

2023 Recreational Trails Program – 06130-RTP24-XX Grants

Grant Administration Guide

This Grant Administration Guide outlines key responsibilities of the Grantee in administering their Recreational Trails (RTP) Grant, from tracking grant expenses to grant closeout. This document is meant to serve as a quick reference version of the more detailed grant agreement, however it is ultimately the responsibility of the Grantee to adhere to the specific terms outlined in the grant agreement.

Please contact the Recreation Grants Team at the Department of Forests, Parks and Recreation (FPR) at ANR.FPRRecreationGrants@vermont.gov for all communications about your grant. Even if you have personal emails for individual FPR staff, please don't send grant-related information to those addresses. This helps us keep all communication related to your grant together - which ultimately helps us better support you!

Grant Start-up & Management

1. Tracking Grant Expenses: The Grantee is responsible for maintaining financial records throughout the grant agreement period. Please inform your Municipal Clerk/Treasurer (for Municipalities) or your Finance Director (for Nonprofits) of your RTP Grant and complete the following:

- Provide them with copies of your fully executed grant agreement.
- Recommend that they determine the best way to document grant income and expenses in line with the project budget included in the grant agreement.
- Explain that the RTP Grant Program is a reimbursement program. The Grantee pays for eligible project expenses up-front and submits for reimbursement from FPR. Eligible planning and permitting project expenses can date back to March 12, 2022 (see your grant agreement for details!); all other project work can be reimbursed back to the award date of your grant and accrue until the award end date, listed in part 1 of your grant agreement.
- Explain that eligible project expenses must be for costs associated with the project components outlined in your executed grant agreement, Attachment A – Scope of Work.

2. Procurement Procedures: The Grantee may follow their own established written procurement procedures and standard bid processes if such procedures and processes obtain optimal solutions at reasonable prices through procurement efforts that are efficient and cost-effective, promote fair and open competition, guard against favoritism, fraud, and corruption, and protect the interest of the State and its taxpayers. These written

Key Dates

March 12, 2022 – Eligible planning and environmental permitting expenses can date back to this date.

Award start date – Located in part 1 of the grant agreement. Notes when agreement was initiated and start date for when grantee can claim for reimbursement for other work.

One year after award start date – Mid-project progress report due (only applies to grantees who haven't already submitted a reimbursement request).

Award end date – Located in part 1 of the grant agreement. Notes when all project components must be complete and eligible project expenses paid.

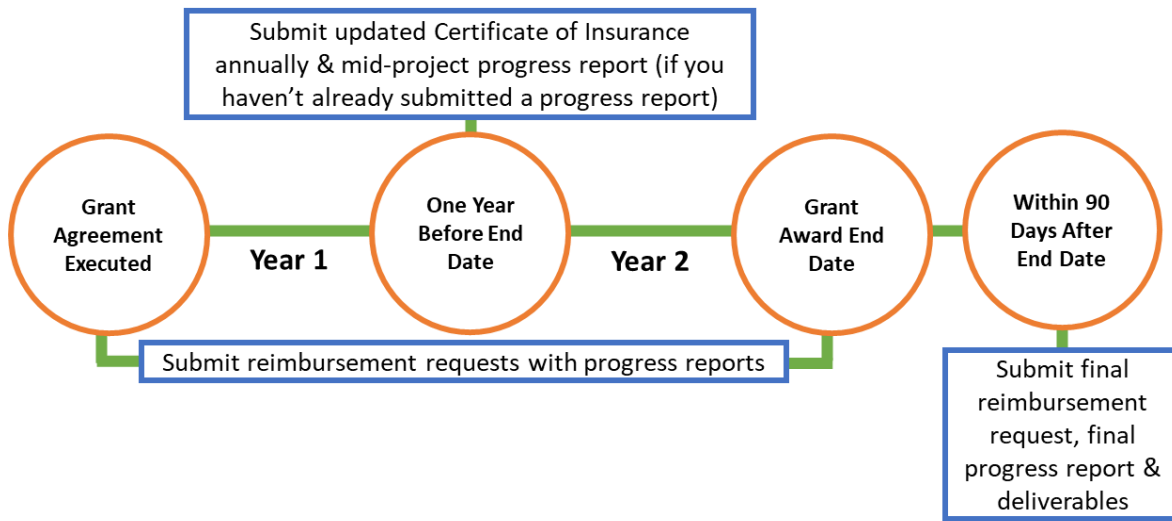
Within 90 days after end date – Final reimbursement request, final progress report, and deliverables due to FPR.

procurement procedures and standard bid processes must exist prior to the award start date, listed in Part 1 of your grant agreement. When the grantee does not have such written policies, the Grantee shall comply with the State’s bidding requirements in the [State of Vermont Agency of Administration Bulletin No. 3.5, Procurement and Contracting Procedures](#).

a. You must secure at least three written estimates for contracts. Maintain these on file.

3. **Partners:** Some Grantees have pre-identified partners who will be completing some of the project components identified in the Scope of Work in Attachment A of their grant agreements. In these instances, Grantees will need to follow their own written procurement procedures or Bulletin 3.5 to establish a written agreement (i.e. a memorandum of understanding) or contract with the partner(s). The agreement should specify the project components the partner(s) will complete and include all the same terms outlined in the Grantee’s grant agreement. FPR does not need to review these partner agreements, however if the Grantee’s written procurement procedures do not allow them to establish a written agreement with a pre-identified partner(s) through sole source purchasing or some other means, please contact us.
4. **Permits:** Before starting on-the-ground project work that requires permit(s), it is the Grantee’s responsibility to secure the necessary permit(s) for the work. (See more details in Attachment A, 5a of the grant agreement.)

Requesting Reimbursement & Communicating Progress



The Grantee is responsible for communicating progress on their grant agreement in two different ways: by submitting reimbursement requests and progress reports.

1. **Reimbursement Requests:** To request reimbursement, grantees will complete the materials underlined below and submit them as attachments by email to ANR.FPRRecreationGrants@Vermont.Gov. Unless there are extenuating circumstances, please plan to only submit reimbursement requests once every three months. For example: if you submit one on June 1, 2024, you may submit the next one on or after September 1, 2024.
 - Reimbursement Request Invoice
Submit an invoice containing at minimum a unique invoice number, invoice date, Subrecipient name and address, request total, and itemization of charges.
 - The itemized list should include both FPR reimbursement request and documentation of match.
 - There are no specific requirements for match amounts on individual invoices (i.e. not every request needs to have the same match percentage), but final payments cannot be processed until the total documented match meets or exceeds the total outlined in your grant agreement.

- Invoices and Receipts, and Proof of Payment PDF

For each itemized activity the grantee will need to submit a receipt, invoice, or other expense documentation. You must submit documentation for both requested reimbursement and matching funds. Compile these documents into one PDF file in the same order they appear on the invoice.

- **Receipts** – Receipts should include an itemized list of purchases.
- **Invoices** – Invoices should include an itemization of services completed by the contractor or consultant.

Here are some answers to common questions about invoices:

- If a contractor or consultant completes work that crosses different budget categories, they need to itemize their work completed by budget category or send separate invoices for each budget category.
- If a partner organization is managing part of the project or completing activities outlined in the Scope of Work (Attachment A), the partner needs to send an itemized invoice to the grantee for the work completed. After the grantee pays the partner, both the itemized invoice (from the partner) and proof of payment (from the grantee) need to be submitted as part of the reimbursement request materials.
- **Other Expense Documents** – Every expense should have corresponding documentation that clearly explains what the item is, what the value is, who provided it, and when it happened.
 - **Donated Labor or Materials** - Statements or invoices with donated services shall clearly indicate that the donation was made for the specific project component specified in this agreement. Donation documentation must include the donor’s signature.
 - For unskilled volunteer labor, you can submit a volunteer hours log/report.
 - For skilled volunteer labor, you must submit both a volunteer log/hours report and backup documentation showing the rate of pay (usually paystub from current employer) or the hours will be counted at the current unskilled volunteer labor rate.
 - **Timesheets** – Staff employed by the grantee organization need to track hours spent on activities outlined in the Grant Scope of Work (Attachment A) in a timesheet or other acceptable timekeeping record. Timesheets need to show the number of hours worked by pay period (at a minimum), with time tracked separately for each budget category, as well as a general description of the allowable activities completed (per the Scope of Work).

Below is an example of a format that provides information about the level of detail required. If time tracking software is not available this format can be used by the grantee for submitting their timesheet information.

Employee Name & Title	Pay Period	Number of Hours	Hourly Rate	Budget Category from Grant Agreement	Description of Activities Completed
	07/23/23 – 08/04/23	3.5 hours		Grant Administration	– Met with partners to discuss RFP – Finalized RFP and solicited bids
	07/23/23 – 08/04/23	.75 hours		Grant Administration	– Placed orders for shovels, mattocks, and chainsaw
	08/07/23 – 08/18/23	1 hour		Map Update	– Reviewed and edited content for map design
	08/07/23 – 08/18/23	5 hours		Construction Labor	– Directed volunteer work crew working on trail tread remediation

Note: Employees can only be reimbursed for completing administrative activities, such as updating payment provisions, submitting reimbursement requests, and communicating with FPR about your grant agreement, if they are specifically outlined in the Scope of Work (Attachment A) within a Grant Administration budget line. If you do not have a Grant Administration budget line you will need an amendment to be reimbursed or claim match for these types of activities.

- **Progress Report**

Submit a progress report form (separate Excel sheet) with every reimbursement request. The progress report asks Grantees to report on project components and metrics outlined in the grant agreement, Attachment A – Scope of Work.

Note: When Recreation Grant Program Staff receive your Reimbursement Request they will check to make sure you've submitted this report. During their review of both the Reimbursement Request materials and Progress Report, they will need to see progress being made on grant agreement activities in order to approve the reimbursement request.

- 2. Mid-Project Progress Reports:** If a reimbursement request is not submitted before there is one year left in the grant period noted in the grant agreement part 1, the grantee must submit a Progress Report (doesn't need to be tied to a reimbursement request). After completing and submitting the report, email ANR.FPRRecreationGrants@Vermont.Gov to let Recreation Grant Program Staff know it has been submitted.
- 3. Certificate of Insurance:** FPR needs a current Certificate of Insurance (COI) on file for each year of the grant. Grantees will need to submit an updated COI ahead of the current COI's policy expiration date (approximately annually). Grantees should set a reminder to ask their insurance carrier for an updated COI with current policy dates. The COI needs to include the insurance requirements outlined in [this guidance document](#). Please email the updated COI to ANR.FPRRecreationGrants@Vermont.Gov.

Making Agreement Adjustments

In all cases, requests to make adjustments to your grant agreement must be submitted in writing. The Recreation Grants team will review the request, ask clarifying questions, and decide on your request. If an amendment is needed, changes cannot be implemented until the amendment is fully signed.

- 1. Budget Adjustments:** Changes to budget categories that are less than 25% of the budget for that category do not require approval, however if a change is **25% or more for any single budget category** the grant agreement will need to be amended. To start this process, please email the following information to ANR.FPRRecreationGrants@Vermont.Gov:
 - Summary detailing the original grant budget, what happened, and why the original budget allocations no longer work.
 - Proposed new budget
- 2. Extensions:** Grantees should aim to complete all project components by the award end date noted in part 1 of the grant agreement. If there are unforeseeable circumstances that make it impossible to meet the deadline of the grant, as soon as possible and at least two months before the grant end date please email the following information to ANR.FPRRecreationGrants@Vermont.Gov to request an extension:
 - Summary detailing original grant timeline, what happened, and why specifically the grantee can no longer meet the original timeline.
 - What the Grantee has done to feel confident they can complete the work within the new proposed timeline.
- 3. Scope Changes:** Approval is required to change any project components identified in the Scope of Work in Attachment A of your grant agreement. In these instances, please review your grant agreement in full detail

and then email ANR.FPRRecreationGrants@Vermont.Gov to request an amendment. Major changes are unlikely to be approved.

- Summary detailing what happened, and why the original scope needs to change
- Itemized list of proposed new scope – including both project component additions and removals, if applicable.
- If the new scope will also include a budget change, please provide the same detail as requested above for budget adjustments.

Project Completion & Grant Closeout

- 1. Before end date:** No later than one month before award end date, wrap up work and complete all payments.
- 2. By end date:** Make sure all project components are complete and any outstanding grant expenses have been incurred and paid for. FPR will not be able to reimburse for payments submitted after the grant end date unless an amendment is processed beforehand to extend the grant.
- 3. Due within 90 days after end date:**
 - Compile and submit the following final documentation to ANR.FPRRecreationGrants@Vermont.Gov:
 - All of the deliverables listed in the grant agreement under Attachment A
 - Final reimbursement request with supporting documentation
 - Final progress report
- 4. Confirmation:** Once all reimbursements have been completed and the final report submitted, FPR will email the Grantee to confirm the official closeout of the grant.

Questions & Contact Information

If you have questions or the Grantee's main contact changes, please email the Recreation Grants team:

ANR.FPRRecreationGrants@Vermont.Gov It is the Grantee's responsibility to ensure that FPR has up-to-date contact information for the grantee throughout the grant agreement period.