



The following grant proposal guidelines are provided as a reference. The 2021 Route to Parks grant proposals will be submitted through our new grant software which will be available in June 2021. You will find the link to the grant portal [here!](#)

Proposal Guidelines

Please provide the following information and the requested materials to Parks California. Proposals will not be considered complete unless all the information and attachments are provided.

Applicant:

Organization Type *(checklist)*

- 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization
- Government agency
- Other – Please specify:

Proposal Name:

Program/Project Location:

Project Contact Name and Email:



Route to Parks Grants, 2021 Proposal

Executive Summary

Provide a summary of the project/program, the need and specific request sections of the proposal in 500 words or less.

Applicant Background

Describe your organization and mission. Include the year it was founded, the number and location of offices, and the number of staff members.

Specific Requests

1. Describe the issues affecting the community's access to state parks and beaches. What is your organization's prior involvement on these issues?
2. What approach will you take to create solutions to the issues you described? What specifically will the participants do and what are your transportation plans?
3. Tell us about the participant program experience and duration. Estimate duration of program (e.g. one day event, overnight, weeklong) and the number of hours each participant will spend in your program (e.g. 3-hour surfing lesson, 1.5 hours of classroom science activities, 2-hour sailing trip).
4. Describe how program participants and/or the community inform your program development.
5. COVID-19 has led us to redefine a new normal. Has your program readapted its approach to address this new reality? If so, how?
6. Tell us how your program cultivates a lifelong connection with California's parks and nature?
7. Does environmental stewardship play a role in your program? If so, how?

Project Goals, Outputs and Outcomes

8. Share with us your project goals:

Goals are defined as long-term desired impacts or results of an effort. For example, a long-term goal could be to increase access to the outdoors for people with disabilities.

9. Project Outputs

Defined as the direct results of activities undertaken with the grant. Provide participant number, if applicable.

- Participants:
- Park visits:
- Events:
- Community meetings:
- Other:
 - Please specify: ____
 - Estimated number: ____

10. Participant Outcomes: Outcomes are defined as a change in program participants’ knowledge, attitude, or behavior that results from your efforts, and with partner organizations if relevant. For example, increase appreciation for the outdoors.

- a. **Describe the project’s intended outcomes for participants.**

- b. **How will success be measured?** Do you use survey tools to measure participant outcomes? If your organization does not use survey tools, how do you measure success?

11. Project timeline: (include start/end, milestones, deadlines and deliverables)

12. Help us better understand who the program will be serving. Tell us about the population/geographic community served. Include information about the general demographics of the neighborhood(s) you serve. If your program serves a specific population such as a specific racial/ethnic group, veterans, LGBTQ, foster youth, homeless youth, let us know which population(s)?

13. Now tell us about the specific group of participants you intend to reach with this program

a. Participant demographic breakdown by percentage. Numbers can be approximate.

i. Race/Ethnicity:	____% White: ____% Black or African American: ____% Native American and Indigenous: ____% Asian or Pacific Islander: ____% Hispanic or Latinx: ____% Multi-Racial: ____% Other:
ii. Age ranges:	____% 5-11 y/old: ____% 12-14 y/old: ____% 14-17 y/old: ____% 18-24 y/old: ____% 25+ y/old:
iii. Gender:	____% Male: ____% Female: ____% Gender nonconforming: ____% Other:
iv. Low income	____%
v. Other	

b. **How will you reach the audience?** What strategies will you employ to increase access for individuals from traditionally underrepresented communities to participate in the program?

14. Do you involve program participants in the program development process? If so, how?

15. What are some potential challenges (internal and/or external) that your organization may encounter when implementing this project/program? What are potential strategies for overcoming them?

16. Sustainability: How will the project be sustained beyond this funding?

17. List of Principal Staff. Provide a list of the principal staff that will be responsible for administering the grant funds and implementing the proposal, with a brief description of their background, qualifications, and role on the project.

18. Key Partners. Please share the names of the individuals and/or organizations beyond your organization who will be your closest collaborators and what role they will play. If you have an existing relationship with California State Parks, describe it here.

Attachments:

Please also include copies of the following documents with your proposal. **Proposals with missing attachments will be considered incomplete.**

1 of 7: Project Budget. Provide a detailed budget statement for the proposed project. The statement should set forth all project expenses, specifying how Parks California funds will be used.

- a. Include a detailed project budget using the [Route to Parks Grants budget template](#)
- b. Include the percentage of staff time allocated to this program
- c. Identify other funding sources for this project/program

2 of 7: Letter of Acknowledgement. Include letters acknowledgement from your local State Parks Superintendent or State Park designee indicating you have discussed the project with them and what role State Parks has in the project.

3 of 7: List of Board Members. Provide a list of board members, with title and affiliation of each.

4 of 7: Organizational Budget. Include a detailed organization budget for the current fiscal year.

5 of 7: Financial Statements. Provide current audited financial statements, or equivalent documentation (showing assets/liabilities and revenues/expenses)

6 of 7: IRS Form 990. Provide a copy of the organization's most recent IRS Form 990.

7 of 7: Photo and Liability Release. Provide a copy of your participant photo release form. Parks California may request photos of your program for reporting, marketing and/or storytelling purposes.

FAQ | Before you apply:

- **Who is eligible to apply for this grant?** Nonprofits, cities, counties and local park districts who can provide programming and transportation (free or discounted services) to state parks.
- **Does this program only support visits to California State Parks and beaches or can my organization also include outdoor experiences in public lands outside of state?**
While we encourage all kinds of outdoor exploration, this program only supports experiences in California State Parks.
- **What kind of transportation methods are permitted under this grant?** Through this grant, we support efforts that decrease the impacts of climate change by using mass transit or alternative transportation options. Transportation options such as vans, public transit, bikes, buses, ride-share and bikeshare are encouraged.
- **Who is this grant program intended to serve?** This grant supports programs that serve communities with a median household income (MHHI) less than 80 percent of the statewide average, often defined by government agencies as disadvantaged. The 2014-2018 American Community Survey reports the MHHI of California to be \$71,228. 80% - a disadvantaged community would be less than \$56,982. 60% and a severely disadvantaged community would be less than \$42,737. Percent or total number of participants reached from this prioritized community is a factor of grant consideration.
- **How much are the grant amounts?** Under this grant cycle, Parks California anticipates awards will average \$15,000 per grantee. Parks California will base the size of the awards on project need, scale and benefits to the community. Grantees will receive awards upfront upon signing the grant agreement.
- **Is this a one-year grant?** Grant awards will be one-year with the opportunity for multi-year funding through renewals. Grant funds must be spent within the grant period.
- **What are the reporting requirements?** A mid-year and final narrative and financial report on the use of the funds are required to be submitted. Mid-year report will be due on May 31, 2022 and final report within 30 days upon conclusion of the funded activity. Grantees shall use the report template provided by Parks California.
- **In addition to grant reporting, what else will grantees be asked to provide?** Parks California wants to illuminate the great work happening in communities. As funders, we will ask grantees to share information such as photos, quotes, interviews, etc. to highlight the collective impact on parks. These stories will be used for internal and external communications and marketing materials.
- **Does the grant only fund direct transportation expenses?** We understand that addressing the transportation barrier to park access is multifaceted. This initiative intends to support programs that address this barrier with sustainable solutions that are replicable and measurable. Program expenses in addition to transportation are allowed under this grant.

- **Are indirect expenses allowed in this grant?** Indirect expenses will be considered as part of grant proposals and should be clearly outlined in the budget template and narrative.
- **I typically collaborate with my local California State Park representative (i.e. interpreter). Can I ask that person to write the required letter of acknowledgement?** We encourage all applicants to have conversations with local state park staff about the proposed project/program to ensure collaboration and partnership. The letter of acknowledgement needs to come from the State Parks Superintendent or designee who oversees the park unit.
- **Eligible Applicants:** Eligibility of nonprofit organizations must exist under the provisions of Section 501c3 of the International Revenue Code.
- **What are considered ineligible costs under this grant?** Fundraising, grant writing, lobbying, costs outside grant performance period and costs outside the approved grant scope.
- **How do you calculate time/hours spent at parks?** Time spent should be calculated by the duration of the event and/or experience in a park. For example, the outdoor experience in a park is from 9 a.m. – 2 p.m., that is a total of five hours spent in a park. Please round up to the nearest 30 minutes.
- **Who can I reach out to if I have questions about the grant guidelines?** We encourage applicants to participate in the webinar hosted by Parks California on June 15, 2021. Parks California will also host “office hours” from 10 a.m. – 12 p.m. on June 22, 23 and 24. To schedule a 15-minute meeting during “office hours”, please email grants@parkscaifornia.org. Meetings will be confirmed after the June 15 webinar. You can also submit questions related to the grant guidelines to grants@parkscaifornia.org
- **If my organization received funding from the first Route to Parks grant cycle, are we eligible to apply for new funding?** Yes. To confirm eligibility, please contact Parks California to discuss the status of your current grant and review ideas for your new proposal.
- **My organization was awarded funding from the first Route to Parks grant cycle and received a no-cost extension to fulfill our proposal deliverables due to COVID-19 restrictions, are we eligible to apply for new funding?** Current grantees with no-cost extensions are not eligible for a second year of funding. If you have questions about your current grant and deliverables, please contact Parks California at grants@parkscaifornia.org

About Parks California

As California State Park’s statutory partner, we have a simple mission – to help strengthen parks and inspire all to experience these extraordinary places. We have a vision to create vibrant, healthy parks that welcome, engage and inspire – it’s in our nature.