2023 VOREC Community Grant Program Application Preview

The purpose of this document is to assist you in preparing your application. All applications must be submitted through the online portal to be considered for funding. Note: fields for applicant response are identified below in blue.

SECTION 1: Background Information

Please share key applicant information. Please note that the “Project Manager” should be the project lead and “Authorized Representative” should be the person at the organization, business or municipality that can sign legal documents.

Name of lead applicant organization

Address

Address Line 1

Address Line 2

City

State/Area

Postal Code

Project Manager

First Name

Last Name

Phone Number

Email

Authorized Representative

First Name

Last Name

Phone Number

Email

Please share key project information

Project Title

Project location: City/Town

Project Location: County

Overall Amount Requesting

Brief description of the project (5 sentences or less)

# Please share information on your project team. (20 points)

Project Management: How will the project be managed and who will make decisions about the project? (1,250 character limit)

Project Partners: Identify up to 5 individuals or groups that will champion the project and be significantly involved in the design and implementation of the project. Please briefly describe their role and expertise. (name, title, organization, role played in the project) We strongly recommend including a recreation professional as part of your project team, particularly for projects with components of construction, design and planning. (2,500 character limit)

Funding Resources: What other funding sources, if any, were considered, and why is the VOREC program the best source to fund this project? (2,000 character limit)

Project Issue & Urgency: What timely issues, problems, challenges, or obstacles will the project address? (2,500 character limit)

What does success look like for this project? How do you plan to measure success? (2,000 character limit)

Can your organization comply with the requirements of the Act 154 Certificate of Good Standing, Vermont FPR State Risk Assessment Questionnaire, and FPR Grantee Insurance Guidance? Please review the documents in the Application Guidance.

* + Yes
  + No

SECTION 2: VOREC Pillars

Which VOREC pillars does the project support? (check all that apply)

* + Grow outdoor recreation-related businesses. (such as outdoor shops, retailers, lodges, tour operators, guides, restaurants)
  + Increase participation in outdoor recreation activities among all demographics.(such as reducing barriers and expanding opportunities for accessing outdoor spaces)
  + Strengthen the quality and extent of outdoor recreation resources (such as trail systems, recreation facilities and water access facilities like boat launches and beaches.)
  + Increase the stewardship of outdoor recreation resources and environmental quality (such as redesigning eroded trails, creating a program for volunteer trail maintenance or teaching schoolchildren about Leave No Trace practices).
  + Promote and enjoy the health and wellness benefits of outdoor recreation (such as health providers encouraging time outdoors, programs that bring people outside to improve their mental and physical health, informational resources that educate people about the benefits of spending time outdoors).

# Project Contribution Description (15 points)

Explain how the project furthers the selected VOREC Pillar(s). (2,000 character limit)

SECTION 3: VOREC Work Plan

Please fill out the “VOREC Workplan Template” for your project and upload it below. The workplan should tell us how you plan to implement your project, including a timeline. A fully thought out and well-communicated workplan are included in the template document. Title the document using the following format: 2023\_Workplan\_[Name of applicant organization]. Example: 2023\_Workplan\_FPR.

Title the document using the following format: 2023\_Workplan\_[Name of applicant organization]. Example: 2023\_Workplan\_FPR.

VOREC Workplan Template Upload:

*Please be aware that files exceeding 100 MB in size are not allowed*

*Comment*

Does your project include the construction or renovation/rehabilitation/repair of buildings, trails or other infrastructure? If you select “Yes”, you will need to upload a project map, landowner permissions, and the status of permit acquisition for the project. If you don’t have these items, your project may not be ready for implementation.

* + Yes
  + No

Does your project include land acquisition? If “Yes”, you will need to answer questions regarding the status of your acquisition project. Projects that are ready to purchase, with an appraisal, purchase and sales agreement, title and environmental review in hand, will likely rank higher than those without.

* + Yes
  + No

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Required For Construction

Required for construction Note: Failure to provide documents where needed will result in incomplete application / not eligible for consideration for this grant round.

Project Map(s):

*For guidance on what grant staff will be looking for refer to the Application Guidance. Share a detailed map depicting the project location with all work plan’s components and structures with site locations highlighted and clearly marked, and a legend to understand what components will be done at what locations. Your map file should be clearly titled using the following format: 2023\_ProjectMap\_[Name of applicant organization]. Example: 2023\_ProjectMap\_FPR.*

Upload Map. *Please be aware that files exceeding 100 MB in size are not allowed*

*Comment*

Written landowner permission:

*Written landowner permission: Refer to the “VOREC Application Guidance” document on the Instructions page for more information on what you need to complete this section. Landowner permission is required for all work proposed on private and/or public land. Please upload as many documents as you need. Each file should be clearly titled using the following format: 2023\_LandownerPermission\_[Easement/Public/Private/Class4]\_[Name of landowner]\_[Name of applicant organization]. Example: 2023\_LetterOfPermission\_Private\_JimSmith\_FPR.*

Upload landowner permission. *Please be aware that files exceeding 100 MB in size are not allowed*

*Comment*

Additional Documents

Please upload any additional document(s). *Add additional documents including engineering plans, if needed for the project. Please be aware that files exceeding 100 MB in size are not allowed*

*Comment*

Project Permitting: Projects that involve trail or asset construction must have all necessary permits in place prior to construction. For state permits, the first step is to put the project through the Permit Navigator tool, which is found on the Department of Environmental Conservation website. The Permit Navigator tool will provide the contact information for permit specialists who can be contacted for further information about obtaining permits for the project. Please upload the Permit Navigator guide for your project below. [Department of Environmental Conservation](https://dec.vermont.gov/permitnavigator)

Upload Permit Navigator guide

Please upload permit navigator guide. *Please be aware that files exceeding 100 MB in size are not allowed*

*Comment*

If your Permit Navigator guide determines that permits are likely for your project, please explain what additional steps, if any, you have taken to obtain your permits. (250 words or less).

Does your project require municipal permitting?

* Yes
* No

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## Required For Land Acquisition

Note: Failure to provide documents where needed will result in incomplete application / not eligible for consideration for this grant round.

Acquisition Type

* Fee Acquisition
* Fee Acquisition with an Easement
* Permanent Public Access Easement
* Term Public Access Easement (25 year minimum)

### Fair Market Value

Applicants acquiring property or interests in property (e.g., easements) will be required to substantiate the value of that interest before a full grant funds can be used to reimburse for aquisition costs. Obtaining an independent appraisal by a qualified appraiser that meets the Uniform Standards of Professional Appraisal Practice (USPAP) is required unless the interest to be acquired is below $10,000 or the amount to be paid is significantly below the market value. In which case, obtaining a market analysis and providing a justification for not needing a USPAP appraisal is needed.

Have you completed an appraisal for the subject property?

* Yes
* No

### Purchase and Sales Agreement

Complete the section below pertaining to a purchase and sales agreement. Applicants acquiring any property or easement will be required to demonstrate that they can complete the acquisition in the two-year grant period. Applicants will be required to demonstrate landowner commitment to sell the property, ideally through a purchase and sales agreement.

Do you have a signed purchase and sales agreement with the landowner?

* Yes
* No

### Title Work, Boundaries, and Environmental Conditions

Applicants will also be required to demonstrate that they have inspected the title, boundaries and environmental conditions of the property to ensure that any legal or physical conditions do not infringe on the purposes for which the property is being acquired. Complete the section below for Title Work. Please note: Any restrictions on the property that could prevent it from being available for recreational purposes of the grant at any time may render the project ineligible.

Has title work been completed for the property?

* Yes
* No

Describe how you intend to inspect the title and demonstrate that the property is free of title defects. (1,250 character limit)

Please share whether there are any liens, restrictions, easements, or covenants on the property. (2,500 character limit)

Please describe any encumbrances on the property that could impact the public’s use of the property, the recreational value of the property, or the purpose for which the property is being acquired. (2,500 character limit)

Have property or easement boundaries been substantiated?

* Yes
* No

Has an environmental assessment (an assessment of any possible contaminants, pollution or other issues) of the property been completed?

* Yes
* No

Note: You will need to itemize acquisition costs in your project budget. Eligible acquisition costs include Purchase price, closing fees, title search, title insurance, survey cost, appraisal fee, stewardship funding, administration costs.

### SECTION 4: VOREC Project Budget

Please use the section below to upload a project budget using the provided budget template. The budget is an estimate of eligible costs associated with this project. Be thorough, detailed, and accurate. Explain any basis used to formulate estimates for listed expenses. For guidance on how to fill out the project budget, refer to the Application Guidance document.

Note: Match is not a requirement for this grant program. Only fill out the “Other Funding Committed” budget table for match already committed to the project.

Project Budget Upload

*Please be aware that files exceeding 100 MB in size are not allowed*

*Comment*

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### SECTION 5: Project Track

Please use this section to identify the primary track under which your project should be reviewed. Please choose one track, even if your project could be considered under multiple tracks. Please review the Application Guidance document for more information about what types of projects are allowed under each track.

Track Descriptions:

Implementation Track: Projects that support local outdoor recreation economies, support the five VOREC pillars and will be ready to implement in Spring 2024. Any necessary permits, engineering plans or designs should be secured or in the process of being secured. Examples of projects in this track might include building a trail that connects the downtown to the town forest, adding a wayfinding system that helps visitors find outdoor recreation opportunities or acquiring a property and building a trail system that connects a neighborhood to public lands.

Project Development Track: Projects that will support local outdoor recreation economies and support the five VOREC pillars, but need design, scoping, or planning work done in order to be ready to implement. Examples of projects in this track might include funding for architecture and engineering plans for a new visitor center, consultant fees for a community-focused recreation plan, or designing a trail system on a new town forest.

Outdoor Equity Track: Projects that reduce barriers and expand opportunities for people to access Vermont’s outdoors. In particular, this track will fund projects that support BIPOC, LGBTQ+ people, people with low income, speakers of languages beyond English and/or people with disabilities. Examples of projects in this track might include expanding or lowering costs for a bike rental and instruction program for kids, adding information on town-owned kiosks in languages other than English, or planning a BIPOC-led trails festival. Staff capacity support for increasing diversity, equity and inclusion in outdoor programming can also be included in this track. Businesses are an eligible applicant in this track.

Flood Recovery Track: Projects that repair or replace outdoor recreation infrastructure that was damaged due to flooding between July 10, 2023 and August 15, 2023 (referred to going forward as summer 2023) relocating a trail that washed out due to its fall-line alignment.

Track type:

* Implementation Track
* Project Development Track
* Outdoor Equity Track
* Flood Recovery Track

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# SECTION 5a: Implementation Track Narrative (40 points)

The implementation track covers projects that can include wayfinding, stewardship, programming, infrastructure construction, marketing, and / or land acquisition activities that further the five VOREC pillars. Projects that are implementation ready will have completed design and engineering and be actively working on securing any required permits and/or documentation needed for land acquisition.

Grants will be awarded to projects with a minimum budget of $50,000 and no maximum budget.

Project activities (Check all that apply)

* Wayfinding & Interpretation: Public access improvements including maps, road and community signs and/or other informational materials.
* Environmental Stewardship: Program or material needs related to environmental quality and stewardship of recreation assets.
* Recreational Programming: Program, material, or equipment support for existing or new outdoor recreation events and programs.
* Land Acquisition: Land acquired through this grant (ex. Buying/conserving a town forest) should be held by a qualified organization such as a municipality or a land trust. Refer to the Application Guide for qualifications.
* Recreation infrastructure construction: New trails, trail rehabilitation, small-scale trail-related infrastructure construction or improvements and/or trailside signs and kiosks. All design and engineering must be complete and at a minimum all permits required must be identified (if applicable).
* Capital infrastructure construction: Construction of large-scale recreation-related project including parking lots, engineered bridges and construction or renovation of buildings. All design and engineering must be complete and at a minimum all required permits must be identified.
* Community Marketing: Marketing activities (must be part of a larger project that includes other eligible activities).
* Community Planning: Planning activities, including assessments or and/or mapping (must be part of a larger project that includes other eligible activities).
* Project Management: Required activities for the management of the proposed work. These activities are not for the administration of the grant (e.g. coordination with FPR on development of project scope, grant reimbursements, grant amendments).
* Administrative Support (indirect costs): Administrative costs for work done by Executive Directors or Administrative Staff on grant coordination with FPR (e.g. development of project scope, grant reimbursements, grant amendments), office space rent, utility bills, printers, etc. (a percentage of a project/the program).

Implementation projects should fulfill the following priorities.

Community Planning: Projects should demonstrate public and partner engagement in the concept development, have a high positive impact and/or be deemed critical by the community.

Economic and Community Need: Concepts should fill a demonstrated gap in recreation economy or strengthen the recreation economy. Intended impact must fulfill a public need.

Sustainability and Environmental Stewardship: Projects should incorporate best practices to protect natural resources and increase resilience.

Innovation and Creativity: Projects that propose novel and imaginative solutions to revitalize or strengthen the outdoor recreation economy are encouraged.

Inclusivity and Increased Participation: Projects should actively involve and benefit diverse communities, ensuring equitable access to outdoor recreation.

Describe how the proposed project advances the priorities listed above. (3,000 character limit)

Is the proposed project connected to existing recreational assets or outdoor businesses? If so, please list. (2,000 character limit)

## Letters of support

Please upload a minimum of 1 and a maximum of 3 letters of support that represent community and/or regional support for the proposed project and how it reflects the community’s expressed needs. Each file should be clearly titled using the following format: 2023\_LetterOfSupport\_[Name of signee]\_[Name of applicant organization]. Example: 2023\_LetterOfSupport\_JimSmith\_FPR.

Letter of Support Upload

*Please be aware that files exceeding 100 MB in size are not allowed*

*Comment*

Additional Letter of Support 1 Upload

*Please be aware that files exceeding 100 MB in size are not allowed*

*Comment*

Additional Letter of Support 2 Upload

*Please be aware that files exceeding 100 MB in size are not allowed*

*Comment*

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SECTION 5b: Project Development Track Narrative (40 points)

The Project Development track covers projects to develop a concept into a project ready for implementation. Project concepts must advance one or more of VOREC’s pillars.  
Grants will be awarded to projects with a minimum budget of $20,000 and no maximum.

Project activities (Check all that apply)

* Assessment and Design: Assessment of trail and recreation assets and access to assets.
* Master Planning: Strategic planning for trail, recreation areas and/or communities.
* Professional Services (planning and design): Engineering, architecture, mapping or other design services required before implementing project.
* Professional Services (natural and cultural resources): Natural and/or cultural resource inventories and assessments required before implementing project.
* Permitting: Costs for permits required before implementing project.
* Project Management: Required activities for the management of the proposed work. These activities are not for the administration of the grant (e.g. coordination with FPR on development of project scope, grant reimbursements, grant amendments).
* Administrative Support (indirect costs): Administrative costs for work done by Executive Directors or Administrative Staff on grant coordination with FPR (e.g. development of project scope, grant reimbursements, grant amendments), office space rent, utility bills, printers, etc. (a percentage of a project/the program).
* Other: Other activities that will further the development of the project. If checked, please explain in project narrative below.

Development track projects should fulfill the following priorities:

Community Planning: Projects should demonstrate public and partner engagement in the concept development, have a high positive impact and/or be deemed critical by the community.

Economic and Community Need: Concepts should fill a demonstrated gap in recreation economy or strengthen the recreation economy. Intended impact must fulfill a public need.

Sustainability and Environmental Stewardship: Projects should incorporate best practices to protect natural resources and increase resilience.

Innovation and Creativity: Projects that propose novel and imaginative solutions to revitalize or strengthen the outdoor recreation economy are encouraged.

Inclusivity and Increased Participation: Projects that actively involve and benefit diverse communities, ensuring equitable access to outdoor recreation.

Describe how the proposed project concept was determined and how it advances the above project priorities. (3,000 character limit)

What steps are you taking, or have you taken to be prepared to implement the project once fully developed? (2,000 character limit)

Is the proposed project connected to existing recreational assets or outdoor businesses? If so, please list. (2,000 character limit)

## Letters of support

Please upload a minimum of 1 and a maximum of 3 letters of support that represent community and/or regional support for the proposed project and how it reflects the community’s expressed needs. Each file should be clearly titled using the following format: 2023\_LetterOfSupport\_[Name of signee]\_[Name of applicant organization]. Example: 2023\_LetterOfSupport\_JimSmith\_FPR.

Letter of Support

*Please be aware that files exceeding 100 MB in size are not allowed*

*Comment*

Additional Letter of Support 1

*Please be aware that files exceeding 100 MB in size are not allowed*

*Comment*

Additional Letter of Support 2

*Please be aware that files exceeding 100 MB in size are not allowed*

*Comment*

### ----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------- SECTION 5c: Outdoor Equity Narrative (40 points)

The Outdoor Equity Grant track is administered through a partnership between the Department of Forests, Parks and Recreation (FPR) and the Office of Racial Equity (ORE). Projects in this track should expand access to Vermont’s outdoors and reduce systemic barriers that have excluded people from full participation in outdoor recreation opportunities. In particular, this track will fund projects that support BIPOC, LGBTQ+ people, people with low income, speakers of languages beyond English and/or people with disabilities.

Project Activities (Check all that apply)

* Educational Initiatives: Classes and workshops, or other means of educating recreation users or communities.
* Organized Events: Organizing and implementing events and/or supporting participation in events including transportation and food.
* Supplies: Purchase of gear, tools or other assets that reduce barriers for enjoying the outdoors.
* Land Acquisition: Land acquired through this grant (ex. Buying/conserving a town forest) should be held by a qualified organization such as a municipality or a land trust. Refer to the Application Guide for qualifications.
* Recreation Infrastructure Construction: New trails, trail rehabilitation, small-scale trail-related infrastructure construction or improvements and/or trailside signs and kiosks. All design and engineering must be complete and at a minimum all permits must be identified (if applicable).
* Professional Services: Contracting for services directly related to the outcome of the grant including translation and interpretation services.
* Capacity Building: Staff time, additional staff, internships or workforce development programming directly related to diversity, equity and inclusion.
* Capital Infrastructure Construction: Construction of large-scale recreation-related project including parking lots, engineered bridges and construction or renovation of buildings. All design and engineering must be complete and at a minimum all required permits must be identified.
* Program/Projects Development: Planning and developing projects related to diversity, equity and inclusion.
* Project Management: Required activities for the management of the proposed work. These activities are not for the administration of the grant (e.g. coordination with FPR on development of project scope, grant reimbursements, grant amendments).
* Administrative Support (indirect costs): Administrative costs for work done by Executive Directors or Administrative Staff on grant coordination with FPR (e.g. development of project scope, grant reimbursements, grant amendments), office space rent, utility bills, printers, etc. (a percentage of a project/the program).
* Other: Other activities that promote diversity, equity and inclusion in the outdoors. If checked, please explain in project narrative below.

Outdoor equity projects should fulfill the following priorities:

Inclusivity and Increased Participation: Projects that actively involve and benefit diverse communities, ensuring equitable access to outdoor recreation.

Partnership and Public Engagement: Projects should be supported by the communities the project intends to serve. Projects with partnerships among multiple organizations are encouraged.

Sustainability and Environmental Stewardship: Projects should incorporate best practices to protect natural resources and increase resilience.

Innovation and Creativity: Projects that propose novel and imaginative solutions to improve access to the outdoors are encouraged.

Describe how the proposed project will further the priorities listed above. (3,000 character limit)

How does your organization currently engage with the populations the proposed project intends to serve? (2,000 character limit)

## Letters of support

Please upload a minimum of 1 and a maximum of 3 letters of support that represent community and/or regional support for the proposed project and how it reflects the community’s expressed needs. Each file should be clearly titled using the following format: 2023\_LetterOfSupport\_[Name of signee]\_[Name of applicant organization]. Example: 2023\_LetterOfSupport\_JimSmith\_FPR.

Letter of Support

*Please be aware that files exceeding 100 MB in size are not allowed*

*Comment*

Additional Letter of Support 1

*Please be aware that files exceeding 100 MB in size are not allowed*

*Comment*

Additional Letter of Support 2

*Please be aware that files exceeding 100 MB in size are not allowed*

*Comment*

### ----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------- SECTION 5d: Flood Recovery Narrative (40 pts)

The Flood Recovery track covers projects that replace, repair or upgrade recreation assets that were damaged due to flooding and/or heavy rain events during the summer of 2023. Projects should provide evidence for how the repair and/or upgrade was or will be more resilient to future rain events and/or compelling reasons for why the asset should be replaced in-kind.

If the project involves construction of new recreation assets, including projects that involve new construction and repair of damaged recreation assets, please apply for funding through the Implementation track.

The budget for projects in this track can include eligible flood related expenses that have already been incurred as well as planned expenses to complete replacement, repair or upgrades to damaged recreation assets. This grant track has no budget minimum.

Eligible project activities (Check all that apply)

* Trail construction: Construction and/or relocation of trails, bridges, culverts, or other trail assets damaged in the 2023 floods.
* Recreation infrastructure construction: Construction of parking lots, kiosks, recreation areas or other recreation assets damaged in the 2023 floods.
* Assessment and Design: Assessment of trail and recreation assets and access to assets damaged in the 2023 floods.
* Professional Services: Engineering, mapping, natural or cultural resource assessment or other services required before implementing project.
* Supplies: Purchase of gear, tools or other assets.
* Project Management: Required activities for the management of the proposed work. These activities are not for the administration of the grant (e.g. coordination with FPR on development of project scope, grant reimbursements, grant amendments).
* Administrative Support (indirect costs): Administrative costs for work done by Executive Directors or Administrative Staff on grant coordination with FPR (e.g. development of project scope, grant reimbursements, grant amendments), office space rent, utility bills, printers, etc. (a percentage of a project/the program).
* Reimbursement: Reimbursement for costs already incurred (after July 10, 2023) for any of the above eligible activities.

Flood recovery projects should fulfill the following priorities:

Economic and Community Need: Projects should fulfill a demonstrated need (e.g., a critical link or access point for a trail system), have high positive impact or be deemed critical by the community.

Resilience: Projects should implement an increased resilience (e.g., projects that replace culverts with bridges) as well as a well-described and considered design.

Sustainability and Environmental Stewardship: Projects should incorporate best practices to protect natural resources and adequately address the cause of damage or failure of asset (e.g., an undersized culvert).

Innovation and Creativity: Projects that propose novel and imaginative solutions to revitalize outdoor recreation spaces to be more resilient will be prioritized.

Inclusivity and Increased Participation: Projects that actively involve and benefit diverse communities, ensuring equitable access to outdoor recreation.

Describe how the proposed project will further the priorities listed above. (3,000 character limit)

Describe how and why the project area/asset was impacted by rain events in summer 2023 and how the new project design will mitigate the risk of future damage. (2,000 character limit)

Photos of the damage

Please upload up to 5 photos of the damage, if available. *Please be aware that files exceeding 100 MB in size are not allowed*

*Comment*

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### SECTION 6: Supplemental Information

You may also use this section to upload any other information you feel would be helpful for evaluating the proposed project (pictures, site plans and sketches, other planning materials, etc.). Your files should be clearly titled using the following format: 2023\_[document type]\_[Name of applicant organization]. Example: 2023\_Photos\_FPR.

Optional Documents

Upload optional documents. *Please be aware that files exceeding 100 MB in size are not allowed*

*Comment*