

COMMUNITY CHALLENGE GRANTS

Community Challenge Grant Program Guidelines

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sfccg.org

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Introduction

About the Community Challenge Grant Program

For more than 25 years, the Community Challenge Grant Program (CCG) has provided funding to community groups, schools, and nonprofit organizations to make improvements in their communities. The program is an important tool for building a stronger and more vibrant San Francisco by empowering groups to lead improvements in their neighborhoods and communities.

The Guidelines presented below define the eligibility requirements, policies and general operations of the Community Challenge Grant Program. The Guidelines are not an application or a summary of the application process.

Grant Cycle Timeline

The CCG offers grants through one annual cycle in the fall. The grant cycle is open for six weeks to allow for the completion and submission of applications. Awards are announced in spring of the following year. Depending on the award amount and project scope, grantees may be under contract as soon as thirty days following the pre-contracting meeting.

General Eligibility Criteria

Applicant Organizations

Nonprofit organizations, community groups, merchant associations, community benefit district organizations and schools are eligible to apply for funding. Groups applying for the grant must be a 501(C)(3) nonprofit organization, or identify a 501(C)(3) to serve as their fiscal sponsor. The applicant or its fiscal sponsor must be an approved and compliant City supplier to enter into a grant contract with the City & County of San Francisco. For more information on becoming a supplier, please visit <https://sfcitypartner.sfgov.org>.

Project Categories

Organizations are eligible to receive funding for the following types of projects:

- Green spaces: Including gardens, sidewalk gardens, median enhancements, tree planting, decorative planters/boxes, landscaping, and urban agriculture and greening
- Gathering places: Mini-parks, parklets, plazas, dog parks, open space and trail restoration
- Public art: Sculptures, mosaics, murals, and new media
- Neighborhood amenities: Community lighting, seating/benches, bike racks, neighborhood branding, community activation initiatives
- Sidewalk landscaping
- Street maintenance including power washing and graffiti/litter abatement.

Note: The examples provided above are generally representative of eligible project categories/examples, but not an exhaustive list.

Application Requirements & Commitments

Applicants must agree to develop, prepare and submit a variety of supporting documents with their applications; obtain insurance; install interpretive signage; and meet a variety of contracting and project execution requirements to be eligible for a grant, including:

- Develop a detailed work plan in the specified format.
- Provide a detailed budget in the specified format.
- Have a 5-year maintenance plan for greening/beautification projects and a 10-year maintenance plan for public art projects detailing ongoing maintenance after project completion. Be sure to list the responsible party(ies) as well as the source of funding to support the proposed maintenance plan.
- Identify key vendors prior to the contracting process, including obtaining quotes; and provide service agreements with all vendors engaged in the project.
- Provide the insurance required to complete your project, as determined by the City's Risk Management Division. These requirements are subject to change. If serving as a fiscal sponsor, your organization must be able to demonstrate the project is an additional insured to applicable policies, including but not limited to, general liability, automobile liability, workers' compensation, and professional liability. Organizations supervising youth or working with seniors are required to provide enhanced policies.
- Include the design and installation of interpretative signage acknowledging CCG, including the CCG logo. Interpretative signage is signage that creates a narrative that acts to generate a positive visitor experience and/or educate the visitor on the background, purpose and intent of the project. Signage may include other project partners and funders, as desired. Costs associated with such signage may be included in your grant request, up to \$1,000. Final reimbursements will not be issued until signage is approved by the CCG Program Director and installed. Any project funded in whole or part by the CCG is required to meet signage requirements.
- Attend a pre-contracting meeting with the CCG Program Director to review all requirements of the contracting, grant administration, reporting, reimbursement, and closeout processes.
- Hold at least three sites visits with the CCG Program Director, at time of award, midway point and at project completion. Interpretive signage must be installed at time of final site visit.

Supplemental Requirements for Public Art Projects

At the time of submission, public art projects must include (1) sketches of the proposed design and/or a written description of the theme, (2) artist(s) identified to complete the project, including a biography and history of their past work, and (3) a project site. Public Art projects whether on public or private property must complete the Civic Design Review Process with the SF Arts Commission (SFAC) this process must take place after award notification but prior to entering into a grant contract with the CCG. Groups applying for public art projects can count the design approval process as a match. Projects must demonstrate approval has been granted to finalize the contract process and begin implementation of the art project. For more information regarding the Civic Design Review Process visit the SF Arts Commission

website at <http://www.sfartscommission.org/pubartcollection>, or contact Craig Corpora, Program Associate with the Civic Art Collection & Public Art Program at (415) 252-2249.

Public Art on SF Unified School District (SFUSD) property must also demonstrate design approval and permit entry approval from the SFUSD Real Estate/Permit Office. This process must take place consecutively with the SFAC Civic Design Review Process and prior to entering into a grant contract. For assistance or more information contact Cynthia Lam (Tam) at (415) 241-6090 option 3 or tamc@sfusd.edu.

Permits & Approvals

It is the responsibility of the applicant to engage permit-issuing agencies in advance of applying. The applicant must discuss the process and timeline required to obtain necessary permits, and how permitting will affect implementation of your project, in the design section of the proposal narrative and project work plan.

For all projects on *property owned by the City & County of San Francisco*:

Before a project is approved for implementation, the applicant must obtain the required permits, approvals, and/or authorization from all City departments with regulatory jurisdiction over the project area. This includes resolution of all issues regarding City acceptance of the project (if it will become a City-owned resource), future maintenance, and liability of the project improvements must be addressed to the satisfaction of all City departments with jurisdiction over the project area.

For all green spaces and sidewalk landscaping projects on *property owned by the San Francisco Unified School District*:

Proposed projects on any San Francisco Unified School District property must receive approval from the District's Green Schoolyard Manager, Tamar Barlev. Additional requirements to obtain approval from the School District may be required. Please contact barlevt@sfusd.edu for more information.

For all projects on *privately owned property*:

Projects on private property must include written permission from property owner(s) of the proposed site location.

Program Restrictions

- Projects cannot duplicate or replace funding for an existing private or public program
- Projects cannot duplicate existing maintenance programs
- Projects cannot conflict with existing City policies, regulations or laws
- Applicants must be in good standing on current and/or previous CCG contracts

Awarded grants may be revoked if a grantee is identified as having violated the program restrictions.

Timeliness

Applicants must be prepared to enter into a contract within three months of award announcement, including the timely submission of required contract documents, and proactively communicating with the CCG to resolve outstanding deliverables or other problems. If an applicant is unable to comply with timeliness requirements the grant may be revoked.

Application Review Process

Applications will first be screened by CCG staff for completeness, adherence to The Guidelines, and to ensure that the proposed project meets the intended use of CCG funding. Applications that are complete and in compliance with The Guidelines are referred to The CCG Advisory Committee (CCGAC) for review. The CCGAC will evaluate and score applications based on the Evaluation Criteria. The CCGAC submits funding recommendations to the City Administrator who decides final awards. Applicants may not always receive the funding requested in the application. This may require revisions to the proposed budget and project work plan.

Evaluation Criteria	Points
Design & Impacts: Presents a sound, well-researched, and feasible project design; and describes the expected impact of the project.	20
Community Engagement: Describes a compelling need for the project in the community. Demonstrates support and involvement in the project from neighbors and other beneficiaries.	20
Racial Equity: Presents a clear approach to increase engagement and participation of communities of color, including, but not limited to, community outreach and engagement, inclusion and participation, and sourcing from local businesses owned by people of color.	15
Capacity: Demonstrates ability to complete the project in the allowed timeframe, identifying the project lead and their qualifications; the specific roles and responsibilities of all organizations involved in the project, and all resources required to complete the project.	20
Budget: Proposes a reasonable, well-researched and feasible project budget based on the project design and scale.	15
Maintenance: Presents a well-defined and appropriate plan of action to preserve and maintain the project after completion.	10

Match Requirements

The Community Challenge Grant Program is designed to provide financial assistance that is complemented by a partially-matched community contribution, including in-kind donations, volunteer labor, and other sources. The required match is based on the grant request. For every grant dollar requested the applicant must provide *at least* a 35% match for all projects. Applicants must keep detailed records of all expended match.

The following are requirements for an eligible match:

- The amount and type of match must be appropriate to the needs of the project. The applicant must be prepared to justify that each element of the match, in the amount proposed, is required to complete the project.
- The match must be appropriately documented through service contracts, invoices, receipts, signed timesheets or attendance logs.
- Volunteer labor is valued at \$25.00/hour, after a grant contract is executed. No volunteer contributions prior to the execution of the grant contract can be counted against the match requirement.
- Professional services and project management costs cannot be both a cash and in-kind match. They must either be provided fully in-kind or fully in-cash. Discounted rates do not count toward a project's match amount.
- Labor for ongoing maintenance after the project is completed may not be counted toward the required match.
- Eligible items described in the funding and reimbursement section are eligible as a match unless otherwise stated. Ineligible budget items cannot be used as a match.

Budgets, Financial Restrictions & Reimbursement Operations

Funding Levels

The minimum funded grant amount awarded from the CCG's grant budget is \$15,000. The maximum grant amount awarded from the CCG's grant budget is \$150,000. Grant awardees must provide a 35% match of cash, volunteer labor (valued at \$25.00/hour), donated materials and/or supplies, or services. Grantees may incorporate additional sources of funding into their projects, and grant contracts, if additional sources of funding are awarded by other divisions or programs of the City and County of San Francisco, upon review and approval by the CCG Program Director.

Funding Level	
Budget Size	\$15,000 to \$150,000
Project Duration	9 - 12 months depending on the project scope and timeline* <i>On a limited basis, the CCG Program Director may authorize a project duration that exceeds 12 months based on the project complexity and scope. The duration is established at the beginning of the grant contract</i>

	<i>and represents the period of time that an awardee has to complete the project.</i>
Required Match	35% for all projects

Eligible Expenses

- General Labor/Professional services costs. Please note that certain types of professional services are eligible on a limited basis as described in the limitations section below.
- Equipment, supplies and materials, as they directly relate to the proposed project.
- Community outreach materials, as they directly relate to the proposed project.
- Permit fees, as they directly relate to the proposed project.

Eligible Expenses with Limitations

Grant budgets may not be concentrated in a single expense category and must reflect a balanced approach and use of CCG grant funds.

- Design costs are NOT to exceed 20% of the requested project budget.
- Construction and material costs are NOT to exceed 40% of the requested project budget.
- Outreach & Engagement costs are NOT to exceed 15% of the requested project budget
- Project Management costs are NOT to exceed 20% of the requested project budget.
- Administrative or Indirect Costs are NOT to exceed 10% of the requested project budget. Any organization submitting for reimbursement of administrative or indirect costs must be prepared to document and justify the services provided to the CCG Program Director. If a grantee is fiscally sponsored, the grantee may not claim an indirect fee. Instead, expenses that would typically fall under the indirect fee category should be specified in the grant program budget for consideration. Excessive administrative costs are discouraged and may not receive funding.
- Fiscal Sponsorship fee is NOT to exceed 15% of the requested project budget.
- Permanent interpretive signage costs are NOT to exceed \$1,000 of the requested project budget.

Ineligible Expenses

- Food and beverages
- Travel expenses
- Celebrations
- Expenses incurred prior to the execution of the grant contract.
- Previous financial commitments made as part of an organization’s regular operation or as part of another program. Grant awards may not be used to fund ongoing or existing programs, unless there is a clear, documented expansion of services.

Fiscal Sponsorship Fees

Fiscal Sponsors may receive a fee of no more than 15% of the requested grant award. This fee must be included in the project budget.

Disbursement of Grant Funds on a Reimbursement Basis

The CCG is a reimbursement grant program. Funded entities must first expend dollars, document expenditures, and submit invoices to receive disbursement of grant funds. Awardees CANNOT begin projects or submit invoices for expenditures made prior to entering into a grant contract with the CCG. To receive reimbursement awardees will be required to submit payment request forms with supporting documentation, including copies of receipts, invoices, cancelled checks, credit card statements, payroll journals, and timesheets. All invoices will undergo review and auditing by the CCG before disbursement of reimbursements. Reimbursements must follow a monthly or quarterly submission cycle. Grantees may not submit more than one reimbursement per month. Prior to submission for reimbursement of any compensation or fees paid to a subcontractor, the grantee must provide a service contract, and any applicable insurance, approved by the CCG Program Director. Reimbursement requests may take up to 30 days to process upon approval.

Project Submittals & Reporting

Once a project is selected to receive funding and has entered into a grant contract, the following requirements are the responsibility of the grantee:

Project Follow-Up

- Submit project design drawings (if applicable) for CCG staff review.
 - The conceptual plan submitted with the application must be finalized and submitted prior to construction as documentation of the work that will be completed.
 - Public art projects, submit final drawings and copy of SF Arts Commission Civic Design Review forms to CCG once project has been calendared for the Visual Arts Review Committee. Submit design approval and Permit of Entry from the SFUSD, if required.
- Notify CCG staff of key milestones in the construction of the project so grant administration staff can conduct site visits to observe and document the progress of the project.
- ALL projects must finalize their proposed interpretive signage and submit for review, comment and approval no later than three months prior to the end of the grant contract. CCG staff must confirm installation of signage prior to grant closeout. The proposed signage must be fabricated and installed one month prior to the conclusion of the project.
- Final grant billings will be rejected if signage requirements are not met prior to the submission of the billing and remaining grant balances may be forfeited.

Quarterly Reporting Requirements

- Electronically submit detailed quarterly reports with photo record of each phase of the project.
- Develop and submit a final report after project completion with photo record of each phase of the project.

Note: Quarterly and Final Report deadlines are based on the date the grantee enters into a grant contract and are therefore project-specific. Custom Quarterly and Final Report templates will be sent to the grantee once they are under contract.