



GUIDELINES FOR APPLICANTS

This document provides further information to applicants on the Call for Proposals, its objectives, timeline, and how projects will be selected.

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1. About ORRAA and the UK's Blue Planet Fund

The United Nations has called for a transformative response by the finance and insurance industries to reduce the exposure and vulnerability of coastal communities and ecosystems through the global mobilisation of private capital and risk reduction expertise. The importance of reefs, mangroves, seagrass beds, wetlands, saltmarshes, and other coastal ecosystems to economies and coastal protection cannot be underestimated. They provide significant co-benefits to communities, building ecological and social resilience as well as protecting biodiversity. There is therefore an urgent need to better understand and mitigate ocean-derived risks, and to build resilience in our coastal natural capital and for the most vulnerable communities.

ORRAA is a multi-sector collaboration connecting the international finance and insurance sectors, governments, non-profits, and stakeholders from the Global South to pioneer finance products that incentivise investment into coastal and ocean Nature-based Solutions. ORRAA's goal, by 2030 is to activate at least \$500million of investment into this space, and in so doing, help build the resilience of at least 250 million climate vulnerable coastal people.

The UK's £500 million Blue Planet Fund supports developing countries to protect the marine environment and reduce poverty. Its objectives are in line with the UK's focus on protecting nature and tackling climate change in an integrated way and seeks ambitious outcomes in four interlinked areas: biodiversity, climate change, marine pollution, and sustainable seafood.

1.1 Our Planet and Ocean in Peril

The ocean is changing at a faster rate than at any time in human history, with wide-ranging implications for coastal infrastructure, biodiversity and the lives and livelihoods of millions of people. The impacts of these changes include more intense storms, sea-level rise, acidification, deoxygenation, and warming. The resulting vulnerabilities and risks will have significant consequences over time.

Coastal communities in developing countries, Small Island Developing States (SIDS), and other low-lying areas are the most threatened, with women and girls often on the front line of this change. Sea level and population density projections indicate that 800 million people will be at risk of coastal flooding and storm surges by 2050, and over 570 low-lying coastal cities will face a sea level rise of at least 0.5 metres.¹ Coastal floods and storm surges currently cost the world between US\$10 billion and US\$40 billion a year.² Floods will cost coastal cities US\$1 trillion a year by 2050, with billions of dollars worth of infrastructure at risk.³

The world must transition to a more resilient investment model that protects the ocean, secures the future well-being of coastal communities; and also reduces the risk of falling portfolio values and stranded assets, and achieves sustainable and long-term returns for those prepared to invest in the ocean's natural assets.

¹ C40 Cities. Staying Afloat: The Urban Response to Sea Level Rise.

² Association of British Insurance. Financial Risk of Climate Change.

³ Global Commission on Adaptation. Adapt now: A Global Call for Leadership on Climate Resilience.

1.2 Nature Offers Cost Effective, Adaptive Resilience Solutions

A healthy reef can reduce incoming wave energy by up to 97%⁴ and reduce the annual expected damage from storms by more than US\$4 billion.⁵ Mangrove forests sequester five to ten times more carbon than terrestrial forests, and provide more than US\$80 billion per year in avoided losses from coastal flooding.⁶ The UN estimates that investing just \$US6 billion a year in nature-based disaster risk management measures like restoring coastal ecosystems would save the world US\$360 billion over the next 15 years.⁷ Protecting and regenerating natural capital is one of the critical components of disaster risk management and climate adaptation in countries that often lack the financial resources to fund relief, recovery and post-disaster reconstruction efforts.

1.3 Addressing Ocean Risk through Innovation and Investment

The IPCC's 2022 AR6 Report on Impact, Adaptation, and Vulnerability is unequivocal. It states that climate change is happening now with cascading and compounding effects.⁸ Addressing climate change requires an upscale in action from all sectors: governments, the private sector, and civil society. It also requires a significant ratcheting up of investment to mitigate the exposures and vulnerabilities of those on the front lines, particularly coastal communities in Least Developed Countries (LDCs) and Small Island States. Financing a climate resilient development pathway that builds the social, economic, and cultural durability of communities is essential.

By catalysing, scaling and accelerating investment and innovation, ORRAA's work will help achieve the Sustainable Development Goals and improve ocean stewardship. This will be achieved through delivering three priority pathways that underpin ORRAA's work:

1. **Financial innovation:** Pioneering innovative and scalable finance and insurance products to protect and regenerate valuable coastal and marine natural assets while delivering a return on investment by:
 - Leveraging and influencing public and private investments in coastal natural capital that deliver a return on investment
 - Surfacing, incubating and scaling 50 finance and insurance solutions that build resilience by investing in nature
2. **Science and research:** Accelerating research on ocean risk and resilience and improving modelling that informs financial innovation and policy action to reduce the impacts of climate and ocean change by:
 - Undertaking research and developing strategies to better understand, analyse, predict, and model and manage ocean risk

⁴ Ferrario, F., et al. The Effectiveness of Coral Reefs for Coastal Hazard Risk Reduction and Adaptation. *Nat Commun* 5, 3794 (2014).

⁵ Beck, M.W., Losada, I.J., Menéndez, P. et al. The Global Flood Protection Savings Provided by Coral Reefs. *Nat Commun* 9, 2186 (2018).

⁶ Beck, M. W., et al. 2018. The Global Value of Mangroves for Risk Reduction. Summary Report.

⁷ UNISDR (2015). Making Development Sustainable: The Future of Disaster Risk Management. UNISDR: Geneva, Switzerland.

⁸ IPCC. Climate Change 2022: Impacts, Adaptation, and Vulnerability. Contribution of Working Group II to the Sixth Assessment Report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (2022).

- Improving the design and implementation of gender-sensitive ocean resilience projects in key vulnerable regions
3. **Policy and governance:** Informing, advancing and driving public and private policy commitments and action that value nature, build coastal resilience, reduce ocean risk, and accelerate the delivery of the SDGs, by:
- Acting as a connector and catalyst for cross-sector collaboration across the Global North and South
 - Advancing the global narrative on ocean risk and coastal resilience with policymakers, finance leaders and investors

To achieve these objectives, ORRAA has developed a Project Portfolio Pipeline to catalyse, scale, and accelerate investment into coastal and marine natural capital. Through Calls for Proposals, the Ocean Resilience Innovation Challenge (ORIC), and broader engagement, the Pipeline surfaces innovative finance and insurance products developed with coastal communities and delivered by ORRAA members and partners. It also develops benchmarks, metrics, and resources to develop ocean resilience solutions.

The full list of projects that ORRAA is supporting is available [here](#).

2. The Call for Proposals

ORRAA, invites all **parties to submit proposals for financial support to either:**

1. Pioneer innovative and scalable finance and insurance products that build resilience and protect and regenerate valuable coastal and ocean natural assets, while delivering a return on investment.
2. Accelerate research and modelling on ocean risk and resilience to inform financial innovation as well as private and public sector policy action.
3. Inform, advance, and drive public and private policy commitments and action that value nature, build coastal resilience, reduce ocean risk, and accelerate the delivery of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and Global Biodiversity Framework.

The Call is financially supported by the United Kingdom’s Blue Planet Fund and administered by the ORRAA Secretariat.

2.1 Financial Support Details and Implementation Timeline

Prospective projects can apply for either a **Pilot** or **Project** grant, depending on the level of development of their project:

Grant Type	Description	Financial Support	Implementation Timeline
Pilot grant	Tailored for organisations to test and pilot innovative solutions.	Between US\$50,000 – US\$150,000	Up to 24 months
Project grant	Tailored for organisations to pilot innovative solutions and scale up and replicate proven ideas in new contexts.	Between US\$150,000 – US\$500,000	Up to 24 months

3. Project Eligibility Criteria

Project proposals must meet the following criteria to be considered by the ORRAA Secretariat for financial support. These criteria ensure that projects supported by ORRAA help to advance its mission to catalyse the investment of at least US\$500 million into coastal and marine natural capital through the development and deployment of financial products that build the resilience of 250 million climate vulnerable coastal people, by 2030.

3.1 Project Focus

Project proposals must fall into one of ORRAA’s [priority pathways](#), and advance ORRAA’s mission through one of the following:

- **FINANCIAL INNOVATION: Pioneering innovative and scalable finance and insurance products that build resilience and protect and regenerate valuable coastal and ocean natural assets, while delivering a return on investment by leveraging and influencing public, philanthropic, and private capital.** Financial innovations that ORRAA has previously supported include insurance products (micro, parametric, and indemnity), finance tools (micro-finance, blended finance, and bonds), and efforts to quantify nature as an asset class (blue carbon, biodiversity

and resilience credits, and natural capital accounting). However, proposals piloting other types of financial innovations are also encouraged to apply.

- **SCIENCE and RESEARCH: Accelerating research and modelling on ocean risk and resilience to inform financial innovation as well as private and public sector policy action.** Proposals should seek to reduce the impacts of climate and ocean change through better understanding, analysis, prediction, modelling, and management of ocean risk, and/or help improve the design and implementation of gender-sensitive ocean resilience projects in vulnerable regions.
- **POLICY and GOVERNANCE: Informing, advancing, and driving public and private policy commitments and action that value nature, build coastal resilience, reduce ocean risk, and accelerate the delivery of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and Global Biodiversity Framework.** Proposals should seek to catalyse cross-sector collaboration across the Global North and South, advance global action to address ocean risk, and improve coastal resilience with policymakers, finance leaders, and investors.

In addition, projects must:

- Promote the development of ocean and coastal Nature-based Solutions (NbS), habitat protection practices and sustainable management, support adaptation and/or mitigation of climate change, or mitigate risk multipliers like overfishing and pollution.
- Align with and include the priorities and interests of local communities.
- Deliver enhanced economic, social, and cultural resilience for climate vulnerable coastal communities.
- Be biodiversity positive, lead to either net zero or climate positive outcomes, and “do no harm” (do not result in negative impacts on communities or the ecosystems they are designed in which to build resilience).

3.2 Geographic Focus

Projects should either be located or deployed in coastal countries that are Official Development Assistance (ODA), which do not conflict with applicable individual and consolidated sanctions set out by the United States. Special consideration will be given to projects located or deployed in Small Island Developing States (SIDS) and Coastal Least Developed Countries (LDCs).

Eligible countries: Albania, Algeria, Angola, Argentina, Bangladesh, Belize, Benin, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Brazil, Cabo Verde, Cambodia, Cameroon, Colombia, Comoros, Congo, Cook Islands, Costa Rica, Cote D'Ivoire, Djibouti, Dominica, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Egypt, El Salvador, Equatorial Guinea, Eritrea, Fiji, Gabon, Gambia, Ghana, Grenada, Guatemala, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Guyana, Haiti, Honduras, India, Indonesia, Jamaica, Jordan, Kenya, Kiribati, Liberia, Madagascar, Malawi, Malaysia, Maldives, Marshall Islands, Mauritania, Mauritius, Mexico, Micronesia, Montenegro, Morocco, Mozambique, Namibia, Nigeria, Nauru, Niue, Pakistan, Panama, Papua New Guinea, Palau, Peru, Philippines, Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Samoa, Sao Tome and Principe, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Solomon Islands, South Africa, Sri Lanka, Suriname, Tanzania, Thailand, Timor-Leste, Togo, Tonga, Tunisia, Tuvalu, Vanuatu, Viet Nam

3.3 Delivery Partners

To ensure projects are community-led and driven by local partners, projects must include organisations from the Global South as lead or supporting partners and should demonstrate how they will build stakeholder engagement to advance their objectives. While we strongly encourage private sector participation as supporting partners, a project cannot be led by a private sector organisation.

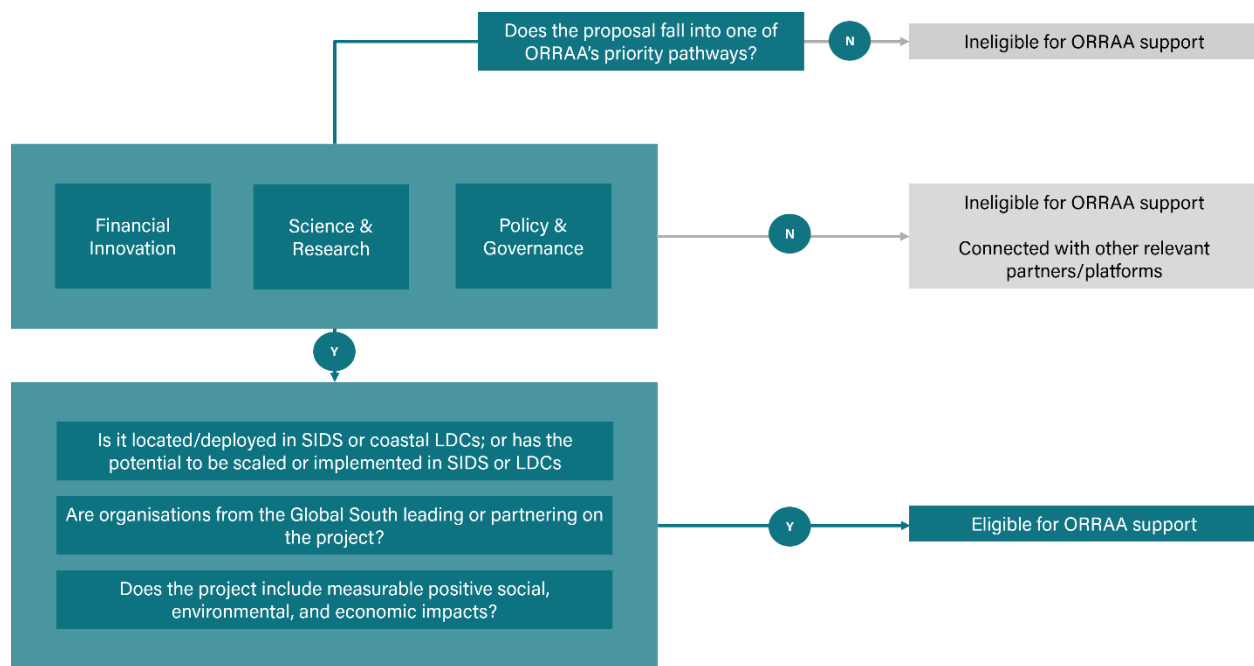
3.4 Environmental and Social Impact

Projects must ensure they are underpinned by gender equity and human rights, and support coastal communities in reducing their exposure or vulnerability to ocean risks by increasing their ability to build resilience in the face of uncertainty.

Projects should accelerate the delivery of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), in particular, SDG14 (Life below Water), and should be directly relevant to at least 3 additional SDGs.

3.5 ORRAA Eligibility Decision Tree

The following diagram summarises ORRAA’s decision-making process in assessing the eligibility of proposals received. Project proponents are strongly encouraged to review the ORRAA Eligibility Decision Tree before applying for support.



Proposals that do not meet all the ORRAA criteria but that are still considered relevant for addressing ocean risk and resilience by the Secretariat may be shared with other ORRAA Members and partners that may be a better match for their support. Decisions with regards to such support fall beyond ORRAA’s remit and the ORRAA Secretariat is not responsible for how they may be taken forward.

4. Application Timeline

Project applications for seed or project grants will follow the same timeline, summarised below.



1. The Call for Proposals will open on **22 April 2023 at 9:00 BST**. Prospective applicants can submit project proposals through the ORRAA application portal. If an applicant experiences technical difficulties, please email info@oceanriskalliance.org for assistance.

Submit proposal [here](#). All submissions must be in English.

Information Webinar

The ORRAA Secretariat is hosting an information webinar to present the Call's objectives and answer questions from prospective applicants. The webinars will be on:

16 May 2023 at 0830 BST

16 May 2023 at 1600 BST

Please sign-up for either webinar [here](#).

Applicant Questions

If you have specific questions about the Call for Proposals, you can also email the ORRAA Secretariat at info@oceanriskalliance.org. Questions will be accepted up to **Sunday, 18 June 2023 at 23:59 BST**, two weeks before the Call for Proposal application deadline.

2. The Call for Proposals will close on **Sunday, 2 July 2023 at 23:59 BST**.
3. Proposals will be evaluated by the ORRAA Secretariat using Project Assessment Criteria to determine their impact, innovativeness, potential for scalability, and other key features. For more information about this scoring process, please refer to section 5 in the Guidelines for Applicants. Shortlisted proposals will then be considered by ORRAA and the UK Blue Planet Fund for financial support.
4. Potential project partners must meet ORRAA **Due Diligence** and **Safeguarding Requirements** to be considered for financial support.
5. **Approval** and onboarding of new ORRAA projects and/or partners.

5. How Projects will be Evaluated

All grant proposals will be evaluated by the ORRAA Secretariat. Project selection and evaluation is also supported by ORRAA co-host, the Global Resilience Partnership.

Proposed projects will be evaluated using ORRAA’s Project Assessment Criteria. Projects are scored on seven key elements and this information is used to provide benchmark parameters on projects potentially eligible for financial support from ORRAA. Shortlisted proposals will then be considered by ORRAA and the UK Blue Planet Fund for financial support.

Impact	Innovation	Equity	Scale and systemic change	Team composition & Stakeholder Engagement	Risks	Additionality	TOTAL
20	15	15	15	15	10	10	100

Impact: The project demonstrates potential for i) improving the resilience of the most vulnerable people and places in coastal areas, ii) contributing to the environmental sustainability of coastal ecosystems and resources, iii) long term impact, either independently or as part of a larger initiative. Scoring is based on a continuous scale from 0-20:

- 20 - Strong environmental conservation and resilience efforts backed by science and high potential for social impact. The route to impact is clearly described and realistic.
- 15 - Moderate environmental conservation and/or resilience efforts and potential for social impact. The route to impact is clear.
- 10 - Some environmental conservation and/or resilience efforts and potential for social impact. The route to impact is unclear.
- 5 - Low potential for environmental conservation and/or resilience impact.
- 0 - No potential for environmental conservation and/or resilience benefits.

Innovation: The project aims to address an existing challenge in a manner that adds value, is sustainable and is practically implementable. Scoring is based on a continuous scale from 0-15:

- 15 - The innovation is completely new and new to the sector.
- 10 - The innovation is new on the continent and new to the sector on the continent.
- 5 - The innovation is new in the country.
- 0 - The project is not innovative by the above metrics.

Equity: The project proposal i) demonstrates potential to specifically improve gender equity and human rights, ii) includes special consideration for vulnerable groups and communities (women, girls, Indigenous groups, people with disabilities, and other vulnerable communities) or low-income populations, iii) outlines how women, children and other vulnerable groups will benefit. Scoring is based on a continuous scale from 0-15:

- 15 - Transformative. Strong gender equity and human rights benefits; and involvement of vulnerable groups and communities.
- 10 - Sensitive. Attention to equity and integration of gender considerations.
- 5 - Some benefits for excluded and marginalized groups.
- 0 - No consideration for excluded and marginalized groups.

Scale and Systemic Change: The project demonstrates potential to i) be scalable and replicable (sector/geography), ii) lead to wider resilience building through deeper and wider integration into the systems in the focus area and contributes to systemic change. The proposal should describe what are the short- and long-term strategies to ensure results are sustained beyond the project and what the scale-up or exit-strategy is (including if the project intends to access commercial funding). Scoring is based on a continuous scale from 0-15:

15 - The project is highly scalable, replicable, and contributes to systemic change. Scale-up and exit-strategies are clearly described.

10 - The project is potentially scalable, replicable and can contribute to systemic change. Scale-up and exit-strategies are unclear.

5 - The project is highly context-specific. Low potential for replicability, scalability and systemic change outside of the original context.

0 - No potential for scalability, replicability or systemic change.

Team Composition & Stakeholder Engagement: The project proposal i) identifies the team composition relevant for developing the idea further, ii) describes the relevant experience, skill sets, networks, and in-depth knowledge of the team, iii) clarifies the ownership of the idea, iv) identifies the critical local stakeholders for project success and strategies to engage them. Scoring is based on a continuous scale from 0-15:

15 – The team has strong and relevant conservation, resilience, and business experience. The local stakeholder engagement strategy is clearly described.

10 – The team has some conservation, resilience, and business experience. The local stakeholder engagement strategy is low or unclear.

5 – The team has little conservation, resilience, or business experience. The stakeholder engagement strategy is unclear or absent.

0 - No conservation, resilience, or business experience. No stakeholder engagement strategy.

Risks: Project should note risks, both long and short term, which could impede its implementation, and how these risks will be analysed and mitigated. Scoring is based on a continuous scale from 0-10 (NB: Inverse scoring: 10 = low risk, 0 = high risk):

10 - Low risk.

5 - Medium risk.

0 - High risk.

Additionality: If a project proposed is part of a larger, pre-existing project, it must demonstrate clear additionality beyond existing activities, provide synergies with existing work, and not displace other funding. Scoring is based on a continuous scale from 0-10:

10 - Very unlikely to be funded and/or implemented without specific support from ORRAA at this juncture.

5 - Unlikely to be funded and/or implemented without specific support from ORRAA at this juncture.

0 - Very likely to be funded and/or implemented without ORRAA's financial support.

6. Project Due Diligence and Safeguarding

Once a project has been assessed as eligible, partners will be required to meet and adhere to ORRAA's due diligence and safeguarding standards.

Due Diligence: Any partners that are granted funding must agree to complete an organisational self-assessment, a risk register that is regularly updated, annual audits, financial reports, and narrative reports and evaluations.

Safeguarding: Safeguarding in its broad sense means protecting people and the environment from unintended harm. ORRAA undertakes environmental and social safeguard screening for every project to evaluate various social and environmental risks and opportunities, beyond those relating to reducing coastal vulnerability, but also including biodiversity and climate considerations, as well as potential repercussions on the most vulnerable and their livelihoods.

ORRAA expects grantees to uphold social safeguards and best practices within their own organisations, as members of the ORRAA community. Environmental principles and processes that are key to ORRAA to ensure the adequate application of environmental and social safeguards are outlined and addressed in the organisational self-assessment that is expected to be completed by any partners that are financially supported. Evaluation of these safeguards will also be monitored throughout the term of the project, as well as during exit strategy and final evaluation.

Topics included in this self-assessment, broadly include, but are not limited to: environmental and social assessment, management and monitoring; protection of natural habitats resettlement, physical and economic displacement; resource efficiency and pollution prevention; indigenous peoples; cultural heritage; labour and working conditions, etc.

ORRAA expects partners to uphold social safeguards and best practices within their own organisations, as members of the ORRAA community.

ORRAA will share with project partners its clear and concise process for partners to report any safeguarding issues of concern and ensure that there are gender-appropriate contact points for any such reporting.

7. Frequently Asked Questions:

How does ORRAA define ocean risk and resilience?

Ocean risk is defined in a 2018 IUCN report as: “a function of exposure to hazards arising from ocean change, and impacts resulting from external or internal vulnerabilities, which may or may not be avoided, reduced or adapted to through pre-emptive action.” Immediate onset risks include tropical cyclones, storm surge events, flooding and inundation. Slow-onset risks include sea-level rise and acidification, food security issues and impacts on human health and declines in biodiversity. Risk Multipliers include pollution, resource exploitation (including overfishing) and land-use change.

Resilience is the ability to adapt to changing conditions and either withstand or rapidly recover from disruption - often described as the ability to 'bounce back'. Improving coastal resilience refers to the ability to reduce the vulnerability of coastal communities, their economies and ecologies, even as their exposure and the types of hazards that they face increases. It entails investing in measures that enable adaptation and recovery as a result of informed choices to assess risk, minimize losses, reduce vulnerabilities and adapt to change with a variety of tools, data and services.

ORRAA aims to help coastal communities build resilience through the deployment of finance products designed to invest in nature-based or green infrastructure solutions, resulting in an increase in coastal resilience to effectively protect, restore and sustainably manage natural resources while strengthening capacity for climate adaptation.

How do I apply?

Please submit your project application for either seed or project grant funding on the ORRAA website. Applicants can start an application and complete it later. Draft applications will be saved on our system and remain available until the application window closes.

Can I apply to the Call for Proposal multiple times?

Organisations can submit multiple projects to the Call for Proposals. However, these projects must be distinct and cannot be two parts of the same project.

Who can apply?

Individuals, public institutions, development finance institutions, and civil society (NGOs, think tanks, academics) are all welcome to submit proposals. ORRAA's Call for Proposals is open to innovators in the ocean finance space, provided that projects align with all the eligibility criteria described in this document. While we strongly encourage private sector participation as supporting partners, a project cannot be led by a private sector organisation.

What countries are eligible?

Projects should either be located or deployed in coastal countries that are Official Development Assistance (ODA) and UNFCCC eligible (non-Annex I countries), which do not conflict with applicable individual and consolidated sanctions set out by the United States. Special consideration will be given to projects located or deployed in Small Island Developing States (SIDS) and Coastal Least Developed Countries (LDCs). Applicants should refer to section 3.2 in this document for a complete list of countries/territories.

Who will assess the proposals?

Projects are evaluated by the ORRAA Secretariat. Project selection and evaluation is also supported by ORRAA co-host, the Global Resilience Partnership. Shortlisted proposals will then be considered by ORRAA and the UK Blue Planet Fund for financial support.

How will the implementation of funded projects be monitored?

Grant recipients will be expected to comply with various reporting requirements to be mutually agreed during grant proposal process. To learn more about ORRAA's monitoring, evaluation, and learning (MEL) requirements [here](#).

Who do I contact for more information?

If you have questions about the application process, please email info@oceanriskalliance.org.