



County of San Mateo Office of Sustainability: 4Rs Grants Program

Mini Grant Application Guideline (\$2,000 to up to \$5,000)

Application Deadline: Monday, March 2, 2020 at 6:00 pm

1. Background

The mission of the County of San Mateo Office of Sustainability's (OOS) Waste Reduction Workgroup is to develop, implement, and promote programs that reduce waste and conserve natural resources throughout San Mateo County. This includes collaboration with other public agencies, nonprofits, schools, and private entities, as well as outreach to all residents and businesses in the county. The Waste Reduction Workgroup also oversees waste, recycling, and composting services for County-owned facilities and Unincorporated San Mateo County areas. The OOS is not affiliated with any of the private waste haulers in the county, but does help to promote their waste reduction services.

The 4Rs (Reduce, Reuse, Recycle, and Rot) Grants Program was developed to help eligible organizations create and implement different programs to help divert waste from being sent to the landfill. The program's primary focus is to fund reuse, waste reduction, recycling, and composting programs throughout San Mateo County.

2. Eligibility Requirements and Project Criteria

Who Can Apply:

An application may be submitted by a government agency, a public or non-profit educational institution (e.g., school, school/college district, state university system, etc.), or a non-profit organization that is located in San Mateo County and/or that serves communities in San Mateo County.

Mini Grant Objectives:

The following objectives will be used in selecting grant recipients and are intended as guidance to the applicant in determining how well the intended proposal aligns with the Mini Grant's objectives.

- 1) The Mini Grant project will focus specifically on the "4Rs" of the solid waste sector – reduce, reuse, recycle and rot (composting). The project will address and provide solutions for *diverting waste from being sent to the landfill*.
- 2) The Mini Grant project will initiate new or expand existing efforts *targeted at a specific community/group* in San Mateo County (e.g., a school, a city, a neighborhood, a community garden, etc.).
- 3) The Mini Grant project will increase awareness about the 4Rs and provide opportunities for our San Mateo County community members, especially our children/youth and the underserved communities, to become active stewards of the diverse natural environment in San Mateo County.
- 4) The Mini Grant will fund long-term, sustainable projects within communities throughout San Mateo County.

Requirements:

To be considered for the Mini Grant, the project **must** meet the below requirements:

- 1) The project objectives must align with Mini Grant Objectives (listed above).
- 2) If applicable, comply with all federal, state, and local land use, regulatory and permit requirements.

Examples of Eligible Projects:

- Field trip costs for environmental outings to waste or recycling facilities, natural areas (parks and beaches), museums or interpretive centers, nonprofit workshops or classes. Trip theme must have a solid waste/4Rs focus, and destination must be within or near San Mateo County.
- Classroom workshops or activities hosted by nonprofits
- Fix-it Clinics, Repair Cafes, or other reuse/repair projects
- Books, materials and equipment, which will be utilized by teachers/educators and students over the years
- Events related to environmental education around the 4Rs
- Recycling and composting bins, signs, and outreach materials
- Training opportunities
- Service learning projects
- Materials and costs associated with improving or implementing a campus/facility-wide recycling, reuse or waste reduction program
- Outreach items that promote the 4Rs (e.g., signs, posters, brochures, flyers, etc.)

- Please check past years' lists of grant recipients for additional information on eligible projects (<https://www.smcsustainability.org/waste-reduction/reduce-reuse-recycle/#4RsGrant>).

Examples of Ineligible Projects:

- Projects that do not have at least one of the 4Rs as the **central** focus. Projects that touch upon other sustainability areas (e.g., energy and water conservation, climate change, green transportation, etc.), but do not have at least one of the 4Rs as a central focus will be disqualified.

Examples of Eligible Expenses:

- *Labor cost:* Grant funds can be used for in-house staff labor and/or contracted service labor (includes subcontracting) costs. The hourly rate (\$/hour) and total estimated hours must be included in the budget section of the grant application for all applicable grant project staff, including in-house and contracted service (including subcontracts) staff.

Important Note: The OOS is committed to promoting diversity, equity, and inclusion throughout San Mateo County. As such, if requesting grant funding for staff labor, applicable applicants **must** comply with the County's Living Wage Ordinance (LWO) to promote the creation of a livable wage for associated labor staff costs. The LWO requirement for the upcoming 4Rs Grant Program cycle will be \$18/hour. For additional information on the County's LWO, including who must comply, please visit:

(1) <https://hr.smcgov.org/san-mateo-county%E2%80%99s-living-wage-ordinance-lwo> and

(2) https://hr.smcgov.org/sites/hr.smcgov.org/files/LWO%20FAQ_Final_03142017.pdf

- *Equipment, supplies and materials:* Examples include recycling and composting bins, posters and stickers, composting tools, environmental education curriculum, etc. When possible, equipment purchases for project must remain at the project site.
- *Outreach and educational materials and expenses:* Examples include curriculum development, lesson plan printouts, graphic designer, materials/supplies/props used for instruction, etc.
- *Advertising and marketing:* Examples include printing, ads, and designer fees.
- *Event expenses:* Examples include venue reservation cost, equipment rental (e.g., tables, chairs, A/V equipment), and speaker fees. Grant funds cannot be used for food/beverage.
- *Field trip fees:* Examples include charter bus fees, entrance fees, and guide/educational literature fees.

Examples of Ineligible Expenses under Grant Funds:

- Overhead costs (e.g., insurance, internet/phone fees, utilities, rent, etc.)

- Food/Beverage (unless they are used directly for educational purposes, for example, as part of instructional material in a food preservation class)
- Expenses for activities incurred before grant agreement execution
- Monetary awards or gift cards
- Donations
- Membership fees
- Legal fees or indemnity obligations
- Repayments of debts
- Loan or bank fees
- Fines or penalties

OOS' Community Gardens Partnership Program

Interested and eligible entities may be able to obtain funding for equipment and supplies for building a community garden through OOS' Community Garden Partnership Program (Program). The Program is a partnership between the OOS and local community organizations, schools, businesses and other entities located in San Mateo County. The OOS is looking to partner with local community organizations and businesses to build vibrant community gardens and to promote sustainable gardening and composting techniques. The OOS will provide funding and resources to help start up and maintain the gardens, while the partnering organization's role is to use the funding to build the garden, coordinate with the gardeners to keep the garden up and growing and promote composting and sustainable gardening. For additional information, please visit: <https://www.smcsustainability.org/waste-reduction/composting/#communitygardenpartnerships>

Important Note: If your proposed project concept aligns with OOS' Community Garden Partnership Program, please contact OOS staff *as soon as possible* to determine if the above program is more appropriate for your needs than the 4Rs Grants Program.

Contact OOS staff: Email sustainability@smcgov.org / Call 888-442-2666

3. Determination of Grantees

Additional information may be requested from applicants before a grant determination is made. Recommendations for the award of a Mini Grant will be made by a team comprised of staff from the County of San Mateo and may also include an independent party outside the County. Grants or partial grants may be awarded from \$1,000 up to the maximum of \$5,000 per project.

4. General Conditions

The below general conditions **must** be met by all Min Grant grantees.

- 1) All grantees will be required to sign a grant agreement that will include the final scope of the project, budget, and reporting requirements to the County.
- 2) The grant project may start during the end of the summer/early fall. Please note, that the OOS will begin distribution of the grant funds in **early September 2020**. Please plan your project timeline accordingly. The grantees will have at most **one year** to complete their project. Reporting is due at the completion of the project or within one year of the start of the grant agreement, whichever comes first.
- 3) If requesting grant funding for staff labor, grantees must comply with the County's Living Wage Ordinance (LWO) to promote the creation of a livable wage for associated labor staff costs. The LWO requirement for the upcoming 4Rs Grant Program cycle will be \$18/hour. For additional information on the County's LWO, please visit: (1) <https://hr.smcgov.org/san-mateo-county%E2%80%99s-living-wage-ordinance-lwo> and (2) https://hr.smcgov.org/sites/hr.smcgov.org/files/LWO%20FAQ_Final_03142017.pdf
- 4) If any part of the grantee's project involves construction, alteration, demolition, installation, repair, or maintenance of a physical structure (e.g., garden beds, etc.), land (e.g., landscaping, etc.), or other physical applications, then the grantee agrees that all persons providing labor associated with the above mentioned physical activity will be paid not less than State mandated prevailing rates of wages and that the grantee will ensure compliance with all provisions of the California Labor Code on prevailing wage. A copy of the prevailing wage scale established by the State Department of Industrial Relations is on file in the office of the County's Director of Public Works and available at www.dir.ca.gov/DLSR or by phone at 415-703-4774.
- 5) All materials submitted for the application become the property of the County and will not be returned. Funds awarded are public funds, and any information submitted or generated will be considered a public record and may be subject to public review.
- 6) The County of San Mateo reserves the right, at its sole discretion, to waive minor irregularities in submittal requirements, to request modifications of the proposal, to accept or reject any or all proposals received, to grant full or partial funding of any request, and/or to cancel all or part of this grant solicitation at any time prior to awards. There is no appeal process.

5. Evaluation Criteria

All submitted proposals that are in compliance with the grant application requirements and application instructions will be evaluated and rated according to the following criteria:

- 1) **Project Concept and Objectives** – The project concept is clear, comprehensive, well thought out and practical. The project objectives align clearly with those of the Mini Grant (refer to “Mini Grant Objectives” in Section 2 of this document). If applicable, communications with relevant partners for the proposed project have been established, and letters of support/memorandum of understanding obtained (and submitted as part of the grant application) to confirm partner(s)’ commitment to collaborate on the project.
- 2) **Project Implementation and Timeline** – Project tasks are well defined, well planned, practical, and technically feasible with a realistic timeline.

Important Note: The OOS will begin disbursement of the grant funds at the beginning of September 2020. Please plan your project timeline accordingly.

- 3) **Project Budget** – Project budget is reasonable, realistic, and cost effective. Budget does not include any non-eligible expenditures (refer to “Examples of Ineligible Expenses” in Section 2 of this document). The organization demonstrates sound fiscal management.
- 4) **Project Deliverables** – Project deliverables are clearly stated, specific, realistic, and reflective of the success of the project.
- 5) **Project Team** – Management, staff and/or students are qualified and experienced to implement project and achieve stated objectives.
- 6) **Grant Application and Written Communication** - The applicant has followed all instructions detailed in the grant application. The proposal is well-written, clear, complete, concise and free of grammar and spelling mistakes.

6. Application Deadline

Grant applications are due latest on **Monday, March 2, 2020 at 6:00 pm**. All applications must be submitted online: <https://forms.gle/cXhEwxyVprA93kZs9>

Applicants will be notified of the results within approximately 10 weeks from the application due date. If the project is approved for funding, the grant recipient will be required to sign a grant agreement with the County of San Mateo and submit additional paperwork. This will include provisions for providing the County with information regarding the use of the funds and the outcome of the projects.

7. Application Submission Instructions

A Mini Grant proposal must include all of the below information to be eligible for consideration.

- 1) All applications must be signed by an authorized representative applying for the Mini Grant. In the case of a student or school group applying, a signature must be from a representative who is at least 18 years old.
- 2) Applications must be submitted online (<https://forms.gle/cXhEwxyVprA93kZs9>) by latest 6:00 pm on Monday, March 2, 2020.
- 3) Due to the competitive nature of this grant program, submitted applications that do not adhere to the application instructions and/or are incomplete will be penalized and/or eliminated from the running.
- 4) All questions on the application must be answered in the appropriate designated sections of the application, and the responses must be provided in English only.
- 5) After the application is submitted online, it is final; the application cannot be modified.

Important Note: Grant guidelines and applications are also available in Spanish and Chinese. However, all applications must be submitted in English, and all current and future communications with OOS staff will need to be conducted in English. Spanish and Chinese translated grant documents are intended to be a language assistance resource for English as a Second Language (ESL) applicants.

8. Grants Program Timeline

Dates (Dates may be subject to change)	Activity
Monday, February 3, 2020	Call for grant applications released.
Monday, March 2, 2020 at 6:00 pm	Application deadline for grant applicants.
Mid May 2020	Grant evaluation committee determines and finalizes list of new grant recipients. OOS staff notifies all applicants of the results.
After May 2020	OOS staff initiates grant agreements and other paperwork (e.g., certificate of insurance, etc.) with new grant recipients.
Early September 2020	OOS distributes grant funding to grant recipients.

Office of Sustainability 4Rs Mini Grant Guideline

One year after start date in grant agreement (earlier reporting accepted)	Grant recipients submit final reporting to OOS.
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9. Questions?

If you have questions regarding the 4Rs Grants Program, please email sustainability@smcgov.org or call 888-442-2666.