

Solid Waste Trust Fund Grant Program
Recycling, Waste Reduction, and Diversion Grant
Guidelines
FY 2023

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Recycling, Waste Reduction, and Diversion (RWD) Grant

Introduction

The Solid Waste Trust Fund (SWTF) Grant Program furthers the goals of the SWTF by providing financial support for projects that meet the requirements described in O.C.G.A. § 12-8-27.1 and O.C.G.A. § 12-8-37.1 of the Georgia Comprehensive Solid Waste Management Act (Act), and Rule 391-3-21.17 of Rules and Regulations of the State of Georgia (Rules).

The Recycling, Waste Reduction, and Diversion (RWD) Grant created as a part of the SWTF Grant Program, will reduce solid waste in Georgia, recover valuable materials, support manufacturing, and encourage innovation.

Grant Description

Grants will be awarded each fiscal year (July 1 through June 30) subject to the amount of funds available that year, and there may be multiple rounds of funding in a year. Eligible applicants may apply for any amount up to the maximum available in that cycle. Awarded grant funds may pay up to 100% of project costs, subject to available funding. Grant funds must be spent according to the proposed budget.

A total of \$2,000,000 is available for funding for the first grant cycle.

Projects at various stages will be considered. The timeline for the portion of the project funded by this grant may not exceed 24 months in length.

Eligibility Requirements

Eligible applicants and recipients for the RWD Grant include:

- a. Counties, municipalities, or any combination of the same, hereafter referred to as local governments
- b. Public authorities, agencies, commissions, or institutions

Local government applicants must have Qualified Local Government status as of the date of their application, as determined by the Georgia Department of Community Affairs. The Georgia Department of Community Affairs maintains an active listing of local governments who are ineligible to receive state funding, including grants: <https://apps.dca.ga.gov/LocalGovStatus/planning.asp>

Nonprofit or private organizations are not eligible to apply for funding, however, they may partner with eligible applicants on projects.

In addition to those baseline eligibility requirements:

- a. Applicants who are subject to an open EPD consent order or other EPD enforcement action are not eligible to receive grants.
- b. Applicants who have received grant funds in past years but have NOT demonstrated successful administration of those grant funds may be deemed ineligible by EPD. Successful administration includes but is not limited to completing all project activities during the contract period, meeting all required deadlines, completing the project on time and on budget, expending all grant funds requested on project activities, and providing adequate documentation as requested by EPD.

Eligible Project Examples

The RWD Grant allows applicants to develop project proposals that best support their communities' needs. Projects must focus on increasing recycling, reducing waste, and/or diverting recoverable materials from the solid waste stream as described in the authorized uses of the SWTF.

Examples of RWD Grant projects may include, but are not limited to:

- a. **Recycling and Waste Diversion Infrastructure** – Projects that create, expand, or improve infrastructure at materials recovery facilities (MRF), recycling transfer stations, convenience centers, or through other equipment that will increase the capacity to serve customers
- b. **Hub and Spoke Development** – Projects that create, expand, or improve the operation of recycling hub and spoke infrastructure, collection, distribution, and logistics
- c. **Hard-to-Recycle Materials** – Projects that create, expand, or improve the operation of hard-to-recycle and/or household hazardous waste recycling facilities
- d. **Recovery of Additional Materials** – Projects that collect and/or process new material streams
- e. **Waste Reduction** – Projects that create, expand, or improve programs at the local level to reduce waste
- f. **Innovation** – Projects that demonstrate innovative processes for waste reduction or innovative use of recycled products

Application Period

The application period will open August 1, 2022. The deadline for submitting applications is 4:30 p.m. on September 30, 2022.

EPD will host virtual meetings in August 2022 to review RWD Grant eligibility and application requirements. The virtual meetings will be recorded and will be posted along with a list of Frequently Asked Questions at the following website address:

<https://epd.georgia.gov/recycling-waste-reduction-and-diversion-grant>

The RWD Grant will be administered according to the following schedule:

August 1	Application period open
September 30	Application submission deadline
October – November	Application review
December - January	Grant funds awarded
February-March	Second application period opens if funding is available

Special Requirements

Grant funds are paid out on a reimbursement basis. If you require advance funds in order to achieve grant objectives, please contact program staff **before** submitting your application. This is permissible; however, additional documentation may be required.

Contractual costs for one-time only services are allowed, provided the project itself is approved. The first year of a recurring cost may be allowed if future non-EPD funding is available.

Eligible grant award amounts will be determined by EPD. Grant awards may be less than amounts requested.

All facilities constructed, equipment purchased, and education material produced with grant funds must credit the RWD Grant.

All purchases of goods and services shall be made according to the recipient's procurement (bid) requirements and policy.

Recipients may also be asked to provide documentation to be used by EPD as a case study illustrating the approach to reducing municipal solid waste management through recycling and waste reduction or supporting market development activities from scrap tires or other recyclables.

EPD staff may perform site inspections during the term of the grant.

EPD shall have the right to terminate a grant award and demand refund of grant funds for non-compliance with federal, state, or local regulations, the terms of the grant award, or these guidelines.

EPD may declare the recipient ineligible for further participation in the program until the recipient complies with the regulations, the terms of the grant award, or these guidelines.

Evaluation Criteria

RWD Grant funds are limited and are contingent upon available funding. Applications will be evaluated by EPD to determine if the applicant and proposed project are eligible (see Eligibility Requirements). Eligible projects will be scored according to the requirements and criteria described below. EPD will fund projects starting with the highest-ranking score first and will continue awarding funds to those qualifying applications until EPD has exhausted available funds for that grant cycle. Projects not selected in one grant cycle may be resubmitted in subsequent grant cycles. If funds allow, there may be multiple grant cycles per year.

EPD reserves the right to coordinate with applicants as needed to modify project scopes and budgets.

Minimum Application Requirements

The following elements must be included in all applications and will be evaluated as part of the scoring for award. An application will not be considered for grant award if the minimum project requirements are not met.

- a. The application must demonstrate the need, purpose, and objective for the proposed project.
- b. The application must describe all steps for implementation, including details regarding the specific activities or categories of activities to be carried out with grant assistance.
- c. The application must include a detailed project implementation schedule including start date, completion date, and interim milestones.
- d. The application must include a budget detailing the amount and intended use of funds requested. This includes but is not limited to a line-item estimate of all expenses, and information about any match items (including in-kind matches such as resources or staff time). Documentation for expenses should be provided, such as quotes for equipment purchases or payroll for salary costs. Match items should also be documented through letters of commitment, copies of checks, payroll records, etc.
- e. Applications should include a section that specifically identifies the metrics that will be used to measure project success and describes how those metrics will demonstrate that the project is likely to result in increased recycling, diversion of waste from landfills, and/or waste reduction. Examples include weight or volume of materials diverted from the solid waste stream.

Evaluation Criteria

Applications will be scored based on how successfully the application demonstrates the following:

- a. The need, purpose, and objective for the project in the proposed affected community.
- b. Community investment through a documented match. There is no minimum match required, however, applications demonstrating a match will receive more points in the ranking process. Match does not have to be cash and can include in-kind contributions like staff time, equipment use, volunteer time, supplies etc.
- c. A robust plan with clearly identifiable steps for project implementation that are likely to result in the achievement of the outlined objectives for the proposed project.
- d. Quantifiable metrics and evaluation strategy that demonstrate how the project will make a significant impact in achieving recycling, waste reduction, and diversion goals.
- e. Demonstrates the project's cost effectiveness. An example includes but is not limited to the cost savings per weight/volume of materials diverted from the solid waste stream.

- f. Demonstrates how the project and its benefits are to be perpetuated after the grant funds have been expended without additional investment from the State.

Applications may be assigned bonus points for:

- a. Projects that use Georgia-based suppliers for products and services.
- b. Regional or multi-jurisdictional project proposals jointly submitted by two or more local governments.
- c. Consistency with the local or regional solid waste management plan or other recycling, waste reduction and/or diversion projects and activities.
- d. Bringing together new resources or innovative approaches to recycling, waste reduction, and diversion.
- e. Applicants that have or who have partners for the proposed project who have “buy recycled” ordinances, policies, practices, and procedures.
- f. Applications that demonstrate additional environmental benefits such as water conservation, emissions reduction, and energy conservation.
- g. Applicants that or who have partners that participate in the Georgia Municipal Measurement Program by submitting surveys and reports.

RWD Grant Award Procedures

Grant applications will be scored according to the criteria described in the Evaluation Criteria section. If a grant application is approved for award, EPD will notify the applicant and provide an agreement for signature.

The applicant must then return the signed agreement and completed Vendor Management Form, E-Verify Form, and W-9 within 30 days of receiving the agreement via email to the following address: SWTF.grant@dnr.ga.gov.

Any electronic signatures constitute original, valid signatures pursuant to the Uniform Electronic Transactions Act, O.C.G.A. § 10-12-1 et seq.

Upon receiving the signed agreement, EPD will route the agreement for signature to the EPD Director. EPD will then send the fully executed agreement to the recipient. Recipients may begin work upon receipt of the fully executed agreement and must commence work within 30 days.

Work related to the project performed prior to the execution of the agreement will not be eligible for reimbursement.

Recipients are required to submit Quarterly Reports throughout the duration of the project to document implementation progress. Quarterly Report Forms will be provided. A Final Report must be submitted at the end of the project that includes a summary of the project and metrics quantifying the project's success.

Recipients must submit a Reimbursement Request Form to EPD along with invoices and proof of payment for grant expenditures. The Reimbursement Request Form will be provided by EPD. Reimbursement Request Forms may be submitted along with the quarterly reports or as needed, no more than once every 30 days.