



COMMUNITY CLEAN AIR GRANT: FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

boston.gov/clean-air-grant

Does the City prioritize large or small projects?

This funding round intentionally supports a range of project sizes, including smaller-scale initiatives. Applicants are encouraged to request the amount of funding appropriate to their current needs. Successful smaller projects may be eligible to apply for expanded support in future rounds.

What criteria apply specifically to 2-year projects?

There are no distinct criteria for 2-year proposals. Multi-year projects will be evaluated based on the strength of partnerships, community engagement, anticipated impact, and potential for scalability or lasting outcomes.

Does the program support education and outreach activities?

Yes. The program welcomes projects that enhance community capacity to understand, monitor, or reduce air pollution through education, engagement, and communication.

Can projects include an advocacy component?

No. Grant funds may not be used for lobbying or legislative advocacy.

Is tree-related outreach/education an eligible activity?

While we will not fund tree-planting work, we will consider funding small grants aiming to develop and distribute scientifically-grounded, language-accessible, and novel tree education/outreach materials that focus on air quality impacts. Contact the program team to discuss potential eligibility.

Are organizations with a nonprofit fiscal sponsor eligible?

Yes. The lead applicant must be a nonprofit organization. If you are a nonprofit with a fiscal sponsor, the sponsor's information may need to be included within the application, and it may be appropriate for them to be the lead applicant from a budgetary standpoint. However, the partner organization may take the lead on implementing the proposed project activities. Community groups or coalitions are encouraged to partner with eligible nonprofits to apply. For more complex fiscal sponsorship arrangements, please contact apcc@boston.gov or attend [office hours](#).

Do nonprofit fiscal sponsors need to be registered in Massachusetts?

No. Fiscal sponsors do not need to be registered in Massachusetts in order to be eligible.

**Can a nonprofit partner with public entities?**

Yes, as long as the nonprofit serves as the lead applicant and administers the grant. The funded activity must serve a public purpose and should not primarily support operations of the partner entity.

Are colleges and universities eligible applicants?

Yes, if the college or university is registered as a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization. Please note that academic research alone is not eligible for funding. Projects should have a clear community impact and align with the program's goals. Contact us if there are questions about a proposed project's eligibility.

Are applicants outside Boston eligible?

Projects must be based in and benefit the City of Boston. Collaborations involving nearby municipalities (e.g., Chelsea, Brookline) may be considered if only the Boston portion is funded by this grant. Contact the program team to discuss potential eligibility.

Are there limits on the amount that can be allocated to staff time?

There is no limit on the portion of the grant budget allocated to staff time for project implementation. However, indirect or administrative costs are limited to 10% of the total grant budget.

Can grant funds be used to hire new staff?

Yes. Grant funds may be used to hire personnel, provided their work is directly tied to the proposed project. If the role is full-time but the project only requires part-time support, applicants may combine this grant with other funding sources. Alternatively, the position may be structured as part-time to meet the project's specific needs. Please note that the City cannot guarantee continued funding beyond the original 1-2 year grant period.

Can applicants receive technical guidance on equipment selection?

Yes. Applicants may receive support during office hours to align equipment selection with project goals. Selected grantees will have access to technical assistance from the City throughout the grant period and participate in a cohort model that facilitates peer learning and shared best practices.

What types of evaluation metrics are recommended?

While not required, applicants are encouraged to include metrics that demonstrate engagement or measurable impact. These may include participation rates, air quality measurements, or estimated emissions reductions. City staff are available to help identify meaningful and feasible evaluation approaches.

**When does the grant period begin?**

Grant activities are expected to begin around September 2025, following completion of the contracting process. The process may take 1-2 months after award announcements, which are anticipated by the end of June 2025.

What are some examples of previously funded projects?

Three pilot-phase projects were funded in 2021, each receiving approximately \$50,000. The grantees were Mothers Out Front East Boston, the Neighborhood of Affordable Housing (NOAH), and the Home Energy Efficiency Team (HEET). Mothers Out Front and NOAH distributed air purifiers to home-based childcare providers, vulnerable households, and community hubs in East Boston, and measured changes in indoor air quality following these interventions. HEET focused on source reduction/abatement by providing induction cooktops as an alternative to gas stoves to vulnerable households, including participants in the Breathe Easy at Home program. Additional details about these pilot projects are available [on our website](#).

What lessons from past grants have informed this new round?

The program has evolved to support more strategic use of air monitoring, ensuring that data collection is purposeful and actionable. Projects are encouraged to include data analysis capacity and clearly defined goals. The program now offers more robust support, including increased funding levels, quarterly check-ins, and cohort-based learning opportunities to promote collaboration among grantees.