



GENERAL GUIDELINES

SFY2017
REGIONAL WATER PLAN SEED GRANT
Revised September 2016

TABLE OF CONTENTS

STATE CONTACT LIST.....	3
INTRODUCTION	3
Eligible Recipients.....	3
Maximum Reimbursement And Minimum Match.....	4
Requirements for Funding	4
Eligible Activities and Projects	5
Key Ranking Criteria.....	5
Additional Priorities	6
APPLICATION INSTRUCTIONS	7
PROJECT DESCRIPTION	8
Project Title.....	8
Lead Organization.....	8
Project Goals.....	8
Project Background.....	8
Project Activities	9
Roles and Responsibilities of Partnering Organizations	9
Project Location	10
Project Budget.....	10
Item Class Categories for Project Budget Table.....	10
Example Project Budget.....	12
Budget Narrative Justification.....	13
Project Implementation and Drawdown Schedule.....	14
 APPENDICES	
A. Match FAQs Sheet	14



CONTACT

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INTRODUCTION

Under O.C.G.A. 28-5-120, the Georgia Environmental Protection Division (Division) is authorized to make grants to eligible recipients for projects related to water management, both quality and quantity. Using this authority, the Division has established the Regional Water Plan Seed Grant program that provides funds to eligible recipients in Georgia to support and incentivize local governments and other appropriate water users as they collect and manage the requisite data and information and undertake their implementation responsibilities as provided in the applicable Regional Water Plans.

ELIGIBLE RECIPIENTS

Eligible recipients of the Regional Water Plan Seed Grant funds include:

- Local, regional and State units of government such as city or county governments and State agencies;
- Local authorities which operate local government service delivery programs;
- Regional Commissions;
- Resource Conservation and Development Councils;
- Local school systems and State college and universities.

State law currently prohibits non-governmental organizations (such as private firms and nonprofit organizations) from receiving Grant funds directly; however, these organizations are encouraged to foster partnerships with eligible applicants to develop projects.

Please note that local governments must have Qualified Local Government Status in compliance with the requirements of the Georgia Planning Act of 1989 and the Service Delivery Strategy Law of 1997 in order to be eligible to execute contracts with GAEPD, per State law.

<http://www.dca.ga.gov/LocalGovStatus/planning.asp>

MAXIMUM REIMBURSEMENT AND MINIMUM MATCH

Maximum reimbursement amount for a Regional Water Plan Seed Grant is capped at **\$75,000** and limited to **60%** of the total project cost.

Award recipients must provide a **minimum match amount** of **40%** of the total project cost.

Of the required 40% match, a **minimum of 10% of the total project cost must be in the form of a cash expenditure** with the remaining amount in the form of local or in-kind match.

The cash match must be expended to pay for specific elements of the project budget and may not include direct costs, indirect costs, equipment operation costs, or in-kind services. Projects must clearly identify the sources of cash match in their application, and the use of the cash match in their budgets.

Applicants who are able to demonstrate a **match commitment of 50% or greater** and/or a **cash match of 20% or greater** may receive priority consideration for funding.

TO DETERMINE APPROPRIATE GRANT AND MATCH AMOUNTS WITH PERCENTAGES, PLEASE USE THE
SEED GRANT FUND AND MATCH CALCULATOR PROVIDED AT

<https://epd.georgia.gov/regional-water-plan-seed-grant-funds>

MATCH IS EXPLAINED IN MORE DETAIL IN
APPENDIX A: MATCH FAQ SHEET

REQUIREMENTS FOR FUNDING

At a minimum, applications must address the Requirements for Funding below in order to be considered for funding:

- Regional Water Plan Seed Grant projects must specifically identify the Regional Water Plan(s) and management practice(s) or other recommendation(s) from each plan (including data and information needs) that the project is designed to address.
- Applications must include a letter of endorsement signed by the Regional Water Planning Council (Council) Chair or authorized signatory from the relevant Council or Councils that at a minimum describes how the project is consistent with the Council's implementation priorities, the vision and goals articulated in their regional water plan(s).
- Applicants must schedule and participate in a project development pre-application meeting with Division staff.
- Commit to a minimum 40% Project Match with 10% of the total project cost in the form of cash contribution.
- Project proposals must be consistent with the policies and implementation actions in the Georgia Comprehensive State-wide Water Management Plan. Additional information can be found at <http://www.georgiawaterplanning.org/>

ELIGIBLE ACTIVITIES AND PROJECTS

Types of Regional Water Plan activities and projects that are eligible for funding by the Regional Water Plan Seed Grant include:

- Undertaking programs to address critical information and/or data needs identified in the Regional Water Plan(s);
- Tracking and analyzing available monitoring data and reporting on water resource conditions as identified as needs in the Regional Water Plan(s);
- Preparing and distributing technical guidance that can be shared by Regional Water Councils on management practices that effect common water resources; and
- Providing technical assistance to support implementation of Regional Water Plan management practices.

KEY RANKING CRITERIA

In addition to the Requirements for Funding and Eligible Activities and Projects, criteria are assigned priority according to Division rules and guidelines. These priorities are incorporated into the competitive scoring process used to allocate funds.

- Project proposals must specifically identify the Regional Water Plan(s) and management practices or other recommendations from each plan that the project is designed to implement.
 - If a project proposal addresses data or information needs, the applicant must specify the connections between the data to be collected and specific management practices or other recommendations in the Regional Water Plan(s) and demonstrate how the data will be applied or integrated in the Regional Water Plan(s) or plan implementation.
 - If a project proposal includes water quality monitoring, a detailed State Sampling Quality Assurance Plan (SQAP) or Quality Assurance Project Plan (QAPP) will be required. The requirements for SQAP are contained in EPD's Guidance On Submitting Water Quality Data For Use By The Georgia Environmental Protection Division In 305(b)/303(d) Listing Assessments (SQAP) [May 2007].
- Project proposals must be consistent with the implementation priorities, vision and goals articulated in the applicable Regional Water Plan(s). To ensure this consistency, proposals must demonstrate significant coordination between the applicant, Council(s), and the Division during preparation of the application and throughout the awarded project.
- Project proposals must demonstrate the state, regional and/or local benefits of the project including but not limited to enhancing water supply or water quality improvements that also provide water supply benefits.
- Project proposals must demonstrate how the project will enable continued and new implementation of Regional Water Plan management practices and other Regional Water

Plan recommendations. Applications that do not clearly demonstrate this will not be considered for funding.

- Project proposals must demonstrate how the effectiveness (i.e., measure of success) of the project will be evaluated. Numerical measures should be used where appropriate.
- Project proposals must demonstrate collaboration with multiple Regional Water Planning Councils, cooperating partnerships, the Division and/or involving multi-governmental agencies, and other implementation stakeholders.
- Project proposals must demonstrate coordination with other water management projects and activities within the watershed as well as projects conducted across jurisdictional boundaries.
- Project proposals must demonstrate additional environmental benefits including but not limited to protection of in-stream flows, water conservation, air quality and energy conservation.
- Project proposals must demonstrate cost effectiveness of both Grant and Local funds. Cost effectiveness is defined as having the largest possible impact with the funds available. Project proposals utilizing Indirect Charges as a sole source of match will not score as well due to a reduction of cost effectiveness.

ADDITIONAL PRIORITIES

Additional priority, which may increase competitiveness, will be given to project proposals that:

- Demonstrate a match commitment of 50% or higher. Those project proposals may receive additional points during project review. Note, this will lead to a higher total project cost and the cash match must still equal 10% of the total project cost.
- Demonstrate a cash match commitment of 20% or higher. Those project proposals may receive additional points during project review.

NOTE:

Project applicants who have received grant funds in past years but have NOT demonstrated successful administration of previous Section 319(h), Section 106, Section 604(b) or other grant funded projects may receive a reduction in points during project review. Successful administration includes but is not limited to: completing all project activities during the contract period, meeting all required deadlines, completing the project on time and on budget, expending all grant funds requested on project activities, and providing adequate documentation as requested by the Division.

APPLICATION INSTRUCTIONS

APPLICATION MATERIALS THAT DO NOT ADHERE TO THE PROVIDED FORMAT AND GUIDELINES MAY NOT BE CONSIDERED FOR FUNDING.

APPLICATION DEADLINE

SFY2017 Regional Water Plan Seed Grant applications must be postmarked by
December 1, 2016
Any application postmarked (or hand-delivered) after this date will not be considered for funding.

Completion of All Sections of the Application

A successful project proposal is thoroughly planned, well prepared and concisely packaged. All activities and project information should be consistent throughout the application materials. Please follow ALL instructions and complete ALL sections. If you feel a section of the application does not pertain to your project, then use a "Not Applicable (N/A)" response. **DO NOT LEAVE ANY SECTIONS BLANK.** Incomplete applications may not be considered for funding. Before submission, please verify that all sections of the application have been completed in accordance with the information provided in this Guidelines document.

Required Format, Electronic Copies via Mail (No Faxes or Emails)

Applications must be typed in Microsoft WORD and must be single-spaced and in 12-point normal font. Please number pages and include the project name and applicant name on each page. A cover page should be the only item before the application. Please include all appendices and attachments at the end and in electronic format as applicable. **PACKETS MUST INCLUDE ONE DIGITAL COPY SAVED TO A CD, AND BE SUBMITTED VIA MAIL.**

Deadlines for Pre-Application Meeting or Conference Call

All applicants are required to meet with GAEPD Grants Unit Staff to discuss the project proposal before an application is submitted. Project partners, consultants, or other affiliated parties are welcome to attend, but the primary applicant **MUST** be in attendance. **All pre-application meetings MUST be completed by November 9, 2016.**

Eligible applicants must address their SFY17 Regional Water Plan Seed Grant application packets as follows:

SFY2017 Regional Water Plan Seed Grant Application
ATTN: Barbara Stitt-Allen
Watershed Protection Branch
Grants Unit
2 Martin Luther King Jr. Drive, Suite 1462
Atlanta, GA 30334

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

1. Project Title:

Please include the name of Regional Water Plan as part of the Project Title.

2. Lead Organization and Primary Contact:

Please provide the name, address, telephone number, fax number and email of the lead organization and primary contact.

It is acceptable to also include a secondary point of contact (for instance, when an applicant would like to include a contact for a major project partner). However, a primary contact **must** be provided for the applying organization to serve as a point of contact for invoicing, documentation and reporting.

3. Project Goals

The Project Goals section should **clearly state the overall goal of the proposed project in a concise manner**. Please refer to the Eligible Activities and Projects on page 5 to help guide the overall goal of the project proposal. Applicants are encouraged to think of this section as a “sound byte” that provides an accurate account of what their project will accomplish in the grant period. The information provided must be factual and all objectives should be realistic and attainable.

- Provide the applicable Regional Water Plan(s) management practices to be implemented with this project.
- Provide the description associated with each management practice to be implemented.
- Include quantifiable goals such as numbers to be addressed, percent achieved, and minimum targets.

4. Project Background

The Project Background section puts the project goals in a specific context and provides the justification for funding a particular project. Please refer to the Key Ranking Criteria on page 5 to help guide the Project Background and important features of the project. Include all relevant supporting information in a summary format. The following list is not all inclusive but provides some examples of what is expected in the Project Background:

- State in a **clear and concise** manner and articulate how the proposed project is consistent with the implementation priorities and the vision and goals articulated in the applicable Regional Water Plan(s).
- Include relevant information about how the proposed project activities are appropriate and relate to the Regional Water Plan(s).
- Clearly identify how the project will enable continued and new implementation of regional water plan management practices and other regional water plan recommendations.

5. Project Activities

The Project Activities should detail the actions that will be taken in order to achieve the project goals, the methods of implementation for each activity, and the measures of success that will be used to assess the effectiveness of each activity. All items must be directly correlated to Project Goals, Project Background, the Budget, and Project Implementation Schedule.

Project Activity: Identify and describe the main strategies for achieving the project goals. Please include as many activities as are necessary to accomplish the project.

Tasks: Describe the specific tasks that are necessary to complete each project activity. Please be detailed and specific about the project activities that will be completed using available resources, and provide quantifiable information where appropriate.

Deliverables: Identify any items that will be delivered as a result of each task. Provide quantifiable information where appropriate. Examples of deliverables include, but are not limited to: maps, reports, pictures, monitoring data, and monitoring reports.

Measures of Success: Describe what evaluation criteria will be applied to each task to assess the appropriateness and effectiveness of the associated activity. Criteria should target both quantifiable and qualitative results to be achieved. Where appropriate, describe how particular criteria will be measured.

6. Roles and Responsibilities of Partnering Organizations

A description of the roles and responsibilities for all Partnering Organizations allows for a clear delineation of duties and will help maintain a sense of accountability for project partners. Identify and include all Federal, State, regional and local organizations that will contribute time, services or resources to this project and provide a detailed explanation of the expected responsibilities of each partner. **Please note that private organizations that will be reimbursed as paid sub-contractors on the project are not considered to be Partnering Organizations.**

Organization Name	Specific Responsibilities
<i>(Lead Organization)</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Execute grant contract with GAEPD • Account for/contribute to 40% (state if greater) of total project costs in matching expenses or in-kind services • Request payments from GAEPD on a quarterly basis • Pay funds to appropriate contractor(s) and vendor(s), and request reimbursements from GAEPD • Track all grant funds expended and all match values provided in accordance with the implementation schedule • Track all project activities in accordance with the implementation schedule • Complete and submit quarterly progress reports with invoices to GAEPD by January 15th, April 15th, July 15th, and October 15th of each project year (Payment of invoice is contingent on work completed and a review of the quarterly report.) • Complete and submit close-out report at conclusion of project • (ADD OTHERS AS APPROPRIATE)

GAEPD	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide 60% of total project costs • Review and approve project deliverables • Participate in meetings, as appropriate • Provide project oversight and contract management • Provide monitoring guidance and training
<i>(Partnering Organization)</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Responsibilities • % match provided (indicate cash or in-kind)

7. Project Location

Project Area Description and Map: Identify the approximate size and location of the proposed project area on a map (paper and electronic copies). Be sure to include the ENTIRE project area on one map. The project area should be of an appropriate size to ensure the project activities will have a significant impact. If necessary due to size, attach the map as an application appendix, and reference the appendix in this section.

8. Project Budget

The Project Budget includes budget costs organized in a Project Budget Table and a Budget Narrative Justification. The project budget delineates proposed grant and in-kind or cash matching expenditures by **Item Class Categories** (A-J).

The project proposal must provide sufficient detail to justify all project costs. Project Activities and Tasks must correspond directly to the break-out of budget expenditures in the Item Class Categories. For example, if a turbidity meter is listed as an equipment budget item, the Project Activities must include a task that would require the purchase of a turbidity meter – i.e. TSS monitoring.

The project proposal must provide dollar amounts and identify funding sources of match (name of organization/person, cash, or in-kind.) If the match source is not from the Lead Organization, then sufficient detail is needed from the Partnering Organization showing match source and commitment. See Roles and Responsibilities of Partnering Organizations of the application. The project proposal must also provide details on what Item Class Categories is paid for with match, especially cash match.

TO DETERMINE APPROPRIATE GRANT AND MATCH AMOUNTS WITH PERCENTAGES, PLEASE USE THE
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Item Class Categories for Project Budget Table:

Break out the following summary information in each Item Class Category in the Project Budget Table for both grant and local match cash/in-kind allocation. Make sure that expenditures (i.e. salary, fringe, materials and supplies), for both federal and match, are prorated as a percentage

of what will be applied specifically to the project. Specific details and justification need to be provided in the Budget Narrative Justification.

(A) Personnel Budget: *Position on Lead Organization Payroll (not subcontractors), annual full-time equivalent (FTE) salary, percentage of FTE, resulting dollar amount and number of years assigned to project.*

(B) Fringe Benefits: *Position on Lead Organization Payroll (not subcontractors), percentage of FTE, resulting dollar amount, fringe benefit rate applied, and number of years assigned to project.*

(C) Travel: *Position or subcontractor, purpose, total mileage estimated for project and mileage rate.*

(D) Equipment: *Description, purpose or use.*

(E) Supplies: *Item or category of items (monitoring, administrative, printing, etc.), purpose or use.*

(F) Contractual: *Sub-contractor name, services or products related to project.*

(G) Construction: *N/A*

(H) Other: *Items, expenses for reimbursement and volunteer hours, donated services for match.*

(J) Indirect Charges: *Federally-approved indirect cost rate. Indirect Charge costs will not be reimbursed utilizing grant funds. However, applicants may use indirect charges as match. Project proposals utilizing indirect charges as a sole source of match will not score as well due to a reduction of cost effectiveness.*

PLEASE SEE EXAMPLE PROJECT BUDGET TABLE ON PAGE 12

- Applicants **MUST** use the budget format included in the application template.
- All project proposals are limited to \$75,000 in requested grant funding.

Example Project Budget Table:

Item	Item Class Category	Grant Funds (60% Maximum)	Matching Funds (40% Minimum, 10% as Cash)		Total
			In Kind	Cash	
A	Personnel: One (1) (Name position if any) - xx FTE (\$xx/year) for 1 year Description of Duties: (explain here)				
	Sub Total:				
B	Fringe Benefits: One (1) (Name position if any) - xx FTE (xx%) for 1 year				
	Sub Total:				
C	Travel: Staff Position: (Name position if any) Purpose of Travel: (Explain here) xx miles x \$.54/mile				
	Sub Total:				
D	Equipment: Equipment: (What kind) Purpose/use: (describe)				
	Sub Total:				
E	Supplies: Supplies: (What kind) Purpose/Use: (describe)				
	Sub Total:				
F	Contractual: Contractor Name: (enter name) Description of Duties: (describe)				
	Sub Total				
G	Construction: Does not apply to Regional Water Plan Seed Grants	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
H	Other:				
	Sub Total				
I	Total Direct Charges: (Sum of A-H)				
J	Indirect Charges: Indirect Charge Rate	N/A		N/A	
K	Total: (Sum of I and J)				

Budget Narrative Justification:

The project proposal must also supply a Budget Narrative Justification to the budget that relates to actual Project Activities/Tasks and justifies the expenses covered by federal dollars and match values in appropriate Item Class Categories.

Item Class Categories:

(A) Personnel Budget Narrative Justification: *Personnel budget items must include the position title, salary rate, percentage of full-time equivalent (FTE), resulting dollar amount, number of years to be reimbursed, and a description of responsibilities for each position cited, regardless of funding source. Summarize responsibilities and duties of staff on lead organization payroll as related to Project Activities and Tasks for each position cited, regardless of funding source. Describe skills, experience and qualifications of each individual that show them to be capable of performing the associated Tasks.*

(B) Fringe Benefits Narrative Justification: *Fringe benefit budget items must include the position title, percentage of FTE, resulting dollar amount, fringe rate (as a percentage of salary), and number of years to be reimbursed for each position cited, regardless of funding source.*

(C) Travel Budget Narrative Justification: *Travel budget items should be calculated by multiplying the number of expected travel miles by the current federal mileage rate. Applicants should also clearly identify the personnel traveling by position title, and the type and purpose of travel. Correlate travel budget items with a specific Project Activity and Task. **NOTE: out-of-state travel must be pre-approved by GAEPD and is dependent upon reason for travel and cost.***

The State Mileage Rate for 2016 is \$.54 per mile. For more information, please visit the following website: http://sao.georgia.gov/state-travel-policy

(D) Equipment Budget Narrative Justification: *All equipment budget items and costs MUST be itemized separately. Please include brief descriptions, specifications or actual quotes AND associated activity/task to justify the proposed costs. The term "Equipment" applies only to items with a useful life of more than one (1) year and an acquisition cost equal to or greater than \$5,000.*

(E) Supplies Budget Narrative Justification: *Supply budget items may be collectively summarized by type (monitoring, administrative, printing, etc.) as long as the collective total for each type is less than \$2,000. Otherwise, they MUST be itemized separately.*

(F) Contractual Narrative Justification: *Contractual budget items represent formal financial relationships between the lead organization and subcontractors, and must identify the type of subcontractor and the applicable project activities. For each large*

subcontract item (\geq \$30,000), a detailed budget breakdown using the same item class categories **MUST** be attached as an appendix to the application. A copy of the bid request or job announcement, and contractual agreement must be submitted to GAEPD.

(G) Construction: GAEPD Seed Grant funds **CANNOT** be applied to this category, which refers to infrastructure and related building costs.

(H) Other Narrative Justification: Other budget items and costs must be itemized separately. Items allocated to this Item Class Category include in-kind volunteer contributions to match. Specify expenses (either dollar amount or percentage of totals) allocated to the project that are eligible for federal reimbursement or match (rent, utilities, telecommunications, financial services, audits, etc.).

(J) Indirect Charges Narrative Justification: Indirect Charge costs will not be reimbursed utilizing grant funds. However, applicants may use indirect charges as match. Project proposals utilizing indirect charges as a sole source of match will not score as well due to a reduction of cost effectiveness.

9. Project Implementation and Drawdown Schedule

All project proposals must include a Project Implementation and Drawdown Schedule, which details expected execution of tasks, state and federal reporting requirements, and expenditure of funds. **Please note that Regional Water Plan Seed Grant projects CANNOT exceed twenty-four (24) months in duration.**

PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION AND DRAWDOWN SCHEDULE

Applicants are now required to prepare and submit a **Section 9: Project Implementation and Drawdown Schedule Gantt Chart**, which can be downloaded from the GAEPD website at:

<https://epd.georgia.gov/regional-water-plan-seed-grant-funds>

Full instructions are included with the Gantt Chart Excel File.

The Gantt Chart is formatted to fit one 11 x 17 inch sheet, but can be expanded or shortened as appropriate by the applicant.

10. Project Attachment(s):

Provide list of all documents and supporting files included with application.

APPENDIX A MATCH FAQs SHEET

WHAT IS LOCAL MATCH?

Local match is a resource commitment beyond the grant dollar amount requested, and is required as part of a Regional Water Plan Seed Grant contract to implement the project. The applicant and contributing project partners identify budget expenses and provisions that will be paid as match in non-federal dollars when submitting the initial application.

HOW MUCH LOCAL MATCH IS REQUIRED?

Award recipients must provide a minimum match amount of 40% of the total project cost for all Regional Water Plan Seed Grant projects. Of the required 40%, a minimum of 10% of the total project cost must be in the form of cash. Applicants who are able to demonstrate a match commitment of 50% or greater and/or a cash match of 20% or greater may receive priority consideration for funding.

**Example Calculation for Determining Match Commitment:
Grant Funds Requested x $\frac{2}{3}$ = Required Minimum Non-Federal Matching Funds**

<i>Grant Funds Requested:</i>	<i>\$75,000</i>
<i>Minimum Local Match Required:</i>	<i>\$37,500</i>
<i>Minimum 10 % cash match required:</i>	<i>\$12,500</i>
<i>Total Project Cost:</i>	<i>\$125,000</i>

To Determine Appropriate Grant and Match Amounts With Percentages,
Please Use the **Seed Grant Fund and Match Calculator** provided at:

<https://epd.georgia.gov/regional-water-plan-seed-grant-funds>

WHAT CAN BE USED AS LOCAL MATCH?

Local match **must be from non-federal sources.**

CASH MATCH: Cash contributed specifically to cover the actual costs of the project.

These costs **may not** include:

1. Indirect costs
2. Equipment operation
3. In-kind services

IN-KIND MATCH: Contributions made directly in the form of efforts or goods, with dollar value specified, to implement the project. These amounts must be:

1. Verifiable (see section below regarding tracking local match commitments);
2. Directly related to accomplishing project goals;
3. Not already being counted as match for another project;

HOW DO I TRACK LOCAL MATCH CONTRIBUTIONS?

1. Local match contributions must be tracked on a quarterly basis along with invoicing for Grant funds and progress reports;
2. Match contributions must be entered into the lead organization's accounting records

- and be auditable from those records (i.e. type, quantity, value of contribution, date of contribution, signature of contributor/partner organization);
3. When recording in-kind match, accounting records must show how the value placed on the match was derived (i.e. number of volunteer or personnel or meeting space hours and hourly rate for each, etc.);
 4. Volunteer hours and services must be documented to the extent feasible.