**Frequently Asked Questions**

**Hybrid Programming for Councils on Aging Grant**

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# Grant Overview

1. **Q: What is the Hybrid Programming for Councils on Aging Grant?**

**A:** This grant is designed to provide American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funding in the form of time-limited grants to Councils on Aging (COAs) to deliver Hybrid Programming to Massachusetts residents who are 60 years of age and older. Additionally, the proposed program must be designed to include **at least one** of the following components/activities:

* **Hybrid Programming Equipment** 
  + Applicants must use funds to purchase equipment that enables the COA to successfully deliver high-quality Hybrid Programming.
  + While the emphasis of these purchases should be for the COA, limited equipment purchases to allow Older Adults to successfully access Hybrid Programming is permissible.
* **Staff to Manage Hybrid Programming** 
  + Applicants must use the funds to deliver Hybrid Programming to Older Adults in the COA’s service area. This may include funding personnel (e.g., COA staff and interns) or third-party vendor(s) to provide technical assistance, assist with troubleshooting, or act as the in-room or online moderator for programming.
* **Programming Expenses** 
  + Applicants must use funds on Hybrid Programming-related expenses. This may include but is not limited to: software or platform fees, presenter fees, programming materials, or staff-travel within the COA’s service area to deliver programming materials to Older Adults’ homes.

1. **Q: What is the deadline to submit the grant application?**

**A:** Grant applications will be accepted until Friday, September 25nd, 2023 at 5p.m.

1. **Q: What is the difference between the Hybrid Programming for Councils on Aging Grant and the Enhancing Digital Literacy for Older Adults Grant? Can awardees for the latter apply to this grant?**

**A:** The Hybrid Programming for Councils on Aging Grant aims to increase older adults’ access to Hybrid Programming at the Councils on Aging (COAs) with a focus on providing COAs with resources needed to increase capacity for Hybrid Programming delivery. The Enhancing Digital Literacy for Older Adults Grant aimed to increase Older Adults’ ability to use devices and the internet by strengthening access to digital literacy training, education, and support. Use of devices and the internet may relate to Hybrid Programming.

Yes, awardees of the Enhancing Digital Literacy for Older Adults Grant may also apply to this grant.

1. **Q: What is the definition of Hybrid Programming** **as it pertains to this grant?**

**A:** The definition of “Hybrid Programming” is as follows per the RFA: Classes or events that are run both in person and virtually so that participants can choose the setting that works best for them. For the purposes of this grant, Hybrid Programming can refer to programs that are run at the same time in both formats (synchronous) or on different schedules (asynchronous).

1. **Q: What, if any, priority criteria exist for this grant?**

**A:** Applications that include one or more of the following criteria will receive preference in final awarding of grant funds; note that applications that include multiple criteria will receive higher preference:

* Applications from COAs that serve Gateway Cities or Rural Communities in Massachusetts. Municipalities that fall into these classifications can be identified as follows: [Rural Definition Detail](https://nam02.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.mass.gov%2Fdoc%2Frural-definition-detail-0%2Fdownload&data=05%7C01%7Crwyant%40pcgus.com%7C9e910b42f6ac490435be08db0bad7b70%7Cd9b110c34c254379b97ae248938cc17b%7C0%7C0%7C638116611969017415%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWIjoiMC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQIjoiV2luMzIiLCJBTiI6Ik1haWwiLCJXVCI6Mn0%3D%7C3000%7C%7C%7C&sdata=coT4bk5Ben0%2BfwY0KzBVWW%2BJd01yMxPgt3PVcSn3hiY%3D&reserved=0) and [Mass General Law](https://nam02.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fmalegislature.gov%2Flaws%2Fgenerallaws%2Fparti%2Ftitleii%2Fchapter23a%2Fsection3a&data=05%7C01%7Cljaime%40pcgus.com%7C9e910b42f6ac490435be08db0bad7b70%7Cd9b110c34c254379b97ae248938cc17b%7C0%7C0%7C638116611975002369%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWIjoiMC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQIjoiV2luMzIiLCJBTiI6Ik1haWwiLCJXVCI6Mn0%3D%7C3000%7C%7C%7C&sdata=taHHt%2FfUvCxj7jb%2B9CWM1gu%2BxG1quo4tbGhYsRbtJV4%3D&reserved=0).
* Applications from COAs that do not currently provide Hybrid Programming.
* Applications from COAs that propose to provide synchronous (in-person and virtual formats delivered at the same time) programming.
* Applications that provide a high level of detail and demonstrate that they have a plan to start implementing grant activities within the first three months of receiving funding.
* Applications that limit their indirect costs to at or below 10% of the overall project Budget.

1. **Q: Will there be technical assistance for Awardees?**

**A:** Yes, Awardees will have access to staff at EOEA and potentially other organizations with subject matter expertise in Hybrid Programming (e.g., Edward J. Collins, Jr. Center for Public Management) for assistance with establishing and operating Hybrid Programming.

1. **Q: Will there be another application in the future?**

**A:** We expect all funds for this Hybrid Programming for Councils on Aging grant program to be distributed during this first round.

1. **Q: Can my organization use a Subcontractor to conduct all or some of the initiative activities?**

**A:** Yes, your organization can use a Subcontractor to conduct all or some of the initiative activities. On the project application, you will be asked to identify and describe any Subcontractor relationships with other organizations and to identify points of contact at the subcontracted entity.

1. **Q: Can my organization partner or subcontract with another organization or municipality to submit a request for a geographic region?**

**A:** Yes, COAs may partner and/or subcontract with one or more COAs or other additional organizations to apply with a regional proposal. If the partnership includes multiple COAs only one application should be submitted by the COA who will be the financial agent for the grant (see Section 1 of the RFA).

1. **Q: Can my organization submit more than one application?**

**A:** No. Each Council on Aging, or a group of COAs applying in partnership, may only submit one application.

1. **Q: If I apply in partnership with other COAs, what is the maximum amount of funding we can request?**

**A:** One COA may request a grant up to $100,000. Two COAs applying together can request a grant up to $200,000; three or more COAs applying together can request a grant up to $300,000.

1. **Q: Can I use the funding to supplement an existing project?**

**A:** Yes, you may propose funding to supplement an existing project. Awarded funding may not be used as a duplication of benefits with funding awarded from another federal, state or grant funded program and cannot be used for programs and initiatives that overlap with CMS waiver extension proposals.

# Eligibility Requirements

1. **Q: Who is eligible to submit an application?**

**A:** To be considered for a grant award, the Applicant must be a Council on Aging (COA) located in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts. All applications will require a primary and secondary point of contact, detailed budget outlining the Direct and Indirect Costs associated with how the grant funds are to be used, and an implementation plan.

1. **Q: What are the minimum qualification requirements?**

**A:** Grant proposals must include a clear plan on how the Applicant will deliver Hybrid Programming to Massachusetts residents who are 60 years of age and older. Additionally, the proposed program must be designed to include **at least one**of the following components/activities:

* **Hybrid Programming Equipment** 
  + Applicants must use funds to purchase equipment that enables the COA to successfully deliver high-quality Hybrid Programming.
  + While the emphasis of these purchases should be for the COA, limited equipment purchases to allow Older adults to successfully access Hybrid Programming is permissible.
* **Staff to Manage Hybrid Programming** 
  + Applicants must use the funds to deliver Hybrid Programming to Older adults in the COA’s service area. This may include funding personnel (e.g., COA staff and interns) or third-party vendor(s) to provide technical assistance, assist with troubleshooting, or act as the in-room or online moderator for programming.
* **Programming Expenses** 
  + Applicants must use funds on Hybrid Programming-related expenses. This may include but is not limited to: software or platform fees, presenter fees, programming materials, or staff-travel within the COA’s service area to deliver programming materials to Older adults’ homes.

1. **Q: Can COAs who applied for the Digital Literacy for Older adults Grant apply for this grant?**

**A:** Yes, though funds received for each grant must be used only for the purpose of that grant

and cannot be comingled.

# Eligible Expenses

1. **Q: What activities are grant eligible?**

**A:** Applicants must assert that grant funds will only be used for Eligible Expenses. An Applicant must propose to use grant funds only for activities and purposes as defined in Section 4 of the RFA. Eligible expenses include, but are not limited to, the following:

**Category 1 – Hybrid Programming Equipment**

1. Technology Equipment at the COA, for example:
   * Camera/tripod
   * Laptop/tablet
   * Monitor/screen
   * Projector
   * Microphone
   * Speaker
   * Video conferencing smart device
   * Headphones
2. Equipment Extras for the COA, for example:
   * Cable/adaptor (e.g., to connect computer to monitor/projector)
   * Room darkening shades
   * Rolling cart/podium
   * Storage bin

**Category 2 – Staff to Manage Hybrid Programming**

1. Staff to Manage Hybrid Programming, for example:

* Technical assistance and troubleshooting
* In-room or online moderator

1. Training/Support, for example:
   * Training/support staff time (e.g., a part- or full-time staff person to provide education and training, stipends for interns)
   * Contracts for training and support with a third party

Category 3 – Programming Expenses

1. Platforms/Software Expenses, for example:
   * Virtual engagement/activity platform
   * Scheduling software
   * Virtual meeting software
2. Other Program-Related expenses, for example:

* Presenter/class facilitator fees
* Class materials
* Mailing expenses
* Travel expenses
* Marketing expenses

1. **Q: Is there a cap on indirect costs? What indirect costs are allowable?**

**A:** Indirect costs related to program expenses (e.g., coordination costs, administrative salaries, etc.) are allowable in proposed Budgets. There is no cap on indirect costs; however applications that limit their indirect costs to at or below 10% of the overall project Budget will be more competitive during the review process. Proposals must include a detailed breakdown of indirect costs in the application.

1. **Q: If a number of COAs in a region apply together, is it possible to use some of the award to fund administration/coordination of a larger grant with a number of partners?**

**A:** Yes, grant funds can be used to administer or coordinate a grant. However, these expenses are considered indirect costs.

1. **Q: If a number of COAs apply together, do you anticipate contracting with the lead applicant who would then subcontract with the others? If so, can funding be used for this coordination?**

**A:** EOEA will contract with the lead applicant, who will act as the fiscal agent for this grant and be responsible for coordinating with their project partners and/or Subcontractors. Grant funds can be used to administer or coordinate the grant. These expenses are considered indirect costs.

1. **Q: Can devices or equipment be given to Older Adults for permanent use (i.e., will not be returned to the COA) for those who wish to participate in Hybrid Programming from home?**

**A:** This may be permissible if the Applicant can explain how it will support the expansion of Hybrid Programming. These expenses must not overlap with grant funding for digital literacy initiatives and cannot exceed the total value of $500 per Older Adult recipient.

1. **Q: Is there any limitation on partnerships, for example can a COA partner with a local library?**

**A:** COAs are encouraged to partner with any other organizations to complete their project. Note that if a COA partners with an organization that is not a COA, like a local library, the grant award remains capped at $100,000. The grant award only increases if two or more COAs partner on a project.

1. **Q: Is there a match required? If so, what is the percentage?**

**A:** No, Awardees are not required to match funds for this grant.

1. **Q: Does the grant funded hybrid programs have to be synchronous, and provided at the same time, for both the COA’s in person and virtual participants?**

A: No, grant funds may be used to provide synchronous, asynchronous and/or a combination of both programming options to Older Adults in the COA’s service area. However, grant applications that include synchronous Hybrid Programming will be given priority in the selection process.

# Grant Priorities

1. **Q: Will any activities be prioritized for funding?   
   A:** Yes. Applications that include one or more of the following criteria will receive preference in final awarding of grant funds; note that applications that include multiple criteria will receive preference:

* Applications from COAs that serve Gateway Cities or Rural Communities in Massachusetts. Municipalities that fall into these classifications can be identified as follows: [Rural Definition Detail](https://nam02.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.mass.gov%2Fdoc%2Frural-definition-detail-0%2Fdownload&data=05%7C01%7Crwyant%40pcgus.com%7C9e910b42f6ac490435be08db0bad7b70%7Cd9b110c34c254379b97ae248938cc17b%7C0%7C0%7C638116611969017415%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWIjoiMC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQIjoiV2luMzIiLCJBTiI6Ik1haWwiLCJXVCI6Mn0%3D%7C3000%7C%7C%7C&sdata=coT4bk5Ben0%2BfwY0KzBVWW%2BJd01yMxPgt3PVcSn3hiY%3D&reserved=0) and [Mass General Law](https://nam02.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fmalegislature.gov%2Flaws%2Fgenerallaws%2Fparti%2Ftitleii%2Fchapter23a%2Fsection3a&data=05%7C01%7Cljaime%40pcgus.com%7C9e910b42f6ac490435be08db0bad7b70%7Cd9b110c34c254379b97ae248938cc17b%7C0%7C0%7C638116611975002369%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWIjoiMC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQIjoiV2luMzIiLCJBTiI6Ik1haWwiLCJXVCI6Mn0%3D%7C3000%7C%7C%7C&sdata=taHHt%2FfUvCxj7jb%2B9CWM1gu%2BxG1quo4tbGhYsRbtJV4%3D&reserved=0).
* Applications from COAs that do not currently provide Hybrid Programming.
* Applications from COAs that propose to provide synchronous (in-person and virtual formats delivered at the same time) programming.
* Applications that provide a high level of detail and demonstrate that they have a plan to start implementing grant activities within the first three months of receiving funding.
* Applications that limit their indirect costs to at or below 10% of the overall project Budget.

1. **Q: Could Gateway Cities work with surrounding Rural Communities, if they meet the definition?**

**A:** Yes, COAs are encouraged to partner with any other organizations to complete their project.

1. **Q:** **Are there any exclusions on spending?**

**A:** Grant funds may not be used for any of the listed ineligible activities in Section 4 of the RFA.

# How to Apply for the Grant

1. **Q: How do I apply for the grant?**

**A:** Log in to the MassGRANTS portal using the following link: <https://maanfgrants.force.com/s/loginpage>

* If you do not have an account, you can create one by clicking “Register for an account” on the left-hand side of the page (Figure 1).
* To create an account, you will need both your Vendor ID and the last four digits of your Tax Identification Number (TIN). If you do not know your Vendor ID, contact one of the Commonwealth departments that you do business with.
* After you log in, select the Grants Management tab on the left-hand navigation bar (Figure 2).
* Search for “Hybrid Programming for Councils on Aging” using the search bar in the upper right (Figure 3)
* Click on the title of the grant program you wish to apply for, in this case “Hybrid Technology for Councils on Aging”
* On the next screen, click “Apply” in the upper-right corner to begin your application (Figure 4).
* Fill in the appropriate information and click Submit when finished your application.

***NOTE: You cannot make any changes to your application after you submit it.***

For more detailed applications instructions, see the MassGRANTS App Guide posted on [COMMBUYS](https://www.commbuys.com/bso/external/bidDetail.sdo?docId=BD-24-1040-1040C-1040L-91917&external=true&parentUrl=close).

1. **Q: Can I make changes to my application after it is submitted?**

**A:** No, your grant application is final once you submit it. You cannot make any changes to the application after that point.

1. **Q: How do I pause and save an application in progress?**

**A:** At any point, you can pause and save an application in progress by clicking the Home button in the upper-left corner (Figure 5). This will automatically save your progress and return you to the MassGRANTS home page.

When you are ready, or the next time you log in, you can resume any application by navigating to the Home tab, selecting the Draft section, and clicking Resume on the relevant application (Figure 6).

1. **Q: Is there a page limit, word or character limit on the application?**

**A**: Yes, there is a 5,000-character limit on all narrative sections.

1. **Q: Who should I contact if I need technical assistance with the Grant Portal?**

**A:** For technical assistance, please email: [MassGrantsSupport@mtxb2b.com](mailto:MassGrantsSupport@mtxb2b.com).

1. **Q: Who should I contact if I have questions about the program and eligible uses of funds?**

**A:** For questions about the program and eligible use of funds, please email [MAHCBSGrants@pcgus.com](mailto:MAHCBSGrants@pcgus.com).

1. **Q: How will I know if my application was received?**

**A:** The persons designated as the primary and secondary points of contact in your organization’s application should receive a confirmation email which states that your organization’s application was received. If you did not receive a confirmation email, please contact [MassGrantsSupport@mtxb2b.com](mailto:MassGrantsSupport@mtxb2b.com).

1. **Q:** **What do I need in order to create an account on MassGRANTS?**

**A:** You will need your Massachusetts Management Accounting & Reporting System (MMARS) vendor code and TIN to register for an account. The MMARS vendor code may also be referred to as the municipal vendor code because COAs will use the vendor code for their town.

1. **Q: How do I find my Municipal Vendor Code?**

**A:** Your Municipal Vendor Code is an ID that your town uses to do business with the Commonwealth of Massachusetts. Vendor codes begin with “VC” followed by 10 digits. Your vendor code is the same code that you use to login to [VendorWeb](https://massfinance.state.ma.us/VendorWeb/vendor.asp?login=1). If you do not know, or are unable to remember your vendor code, please refer to the “[Vendor Code” section of this document](#_Vendor_Codes).

# Grant Award

1. **Q: How will I know if I am chosen to be awarded funds?**

**A:** Selected Applicants will be notified via email that their project has been chosen to be funded. The selected Applicant must complete, sign, and return any attached required forms, and comply with any conditions for receipt of award included in the notice. Upon completion of all required forms and conditions, EOEA and the selected Applicant will execute a grant agreement which, accompanied by the Commonwealth Standard Contract Form, will serve as a Contract between EOEA and the selected Applicant. The Contract will specify the portion of funds that support the project as well as any proposed and approved reasonable direct costs associated with the program(s) and activities.

1. **Q: How soon can I expect award funding to arrive?**

**A:** Provided you have an approved spending plan, funds will be released when your organization: (1) completes all required documentation, including an executed Contract; (2) has an active SAM.gov account; and (3) has a Municipal Vendor Code account.

1. **Q: Will our organization receive all funding up front?**

**A:** Yes, your organization will receive all obligated funding for your project up front. All funds must be spent by March 31, 2025.

1. **Q: How will my organization receive funding from this grant?**

**A:** Your program should already have a vendor code registered through MMARS. Upon receipt of all required documentation, including the signed and completed grant agreement, funds will be electronically transferred into the provided account.

1. **Q: Does our organization have to repay funding if data shows that the funding is not meeting the project purpose? How do we repay funding?**

**A:** Funding will need to be repaid if:

* The Awardee does not complete the approved scope of work.
* The Awardee does not follow program guidelines, such as failing to comply with reporting requirements.
* The Awardee completes their scope of work for less than the obligated amount, the cost underrun would need to be returned.

If any of the above occurs, funding will need to be returned in the manner directed by EOEA within four weeks of written notification.

1. **Q: What are the reporting requirements?  
   A:** Awardees will be required to provide baseline, interim, and final reports across an established set of Metrics. No metrics are required to be submitted as part of the application.
   * + *Baseline report:* Submission of the baseline report will be required 60 days after contract execution. The baseline report will include reporting across an established set of Metrics (see RFA Section 6.2) from July 1, 2022 – June 30, 2023.EOEA will also require at least two custom Metrics from each grant Awardee.
     + *Interim report:* An interim report will be required on September 1, 2024, covering the first eight months of the funding period.
     + *Final report:* A final report will be required on May 31, 2025, which is 60 days following the end of the grant period.

1. **Q: For how long does our organization have to retain program documents?**

**A:** Per Section 7 of the Commonwealth Terms and Conditions, Awardees are required to retain program documents and records for six years from the date of submission of the final expenditure report.

# Vendor Codes

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| MUNICIPALITY | VENDOR CODE |
| TOWN OF ABINGTON | VC6000191688 |
| TOWN OF ACTON | VC6000191689 |
| TOWN OF ACUSHNET | VC6000191690 |
| TOWN OF ADAMS | VC6000191691 |
| TOWN OF AGAWAM | VC6000191692 |
| TOWN OF ALFORD | VC6000191687 |
| CITY OF AMESBURY | VC6000191693 |
| TOWN OF AMHERST | VC6000191695 |
| TOWN OF ANDOVER | VC6000191696 |
| TOWN OF AQUINNAH | VC6000191796 |
| TOWN OF ARLINGTON | VC6000191698 |
| TOWN OF ASHBURNHAM | VC6000191699 |
| TOWN OF ASHBY | VC6000191700 |
| TOWN OF ASHFIELD | VC6000191702 |
| TOWN OF ASHLAND | VC6000191703 |
| TOWN OF ATHOL | VC6000191704 |
| CITY OF ATTLEBORO | VC6000192072 |
| TOWN OF AUBURN | VC6000191706 |
| TOWN OF AVON | VC6000191708 |
| TOWN OF AYER | VC6000191709 |
| TOWN OF BARNSTABLE | VC6000191710 |
| TOWN OF BARRE | VC6000191711 |
| TOWN OF BECKET | VC6000191712 |
| TOWN OF BEDFORD | VC6000191713 |
| TOWN OF BELCHERTOWN | VC6000191714 |
| TOWN OF BELLINGHAM | VC6000191715 |
| TOWN OF BELMONT | VC6000191717 |
| TOWN OF BERKLEY | VC6000191719 |
| TOWN OF BERLIN | VC6000191720 |
| TOWN OF BERNARDSTON | VC6000191722 |
| CITY OF BEVERLY | VC6000192074 |
| TOWN OF BILLERICA | VC6000191723 |
| TOWN OF BLACKSTONE | VC6000191724 |
| TOWN OF BLANDFORD | VC6000191725 |
| TOWN OF BOLTON | VC6000191726 |
| CITY OF BOSTON | VC6000192075 |
| TOWN OF BOURNE | VC6000191727 |
| TOWN OF BOXBOROUGH | VC6000191728 |
| TOWN OF BOXFORD | VC6000191730 |
| TOWN OF BOYLSTON | VC6000191731 |
| TOWN OF BRAINTREE | VC6000191733 |
| TOWN OF BREWSTER | VC6000191734 |
| TOWN OF BRIDGEWATER | VC6000191735 |
| TOWN OF BRIMFIELD | VC6000191736 |
| CITY OF BROCKTON | VC6000192078 |
| TOWN OF BROOKFIELD | VC6000191737 |
| TOWN OF BROOKLINE | VC6000191738 |
| TOWN OF BUCKLAND | VC6000191739 |
| TOWN OF BURLINGTON | VC6000191741 |
| CITY OF CAMBRIDGE | VC6000192080 |
| TOWN OF CANTON | VC6000191742 |
| TOWN OF CARLISLE | VC6000191743 |
| TOWN OF CARVER | VC6000191744 |
| TOWN OF CHARLEMONT | VC6000191745 |
| TOWN OF CHARLTON | VC6000191746 |
| TOWN OF CHATHAM | VC6000191747 |
| TOWN OF CHELMSFORD | VC6000191748 |
| CITY OF CHELSEA | VC6000192083 |
| TOWN OF CHESHIRE | VC6000191749 |
| TOWN OF CHESTER | VC6000191750 |
| TOWN OF CHESTERFIELD | VC6000191751 |
| CITY OF CHICOPEE | VC6000192086 |
| TOWN OF CHILMARK | VC6000191752 |
| TOWN OF CLARKSBURG | VC6000191753 |
| TOWN OF CLINTON | VC6000191754 |
| TOWN OF COHASSET | VC6000191755 |
| TOWN OF COLRAIN | VC6000191756 |
| TOWN OF CONCORD | VC6000191757 |
| TOWN OF CONWAY | VC6000191759 |
| TOWN OF CUMMINGTON | VC6000191760 |
| TOWN OF DALTON | VC6000191761 |
| TOWN OF DANVERS | VC6000191762 |
| TOWN OF DARTMOUTH | VC6000191765 |
| TOWN OF DEDHAM | VC6000191767 |
| TOWN OF DEERFIELD | VC6000191764 |
| TOWN OF DENNIS | VC6000191768 |
| TOWN OF DIGHTON | VC6000191769 |
| TOWN OF DOUGLAS | VC6000191770 |
| TOWN OF DOVER | VC6000191771 |
| TOWN OF DRACUT | VC6000191772 |
| TOWN OF DUDLEY | VC6000191773 |
| TOWN OF DUNSTABLE | VC6000191774 |
| TOWN OF DUXBURY | VC6000191775 |
| TOWN OF EAST BRIDGEWATER | VC6000191776 |
| TOWN OF EAST BROOKFIELD | VC6000191777 |
| TOWN OF EAST LONGMEADOW | VC6000191778 |
| TOWN OF EASTHAM | VC6000191779 |
| CITY OF EASTHAMPTON | VC6000191781 |
| TOWN OF EASTON | VC6000191783 |
| TOWN OF EDGARTOWN | VC6000191784 |
| TOWN OF EGREMONT | VC6000191785 |
| TOWN OF ERVING | VC6000191786 |
| TOWN OF ESSEX | VC6000191787 |
| CITY OF EVERETT | VC6000192088 |
| TOWN OF FAIRHAVEN | VC6000191789 |
| CITY OF FALL RIVER | VC6000192090 |
| TOWN OF FALMOUTH | VC6000191790 |
| CITY OF FITCHBURG | VC6000192093 |
| TOWN OF FLORIDA | VC6000191791 |
| TOWN OF FOXBOROUGH | VC6000191792 |
| CITY OF FRAMINGHAM | VC6000191793 |
| TOWN OF FRANKLIN | VC6000191794 |
| TOWN OF FREETOWN | VC6000191795 |
| CITY OF GARDNER | VC6000192095 |
| TOWN OF GEORGETOWN | VC6000191797 |
| TOWN OF GILL | VC6000191798 |
| CITY OF GLOUCESTER | VC6000192096 |
| TOWN OF GOSHEN | VC6000191799 |
| TOWN OF GOSNOLD | VC6000191800 |
| TOWN OF GRAFTON | VC6000191802 |
| TOWN OF GRANBY | VC6000191803 |
| TOWN OF GRANVILLE | VC6000191805 |
| TOWN OF GREAT BARRINGTON | VC6000191806 |
| TOWN OF GREENFIELD | VC6000191808 |
| TOWN OF GROTON | VC6000191809 |
| TOWN OF GROVELAND | VC6000191810 |
| TOWN OF HADLEY | VC6000191811 |
| TOWN OF HALIFAX | VC6000191812 |
| TOWN OF HAMILTON | VC6000191814 |
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| TOWN OF HANCOCK | VC6000191816 |
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| TOWN OF MONTEREY | VC6000191894 |
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| TOWN OF MOUNT WASHINGTON | VC6000191897 |
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| TOWN OF NATICK | VC6000191900 |
| TOWN OF NEEDHAM | VC6000191901 |
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| CITY OF NEW BEDFORD | VC6000192118 |
| TOWN OF NEW BRAINTREE | VC6000191904 |
| TOWN OF NEW MARLBOROUGH | VC6000191905 |
| TOWN OF NEW SALEM | VC6000191906 |
| TOWN OF NEWBURY | VC6000191908 |
| CITY OF NEWBURYPORT | VC6000192119 |
| CITY OF NEWTON | VC6000192120 |
| TOWN OF NORFOLK | VC6000191909 |
| CITY OF NORTH ADAMS | VC6000192121 |
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| TOWN OF NORTH ATTLEBOROUGH | VC6000191912 |
| TOWN OF NORTH BROOKFIELD | VC6000191913 |
| TOWN OF NORTH READING | VC6000191915 |
| CITY OF NORTHAMPTON | VC6000192124 |
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| TOWN OF NORWELL | VC6000191923 |
| TOWN OF NORWOOD | VC6000191924 |
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| TOWN OF OAKHAM | VC6000191927 |
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| TOWN OF PEMBROKE | VC6000191938 |
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| TOWN OF PETERSHAM | VC6000191941 |
| TOWN OF PHILLIPSTON | VC6000191942 |
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| TOWN OF PROVINCETOWN | VC6000191950 |
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| TOWN OF RAYNHAM | VC6000191952 |
| TOWN OF READING | VC6000191953 |
| TOWN OF REHOBOTH | VC6000191955 |
| CITY OF REVERE | VC6000192136 |
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| TOWN OF TOLLAND | VC6000192007 |
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| TOWN OF TOWNSEND | VC6000192009 |
| TOWN OF TRURO | VC6000192010 |
| TOWN OF TYNGSBOROUGH | VC6000192011 |
| TOWN OF TYRINGHAM | VC6000192012 |
| TOWN OF UPTON | VC6000192013 |
| TOWN OF UXBRIDGE | VC6000192014 |
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| CITY OF WALTHAM | VC6000192141 |
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| TOWN OF WESTHAMPTON | VC6000192047 |
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| TOWN OF WILMINGTON | VC6000192061 |
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| TOWN OF WINTHROP | VC6000192064 |
| CITY OF WOBURN | VC6000192142 |
| CITY OF WORCESTER | VC6000192145 |
| TOWN OF WORTHINGTON | VC6000192067 |
| TOWN OF WRENTHAM | VC6000192068 |
| TOWN OF YARMOUTH | VC6000192069 |

# Responses to Questions Submitted During the RFA Question Period

# Grant Overview

1. **Q: Are resources on hybrid technologies available?**

**A:** Aside from the information provided in the RFA, Awardees are responsible for conducting their own research regarding technology that may be relevant to their projects.

1. **Q: Can applicants access a recording of the Bidder's Conference that took place on August 29, 2023?**

A: No recording of the Bidder's Conference is available, but awardees can access the slides from the presentation on the grant website <https://www.mass.gov/info-details/hybrid-programming-for-councils-on-aging-grant>. Furthermore, all the questions asked during the Bidder's Conference have been incorporated into this FAQ document.

# Eligibility Requirements

1. **Q: Can the Friends of the Council on Aging hold this grant rather than the municipality?**

**A:** To be considered for a grant award, the lead applicant must be a COA located in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, but the application may include additional partners or subcontractors such as the Friends of the COA.

1. **Q: How can awardees determine if they serve Gateway Cities or Rural Communities?**

**A:** Awardees can visit this website for the definition of a Rural Community: <https://www.mass.gov/doc/rural-definition-detail-0/download>. Awardees can visit this website for a definition of Gateway City: <https://malegislature.gov/laws/generallaws/parti/titleii/chapter23a/section3a>.

# Eligible Expenses

1. **Q: Wondering if the Hybrid Programming grant would cover the cost of tuition for seniors to attend higher education classes via a virtual zoom session to be broadcast at a senior center for multiple seniors?  The courses do not require tests or grading.  Seniors do not live at the senior center.**

**A:** Grant applications must include at least one of the following components/activities: 1) Hybrid Programming Equipment; 2) Staff to Manage Hybrid Programming; and/or 3) Programming Expenses. Grant applications may also include tuition for higher education classes if the programming allows the Older Adult to engage with their COA and community, including information and access to resources that enable home and community-based support.

1. **Q: I believe I heard at the bidders meeting that an existing COA staff could increase their hours to accommodate the work involved within the parameters of this grant and be compensated. Would you confirm?**

**A:** Applicants must use the funds to deliver Hybrid Programming to Older Adults in the COA’s service area. This may include hiring personnel (e.g., COA staff and interns) or third-party vendor(s), or expanding hours for existing personnel to provide technical assistance, assist with troubleshooting, or act as the in-room or online moderator for programming.

1. **Q:** **Can grant funds be used to supplement wages for existing COA staff?**

**A:** Awardees can use grant funds to pay for staff to work additional hours related to grant activities to provide Hybrid Programming. However, awardees cannot use grant funds to supplant existing staff wages.

1. **Q: Is subscription-based software allowed like Zoom premium?**

**A:** Applicants may use funds to purchase equipment or software that enables the COA to successfully deliver high-quality Hybrid Programming. Eligible platforms/software expenses include virtual engagement/activity platforms, scheduling software, and virtual meeting software.

1. **Q: Are fitness streaming services an eligible expense?**

**A:** A fitness streaming service is eligible if it is complemented by Hybrid Programming conducted by the COA that allows Older Adults to engage with their COA and community.

1. **Q: Is technology to help participants hear in-person and/or remote programs an eligible expense?**

**A:** Speakers and other audio-visual devices are eligible expenses if the application describes how this enables an Older Adult to participate in Hybrid Programming. Devices for individual’s permanent use must have a value of $500 or less. However, medical devices (e.g., hearing aids) are ineligible.

1. **Q: Can a COA partner with a local organization (e.g., a YMCA) to support programming they already hold?**

**A:** Awardees are encouraged to partner with local community organizations.

1. **Q: Can COAs purchase a "zoom cart" which has a monitor, camera, computer, microphone all integrated to provide hybrid programs?**

**A:** Provided applicants can explain how this equipment is necessary to support their Hybrid Programming, these are eligible expenses.

1. **Q: Are integrated TVs or Neat devices allowed?**

**A:** Provided applicants can explain how this equipment is necessary to support their Hybrid Programming, these are eligible expenses.

1. **Q: Are integrated Chromebooks with internet hot spots allowed?**

**A:** An integrated Chromebook could be eligible if it is complemented by Hybrid Programming conducted by the COA and allows Older Adults to engage with their COA and community.

1. **Q: Could COAs use grant funds to purchase equipment for senior housing or another off-site locations to develop remote group programming?**

**A:** This is an eligible expense if this technology supports Hybrid Programming in conjunction with the COA.

1. **Q: Does the $500 spending limit apply to all devices, or only those given to Older Adults for permanent use?**

**A:** Any device(s) or equipment given to an Older Adult for permanent use (i.e., equipment not intended to be returned to the COA) cannot exceed the total value of $500 per Older Adult recipient. That spending cap does not apply to equipment or devices for the COA.

1. **Q: Could COAs use grant funds to purchase devices for a technology lending library for seniors? Would the $500 limit still apply?**

**A:** Awardees could use funds to create a device lending library for Older Adults, provided this lending library helped older adults access Hybrid Programming from the COA or its partners. If devices must be returned to the COA, the $500 spending limit per Older Adult recipient would not apply.

1. **Q: Can awardees include funds to replace devices that are lost, broken, stolen, etc. in their budget?**

**A:** COAs should include all devices, including any replacement devices, in their total requested budget.

1. **Q: Does the content of Hybrid Programs have to relate to using technology? Or can it cover anything the COA offers?**

**A:** Hybrid Programs can revolve around anything the COA or its partner organizations offers, including technology programs, art classes, fitness programs, music classes, etc. The applicants proposed content of Hybrid Programs must meet the definition of Hybrid Programming provided in the RFA.

1. **Q: Does Hybrid Programming need to be free for participants?**

**A:** COAs can charge a fee for programs enabled by Hybrid Programming (e.g., fitness classes, speaker series), as a way of sustaining the program after grant funds end. Likewise, awardees can use grant funds to offer their programming for free to allow more Older Adults to participate.

1. **Q: Can or should awardees use grant funds to purchase warranties or service contracts for devices?**

**A:** Awardees can use grant funds to purchase warranties or service contracts for devices. However, grant funds can only be used during the grant period, which ends on March 31, 2025. Warranties may extend past this deadline though grant expenditures must be incurred by March 31, 2025.

1. **Q: Can a member of the COA Board be paid for training in this program or would that be a conflict of interest?**

**A:** Please refer to this website for more information: <https://www.mass.gov/info-details/summary-of-the-conflict-of-interest-law-for-municipal-employees>

# How to Apply for the Grant

1. **Q: How do I know if (my town) is registered with VendorWeb to get a vender code and TIN number?**

**A:** Municipalities’ vendor codes are listed in the "Vendor Code" section of this FAQ document. If you need further support, please contact your municipalities manager.

1. **Q: Will we have assistance registering on the portal?**

**A:** For detailed applications instructions, see the MassGRANTS App Guide posted on [COMMBUYS](https://www.commbuys.com/bso/external/bidDetail.sdo?docId=BD-24-1040-1040C-1040L-91917&external=true&parentUrl=close) (listed as final attachment). For technical assistance, please email MassGrantsSupport@mtxb2b.com or call 866-406-2170.

# Grant Award

1. **Q: How will awardees receive funding?**

**A:** Your organization will receive all obligated funding for your project up front. Upon receipt of all required documentation, including a grant agreement signed by both you and EOEA, funds will be electronically transferred into the account you provide.

1. **Q: How long does this grant last?**

**A:** The grant period is from the date the contract is signed by both the COA and EOEA through March 31, 2025.

1. **Q: Will awardees be penalized if their remote programming has low or no attendance?**

**A:** Awardees will not be penalized for low or no attendance. COAs are encouraged to mitigate the risk of low attendance by adequately promoting the program and providing technical support to help Older Adults attend.