

November 14, 2025

Adaptive Capacities for Transformation Initiative Planning Grant: Houston

REQUEST FOR APPLICATIONS



NATIONAL
ACADEMIES

*Sciences
Engineering
Medicine*

GULF RESEARCH PROGRAM

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ADAPTIVE CAPACITIES FOR TRANSFORMATION (ACT) PLANNING GRANTS: HOUSTON

SUMMARY

The National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine's [Gulf Research Program](#) (GRP) aims to assist communities within Houston¹ in enhancing their capacity for disaster preparedness, adaptation, health, and resilience. Through its Adaptive Capacities for Transformation (ACT) Initiative, the GRP has engaged individuals from local nonprofits, foundations, academia, and government in Houston to identify and prioritize what their communities need to “deal with” (plan and prepare for, respond to, recover from, and adapt to) disasters. This engagement resulted in the co-development of the ACT Houston Framework, which shows the priorities (Priorities) Houston communities rated as most critical to prepare for disaster impacts, take advantage of opportunities, and respond to consequences of disasters on health and resilience. The ACT Framework represents a consensus of perspectives among Participants, local plans, and the research literature on disaster resilience.

This grant opportunity supports Participants in the collaborative planning of activities that advance Priorities using science-based and community-driven inputs. Specifically, **the goal of this grant opportunity is to *build relationships for collaborations within Houston that can produce impactful solutions in Priority areas.* This grant series supports Participants in (1) establishing a working group committed to advancing select Priorities and (2) developing a program/project idea(s) for place-based solutions that advance selected Priorities.** Applicants should outline specific, locally relevant project goals that align with the chosen Priorities and promote collaboration and effective use of shared resources and other assets.

This grant opportunity is intended for all groups, organizations, and institutions that participated in at least one ACT Houston activity in 2025. Applicants may request between \$50,000 and \$100,000 for activities that reflect the scale and scope of work proposed and that are no more than 12 months in duration. The GRP anticipates making up to 5 awards within this range.

KEY DATES

- **November 14, 2025:** Online application submission opens
- **November 19, 2025:** Grant Opportunity Question and Answer Session
- **December 2, 2025:** ACT Houston Session 4 (Workshopping Applications)

¹ For the purposes of this funding opportunity, we will be focusing on Harris County Precincts 1 and 2. Please note that all references to Houston refer to these precincts specifically.

- **December 19, 2025:** Deadline for submissions of applications due by 5:00 p.m. Eastern Time
- **January 20, 2026:** Award selection and notification
- **February 15, 2026:** Anticipated funding start date
- Online submission website: <https://gulfresearchprogram.smapply.io/>

AWARD INFORMATION

- **Specifications for award amount:** Applicants may request between \$50,000 and \$100,000. All budget requests must reflect the scale and scope of work proposed.
- **Estimated number of awards:** The GRP anticipates making up to 5 planning grant awards. Resources made available under this grant opportunity will depend on the applications received. The Gulf Research Program reserves the right to negotiate, some, one, or none of the applications received in response to this solicitation.
- **Award notification:** January 2026
- **Award performance period:** Planning grants will be awarded to support activities for a maximum of 12 months in duration. All planning activities and associated documentation must occur within this timeframe.

PURPOSE

The Gulf Research Program (GRP) seeks to support local nonprofits, foundations, academia, and government from Houston, AL (Participants) in the collaborative planning of activities that advance priorities (Priorities) from the ACT Houston Framework for disaster preparedness, adaptation, health, and resilience. The goal of this planning grant opportunity is to *build relationships for collaborations* by supporting Participants in reaching two planning objectives:

- **Objective 1:** Establish a Working Group committed to advancing select Priorities
- **Objective 2:** Develop a program/project idea(s) for place-based solutions that advance selected Priorities

Building relationships for collaboration involves strengthening existing and developing new relational and institutional connections that enable Participants and Working Groups to share and mobilize assets (knowledge, skills, abilities, resources, and strategies) to produce a desired result for enhanced disaster preparedness, adaptation, health, and resilience.

The GRP aims for this grant to strengthen meaningful and strategic working relationships among Participants, Working Groups, the GRP, and other partners as outlined in the following desired outcomes.

- **Intended Outcome 1: Finding Common Ground**
Participants and Working Groups will work to become more closely aligned with each other, the GRP, and other partners involved in planning. This means finding common ground—such as shared goals, values, or priorities—to form the foundation for stronger collaboration.

- **Intended Outcome 2: Sharing Assets**

Participants and Working Groups will increase how much and how well they share their assets with each other, the GRP, and other partners. Identifying and exchanging these resources will help strengthen their working relationships.

- **Intended Outcome 3: Achieving Shared Results**

Participants and Working Groups will increase the number of times that they act collectively with each other, as well as with the GRP and other stakeholders with whom they share assets in the planning process. Collective action to achieve a shared result (such as an objective, goal, output, or outcome) will serve as the basis for building relationships for collaboration.

In the short term, the GRP desires for this grant opportunity to prepare Participants and Working Groups to *collaboratively* implement their place-based solutions. In the medium term, the GRP hopes to see solutions co-implemented by Working Groups and for the relationships to become even more strategic. This would be demonstrated by increases in the quantity and quality of resources and other assets available to them and their communities. In the long term, the GRP wants the programs/projects seeded by this funding to better position Participants and Working Groups to secure additional investment in Priorities related to disaster preparedness, adaptation, health, and resilience.

WHAT WE ARE LOOKING FOR

This grant opportunity aims to build relationships for collaboration by supporting Participants in achieving two objectives focused on co-planning the advancement of select Priorities. Activities supported by this grant opportunity should use science-based and community-driven inputs to achieve these objectives. For Objective 1, Participants should follow best practices for collaboration between academics/scientists and community members. For Objective 2, Working Groups should incorporate place-based approaches in developing program/project ideas. Additionally, program/project ideas should align with the GRP mission and strategic plan, including:

- Supporting a safer, more resilient, and sustainable future for the Gulf and all those who call the region home.
- Advancing and/or applying science to enhance health and resilience in the face of compounding disasters.

Competitive applications will include Working Groups that consist of representatives from at least three of the following groups, organizations, or institutions: local nonprofits (including community- and faith-based organizations), foundations, academia, and government. Overall, Working Groups should represent different sectors and expertise relevant to advancing select Priorities.

The National Academies must remain in compliance with federal guidance as it evolves. Given this, we advise applicants to ensure their applications align with applicable laws and guidance. Applicants should focus on presenting a strong and well-supported proposal that aligns with what is being requested in the Request for Applications documents.

PRIORITIES

Proposed activities for co-planning must focus on advancing at least one of the Priorities rated by Participants to be of “high importance” but “low happening” and rated by the GRP to be “highly aligned” with GRP’s mission and strategic plan. For ACT Houston, these 12 Priorities are listed below. (NOTE: The identification number for each Priority is provided in parentheses).

- Design and carry out effective adaptation plans that protect groups who are most impacted (56)
- Fund long-term, large-scale solutions that reduce the chances of communities being harmed by hurricanes and flooding (19)
- Have strong organized networks to support people, share information, and respond to emergencies (33)
- Add locally driven & supported programs that build strong neighbor relationships into disaster planning & risk reduction efforts (70)
- Use collaborative leadership and teamwork to build city networks that can better handle disasters (61)
- Fund community-based organizations to develop disaster plans with communities (20)
- Use reliable tools (like quick impact or environmental damage assessments) that can inform decision makers on how to fairly distribute resources following disasters (28)
- Consider the impacts of disasters on populations that are impacted differently (like impacts of disasters on children and lasting behavioral consequences) (58)
- Base policies on both scientific research and the lived experiences of the most impacted populations (65)
- Translate research into feasible solutions to improve resilience (47)
- Support integrated and long-term research to fill major knowledge gaps in disaster-related priorities (66)
- Include the experiences of groups who are most directly impacted when making and implementing policies (57)

Applications must describe how proposed activities intend to use science-based and community-driven inputs to reach the objectives, goal, and intended outcomes of this grant opportunity.

Applicants should carefully review the [Merit Review Criteria](#) prior to submitting.

PROJECT EVALUATION

The GRP regularly assesses its grantmaking portfolio to ensure that funded activities align with the GRP's mission and desired outcomes. Through these evaluations, the GRP seeks to build a shared evidence base that both grantees and the GRP can use to understand, strengthen, and communicate their impact.

The GRP may engage an external evaluation consultant to support the development of an evaluation framework for this planning grant or may conduct this work internally. Grantees are expected to cooperate fully with the evaluation process, including by providing timely access to relevant data, stakeholders, and documentation.

The GRP intends these evaluations to:

- Build an evidence base that helps grantees and the GRP understand and communicate impact;
- Enable organizational learning and increase capacity to provide effective, high-quality programming; and
- Support the sharing of successes, challenges, and insights among funders, grantees, and stakeholders.

ELIGIBILITY AND REQUIREMENTS

This grant opportunity is intended for all groups, organizations, and institutions that participated in at least one ACT Houston activity in 2025. Eligible applicants are limited to nonprofit organizations (including community- and faith-based organizations) and public charities with a 501(c)(3) tax-exempt status in good standing, as well as academic institutions and local governments. Federal agencies, for-profit organizations, foreign institutions, and individuals are not eligible to apply or receive funding; however, these entities may participate as project partners (Working Group Members).

Additionally, the GRP will not consider applications that include:

- Political campaigns, lobbying or advocacy activities.
- Clinical trials and human subject research.
- Construction of physical infrastructure projects (e.g., construction of facilities, clinics, levee).
- General organizational operating costs.

The applying organization will be referred to as the “Applicant” hereafter. The individual who will lead the proposed work will be referred to as “Project Director” hereafter. All eligible Applicants must have a valid federal tax ID number to apply.

Project Directors usually initiate applications that are officially submitted by their employing organizations (the Applicant). When initiating an application, the Project Director typically is responsible for ensuring the application meets all the requirements outlined by the GRP as well as any requirements set by the employing organizations.

The GRP requires individuals named as Project Director or Key Personnel (Participants and other Group Members) in an application to adhere to the following:

- An individual may be proposed as Project Director in only one application. If an individual is proposed as Project Director in any application, they may also be proposed as Key Personnel in up to two additional applications.
- An individual not proposed as a Project Director in any application may be named as Key Personnel in up to three applications.
- It is the responsibility of each individual being named as Project Director or Key Personnel in any application to ensure that they are not named in more than three total applications.
- Key Personnel must include at least one individual who has participated in at least one ACT event.

To best serve the residents of the region, the GRP aims to limit the overhead charges on grants. As such, **overhead charges for this grant opportunity cannot exceed a total of 20%**. This limit also applies to sub-awardee budgets.

APPLICATION SUBMISSION

Project Directors can apply for this grant opportunity via the [online application system](#). Applications submitted by other means (e.g., mail, fax, or email) will not be considered. Application materials must be submitted in English.

Project Directors should review the application preparation and submission instructions and submit any questions to gulfgrants@nas.edu prior to the submission deadlines. The GRP strives to respond to Applicants' questions within two business days but cannot guarantee that Applicants' questions will be answered before submission deadlines.

APPLICATION GUIDELINES

All complete applications will be reviewed internally by the GRP and evaluated using the [Planning Grant Selection Criteria](#).

The application must provide the following information:

1) **Project Team (Working Group):**

- a) **Project Director:** If applicable, provide ORCID (Open Research and Contributor ID)
- b) **Key Personnel** (Participants and other Working Group Members): Provide the following information for each individual who has agreed to participate in the Working Group: name, email, group/organization/institution, area of expertise, and proposed role or contribution to the Working Group. Describe any previous collaboration among Project Team (Working Group) members.

- c) **Applicant Overview** (maximum 250 words): State the Applicant's location, service area, and mission. If applicable, list the ACT Houston activities that the Applicant has participated in.
- d) **Involvement of Project Director or Key Personnel** (Participants and Working Groups) in other applications related to this grant opportunity

2) Project (Work) Details:

- a) **Proposed Title** (maximum 15 words)
- b) **Proposed Key Words** (maximum 10 words). Please highlight key features of your application.
- c) **Proposed ACT Houston Priorities**. At least one of the Priorities must be rated as "highly aligned".
- d) **Draft Timeline**. Provide a Draft Timeline for the anticipated start date, proposed activities, and end date. This may be a Gantt chart or description.
- e) **Statement of Intent (SOI)** (maximum 1500 words). Provide an SOI that describes the work proposed to reach the objectives, goal, and outcomes of this grant opportunity. The description should include the resources (input) that are available to do the work, the activities proposed to do the work (including who is leading activities and who is benefiting from activities), and the results (outputs and outcomes) anticipated from doing the work. The SOI must describe how proposed activities intend to use science-based and community-driven decisions and actions to reach the objectives, goal, and outcomes of this grant opportunity. The description may refer to Priorities by their identification number.

3) Proposed Budget

- a) **Total Budget Requested**.
- b) **Budget Justification** (maximum 2000 words). Please submit a budget justification. A [sample budget justification](#) is provided.
- c) **Budget Form**: Download the [budget template](#). Complete this form to provide information on the proposed budget. Budget requests should be developed commensurate with the support needed to achieve the project goals. Adequate compensation should be provided for community- and/or faith-based organization partners and community members for the effort they are contributing to the project. Budget should demonstrate that at least 30% of the total grant award will be spent no later than April 30, 2026. Indirect Rate is capped at 20% for this funding opportunity.

4) Other Attachments

- a) **Resume(s)**: Resumes are required for the Project Director and every individual identified on the Project Team (Participants and Working Group Members). Resumes may not exceed two pages per person. All resumes should be combined and uploaded as a single PDF document. Do not include resumes for individuals not named as a Project Director or Project Team member.

The National Academies must remain in compliance with federal guidance as it evolves. Given this, we advise Applicants to ensure their applications align with applicable executive orders, review criteria, and focus on presenting a strong and well-supported proposal.

PLANNING GRANT SELECTION CRITERIA

It is important that all applications clearly describe how activities are intended to achieve the objectives, goal, and outcomes of this grant opportunity. All complete applications will be evaluated on the basis of the Planning Grant Selection Criteria described below. Applicants should consider the Application Guidelines as well as Selection Criteria in the development of their application. The GRP may raise additional issues that are not covered by the criteria during review.

Working Group (30%)

- *Does the Working Group consist of individuals from at least three of the following groups, organizations, or institutions: local nonprofits, foundations, academia, and government?*
- *To what extent does the Working Group (overall) represent different sectors and expertise relevant to advancing the select Priorities proposed in this application?*

Statement of Intent (45%)

- *Does the Statement of Intent propose Priorities to advance?*
- *Is at least one of the priorities in the proposed Priorities rated as “highly aligned”?*
- *To what extent does the Statement of Intent describe how the proposed activities intend to use science-based and community-driven inputs?*
- *To what extent does the Statement of Intent describe how the proposed activities will address the objectives, goal, and outcomes of this grant opportunity?*

Timeline (10%)

- *To what extent are proposed activities feasible within 12 months?*

Budget (15%)

- *To what extent does the Budget reflect the scope and scale of proposed activities?*
- *To what extent does the Budget reflect the effort of proposed sub-awardees?*

MAKING THE AWARD

Selection Notice

The GRP reserves the right to select all, some, one, or none of the applications received in response to this solicitation.

When the evaluation of an application is complete, the Project Director will be notified that (1) the application has been selected for funding pending contract negotiations, or (2) the application has not been selected. These official notifications will be sent via email to the Project Director identified on the

application. If an application is selected for award, the GRP reserves the right to request additional or clarifying information for any reason deemed necessary, including, but not limited to, indirect cost information or other budget information.

Award Notice

The GRP transmits award notices to organizations via e-mail. The award is not finalized and the National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine is not obligated to provide any funding until a signed copy of the award agreement has been received by the Academies.

Grant Periods

Upon receipt of the award notice, the awardee should note the effective date and the expiration date. The effective date is the date specified in the grant notice on or after which expenditures may be charged to the grant. Charging expenditures to the grant prior to the effective date is prohibited. The expiration date is the date specified in the grant notice after which expenditures may not be charged against the grant except to satisfy obligations to pay allowable project costs committed on or before that date. Once an award is made, the effective date cannot be changed. The expiration date may be changed as a result of approval of a request for a no-cost extension. If approved, the GRP will issue an amendment to the grant.

If additional time beyond the performance period and the established expiration date is required to assure adequate completion of the original scope of work with the funds already made available, the awardee may apply for a one-time, no-cost extension of up to six months. A formal request must be submitted to the GRP at least 45 days prior to the expiration date of the grant. The request must explain the need for the extension and include an estimate of the unobligated funds remaining and a plan for their use. This one-time extension will not be approved solely for the purpose of using the unliquidated balances.

POST-AWARD MANAGEMENT

Coordination with GRP

After the award is conferred, grantees shall coordinate with the GRP to formally initiate the project. GRP staff will periodically request status meetings during the project implementation phase to discuss progress and any unanticipated developments that may affect the project outcomes as specified in the grant agreement. These interactions will help ensure successful management of the grant.

Reporting Requirements

After an award is conferred, the grantee shall provide a financial report to the GRP no later than April 30, 2026, to report on grant expenditures to date under the grant. By this date, grantees must demonstrate that at least 30% of the total grant award has been spent. No later than 60 days after the expiration of the award, the grantee shall provide final financial and written grant reports. The final

written grant report shall address the original objectives of the project as identified in the grant application, describe any changes in objectives, describe the final project accomplishments, and include a final project accounting of all grant funds in the final financial report.

SCIENTIFIC INTEGRITY

A fundamental purpose of the GRP is to facilitate the advancement of knowledge and the application of science to address challenges relevant to the GRP's mission. All activities of the GRP will be conducted to meet the highest standards of scientific integrity. All grantees have a responsibility to use the funds wisely.

GRANT AGREEMENT TERMS AND CONDITIONS

Please review the Grant Agreement prior to submitting an application. It is the policy of National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine to entertain potential modifications to the Grant Agreement only under the most exceptional circumstances. Rather, successful Applicants are strongly encouraged to sign the Grant Agreement as presented.

- [View a sample grant agreement if the applicant is a public institution.](#)
- [View a sample agreement if the applicant is a private institution.](#)

ABOUT THE GULF RESEARCH PROGRAM

[The National Academies'](#) Gulf Research Program (GRP) is an independent, science-based program founded in 2013 as part of legal settlements with the companies involved in the 2010 Deepwater Horizon disaster. The GRP's mission is to develop, translate, and apply science to enhance the safety of offshore energy, the environment, and the wellbeing of the people of the Gulf region for generations to come. It supports innovative science, guides data design and monitoring, and builds and sustains networks to generate long-term benefits for the Gulf region and the nation.