

Basic Guidelines re: Mini-Grant Application to NRHC ~ 2015

1. Even though the amount of these mini-grants is relatively low, the source of the funding is from the Commonwealth of PA Dept. of Conservation and Natural Resources' Community Conservation Partnerships Program, and there are specific rules because these are public funds. The National Road Heritage Corridor administers the grants and is the point of contact. Any questions, please email Donna Holdorf, Executive Director, at donna@nationalroadpa.org
2. Focus of grant can be just one or all three topics: nature, recreation, or cultural heritage.
3. It is extremely important to determine **prior to writing** the grant request the **total cost of your project**. The reasons this is necessary: 1) Grant has a 1 to 1 match requirement so you can only ask for 1/2 of the total project cost ; 2) Do not inflate your request. If awarded the grant, you will be expected to spend the entire amount; 3) If awarded the grant, you will be expected to complete the project, even if the final cost exceeds the amount you anticipated.
4. You must have the cash match in hand at the time of application. By submitting the grant, you are affirming this fact. Also, if you have a much larger project, it is best to 'carve out' a small piece of it if you desire mini-grant funds. Otherwise, the entire project will be subjected to state rules and regulations.
5. If you choose to submit an application, it is imperative not to begin any part of your project (except for gathering written bids/quotes). Should you receive the grant, you will be expected to provide copies of quotes, invoices, cancelled checks-both sides, etc. If it becomes apparent the project began BEFORE you received the official Notice to Proceed Letter, then you will need to return all grant money to the NRHC.
6. **Please cash the check in a timely manner and begin your project as soon as possible.**
7. If you receive a grant, once your project is underway, please notify your local newspaper for a story and photo. The NRHC does not want to 'steal your thunder' and send out press releases about your project. Your press release must include one sentence that credits the funding source and partners. This is spelled out in your mini grant Partnership Agreement. You will be asked to include proof of press coverage when you close out your grant. **A hard copy of the actual article from your local newspaper is required with your closeout.**
8. The application provides a link to the DCNR website re: grants, you must read this section to make sure you are compliant with the program's requirements.
9. You must submit a copy of your 501c3 determination from the IRS and a CURRENT copy of your PA Dept. of State - Bureau of Charitable Organizations(BCO) with your grant application. If these documents are not included, your grant will not be reviewed at all. If your Certificate is not CURRENT, it could take 2-3 weeks to obtain an updated version.
10. Think about your project; think about the seasons in PA. Can you complete it before September 30, 2016? You must stay on track with the timetable you state in your application.
11. Read the *Process and Documentation* section of the Application. The dates are important for you to plan for and understand.
12. Keep in mind that these National Road/ Conservation Landscape Mini-Grants are very competitive with applicants (both nonprofits and municipalities) submitting from a 5 County area.
13. Start your application process early. When seeking bids, do so in writing so every vendor has the same information, and request a written, line item response from the vendor. Make sure you have the 2 required documents (if you don't have a current Dept. of State, BOC Certificate, it can take a few weeks to get it); two signatures are needed on the application – Exec. Dir. and Board Chair OR Township/Borough Manager and Dept. Head.; read and follow the instructions carefully.
14. Next steps? A committee of five will review and rank ONLY the complete and eligible applications. *All* applicants will hear back from the NRHC in writing after the review and ranking; please don't call the office. Thank you and good luck!