



PROJECT FUNDING OPPORTUNITY

Community Resilience Housing Guide

Purpose

Smart Home America (SHA) received an award from the EPA Gulf of Mexico Program titled “Community Resilience Housing Guide: Creating a Stronger Post-Disaster Housing Framework for the Gulf Coast.”

This project aims to create community-wide ownership of a new post-disaster housing recovery plan. It will enable local communities to incorporate and implement best practices in pre-disaster mitigation, policy, and planning by identifying missing knowledge or tools needed for local communities to implement their disaster recovery efficiently and shorten the consistent lag time of federal aid.

Scope

This project will increase the resilience of 3-4 communities by enhancing their capacity to plan for and expedite the recovery of their local housing stock post-disaster. Smart Home America is seeking proposals to work with up to 4 pilot communities in the Gulf of Mexico.

This Request for Proposals seeks cities or jurisdictions to pilot recommendations from the newly created Community Resilience Housing Guide by piloting and providing recommendations to the newly created Guide. In the process, successful applicants will develop a Resilient Housing Plan for their city, along with meeting other qualifications outlined in the eligibility section.

This project aims to assist the SHA project team in refining recommendations in the development of a Community Resilience Housing Guide. The goal would be for each community to adopt a Community Resilience Housing Plan or Post-Disaster Recovery Plan.

Funding

Anticipated typical awards will range from **\$15,000-\$20,000 (min-max)**. Cost-sharing or matching is not required. Project costs cannot include already-incurred costs for projects underway and must limit indirect rates to 10% or less.

Location

Communities within the following four (4) states in the Gulf of Mexico Region are eligible for funding: Alabama, Louisiana, Mississippi, and Texas.

Eligibility

Eligible organizations can be any units of state and local government, or federally recognized Native American Tribes. The funding instrument will be by subgrant award or cooperative agreement. SHA will implement a competitive process for submittal. The fund agreement includes merit reviews of the community's proposals by members of the Gulf Housing Committee (GHC), who have volunteered to provide support and guidance to this project. We anticipate establishing one pilot community in each of the targeted states (AL, LA, MS, TX). However, the GHC has the flexibility to award three or four subawards.

Additionally, eligibility and criteria will be set and maintained for applicants, including:

- If awarded, agree to participate on the Gulf Housing Committee (GHC)
- Completion of the [Coastal Community Resilience Index \(CRI\)](#) OR the willingness to complete the CRI as part of a winning Proposal*
- Adoption of a Hazard Mitigation Plan
- Demonstrable housing recovery impacts from a natural disaster
- Environmental Justice or Social Vulnerability issues
- A population of less than 200,000.
- Experienced a recent disaster

*The completion of [The Coastal Community Resilience Index \(CRI\)](#) is required for this application. The CRI is a tool communities can use to examine their preparedness for storms and storm recovery. It is a simple, inexpensive method to identify weaknesses a community may want to address before the next hazard event. The CRI was updated in 2021 and may provide more opportunities to assess your community's level of resilience. *Mississippi- Alabama Sea Grant is willing to facilitate the CRI process for free to those communities that may require the CRI as part of their Full Proposal.*

Letter of Intent (LOI)

Letter of Intent (LOI) is requested before submitting a full proposal. LOI's should be no longer than 1 page and use the template provided. The LOI must include a robust justification for funding and willingness to participate in piloting and offering recommendations for the Community Resilience Housing (or Post-Disaster Recovery) Plan. The LOI must address needs that have been identified through recent disasters, the relevance of the project to post-disaster housing, the status of an applicant's Coastal Community Resilience Index (CRI) assessment or willingness to undertake the CRI if awarded, and status of Hazard Mitigation Plan. Full requirements are listed in the LOI template.

Applicants will be notified if they are selected to submit a full proposal.

Full Project Proposals

Full Project Proposals should be no longer than five pages and use the template provided. If selected, the LOI will become the first page of the Full Proposal. Resumes of Key Personnel and Two Letters of Support will also be required.

Deadlines

- [03-21-2022 – Letter of Intent \(LOI\) Released](#)
- [04-08-2022 – LOI Due](#)
- [04-18-2022 – Applicants Notified About for Full Proposal Submission Status](#)
- [05-13-2022 – Full Proposals Dues](#)
- [05-27-2022 – Final Selections Made, All Applicants Notified.](#)

Submittal and Selection

If mailed, the LOI and/or Full Proposal must be postmarked by the due date. If delivered, the application must be received in our office **by the close of business at 5:00 PM on the due date.**

- **Mailing and delivery address: 200 Government St., 4th Floor, ATTN: Smart Home America, Mobile, AL, 36602**
- **If electronically submitted, send LOI and/or Project Proposals to Graham Green at the Smart Home America office - graham@smarthomeamerica.org, 251-206-5632.**

Smart Home America will then present LOI and Full Proposals to the evaluation sub-committee members for selection without screening or bias. **Applicants and selected projects will be notified of their status by the date listed.**

Proposal Evaluation Criteria

Evaluation Criteria are outlined in Appendix A. The evaluation committee members reserve the right to make project selections based on the outlined criteria and their deliberations. There will be an attempt to select various projects across the Gulf of Mexico; however, only the most meritorious and relevant projects will be funded. Therefore, the selected projects may not be equally distributed across states. The evaluation committee members will make project selections with advisement from other Gulf Housing Committee (GHC) members.

Cost Reimbursement

Grant funds are provided on a reimbursement basis. Grant funds are provided after project costs are incurred and paid for by the grant recipient. To request a reimbursement, the grantee must submit a progress report and documentation of paid expenses, including receipts, paid invoices, copies of checks, and a ledger of expenses charged to the grant. Additional documentation may be requested.

If there is a compelling need for advance funds to start the project, the applicant may request partial advance payment in the grant application. Smart Home America will consider such requests on a case-by-case basis. Partial advance payments may not exceed 50% of the total grant award. Advance payments that are approved will be made upon signing of the grant agreement.

APPENDIX A –**Community Resilient Housing Guide**

The "Resilient Housing Plan Overview" outlines the Community Resilient Housing Guide (Housing Guide) and how it could be used for planning purposes. Again, this project's goal is for communities to pilot and provide recommendations in the development of the Housing Guide while also creating and adopting their own Community Resilience Housing Plan or Post-Disaster Recovery Plan.

Resilient Housing Plan Overview**1. Introduction**

A Resilient Housing Plan improves a city's housing opportunities and prepares residents for future disasters by risk-informed land-use planning and improved design and construction practices. The plan also empowers city leaders by having a plan ready to pursue, receive, and make good use of available funding before and following a disaster.

Cities selected to pilot the Resilient Housing Planning Guide will be expected to perform two related activities. They will provide useful feedback as they use the Guide, and they will gain the benefits of producing a Resilient Housing Plan for their city.

2. Purpose of a Resilient Housing Plan

A Resilient Housing Plan will improve housing in the city as it aims to:

- Reduce the risks of flooding and wind damage to housing with risk-informed land-use planning.
- Reduce damage and loss of buildings with well-informed, resilient design and construction practices.
- Prepare for future storms with a disaster housing plan including the four phases of housing relative to a disaster: storm shelters, temporary housing, repair to existing housing, and replacement housing.
- Prioritize the existing community, to retain and rehouse people on their own property, rely upon current property owners to make informed decisions, and promote equity in both the process and the outcomes of housing planning.
- Educate community leaders, government officials, developers, building industry professionals, and the general public regarding best practices to increase housing resilience.
- Strategically target federal and other funding opportunities to pursue, receive, and make good use of available funding before and following a disaster.

3. Use of a Resilient Housing Plan

A questionnaire was used at the onset of this project to seek feedback from city officers and other stakeholders regarding the potential use of a Resilient Housing Plan. The response made clear that people think that disaster housing should be included in a city's Comprehensive Plan and Emergency Response Plan. However, most people that responded indicated that either such is not the case, or they did not know whether or not disaster housing is included in these standard plans.

Such feedback suggests that a Resilient Housing Plan should be designed to align with and be able to be inserted into a city's Comprehensive Plan and Emergency Response Plan. However, a Resilient Housing Plan should also be able to be a stand-alone plan to be most useful for a city. Such questions will be further addressed by feedback from the pilot cities.

4. Plan overview

The Resilient Housing Planning Guide outlines the contents of a city's Resilient Housing Plan into the following components:

1. Existing housing assessment

Assess the existing housing stock to locate and quantify the probable damage and loss from a range of disasters.

2. Housing land-use plan

Create a land-use plan relative to housing informed by the geographic, economic, and social vulnerability factors of climate risk.

3. Damage and loss reduction plan

Create a plan to reduce damage and loss with changes to land use and improved construction standards to increase the resilience of normal housing renovation and development as well as increase the resilience of housing repaired and built following a disaster.

4. Disaster recovery housing plan

Create an action plan for housing recovery following a disaster, including sheltering, temporary housing, repair, and replacement housing.

5. Strategic funding plan

Create a strategic recovery plan kept current and modified as needed to be ready to pursue, receive, and effectively use federal funds before and following a disaster.

5. Planning Process

A variable that was queried in the initial project questionnaire is whether a city has the staff capacity to produce a Resilient Housing Plan on their own or whether they would hire a consultant to do parts of the plan. The Guide is designed for both cases. A city that decides to hire a consultant to assist with the planning process needs to have enough understanding of the project to be able to communicate their needs to a consultant. The choice of whether to use a consultant or not will be left up to the city. If a municipality uses a consultant, the consultant will also be expected to provide feedback on the Guide so that as the Guide is rolled out, it will be useful in either scenario.

APPENDIX B – EVALUATION CRITERIA FOR SHA PROJECT FUNDING OPPORTUNITY

All proposals will be evaluated based on the following criteria:

1. **Rationale (15 points)** – Addresses objectives identified in CRI or other post-disaster plans. Clearly states the need for the project and the high priority in accomplishing the project.
2. **Proposal Merit (10 points)** – Assesses whether the goals and objectives are clear and the methodology is appropriate for the proposed project. The likelihood that the proposed project will attain the stated purposes.
3. **Impacts and Application of Results (10 points)** – Evaluate the completed project's overall impact and anticipated outcomes. Identifies opportunities for leveraging or complementary projects (if any).
4. **Grantee (10 points)** – Principal Investigator/grantee organization has taken the CRI.
5. **Proposal Specifications (5 points)** – The proposal is limited to 5 pages and contains all information required by the RFP.

Category	Possible Points	Points Earned
Rationale	15	
Proposal Merit	10	
Impacts and Application	10	
Grantee	10	
Proposal Specifications	5	
TOTAL	50	

APPENDIX C –

Terms of Award

If awarded, the terms of the grantees subaward or cooperative agreement will include at minimum the following items.

Terms of Grant Award

1. **Project Manager:** Grant applicants must appoint a Project Manager who will act as the primary contact between Smart Home America and the grantee.
2. The assigned project manager must have the ability to respond back to a project email or phone call from the SHA grant project manager or the SHA grants department within a minimum three (3) business days. The repercussions of continued lack of communication between a grantee and SHA will be noted in the grant file and could potentially affect the continuation of funding and the eligibility for future allowance of Grant funding.
3. **Notification:** All grant applicants will receive written or email notification regarding grant award decisions by **May 27, 2022**.
4. **Grant Administration Orientation Meeting:** After notification of the grant award, the Project Manager or a designated representative of the grant recipient organization will be required to attend an orientation meeting virtually. **Meeting date will be determined after May 27, 2022.**
5. **Sub-Grant Agreement:** The grant funds will be administered through a sub-grant agreement between the Smart Home America and the grant applicant. **The grant award is not official until both parties have signed the sub- grant or cooperative agreement.**
6. **Effective Project Start Date:** The effective project start date is when the agreement is signed by both parties. At the discretion of the SHA, expenses incurred prior to the effective project start date may be eligible for reimbursement upon prior approval.
7. **Grant Period:** The grant period will be for up to twelve (12) months from the effective project start date.
8. **Project Changes:** SHA must approve any changes in the scope or timeframe of the agreement prior to the initiation of such changes. Additionally, any changes in budget categories that surpass 10% of the total award require written approval from SHA.
9. **Grant Acknowledgment:** The grantee will be required to acknowledge the funding support of Smart Home America (SHA) and EPA Gulf of Mexico Program and to display a sign with such an acknowledgment at the project location, if applicable. The acknowledgment should incorporate the logos of each organization. Grantees will also be required to acknowledge SHA in all materials announcing the grant award or implementation/completion of the grant project.
10. Applicants are **required** to notify the SHA grant project manager prior to any press releases being disseminated or any kind of media event taking place.
11. **Final Reports and Publicity:** Upon completion of the project, the grant recipient will be required to submit a final project report in a standard format provided by the SHA Office. Final reports should include an evaluation of the effectiveness and impact of the project. Grantees may be asked to participate in scheduled media events announcing the completion of the project.

12. **Default Statement:** If the grant recipient is not able to complete the project within the agreed-upon project schedule of twelve (12) months, the grant recipient may apply in writing for a one-time extension of up to six (6) months.
13. **Grant Monitoring:** To comply with agency transparency and to fulfill the SHA grant monitoring requirements, a site visit(s) will be arranged to ensure grant goals are being achieved. Proper notification will be provided in advance for all visits related to the funded project.

Grantee Responsibilities-Federal Regulations

Grant awards from Smart Home America (SHA) are made with federal funds received from the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). Because the grant dollars are federal in origin, grant recipients must comply with applicable federal regulations regarding the use and administration of federal funds. These regulations set standards for such administrative activities as procurement and record retention and govern the use of copyrighted work.

Grantees must comply with the Office of Management and Budget's Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirement for Federal Awards (also known as the OMB "Super Circular" or Uniform Guidance"). Grant recipients are subject to 2 CFR Part 200, Subparts A through E for grant administration requirements. These regulations are published as part of the Code of Federal Regulations and can be accessed online at: www.ecfr.gov (Search for Title 2-Grants and Agreements, and then select Part 200-Uniform Administrative Requirements).

In the Uniform Guidance, grantees are considered sub-recipients, while Smart Home America is considered a recipient and a pass-through entity.

These circulars can be downloaded from the White House website: www.whitehouse.gov/omb/circulars

Grantees must also:

- Comply with all applicable federal laws including but not limited to Section 106 of the Historic Preservation Act, Secretary of Interior Standards, the Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act, the National Environmental Policy Act, and the Americans with Disabilities Act. More information can be found on the following webpages:
- <http://www.achp.gov/106summary.html> <http://www.nps.gov/nagpra/>
- http://www.cr.nps.gov/local-law/fhpl_ntlenvirnpolcy.pdf <http://www.ada.gov/>
- Allow inspection of program records and the project by SHA and authorized federal agencies during the project and for up to three years following project completion.

Additional Federal Regulations

Title IV of the Civil Rights Act of 1964: Provides that no person in the United States shall, on the grounds of race, color, or national origin, be excluded from participation in, be denied benefits of, or be subject to discrimination under any program or activity receiving federal financial assistance (Section 601).

Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972: Provides that no person in the United States shall, on the basis of sex, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subject to discrimination under any programs or activity receiving federal financial assistance.

The Age Discrimination Act of 1975: Provides that no otherwise qualified person in the United States shall, on the grounds of age, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subject to discrimination under any program or activity receiving federal financial assistance.

Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973: Provides that no otherwise qualified person with a disability in the United States shall, solely by reason of his or her disability, be excluded from participation in, or denied benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity receiving federal financial assistance.

Fair Labor Standards Act: All personnel employed on projects or productions which are financed in whole or in part through federal financial assistance will be paid not less than the minimum compensation as determined by the Secretary of Labor in Parts 3, 5, 505 of Title 29 of the Code of Federal Regulations. No part of any project shall be performed or engaged in underworking conditions that are unsanitary, hazardous, or dangerous to the health and safety of the employees engaged in the project.

The Drug Free Workplace Act of 1988: Requires that employees of the grantee not engage in unlawful manufacture, distribution, dispensation, possession, or use of controlled substances in grantee's workplace or work site.

Trafficking Victims Protection Act of 2000, Section 106 (g): Provides that during the period of time that the award is in effect, grant recipients and their employees may not engage in severe forms of trafficking in persons, procure a commercial sex act, or use forced labor in the performance of the award.