Photo provided by Kelly Wenzel
Highpoint State Park looking northwest toward Pennsylvania and New York

2024 Applicant Webinar

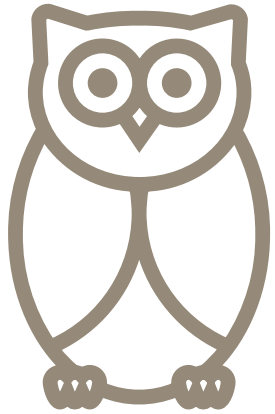
NJ Audubon Watershed Restoration and Community Empowerment Program

Kelly Wenzel
Program Manager

Agenda

- Who's Who – Our Partner Organizations
- Our Focal Areas
- Overview of the *Watershed Restoration & Community Empowerment Program*
- How to Apply
- Proposal Evaluation
- Unique Program Components
- Tips for Success
- Questions

Who's Who



- USFWS
- NFWF
- Coalition for the Delaware River Watershed
- New Jersey Audubon

U.S. FISH & WILDLIFE SERVICE
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

NATIONAL FISH AND WILDLIFE FOUNDATION
NFWF

Coalition *for the* Delaware River Watershed

NEW JERSEY AUDUBON
www.njaudubon.org

NATIONAL FISH AND WILDLIFE FOUNDATION
NFWF

U.S. FISH & WILDLIFE SERVICE

NEW JERSEY AUDUBON

US Fish and Wildlife Service

- The only agency in the federal government whose primary responsibility is the conservation and management of fish, wildlife, plants and their habitats for the American people.
- Be a leader and trusted partner in fish and wildlife conservation, known for scientific excellence, stewardship of lands and natural resources, dedicated professionals, and commitment to public service.
- Has statutory authority and functions
- Upholds and enforces US Conservation Laws, Acts, Treaties, Conventions and Agreements

US Fish and Wildlife Service

National Fish and Wildlife Foundation

- Non-Federal Partners
  - Corporations
  - Foundations
  - Private Donors
  - States
  - NGOs
  - Mitigation and Settlements
- Federal Government
  - Appropriations
  - Cooperative Agreements

Convener of focused, leveraged funding and leadership for priority wildlife & habitat conservation through grant making.

Delaware Watershed Conservation Program

Coalition for the Delaware River Watershed

- A coalition of over 180 member organizations
- Vision and Values focus on creating an inclusive and equitable network
- Identifies and advocates for federal restoration funding
- Convenes regional meetings to facilitate watershed-wide planning
- Created a comprehensive DEIJ Resource Hub

Coalition for the Delaware River Watershed

New Jersey Audubon

- New Jersey Audubon is a privately supported, not-for profit, statewide membership organization. Founded in 1897, and one of the oldest independent Audubon societies.^
- New Jersey Audubon endeavors to:
  - Develop, encourage, and support sound conservation practices, programs, and legislation.
  - Disseminate information on the natural environment through education programs, information services, and publications.
  - Advance knowledge of New Jersey's flora and fauna, and their relationships to the habitats on which they depend, through field research.
  - Acquire, establish, and maintain wildlife sanctuaries and educational centers.
  - New Jersey Audubon maintains stewardship of 34 sanctuaries and conducts its programs through seven staffed facilities.
- *Stewarding the nature of today for all people of tomorrow.*

New Jersey Audubon

^New Jersey Audubon is an independent Audubon and is not a chapter of the National Audubon Society.

Our Partnership – Focal Areas

New Jersey Audubon

- Inspiring Conservation Ethic
- Improving Ecosystem Functionality
- Fostering Connectivity
- Enhancing Climate Change Resilience
- Keeping Common Species Common

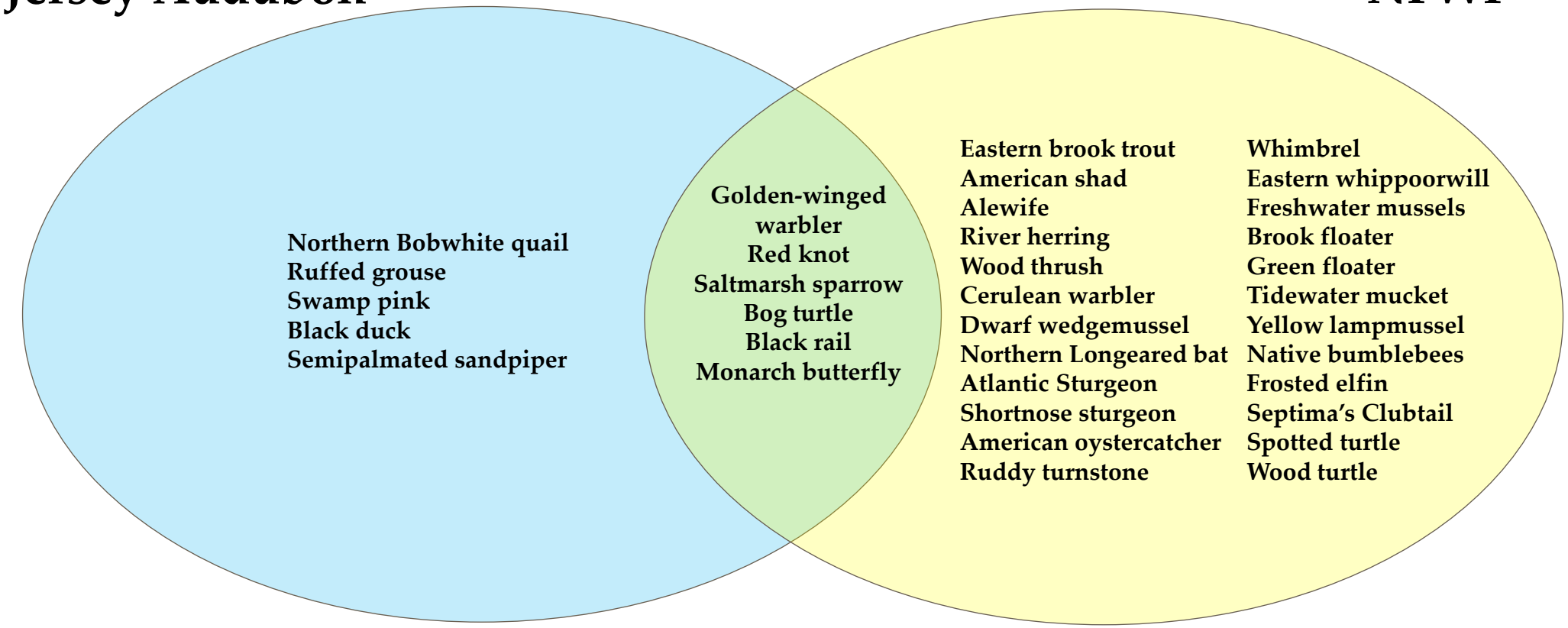
Through the lens of 3 Conceptual Landscapes:

- Forest, Farms and Watersheds
- Cities and Towns
- Coasts and Tidal Wetlands

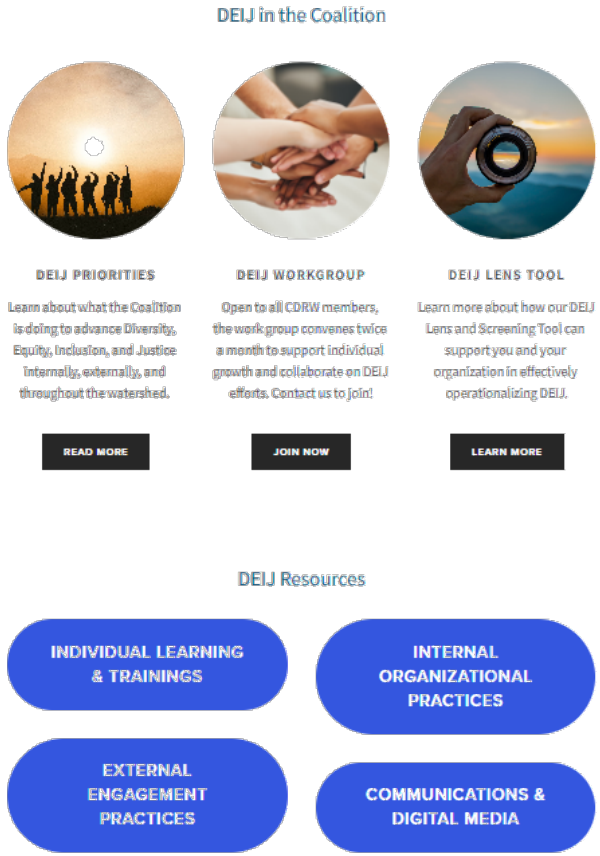
NFWF

- Sustain and enhance fish and wildlife habitat restoration and conservation activities.
- Improve and maintain water quality to support fish and wildlife, as well as habitats for fish and wildlife and drinking water for people.
- Sustain and enhance water resource management for volume and flood damage mitigation improvements to benefit fish and wildlife habitat.
- Improve opportunities for public access and recreation in the basin consistent with the ecological needs of fish and wildlife habitat.

Our Partnership – Species Goals



Our Partnership – Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Justice



NJ Audubon and NFWF are working collectively with the Coalition for the Delaware River Watershed to create more equitable and just practices, eliminate racism and discrimination and elevate the voices of historically marginalized communities within the Delaware River watershed.

DEIJ Resource Hub and Toolkit

Watershed Restoration & Community Empowerment Program

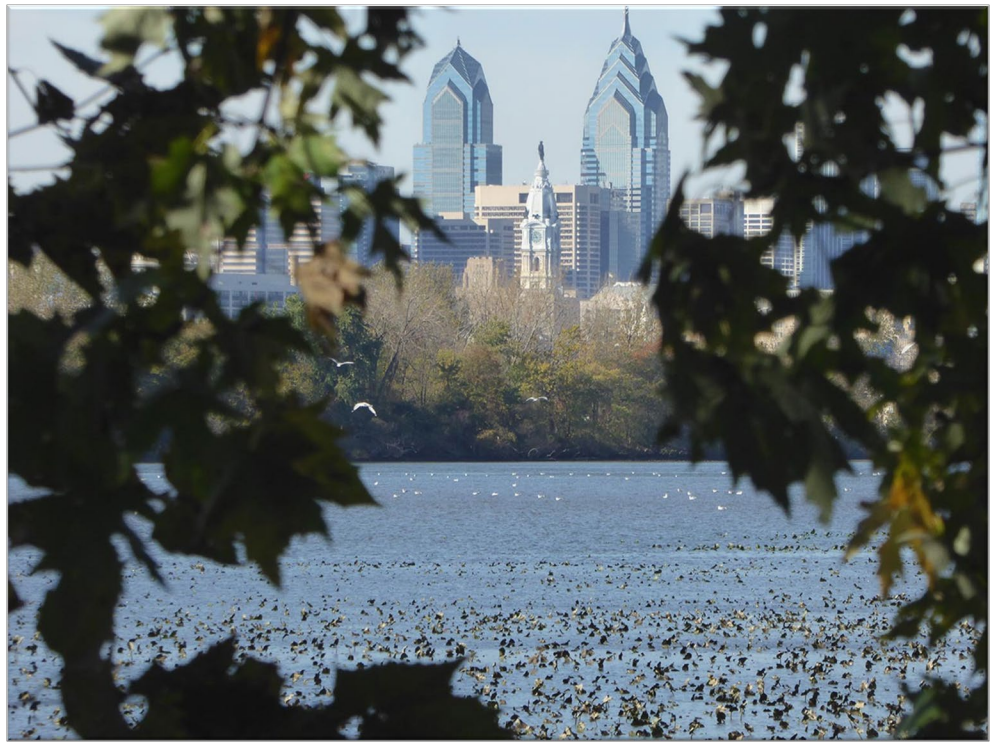


Photo provided by Jared Kofsky, "Jersey Digs"
Petty's Island looking west toward Philadelphia.

No idea is a bad idea.

Be creative.

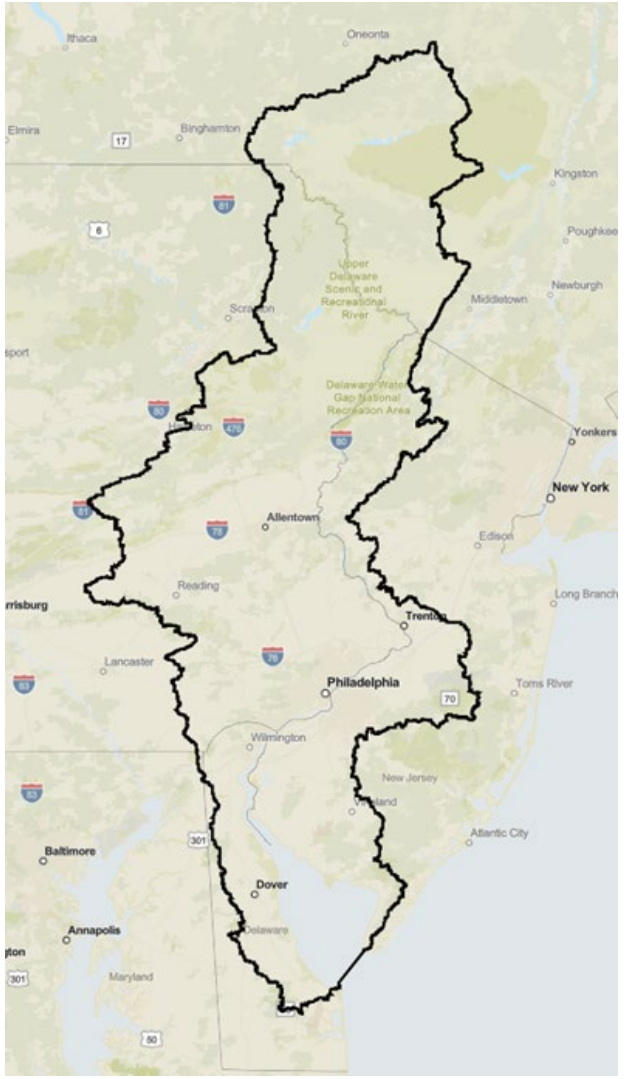
Take risks.

Grant Overview

- Goals
  - Support and strengthen community-based projects in the Delaware River watershed.
  - Build capacity of organizations that are new to the grantmaking process and/or have never received federal funding.
  - Mentor grantees in Federal grantmaking with the express intent of having them apply for a NFWF grant in 2024/2025.

Request for Proposals

- Approximately $220,000 in grant funds available
- Grants from $10,000 to $75,000 with most awards ranging from $25,000 to $30,000.
- Focus on the Delaware River watershed in NY, NJ, PA and DE
- Planning and Capacity Building grants
- Additional technology funding available
- Option to submit an alternative application



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Next Steps – Grant Timeline

- Materials available for review: November 1, 2023
- Application portal opens: January 15, 2024
- Proposal deadline: March 15, 2024
- Proposal review: April 1 to May 15, 2024
- Award announcements: June 1, 2024
- Grant period: July 1, 2024 to June 30, 2025
- Reporting deadline: August 30, 2025

Prospective Applicant Webinars

- Introduction to the project
- Overview of RFP

Mentoring & Coaching

- Grantee Professional Development
- Networking
- Project Development

Final Report & Project

- Submit financial and program reports
- Submit draft proposal for NFWF project

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NATIONAL FISH AND WILDLIFE FOUNDATION NFWF
U.S. FISH & WILDLIFE SERVICE

Eligibility

- ✓ Applicants must be within or *directly serve* communities in the Delaware River watershed and be implemented entirely within the Delaware River watershed, which includes portions of New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, and Delaware.
- ✓ Eligible applicants include non-profit 501(c)3 organizations; federal, state, interstate, local and municipal governments, Tribal governments and organizations, and educational institutions.
- ✓ Applicants must be able to complete the proposed project in its entirety between July 1, 2024, and June 30, 2025.

Eligible Uses of Grant Funds:

- 👍 Projects should address habitat, water quality, stormwater or public access to water and the outdoors
- 👍 Salary, fringe, travel, equipment, materials/supplies, contracts directly related to your project
- 👍 Indirect Costs (overhead)

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Eligibility

× Ineligible applicants include unincorporated individuals, businesses, and international organizations.

Ineligible Uses of Grant Funds:

- Support of ongoing efforts to comply with legal requirements
- Support of political advocacy, fundraising, lobbying, litigation, terrorist activities or Foreign Corrupt Practices Act violations.

Eligibility Requirements

Groups or individuals that do not meet the eligibility requirements are encouraged to contact Kelly Wenzel, Program Manager to discuss their project and consider partnering or contracting with an eligible organization.

Commitment to DEIJ(A)

- Highlight partnerships and project elements intended to enhance equity, social inclusion, and support for underserved and underrepresented communities.
  - Describe the community(ies) where the project will take place and who will benefit from the project. Our goal is that at least 40% of the communities you engage with throughout the entirety of your project rank in the 80th national percentile or above of the Supplemental Demographic Index (SDI) according to the EPA's EJScreen Tool.
  - Projects are not restricted to overburdened communities and that all communities impacted by your project should be listed. This tool is meant to create a more complete picture of the impact of the larger project and help inform future needs.
- Describe outreach and community engagement activities, how they will be engaged in project development and implementation, and how those will be monitored and measured.
- The "A" is for Accessible

Compliance

- With support of New Jersey Audubon, grant recipients are required to adhere to all federally mandated compliance and finance-related policies, legislation and regulations including Uniform Guidance, National Environmental Policy Act, Endangered Species Act, and National Historic Preservation Act.
- Applicants granted funds must furnish documentation of essential permits and clearances to ensure compliance with Federal, state, or local regulations. Projects with complex permitting are advised to explore funding eligibility through the Delaware Watershed Conservation Fund.

NEPA – National Environmental Policy Act
ESA – Endangered Species Act (state and federal)
NHPA - National Historic Preservation Act

Grant Types

Planning Grants

- Planning grants should set the stage for a larger project that can compete for larger federal or nationally competitive funding sources.
- Include engagement, planning and prioritization
- Deliverables to be considered
  - Draft proposal for future submission
  - Final design and permits
  - Site assessment and design
  - Feasibility/suitability analysis

Capacity Building Grants^

- Capacity Building grants seek to establish and/or enhance local networks to accomplish a shared goal or project.
- Partnerships with other organizations with similar goals highly encouraged.
- Deliverables to be considered
  - Strategic plan document
  - Community engagement plan
  - Tribal engagement agreement and plan
  - DEIJ in conservation program evaluations, assessments and monitoring

^ Capacity Building grants are not meant to support new staff. Proposals including new staff must also include a sustainability plan beyond the grant period.

What Grantees Should Expect

- Seeking innovative partnerships
- Seeking greatest watershed impact
- Seeking organizations and partnerships who desire future NFWF funding
- Technical assistance navigating the federal grant platforms
- Technical assistance with compliance
- Professional development for resource development and grant writing
- An open dialogue and collaborative communication
- Site visits and in-person opportunities for networking

Grantee Webinars & Networking

- Topics may include:
  - What does DEIJA Look Like in Practice?
  - Community Partnerships
  - Building Capacity through Cash Flow Management
  - Grant Management Basics
  - An Overview of Federal Compliance
  - Meeting Match and other Federal Grantmaking Tips
  - Navigating Grants.gov and Easygrants

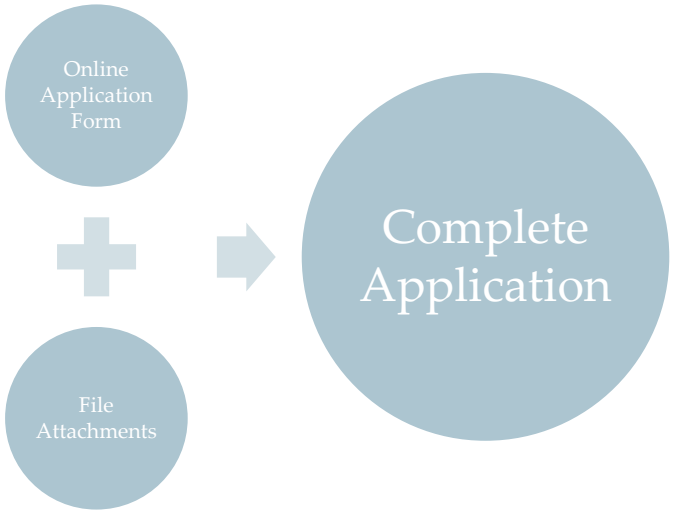
- Grantees will be offered at least 6 webinars
  - July 1, 2024 – Kick Off and Welcome
  - September 9, 2024
  - November 4, 2024
  - January 6, 2025
  - March 3, 2025
  - May 5, 2025 – Reporting and Storytelling Overview

- As well as in person opportunities for collaboration
  - September 2024 – CDRW Conference Presentations
  - January-March 2025 – Grantee Networking
  - March-May 2025 – Project Site Visits

How to Apply

And other key information

Application Process & Materials



NJ Audubon's not-so-fancy application portal

Online Application

- ❑ Project Abstract (50 words)
- ❑ Project Description
- ❑ Organizational Information
- ❑ Project Priority
- ❑ Project Context
- ❑ Objectives and Methods
- ❑ Partners
- ❑ Monitoring and Measuring
- ❑ Transfer of Knowledge
- ❑ **Optional Technology Funding**

File Attachments

- ☐ Application Packet which includes:
  - Project Budget
  - Budget Narrative
  - Project Work Plan
  - Community Engagement
- ☐ Most recent 990 Tax Form*
- ☐ Supporting Materials

*Or other document stating the organization's mission and significant activities, board representation, volunteers, and any unrelated business income.

Alternative Applications

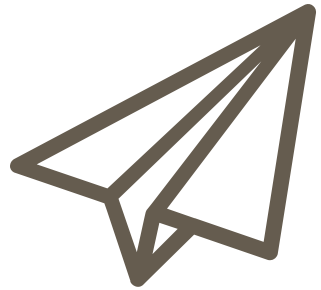
To increase accessibility, New Jersey Audubon will support applications via video upload.

All video applications must provide indicated file uploads in addition to their video.

All other content otherwise required as an upload must be clearly explained in your video, and you must clearly address all the questions asked in the application.

Please refer to the RFP Directions for specific information.

Application Process & Materials



File Attachments

File Naming Convention

2024_YourOrgAbbr_Packet

2024_NJA_Packet
2024_NJA_990
2024_NJA_SupportLetters

Please email your completed Application Packet to:
watershed.grants@njaudubon.org

Subject: 2024 <Organization Name> Application

This email is used for applications only and will not be monitored for questions.

Evaluation

- General Proposal Preparedness
- Technical Merit
- Budget and Cost-effectiveness
- Program Goals and Strategies
- Conservation Context
- Partnership and Community Impact

Rubric will be made available

The Resource Hub

www.njaudubon.org/watershed-grants

New Jersey Audubon
Resources, Complete Application and Instructions

National Fish and Wildlife Foundation
Resources related to the larger project scope

Coalition for the Delaware River Watershed
Resources related to DEIJ

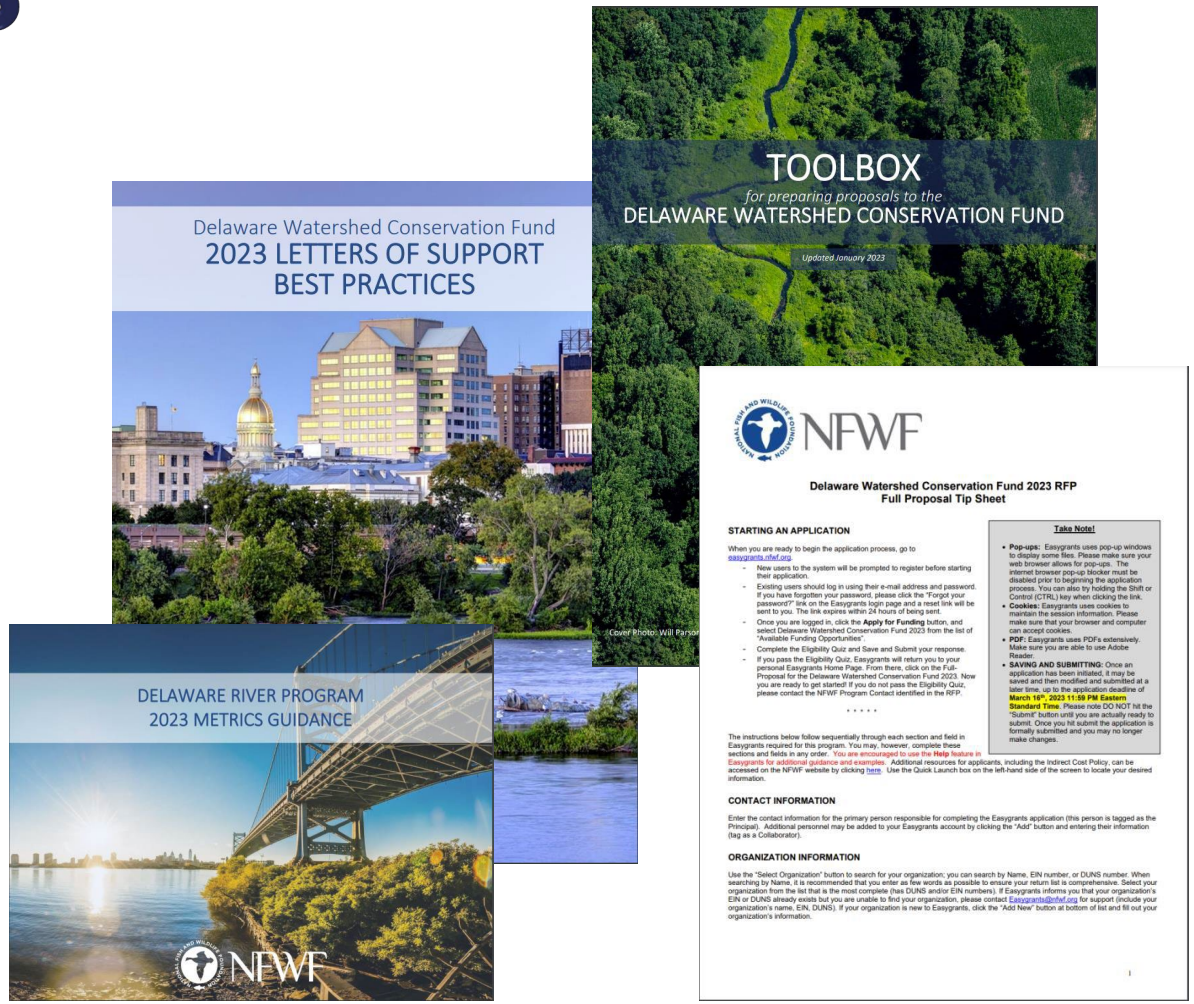
US Environmental Protection Agency
Resources related to larger DEIJ initiatives and habitat mapping

NFWF Resources

Delaware River Program

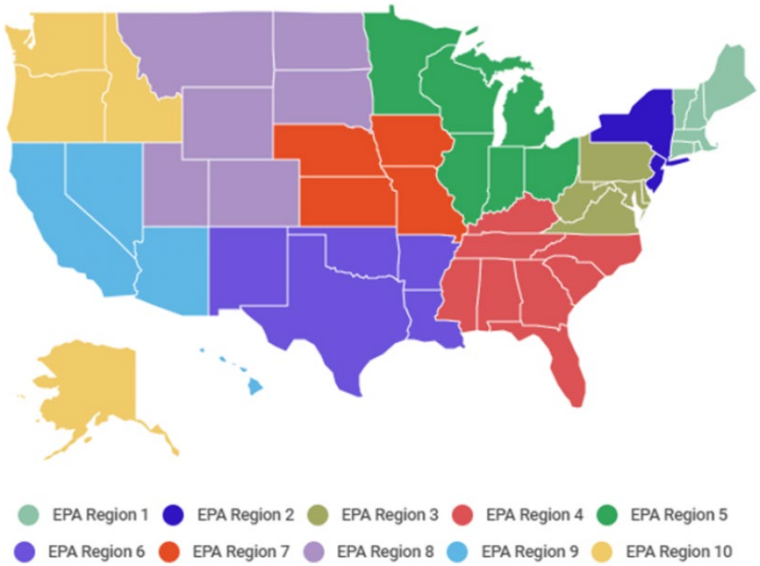
These materials are for the 2023 NFWF DCRW grant application, however many of the resources were used to inform this RFP.

- ✓ Applicant Tip Sheet
- ✓ DWCF Toolbox
  - ✓ Nature's Network
  - ✓ Species-specific plans
- ✓ Letters of Support Best Practices
- ✓ Metrics Guidance



US EPA Resources

- Justice 40 Initiative
- EJ Screen
- EnviroAtlas



United States Environmental Protection Agency

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NFWF

CDRW Resources

DEIJ Resource Hub and Toolkit

EXTERNAL ENGAGEMENT

CDRW'S EXTERNAL DEIJ TOOLKIT

This toolkit contains information on mapping exercises, community engagement practices, conferences, external programming, identity-specific resources, DEIJ in rural areas, and community centric fundraising. Plus, access an introductory webinar to learn how to use the toolkit!

LEARN MORE

ACCESSIBLE EVENT AUDIT

Utilize this checklist while event planning to integrate accessibility and inclusivity measures. It builds on physical accessibility requirements and considers needs of marginalized populations, invisible disabilities, and daily considerations for people of all backgrounds.

LEARN MORE

COMMUNICATIONS & DIGITAL MEDIA

Our DEIJ Communiations and Digital Media resource hub features a variety of resources to support you in creating accessible and inclusive websites, design, social media, copy writing, and other digital content.

EXPLORE RESOURCES

DISCUSSION GUIDE
THEORY OF SOCIAL CHANG

MEASURING AUTHENTIC DEMAND

DEIJ in the Coalition

DEIJ PRIORITIES

Learn about what the Coalition is doing to advance Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Justice internally, externally, and throughout the watershed.

READ MORE

DEIJ WORKGROUP

Open to all CDRW members, the work group convenes twice a month to support individual growth and collaborate on DEIJ efforts. Contact us to join!

JOIN NOW

DEIJ LENS TOOL

Learn more about how our DEIJ Lens and Screening Tool can support you and your organization in effectively operationalizing DEIJ.

LEARN MORE

DEIJ Resources

- INDIVIDUAL LEARNING & TRAININGS
- INTERNAL ORGANIZATIONAL PRACTICES
- EXTERNAL ENGAGEMENT PRACTICES
- COMMUNICATIONS & DIGITAL MEDIA

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NFWF

Tips for Success

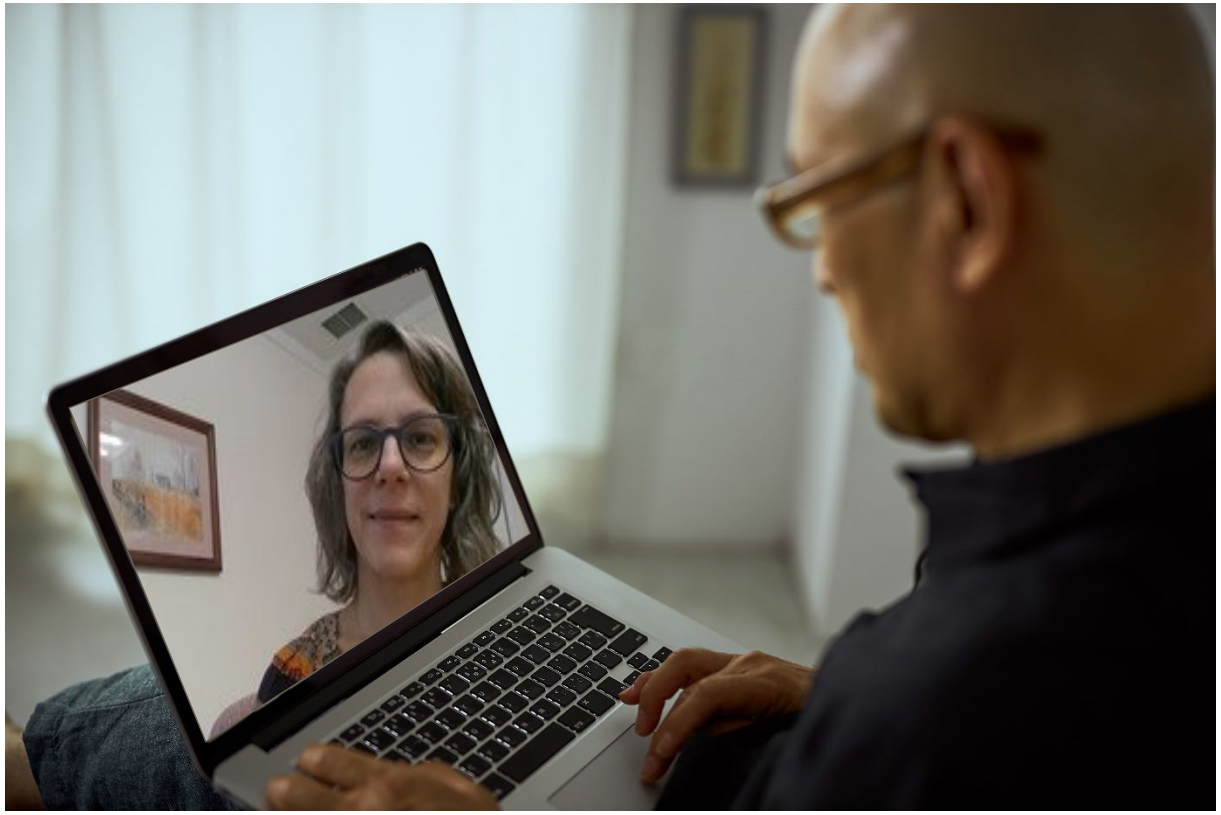
- **Print and re-read the RFP and instructions.**
- Address all criteria and respond to all requirements.
- Explain how your project is unique and delivers impact.
- Include context and details. Do not assume reviewers understand your project!
- Make your budget clear and reasonable and read the explanation for each line item.
- Submit clear reasoning for expenses in your budget narrative.
- Make sure your work plan is feasible and your goals are SMART.
- Submit community information to build context.
- Submit your proposal ON OR BEFORE **March 15th**.
- Reach out if you need help! Book a Strategy Session with Kelly Wenzel.

Assistance

- Introduction webinars will be held on the following dates.
- Registration links can be found on the Resource Hub.
- Thursday, November 16 at Noon
- Tuesday, November 28 at 10:00 AM
- Monday, December 11 at 3:00 PM
- Wednesday, January 10 at 10:00 AM

If you need more information about the RFP or have additional questions, please contact

Kelly Wenzel, Program Manager to schedule a 30-minute Strategy Session.



Stills of aerial drone footage provided by Bob Shinn
Petty's Island looking south toward Philadelphia.

Kelly Wenzel
Program Manager
kelly.wenzel@njaudubon.org

Schedule a Strategy Session