



South King County Fund Environmental Grants Program FAQs

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Locate the 'Q&A Publication' in VendorConnect for the latest questions and responses.

I. Commonly Asked Questions:

Questions	Answers
Is there a drop-dead deadline for submitting questions to VendorConnect ?	Yes. October 8, 2021 5:00 PM PT, is the question deadline. All questions received by the deadline day will be posted in VendorConnect and on the SKCF Environmental Grants Program website by October 13, 2021.
I work for the City and have had several individuals and/or organizations contact me for projects. Is it possible for me to apply on their behalf for a specific project they would like accomplished?	You are welcome to apply with a community service organization as a joint application if you choose. However, it is important to know that the final contract has to be held with a 501(c)(3) or 501(c)(6) organization – the Port is not able to fund or enter into a contract with a government agency to do the project work. Eligibility information is defined in Section II (page 2) of the Application Packet, for your reference.
If the applicant is requesting funding for a specific project which is part of a larger project, can the match come from volunteer work on the larger project as well as the specific project?	The volunteer hours must benefit the specific project, so if the larger project benefits the specific project as well, those hours may be counted towards the match.
Are Port of Seattle staff eligible to apply?	In accordance with Port policies, Port of Seattle staff are not eligible to apply. In addition, potential or perceived conflicts of interest must be disclosed.
Is a museum considered an eligible community service organization? Is an improvement to a museum considered public property?	Yes, if it meets the eligibility criteria listed in Section II (page 2) of the Application Packet. If the property is not accessible to the public and not owned by government, then it does not qualify as public property.
Does the Port require/recommend a fiscal sponsor fee?	For the Environmental Grants Program, the Port does not require or recommend a fiscal sponsor percent fee. It is up to the applying organization to negotiate a fair rate with the fiscal sponsor.
My fiscal sponsor cannot confirm their support of my project until shortly after the application closes. Is it possible to submit the application prior to their vote, or will I need to wait until the next grant application cycle?	The application should include as much information possible to the best of your knowledge at the time of submission. Before interviews, all sponsorships must be confirmed.
Can individuals apply?	Yes. Individuals may apply as long as they find a fiscal sponsor that will manage the grant on their behalf. However, it is important to note, projects will be evaluated on their Project Feasibility and Inclusivity, see Section X. Evaluation Criteria of the Application for more information.

Can an organization apply every year?	Applicants can submit one application as the Prime and one application as the fiscal sponsor, per Application cycle. Organizations cannot have two contracts where they act as the Prime on both contracts at the same time. Additionally, applicants cannot have more than one active contract as the Prime and one active contract as the fiscal sponsor. These restrictions apply to both one year and multi-year contracts.
Are shared costs that support and organization's general expenses or indirect costs allowed to be funded through this grant? For example, rent, equipment rental, printing or general office supplies.	Shared costs or indirect costs are not allowable expenses of grant funds. The Port may pay for staff time and project costs that directly relate to project outcomes (e.g. curricula development, planning, printing of flyers, etc.).
Can the funds be used for the insurance?	No, insurance is considered an indirect cost. Shared costs or indirect costs are not allowable expenses of grant funds.
How will the grants be awarded?	An evaluation team, consisting of Port staff and community advisors, will evaluate each proposed project.

II. Eligibility Questions:

Questions	Answers
Does the community organization need a tax-exempt status? Can non-legally acknowledged community organizations like neighborhood groups apply?	Per RCW 35.21.278 , the Port is only authorized to enter into contracts with community service organizations with a tax-exempt status. Unincorporated groups may apply as long as they find a fiscal sponsor that will manage the grant on their behalf.
Is a Chamber of Commerce eligible to apply or serve as a fiscal sponsor?	According to state law, a local Chamber of Commerce is eligible to apply for the Environmental Grants Program. A Chamber could serve as a fiscal sponsor for groups seeking one. If you want to have the Chamber serve as a fiscal sponsor for your project, please contact them and check their availability to do so.
My organization runs many projects that are eligible for funding. Can I apply for multiple grants on behalf of unique projects during the same grant cycle?	Applicants are limited to submitting one application as the Prime and one application if acting as a fiscal sponsor.
My organization works with different cultural groups to achieve common goals. For example, a Vietnamese cultural organization and a Somali cultural organization would like to work together	Yes, the Port can contract with different organizations to achieve common goals, but each organization must demonstrate its distinct and unique approaches in its application.

to raise awareness of plastic pollution in Puget Sound. Can multiple project partners apply to support the same project? If there are major differences in their approaches, is it still eligible?	
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III. Questions about Expenses, Public Property, Reporting and Payments:

Questions	Answers
What kind of information is needed at the time of application to demonstrate I understand my project’s permitting needs?	State that you have reached out to cities and gained an understanding of this as described in the Application, Section VIII.8.b. Additional documentation is not required at this point in the Application process.
Do “community-owned” resources like regional church property or non-profit spaces like conference centers count as “publicly owned?”	According to legal definition, property owned by private companies, associations, or non-profit organizations are not publicly owned. Public land is limited to properties owned by government agencies like cities, school districts, Port authorities, and counties.
Is nonprofit office space considered private property (we rent office space from private owner) if we want to conduct education and community engagement in the property? Are we still eligible to apply?	This project is eligible since it is not making infrastructural improvements to private property. As a non-profit conducting environmental education in your own space, no permitting is required. Environmental improvement projects on private property are NOT eligible for funding – like placing a rain garden on church property or installing a solar panel in the courtyard of a private apartment building.
Can environmental improvement projects take place at public housing properties?	The public housing property would need to be under public ownership. If a private entity owns it, the property is not eligible. If the owner is King County Housing Authority, which is a municipal corporation, it is eligible.
I would like to hire a contractor to install an eligible environmental improvement on public property. Can contracting out a service be considered an expense?	Yes, this would be considered an eligible and reimbursable expense.
Can we complete activities on a quarterly basis instead of monthly? We prefer to do it quarterly.	You and the Port Project Manager will work together on an agreed upon project timeline. Remember that the funding cannot exceed \$20,000/year from the Port and your project must be completed within the contract duration.
Can the Port do checks instead of ACH?	Yes.

IV. Questions about the 3:1 Match:

Questions	Answers
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Can you offer some examples of how projects can meet the 3:1 match?	Attachment D of the Application offers many examples of how applicants can easily ensure their projects satisfy the required match. See 'SAMPLE Match Worksheet (example only)' for additional guidance on how to calculate match options.
What documentation is required to explain my budget and plans to meet the 3:1 match?	Only Attachment A and Attachment B- see the Application Packet for more details.
Is there any preference to what "Match Options" my project uses to satisfy the 3:1 required match?	No, there is no preference on how your project chooses to satisfy the 3:1 match, but it is required that your application demonstrate your intention and capacity to satisfy the match. If selected, Port staff will work with your project leadership to ensure that the state-required match is satisfied by the end of your contract.
Can we consider the costs incurred while preparing the application towards our match as volunteer hours or in-kind support (if we hire a grant writer)?	No, costs or time spent writing the application may not be used towards the match.
Can I get an item donated by someone from Craigslist to help satisfy the match?	Yes, the donor must provide documentation stating the value of the item and that it is being donated on behalf of the project.
Can a city donate the land value of a property towards the match?	No, cities are not able to donate the value of city property towards a project.
Can out-of-pocket services or contractors (such as a videographer or language interpreter) be counted toward the match?	No. These costs are considered expenses. If the contractors donate their labor and time, it can count toward Match Option 6: In-kind Donations.
For Match Option #2, what kind of activity or public education events count? Do I need to charge admission? How is this different than Match Option #3?	<p>Match Option #2 is meant for broad community events that can serve as a starting point for community members to get involved with environmental issues in the community. These are typically large public events like festivals, Earth Day celebrations, or other free events with an explicit environmental or ecological theme. If you are interested in using this match, multiply your likely attendance by the hours of public education events or project-related activities by the volunteer hourly rate.</p> <p>Match Option #3 seeks to assign value to a project's active, deep engagement with environmental education. In the latter, Match Option #3 can be calculated by multiplying the likely attendance for classrooms/audiences by the volunteer rate per hour by the number of hours they are engaged in the activity.</p>

For Match Option 4, are only trees calculated or can other plants count toward the match?	Any plant that is described in the provided calculator may count towards the match.
I'm interested in using "Match Option 8 (cash donation or grants acquired during the project)" to satisfy the requirement. I have submitted a grant recently and it is currently "pending" review from the potential funder, so it's not committed yet. But my organization is committed to do this project with or without that grant coming through, and so we'd pay for it out of pocket. Can I list that request as a part of my match commitment?	Yes, if the applicant is willing to donate the cash value of the project regardless of whether the other agency's grant is successful, it may serve as a "Match Option 8" cash donation by the applicant.
What grant funds would count towards the match?	Other grant resources in support of the project may be used towards Match Option 8. If you list Match Option 8 as a match option but do not receive the anticipated grant, you will still be required to satisfy the match. If that occurs, Port staff will work with you to identify other ways to meet the match.

V. Technical Support and Submission:

Questions	Answers
I am having trouble working with the online application. Help!	To fill in the Application, first "Download" the Application form to your computer or flash drive. Once you save it, you must open it using Microsoft Word. Then, you are able to edit the document and save your work on your computer or flash drive.
I need assistance with VendorConnect. What do I do?	On a weekly basis, Port staff will be available to provide applicants technical assistance to help navigate VendorConnect. For the weekly Technical Assistance Schedule, see Section IV. Additional Information of the Application.
Is it okay that I include hyperlinks to videos or other material to provide background in my application?	No, links are not accepted.
How do I know if you receive my application?	As stated in Section VI.5 of the Application: You should receive a confirmation email from the Port if you successfully submit. If you do not receive an email confirmation within two hours (during business hours), please contact Amira Beasley (Beasley.A@portseattle.org) to inquire about your application.

Will there be technical support for the match?	Applicants are encouraged to apply with their best attempt at the budget and match. The Port Project Manager and Contract Administrator will work collaboratively with selected applicants on their final budget and match during the negotiation phase. One-on-one technical assistance for a specific project match is not allowed during the open Application phase. A sample Budget & Match form has been included in the 'SAMPLE - Application (example only)' provided in the Documents section of VendorConnect and on the SKCF Environmental Grants webpage .
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