



Neighborhood Matching Fund
Small and Simple Projects Fund
Large Projects Fund

What Is the Neighborhood Matching Fund?

The Neighborhood Matching Fund supports projects and activities that unite and build stronger communities. Community building is an undertaking requiring concerted effort. During the course of a project, the process of bringing people together and building relationships along the way is as important as a completed project. Community building projects offer an opportunity for all segments of a neighborhood/community to participate in a project that will improve the quality of life in a specific neighborhood or community. Community building projects foster and sustain positive change, while honoring the culture, traditions, values, and relationships in that community.

Grass roots neighborhood and community members can apply for Neighborhood Matching Fund dollars to initiate, plan, organize and implement a proposal in partnership with the City of Seattle. The neighborhood or community matches the Matching Fund award with contributions of volunteer labor, donated materials and professional services, or cash.

The Two Funds:

<p>Small and Simple Projects Fund –</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Up to \$15,000 • Applications accepted 4 times a year • Applications reviewed by a team of DON staff and a community person • Notice of award within five weeks 	<p>Large Projects Fund –</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • \$15,000 - \$100,000 (\$100,000 award maximum for any single project, excluding SAS awards) • Applications accepted once a year • Applications reviewed by Citywide Review Team and District Council volunteers • Notice of award within three months
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Who Should Apply?

- Neighborhood based groups of neighbors/community members who want to do a project as a means of building a stronger community in their neighborhood.
- Community members whose community extends beyond a single neighborhood, e.g. racial, ethnic groups, gay-lesbian groups, members of a disability community (Small and Simple only).

All applicant groups must have an open membership and actively invite involvement from new members. Applicants must represent people who live in the City of Seattle.

Neighborhood Matching Fund accepts applications from groups who currently have an open project/contract as long as it is completed and closed out before the new project is contracted.

Project Attributes

To be considered for funding, a project must demonstrate it is building a stronger and healthier community. It must:

- Provide a public benefit, resulting in a project or activity that benefits a geographic neighborhood or improves race relations and social justice, strengthening understanding of multi-culturalism
- Emphasize self-help, i.e., neighbors/community members doing for themselves, in partnership with each other and with local organizations and local government
- Involve neighbors/members of the community in planning and implementing the project
- Demonstrate community match (see Match Requirements section)
- Be one of the Project Types (listed below)

Project Types

1. Race Relations and Social Justice – Creates grassroots opportunities for diverse communities to interact, encourage mutual understanding and respect, celebrate uniqueness, openly address issues of racial and social inequity, and help improve the quality of life for all City residents. R&SJ projects do not have to be neighborhood based under the Small and Simple Fund category.

Examples:

- Building better and stronger relationships between the police and communities of color
- Bridging language and cultural barriers between grassroots communities
- Youth or senior-led projects
- Leadership development training/mentoring in under-represented communities
- Cultural events
- Public education events/campaign related to discrimination and bias

2. Neighborhood Climate Protection Fund - Creates opportunities for neighbors to connect and collaborate on community-driven approaches to addressing climate change. Like R & SJ projects, projects funded under this category do not have to be neighborhood-based but must still build meaningful connections between Seattle residents. (Like Race and Social Justice Projects, Neighborhood climate Protection projects do not have to be neighborhood-based under the Small and Simple Fund category.)

3. Youth Violence Prevention – Creates opportunities for young people to organize around their creativity, intellect, and energy and positively engage with their peers as alternatives to delinquent and/or violent activities.

4. Neighborhood Planning and/or Design Project — A plan, design, or report outlining specific actions that will serve as a guide for future action in, or changes to, your neighborhood.

5. Organizing Project— Creates, diversifies, or enlarges participation in a community, neighborhood-based association or organization in a low-income neighborhood that diversifies and benefits community members in the neighborhood.

6. Neighborhood Physical Improvement Project — Builds or enhances a physical improvement in your neighborhood.

7. Neighborhood Non-Physical Improvement Project — An activity or event such as a festival or celebration, a training session, an educational campaign, or a workshop. A festival or celebration will only be funded one time.

8. Public School Partnership Project — Encourages partnerships between Seattle Public Schools and the surrounding community for the benefit of a stronger neighborhood.

Match Types and Descriptions

To begin, list all the resources needed for the project. Then identify which items might be available in the neighborhood/community and solicited as match for the project.

Volunteer Labor: A pledge sheet is a list of volunteers who have made a commitment of time to work on the proposed activity or project (template attached to the application). It should include each volunteer's name, address, number of hours pledged and type of work to be completed. Completed pledge sheets should be attached to the application.

Early on in developing a project, the applicant should discuss potential volunteer activities with the property owner. A property owner may require skilled professionals instead of volunteers completing some of the work. This might include plumbing or electrical work.

Professional Services: Can be counted as match assuming the services provided are necessary and valued in proportion to the project's needs. Applicants should decide early on whether professional services will be donated to the project or purchased with the Neighborhood Matching Fund award. An individual or business - whose services will be purchased with the NMF award - cannot pledge volunteer time to be counted as match.

The donors of professional services must document the hourly value of their services on their letterhead. Examples are web designer, landscape architect and graphic designer. The Neighborhood Matching Fund will recognize the value of professional services at their customary rates (*not to exceed \$75 per hour*).

Donated Materials or Supplies: Are valued at their retail price, i.e., food and borrowed tools. Borrowed equipment can also be considered as part of the match and valued at the standard rental fee. The donor must provide documentation of the value and quantity of the match.

Cash: Donations may be secured with a written pledge signed by the donor, rather than collecting the cash up front. If you have money in the bank, include a bank statement or a letter from the fiscal sponsor documenting the cash. A detailed fundraising plan must be included with the application. The fundraising plan should specify fundraising activities, including how much money is expected from each activity, when each activity will occur, and which grant-makers will be applied to. The fundraising plan should demonstrate to reviewers that the applicant has planned and will manage this aspect of the project so as to raise adequate funds within the six months after the application is submitted.

Match Requirements

Physical improvement projects (something constructed) require a 1:1 match (one-dollar value of neighborhood match for every dollar awarded by the City). All other activities, including planning and design, neighborhood organizing, one time events, workshops or training, or race and social justice projects require 1/2:1 match (.50 cents value of neighborhood match for every dollar awarded by the City). ***Documenting match is very important and match pledge forms should be submitted with the application.***

Following are requirements for eligible match.

- The amount and type of match must be appropriate to the needs of the project.
- At least 25% of the match must come from the neighborhood or identified community rather than from foundations, the County, School District, State, or other entities.
- All volunteer labor is valued at \$15 per hour.
- Professional services are valued at the reasonable and customary retail value of the product or service, not to exceed \$75 per hour.
- Volunteer time spent on fundraising, planning, design and organizing will be counted starting on the application due date. Ten hours of volunteer time may be credited for preparation of a Small and Simple Project Fund or Large Project Fund application.

Funds from other City of Seattle sources cannot be counted as match. City of Seattle Community Development Block Grant (CDBG), Pro-Parks, and Cumulative Reserve Funds, as well as City staff services, are included in this prohibition.

Award Exclusions

Awards are NOT made to:

- Individual persons or individual businesses.
- Religious organizations, government agencies, political groups, district councils, universities, hospitals, newspapers, non-local organizations.
- Applicants who have failed to successfully carry out projects funded in the two preceding years.

Neighborhood Matching Fund Awards cannot be used to:

- Duplicate an existing public or private program
- Support ongoing programs or services
- Replace funding lost from other sources or provide gap funding
- Pay for an organization's operating expenses that are not directly related to the awarded project
- Purchase land or buildings
- Pay for out of City travel expenses
- Pay for expenditures or financial commitments made *before* the organization is under contract with the City of Seattle

Application Rating Criteria (Maximum: 100 points)

Project Idea (15)

- Provides a good description of what the project is and why you want to do it. (5)
- Based on principles of local control, self-help, and collective action with a clear public benefit. (10)

Builds Community (30)

- Encourages widespread participation and provides opportunities to bring people together to work on a neighborhood/community issue. (10)
- Promotes interaction and builds community between different groups, such as renters, business owners, seniors, or different ethnic or racial groups. (10)
- Provides a “neighborhood to neighborhood” connection with opportunities for communities to learn from each other and act as partners. (5)
- Promotes meaningful collaboration between youth and adults. (5)

Project Feasibility (15)

- Budget is reasonable and appropriate. (10)
- Activities are well planned, timeline is realistic, and project has a clear beginning and end. (5)

Community Match (25)

- Documented match is realistic and appropriate to the project and is representative of the demographic make-up of the community, i.e. represents different segments of the community. (10)
- Match is documented with signatures demonstrating widespread participation and support for the project. (15)

Outcomes (10)

- Clearly identified anticipated outcomes of how the neighborhood/community will be different as a result of this project. (10)

Technical Assistance (5)

- Met with and worked on project idea with an NMF Project Manager. (5)

Bonus Points (5)

- Project addresses one of the following city priorities: Climate Protection, Youth Violence Prevention, Race and Social Justice

Contracts and Public Funding

If your project receives a Neighborhood Matching Fund award, you will encounter certain requirements for use of public funds. Knowing a little about these requirements will help you plan your budget and timeline. **Please pay special attention to the information regarding use of Public Funds on Page 6.**

Contracts: Award recipients get their matching funds by means of a written contract between the applicant and the City. There may also be a third party: the organization’s fiscal sponsor (see Fiscal Sponsor information sheet). This contract explains the terms and methods of getting the matching funds based on the budget and work-plan you propose in your application.

You cannot begin to incur costs to be paid with the Neighborhood Matching Fund award prior to having a contract with the Department of Neighborhoods.

Some Points about Public Funding

Because this is public funding, there are conditions that apply to Neighborhood Matching Fund projects. Being aware of those conditions now will help you plan your budget and timeline.

Contracts: You can't incur costs to be paid with the Matching Fund award before you have a contract with the Department of Neighborhoods.

Award recipients get their money by means of a written contract between the applicant and the City. There may also be a third party: the organization's fiscal sponsor (see explanation below). The contract explains the terms and methods of getting the money, based on the budget and work-plan you propose in your application. The money is provided to you in installments on a reimbursement basis. As you incur costs, you bill the City for the money; we send a check for the amount you claim; then you pay all your vendors. Included with each invoice submitted, you report to us on the match you have expended and on the project's progress.

Fiscal Sponsor: A group can serve as its own fiscal sponsor or, if the group does not have experience handling as much money as the project involves, can use a fiscal sponsor. Typically, fiscal sponsors charge a fee of 3% to 10% of the money they handle. That expense can be included in your budget.

An organization does not need to be an IRS-recognized non-profit charitable organization or 501(c) 3 to receive City funding. However, donors cannot claim tax benefit for their donations to you unless you are, or are affiliated with, a 501(c) 3. If you plan to do significant fundraising, it makes sense to choose an IRS-recognized nonprofit 501(c)3 as your fiscal sponsor. (Becoming a 501(c) 3 requires an IRS filing process, a fee, is a long process, and is not usually a practical option.)

A fiscal sponsor for your project can be a community-based nonprofit, a small or large business, or any group reliable, able, and willing to monitor your progress and to report to the IRS at the end of the year for you on the disposition of funds. The fiscal sponsor usually handles only the cash and not other kinds of donations to your project. You will still be held responsible for tracking and reporting on volunteer time and other donations.

If you want to be your own fiscal sponsor, the Department of Neighborhoods can provide advice on recordkeeping systems and with acquiring an IRS Employer Identification Number. You will need to make annual reports to the IRS about disposition of the money you have received.

Insurance: If your project is funded, the City will provide insurance covering volunteers while working on the project. If there is considered to be risk, you will be asked to purchase Commercial General Liability insurance for the project to limit the liability of your organization and the City. Depending on the project's scope, the price will range from \$300 to \$1,000.

Competitive Bid: The City requires that you give opportunity to a broad set of businesses, to bid on the work you are generating. The City encourages opening that opportunity to women and minority-owned businesses. If you wish to secure consultant services, you must solicit at least three responses to a written scope of work. If the consultant is to receive more than \$10,000 of City funds, you must advertise for those services. Vendor or contractor services (such as printing, or construction work) of more than \$5,000 must also be advertised and selected only after receiving three written bids.

Contingency: All capital construction projects must include 15% cash contingency funds.

Steps in Developing a Project

- 1. Select a Community Building Activity or Project and Build Support within the Neighborhood or Community:** Choose a project that will generate widespread community support and that addresses a known problem, concern, or opportunity for making positive change.
- 2. Contact the Department of Neighborhoods:** You should contact a NMF staff person to discuss your project idea before applying. Call the Department of Neighborhoods, 684-0464.
- 3. Gain Site Control and City Advice:** If your project involves use of, or changes to property that your organization does not own, you must get written permission from the owner, e.g., Seattle School District, Seattle Parks and Recreation, Seattle Dept. of Transportation, or private property owner. If you're proposing improvements to property not owned by the City, your application must clearly articulate the "benefit" the City will receive in consideration for its NMF award.
- 4. Determine All Resources Needed:** Determine the resources that will be required, such as professional expertise and services, equipment, supplies, and volunteers. If you expect a City department to provide a service, contact it in the earliest stages of planning to determine the cost.
- 5. Develop a Project Budget:** After you list needed resources, begin to estimate costs in order to do a budget. Get cost estimates for each budget item from more than one reliable source. Keep careful notes of all conversations with vendors or contractors that involve estimates.
- 6. Determine the Match:** Identify all possible match resources (cash, donated resources, professional services or volunteer time) and follow the guideline covering Match Requirements.
- 7. Research Regulations:** Many projects need permits, insurance, or design review before proceeding. Find out what regulations and permits apply to your project.
- 8. Keep in Mind these Suggestions to Help You Complete a Competitive Application:**
 - Plan for community participation before you develop the application. This will build support for your project and may avoid problems later on in the process.
 - Create a timeline, starting with the application's due date and working backward. Allow adequate time to publicize community participation events.
 - You must use the budget forms provided in the application or replicate them exactly. Forms are available in a digital format (or download it from: seattle.gov/neighborhoods/nmf). However, only printed-out paper copies with attachments, and one with a real signature, will be accepted.
 - Assume that reviewers are not familiar with your community. Include documentation and relevant data. Clearly describe how this project will build community, the public benefit and the opportunities for broad-based public participation.
 - Work with the property owner to develop a written maintenance plan for any type of capital improvement project.

A complete application includes: any necessary attachments in 8 ½ x11 format, an original application, documented match, and required copies signed by the chair of the organization.

Late applications will not be accepted.