

REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

THE NATIONAL PARK FOUNDATION'S 2024-2025 Park Partner Capacity Building Grant Program

Grant Application Open: **June 3 – July 21, 2024**

Please Note that Applicants Must Meet the Following Requirements:

- Capacity building projects focused specifically on increasing your organization's park-related revenue and philanthropic impact to national parks.
- NPS philanthropic, cooperative, or cooperating association agreement in place.
- Signed letter of support from your NPS Superintendent, NPS site leadership representative, or NPS Regional Partnership Coordinator.
- Signed letter of support or resolution from your Board of Directors to confirm a leadership commitment to your capacity building project and applicable matching funds.
- Able to complete project between October 1, 2024 – September 30, 2025.
- **This cycle of funding is restricted to medium-sized organizations with annual park-related revenue ranging from \$250K to \$1M.**

The [National Park Foundation](#) (NPF), in support of its partnership with the National Park Service (NPS), is excited to announce a Request for Proposals (RFP) for the Park Partner Capacity Building Grant Program. This periodic funding opportunity is designed to help build the organizational, philanthropic, and programmatic capacity of NPS' official park partners. From strategic planning and systems management to updated branding and streamlined fundraising efforts, our goal is to support partners in having a greater impact on parks and people, elevating the importance and potential for park philanthropy nationwide.

In this cycle of funding, we will fund projects from medium-sized partner organizations with an annual park-related revenue range of \$250,000.00 to \$1,000,000.00. Park-related revenue is defined as revenue specifically tied to the work your organization does as a part of its agreement(s) with NPS. If your organization works on projects or programs outside of NPS, please consider your eligibility for this grant based on organizational revenue for work related specifically to NPS.

This investment focus is driven by data from the [2020](#), [2022](#), and the forthcoming 2024 Park Partners Report, through which it has become clear that *"Growing into larger revenue categories...affords organizations access to resources that can further their development. According to [2020] survey results, over 10% of large partners and 35% of very large partners had more than 5 full-time equivalent employees focused on fundraising. No groups in smaller revenue categories crossed that threshold. Larger groups have a clear advantage in the number of staff to make direct appeals to support parks."*

By focusing our investment on this specific revenue band, we plan to fund activities specifically related to growing your organization's park-related fundraising and support to NPS, with belief that this will ultimately result in an increased philanthropic impact to your associated NPS sites. Particular

consideration will be given to grantees who embed a [commitment to DEI](#) within all of the work that they do on behalf of national parks.

Requests for renewal funding for previous NPF capacity building grants are welcome, if accompanied by compelling evidence that demonstrates how prior foundational support has contributed to ongoing and future project success and will support increased philanthropic impact to the park.

Partner organizations should apply to this program via [NPF's online grant system, Fluxx](#). Additional details on the application process may be found in Section F. A copy of the online application can be found in Appendix A.

Please note that only nonprofit organizations with an existing long-term philanthropic agreement, cooperating association agreement, and/or cooperative agreement with the National Park Service will be eligible for support.

Informational Conference Call: An optional, informative call to discuss this RFP and the proposal process will be held on **June 13, 2024 at 3pm ET**. ([Zoom link here](#)). All parties interested in submitting a proposal are encouraged to attend the call, though it is not required.

Deadline: Applications are due no later than **July 21, 2024** (midnight ET).

Award Amount: Grant requests should be between \$25,000 - \$50,000*. Funding should forecast work that can be achieved within one calendar year and may be allocated at a lesser amount than requested based on availability, priority, and need. Please ensure you are prepared to adjust your project's scope or find complementary sources of funding if the allocated amount is less than the total dollars requested.

Indirect costs (IDC) should not exceed 15% of the total grant request. IDC are defined as the administrative costs of running your organization day-to-day and are not tied to the specific activities of this grant.

**Please note: Project requests may exceed \$50,000, though additional funds requested over the limit must include a 1:1 match from the applying organization for each dollar above the \$50,000 threshold.*

Notification: Applicants will be notified of award selections by September 2024.

Selection Process: All applications will be evaluated by a review committee comprised of representatives from the National Park Foundation. Grantee selections will be based on the applicant's ability to meet and exceed program requirements and outcomes.

Questions: Contact parkpartners@nationalparks.org with any questions about this RFP or program.

RFP Contents:

- A. Program Overview**
- B. Program Criteria**
- C. Program Timeline**
- D. Program Details and Instructions**
- E. Program Evaluation**

F. Proposal Instructions

Appendix A: Example of Online Application

Appendix B: Fluxx Cheat Sheet

A. Program Overview

Over the last decade, NPF has worked to address capacity limitations at park partner organizations by facilitating growth and helping partners foster deeper engagement between people and parks. Through NPF's capacity building program, partners have grown into more resilient and impactful stewards of their parks, supported enhanced infrastructure, interpretation, volunteerism, and visitor experience improvements. By providing funds for these organizations to invest in partners' internal operations, the program ultimately seeks to better equip them with the foundational capacity needed to increase their impact on national parks. (Click here for information on our [2020](#), [2022](#), and [2023](#) grantees). Now is the time to build on these successes.

Park partners collectively contributed more than \$500 million to NPS in 2023, with many providing increasing levels of basic operational support to parks and over 75% serving as partners in park-based education. This level of support is over 60% higher today than a decade ago and is critical for NPS sustainability. It equates to more than 10% of all NPS annual spending.

To deliver increased impact, park partners need to play an ever-growing role in supporting national parks. Partners support NPS's mission directly and indirectly through philanthropic giving, management of programs and services, engagement of volunteers, support of staff and operations, and much more. Growing partner fundraising and support to NPS is essential to create systems change and lasting philanthropic impact.

Those selected will include a diverse range of geographic distributions, representing a variety of capacity challenges and opportunities. Some may have straightforward needs that can be addressed through short-term planning and action while others may face more complex challenges, requiring a mindset of movement building to fundamentally improve the work of park partnership. Strong applications will be driven by fresh, innovative thinking, coupled with the ability to execute on the plan proposed.

B. Program Criteria

While NPF understands and respects the broad diversity of challenges and needs in the park partner community, funding will be prioritized for the projects that closely meet the criteria below.

Innovative and Bold. Project demonstrates "big picture" thinking around creative solutions to pressing needs and challenges, particularly related to park philanthropy, and provides a clear understanding of how NPF funding will contribute to the long-term success of your organization and park partnership.

Philanthropic Impact. Project will increase your organization's park-related revenue and philanthropic impact to national parks. This will be measurable in a way that is specific, achievable, and relevant to a broader and more diverse audience of park partners and communities.

Ability to Implement. Capacity building proposals will be thoughtful and precise, describing in detail the organizational advantages that will help applicants be successful, whether that be a highly motivated team with the skill set to follow through, an upcoming anniversary or commemoration, or an exciting capital project with the NPS' involvement.

Maximizing Impact Through New or Existing Resources. Participation in this capacity building program should position your organization to garner additional resources or otherwise have an increased impact to NPS/your affiliated national park site(s).

Matching Funds: Projects that leverage additional or matching funds for the NPF grant will be taken into high consideration. Availability of matching funds may also increase project requests above the \$50,000 threshold. If matching funds are committed to the project, please ensure that your board's letter of support verifies the availability of matching funds.

C. Program Timeline and Selection

Initial Application Opens:	June 3, 2024
RFP Informational Call:	June 13, 2024 at 3pm ET (join via this link)
Application Closes:	July 21, 2024
Notification of award selection:	August 2024
Grant agreement and payment processing:	September 2024
Grant reports due:	Mid-year report due March 31, 2025 Annual report due October 31, 2025
Period of Performance:	October 1, 2024 – September 30, 2025

Review. All applications will be reviewed by a selection committee comprised of representatives from the National Park Foundation. Selection will be based on the applicant's ability to meet and exceed program requirements and criteria described herein.

D. Program Details and Instructions

1. Grant requests should be between \$25,000 - \$50,000, though additional funds requested over the limit must include a 1:1 match from the applying organization for each dollar above the \$50,000 threshold. Only one request may be submitted per organization.
2. Please include the following when submitting your application, as applicable:
 - **NPS Commitment:** Please attach a signed letter of support from your superintendent, NPS site leadership representative, or NPS Regional Partnership Coordinator. In the case that your organization's agreement is still in development, please have your NPS colleagues indicate their intention to formalize a partnership in their letter of support.
 - **Leadership – Demonstrated Commitment to Participating:** Please also include a signed letter of support or resolution from your Board of Directors to confirm a leadership commitment to your capacity building project.

- **Optional Matching Funds:** Though not a requirement, projects with a partner match available will be given high consideration. If complimentary funding is available, please describe how an NPF Capacity Building Grant support will bolster or leverage existing program capacity.
- 3. Selected partners will be asked to collect project content (videos, photos, participant biographies, impact stories, etc.) and work with NPF to collaboratively amplify partnership activities through social media, media inquiries, and other opportunities as available.

E. Program Evaluation

Successful applicants will be engaged by NPF program staff over the course of the grant period and may be required to detail their evaluation and program outcomes in a follow up conversation with NPF staff, guided by the standard NPF annual reporting template.

F. Proposal Instructions:

1. Read the RFP

Please read this RFP carefully and then use the online application system to submit between **June 3 – July 21, 2024**. Please be as specific as possible when answering application questions to help reviewers fully understand the scope and expected impact of your proposed project. Please indicate if this grant will allow you to complete your project, begin a multi-phase project or finish something that was already started.

2. Online Application

Partner organizations should apply to this program by accessing [NPF's online grant system, Fluxx](#), and selecting "**Capacity Building Application**." A copy of the online application can be found in Appendix A for parties who are interested in reviewing the application prior to logging into the system; detailed instructions for navigating Fluxx may be found in Appendices B.

Here are some important tips below for completing the application:

1. If you do not already have an account through Fluxx, you will have to register first (see instructions in Appendix B). Registration can take two to three days to receive approval prior to being able to access the online application, so please allow for this time during the application period.
2. The system **does not** auto-save, therefore, be sure to periodically hit the "save" button to protect your work. We recommend completing the application in a word document first and then placing the responses into the Fluxx application to have a copy in the instance that your responses are not saved.

*For more information on this program and other support from the
National Park Foundation, please contact
parkpartners@nationalparks.org.*

APPENDIX A**Copy of Fluxx Application (FOR REFERENCE ONLY)**

Please note that only nonprofit organizations with an existing philanthropic, cooperative, and/or cooperating association agreement with the National Park Service will be eligible for support. Organizations with agreements currently in development may also be considered when accompanied by a letter of support from NPS.

Award Amount: Grant requests should be between \$25,000 - \$50,000, though additional funds requested over the limit must include a 1:1 match from the applying organization for each dollar above the \$50,000 threshold. Only one request may be submitted per organization.

Contact parkpartners@nationalparks.org with any questions about this application or program.

Organization Information

- Organization:
- Primary Grant Contact:
The Primary Grant Contact is the person primarily responsible for receiving updates and managing reporting on this project.
- Primary Signatory:
Primary Signatory is the name of the person who will be signing the Grant Agreement. This is typically the partner organization's Executive Director.

Organization Details

Auto-populates from organization's Fluxx profile. Please update as needed.

- Name:
- Organization Type:
- Organization Sub Type:
- Tax ID:
- Payment Preference: (EFT, Check, Wire):
- Street Address:
- City:
- State:
- Country:
- Postal Code:
- Website:
- Organization Email:

Program/Project Information

- Project Title (Please provide a short, concise title that captures your project):
- Project Abstract (Please provide a 3-5 sentence description of your project here):
- Program/Project Summary (Please provide a full summary of your project here):

- Program/Project Timeline (Include a detailed timeline of project milestones. Be sure to include specific dates/months, locations, and brief descriptions of events, as applicable or known):
- Program/Project Partners (If applicable, please identify, list, and describe all project partners and how they are contributing to this request. Examples include working with other organizations, funding, volunteer hours, input from scholars, etc.)

Note: Applicable Program/Project information may be uploaded as separate documents.

National Park Partner Information:

- Affiliated National Park Service unit(s):
- Select which naming designation your affiliated unit is considered: (Drop down list)
- Affiliated NPS Region?
- Which type of agreement(s) does your organization currently have in place with the National Park Service? (Drop down list)
- Annual Operating Budget:
- Number of Staff at Organization:
- Annual Park-Related Revenue:
- How much monetary or in-kind support does your organization provide to your NPS unit(s) on an annual basis? Please include an estimated total value.

Program/Project Criteria

- How will your proposed project increase your organization's park-related revenue and philanthropic impact to national parks?
- Describe your organization's ability to implement this project. What organizational strengths do you have that will help this project be a success?
- Will participating in this program position your organization to leverage new or existing resources? If so, please describe.
- It is also important to understand how this investment will set your organization up for long-term success. How do you intend to build upon progress and maintain momentum after the end of the grant period?
- Does your organization have a partner match available to support this project? If so, please indicate the value of matching support and ensure that the letter of support from your Board of Directors verifies that funds are in hand.
- Does the proposed project build upon any past investment from NPF? If so, please describe.

Amount Requested and Budget

- Amount Requested (Please round to the nearest dollar):
- Note: Applicable budget information should be uploaded as a separate document.*

Executive Director Certification

- Name of Executive Director/Board Chair:
Name of Executive Director of the partner organization submitting this application. If your organization does not have paid staff, please provide the name of the chair of your Board of Directors.
- Title:

- I certify that the Executive Director/Board Chair of the partner organization submitting this application has approved this submission.

Document Upload

Required:

Letter of Support from Affiliated Park Superintendent

Letter of Support from Partner Organization's Board of Directors

Project Budget

Optional (if not included above):

Timeline

Other

APPENDIX B FLUXX Cheat Sheet

Logging into Fluxx

For optimal functionality, it is recommended to use the Chrome browser. To install Chrome, visit:

<https://www.google.com/chrome/>

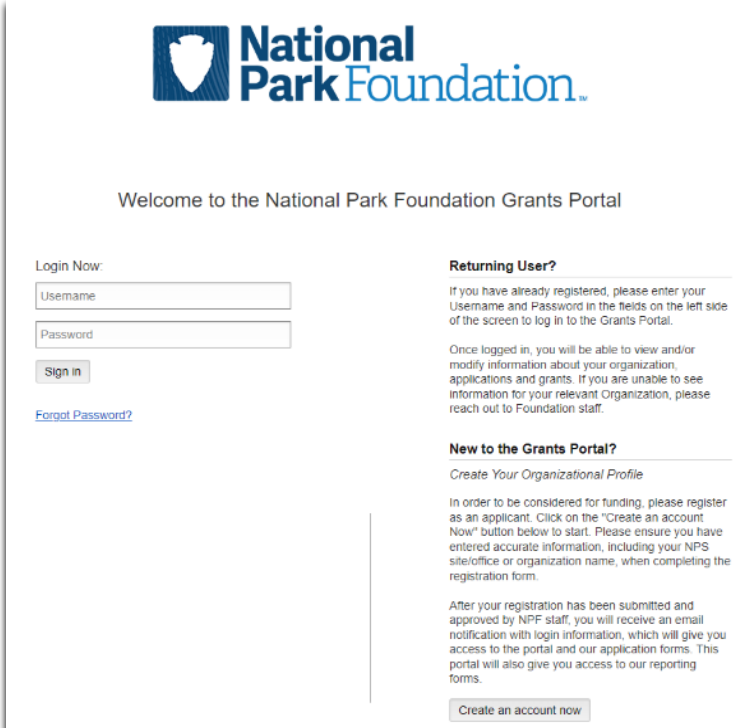
If you have any questions throughout the process, please reach out to the Grants Administration team at applications@nationalparks.org.

New Users

If you have not accessed the system before, please register your profile at <https://nationalparks.fluxx.io/>. We ask that you DO NOT share profiles within your organization; all individuals accessing the portal should have a unique login. Once you have submitted your registration, please allow up to 2 business days for processing, at which point you will be invited to the system with an automated email sent to the email address indicated in the registration.

Existing Users

- ✓ Navigate to the National Park Foundation Fluxx portal by visiting <https://nationalparks.fluxx.io/>
- ✓ Enter your user ID (email address you used during registration) and password (case sensitive)
 - Typically, your ID is your primary email address
 - The password is case sensitive



The screenshot shows the login page for the National Park Foundation Grants Portal. At the top left is the National Park Foundation logo. Below it, the text reads "Welcome to the National Park Foundation Grants Portal". On the left side, there is a "Login Now" section with two input fields: "Username" and "Password", followed by a "Sign in" button and a "Forgot Password?" link. On the right side, there are two sections: "Returning User?" and "New to the Grants Portal?". The "Returning User?" section contains instructions for existing users and a "Sign in" button. The "New to the Grants Portal?" section contains instructions for new users and a "Create an account now" button.

How to Reset Password

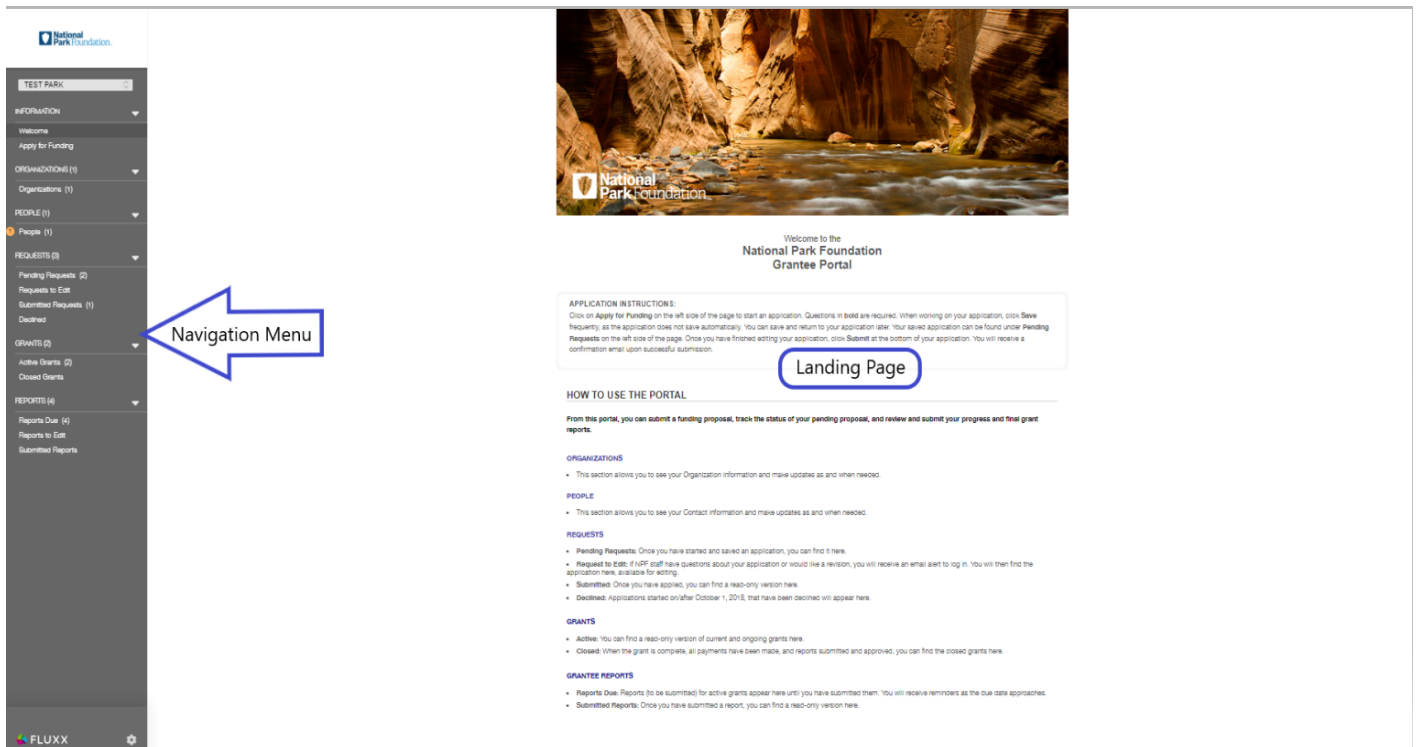
- ✓ Click on the "Forgot Password?" link on the left side of the login page
- ✓ Enter the email associated with your Fluxx account and click "Submit"
- ✓ Allow a few minutes to receive a reset email and follow the instructions provided
- ✓ If you do not receive a reset email, check your spam/junk folder. If you still haven't received a reset email, please reach out to the Grant Administration team at applications@nationalparks.org

Navigating the Grantee Portal

The NPF grantee portal is where you will submit applications, check the status of applications and subsequent grants, submit reports and update your personal and organizational profiles.

Landing Page

The main landing page has two main sections: the navigation menu on the left and the general information section.



Navigation Menu



1. **Affiliated Organization** - Your organization is listed here. If your email is associated with more than one organization, you can change organizations here.
2. **Information** – Click on Welcome at any time to get back to this main page
3. **Apply for Funding** – NPF’s open applications are linked here. You can also reference closed applications and grantee resources. Please read the application descriptions carefully before starting to ensure you are completing the right form.
4. **Organizations** – Go here to view and update/request updates to your organizational information
5. **People** – Go here to update your contact information.
6. **Requests** – All grant applications are found here, whether still in draft or in review.
 - o Pending requests – Unsubmitted draft applications that you are working on. They will remain here until you submit them to NPF.
 - o Requests to Edit – If NPF staff have questions or require additional information on your submitted request, they will send the application back to you and you will find them here. You will also receive an email alert.
 - o Submitted Requests – All requests that are being considered for funding are located here.
7. **Grants** – Active and closed grant applications are found here
8. **Reports** – This section displays information on upcoming reports due, previous reports submitted, and reports for which NPF has requested additional information. You will receive an email alert requesting additional information.
9. **Gear Icon** – Clicking on this icon will allow you to change your password and logout