

## Community Outdoor Recreation Assistance Recovery Program

CORA is funded through the US Economic Development Administration (EDA) American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) [Travel, Tourism, and Outdoor Recreation State Grant](#). This sub-award program provides funding to eligible applicants to support the economic recovery of the State's travel and tourism sectors from the impacts of the coronavirus pandemic.

Sub-awards will be granted for a minimum amount of \$50,000 and a maximum amount of \$200,000. Minimum amount for Equity Projects can start at \$5,000. Projects must be completed by June 30<sup>th</sup>, 2025. Applications will be accepted on a rolling basis until April 25, 2024, OR until all funds have been awarded. Funding Currently available \$3,500,000.

### Program Goals

- To support economic recovery from the Covid-19 pandemic of the travel and tourism industry in Maine, by strengthening the outdoor recreation sector in local communities so that it is more; equitable, competitive, and resilient.
- Provide funding for outdoor recreation; development, and training programs that will increase and make access to outdoor recreation more sustainable for regions across the state.

Priority will be given to projects that have the potential for long-term transformational impacts; campaigns that reach underrepresented and new and diverse communities of visitors; and projects that will create and/or improve recreational assets that will continue beyond the life of the grant term.

### Eligible Applicants

- Maine municipalities, tribal governments or other local governments engaged in economic development activities, or a consortium of political subdivisions
- Non-profit organizations or associations within the outdoor recreation, travel and tourism industries, acting in cooperation with officials of a political subdivision of the State

*Per EDA regulation 13 C.F.R. § 300.3 -Individuals and for-profit entities are not eligible to receive funds.*

*If the applicant entity has received ARPA funding for specific recovery projects, the same projects cannot receive funding through the Maine Tourism Marketing & Development Program. Only one application per organization will be accepted.*

### **Matching Funds**

Matching funds are recommended, but not required. However, preference will be given to applicants that can successfully demonstrate organizational buy-in, community and/or regional collaboration and partnership, and a commitment to the execution of a successful recovery program that will boost the economic impact of the tourism and outdoor recreation industries in Maine. Funds received from the Maine Office of Outdoor Recreation, General Fund, or other Federal funding programs are NOT considered matching funds.

### **Eligible Projects & Uses of Funds**

Eligible and ineligible uses of funds apply to both requested grant funds and matching funds.

#### **ELIGIBLE PROJECTS**

- Enhanced wayfinding and user experience-signage, kiosks, maps, interpretation, outdoor art
- Design, planning & engineering-
  - Professional Services - trail builders, landscape architects, planning consultants, surveying costs, appraisal and legal costs.
- Asset mapping, inventories and assessments
- Economic impact, feasibility and participation studies
- User data collection and research
- Technical assistance to outdoor recreation businesses, entrepreneurs, start-ups and non-profit organizations
- Outdoor industry workforce training and development
- Outdoor recreation programming and outdoor equity projects-increasing access and building skills for underserved populations and communities.
- Increase gear library inventory and expand program offerings.

#### **INELIGIBLE PROJECTS/USE OF FUNDS**

- Website hosting fees
- Fundraising (raffles, giveaways, contests)
- Performance, exhibition, lecture fees
- Promotional products – tents, banners, t-shirts, costumes, stickers, etc.
- Capital equipment, including rental equipment such as fencing, tents, stages, etc.
- New Construction
- Scholarships

#### **Education and Training Programs**

Education and training program designed to improve and increase the capabilities and outdoor recreation industry knowledge of tourism professionals & businesses within a community, county, or region.

### Administrative/Project Management

Administrative expenses that are directly related to the execution of the program outlined in this application may be expensed at 10% of the project proposal. All administrative expenses must be clearly defined in project budget documents and cannot include indirect or overhead expenses such as rent, utilities, office supplies, maintenance fees, etc.

### **Application Process**

1. Confirm your entity's valid UEI Number with [SAM.gov](https://sam.gov) or register your entity to receive a Unique Entity ID.
  - Existing registered entities can find their Unique Entity ID by [following the steps here](#).
  - Proof of [SAM.gov](https://sam.gov) active account (screenshot) or account registration initiation (email confirmation) will be required for application. Applicants must be registered and active in SAM.gov before the final award can be made.
2. Prepare your application and required documents by reviewing the [Application Information & Instructions](#) (PDF format).
3. Create an online account at <https://stateofmaine.force.com/DECDMAINE/s/self-registration>
4. Once you have logged into your account, the online application can be found here: <https://stateofmaine.force.com/DECDMAINE/s/funding-requests>
5. Click on the **'Maine Office of Tourism'** box to start the application process.

### **Application Review**

The Maine Office of Outdoor Recreation will appoint a Review Committee that will review all applications within 21 days of receipt to ensure eligibility, compliance, and alignment with the Maine Office of Outdoor Recreation. Final application approval must be granted by the EDA and takes approximately 30 days. Projects may not be started until final approval is granted. Incomplete applications may be rejected.

The MOOR Review Committee will score applications based on the following criteria:

1. Overall strength and quality of proposed outdoor recreation/tourism recovery project
2. Demonstrated recovery need.
3. Project provides measurable results/economic impact
4. Organization's implementation capacity
5. Realistic budget and timeline

## **Award Distribution**

Once an application is approved by both the Office of Outdoor Recreation and the EDA, a formal grant contract will be executed between the applicant and the Maine Department of Economic and Community Development (DECD). When the final contract is approved by the Maine Division of Purchases, applicants may formally request grant payment(s). To receive disbursements during the grant execution period, awarded applicants must submit a formal request for grant payment.

## **Media Requirements**

Press releases, e-news, and other success stories related to your grant project should be forwarded to Charlene Williams, Marshall Communications [cwilliams@marshallpr.com](mailto:cwilliams@marshallpr.com) and Jeff McCabe, Deputy Director [Jeff.McCabe@maine.gov](mailto:Jeff.McCabe@maine.gov)

## **Changes to Approved Project Application**

The Maine Office of Outdoor Recreation must approve any significant refinements, clarifications, modifications or changes to the proposal, or your organization may forfeit grant funds. Organizations must submit a formal proposal change request. Proposal change requests submitted 60 days or less from the end of project timeline may not be accepted.

## **Reporting Requirements**

Reports must be submitted as outlined in the formal grant contract and will depend on the length and complexity of your proposed project. Awarded applicants will be required to submit periodic progress reports until all project components are completed. The applicants' final report must include a final budget and all documents for expenses. Final reports must also include measurable results that tie into the overall economic benefits to the destination.

## **Reporting Timeline**

Submitted to Maine Office of Outdoor Recreation (Jeff McCabe) by dates listed below.

First report is Due September 1, 2024

Second Report Due March 1, 2025

Final Report to MOOR– September 1, 2025

## **Unused Funds**

Unused grant funds shall be returned to the DECD/Maine Office of Outdoor Recreation. Any grant funds not used as approved shall be returned pursuant to the grant agreement.

## **QUESTIONS?**

Jeff McCabe, Deputy Director [Jeff.McCabe@maine.gov](mailto:Jeff.McCabe@maine.gov)

Phone: 207-592-2784

## Community Grant Application Instructions

### *\*Required fields*

1. \*Application Date – this will auto-fill to today's date
2. \*Requested Amount – this must be between \$50,000 to \$200,000  
Minium amount for Equity Projects can start at \$5000
3. \*Estimated Project Start Date – applicants must factor in 21 days for MOOR/DECD approval from application submission date PLUS 30 days Federal EDA Approval

### **Applicant Information**

1. \*Entity Name - name listed must match the legal name as shown on a W9 of the organization or government entity receiving grant funds.
2. \*Address
3. \*City
4. \*State
5. ZIP
6. Phone
7. Organization Taxpayer ID #
8. Organization Unique Entity Identifier (UEI) – not required for application submission, however, applicants must be registered and active in SAM.gov before the final award can be made. [Start the registration process here](#) OR [search for previous registrations here](#).
9. If Doing Business As (DBA) - If "Doing Business As" please list assumed, trade or d/b/a name. Assumed names must be registered with the Maine Secretary of State.
10. \*Entity Type (Drop-Down)
  - a. city, town, municipality
  - b. non-profit organization
  - c. economic development district organization
  - d. tribal government or a consortium of tribes
  - e. other

## **Contact Information**

1. \*Contact Name – this will be auto-filled from your initial account registration and cannot be changed.
2. \*Phone
3. \*Email – this will be auto-filled from your initial account registration and cannot be changed
4. \*City
5. \*County
6. Zip

## **Add Additional Contacts**

One additional contact person must be listed in the event the primary contact cannot be reached.

1. \*Name
2. \*Title
3. \*Email
4. \*Phone

## **Project Category**

**Please Select Tourism Region**

## **Required Uploads**

*All uploads must be in PDF file format*

1. [SAM.gov](https://sam.gov) VERIFICATION UPLOAD
  - New/renewing organizations: proof of registration (email confirmation)
  - Active organizations: screen shot of [SAM.gov](https://sam.gov) showing active account ***Sub-recipients will not receive awards until registered and active in SAM.gov***
2. Brief overview of your organization and its mission and an executive summary of the project for which you are applying for funding. Explain how your organization will successfully implement the proposed project. Be sure to include local/regional collaborations with other organizations that will support and enhance the impact of your project. Describe how this project will help meet key goals and objectives of the business or organization strategic plan, local and/or regional Comprehensive Economic Development plan, Recreation Economy for Rural Communities Action plan, the state [SCORP plan](#), [MOT Destination Management Plan](#), [DECD 10 year plan](#) or other plans in development. Explain

how your organization will successfully manage and complete the proposed project. Include internal resources and/or any external partners, including all vendors, that will be utilized to advance your project within the timeline that is submitted.

3. Complete project budget including ALL sources and amounts of matching funds (Matching funds not required but encouraged, including additional funding support from municipal, county, state, tribal or federal levels. Regular budget updates will be required throughout the lifecycle of grant funding.
4. Project Timeline (***keep in mind MOOR/DECD review and federal EDA approval time***)
5. **Business or Organization Strategic Plan** that includes the following:
  - a. Describe how these investments into the proposed outdoor recreation related projects will create a more equitable, competitive, and resilient outdoor recreation industry in the region.
  - b. A clear strategy and objectives with realistic and attainable deliverables. Described measurable metrics and KPIs (Key Performance Indicators)
6. Letter(s) of commitment from partners and organizations involved in your project and listed in your budget as contributors of matching funds. (Matching funds encouraged but not required) For nonprofit organizations, this includes official documentation of the project areas, local officials.
7. Organization's Annual Report including budget & Profit and Loss Statement. Organizations are encouraged to provide information for the previous three (3) years. (Organizations that are experiencing ongoing financial challenges related to the pandemic are encouraged to note that.) Organizations are asked to include their last 990 filing if applicable.
8. Completed State of Maine Substitute W9 & Vendor Authorization Form [https://motpartners.com/wp-content/uploads/2023/02/vendor\\_ME\\_W9v5.pdf](https://motpartners.com/wp-content/uploads/2023/02/vendor_ME_W9v5.pdf)

**Additional Required Uploads for Non-profit Organizations:**

Non-profit organizations must also submit the following (PDF format only)

1. articles of Incorporation
2. Most recent **signed** bylaws – must be signed by CEO or Executive Director to confirm that the submitted bylaws are the ones currently in use.
3. [Maine certificate of good-standing](#)

### **Additional Uploads** (optional)

Applicants have the opportunity to upload any additional files that they think will support the application. Please provide no more than three (3) additional files.

### **Attestation**

This Assistance Program is federally funded, in whole or in part, and all sub-recipients shall comply with:

1. \*I agree to comply with the [Dept. of Commerce Standard Terms and Conditions.](#)
2. \*I agree to comply with [2 CFR Part 200](#) Federal Regulations if awarded.
3. \*I agree to comply with Maine DAFS -[Maine DAFS -Addendum A - Agency Uniform Guidance](#) if awarded
4. \*I agree that I have not and will not seek duplicative benefits from any source for these same expenses.
5. \*I agree that the provided information is correct and complete to the best of my knowledge.

### **QUESTIONS?**

Jeff McCabe, Deputy Director [Jeff.McCabe@maine.gov](mailto:Jeff.McCabe@maine.gov)

Tel: 207-592-2784