

## Neighborhood Matching Fund 2017 Frequently Asked Questions

The mission of Seattle Department of Neighborhoods is “strengthening Seattle by engaging all communities.” This year improvements have been made to the Neighborhood Matching Fund to provide more equity, flexibility, and access to the funds – all to make it simpler and easier to participate.

### General

#### Why did the NMF Program Change?

Actually, the NMF Program has not changed. We continue to support community groups that have projects that will engage and strengthen our city. Plus, everything that community groups (YOU) use the NMF funding for stays the same.

Applicants will continue to provide information in their application that illustrates community involvement, community benefit, specific volunteer opportunities, and the value of volunteer contributions.

#### How are we simplifying and improving access to the NMF Program?

The NMF improvements have made it easier and faster to get funding in the hands of the community to do great community projects. We’ve streamlined the program to **increase access to funding** and **increase equity**.

Improvement	Community Benefit
<b>New NMF Materials</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Simpler Guidelines</b></li> <li>• <b>Single Application</b></li> <li>• <b>New Outreach Materials</b></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Easier to read and use</li> <li>• Streamlined application questions</li> <li>• One application for both funds</li> </ul>
<b>Increased Small Sparks Award to \$5,000 (from \$1,000)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increased flexibility for small projects</li> <li>• Improved ability for small projects to have larger impact</li> <li>• Increased resources to cover required expenses (insurance, permits, fees) AND to support other community expenses (art supplies, outreach materials, food, etc.)</li> </ul>
<b>Combined Small and Simple Projects Fund and the Large Projects Fund</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Created the Community Partnership Fund (\$5,001 to \$100,000)</b></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increased access for larger projects to apply <b>three</b> times a year</li> <li>• Encourages groups to apply when projects are ready and feasible versus trying to meet one deadline per year.</li> <li>• Provide approximately \$1 million dollars of funding three times a year!</li> </ul>
<b>Quicker Review and Award Process</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Award Decisions in 6-8 weeks instead of 5+ months for large projects</b></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provides funding when community group has the momentum, support, and energy to make project happen</li> <li>• Gets funding to the community in timely manner</li> </ul>
<b>Community Events</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Eligible every 2 years instead of one-time funding</b></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Events are great community building projects!</li> <li>• Improved access to funding especially for reoccurring events</li> </ul>

### **What are the Race and Social Justice (RSJ) implications to the NMF Program in 2017?**

The Community Partnership Fund **promotes equitable access** to receive funding over \$25,000 for nongeographic-based communities including youth, seniors, refugee, immigrants, race, culture, and LGBTQ groups. We recognize that not all community groups organize based on their neighborhood location.

In the past, the Large Projects Fund **required** applicants to be geographically based. This requirement made it difficult for RSJ-type groups and projects to be eligible for funding over \$25,000. Now, we can support **BOTH** neighborhood-based **AND** community-based projects for all levels of NMF funding.

## **Application**

### **Are applicants required to attend a NMF workshops to apply for NMF funding?**

No; however, applicants are highly encouraged to attend a NMF workshop. It provides an overview of our 2017 Program Guidelines, application requirements, review process, and ongoing assistance that NMF staff can provide applicants.

### **How is a single application simpler?**

The NMF program has one application for both funds which makes it easier to read and use. The application is streamlined into two primary sections 1) Builds Community Partnerships and 2) Project Readiness.

### **Why does community match, specifically cash, need to be provided at the time of application?**

Community match represents that the project is ready and demonstrates the community support for the project. It also demonstrates that the community group has the necessary resources secured including cash to complete the project when they are awarded.

### **How will applications be reviewed?**

All applications will be reviewed by DON staff with input from other City departments and agencies. For projects proposing to plan, design, or renovate a physical location on City of Seattle, WSDOT, King County, Seattle Housing Authority, or Seattle Public Schools (SPS) property, the appropriate City department or agency will also review the application to determine whether the project aligns with their requirements. Learn more about specific [City department guidelines](#).

## **Award Amounts**

### **Why was Small Sparks increased to \$5,000?**

The Small Sparks Fund was increased from \$1,000 to \$5,000 to provide the community with greater ability to apply for small projects that have larger impact. Also, we recognize that required expenses for community projects such as insurance, permits, and fees have increased.

### **Why is the cap still \$100,000 for projects?**

We believe that \$100,000 is an appropriate amount for community-based and volunteer driven-projects. This award amount also allows us to disperse our \$3.2 million to community groups and projects throughout the City.

## Guidelines

### **Is it possible to have multiple applications and/or projects at the same time?**

No. Community groups are required to complete an NMF-funded project and fulfill all the contractual requirements prior to applying for another project. NMF will only fund one project at a time.

### **What do you mean by the 1/2 Community Match requirement for all projects?**

All projects have a ½ minimum requirement for community match. This means that your project must have community contributions that are ½ of the amount that you request from the NMF program. The community match value may include volunteer time, cash, donated services, and/or donated supplies. For example, if you requested \$10,000, then you must have at least \$5,000 worth of community contributions documented at the time of application.

The application also needs to clearly outline how the **total project cost** will be covered and not just document the minimum match requirement.

### **Are District Councils eligible applicant organizations?**

Yes. District Councils represent the diversity of interests, skills, and abilities in their communities, making them good candidates for developing and implementing Neighborhood Matching Fund projects.

### **What do you mean by “ready to go”?**

Eligible applicants who are “ready to go” are those who have projects ready to contract within four weeks from our award decision. This allows the City to contract with you and allows the project to begin. Once your project is underway, you have about 12 months to complete the project, spend the funding, and complete all our program requirements.

### **When does the two-year timeframe begin for community events?**

The two years begins from the date of the last event funded by NMF. For example, if you received NMF funding for an event in 2016, you are eligible to apply again in 2018.

### **Does the two-year requirement for events apply to both the Small Sparks Fund and the Community Partnership Fund?**

Yes. The two-year requirement applies to both funding opportunities. Applicants cannot alternate between Small Sparks and the Community Partnership Fund to receive funding every year for the same event.

### **For a physical improvement project, can I apply for planning and construction in one application?**

No. A planning and design process must be completed prior to applying for funding for construction. The planning phase allows for sufficient time for community input, development of cost estimates, securing necessary reviews and approvals, and raising the funds needed for construction. Each of these planning requirements will help demonstrate that your project is ready for the construction phase.