



Lehigh Valley Greenways Conservation Landscape 2017 MINI GRANT GUIDELINES AND INSTRUCTIONS

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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

2017 Mini Grant Program Priorities:

- Promote the region's natural areas and land/water trails through programming and informational signage in order to increase appreciation of natural and cultural resources and improve public health
- Advance land conservation of the Lehigh Valley's critical landscapes
- 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 to advance the goals of Lehigh Valley Greenways
- (Municipalities) Adopt model ordinances and/or an official map to protect natural resources and improve bicycle/pedestrian connections

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 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 the signed agreement
- Staff salaries greater than 50% of the total amount of grant funds requested. Grant funds requested to pay staff benefits and contractual salary/benefits will be included in calculating this 50% cap (does not apply to matching funds, only to reimbursable grant funds).
- 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.).

“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 2017 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.*
- 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 in 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 until all final reporting is submitted complete and accurate.

IV. Timeline

January 30, 2017 – Application period opens using online application form on Lehigh Valley Greenways website - <http://lvgreenways.org/mini-grants/apply-for-a-mini-grant/>

February 17, 2017, 1:00-3:00pm – 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.

Friday, March 3, 2017 at 4:00pm – Application period closes

****Applicants are required to submit an online application by 4pm on March 3, 2017 at**

<http://lvgreenways.org/mini-grants/apply-for-a-mini-grant/> .

March and April 2017 – Projects are reviewed and selected by review committee

April 2017 – Mini grant awards are announced, award event held and grant agreements mailed

May 1, 2017 – Project start date **only if agreements are signed and an executed copy is returned to D&L*

July 31, 2018 – 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 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 2017 priorities and 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

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.

VI. FAQs

- *When is the application deadline?*

Final applications must be submitted no later than 4:00pm on Friday, March 3, 2017 through the online application form on the Lehigh Valley Greenways website - <http://lvgreenways.org/mini-grants/apply-for-a-mini-grant/> .
- *What projects are eligible?*

Eligible projects are single-year education, planning or implementation projects located within Northampton and Lehigh Counties.
- *What are the grant request limits?*

Grant requests are limited to minimum of \$1,000 and maximum of \$10,000.
For large projects (\$20,000 and greater) and land acquisition projects, apply directly to DCNR Community Conservation Partnerships Program (C2P2) <http://www.dcnr.state.pa.us/brc/grants/> and contact Lorne Possinger, DCNR Regional Advisor, at lpossinger@pa.gov .
- *What is considered eligible local match?*

Eligible local match can include:

 - **Cash match** that is secured and available when you list the match on your grant application
 - **Eligible in-kind values** for mini grantee staff labor and professional services; hourly billable rate multiplied by number of hours performing job task/service directly related to the project = total

- value (requires time sheet documentation)
- **Donated professional service, materials, and equipment** by a professional in the discipline of the service provided; include donated value of materials, hourly billable rate for labor/service and hourly or daily billable rate for equipment use multiplied by number of hours/days; *documentation must be included on business letterhead of the donator*
- **Volunteer services (non-skilled labor)** valued up to the current Pennsylvania Independent Sector Volunteer Rate at the time the service was performed for individuals age 18 and older http://www.independentsector.org/volunteer_time; service performed by individuals under age 18 will be valued at the Pennsylvania minimum wage rate
- **All projects and project related costs and funding must conform to the guidelines outlined in the PA DCNR Community Conservation Partnerships Program at <http://www.dcnr.state.pa.us/brc/grants/>**
- *When do we need the cash match available?*
Cash match should be secured and available when you list the match on your grant application.
- *Can I match the mini grant to a DCNR grant?*
No, the mini grant program is funded through a DCNR funding source, and you cannot match DCNR funds to DCNR funds.
- *What are the terms and conditions of the grant agreement if I am awarded a mini grant?*
All applicants must adhere to the DCNR Community Conservation Partnerships Program (C2P2) requirements for [eligibility](#), [eligible and ineligible costs](#), and [post-completion mini grant requirements](#). These include but are not limited to:
 - Agree to include the following notice and accompanying logos recognizing the funding in all announcements, published material and signage relating to the project: *“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.”*
 - Mini grantee will maintain a separate project file which shall include the original application, executed mini grant agreement with D&L, copies of all contracts related to the project, copies of all relevant correspondence regarding the administration of the project, and transactions and documentation of use of project funds.
 - Agreement to provide proper closeout documentation: completed In-Kind worksheets, Attachment A and Attachment B provided by D&L, copies of paid invoices with check number and date paid written on each invoice, narrative and photos in the “Success Story” template provided by D&L, and any other items related to the scope of work (drawings, maps, brochures, completed plans/studies)

For Grant Assistance, Contact:

Claire Sadler

D&L Director of Trails & Conservation/Lehigh Valley Greenways Co-Lead

610-923-3548 ext. 226

Claire@delawareandlehigh.org