



Waste-Free Communities Grant: TEXTILES

2026 Grant Guidelines

Applications are due by 5:00 pm on April 24, 2026

Seattle Public Utilities (SPU) is excited to focus the 2026 Waste-Free Communities Grant on textile waste prevention projects that provide job training and employment opportunities for refugee and immigrant women.

There is a total of \$300,000 to award for this grant cycle, with awards ranging from \$50,000 to \$150,000.

Grant Program Objectives:

- Support community leadership and innovation around textile waste prevention and reuse
- Support refugee and immigrant women in overcoming barriers to employment
- Protect the environment and public health through conserving resources and reducing greenhouse gas emissions and other pollutants
- Reduce the amount of materials going to waste in Seattle

About Textile Waste Prevention

Textile waste includes unused, unwanted, or discarded textile materials from the production, use, and disposal of products. Examples of products made from textiles include clothing, shoes, furniture upholstery, carpet, rugs, curtains, bedding, towels, bags, and tents.

The U.S. EPA estimates textile waste has increased by over 50% since 2000. While there have been advances in textile recycling, it continues to be challenging and is not widely available yet. Seattle residents and businesses dispose of more than 13,000 tons of textiles and mixed-textile waste every year, which is shipped to a landfill in Oregon.

While recycling textiles is challenging, there are many actions residents and businesses can take to prevent textile waste in the first place.

We can prevent textile waste by:

- buying and using less
- making or buying products that last longer
- choosing to repair, reuse, and buy used
- sharing, donating, or re-selling items so others can use them again

By taking action to prevent textile waste, we:

- save money by buying and using less
- help our community by donating and sharing
- reduce greenhouse gas emissions that cause climate change
- reduce air, water, and soil pollution that hurt human health and wildlife
- conserve natural resources, such as water, energy, and land

Project Requirements

Projects must meet all the following requirements to be eligible:

1. Activities must increase textile waste prevention and reuse.

Examples of eligible projects include:

- Research, develop, and pilot new approaches to extend the life of textile products or design products for reuse and repair
- Expand services that allow Seattle residents and businesses to rent, share, swap, repair, or reuse textile products
- Conduct campaigns to encourage the community to reduce textile consumption and encourage repair and reuse
- Establish shared collection and sorting facilities for textile reuse and upcycling
- Establish financially sustainable business models to support the growth of textile reuse and upcycling businesses
- Establish textile reuse and upcycling supply chains with consistent feedstock and end-markets

The following activities are **not** eligible for grant funds:

- Ongoing operating expenses to sustain textile waste prevention activities at their usual levels
- Transitioning to more sustainable materials for textile production
- Textile recycling

2. Activities must take place within Seattle city limits or have a direct impact on textile waste in Seattle.

Applicants may be located outside Seattle so long as the project clearly demonstrates a strong connection to Seattle's textile waste stream.

[View the map of Seattle city limits.](#)

3. Activities must provide job training or employment opportunities for refugee and immigrant women.

Waste prevention has the potential to offer many economic benefits, but those opportunities are not always accessible to all communities. Textile waste prevention grant projects must incorporate job training and/or employment opportunities for refugee and immigrant women.

In addition to the requirements above, the most competitive applications will also have:

- A clearly defined challenge or question that the grant project will help solve
- A plan for putting to use, during or after the grant project, any research recommendations or tools developed
- A plan to fund the continuation, expansion, or next stages of the project after the grant is completed
- An impact beyond a single organization or business. For example, partnering with others to expand the reach of the grant project or sharing knowledge gained through the project to help others expand textile waste prevention in Seattle.

Who Should Apply

SPU encourages applications from:

- Nonprofit organizations
- Businesses
- Schools, colleges, and universities
- Institutions (such as health care or housing)

Applicants may submit more than one application but are only eligible to receive one grant award each grant cycle.

All applicants must have Washington State and City of Seattle business licenses to receive grant funds, or work through a Fiscal Agent with the required licenses. A Fiscal Agent takes responsibility for receiving and administering grant funds for a project.

[Visit the City of Seattle business license website](#)

[Visit the Washington State business license website](#)

Funding Requirements

Funding

- There is a total fund of \$300,000 to award this grant cycle.
- Grant requests may range from \$50,000 to \$150,000. SPU may award amounts smaller or larger than requested.
- Grant funds must be used and invoiced no later than July 31, 2027.

Eligible Expenses

The following are examples of expenses that may be eligible for grant funding:

- Staff time assigned to the grant project (may include overhead)
- Project supplies, materials, and equipment
- Space rentals for project activities
- Services such as interpretation, printing, and design
- Advertising
- Stipends and other incentives for project participation
- Food and drink for project activities, excluding alcoholic beverages
- Mileage and parking for project activities (valued at the federal mileage rate)
- Fiscal agent fees (up to 10% of the grant request)

Contracting and Payment

Fiscal Agents

Applicants may choose to work through a Fiscal Agent that takes responsibility for receiving and administering grant funds for the project. Applicants are responsible for identifying their own Fiscal Agent and confirming that the Fiscal Agent has current Washington State and City of Seattle business licenses. Fiscal Agents may charge a fee of up to 10% of the grant award. Applicants may include this fee in the grant request.

Contracting

Each award recipient or their Fiscal Agent must submit a W9 form and sign an agreement with SPU to receive grant funds. The agreement will include additional terms and conditions of the grant.

The grant will only reimburse for project activities that take place after the agreement with SPU is signed.

Insurance Requirements

Grant recipients or their Fiscal Agent must maintain levels of insurance as typical for businesses performing work that is similar in scope and nature to the grant project, and no less than required by Washington State law. Workers compensation insurance must also be maintained if required by Washington State law.

Payment

Grant awards are paid on a reimbursement basis. Award recipients will submit invoices based on completion of specific milestones identified in the grant agreement or based on actual expenses. SPU will mail reimbursement checks 30 days after receipt of each invoice. Payment will be delayed if invoices are incomplete or missing required reports and documentation.

Award recipients may request up to 10% of the grant award in advance to support project start-up costs. The request must clearly explain the need and how the advance funds will be used. Proof of use of the funds must be submitted and approved by SPU before the grant recipient will be allowed to request reimbursement for the remainder of the grant award. SPU will require the return of some or all advance funds if the award recipient does not provide sufficient supporting documentation.

Reporting

SPU will work with each award recipient to develop a customized report template to document project activities, outcomes, challenges, successes, and lessons learned. Award recipients may choose to submit reports in print or video format or meet with SPU staff to submit reports verbally.

Reports must be submitted with each invoice, and the final report must be submitted before receiving the final grant payment. SPU may request a meeting with each award recipient to review the final report and ask clarifying questions.

Application Review

The grant review committee will prioritize projects based on the criteria described below. SPU will also consider diversity in geographic location, impacted communities, and types of projects. SPU may contact applicants with follow-up questions before making final funding decisions.

Review Criteria

- 1. Waste Prevention Outcomes:** A project's potential to prevent textile waste.
 - Amount of textile waste the project has the potential to prevent during the grant project and in the future, and relevant environmental and health impacts
 - Number of people the project has the potential to reach in effective ways
- 2. Sustainability and Growth:** A project's potential to contribute to the growth of textile waste prevention in Seattle.
 - Project will lead to sustainable waste prevention efforts with the potential to continue and grow beyond the grant period
 - Project is seeking to solve a key challenge or gain new knowledge that can be used and/or shared with others to expand textile waste prevention in Seattle
- 3. Employment Opportunities:** A project's potential to provide meaningful job training and/or employment opportunities for refugee and immigrant women.
 - Number of refugee and immigrant women the project has the potential to train or employ
 - Potential to lead to sustainable employment opportunities with a living wage
- 4. Project Capacity:** A project's potential to succeed based on capacity.
 - Project has enough staff, partners, volunteers, and financial resources to be successful
 - Project staff, volunteers, and partners have the necessary knowledge, skills, experience, and relationships
 - Partnerships are already secured, if needed
- 5. Project Budget:** A project's potential to succeed based on the proposed budget.
 - Budget is consistent with the project proposal
 - Budget estimates are accurate
 - Expenses are appropriate for the grant
 - Requested amount is reasonable for the expected outcomes

Application Process

Schedule

- Applications due by April 24, 2026
- Notice of decisions in May 2026
- Agreements with the SPU signed in June 2026 (projects may begin)
- Work completed and invoiced by July 2027

Application Steps

Step 1: Read the Grant Guidelines before completing your application.

Step 2: Contact us to confirm your project is eligible and get project advice:
WasteFreeGrants@seattle.gov or (206) 615-1405

Step 3: Complete a Print or Video Application (do not do both).

- Print Applications must be no longer than 10 pages.
- Video Applications must be no longer than 15 minutes.
- Applications may be submitted in your preferred language. SPU will provide translation/interpretation.

Step 4: Submit your grant application and supporting documents by 5:00 pm on April 24, 2026. Call (206) 615-1405 if you do not receive email confirmation of receipt within 2 business days.