2019-2020 Bay Partners Grants Information Packet

Mission

The mission of the Sarasota Bay Estuary Program's *Bay Partners Grants* program is to promote environmental education, awareness, community involvement, and stewardship and to improve the overall quality of Sarasota Bay, its tributaries, and its watershed. To further these goals, funding is available for projects that focus on *Habitat Restoration* and *Bay-Related Environmental Education and Stewardship.*

Eligibility

Businesses, non-profit organizations, schools, academic institutions, civic associations, religious organizations, and neighborhood/homeowners' associations located in Sarasota and Manatee counties with projects that will benefit the Sarasota Bay watershed are eligible to receive funding. The watershed reaches from the northern end of Anna Maria Island south to the Venice Inlet and encompasses the barrier islands in between (Figure 1). Please contact SBEP if you are not sure that your project area falls within the Sarasota Bay watershed.

Figure 1: Sarasota Bay watershed.

Timeframe

Eligible project timelines must begin no earlier than May 2019 and end no later than August 2020.

Funding

$30,000 is available for 2019 applicants. A maximum amount of $3,000 may be awarded to each applicant**.** *Please note: this is a reimbursement grant. Funds will only be awarded at the completion of the project.* Matching funds are not required but are encouraged. Projects proposed in gated or restricted-access communities with higher match proportions will be more favorably judged because most of the project benefit will be to residents, not the public. In-kind donations such as volunteer hours may be applied to any project.

Project Categories

Grant funding is available for projects that would achieve habitat improvement or water quality improvement in the Sarasota Bay watershed and/or that would enhance environmental education or outreach programming for communities in the Sarasota Bay watershed.

Examples of projects eligible for funding:

Habitat Restoration Projects. Examples include:
- Removing invasive species and replacing them with Florida native plants.
- Enhancing a Bay, creek, or pond shoreline with native plants, including installation of living shorelines and vegetated buffer zones.
- Projects with benefits to wildlife, including marine debris cleanups.
- Installing Bay-friendly landscaping such as rain gardens, bioswales, and green roofs.

Bay-Related Environmental Education and Stewardship Projects. Examples include:
- School or college environmental club projects.
- Designing and printing Bay-related educational brochures for distribution to the public.
- Creating videos, apps, or other electronic media to encourage stewardship of Sarasota Bay.
- Community storm drain stenciling activities.

Examples of types of projects NOT eligible for funding:

- Non-environmental programming
- Projects that do not include a community outreach or involvement component
- Adding or repairing walls, fish ponds, swimming pools, patios, decks, benches, light fixtures, road signs, or any other non-natural feature
- Projects related to compliance, regulation, code enforcement or penalties
- Projects that use invasive plant species identified on the Florida Exotic Pest Plant (FLEPPC) list: http://www.fleppc.org/list/list.htm

Grant Selection Process

A subcommittee of the Sarasota Bay Estuary Program Citizens Advisory Committee will review the applications using the criteria below and make recommendations to SBEP staff and boards for funding in March 2019. Applicants will be notified about review committee decisions in mid-May 2019.

Selection Criteria

Applicants may earn a maximum of 100 points. Scores will be determined by totaling the points earned. Funds will be allocated based on scores. Applicants may receive partial funding. Please indicate on your application if your organization does not wish to be considered for partial funding. Scores, comments, and recommendations from the Grant Review Committee will be available for review upon request.

- Lead Organization has not received Bay Partners Grant funding within the past three years (5 points)

    o The Sarasota Bay Estuary Program aims to broaden the reach of Bay Partners Grants. Therefore, organizations that have not received Bay Partners funding within the past three (3) years will receive special consideration.

- Project Description (20 points)

    o How well does the application describe the project and its goals?
    o Does the applicant provide evidence that the Project Leader and other participants have the expertise to carry out the project, or that they will seek out expertise?
    o Does the applicant describe realistic and meaningful project outputs and outcomes?
    o Does the application detail how the applicant will measure project success?

- Ecological Benefits (30 points)

    o Will the proposed project benefit natural habitats and/or water quality in the Sarasota Bay watershed?
    o Will the project make a *lasting* positive impact on the Sarasota Bay watershed?
    o Does the project incorporate benefits to wildlife?
    o If the project aims to alter existing habitat, does the applicant provide evidence that their organization possesses or can acquire the knowledge necessary to make the alterations?
    o If maintenance will be required past the scope of the Bay Partners Grant, is a plausible maintenance plan described?

- Community Involvement (30 points)

    o Does the project promote long-term environmental awareness and stewardship?
    o Does the applicant provide evidence for why the project will fill a community need?
    o Will the community be involved in the project? If not, is a public community event identified?
    o Are letters of support from participating organizations or expected project participants included in the application?

- Budget Proposal (15 points)

    o Does the application include a detailed line item budget describing all estimated expenditures? Are all expenditures allowed costs? If the applicant is a gated or restricted-access community, is match identified?

Project Costs

Allowed Costs:

1. Administration costs - Accounting, bookkeeping, printing, reproduction, postage, shipping, rental of office space (at comparable rates), insurance, indirect costs (limited to 5% of costs of labor), phone costs (solely related to grant work).

2. Professional services – Hourly, with invoice of rate and work accomplished.
3. Materials, plants, and supplies – As necessary to carry out the work of the grant (actual price after discounts, rebates or special offers).
4. Equipment – Rental only for sole use of grant work; maintenance and repair only to keep in operating order for life of grant. Purchasing of equipment only in certain circumstances detailed in application and decided upon by Grant Review Committee.
5. Meetings and Conferences – Hosting (only if clearly defined in grant application budget). Attendance costs are not allowed without prior written permission and then only for presentations of information relating to grant work.
6. Reference Materials – If related to grant work. Must be available for public access.
7. All costs must result from work performed solely for the grant.

The following costs are NOT allowed:

Memberships, computer software, hardware, and supplies, contingency funds, contributions and donations, depreciation, entertainment, food, drinks, gifts, regulations, code enforcements, fines and penalties, bad debts, interest and financial costs of borrowing, pre-payments, legislative expenses, payment to association members, unexpended funds, and attendance at conferences and meetings (unless prior written permission is obtained).

Project Permits and Permissions

Permitting compliance. It is the responsibility of the applicant to ensure all required permits are obtained and submitted with project application materials. The project must comply with all applicable federal, state and local codes. If you don't know if the project will require a permit, contact the relevant city or county public works, environmental services or building departments. The Sarasota Bay Estuary Program will not be held responsible for work done with Bay Partners Grant funding that does not have proper permits.

Permissions. If the project involves use of any parks or preserves, the applicant must obtain permission from the appropriate land management agency to utilize the park or preserve in the project and submit the permission in writing as part of the grant application.

Application Submission Instructions

Please email your application to Darcy Young at darcy@sarasotabay.org or complete it online by 5:00 pm on Friday, March 1, 2019.

Alternatively, you may submit a hard copy to:
Sarasota Bay Estuary Program
Attn: Darcy Young
111 South Orange Avenue, Suite 200W
Sarasota, Florida 34236

For more information:
Darcy Young, Director of Planning and Communications | darcy@sarasotabay.org | (941) 955-8085

Appendix I: Sample Grant Budget

Please click here to download the blank Bay Partners Grant budget form: https://sarasotabay.org/2019-bay-partners-grant-budget-form/

In this example, the applicant is proposing a budget for a Habitat Restoration project that will include paying a landscaping contractor to site and dig a rain garden and then planting the rain garden with volunteers from the neighborhood. The applicant also plans to conduct outreach to neighborhood residents to encourage Bay-friendly landscaping and reduce fertilizer use.

<u>Example of a Good Project Budget</u>

This budget contains details like the types of plants and mulch that the applicant plans to purchase for the rain garden and separates different types of outreach materials and labor.

Budget Item	Request to SBEP ($)	Match ($)	Total ($)
65 1-gallon swamp milkweed plants @ $5/each	$325	-	$325
100 1-gallon blue flag iris plants @ $5/each	$500	-	$500
10 bags FloriMulch @ $2.50/each	$25	-	$25
500 Educational brochures – design and printing	$250	$250	$500
Educational sign for project site – design, printing, and installation	$250	$100	$350
Volunteer labor for planting and maintaining the rain garden and distributing educational brochures – 25 volunteers x 10 hours/each x $24.69/hour*	-	$6,172.50	$5,675
Landscape contractor labor to scope and dig area for rain garden – quote attached to application	$1,000	$1,500	$2,500
TOTAL COSTS	**$2,350**	**$8,022.50**	**$10,372.50**

* current hourly Florida volunteer rate according to Independent Sector

<u>Example of a Poor Project Budget</u>

This budget is not sufficiently detailed. Descriptions of each line item are important for reviewers to determine whether the project includes unrealistic or not allowable costs.

Budget Item	Request to SBEP ($)	Match ($)	Total ($)
Plants	$825		$825
Mulch	$25		$25
Outreach materials	$500	$350	$850
Labor	$1,000	$7,672.50	$8,175
TOTAL COSTS	**$2,350**	**$8,022.50**	**$10,372.50**

Please contact Darcy Young at (941) 955-8085 or darcy@sarasotabay.org with questions about building a project budget.

Appendix II: **Responsibilities of Grant Awardee (after receiving award letter)**

- *Acknowledgement of receipt.* Awardees must acknowledge receipt of the award letter from the Sarasota Bay Estuary Program and notify the SBEP immediately if there have been any changes to the project scope or budget.
- *Community engagement.* Grant awardees must demonstrate community involvement and education in the project. If appropriate, your project may involve a volunteer effort. If your project does not involve volunteers, you must organize a community education and involvement event or program around your project. For example, you could host an open house or public class related to your project. Documentation of the public involvement event must be included in the final report.
- *Presentation of project.* Bay Partners Grants recipients are highly encouraged to share their finished project with the SBEP Citizen Advisory Committee in a presentation or video. SBEP will contact each grantee with suggested presentation dates.
- *Funding Acknowledgement.* Any publications, media coverage, signage, or advertisement associated with the grant project must give funding/sponsor credit to the Sarasota Bay Estuary Program. A digital file of the SBEP logo will be provided in the award letter email.
- *Project deadline.* Invoices and final reports must be submitted to SBEP no later than August 31, 2020. A suggested invoice format is included in Appendix III.
- *Costs/expenditures.* Costs of the project exceeding the grant award amount are the responsibility of the applicant. Changes to the project budget or scope after grant approval must be approved by the SBEP Director of Planning and Communications.
- *Notice of inability to complete project.* If unforeseeable circumstances (including but not limited to natural disasters) change the nature or scope of the work described in the grant and agreed upon when awarded, it is the responsibility of the grant awardee to contact SBEP to determine if the grant monies can still be used in the project. Severe changes in the scope of work may require additional documentation, review by the Grant Review Committee, encouragement to apply again next year or even denial of revised proposal.

Please note: The Sarasota Bay Estuary Program may use all publications, artwork, reports, creative works, or other products produced using Bay Partners Grants at any time, with appropriate credit and notice given to the grantee.

To receive reimbursement, the grant awardee must submit a final and invoice to darcy@sarasotabay.org no later than August 31, 2020.

The final report must include:

- a detailed description of the project,
- the names of organizations or individuals involved in the project,
- a description of how the project met the goals outlined in the application,
- a description of community benefits achieved by the project,
- documentation of successful community involvement and education (including, if applicable, documentation of volunteer hours), and
- photographs or videos of the completed project or educational activity. Please attach photographs and videos as SEPARATE files (not embedded in a PDF).

Appendix III: **Suggested Invoice Format**

Current Date

To:
Darcy Young
Sarasota Bay Estuary Program
111 South Orange Avenue, Suite 200W
Sarasota, FL 34236

From:
Organization name (as it appears on W-9)
Organization address (as it appears on W-9)

INVOICE

Description of items or services purchased:
Cost of items or services purchased: $
Total cost to be reimbursed: $