

THE NATIONAL PARK FOUNDATION
REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS
Accessible Equipment, Information, & Training

Application open: July 8 - August 22, 2024

Summary

The [National Park Foundation](#) (NPF) is excited to announce a Request for Proposals (RFP) for a pilot grant program dedicated to expanding accessibility information, services, and tools at national park sites. The grants aims to improve visitor trip planning and elevate inclusive park experiences for visitors with disabilities.

With up to [one in four adults](#) in the U.S. having some type of disability, millions of visitors to the 425+ national park sites are people with disabilities. The National Park Service (NPS) is [committed](#) to ensuring that people with disabilities have equal opportunity to benefit from park facilities, programs, services, and activities, whether indoors or outdoors. This NPF initiative represents a commitment to parks for everyone.

Through this grant opportunity, NPF will fund accessibility projects that provide information for visitors, build community connections, expand trainings, and improve access to equipment. More details about criteria can be found in the RFP.

Entities apply to this program via [NPF's online grant system, Fluxx](#). An optional informational call will take place on July 22, 2024, 3PM ET, via [zoom](#).

Deadline: Applications are due on the NPF Fluxx Grant Portal no later than August 22, 2024 (midnight ET).

Award Amount: Grant requests may be up to **\$75,000**. Grants will be awarded to the applicant organization.

Eligibility: Eligible applicants include official units of NPS and affiliated systems (such as national trails, waterways, and heritage areas) and nonprofit organizations. NPF encourages applications from nonprofits with an NPS philanthropic, cooperative, or cooperating association agreement; community organizations, such as adaptive sports and recreation organizations; and other organizations that serve people with disabilities. Only one request per NPS park or unit may be submitted. For-profit entities are not eligible to apply.

Selection Process: Applications will be reviewed by a selection committee comprised of representatives from NPF and NPS. The committee will prioritize projects that can be completed within 18 months of receipt of funds (by approximately June 1, 2026). Additional selection criteria can be found in the RFP.

Questions: General grant application or Fluxx questions can be directed to NPF (applications@nationalparks.org). Questions and inquiries regarding project eligibility and proposal content are welcome. We [highly encourage](#) interested parties to reach out in advance of application. Please contact:

- Stef Martin – NPF, Director, Park Infrastructure & Visitor Experience (smartin@nationalparks.org)
- Jeremy Buzzell – NPS Program Manager, Park Accessibility for Visitors & Employees (PAVE) (Jeremy_buzzell@nps.gov)

Please Note: Infrastructure (planning, design and construction) projects are not eligible for this RFP

Request For Proposal: Accessible Equipment, Information, & Training

A. Overview

NPF seeks proposals to expand accessibility information and tools at parks sites in order to improve visitor trip planning and park experiences.

Members of the disability community want and need better information in order to make their own decisions about whether they can access park facilities and programs meet based on their needs. Related, parks have been successful in improving access when engaged with local and state disability groups and associations, but resources and expertise are not always available to make these important connections. Local organizations can also provide and manage equipment (e.g., all-terrain mobility devices) that visitors need to experience their parks.

Therefore, the purpose of this grant opportunity is to provide funding for accessibility projects that:

- Research, publish and/or promote accessibility-related information
- Create new and nurture already existing community connections
- Provide staff and partner training for improved experiences for visitors with disabilities
- Improve access to technology that increases accessibility

Eligible applicants include official units of the National Park Service and affiliated systems (such as national trails, waterways, and heritage areas), and nonprofit organizations with 501(c)(3) public charity designation by the IRS. We encourage applications from nonprofit organizations with an NPS philanthropic, cooperative, and/or cooperating association agreement; community organizations, such as adaptive sports and recreation organizations; and other nonprofit organizations that serve people with disabilities. Only one request per NPS park or unit may be submitted. For-profit entities are not eligible to apply.

Examples of proposal concepts for the RFP may include (but are not limited to):

- i) Conducting accessibility reviews of parks with the intent of improving information available to the public about access. Proposals to measure trails are strongly encouraged
- ii) Programs that engage local disability stakeholders in ongoing collaboration with parks resulting in deeper park relationships and improved access
- iii) Provision of accessibility training to park staff, park partners, volunteers, or others who will engage with visitors with disabilities
- iv) Video or other content development that helps NPS showcase and promote accessible experiences in parks (any content developed must be fully accessible and compliant with Section 508 of the Rehabilitation Act).
- i) Efforts to begin new or expand existing programs that ensure mobility devices are available to visitors with disabilities for use in parks, with a particular emphasis on programs where devices are provided by friends' groups or other non-profit entities.

Only one proposal concept may be submitted per applicant (e.g. a training proposal or a technology access proposal, not a combination). The RFP will not consider facilities and infrastructure proposals, including any planning or design that would be associated with construction (inclusive of exhibit design, fabrication, and

installation). While NPS and NPF recognize the importance of physical and exhibit improvements to the visitor experience, this RFP’s funding is focused on improving services via trip information, equipment, and personnel.

B. Selection Criteria

While NPF understands and respects that there are a broad diversity of project opportunities and needs in parks, this RFP funding will be prioritized for the projects that most strongly meet the criteria below:

Impactful. Proposals will be thoughtful and precise, describing in detail the knowledge and ability to execute that the NPS unit(s) and, if applicable, other applying organization(s) have for reaching project completion. Project clearly articulates how visitor experience will be improved.

Actionable. Projects will describe in detail the timeline and budget. Projects may highlight how the proposals could provide learnings and/or models that can be exported to other NPS units. Projects will articulate how they will be substantially complete within 18 months (by May 2026).

NPS Alignment. Proposals from partners should display how the project helps improve access to recreation and other opportunities at NPS units for people with disabilities. A letter of support from the NPS superintendent is required.

C. Selection Process

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

D. Timeline & Deadline

Applications are due on NPF’s Fluxx grants portal by August 23, 2024 (midnight ET)

Initial Application Opens:	July 8, 2024
RFP Informational Call:	July 22, 2024 at 3pm ET Join via zoom*
Application Closes:	August 22, 2024
Notification of award selection:	September 16, 2024
Grant agreement and payment processing:	September/October 2024
Grant reports due:	October 31,2025 and annually until completion
Period of Performance:	Through May 2026

**The call will have live captioning and ASL interpretation. Please reach out to applications@nationalparks.org for other for other reasonable accommodations. A recording of the call will also be posted to [NPF’s website](#).*

E. Program Details

- NPF commits to at least \$500,000 in grant funds for this pilot year of the RFP.
- Grant requests may be up to \$75,000. The maximum grant award will be prioritized for new projects or programs being launched for the first time. Established programs and project models are encouraged to apply; NPS and NPF anticipate awards for established programs up to \$50,000.
- Only one request may be submitted per park unit.
- Only one proposal concept may be submitted per applicant (e.g. a training proposal or an equipment program proposal, not a combination).
- NPS Commitment: A signed letter of support from an NPS Park Superintendent is required.

F. Evaluation and Reporting

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 interim and annual reporting templates.

Annual reports are due October 31, 2025, and annually until the grant is complete. Reports will be submitted via NPF's grant system, Fluxx.

Grantees will also 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.

G. How to Apply

Please appoint one person to apply on behalf of the organization. Read this RFP carefully and then use the online application system to submit between July 8 and August 22, 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. For additional information, join the optional informational call on July 22, 2024.

To apply, log into [NPF's online grant system, Fluxx](#), and select "**Accessibility Grant.**" 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. Instructions for navigating Fluxx may be found in Appendix B.

Tips for completing the application:

1. If the applying organization does not already have an account through Fluxx, it must first register (see instructions in Appendix B). **Registration can take up to three days** to receive approval prior to being able to access the online application; please allow for this time during the application period.
2. The system **does not auto-save**, therefore periodically hit the "save" button. NPF recommends completing the application in a word document first and then placing the responses into the online Fluxx application.
3. For Fluxx-related technical difficulties, please email applications@nationalparks.org and cc: yzamora@nationalparks.org.

APPENDIX A

Copy of Fluxx Application (FOR REFERENCE ONLY)

Contact applications@nationalparks.org with any questions about this application.

Organization Information

This information will auto-fill from your organization's Fluxx profile. To add or remove names in the Primary Contact and Primary Signatory fields, please email the Grants Administration team at applications@nationalparks.org and include: person's name, organization, email address, and phone number.

- Organization:
- Primary 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 signing the Grant Agreement. This is typically the park superintendent, partner organization's Executive Director, or comparable leadership position.

Organization Details

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

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

Project Information *(for the purposes of this RFP, "project" and "program" are synonymous)*

- Project Title: *Please provide a short, concise title that captures your project*
- Project Abstract: *Please provide a 3-5 sentence description of your project*
- Project Description: *Please provide a description of your project in 2-3 paragraphs MAX.*
- Project Timeline: *Please provide at least month-level detail (i.e. "June" instead of "Summer"); additional timeline detail can be uploaded as an optional attachment in "Document Upload" at the end of this application*
- Project Budget: *Please provide a basic budget summary; a project budget is a required attachment in "Document Upload" at the end of this application*

- Project Contacts: *Provide the name(s) of the person and organization responsible for project implementation. If a partner organization is applying, please also supply NPS contact information.*

Grant Request

- Expected project start date:
- Expected project end date: *This RFP will prioritize funding projects that can be completed within 18 months of receipt of funds*
- Amount Requested: *Please round to the nearest dollar. Grant requests should not exceed \$75,000. The maximum grant award will be prioritized for new projects or programs being launched for the first time.*
- Affiliated Park Site Name(s):
- Affiliated NPS Region? (Drop down list)

Project Criteria

Please note in responses if there are relevant attachments to consider.

1. Describe how the project aligns with one of the following RFP priority areas:
Suggested response length: 2-3 paragraphs. Only one proposal concept may be submitted per applicant (e.g. a training proposal or a technology access proposal, not a combination).
 - a. **Research, publish and/or promote accessibility-related information:**
 1. How will this project conduct an accessibility review of the park, specifically measure park trails, to improve information available to the public about access?
or
 2. What accessible experiences at the park will a video (or other content) be used to showcase park accessibility? This must indicate the accessibility features that will be included in the video or other content (e.g., captions, audio description)
 - b. **Create new and nurture already existing community connections:** How will this project engage local disability stakeholders in ongoing collaboration with parks resulting in deeper park relationships and improved access?
 - c. **Provide staff and partner training for improved experiences for visitors with disabilities:** What kind of accessibility training will be provided to park staff, park partners, volunteers, or others and by whom (i.e. what organization or individual)?
 - d. **Improve access to technology that increases accessibility:** What kinds of devices will be provided to visitors with disabilities; how will the equipment/device program be managed and by who?
2. Describe your ability to implement this project. What strengths or resources do you have? Do you have examples of how you've been successful in similar efforts in the past? *Suggested response length: 2 paragraphs*
3. Explain the organizational commitment to ensuring the results of this project are carried out or carried on (e.g., What will the park do with information that has been gathered? How will staff

use the requested training? How will a device loan program be maintained after this seed money is provided?) *Suggested response length: 1-2 paragraphs*

4. Is this project established or new? Please explain how the grant will support project/program creation and/or growth; include before/after metrics (e.g. visitors served, number of trainings offered, etc.) *Suggested response length: 1-2 paragraphs*
5. What is the intended outcome or impact of this project on visitors with disabilities? What metrics will be used to evaluate outcomes/impact? *Suggested response length: 1-2 paragraphs*
6. How will the project provide a model or lessons-learned that can be exported to other NPS units? Please describe. *Suggested response length: 1 paragraph*

NPS Superintendent Certification

Name of Superintendent: *Name of Superintendent/Site Manager*

Document Upload

Please upload the following required application documents in a format compliant with Section 508 of the Rehabilitation Act:

- NPS Superintendent's Letter of Support
Upload Letter of Support from Park Superintendent confirming NPS awareness and approval of project.
- Proposed project budget
Attach a project budget; the budget should include proposed NPF grant funding. If there are other fund sources that support the project (such as appropriated dollars, matching funds, etc.) please indicate in the attachment.
- Optional: Additional materials (i.e. timeline, case statements, project summaries or PMIS statements, other relevant documents) may also be uploaded

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/>

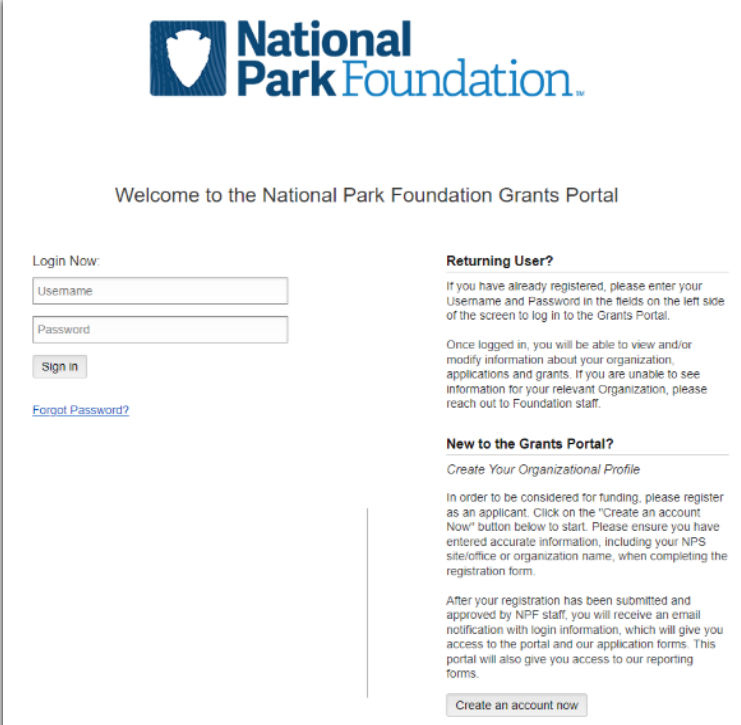
If you have any questions throughout the process, please reach out to the Grants Administration team at applications@nationalparks.org.

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

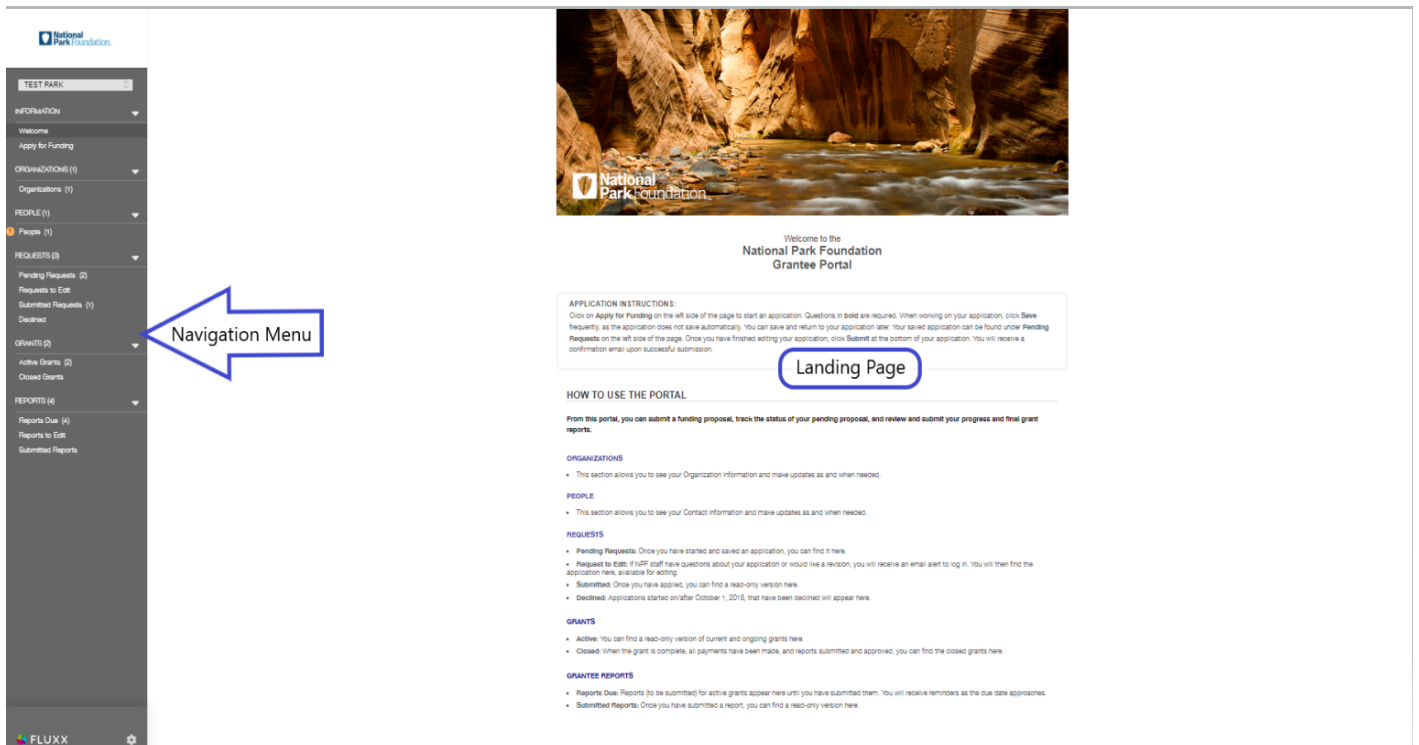
- ✓ Click on the "Forgot Password?" link on the left side of the login page
- ✓ Enter the email associated with your Fluxx account and click "Submit"
- ✓ Allow a few minutes to receive a reset email and follow the instructions provided
- ✓ If you do not receive a reset email, check your spam/junk folder. 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