Lehigh Valley Greenways Conservation Landscape
2019 MINI GRANT GUIDELINES AND INSTRUCTIONS

Content Includes:

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The information contained in these guidelines is important for the successful completion of your grant application.

Contact Claire Sadler, D&L Director of Trails & Conservation/Lehigh Valley Greenways Co-Lead, to discuss your project ideas or answer questions:
610-923-3548 Ext 226 or Claire@delawareandlehigh.org

I. Overview

Lehigh Valley Greenways is one of seven Conservation Landscapes supported by the Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resources. The Greenways Partnership includes more than 25 organizations and municipal partners dedicated to the conservation of and connection to natural resources in the Lehigh Valley region.

The Lehigh Valley Greenways Mini Grant Program is a reimbursement grant program funded by the Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resources (DCNR) and administered by the Delaware & Lehigh National Heritage Corridor (D&L). The purpose of the mini grant program is to inspire collaborative, strategic approaches to regional conservation and/or outdoor recreation opportunities and to implement ready-to-go, single-year projects that protect and promote the natural resources of the Lehigh Valley and advance the goals of Lehigh Valley Greenways.

Lehigh Valley Greenways Conservation Landscape Vision: Lehigh Valley communities are linked to greenways, trails, and outdoor experiences resulting in stronger local economies and improved public health, green infrastructure and natural resources.

Lehigh Valley Greenways Conservation Landscape Goals:

Goal 1: Land Conservation & Restoration - Conserve critical landscapes, restore buffered stream corridors, and promote best management practices

Goal 2: Outdoor Recreation & Trail Connections - Connect people to greenway and trail opportunities to promote healthy living, recreation, and the region's green assets

Goal 3: Community Revitalization – Support community revitalization through green infrastructure that enhances the quality of life

Goal 4: Local Education & Outreach – Promote understanding of our natural environment and its benefits to our communities

2019 Mini Grant Program Priorities:

- (Municipalities) Adopt model ordinances and/or an official map to protect natural resources and improve bicycle/pedestrian connections
- Implement ecological restoration projects (ex. stream habitat improvements, riparian buffers, native grass/wildflower meadows, rain gardens, no-mow areas along streams and in public parks)
- Host educational events, trainings and workshops which involve an inclusive audience to advance the goals of Lehigh Valley Greenways
- Improve THE LINK, the trail network in the Lehigh Valley (ex. Close trail gaps, install safety and directional signage, create safe road crossings, add trail amenities)

II. Eligibility

Who is eligible?

- Non-profit organizations with tax-exempt 501c3 status **and** registered with PA Bureau of Charitable Organizations ***Selected applicants will need to provide proof of both 501c3 and BCO registration*
- Municipalities, municipal agencies (COG, MPO, municipal authority), county conservation districts
- Educational institutions (Lehigh Valley colleges and universities, public/private schools)

What kind of project is eligible?

Eligible project types are educational programs/workshops, special purpose studies, or implementation projects. Eligible projects should advance the Lehigh Valley Greenways vision and goals and be consistent with previously completed local, county, and regional plans such as open space, greenway, trail, recreation, comprehensive, watershed and/or rivers conservation plans. The list of plans and recommendations directly addressed by the proposed project should be included in the application. Lehigh Valley Greenways mini grants may not be used to fund property easement or acquisition activities.

Projects should be single-year projects **(July 2019 – July 2020)** and must be located in the Lehigh Valley region **(Lehigh or Northampton County).** Please note that projects along the D&L Trail in Carbon and Luzerne Counties should apply to Pocono Forest and Waters Conservation Landscape for mini grant funding.

What projects or expenses are NOT eligible?

Lehigh Valley Greenways mini grants will not fund fundraising or membership drives, real estate acquisition or property easements, or projects not entirely related to at least one of the four goals of Lehigh Valley Greenways listed above. Ineligible grant expenditures include (*does not apply to matching funds, only to reimbursable grant funds):

- Reimbursement for any expenses prior to the effective start date listed on signed agreement.
- *In-house professional services (grantee staff) greater than 50% of the total amount of awarded grant (*does not apply to matching funds, only to reimbursement funds*). The billable rate officially established by grantee governing body can include hourly wage, fringe benefits, and operational overhead costs.
- *Award items, free giveaways, or promotional items (certificates, trophies, plaques, tshirts, hats, magnets, pins, stress balls, stickers).
- Indirect costs, general operations or overhead charges (rent, utilities, website hosting).
- Power equipment (lawn mowers, chain saws, weed wackers).
- Grants, scholarships or fellowships to be given by the grant recipient to a third party. Grant funds may be used to pay up to $100 a day for either substitute teachers or teacher stipends to enable teachers to participate in Lehigh Valley Greenways grant funded programs. Grant funds may also be used to provide classroom supplies purchased by the grantee to enable teachers to implement new programs, but not to provide cash payments to teachers for these supplies.

Application Restrictions

Each applicant is limited to a maximum of two project applications per grant round. Applicants with multiple project ideas are encouraged to contact Claire Sadler, Claire@delawareandlehigh.org, for advice on prioritizing your projects. Applications that have been funded by another Conservation Landscape are ineligible. Applicants are strongly discouraged from repeatedly applying for mini grant funding to support the same project.

III. Funding

- Funding for the Lehigh Valley Greenways Mini Grant Program comes from Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resources, Bureau of Recreation and Conservation, Environmental Stewardship Fund through a grant to the Delaware & Lehigh National Heritage Corridor, which administers the mini grant program. **All mini grant recipients will need to include the DCNR following funding citation and three accompanying logos on any printed materials, products or signs (brochures, flyers, completed plans, educational handouts, etc.) and send a picture of the acknowledgement with closeout.**

  "This project was completed in partnership with the Lehigh Valley Greenways Conservation Landscape. Funding was provided in part by a grant from the Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resources, Bureau of Recreation and Conservation, Environmental Stewardship Fund, administered by Delaware & Lehigh National Heritage Corridor, Inc."

- For the 2019 round, $75,000 is available.
- *Grant requests shall be a minimum of $1,000 and not to exceed $10,000, with total project costs at least twice the grant request.* ***Requested grant amounts should be rounded down to the nearest $100 increment.***
- Mini grants are on a **reimbursement basis** so the mini grantee will be expected to expend eligible project costs then submit for 50% reimbursement of total costs up to the awarded mini grant amount. All mini grants must be matched with cash and/or eligible non-cash (in-kind) contributions at a minimum ratio of 1:1. Example: Grant Request (50% or less) + Eligible Match (50% or more) = Total Project Cost (100%). Your application MUST include commitment letters from any partner organization(s) that states the agreed upon donation amount or value to be used as match. Lehigh Valley Greenways mini grants may not be used to fulfill match requirements for other DCNR funded grant projects and DCNR funds may not be used as match for mini grants.
- Mini grantees are responsible for following the competitive bidding requirements that apply to their organizations. These vary based on whether the organization is a municipality or a non-profit. Mini grantees not familiar with the applicable bidding requirements are strongly advised to consult with their solicitor/attorney.
- Reimbursement may be applied for as one complete payment or broken into two payments, one mid-way through the project and the remaining funds after completion of the project. If requesting two payments, at least ten percent (10%) of the mini grant award will be held as the second payment until all final reporting is submitted complete and accurate.

IV. Timeline

March 6, 2019, 9:00 – 11:00am – Pre-application meeting at Jacobsburg Environmental Education Center

*** All potential applicants must attend this meeting or schedule a separate meeting with Claire Sadler to discuss your projects. Attending the pre-application meeting is strongly preferred.*

March 25, 2019 – Application period opens using online application form on Lehigh Valley Greenways website - http://lvgreenways.org/mini-grants/apply-for-a-mini-grant/

Friday, May 3, 2019 at 4:00pm – Application period closes and online application form is no longer available

May and June 2019 – Projects are reviewed and selected by review committee

June 2019 – Mini grant awards are announced, award event held and grant agreements mailed
July 1, 2019 – Project start date **only if agreements are signed and an executed copy is returned to D&L*
July 2020 – Project completion and closeout

V. Review Process

Grant awards are made on a competitive basis. Applications will be initially screened to ensure all application requirements have been submitted. Then applications will be reviewed by a small committee of current Lehigh Valley Greenways partners or representatives from other conservation landscapes who meet DCNR conflict of interest requirements. Applications are ranked based on:

1) completeness of the application (scope of work, budget, timeline, narrative describing relevant LVG goals and existing local plans, confirmed match with commitment letters, drawings/maps/photos, partner list, letters of support) and

2) how well the project:

- Aligns with 2019 priorities
- Supports Lehigh Valley Greenways vision/goals
- Implements actions listed in existing local plans
- Identifies and secures required match
- Promotes partner collaboration
- Includes the use of best management practices

3) applicant's LVG grant management for past three rounds

The review committee reserves the right to request additional information to supplement the submitted application as needed. Applications will be listed as SELECTED for funding, NOT SELECTED for funding, or held as a HIGH VALUE PROJECT to be considered for funding if resources become available before the next mini grant application process.

For more details, examples of funded projects, and a list of FAQs,
visit LVgreenways.org/mini-grants/.

For Grant Assistance, Contact:

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610-923-3548 ext. 226
Claire@delawareandlehigh.org