



Frequently Asked Questions

Grantmaking Program 2023 Grant Opportunity

Updated August 30, 2023

On June 7, 2023, Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District (Midpen) announced \$250,000 in funding will be available through the 2023 Grantmaking Program grant round. Organizations are invited to submit pre-proposals for projects that further scientific understanding of our natural world, build capacity in the conservation field, or support nature-focused access, interpretation, and/or education for the public.

The following information is provided in addition to the request for proposals which can be accessed at openspace.org/grants. This FAQ sheet is available on openspace.org/grants and will be updated regularly. Updates will be shared via email to contacts subscribed to our [Grantmaking Program interest list](#).

A webinar with an overview of the funding opportunity and application forms will be held July 13, 2023, at 6:30 pm on Microsoft Teams. The webinar recording will be available on openspace.org/grants.

GRANT OPPORTUNITY

How many awards are expected? Midpen's Grantmaking Program has a total of \$250,000 in funding available for the 2023 grant opportunity. Approximately six to ten proposals may be selected for awards.

What is the maximum size grant possible? Tier 1 grants are up to \$25,000. Tier 2 grants are up to \$50,000. Partial awards may be offered.

Is there a grant match requirement? Matching or in-kind funds are not required. Applicants are encouraged to look for creative ways to leverage funds to create a more robust or effective project.

What is your indirect cost policy? A maximum of 10% of each grant may be allocated toward indirect costs. Indirect costs can be a separate line item in the project budget, but the 10% allocation must exclude the following direct costs (expenses required for project execution that can be directly linked to the project): personnel, consultants, contractors, and sub-grants; equipment and capital expenditures; fee-for service charges; and fiscal sponsor fees.

Are applicants able to submit more than one pre-proposal? Yes, multiple pre-proposals for separate projects may be submitted to either funding tier.

Is it possible to receive more than one grant award if more than one project proposal is submitted? Yes, however the Grantmaking Review Committee will be considering the technical review scores based on the evaluation criteria listed in the RFP as well as the balance and distribution of funds by geographic area, project type, type of organization, and availability of funds.

Can projects support more than one funding priority? Yes, if appropriate, reference how the project meets more than one funding priority. Midpen seeks to support projects that fall into one of three funding priorities:

- *Applied science* - Advancing scientific understanding of natural processes and promoting environmental stewardship.
- *Partnership and network support* - Cultivating, sustaining and growing conservation networks.
- *Access, interpretation, and education* - Educating and promoting open space protection.

GRANT PERIOD

When can funding begin to be used? The earliest grant funding agreements are anticipated to be executed (signed by all parties) is February 2024, depending on length of time to finalize individual grant agreements with awardees. Expenses incurred prior to the date the agreement is executed will not be eligible for reimbursement.

How long will the funding period be? Up to three years from the date the agreement is executed, following board approval of awards. Final reimbursement requests and reporting must be complete by spring 2027.

EQUITY AND ACCESS

Equity, Under-resourced Communities, and Barriers to Access

How are community needs considered for this grant opportunity? Applicants are encouraged to briefly describe any specific need for the community or communities the project will serve in the pre-proposal narrative. Midpen welcomes proposals that serve all communities and encourages proposals that serve under-resourced communities and/or communities that have been under-represented in access to open space.

Can communities outside Midpen’s district boundaries benefit from the proposed project? Projects without a field work component can take place outside of [Midpen boundaries](#). All proposed field work must take place on Midpen preserves. Transportation-related projects must be to and from Midpen preserves. Projects with a regional focus will be prioritized.

PROPOSALS

Why are pre-proposals an initial step? In order to create an opportunity to explore a wide range of projects, Midpen is welcoming pre-proposals using a limited content request. The intent is to (1) develop an understanding of interested organizations and potential grant applicants across the three funding priorities, and (2) ensure appropriate project endeavors and balance across the three grantmaking priorities.

In the pre-proposal applicant information section, what is the role of the “project manager”? Please specify the person(s) responsible for the work that would be required for grant management. We anticipate having a minimal request for reimbursement and reporting process up to 4 times annually.

Will letters of support be accepted at the pre-proposal stage? No, but there will be an opportunity to provide letters of support if invited to submit a full proposal.

When will invitations be provided for full proposals? Depending on the pre-proposals received, invitations to submit a full proposal will be sent via email to the contact person identified on the pre-proposal. The full proposal involves a greater commitment of time and documentation.

How will proposals be evaluated? Please refer to the evaluation criteria listed in the RFP.

Can applicants request a consultation? Applicants are welcome to request a consultation prior to submission of their pre-proposal(s) by emailing grants@openspace.org. Upon invitation to submit a full proposal, applicants may request a consultation up to the submission deadline.

How will feedback be made available? Feedback on the pre-proposals and full proposals not selected will be provided upon request following Midpen board approval of final awards.

ELIGIBILITY

Who is eligible to apply? Eligible applicants must be a public agency, affiliated with a K-12 school or academic institution, or a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization. Applicants with eligible projects that are not one of these entities, such as a private organization, may work through a [fiscal sponsor](#) to apply if the fiscal sponsorship is established before proposal submittal and the project has a primarily charitable, scientific, or educational purpose.

Are student researchers able to apply? Faculty at accredited academic institutions must sponsor research-related projects; practitioner science projects may require faculty sponsorship and will be determined on a case-by-case basis. Please contact the Grants Program team prior to proposal submittal to establish whether a faculty sponsorship will be required.

Are applicants from prior Grantmaking grant rounds eligible to apply? Yes. Current or past grantees may submit for a new project or for an additional grant in support of their original proposal.

AWARDS

When will awards be announced? Midpen's board of directors are anticipated to approve awards in December 2023. Once the board meeting date is set, openspace.org/grants will be updated and the Grantmaking Program interest list notified. Please sign up for the [Grantmaking Program interest list](#) to receive a public meeting notice in advance of the meetings.

How will the award selections be made? Midpen's Grantmaking Program Review Committee will develop grant award recommendations to present to Midpen's executive team and general manager. The general manager will consider the comments and recommendations from the entire review process and will determine the final grant award recommendations to be presented to the Legislative, Funding and Public Affairs Committee for consideration prior to presenting the recommendations to the full board of directors for funding approval. The board has sole and absolute discretion to approve or reject funding for a project. Upon approval, the Grants Program team will work with selected applicants to develop grant funding agreements.