



2024 Route to Parks Grant Program Applicant FAQ

Route to Parks Grant Program, Technical Questions

What is the required coordination for grant applicants with State Parks?

To ensure grant applicants have dialogue with their state park representative before the potential grant is awarded, Parks California is requesting applicants to have a conversation about the proposed program with their local state parks representative prior to applicant submitting their grant proposal. Our intent is to encourage conversation, collaboration and potentially surface park considerations before the grant is awarded. We suggest applicants reach out to District Superintendents and/or Park Interpretive Staff for each State Park unit included in proposed projects. Applicants will be required to submit the name and contact of the State Parks staff member they spoke with, and Parks California will confirm that each District is aware of the proposed projects that will visit their parks.

What is the funding cycle for the Route to Parks Grants program? Grant applications are due to Parks California on **September 22, 2023**. New this year, applicants should apply for projects that start January 1, 2024 with an intention of completion by December 31, 2024.

Who can apply for this grant opportunity? Eligible applicants include: 501(c)3 Organizations, Federal- and State- Recognized Tribal Governments (Tribal Government Programs, such as Tribal Arts Programs, Heritage Departments, Economic Development Entities, etc.), Fiscally-sponsored Community Organizations, Government Agencies, and Native 7871 Organizations.

When should the park experiences take place? Applicants should apply for projects that start November start January 1, 2024 with an intention of completion by December 31, 2024. Depending on the grantee, these park experiences will include CSP sites including parks, beaches and waterways, and may vary to align with their programming schedule.

What are some important dates applicants should consider?

Parks California held a webinar for prospective applicants on **August 3, 2023** to discuss *Route to Parks Grants* goals and address common questions regarding the application process. If unable to attend live, potential applicants are encouraged to view a recording of the webinar. To view a recording of the webinar, please visit the [grant page](#). Grant applications are due to Parks California on **September 22, 2023**. Applicants should apply for projects that **January 1, 2024** with an intention of completion by **December 31, 2024**.

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 August 3, 2023. Parks California will also host “office hours” from 10 a.m. – 3 p.m. on August 15th, August 31st, and September 15th. To schedule a 15-minute meeting during “office hours”, please select an available time [here](#). If none of the formal office hour times work with your schedule, please email grants@parksocalifornia.org. You can also submit questions related to the grant guidelines to grants@parksocalifornia.org

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.

Is this a reimbursement grant? No, the award is processed once the grant agreement is signed.

How much are the grant amounts? Under this grant cycle, Parks California anticipates awarding \$8000,000 with awards averaging \$35,000 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.

If my organization currently receives funding from the Route to Parks Grants program, are we eligible to apply for new funding? If your current grant is scheduled to close on November 30, 2023 and you are not in need of a no-cost extension to complete the grant project, yes your organization is eligible to apply. To confirm eligibility, please contact Parks California to discuss the status of your current grant and review ideas for your new proposal.

Can a single organization apply for multiple projects? Only one application per organization will be considered for funding.

What are California State Park partnerships? Examples of partnerships may include partner-operated State Park properties, and partner-operated programs at State Park properties.

Do you have a list of California State Parks? Here's a [link to the state parks and beaches](#), which includes a link to each park's landing page.

Budget and Allowable Costs Questions

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, such as staff time, programming costs, equipment, supplies, rentals, and permits, 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.

What are considered ineligible costs under this grant? Fundraising, grant writing, lobbying, costs outside grant performance period and costs outside the approved grant scope.

Programming Questions

Does this grant only support transportation to and experiences at State Parks? Proposals can include parks and public lands that are outside of the State Park system. While we encourage applicants to include experiences in public spaces that are of interest and relevant to the communities served, a majority of the visits/experienced proposed must be at State Park sites to be considered for funding.

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.

Is the program geared primarily for parks with outdoor recreation or nature-based programs or would programs focused on cultural or historical resources qualify? Through this grant program, we intend to fund projects that offer a valuable recreational, environmental, cultural, or historical learning experiences. There are many State Park units with cultural and historical resources that can be visited as a part of this grant.

Who is this grant program intended to serve? This grant prioritizes underrepresented communities such as – communities who may face challenges getting to or enjoying parks, and/or lack opportunities to create meaningful connections to nature. The participants reached from these prioritized communities will be a consideration during the grant review process.

Do proposals that included experiences at coastal and/or non-inland parks qualify for funding? While all projects that primarily include visits to and experiences at State Park units will be considered for funding, preference may be given to proposals that connect communities to inland parks and waterways.

Is there a minimum number of participants to be reached or park visits to be conducted to be considered for funding? There is not a minimum number of participants or number of trips to be considered eligible for funding. We encourage applicants to include the number of participants and trips that are most relevant to the goals of each individual project and community to be served.

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.

Reporting Questions

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. The mid-year report will be due on July 31, 2024 and the final report will be due on January 31, 2024. Grantees shall submit the reports using the report templates provided by Parks California through the grant management system.

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. These stories will be used for internal and external communications and marketing materials.