

Casco Bay Community Grants

2024 Request for Proposals

BACKGROUND

Casco Bay Estuary Partnership (CBEP) invites proposals for the *Casco Bay Community Grants* program. The mission of CBEP is to help conserve the ecological integrity of Casco Bay and its watershed through science, public stewardship, and effective management. CBEP focuses scientific expertise and financial resources on helping watershed communities address regional challenges such as water pollution, habitat degradation, and adaptation to climate change. The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency has supported CBEP's regional work through its National Estuary Program since 1990. CBEP is affiliated with the Catherine Cutler Institute at the University of Southern Maine in Portland, Maine. Further information is available on our website: <http://www.cascobayestuary.org>.

Through the Community Grants program, CBEP encourages new partnerships and innovative projects that engage people and communities with Casco Bay and its watershed.

We will consider **proposals between \$500 and \$5,000.**

ELIGIBILITY

- Proposals are welcome from educators, land trusts and other non-profit organizations, and municipalities. Fund recipients must be legally recognized entities but partnerships with civic groups, municipal committees, churches, clubs, school groups and neighborhood associations are strongly encouraged.
- For-profit corporations are not eligible to apply for funds but are also welcomed collaborators.
- All projects must occur in Casco Bay or its watershed (map attached).

PROJECT THEMES

Successful proposals will incorporate at least one of the following elements from the 2016 [Casco Bay Plan](#) and will address identified *Plan* priorities, such as:

- Marine education focused on climate change, aquaculture, water quality, nutrient cycling, shellfish, marine organisms, habitats (mudflats, eelgrass beds, rocky intertidal, salt marshes, etc.), shorebirds, etc.
- Community science and stewardship initiatives
- Climate change education and community engagement activities
- Storytelling and art projects
- Place-based or experiential education on a topic of importance to Casco Bay and/or the Casco Bay Watershed
- Other activities that benefit or build public awareness around issues affecting Casco Bay and its watershed, such as: nutrient pollution, ocean acidification, stream connectivity, stormwater, and climate resilience

SELECTION CRITERIA

A review committee will evaluate proposals based on the following criteria:

- Focus on community partnerships, especially with smaller, community-based organizations
- Replicability of the project
- Clear connection to project themes (listed above)
- Well-reasoned project plan, including clear objective(s), project readiness, and the likelihood of success
- Sound budget
- Demonstration of community support for the project (donated materials or equipment, staff time, funds, etc.)
- If the project is education-based, preference will be given to projects with a fieldwork component
- The review committee may request an interview or further information

APPLICATIONS

Proposals are due via email to victoria.boundy@maine.edu by 5:00pm, Monday, February 19, 2024 (New deadline!).

You may prepare proposals in either (1) narrative form or (2) by completing the Application form (editable PDF). Please let us know if you would like a hard copy of the application form in the mail. A proposal that does not exceed two pages is

preferable. Proposals should contain the following information:

- Project Title
- Applicant Organization
- Contact name, position, email, phone number
- Grant amount requested
- Theme addressed by project
- Project location
- Project description and importance
- Project objectives
- Project tasks
- Project timeframe; Project personnel
- Evidence of community support which may include collaborating organizations and individuals
- Transferability of the project content & materials for other educators
- Budget explanation; Project budget

AWARDS AND FOLLOW-UP

We will make funding announcements in February 2024. CBEP and the review committee may choose to provide partial funding for any individual proposal.

Successful applicants will be required to enroll as a supplier in the University of Maine eProcurement system, Maine Street Marketplace. We will negotiate timing of payments depending on the project timeline. We expect all projects to take place within one year of the award date.

A condition of the grant is that you acknowledge Casco Bay Estuary Partnership in any press releases, newsletters, on-site materials, signs, or other materials where descriptions of the project may appear. We will provide an electronic copy of CBEP's logo for this purpose.

We will ask grantees to submit a brief (one-page) report summarizing the project outcomes, within three months of project completion. Grantees may attach photographs, permissions, and documentation of media coverage (if any) to this report. We will also ask grantees to provide match and leveraging documentation.

Prospective applicants are welcome to contact CBEP for more information or feedback before submitting a proposal: Victoria Boundy, Community Engagement Coordinator, victoria.boundy@maine.edu.

Casco Bay Watershed boundaries

