



RNRF – Frequently Asked Questions

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2025 Grants Program

Contact: grants@rnrf.org

[Request for Proposals](#)

General Information

Q: Can I meet with RNRF about the grants program and application?

A: Unfortunately, we are not available to meet with potential applicants at this time. Please refer to the Request for Proposals ([RFP](#)) for detailed information and guidance.

Q: Would you tell me about RNRF's past funding awards?

A: This is the inaugural year of the RNRF grant program. At this time, we do not know how many applicants will receive funding.

Q: We don't have time to apply this application cycle. Will RNRF be releasing another funding opportunity?

A: A new RFP will be released in early 2026 with key dates and information.

Q: How do we apply for the grant?

A: Complete details regarding the application are available on the application [website](#). Upon registration, applications will have access to the full list of questions as well as the character limits associated with each.

Q: What can I do if I don't find my question here?

A: You can watch our instructional videos [here](#), and if you can't find the answer there, you can email us at grants@rnrf.org.

Eligibility

Q: Would you clarify the tax-exempt status requirements for the application?

A: The lead applicant must be a tax-exempt nonprofit organization as recognized under the Internal Revenue Code. Eligible entities include organizations with 501(c) (3) designation, tax-exempt colleges, universities, and schools, as well as federally recognized Tribal Nations. Collaborators/Partners do not need to be nonprofit organizations.

Ineligible entities include, but are not limited to, for-profit businesses, membership organizations organized under section 501(c)(6), social welfare organizations (501(c)(4); labor unions (501(c)(5); and religious organizations that have not obtained 501(c)(3) designation, government entities such as municipalities, state and federal agencies. The sponsor reserves the right to determine eligibility and to make final determinations regarding the allowability of applicants at its sole discretion.

Q: Can a fiscal agent be used to submit an application?

A: No, RNRF does not accept proposals that rely on a fiscal agent. All applications must be submitted by organizations that meet the eligibility requirements and are able to directly receive and manage award funds.

Q: How will I know if my project idea fits RNRF's issue areas and parameters?

A: We are asking applicants to help us understand the fit by describing how the project advances the stewardship, understanding, or sustainable management of renewable natural resources.

To assist with this, the Request for Proposals ([RFP](#)) includes examples of our guiding principles and focus areas in order to help potential applicants assess if their project will align with the RNRF Grant Program.

Q: What organizations will RNRF fund?

A: This grant opportunity is open to tax-exempt organizations incorporated in the U.S. This includes organizations with 501(c)(3) status, tax-exempt colleges, universities, and schools and federally recognized Tribal Nations. Please see the [RFP](#) for a complete list of eligibility requirements.

Q: Are organizations from U.S. territories eligible?

A: Eligible organizations located in U. S. territories include IRS-recognized 501(c)(3) nonprofits, nonprofit educational institutions, and federally recognized tribal nations. Applications must also meet IRS Form 990 filing requirements, submitting Form 990, 990-EZ, or 990-N, as applicable.

Q: Are we eligible to apply if we are international/outside of the US?

A: No. The primary applicant must be a tax-exempt organization incorporated in the United States. International organizations are not eligible to serve as the lead applicant.

However, projects may take place outside the United States, and international organizations may participate as collaborators or subrecipients. All funds will be awarded to the U.S.-based lead applicant, which will be responsible for the management and oversight of any subawards, or subcontracts issued to international partners. All subawards and subcontracts to international organizations must comply with applicable

U.S. laws and regulations, including those governing financial management, reporting, and allowable costs.

Q: My program is from a state university, and we are tax exempt but not a 501(c)(3). Can I still apply?

A: Yes, the lead applicant must be a tax-exempt nonprofit organization as recognized under the Internal Revenue Code. Eligible entities include organizations with a 501(c)(3) designation, tax-exempt colleges, universities, and schools, as well as federally recognized Tribal Nations.

Application Questions

Q: Can my organization submit more than one application?

A: Applicants may submit only one application per funding cycle and must apply to the type of grant (Planning & Small Grants; Implementation/Collaboration Grants; or Rapid Response Grants) that most appropriately aligns with their proposed project.

For large institutions (e.g., universities), the application must clearly identify the specific school, college, or department serving as the project lead, in order to differentiate any submission from potential applications originating from other departments or schools within the same institution.

Each application must represent a unique and unrelated project. Collaborations are required and must be substantive rather than duplicative, including cases where multiple applications list the same co-leads or collaborating entities.

The RNRF Grant program aims to support a diverse portfolio across regions and nonprofit organizations. Applications with duplicative leads or co-leads deemed too closely related by the selection committee will not be considered for funding.

Please note: Applicants are welcome to submit a new application **each year**. A new RFP will be released in early 2026 with key dates and information.

Application Review

Q: How will RNRF evaluate the applications?

A: Applications will first be checked for eligibility. The applications will be scored on the strength of the collaboration and fit to the guiding principles outlined in the application. The applications will be reviewed and scored by subject-matter-experts and other professionals who work in the renewable natural resource sector.

Q: Who will evaluate the applications?

A: Applications will be reviewed by volunteers who are subject matter experts or professionals employed in the renewable natural resources sector. All reviewers are required to sign a conflict of interest and confidentiality agreements.

Membership Requirements

Q: Would you clarify the membership requirements for applicants?

A: Either the lead applicant (primary applicant) or at least one co-lead (collaborator/partner) must be a member of an RNRF Member Organization and provide proof of active membership.

Key points:

- Membership may be individual or organizational.
- All membership types are acceptable (e.g., student, academic, corporate).
- If the member is not the primary applicant, they must submit a letter of intent along with the application.

RNRF's member organizations are listed in the [Request for Proposals](#). Their combined memberships reflect a significant cross-section of professionals, scientists, and practitioners dedicated to the stewardship of renewable natural resources.

Multidisciplinary Collaboration and Communities - Explanation

Q: Would you clarify the collaboration parameters for this opportunity?

A: At RNRF, multidisciplinary collaboration is a key guiding principle, recognizing the value for achieving minimal impact. Applications are asked to describe what collaboration looks like in their project and define the community or communities involved. Collaborators may be individuals or organizations. The intent of the program is to bring together multidisciplinary groups to deepen their impact. Collaboration may involve working across scientific disciplines, sectors, or community groups. Examples include partnerships between ecologists, engineers, social scientists, community organizations, and more.

The primary applicant is responsible for managing all collaborators and partners.

Specifically:

- Collaborators (organizations or individuals) may participate as subawardees, contractors, or consultants.
- Collaborators/partners are not required to be nonprofit organizations.
- The primary application must ensure that all collaborators and partners comply with applicable legal and tax requirements.
- Collaborative arrangements should be structured to enhance the impact of the proposed work.

Use of Funds

Q: Indirect Cost Rate - Would you tell me about the indirect use of funds/overhead policy for funding that RNRF has?

A: Indirect costs are capped at 15% of the total budget. The primary applicant is responsible for managing all subawardees and contractors and must ensure that the subawardees' and contractors' indirect costs do not exceed 15% of their respective budgets, consistent with this cap.

Q: Will RNRF fund scholarships?

A: Scholarships are not allowable under this grant, as they constitute general educational support rather than project-specific expenses.

Q: Will RNRF fund stipends?

A: Travel and participation stipends are allowable when they directly support project-related activities, such as attending training, conferences, workshops, or meetings necessary to accomplish the proposed work. Applications must ensure that all travel stipends are clearly justified in the budget and directly tied to the objectives of the grant.

Q: Will RNRF fund repairs and infrastructure?

A: Funding may not be used for repairs, maintenance, or improvements to residential or commercial properties. Funding may be used to upgrade or improve infrastructure only as part of a pilot or similar project and only when directly tied to achieving the project's objectives. Applicants must clearly describe how the proposed infrastructure activities advance one or more of the program's focus areas and guiding principles. All infrastructure-related expenses are subject to sponsor review and approval to ensure alignment with program goals.

Q: Will RNRF fund tuition reimbursements and student salaries?

A: Salary support related to the proposed project is allowable. Tuition remission or reimbursement for undergraduate and graduate students employed as research or teaching assistants may be included as part of the fringe benefit calculation, provided it is allowed under the institution's official fringe benefit policy and clearly linked to the student's employment. Any such inclusion must be explicitly explained in the budget justification.