

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Priority Projects Program Advancement Grant

Fiscal Year 2026 Request For Response

How can I apply to this RFR?

Applications will be accepted on DER's website. In addition to this, applicants are solely responsible to monitor the Commonwealth's official procurement record system, COMMBUYS, for amendments to this Grant RFR announcement, if any, and for the complete RFR posting. Applicants may monitor the COMMBUYS posting through publicly accessible search and browse tools in addition to visiting DER's website.

I want additional funding to support my active, ongoing grant contract with DER. Do I have to apply to this RFR?

Yes. Entities seeking funding above and beyond the amount of their established grant contract must apply to be considered for additional funding in state fiscal year 2026. Applying to this Grant RFR does not guarantee DER will fund active grant contracts above and beyond the amount stipulated in the existing grant contract.

Will I need to set up an account of some kind in order to submit an application?

No. Applications will be accepted via a form on [DER's website](#) and there are no account creation requirements in order to submit.

My Priority Project has been supported by DER holding Technical Services contracts to advance restoration work. Will that be affected?

No. Active Priority Projects are eligible for Technical Services contracts with DER. Technical Services contracts are outside the scope of this grant RFR.

If awarded a grant, when can applicants expect the signed grant contracts to be in place to begin spending?

DER hopes to announce grant awards in January of 2026 with contract negotiations commencing shortly thereafter.

Please explain the list of eligible applicants further (e.g. NGOs, non-profits, etc.).

Any project partner affiliated with a Priority or Provisional Project is eligible to apply to this Grant RFR. The list of eligible partners may include: the Lead Project Sponsor, State, Regional, Municipal, Tribal government, Non-Governmental Organizations, and the public or private entity that either owns or has the permission by the landowner of the existing project within the Priority Projects Program to advance restoration work.

Eligible applicants must be an active stakeholder for the existing project within the Program and will need to clearly demonstrate their ongoing collaborative partnership. Federal agencies will not be considered as eligible applicants for this funding opportunity at this time. Additionally, for-profit firms that are not project site landowners will not be considered as eligible applicants.

The receipt of grant funds is contingent upon the grantee (if a municipality) being able to certify that it will comply with the Massachusetts General Laws, including G.L. c. 40A, § 3A, the MBTA Communities Act. Compliance with the MBTA Communities Act is determined by the Executive Office of Housing and Livable Communities.

My organization is not currently a project partner affiliated with a Priority Project, but we would like to be. Could I apply to this RFR to be added as a partner and receive a grant?

No. Eligible applicants must be an active stakeholder for the existing project within the Priority Projects Program and will need to clearly demonstrate their ongoing collaborative partnership to advance restoration work.

What if my application is not awarded a grant from this RFR?

DER reserves the right to award additional grants to applicants from this Request For Response if additional funding becomes available later in the state fiscal year 2026. All applicants will be notified of award status in the winter of 2026.

Can more than one entity apply for a single Priority Project?

Yes. Every entity that would like to be considered for a grant in state fiscal year 2026 for a Priority Project needs to apply to this Grant RFR. For example, both the landowner and the town where the Priority Project is located can apply to be considered for a grant, assuming both entities are current project partners.

Can the Lead Project Sponsor apply on behalf of all partners connected to a single Priority Project that are interested in seeking grant funding?

No. The Lead Project Sponsor or the landowner should not apply on behalf of another entity to receive a grant. More than one project partner can submit an application for the same Priority Project, and should submit individual applications.

I'm a partner on more than one Priority Project. Can I apply for more than one grant?

Yes. An eligible entity can submit more than one application if associated with multiple Priority Projects. Applicants will need to clearly demonstrate their ongoing collaborative partnership to advance restoration work for each Priority Project.

Can my organization fill out one application to cover multiple Priority Projects?

No. An eligible entity will need to fill out an application for each Priority Project its associated with to be considered for more than one grant award.

If my Priority Project does not submit an application to this Grant RFR, will it be removed from the Priority Projects Program?

No. The project will remain in DER's Priority Projects Program. However, if an entity does not submit an application for their Priority Project to this Grant RFR, it will not be eligible to receive grant funding for this Project in state fiscal year 2026.

If I apply to this RFR and my entity is not awarded a grant, will my Priority Project be removed from the Priority Projects Program?

No. The project will remain in DER's Priority Projects Program. The status designation of a project is outside the scope of this Grant RFR.

If I apply to this RFR and my entity is not awarded a grant, will there be other opportunities to apply for a grant in the future?

DER reserves the right to award additional grants to applicants from this Grant RFR if more funding becomes available later in state fiscal year 2026. Furthermore, DER reserves the right to issue another Grant RFR in future fiscal years to procure grants for the Priority Projects Program. Any upcoming Grant RFR opportunities will be posted on [COMMBUYS](#) and [DER's website](#).

Are Provisional Priority Projects eligible to apply to this RFR?

Yes. All active projects that have already been accepted into DER's Priority Project Program and are in good standing are eligible to apply to this Grant RFR, regardless of whether the project is a Provisional or Priority status designation.

Will my Provisional Project status be affected by this RFR?

No. The status designation of a project is outside the scope of this Grant RFR. Provisional Projects will not be removed from the Priority Projects Program if they do not apply to this Grant RFR.

What if I have more questions after this RFR is released?

DER will host a formal Q&A Period after this Grant RFR is released, which will require all questions to be submitted by a specific deadline. DER will release answers to all questions shortly thereafter. All questions and answers will be provided in one comprehensive document and will be a part of the public record. DER cannot answer scenario-specific questions about projects or restoration circumstances. DER cannot answer any questions outside of the designated Q&A period.

Is there flexibility in the funding amount I submit in my application versus what DER awards?

Yes. DER reserves the right to use discretion in awarding specific funding amounts to applicants. Award amounts will be determined based on further criteria which will be detailed in this Grant RFR when it is released.

How will eligibility requirements be determined for each application?

DER will use a combination of resources including information from MassGIS and existing Priority Project Program files to determine eligibility of projects and applicants. Existing projects that have already been accepted into the Priority Projects Program and are in good standing with DER are eligible to apply to this Grant RFR. Projects that have not been accepted into the Priority Projects Program will not be eligible for funding.

Only existing projects within the Priority Projects Program targeting restoration in the boundaries of the Commonwealth are eligible and must include activities related to a dam removal, stream crossing upgrade or other river restoration technique, cranberry bog restoration, coastal wetland restoration, freshwater wetland restoration, urban river revitalization, or combinations thereof.

Any Lead Project Sponsor, State, Regional, Municipal, Tribal Government, Non-Governmental Organization, public or private entity that either owns or has the permission by the landowner of the existing project within the Priority Projects Program to advance restoration work is eligible to be considered for grant funding. Federal agencies will not be considered as eligible applicants for this funding opportunity at this time. Additionally, for-profit firms that are not project site landowners will not be considered as eligible applicants.

Eligible applicants must be an active stakeholder for the existing project within the Program and will need to clearly demonstrate their ongoing collaborative partnership to advance restoration work.

Eligibility Criteria can be referenced in the Notice of Funding, as well as the upcoming RFR posting.

Applicants are solely responsible to monitor COMMBUYS for amendments to this announcement, if any, and for the complete RFR posting, if any. Applicants may monitor the site through publicly accessible search and browse tools in addition to visiting [DER's website](#).