

BUREAU OF RECREATION AND CONSERVATION

Title: Planning- Eligible and Ineligible Grant Project Activities/Costs/Match		
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Approved By: Tom Ford, Bureau Director	Program Area: All	

AUTHORITY

Act 18 of 1995, Section 306, Community Recreation and Heritage Conservation. The Department shall have the power to administer Federal and State programs for grants and loans to local governments, municipal authorities and nonprofit organizations for community and regional projects involving the planning, acquisition, rehabilitation and development of public park, recreation and conservation areas, facilities and programs.

SCOPE

Provides directive for administration of the Community Conservation Partnerships Grant Program

PURPOSE

The Department of Conservation and Natural Resources (DCNR), Community Conservation Partnerships Program grant program is administered by the Bureau of Recreation and Conservation (Bureau). This policy has been established to help define the various types of activities, costs and match, to include both cash and non-cash match values, which are eligible under this program for planning projects.

Please note that it is difficult to identify all possible project activities, costs and match scenarios. The Bureau reserves the right to review and determine the eligibility of all proposed project activities, costs and match during both the grant application process and the grant administration process, should your project be selected for funding.

POLICY:

A. To be considered eligible, all project activities, costs and match must be:

1. Approved by the Bureau.
2. Directly related to performing the official scope of work included in Appendix A of the Grant Agreement.
3. Incurred within the Grant Agreement period.

B. Eligible Activities, Costs and Match:

1. If an application is funded, costs incurred prior to the Grant Agreement Beginning Date necessary to meet the Bureau's application requirements may be eligible at the Bureau's discretion. An eligible pre-agreement cost may include activities related to developing the Request for Proposal (RFP).
2. Developing the Scope of Work and RFP; reviewing and editing plans; facilitating meetings; preparation of meeting minutes, etc.
3. Contracted Professional Services – Costs incurred under a professional services contract between the Grantee and a qualified consultant to perform all or part of the official scope of work.

4. In-House Professional Services – Professional services by the Grantee’s paid staff to complete all or part of the official scope of work. Costs are tabulated using an established billable rate (see #8 below). Staff performing work must possess the proper qualifications, training and experience.
5. Donated Professional Services – Professional services provided at no cost to the Grantee by individuals possessing specialized skills or expert knowledge to complete all or part of the official scope of work. Costs are tabulated using an established billable rate (see #8 below). The Bureau may request written documentation to establish the value of donated professional services and to ensure that individuals possess the proper qualifications to adequately perform the work.
6. Volunteer Services – Services provided at no cost to the Grantee to complete all or part of the official scope of work. Volunteer rates should not exceed the [Value of Volunteer Time for Pennsylvania](#) as published by the Independent Sector. Work performed by individuals under the age of 18 will be valued at the Commonwealth’s minimum wage rate.
7. Other Project Cash Costs and Donations – Cash costs and donations to the complete all or part of the official scope of work such as advertisements, meeting room rentals, equipment use or rental, map reproduction, printing, postage, travel, meals and lodging. The value of direct costs will be considered either Cash Cost (incurred/paid by the Grantee) or Donation (not paid for by the Grantee). Subsistence costs for [meals, lodging and automobile mileage](#) shall not exceed the rates allowed by Commonwealth policy
8. The value of equipment will be equal to the established hourly rate that the Grantee normally charges for this use, as documented on an invoice. If the organization does not have established equipment rates or must rent the equipment, the invoiced rental rate will be used. For municipalities, cash reimbursement of any equipment use requires a written justification and the approval of the Bureau prior to expenditure of local resources.
9. Billable Rate – For In-House Professional Services or Donated Professional Services, personnel costs should be recorded as a billable rate equal to the employee’s established hourly wage rate or the employee’s hourly rate plus fringe benefits and operational overhead costs as set by the Grantee’s governing body. Fringe benefits and overhead costs include but are not limited to employee insurance, retirement benefits, and paid time off. The billable rate must be pre-approved by the Bureau prior to the costs being incurred. Contact the Bureau Project Manager for specific questions on eligible costs.
10. Donated Land Value – Land Donation Value of the land for which a plan will be completed may be eligible non-cash match for a planning project. The market value must be determined by a state certified General Real Estate Appraiser and the Applicant must submit a copy of the appraisal with the application. If the planning project is selected for funding, a second appraisal may be required. Please refer to the Land Acquisition policy/grant guidelines for additional information related to the appraisal.
11. Audit – Costs related to an independent project audit may be eligible if required by the Bureau. These costs may be eligible even if the audit is performed after the grant agreement period, as specified in the Grant Agreement Terms and Conditions.

12. Cash Contributions by Other Organizations – Cash contributions provided by other organizations to be used as a portion of the local matching funds should be transferred to the Grantee to expend. If an organization other than the Grantee wishes to expend funds on behalf of the Grantee, a formal agreement to define the roles and responsibilities must be executed by all parties (e.g. County CDBG Funds, County Gaming Funds, County Redevelopment Authority Funds, etc.) Draft agreements must be provided to the Bureau Project Manager for review and approval prior to execution.
13. PA Natural Diversity Inventory (PNDI) Environmental Review – Costs associated with ordering a PNDI Environmental Review receipt to meet program requirements.

C. Ineligible Activities, Costs and Match:

1. Costs related to the preparation of the grant application.
2. Costs for projects located outside of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania.
3. Grant project administration, including costs associated with creating and maintaining complete and accurate grant project records (e.g. Generating Bureau progress reports, supplying requests, correspondence or resolutions; in-house costs related to supervision of staff; costs for accounting and bookkeeping, etc.).
4. Costs of conducting fundraising activities.
5. Costs for lobbying activities.
6. Costs of food, drink, gifts and or other hospitality items related to the general promotion of the applicant/grantee organization; or activities not related to overnight travel expenses.
7. Costs determined by the Bureau, to be in violation of the Grant Agreement Terms and Conditions.
8. Match in excess of that counted for a project may not be carried over for use on another grant.
9. Match, whether in the form of cash, non-cash or a land donation, may be used only once as match. If it has been counted as match for another project/grant or portion of this project, it may not be again as match, no matter who funded the project(s).

DISCLAIMER

The policies and procedures outlined in this guidance document are intended to supplement existing requirements. The policies and procedures herein are not an adjudication or a regulation. There is no intent on the part of DCNR to give the rules in these policies that weight or deference. This document establishes the framework within which DCNR will exercise its administrative discretion in the future.

PAGE LENGTH

3 pages

EFFECTIVE DATE

Immediately. This policy is to be reviewed and updated every year.

EXPIRATION

This policy remains in effect until revised or rescinded.

Tom Ford, Bureau Director

12/14/2023

Name/Title of Bureau or Office Director

Date