



United States Department of the Interior

National Park Service
1849 C Street NW
Washington, DC 20240


IN REPLY REFER TO:

L2225

May 10, 2021

MEMORANDUM

To: Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) State Liaison Officers

From: Joel Lynch
Chief, State and Local Assistance Programs Division 

Subject: Announcing of the Opening of the FY2020/2021 Outdoor Recreation Legacy Partnership Program Grant Round

I am pleased to announce the (re)opening of the fifth round of the Outdoor Recreation Legacy Partnership (ORLP) that offers nationally competitive grants to support the creation or significant renovation of state or locally-owned parks and other outdoor recreation spaces located in urban areas. Funded projects help the public access or re-connect with the outdoors, and specifically target economically-disadvantaged neighborhoods that lack adequate parks and recreational opportunities. A total of \$150 million in LWCF money is available; these funds are comprised of the \$25M appropriated for ORLP in FY2020 and the \$125M allocated in FY2021. The full Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO) is attached and can be found on www.grants.gov under opportunity number P21AS00509, Land and Water Conservation Fund Outdoor Recreation Legacy Partnership Program.

Priorities of the ORLP program in Round 5 remain the same as previous rounds. That is, projects must serve densely populated Urban Areas as defined by the Census Bureau (populations of 50,000 or more). Further, projects should directly benefit low income neighborhoods, be designed through engagement with residents of these neighborhoods to ensure the project will meet their recreation needs and interests, and ideally help provide economic benefits to the community, such as through short and long-term job creation. However, some changes were made to the program requirements in response to requests and comments made by program partners. These include:

- Increasing the maximum grant from \$1 million to \$5 million
- Removing limits to the number of proposals states may nominate
- Removing the scoring preference for projects providing overmatch; projects with contributions from non-public sources used to meet the 1:1 match are still favored
- Combining individual budget limitations for administration, architectural and engineering costs, and contingencies into a single 25% overall limit
- Consolidating and reducing the number of application criteria from 9 to 6

Please review the funding opportunity carefully and make note of the changes throughout. Also note that this year we are providing suggested project and budget narrative forms and templates

for other required application elements to help ensure that this round's applications do not suffer in their review due to avoidable issues such as missing documents or unclear project and/or budget information. We strongly recommend you consider making use of these formats.

Although we have removed the limit on the number of applications a state may nominate, this is not intended to relieve the states from vetting proposals through a competitive process and nominating only the projects that clearly conform to the program purposes and SCORP priorities. It is important that you do your due diligence to ensure that forwarded proposals are complete and meet the priorities of the program. Incomplete/inadequate proposals significantly slow the NPS's review process and delays project selection.

States LWCF lead agencies may request grants on behalf of the state or eligible local jurisdictions for projects ranging from a minimum of \$300,000 up to a maximum of \$5,000,000. Project sponsors and/or their partners must contribute a minimum dollar-for-dollar non-federal matching share to the project. Preference is given to projects that will acquire and/or develop land to create a new part or other outdoor recreation spaces. Projects that will substantially renovate or redevelop an existing public park or other outdoor recreation space to an extent that it equates to the impact of a brand-new park are also eligible but are less favored in scoring. The project must serve neighborhoods that are economically-disadvantaged and have no parks or lack quality recreation opportunities. Projects ideally would be close to shovel ready (pending completion of federal compliance) but at a minimum be past the design and public engagement stages and have the matching share secured or firmly committed at the time of application so that they can be completed within 2 to 3 years after award.

Eligible applicants include state and local government agencies and federally-recognized Indian tribes within or serving areas delineated by the Census Bureau as having populations of 50,000 or more people and consisting of densely settled territory as of the 2010 census (we don't anticipate the 2020 data will be available in time for this round). Further, the applicant must be a jurisdiction of 50,000 or more people. If the project sponsor is a state agency or a county, the project must serve an eligible city of 50,000 or more people that is within a designated urbanized area as described herein.

Applications are due by 11:59 pm Eastern Time, on Friday, September 24, 2021.

We plan to host a call for you on Thursday, May 27th at 3pm ET to review the competition changes and answer any questions. Similar to past years, another learning opportunity for you or your potential applicants will be a City Park Alliance-sponsored webinar on ORLP, this year co-hosted with the US Conference of Mayors and the National League of Cities. It is scheduled for June 2 at 3pm.

If you have any questions please contact me or Ginger Carter, ORLP Program Lead, at 202-513-7233 or ginger_carter@nps.gov. Please also email Ginger with the name(s) and emails of any staff that would like to attend the May 27th call.