NYS Park and Trail Partnership Program
Unlocking the Potential of Grassroots Organizations
Evaluation Criteria

Capacity and Organizational Effectiveness Grants

Primary Evaluation Criteria

- Project has well defined metrics, goals, and objectives.
- Project is aligned with the organization’s mission, goals and strategic priorities.
- Project will develop systems or practices that build organizational capacity and effectiveness and are likely to be sustained beyond the grant period.
- Project is likely to enhance the organization’s ability to preserve, steward, interpret, maintain, and/or promote the public resource being served.
- Project can be accomplished within stated grant period.
- Project has a high likelihood of success but is dependent on NYS Park and Trail Partnership Program grant investment.
- Applicant demonstrates sufficient organizational capacity and commitment to complete the proposed grant-funded activities.
- Project will increase the visibility of the organization and/or stewardship, enjoyment and access to the public resource.
- Project leverages other opportunities, partnerships and funding sources.
- Project is aligned with the grants program goals.

Secondary Evaluation Criteria

- Match is greater than minimum required.
- Organization demonstrates a high level of competence, accountability, and due diligence including satisfactory completion of previously awarded Park and Trail Partnership Program grants projects and final performance reports.
- Creativity and the ability of the project to serve as a model for other groups.
- Project supports public resource master plan and/or agency priorities.
- The geographic distribution of fundable projects in any given application cycle.

Step-up Grants

Primary Evaluation Criteria

- Applicant demonstrates sufficient organizational capacity and commitment to complete the proposed grant-funded activities.
- Project leverages other opportunities, partnerships and funding sources.
- Project is aligned with the grants program goals.

Secondary Evaluation Criteria

- Match is greater than minimum required.
Organization demonstrates a high level of competence, accountability, and due diligence including satisfactory completion of previously awarded Park and Trail Partnership Program grants projects and final performance reports.

Project supports public resource master plan and/or agency priorities.

The geographic distribution of fundable projects in any given application cycle.

Professional Development Grants

Primary Evaluation Criteria

- Applicant demonstrates ability to sustain the position beyond the grant period.
- Project has well defined metrics, goals, and objectives.
- Project is aligned with the organization’s mission, goals and strategic priorities.
- Convincing demonstration of need for new and/or expanded staff capacity, clear description of expected outcomes, and a vision for how enhanced professional capacity will lead to a stronger organization.
- Likelihood that investment in professional capacity will achieve stated objectives.
- Extent to which project builds on existing strengths, organizational achievements, and board commitment.
- Likelihood that new and/or expanded staffing capacity will advance organizational sustainability and dramatically enhance the organization’s ability to steward the public resource.
- Security of matching funds and strength of fundraising plan.

Secondary Evaluation Criteria

- Soundness of the organization’s plan to provide training and professional development opportunities to new and/or expanded staff.
- Match is greater than minimum required.
- Organization demonstrates a high level of competence, accountability, and due diligence including satisfactory completion of previously awarded Park and Trail Partnership Program grants projects and final performance reports.
- Project supports public resource master plan and/or agency priorities.
- Preference but not absolute priority will be given to all-volunteer organizations.
- The geographic distribution of fundable projects in any given application cycle.

Stewardship and Public Access Capacity Grants

Primary Evaluation Criteria

- Project is in accordance with public resource master plan and priorities and operational considerations of agency.
- Project has well defined metrics, goals, and objectives.
- Project is aligned with the organization’s mission, goals and strategic priorities.
- Project is likely to enhance the organization’s ability to preserve, steward, interpret, maintain, and/or promote the public resource being served.
- Project can be accomplished within stated grant period.
- Project has a high likelihood of success but is dependent on NYS Park and Trail Partnership Program grants investment.
- Applicant demonstrates sufficient organizational capacity and commitment to complete the proposed grant-funded activities.
- Project will increase the capacity and visibility of the organization and access to and stewardship and enjoyment of the public resource.
- Project leverages other opportunities, partnerships and funding sources.
- Project is aligned with the grants program goals.
• Demonstrated agency, community and local government support for project as evidenced by letters of support.

Secondary Evaluation Criteria
• Match is greater than minimum required.
• Organization demonstrates a high level of competence, accountability, and due diligence including satisfactory completion of previously awarded Park and Trail Partnership Program grants projects and final performance reports.
• Creativity and the ability of the project to serve as a model for other groups.
• The geographic distribution of fundable projects in any given application cycle.