



Commonwealth of Massachusetts  
Executive Office of Energy & Environmental Affairs

# Department of Environmental Protection

100 Cambridge Street Suite 900 Boston, MA 02114 • 617-292-5500

Maura T. Healey  
Governor

Kimberley Driscoll  
Lieutenant Governor

Rebecca L. Tepper  
Secretary

Bonnie Heiple  
Commissioner

## MS4 Municipal Assistance Grant Program 2023-2024 Opportunity

### GRANT OPPORTUNITY SUMMARY:

- A. **Proposals Sought:** The Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection (MassDEP or the Department) seeks proposals from: groups of Massachusetts cities/towns; Regional Planning Agencies on behalf of groups of Massachusetts cities/towns; Massachusetts stormwater coalitions representing two or more municipalities; and/or non-profit organizations on behalf of groups of Massachusetts cities/towns, for innovative projects that will help multiple communities meet the requirements of the 2016 Small Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System (MS4) General Permit (2016 Small MS4 General Permit). The purpose of this funding is to help groups of Massachusetts municipalities expand their efforts to meet the 2016 Small MS4 General Permit requirements and reduce stormwater pollution through coordinated partnerships that emphasize resource sharing. Only projects that meet the specific requirements of the 2016 Small MS4 General Permit will be considered for funding. Interested entities should refer to the MS4 permit here:
- 2016 Small MS4 General Permit: <https://www.epa.gov/npdes-permits/massachusetts-small-ms4-general-permit>; and
  - Note to MS4 Municipal Assistance Grant Applicants: Grant Funding is available only for the Commonwealth of Massachusetts Fiscal Year 2024 (July 1, 2023-June 30, 2024). MassDEP reserves the right to extend the award period past the fiscal year to facilitate the completion of performance under the original terms of the award. Such decisions are at the sole discretion of MassDEP and are not appealable.
- B. **Overview and Goals:** Since 2012, officials of Massachusetts cities and towns have come together and formed regional stormwater coalitions to share resources, training, and best management practices related to stormwater management. Those regional coalitions also formed a statewide coalition to meet those same goals. In April 2016, the United States Environmental Protection Agency (US EPA) and MassDEP issued a renewal of the Small MS4 General Permit for Massachusetts, which became effective on July 1, 2018. EPA proposed modifications to the 2016 MA MS4 General Permit on April 23, 2020, and finalized those modifications on December 7, 2020. MassDEP expects that the work of regional and statewide stormwater coalitions will continue to result in cost savings as Massachusetts municipalities implement the requirements of the 2016 Small MS4 General Permit.

This information is available in alternate format. Please contact Melixza Esenyie at 617-626-1282.

TTY# MassRelay Service 1-800-439-2370

MassDEP Website: [www.mass.gov/dep](http://www.mass.gov/dep)

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MassDEP seeks to help facilitate the work of these stormwater coalitions, encourage the formation of new coalitions, and promote multi-municipal collaboration on improved stormwater management and permit compliance through the MS4 Municipal Assistance Grant Program.

- C. **Eligible Projects:** Eligible projects will result in tools or strategies that will help multiple municipalities meet one or more requirement(s) of the 2016 Small MS4 General Permit. Ineligible projects include funding for the operation and maintenance of sewer systems.
- a. Eligible projects must provide a shared benefit to multiple communities, including environmental justice communities.
  - b. Eligible projects must not duplicate work already done by any Massachusetts stormwater coalition or apply a previously funded project delivery to another region (previously funded projects by MS4 Minimum Control Measure at: <https://www.mass.gov/info-details/stormwater#municipal-resources-for-ms4-compliance->).
  - c. Examples of potentially eligible, MS4-focused projects include, but are not limited to:
    - i. Assessment tool(s) for identifying retrofit sites;
    - ii. Data intake and field-certification tool(s) for Best Management Practices (BMP) operation and maintenance programs;
    - iii. Formation of new regional MS4 coalitions in areas where none exist;
    - iv. MS4 capital investments, including investments in equipment and electronic resources;
    - v. Outreach and education services, materials, and/or strategies for (a) public engagement and/or (b) establishment of stormwater enterprise funds or stormwater utilities;
    - vi. Survey research to identify the needs of smaller MS4 municipalities;
    - vii. Asset management tools for tracking and maintaining stormwater infrastructure such as catch basins, culverts, and BMPs; and/or
    - viii. MS4-related job training opportunities that benefit environmental justice populations.
  - d. Both existing and proposed projects are eligible for this grant program, and funding will support work activities for any phase(s) of a project, from initial project planning through project implementation, so long as the work funded by this program is conducted during the contract period (i.e., started on or after July 1, 2023, and completed on or before June 30, 2024). All Applications must include a feasible timeline for completion (i.e., illustrating that the project can be completed on or before the June 30, 2024, deadline).
  - e. Preference will be given to projects that directly assist the greatest number of municipalities, including environmental justice populations. Information on which communities are classified as environmental justice populations can be found at <https://www.mass.gov/info-details/environmental-justice-populations-in-massachusetts>.

All assets, equipment, data, and/or other property purchased as a result of awards made through this program shall be owned by the grant applicant and/or municipalities partnering on an application, not by MassDEP.

- D. **Eligible Entities:** Eligible Entities are groups of two or more Massachusetts municipalities that are subject to the 2016 Small MS4 General Permit; Regional Planning Agencies acting on behalf of two or more municipalities that are subject to the 2016 Small MS4 General Permit; Massachusetts stormwater coalitions representing two or more municipalities that are subject to the 2016 Small MS4 General Permit; and/or non-profit organizations acting on behalf of two or more municipalities that are subject to the 2016 Small MS4 General Permit.

- E. **Environmental Justice:** MassDEP is committed to advancing equity, diversity, and environmental justice (EJ)<sup>1</sup> through its public investments. The agency seeks to prioritize the direction of these resources to benefit EJ communities and to address environmental inequities. To that end, MassDEP grant, and funding programs include criteria and evaluation parameters that emphasize equity, diversity, and environmental justice, consistent with each program's statutory authority and source of funding. Preference will be given to projects that provide direct benefit to environmental justice populations. Information on which communities are classified as environmental justice populations can be found at <https://www.mass.gov/info-details/environmental-justice-populations-in-massachusetts>.
- F. **Application Deadline:** Applications are due electronically by 5:00 P.M. on November 10, 2023.
- G. **Page Limit:** Grant applications, including the budget sheet, but excluding the cover sheet, must not exceed fifteen single-sided (15) pages in length. The cover sheet (Attachment A) is available at <https://www.mass.gov/info-details/grants-financial-assistance-watersheds-water-quality#stormwater-ms4-municipal-assistance-grant-program->
- H. **Funding Availability:** The total funding currently available for projects under this Grant Announcement and at the time of posting is \$300,000. Grant awards may range from \$50,000 to \$300,000 per applicant, although the MassDEP review committee reserves the right, in its discretion, to grant smaller awards to proposals of exceptional merit. If additional or unspent funds become available during the period, between the announcement of this grant opportunity and the announcement of the grant awards, MassDEP may consider allocating supplemental funds to this grant solicitation. Applicants must only propose project scopes with timelines that can be completed on or before June 30, 2024. All funding of awards issues through this program are subject to the availability of appropriations or funding from other Department sources.
- I. **Match and Other Funding Obligations:** Applicants are not required to provide matching funds. However, Applicants are encouraged to identify other known sources of funding for a proposed project on the Application Form, from both secured and anticipated sources. In addition, applicants are advised that grant awards involving capital funds, which is the case here, are required to be disbursed on a cost reimbursement basis, meaning that grantees will be reimbursed for funds already expended. To receive reimbursement for funds expended, grantees must submit a written request for payment, along with any other required documentation. All work must be completed on or before June 30, 2024, and grantees are strongly encouraged to submit written requests for payment, and any corresponding supporting documentation, on or before June 30, 2024, as well. Please see section L. for more information on required documents.
- J. **Bidders' Conference:** A Bidders' Conference using Microsoft Teams will be held on Tuesday, October 10, 2023, at 1 P.M. To obtain the meeting link information or the Teams link please contact Elizabeth

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<sup>1</sup> "Environmental justice is based on the principle that all people have a right to be protected from environmental hazards and to live in and enjoy a clean and healthful environment regardless of race, color, national origin, income, or English language proficiency. Environmental justice is the equal protection and meaningful involvement of all people and communities with respect to the development, implementation, and enforcement of energy, climate change, and environmental laws, regulations, and policies and the equitable distribution of energy and environmental benefits and burdens." See Environmental Justice Policy of the Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs (updated June 24, 2021): <https://www.mass.gov/doc/environmental-justice-policy6242021-update/download>.

Clark via email at elizabeth.clark2@mass.gov with 'FY 2024 MS4 Bidders' Conference Details' in the email subject line.

- K. **Total Anticipated Duration of Grant(s):** The contract duration will be through June 30, 2024. MassDEP reserves the right to extend the contract duration solely for the purposes of performance completion consistent with the terms of the Grant Award contract.
- L. **Final Report:** Upon completion of the project and with submission of the final request for reimbursement, all applicants shall submit a one-page summary of their project tasks and links or copies to the produced resources.

MassDEP reserves the right to request additional materials, information, and/or other documentary evidence demonstrating completion of work and/or compliance with program requirements. MassDEP also reserves the right to withhold funding until receipt of said materials, information, and/or evidence.

- M. **Applicable Procurement Law:** Grants—MGL c. 7A, § 7; St. 1986 c. 206, § 17; 815 CMR 2.00.

## INSTRUCTIONS FOR APPLICATION SUBMISSION:

- A. **Evaluation Criteria (general):** In order to be considered for a grant award, Applicants must: (1) submit a completed application that includes all required supporting materials; (2) agree to the program conditions; (3) commit to completing the project by June 30, 2024; and (4) meet the eligibility requirements. A MassDEP review committee will evaluate proposed projects based upon the criteria listed below. The review committee reserves the right to reject any or all proposals.

**Evaluation Criteria Components:** The review committee will evaluate and score the grant applications from Eligible Entities (as defined previously in this Grant Opportunity) based upon the following criteria:

### **Project Description (15 points)**

- How well does the Applicant describe the Proposed Project and the work to be covered by this funding?
- How well does the Applicant articulate how multiple municipalities will be helped by the Proposed Project?
- Does the project description include proposed project tasks, personnel, and desired outcome(s) for the project?

### **Meet MS4 Permit Requirements (15 points)**

- Does the Applicant demonstrate how the Proposed Project intends to help a greater number of municipalities meet one or more specific requirement(s) of the 2016 Small MS4 General Permit?

### **Promote Regional Collaboration (15 points)**

- How well does the Application demonstrate that the Proposed Project will encourage multi-town/regional cooperation and collaboration to achieve improved stormwater management and MS4 compliance efforts regionally or statewide?

### **Financial Need (5 points)**

- How well does the Applicant demonstrate the communities' need for financial assistance to implement the Proposed Project?

### **Project Budget and Timeline (10 points)**

- How well does the Applicant estimate and describe project costs?
- Does the Applicant demonstrate a realistic understanding of project costs by providing a budget with detailed and credible cost estimates?
- Does the Applicant identify and describe any match or other funding sources that will support the project?
- How well does the Applicant demonstrate a realistic understanding of the timeline for the proposed work?

### **Qualifications of Organization and Project Manager (10 points)**

- How does the Applicant describe the qualifications of the organization and the project manager to carry out the Proposed Project?

### **Project Benefit (20 points)**

- MassDEP will evaluate the proposed project's environmental benefits and economic benefits. Specifically, the Department will look at how the Proposed Project:
  - Furthers the goal of improved MS4 compliance and stormwater management for multiple municipalities;
  - Reduces community costs, both individually and on a multiple municipality and/or regional basis; and
  - Promotes collaboration and inclusive information sharing among multiple communities.

- MassDEP will also evaluate the extent to which the grant product(s) will benefit the Massachusetts communities subject to the 2016 MS4 permit.

**Environmental Justice (10 points)**

- How does the proposal describe direct benefits to environmental justice communities?
- How well does the project specifically benefit EJ populations?
- How are environmental justice communities involved in the Proposed Project?
- Which environmental justice communities or organizations are included in the Proposed Project?
- Are new partnerships being formed to benefit environmental justice communities?
- Does the Proposed Project promote collaboration and inclusive information sharing among multiple communities, including maximizing compliance benefits in environmental justice communities (information on which communities are classified as environmental justice communities can be found at <https://www.mass.gov/info-details/environmental-justice-communities-in-massachusetts>)?

- B. Application Completion and Submission Instructions:** All grant applicants must include the attached application form in their application and submit the packet electronically as a Microsoft Word or Adobe PDF file by 5:00 p.m. on Friday, November 10, 2023, to:  
Elizabeth Clark, Stormwater Coordinator  
Submit applications to [elizabeth.clark2@mass.gov](mailto:elizabeth.clark2@mass.gov) with the Applicants name AND “MS4 Municipal Grant Assistance Program” in the subject line (e.g., Subject line: “Applicant Name - MassDEP MS4 Municipal Grant Assistance Program”).  
Attachment A, Section 1 and 2 are available for download at <https://www.mass.gov/info-details/grants-financial-assistance-watersheds-water-quality#stormwater-ms4-municipal-assistance-grant-program>

Applications received after the deadline will be rejected automatically. MassDEP reserves the right to reject any and all proposals or request additional information if needed.

**C. Additional Required Documentation:**

Additional Forms: If selected for a grant award, the Applicant will be required to submit the following forms to complete the contracting process. Forms with an asterisk (\*) need not be submitted, if they have been completed previously and are already on file with the Commonwealth:

- Commonwealth Standard Contract Form filled out and signed by the Applicant. Standard Contract Form is listed under Contracts on this website:  
[www.macomptroller.org/forms/](http://www.macomptroller.org/forms/).
- Commonwealth Terms and Conditions. [www.macomptroller.org/forms/](http://www.macomptroller.org/forms/)  
These Terms and Conditions are incorporated by reference into the Standard Contract Form, and do not need to be executed separately.
- Commonwealth W-9 tax information form filled out and signed by the applicant with DUNS number and Federal Tax ID (\*) [www.macomptroller.org/forms](http://www.macomptroller.org/forms)
- Completed Contractor Authorized Signatory Listing Form  
<https://www.macomptroller.org/forms>
- Electronic Funds Transfer (EFT) form (\*)  
<https://www.mass.gov/how-to/tips-for-completing-the-electronic-funds-transfer-eft-form>

Applicants are encouraged to review these forms prior to submission of an application.

**ESTIMATED PROCUREMENT CALENDAR FOR GRANT APPLICATION/AWARD:**

<b>Procurement Activity</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Time</b>
Notice of Grant Opportunity (posted on COMMBUYS and MassDEP website)	Tuesday, October 3, 2023	
Bid Release Date (Posting Date) on MassDEP website	Tuesday, October 3, 2023	
Bidders' Conference: Via Microsoft Teams. To obtain dial-in information or the Teams link please contact Elizabeth Clark via email at elizabeth.clark2@mass.gov with 'FY 2024 MS4 Bidder's Conference Details' in the email subject line.	Tuesday, October 10, 2023	1 P.M.
Deadline for Submission of Questions to MassDEP, either at Bidders' Conference or prior to deadline, via email to: elizabeth.clark2@mass.gov	Wednesday, October 11, 2023	3 P.M.
Official Answers for Q&A published on MassDEP website	Tuesday, October 24, 2023	5 P.M.
<b><u>GRANT APPLICATION DEADLINE; ELECTRONIC SUBMISSION TO</u></b> elizabeth.clark2@mass.gov	<b>Friday, November 10, 2023</b>	<b>5 P.M.</b>
Notification of Grant Award(s) (Estimated) (POSTED ON COMMBUYS AND MASSDEP WEBSITE)	Friday, December 22, 2023	
Estimated Contract Start Date	Friday, January 12, 2024	



## ATTACHMENT A

Section 1 and 2 of application Form available for download at <https://www.mass.gov/info-details/grants-financial-assistance-watersheds-water-quality#stormwater-ms4-municipal-assistance-grant-program>

### MS4 Municipal Assistance 2023-2024 Grant Program Application

**Overview:** The Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection (MassDEP or the Department) seeks proposals from: groups of Massachusetts cities/towns; Regional Planning Agencies on behalf of groups of Massachusetts cities/towns; Massachusetts stormwater coalitions representing two or more municipalities; and/or non-profit organizations on behalf of groups of Massachusetts cities/towns, for innovative projects that will help multiple communities meet the requirements of the 2016 Small Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System (MS4) General Permit (2016 Small MS4 General Permit). The purpose of this funding is to help groups of Massachusetts municipalities expand their efforts to meet the 2016 Small MS4 General Permit requirements and reduce stormwater pollution through coordinated partnerships that emphasize resource sharing. Only projects that meet the specific requirements of the 2016 Small MS4 General Permit will be considered for funding.

#### Section 1: Applicant Information

Applicant Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Participating Communities:

Number of Participating Communities: \_\_\_\_\_

Project Title: \_\_\_\_\_

Short description of the work (<5 sentences)

Requested Funds: \_\_\_\_\_ Matching Funds (optional): \_\_\_\_\_

Name of person completing form: \_\_\_\_\_ Title: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_

By checking this box ☐ the applicant confirms that they are authorized to submit this grant application on behalf of the specified organization and participating municipalities.

#### Section 2: Ability to Perform Proposed Project

- A. Ability to Use Funds: If awarded a MS4 Municipal Assistance Grant, the Awardee must be able to enter into a contract with MassDEP within 15-30 days of award.

By checking this box ☐ you agree that your entity is able to enter into the contract and perform the project and meet all requirements of this state grant.

### Section 3: Application Structure

Please include the following sections in your application:

**Project Description:** Describe the Proposed Project and the proposed work to be covered by this funding. This project description should include proposed project tasks, personnel, desired outcome(s), and how multiple municipalities will be helped by the project.

**Project Benefit:** Provide information about both the environmental and economic benefits of the Proposed Project; specifically, how the project furthers the goal of improved MS4 compliance and stormwater management across multiple municipalities; how it reduces community costs, both individually and on a multiple municipality and/or regional basis; how it promotes collaboration and information sharing among multiple communities; and to what extent the grant product(s) will be transferrable to benefit all communities statewide that are subject to the 2016 Small MS4 General Permit.

**Meet MS4 Permit Requirements:** Describe how the Proposed Project helps multiple municipalities meet one or more specific requirement(s) of the 2016 Small MS4 General Permit.

**Promote Regional Collaboration:** Describe how the Proposed Project will encourage multi-town/regional cooperation and collaboration to achieve improved stormwater management and 2016 Small MS4 General Permit compliance efforts regionally or statewide.

**Financial Need:** Explain the need for financial assistance to implement the Proposed Project, including other anticipated or secured funding sources that will support portions of the project.

**Project Budget:** Detail the anticipated cost associated with the Proposed Project. Demonstrate a realistic understanding of project costs by providing a budget with detailed and credible cost estimates. For any in-kind or monetary match, explain how extensive it is and how it will be made available to the project.

**Project Timeline:** Describe the timeline for the work proposed, including a commitment to achieving final completion by the deadline of June 30, 2024, or earlier. Explain how the work can be feasibly completed by June 30, 2024, or earlier. Describe a plan for written and/or oral communication of the project's status and progress between the awardee and MassDEP throughout the project period.

**Qualifications of Organization and Project Manager:** Describe qualifications the organization and the project manager, and address how they will assist in the successful execution of the proposed project.

**Environmental Justice:** Describe in detail how environmental justice communities will benefit directly from the Proposed Project. If partnerships for the work are being formed, describe which organizations will be part of the work and what role they will play.