

#	FY27 Community Biodiversity Grant Question	DFG Response
1	Are naturalized or hybridized native plant species, including certain fruiting trees and shrubs, eligible for purchase under this grant?	Yes.
2	RFR, section G lists "small-scale habitat improvement/restoration projects" as an eligible project. Can you define how you are measuring "small-scale"? Is there an upper limit that can be defined in terms of acres?	Small-scale should be interpreted to support projects that are in one town or county and are not state-wide.
3	RFR, section H states "projects centered on non-native species, such as honeybees or European Beech trees, are not eligible." Can you clarify this statement? Does this mean grant monies cannot be used to purchase or proliferate non-native species (like honeybees or European beech)? Or does this mean that projects centered on non-native species control are not eligible?	This statement should be interpreted to mean "grant monies cannot be used to purchase or proliferate non-native species (like honeybees or European beech)".
4	Would a forest/habitat/ecological restoration project be deemed eligible for consideration of grant funding approval that involved vegetation management of both native and non-native species utilizing mechanical and/or chemical control techniques?	Yes.
5	What types of community engagement activities are viewed most favorably?	There are no specific types preferred, but metrics around visitation or viewership will be included in grant scoring.
6	We are interested in including a project component that tackles invasive species, but we understand that eradicating Japanese knotweed from an area realistically requires at least three years of engagement. If we enter into a three-year contract with a third-party, would work done through June 2027 (and only that portion of the work) be eligible?	Funding for this round of Community Biodiversity Grants is only available through the end of fiscal year 2027. As required by state law (and the grant award contract) the Department can only reimburse for expenditures incurred on or before 6/30/2027. Any purchases or activity occurring after 6/30/2027 is not eligible for reimbursement.
7	Can a grantee organization (501(c)(3)) pay a municipal cultural council to provide contractual services (such as publicity/outreach) under the grant?	Grant awardees may contract with vendors to provide goods and services related to the grant program. Expenditures must be capital in nature to be eligible for reimbursement. Grant awardees that will utilize a subrecipient to carry out a portion of the grant program must be identified in the grant application and approved by the Department. Please see response to question #8 for differentiation of vendor/contractor and sub-recipient.
8	What is the definition of a "sub-recipient"? Does this include businesses partnering with grantees? If I am listed as a contractor on a grant, would I be considered a "sub-recipient" and would I need to fill out the Commonwealth's Standard Contract Form?	<p>Sub-recipients are distinct from contractors/vendors. Subrecipient means an entity that receives a subaward from a pass-through entity to carry out part of a grant award. A sub-recipient uses the grant funds to carry out a program of the prime recipient as compared to a contractor/vendor providing goods or services for a program of the prime recipient.</p> <p>Neither contractors/vendors nor sub-recipients are required to execute a Commonwealth Standard Contract Form, however sub-recipients needs to be identified in the application and approved by the Department. The grant awardee is responsible for ensuring contractors/vendors and subrecipients compile with all terms of the award.</p>

9	Are quotes required? If yes, how would you suggest quotes are included in the application?	No, quotes are not required but are encouraged to aid in review of the application. Attached quotes are not considered as pages in the 10 page maximum narrative requirement.
10	If the design of a pollinator garden includes the purchase/installation of a bike rack/post and associated anchoring, can that be considered as part of the grant?	Equipment not related to biodiversity protection or enhancement, or biodiversity related education, would not be considered eligible.
11	Can the cost to install an irrigation system for a pollinator garden be part of the grant application?	Yes.
12	Can previously incurred landscape design costs be part of the grant application?	No, state law prohibits the reimbursement of previously incurred costs.
13	<p>Does the state tend to prioritize projects concentrated within a single community, or initiatives that serve multiple communities or regions?</p> <p>Is there a preference for projects with statewide reach versus those that are more centralized and place-based?</p> <p>How does the state balance support for continuing and expanding successful existing programs versus funding new projects?</p> <p>Would you encourage applicants to re-submit previously declined proposals if they have been revised or strengthened?</p> <p>Have the program's funding priorities or focus areas changed since the last grant cycle?</p> <p>Are there geographic regions, populations, or partner organizations that you consider underrepresented and would especially like to see included in applications?</p> <p>Are there partnership models or collaborations that tend to make proposals more competitive?</p>	<p>*Single verses multiple communities is not a scoring criteria. Please see the scoring information in the RFR for more detail. *Proposals that were not funded in the last round can be resubmitted, and we encourage applicants to review their application and the new RFR to ensure any additional requested information is included. *Funding priorities have not changed since the last grant cycle. *Please see the RFR for guidance on how to consider community characteristics. *Projects that both benefit biodiversity and have strong community engagement are most competitive.</p>
14	Is removal of invasive plant species, by hand/small equipment allowed as a component of a project? Would equipment such as hedge trimmers, loppers, clippers, etc. be considered as fundable through the grant?	Yes.
15	As a condo association we are looking at adopting sustainable practices such as drought resistant landscaping, water barrels, etc. We are looking to potentially partner with the town on a biodiversity grant application where we can serve as a pilot project for practices that can be emulated by other similar associations. My question is whether we would be eligible, as a non-profit, to do as a standalone application or in partnership with the town?	Non-profits are eligible to apply and letters of support from the municipality is suggested for partnership projects.

16	<p>On the online application form, applicants must select a specific region from a dropdown menu (e.g., Central Massachusetts, Greater Boston Area, etc.) where their program is based. We are seeking clarification on how these specific boundaries are defined for this grant.</p> <p>Because Town X can be considered a part of more than one region depending on the framework used (such as standard agency maps versus regional planning agency footprints), the correct dropdown choice is unclear. Could you please clarify the mapping standards or criteria used for this grant's dropdown menu, or advise on which option to select for our proposal?</p>	<p>Thank you for your feedback. We have updated the region dropdown categories to include statewide or county boundaries. Please use the MassGIS data layer to identify your county (<a href="https://www.mass.gov/info-details/massgis-data-counties">https://www.mass.gov/info-details/massgis-data-counties</a>).</p>
17	<p>Are Tree Corps, or unincorporated associations that are not 501c3s but serve a public purpose, eligible to apply?</p>	<p>Yes.</p>
18	<p>I am seeking clarification on the ineligibility of "staff" expenses. Our proposed project involves biodiversity surveys. To complete this work, we would need either to contract with an environmental consulting firm or to hire a new seasonal field technician specifically for this project. Could you please clarify: (1) Does the "staff" exclusion apply only to existing organizational staff/overhead, or does it also preclude hiring new, temporary, project-specific personnel? (2) Are contracts with external environmental consulting firms for field survey services considered an eligible expense?</p>	<p>The staff exclusion includes current and future staff, including temporary staff. Contracts with external firms for field survey are an eligible expense.</p>
19	<p>Can you provide feedback at this time on grants that were submitted for the previous round, but not awarded?</p>	<p>No, we can not discuss the grant while the RFR is open, per state law. We can provide feedback after the grant closes and awards are made.</p>
20	<p>I have been putting in native plant gardens at my school and am interested in applying for a grant to remove invasive species. Can the grant be used to pay for labor to do this?</p>	<p>Yes, for contracted labor only. Grants can not be used for organization staff time.</p>
21	<p>We are looking at the possibility of a project between the Town of X and a condo association (non-profit) that would be a demonstration project for sustainable, drought-resistant landscaping. It would also include demonstration projects for rain barrels (the condos are on well water). Would this qualify as a grant proposal?</p>	<p>Yes, non-profits are eligible to apply.</p>
22	<p>Does what we create (such as a pollinator garden) have to be available for the general public; and would you fund for us to hire a design consultant for the project?</p>	<p>Sites do not have to be open to the general public but there must be a demonstrated strong public benefit and a benefit to biodiversity. Design consultants are an eligible expense.</p>
23	<p>When do you anticipate grant funds being available?</p>	<p>DFG anticipates funds will be available in October, 2026 and must be used by the end of the 2027 Fiscal Year, which is June 30, 2027.</p>
24	<p>Is the funding for this grant state or federal funds?</p>	<p>FY27 Community Biodiversity Grants are funded through state funds.</p>
25	<p>Can an organization submit more than one application?</p>	<p>Yes.</p>
26	<p>Would a land acquisition project be eligible if it involves a partnership between a community non-profit and a municipality?</p>	<p>No. Land acquisition is not eligible.</p>
27	<p>Is the funding available for any geographical location around the world or restricted to specific geographical area?</p>	<p>Projects must be in Massachusetts.</p>

<b>28</b>	Can an individual or a community group with no official non-profit status be eligible to apply for this grant?	Yes, but they must be able to demonstrate a history of successful project execution that serves a public and biodiversity benefit.
<b>29</b>	In an area where dam removal is not feasible, would the construction of a fish ladder be eligible for this grant?	Yes.
<b>30</b>	Is the Request for Responses (RFR) a separate document that can be downloaded? I could not find it in the "Downloads" section on the website.	Yes, the RFR can be found here: <a href="https://www.mass.gov/how-to/massachusetts-community-biodiversity-grants">https://www.mass.gov/how-to/massachusetts-community-biodiversity-grants</a> and scroll down the page to <a href="https://www.mass.gov/doc/fy27-community-biodiversity-grants-program-request-for-responses-rfr/download">https://www.mass.gov/doc/fy27-community-biodiversity-grants-program-request-for-responses-rfr/download</a> .
<b>31</b>	How do we select a region for the project?	We have updated this question. Please use the county list in the dropdown menu.
<b>32</b>	Can I apply for a phase of a project, knowing that the next phase is in a future fiscal year?	Yes. Projects can be phased but phases must be completed by the end of the grant period, which is June 30, 2027.
<b>33</b>	Is a project that includes small-scale habitat restoration and the building of a nature-based play area eligible for this grant?	Yes, although the specific components of the project are subject to review per the RFR guidelines.