTENCE ABSTRACT:** Brief description of proposed work.

**INTRODUCTION:** Overview of the project and what it will accomplish in relation to *Opportunities for Action Informing and Involving the Public section.*

**TASKS AND OBJECTIVES:** List the project's objectives and describe in detail the tasks that will be performed relative to each objective, including methods and approaches. Please also list any anticipated partnerships.

**OUTPUTS:** An outputis an activity or product generated as a result of a task, e.g., treatment of six acres of run-off area, holding four public meetings, or generating an educational document. Include a detailed description of the planned outputs from each task of the project. Quarterly progress reports and a final report are required outputs.

**OUTCOMES:** An outcome is a result or effect of all activities, e.g., reduced phosphorus loading to Lake Champlain through the Winooski River, or the public is better informed on aquatic invasive species.

**SCHEDULE:** Timeline showing anticipated dates for completion of the major tasks and deliverables. Quarterly progress reports are due within ten days of the end of each calendar quarter.

**DETAILED BUDGET JUSTIFICATION:** Cost breakdown by major budget categories (e.g., personnel, equipment), linking costs to specific tasks/deliverables wherever possible, as seen in the example budget below. Breakdown should show costs to be covered by the LCBP award as well as any match amounts applied toward each task and totals. See example provided below.

**EXAMPLE** Budget Spreadsheet

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | Project Budget: Line Item by Task | | | | | | |  |  |
| **Line Item** | | **Task 1** | **Task 2** | **Task 3** | **Task 4** | **Task 5. Approved Final Report** (add or remove task columns as needed) | *Line Item* *Totals* for All Tasks | Proposed Match (if any) | *Line Item* *Totals* + Proposed Match |
| Personnel | | $500 | $1,200 | $800 | $495 | $1,000 | $3,995 | $3,000 | $6,995 |
| Fringe | | $150 | $360 | $240 | $149 | $300 | $1,199 | $1,030 | $2,229 |
| Travel | | $0 | $100 | $300 | $100 | $0 | $500 | $400 | $900 |
| Supplies | | $0 | $200 | $0 | $2,000 | $500 | $2,700 | $1,200 | $3,900 |
| Professional Services | | $0 | $0 | $0 | $2,500 | $0 | $2,500 | $1,000 | $3,500 |
| Total Direct | | $650 | $1,860 | $1,340 | $5,244 | $1,800 | $10,894 | $6,630 | $17,524 |
| Indirect | | $80 | $233 | $168 | $655 | $225 | $1,361 | $0 | $1,361 |
| TOTAL BUDGET | | $730 | $2,093 | $1,508 | $5,899 | $2,025 | $12,255  TOTALS MUST BE LCBP FUNDS ONLY | $6,630  PROPOSED MATCH IN THIS COLUMN ONLY | $18,885 |

**REFERENCES CITED: If applicable** (not included in the 5-page maximum total for the proposal).

**CURRICULUM VITAE/RESUME OF PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATORS:** Include up to 3-5 references for prior work pertinent to the proposed project. Please limit to one page per investigator; not included in the 5-page maximum total for the proposal.