

OCEAN CLIMATE FUNDING FOR COASTAL CITIES

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Continuing the work: Federal support offers a window of opportunity for coastal cities

After years of advocacy by the ocean community, the federal government meaningfully invested in ocean climate action, including through passage of the Inflation Reduction Act (IRA) in 2022 and the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA) in 2021.¹ When President Biden signed the IRA into law one year ago, it became the single biggest investment in climate solutions in U.S. history to boost clean energy, protect, restore ecosystems, and create climate-ready infrastructure. This builds upon the progress started with the IIJA, which authorized \$1.2 trillion in infrastructure spending and has awarded funding to nearly 37,000 projects throughout the nation at the time of publication.

These historic investments are continuing to provide funding for coastal cities along the Great Lakes and ocean to adapt to the climate-induced threats they face.² Urban Ocean Lab has identified over \$21.7 billion in funds that cities are eligible to use in implementing ocean climate action projects, \$11 billion allocated from the IRA and \$10.7 billion allocated from the IIJA. Cities and other coastal project managers must act quickly to identify and apply for applicable project funding as many federal programs have already started awarding funds to applicants. This guidebook is intended to be a concise directory to assist cities in accessing the remaining and ongoing funding opportunities afforded for ocean climate projects in these two laws.

Where to act: Funding opportunities by ocean climate action area

Collectively, the IIJA and the IRA provide coastal cities throughout the country with unprecedented opportunities to adapt and become part of the solution to the climate crisis. This guidebook organizes opportunities that cities are eligible for into four categories of action: coastal resilience and disaster risk reduction, climate-ready coastal infrastructure, coastal ecosystems, and the blue economy and workforce.³

¹ The Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act, Public Law 117-58, is sometimes also referred to as the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law.

² Authors included Great Lakes communities in the definition of "coastal communities" but individual federal program details for funding opportunity eligibility should be reviewed.

³ This coastal city-centered guidebook only included programs that cities are eligible to apply for or to apply for in partnership. Several programs included are open to many entities including cities, and therefore other entities may also find value in this guidebook.

Coastal resilience and disaster risk reduction

To build resilience in coastal communities, funding opportunities in this action area support adaptation efforts that advance environmental and climate justice initiatives, improve place-based climate models that help communicate extreme weather and climate events, reduce or eliminate the risk of repetitive flood damage to buildings, and develop mitigation and restoration projects to reduce the risks from extreme heat, air pollution and natural disasters. As a result of historically discriminatory policies like [redlining](#), [frontline](#) and [ocean justice communities](#) experience the “first and worst” of many environmental impacts, which are only made worse by climate change. Coastal cities should consider how to equitably and justly adapt to existing and forecast coastal climate threats.

TABLE 1: COASTAL RESILIENCE AND DISASTER RISK REDUCTION

Program	Funding Description	Statutory Location	Department / Agency	Funding Available	Timeline Details	Contact Information	Additional Resources
Building Resilient Infrastructure and Communities	Addressing future risks to natural disasters, including ones involving: wildfires, drought, hurricanes, earthquakes, extreme heat, and flooding.	IIJA Sec. 70204	FEMA	\$1 billion	Funding is available for the next 5 fiscal years in tranches of \$200 million per fiscal year. FEMA is preparing a report on improvements to the BRIC program due in 2024.	Contact FEMA Community Assistance Program	White House IIJA Guidebook pg 277
Climate Resilience Regional Challenge	Building the resilience of coastal communities to extreme weather (e.g., hurricanes and storm surge) and other impacts of climate change, including sea level rise.	IRA Sec. 40001	NOAA	\$575 million	Letter of intent due August 21, 2023. Full application due February 13, 2024. No future grant competitions are planned.	Contact NOAA Resilience Challenge	Priority funding areas resource list
Enhanced Modeling Capacity	Improving projections, data assimilation, numerical weather predictions, and models in order to improve the prediction of extreme weather, climate events, and ocean and ecosystem changes.	IRA Sec. 40004	NOAA	More information coming soon	Funding to remain open until September 30, 2026.	Contact NOAA about IRA funding	
Environmental and Climate Justice Program	Financial and technical assistance to carry out environmental and climate justice activities to benefit underserved and overburdened communities.	IRA Sec. 60201	EPA	\$2.8 billion for financial assistance, \$200 million for technical assistance	Funding must be allocated by September 30, 2026.	Contact EPA Office of Environmental Justice Subscribe to the EPA EJ Listserv for future announcements	White House IRA Guidebook pg 86

TABLE 1: COASTAL RESILIENCE AND DISASTER RISK REDUCTION (CONTINUED)

Environmental Justice Government-to-Government (EJG2G) Program	Developing processes or tools that integrate environmental justice considerations into governmental decision-making at all levels.	IRA Sec. 60201	EPA	\$70 million	Funding for 2024 is expected but not yet announced.	Omari Burrell Subscribe to the EPA EJ Listserv for future announcements	
Flood Mitigation Assistance Grants	Annual funding opportunity for reducing or eliminating the risk of repetitive flood damage to buildings insured by the National Flood Insurance Program.	IIJA Sec. 1366	FEMA	\$3.5 billion	Funding is available for the next 5 fiscal years in tranches of \$700 million per fiscal year.	Contact FEMA Community Assistance Program	White House IIJA Guidebook pg 271: Grant Program Fact Sheet and Criteria Information
Native Hawaiian Climate Resilience	Building capacity within the Native Hawaiian Community to increase resilience in the face of climate change.	IRA Sec. 80002	DOI	\$25 million	NOFO is expected in 2023. Funding is to remain available through September 30, 2031.	Contact US DOI	
Regional Climate Data and Information	Expanding dissemination of actionable, place-based climate information for hazards including for underserved communities.	IRA Sec. 40004	NOAA	More information coming soon	Funding to remain open until September 30, 2026.	Contact NOAA about IRA funding	White House Spreadsheet of IRA Funding Programs
Watershed And Flood Prevention Operations	Providing technical and financial assistance to help plan and implement flood prevention, watershed protection, public recreation, public fish and wildlife conservation, agricultural water management, municipal and industrial water supply improvements, and water quality management.	IIJA Division J, Title I	USDA	\$500 million	Funding is available until expended.	Contact USDA Office of Partnerships and Public Engagement	Program Sponsor Guide

Climate-ready coastal infrastructure

Coastal infrastructure refers to the physical systems and structures that are specific or unique to the coast or at heightened risk due to coastal impacts of climate change. In the next 30 years, 4.4 million acres of land in the U.S. (an area roughly the size of Connecticut) and \$35 billion of real estate could be submerged because of rising sea levels and increased storm surge. Coastal cities can adapt and build more resilient infrastructure to withstand the impacts of climate change and support healthier communities and ecosystems. This action area includes funding opportunities that reduce emissions of greenhouse gasses and hazardous pollutants at ports, support electric or low-emitting ferry vessels, address adverse impacts on coastal communities and ecosystems caused by stormwater run-off, provide affordable access to public coastal spaces, research and develop wind energy technologies, and implement desalination, water reclamation, and reuse projects to prepare for drought conditions and climate change.

TABLE 2: CLIMATE-READY COASTAL INFRASTRUCTURE

Program	Funding Description	Statutory Location	Department / Agency	Funding Available	Timeline Details	Contact Information	Additional Resources
Clean Ports Program	Funding zero-emission port equipment, technology, and development of climate action plans to reduce U.S. ports' air pollutants.	IRA Sec. 60102	EPA	\$3 billion	New program in development, funding is available through September 30, 2027.	Contact EPA Clean Ports Program Subscribe to the EPA Ports Initiative Listserv	
Construction of Ferry Boats and Ferry Terminal Facilities	Construction of ferry boats and ferry terminal facilities.	IIJA Sec. 11121	DOT	\$912 million	Funding is available until expended and future funding opportunities to be announced in 2024.	Omar Elkassed	
Disadvantaged Community Domestic Water Supply Projects	Providing domestic water supplies to communities that do not have reliable access to potable water. The Bureau of Reclamation is creating a new program for ~545 million remaining in funding.	IRA Sec. 50231	DOI	\$550 million	New program in development, funding is available through September 30, 2031.	Contact USBR	Funding for Domestic Water Supplies Press Release
Electric or Low-Emitting Ferry Program	Improving and expanding ferry service in communities across the country.	IIJA Division J, Title VIII	DOT	\$250 million	Funding is available through 2026. Future notices of funding opportunities will be announced on the website as available.	Contact DOT Federal Transit Authority's IIJA Program	Electric or Low-Emitting Ferry Pilot Program Fact Sheet
Marine Energy Research, Development, and Demonstration	Funding research, development, and demonstration activities to improve marine energy technologies.	IIJA Sec. 41006	DOE	\$70.4 million	Funding is available until expended.	Subscribe to the DOE Marine Energy Newsletter for future announcements Tim Ramsey	

TABLE 2: CLIMATE-READY COASTAL INFRASTRUCTURE (CONTINUED)

Neighborhood Access and Equity (NAE) Grant Program	<p>Improving walkability, safety, and affordable transportation access, and addressing existing transportation facilities that create barriers to community connectivity or negative impacts on the human or natural environment, especially in disadvantaged or underserved communities.</p>	<p>IRA Sec. 60501</p>	<p>DOT</p>	<p>\$3.205 billion</p>	<p>Funding is available until September 30, 2026.</p>	<p>Contact DOT Federal Highway Administration</p>	
Port Infrastructure Development Program Grants	<p>Supporting ports and industry efforts to improve port and related freight infrastructure and commercial fisheries.</p>	<p>IIJA Division J, Title VIII</p>	<p>DOT</p>	<p>\$2.25 billion</p>	<p>Additional information for FY24 and application requirements available in early 2024.</p>	<p>Contact DOT Port Infrastructure Development Program</p>	<p>2023 Notice of Funding Opportunity</p>
Reduction of Truck Emissions at Port Facilities	<p>Reducing truck idling and emissions at ports, including through the advancement of port electrification.</p>	<p>IIJA Sec. 11101; 11402</p>	<p>DOT</p>	<p>\$400 million</p>	<p>Initial applications closed July 26, 2023. Future rounds of program funding, for Federal Fiscal Years 2024 to 2026, will become available in the coming years.</p>	<p>Chip Millard</p>	<p>2023 Notice of Funding Opportunity</p>
Water Desalination Projects	<p>Helping Western communities create or expand clean, new water sources, including desalination, and water reclamation and reuse projects.</p>	<p>IIJA Sec. 40901</p>	<p>DOI</p>	<p>\$250 million</p>	<p>2023 NOFO is expected to be released by the end of August. Funding is offered annually until expended.</p>	<p>Maribeth Menendez</p>	<p>WaterSMART Water and Energy Efficiency Grants</p>
Wind Energy Technology Program	<p>Funding research, development, demonstration, and commercialization activities to improve wind energy technologies.</p>	<p>IIJA Sec. 41007</p>	<p>DOE</p>	<p>\$60 million</p>	<p>Funding is available until expended.</p>	<p>Contact DOE Office of Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy Register for the State and Community Energy Programs Newsletter</p>	<p>Additional Wind Energy Funding Opportunities Additional Water Power Funding Opportunities</p>

Coastal ecosystems

Coastal ecosystems are a diverse set of natural ecosystems and include salt marshes, mangroves, seagrass meadows, kelp forests, oyster reefs, and coral reefs. They provide natural shoreline protection, enhance food security, and support coastal economies, all while absorbing tons of carbon. This action area includes funding opportunities for projects that support climate-ready fisheries; remove or modify barriers to fish passages; restore natural systems through nature-based solutions and community resilience projects; and conserve marine, estuarine, coastal, and Great Lakes ecosystem habitats.

TABLE 3: COASTAL ECOSYSTEMS

Program	Funding Description	Statutory Location	Department / Agency	Funding Available	Timeline Details	Contact Information	Additional Resources
Aquatic Ecosystem Restoration And Protection Projects	Restoration projects that are collaboratively developed, have widespread regional benefits, and result in the improvement of the health of fisheries, wildlife, and aquatic habitat.	IIJA Sec. 40901	DOI	\$250 million	The second application period closes January 24, 2024. Funding is available until expended.	Schedule time to talk with program coordinators	
Climate-Ready Fisheries	Funding to conserve fisheries and protected species in coastal regions around the country.	IRA Sec. 40001	NOAA	\$349 million	Funding is to remain open until September 30, 2026.	Contact NOAA about IRA funding	White House IRA Guidebook pg 164
Community-based Habitat Restoration	Restoring marine, estuarine, coastal, and Great Lakes ecosystem fish habitats, including coastal wetlands, coral and oyster reefs, and riverine habitats, while strengthening the resilience of coastal communities and ecosystems.	IIJA Division J, Title II	NOAA	\$491 million	Funding available over 5 years.	Rebecca Certner	
Ecosystem - Fish Passage	Improving community infrastructure resilience, rebuilding fish populations, improving recreational and commercial fisheries, and restoring the beauty of free-flowing waters.	IIJA Division J, Title VI	USFWS	\$200 million	FY24 Notice of Funding Opportunity will be announced in the Fall of 2023.	Amy Horstman	Additional Fish Passage Funding Opportunities

TABLE 3: COASTAL ECOSYSTEMS (CONTINUED)

National Coastal Resilience Fund	Restoring, increasing, and strengthening natural infrastructure to protect communities while also enhancing habitats for fish and wildlife.	IIJA Division J, Title II	NOAA	\$492 million	Funding for FY24 is expected to be announced in early 2024. Funding available over 5 years.	Rebecca Certner	2023 Request for Proposals
Restoring Fish Passage through Barrier Removal	Reopening migratory pathways and restoring access to healthy habitat for fish around the country.	IRA Sec. 40001; IIJA Division J, Title II	NOAA	\$175 million	Proposals must be received through Grants.gov by 11:59 PM Eastern time on October 16, 2023.	Melanie Gange	2023 Notice of Funding Opportunity

Blue economy and workforce

The blue economy and workforce action area refers to programs that promote economic growth, create good accessible jobs, and preserve or improve the livelihoods of people living in coastal cities while ensuring environmental sustainability of the ocean and coastal areas. It can be applied to any industries and economic pursuits on or adjacent to the ocean and Great Lakes. This action area includes funding opportunities for projects that support small businesses and entrepreneurs aligned with ocean climate resilience projects by developing workforce training programs and creating maritime jobs.

TABLE 4: BLUE ECONOMY AND WORKFORCE

Program	Funding Description	Statutory Location	Department / Agency	Funding Available	Timeline Details	Contact Information	Additional Resources
America's Marine Highway Program Grants	Creating maritime jobs, strengthening the nation's supply chains, reducing emissions, and lowering maintenance costs.	IIJA Division J, Title VIII	DOT	\$25 million	FY 2023 closed in April 2023, further funding is available for a period of 10 years.	Contact America's Marine Highway Program	2023 Notice of Funding Opportunity
Climate-Ready Workforce	Workforce training focused on climate resilience concepts, principles, and techniques and implementation, and ensuring direct hire or promotion into jobs related to climate resilience.	IRA Sec. 40001	NOAA	\$60 million	Letters of Intent are due November 30, 2023. Full Proposals are due February 13, 2024. Funding to remain open until September 30, 2026.	Contact NOAA Sea Grants	Resources for a Climate Ready Workforce
Ocean-Based Climate Resilience Accelerators	Supporting small businesses and entrepreneurs ocean, coastal, and Great Lakes-based climate solutions.	IRA Sec. 40001	NOAA	\$100 million	Applications due on September 11, 2023. Funding to remain open until September 30, 2026.	Contact NOAA Accelerators Program	2023 Notice of Funding Opportunity

Appendix

Additional resources for reference outside of the coastal city-centered climate scope of this guidebook.

Primary Sources:

1. U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, "[Grants.gov](#)", An E-Government initiative to provide a centralized location for grant seekers to find and apply for federal funding opportunities, register to receive grant notices, and download funding opportunity notices (last accessed July 2023).
2. United States Library of Congress, "[H.R.3684 - Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act](#)," (2022): Full text of the IIJA.
3. United States Library of Congress, "[H.R.5376 - Inflation Reduction Act of 2022](#)," (2022): Full text of the IRA.
4. White House, "[Announced Infrastructure Funding as of May 26, 2023](#)," (2023): IIJA funding announced per state by category.
5. White House, "[Bipartisan Infrastructure Law Guidebook](#)," (2023): Official guidebook of all IIJA programs and activities.
6. White House, "[Inflation Reduction Act Guidebook](#)," (2023): Official guidebook of all IRA programs and activities.
7. White House, "[White House Highlights Infrastructure Progress in Every Corner of the Country, Updates State-by-State Fact Sheets](#)," (2023): State-by-state fact sheets on IIJA progress in all 50 states, DC, and the territories as of January 13, 2023.

Selected Auxiliary Sources:

1. Bloomberg Cities Network, "[What are the best sources of funding for planning projects aimed at fulfilling NEPA environmental review requirements, outreach, or design? How should cities think about applying for IIJA funding if they will be applying for larger grants in the future?](#)" (2022): Instructions on how municipalities should use IIJA funding to advance local infrastructure needs, both within and outside of the climate sector.
2. Brookings, "[How state and local leaders can harness new infrastructure funding to build a stronger, more inclusive workforce](#)," (2023): Guide to help state and local leaders use IIJA funding specifically for workforce development activities, both within and outside of the climate sector.
3. C40 Knowledge Hub, "[Climate action and the Inflation Reduction Act: A guide for local government leaders](#)," (2022): Guidebook to help local governments understand the climate provisions included in the IRA.
4. Center for American Progress, "[How States and Cities Can Benefit From Climate Investments in the Inflation Reduction Act](#)," (2022): Overview of how cities and states can use IRA funding opportunities to advance climate and energy initiatives.
5. Rocky Mountain Institute, "[Supporting Local Governments as Climate Change Threatens Their Communities](#)," (2023): How cities and states can identify and leverage IRA and IIJA funds to invest in resiliency projects.
6. Sabin Center, "[Inflation Reduction Act Tracker](#)," (2023): Tracker of climate change-related funding in IRA for all entities.
7. The United States Conference of Mayors, "[Cities Advancing Climate Action: Leveraging Federal Funds for Local Impact A Resource Guide](#)," (2022): Guide for mayors and local leaders to identify IIJA funding programs that will help cities reach their climate goals.
8. The United States Conference of Mayors, "[Infrastructure Investment & Jobs Act: A Federal Investment Guide for Local Leaders](#)," (2021): Guide for local leaders that identifies all funding opportunities for cities in the IIJA.
9. World Resources Institute, "[Understanding How Cities Can Take Advantage of IRA Grants, New IRS Provisions and Direct Pay Models to Advance Communitywide Clean Energy Projects](#)," (2022): Webinar for cities and local governments on climate and energy funding opportunities in the IRA.

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