

COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA
Department of Conservation and Natural Resources

***Bureau of Recreation and Conservation (BRC)
Administrative Policy/Grant Guidelines***

SUBJECT: Planning- Eligible and Ineligible Grant Project Activities/Costs/Match

EFFECTIVE DATE: 1/1/13

REVISED DATE: 12/31/13

BACKGROUND: The 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: 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.

I. Eligible Activities, Costs and Match:

1. If an application is funded, costs incurred prior to the approval of the grant necessary to submit the grant application and to meet the Bureau's requirements, **may be eligible** at the Bureau's discretion. An example of an eligible pre-agreement cost includes activities related to developing the Request for Proposal (RFP).
2. Developing the scope of work and request for proposals; reviewing and editing plans; facilitating meetings; preparation of meeting minutes, etc.
3. **Consultant/Professional Services Costs** – Those costs provided under contract/professional services agreement with the grantee to perform all or part of the approved project scope of work.
4. **In-House Professional Costs** - These include the grantee's paid staff for services and labor to perform all or part of the scope of work. Costs are tabulated using an established "billable rate". Staff performing work must possess the proper qualifications, training and experience.
5. **Donated Professional Services** - These include services provided at no cost to the grantee by individuals possessing specialized skills or expert knowledge to perform specialized tasks related to accomplishing the scope of work. Costs are tabulated using an established "billable rate." 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** - Those services which are not paid for by the applicant/grantee to perform all or part of the project scope of work. Volunteer service rates are determined in the following manner:
 - Grants awarded prior to grant round 16 – The volunteer service rate is established by the grantee but should be pre-approved by DCNR.

- Grants awarded in grant rounds 16 or 17 - The volunteer service rate is equal to the PA State minimum wage at the time the service was rendered.
 - Grants funded in or after grant round 18 – The volunteer service will be valued up to the current Pennsylvania Independent Sector Volunteer Rate, http://www.independentsector.org/volunteer_time
 - Work performed by individuals under the age of 18 will be valued at the Commonwealth’s minimum wage rate.
7. **Direct Costs** – Those costs directly related to the completion of the approved project 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** (costs incurred/paid by the grantee) or **Donated** (not paid for by the grantee). Subsistence costs for meals, lodging and automobile mileage shall not exceed the rates allowed by Commonwealth policy (<http://www.gsa.gov/portal/content/103969>).
- *The value of Equipment Use will be equal to the established hourly rate that the applicant/grantee normally charges for this use, as documented on an invoice. If the organization does not have established equipment rates or has to rent the equipment, the rental rate, as supported by a written quote or invoice 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.
8. **Billable Rate** - for planning projects that include In-House Professional Costs (Section VI of the Final Payment Form) or Donated Professional Services (Section VIII of the Final Payment Form), personnel costs should be recorded as a “billable rate” which is equal to the employee’s established hourly wage rate as set by the grantee’s governing body or the employee’s hourly rate plus fringe benefits and operational overhead costs. Fringe benefits and overhead costs include but are not limited to employee insurance, retirement benefits, and paid time off. The “billable rate” must be preapproved by DCNR and occurs when DCNR provides approval to proceed for the project. Contact Bureau Project Manager for specific questions on eligible costs.
9. Donated land value that meets Bureau grant program guidelines. Land Donations may be an 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/grantee must provide a copy of the appraisal with the application. This value will be considered as match for planning for the donated land and/or adjoining parklands. If the planning project is selected for funding, a second land appraisal may be required. (Please refer to the Land Acquisition policy/grant guidelines for additional information related to the appraisal.)
10. Costs related to an independent project audit, if required by the Bureau. These costs may be considered eligible even if the audit is performed after the grant agreement period, as specified in the grant terms and conditions.
11. Cash contributions being provided by other organizations to be used as a portion of the local matching funds should be transferred to the applicant/grantee to expend. In such cases, where an outside organization/agency wishes to expend funds on behalf of the applicant/grantee, a formalized Agreement to define the roles and responsibilities must be entered into by both parties. (e.g. County CDBG Funds, County Gaming Funds, County Redevelopment Authority Funds, etc.) *Draft Agreements should be provided to DCNR for review and approval prior to execution.*

II. 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 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).

This policy remains in effect until revised or rescinded.