



Connecticut Port Authority
Community Grant Program
Policies and Procedures

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1. Overview

The Connecticut Port Authority ("Authority") is a quasi-public agency, created by the State of Connecticut pursuant to C.G.S. § 15-31a to 15-31i of Chapter 264a. The creation of the Authority represents a major commitment by the State to invest in its port infrastructure to create jobs and attract private investment to the State. The Authority is responsible for marketing and coordinating the development of the State's ports and harbors and for growing the maritime economy in Connecticut.

C.G.S. § 15-31b of Chapter 264 https://www.cga.ct.gov/2023/pub/chap_264a.htm#sec_15-31b states the Purposes, Duties and powers of the Connecticut Port Authority.

2. Purpose

The Community Grant Program ("Program") is administered by the Authority to strengthen Connecticut's maritime economy by enhancing waterfront access, promoting maritime tourism, and supporting community-based initiatives that highlight ports, harbors, riverfronts, and waterfront destinations.

The Program supports community-based maritime initiatives that produce a clear public benefit for Connecticut's ports, harbors, riverfronts, navigable waterways, or waterfront communities. Funded projects must demonstrate a direct maritime connection and measurable benefit through public access, tourism, community activation, or planning and capacity-building outcomes.

3. Eligible Applicants

Applications may be submitted by the following Connecticut-based or Connecticut-serving entities:

- Connecticut municipalities
- Connecticut State Universities and Colleges
- Nonprofit organizations in good standing, including 501(c)(3) entities or state-equivalent nonprofit organizations

Applicants may submit more than one application, up to an aggregate annual award of \$10,000 per applicant, provided that each application represents a distinct project scope. The Authority reserves the right to determine whether an applicant and project are consistent with the Program's purpose and funding availability.

4. Eligible Activities

Eligible activities are organized into the following project categories and funding limits:

Category A: Tourism Infrastructure

Funding limit: up to \$10,000 per award. Public-facing improvements that enhance the visitor experience and improve access to maritime or waterfront destinations. Eligible uses may include interpretive signage, wayfinding, small-scale amenities, visitor-facing displays, and other improvements that support maritime tourism. Infrastructure projects must comply with applicable accessibility standards, including the Americans with Disabilities Act.

Category B: Community Activation

Funding limit: up to \$10,000 per award. Projects that directly engage residents, students, visitors, or community partners with Connecticut's maritime assets. Eligible uses may include local maritime history interpretation, stewardship activities, and public art or storytelling tied to maritime places that connect the community to a port, harbor, riverfront, or waterfront resource.

Category C: Planning and Capacity Building

Funding limit: up to \$10,000 per award. Early-stage planning or capacity-building projects that prepare a community or organization for future maritime investment. Eligible uses may include waterfront

activation plans, feasibility studies, concept designs, program development, needs assessments, or small pilot efforts that produce a practical plan, findings, or next-step recommendations.

Examples of Eligible Costs

- Program supplies
- Event logistics
- Signage
- Design/printing
- Consultant support
- Educational materials
- Equipment directly tied to the approved project
- Small-scale visitor amenities

Examples of Ineligible Costs

- General operating support unrelated to the project
- Lobbying or political activity
- Alcohol
- Deficit reduction
- Fundraising expenses
- Religious worship or sectarian instruction
- Costs incurred before award approval, unless expressly allowed
- Staff salaries
- Major capital construction

5. Funding Structure

The Authority will allocate funding each fiscal year (July 1st to June 30th) for the Community Grant Program. The Authority will disburse funding in accordance with its approved fiscal budget. A Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO) will be posted to the Authority's website prior to the beginning of the fiscal period and will remain until funds are expended. NOFO will invite qualified entities to apply for suitable projects or activities.

6. Funding Cycle and Selection

Applications are reviewed by Authority staff every two (2) months until annual funds are disbursed. Final funding decisions are made by the Executive Director. Selections are made to ensure a wide variety of programming is awarded across Connecticut's coastline. Six bi-monthly review periods will occur, with applications submitted by 11:59pm on the Application Period End Date being considered and awarded by the 15th of the following month (Approval Date):

Period	Application Period End Date	Approval Date
1	July 31 st	August 15 th
2	September 30 th	October 15 th
3	November 30 th	December 15 th
4	January 31 st	February 15 th
5	March 31 st	April 15 th
6	May 31 st	June 15 th

7. Award Requirements

All funded projects must demonstrate a clear and direct maritime connection and provide a measurable benefit to Connecticut's ports, harbors, riverfronts, navigable waterways, or waterfront communities.

Projects involving physical improvements or public-facing infrastructure should be accessible to the general public with any access restrictions or fees applied reasonably and uniformly. Applicants are responsible for compliance with all applicable federal, state, and local regulations, including permitting requirements.

Applicants must submit the following documentation as part of the [online application](#):

- Completed Online Application
- Proof of nonprofit status or public entity designation, if applicable
- Proof of site control or written authorization from the property owner, if the project involves a specific site
- Project narrative describing the scope, goals, category fit, intended audience, and expected impact
- Budget identifying requested funds, cost estimates, and other funding sources, if any
- Project timeline
- Letters of support (optional but encouraged)
- Documentation of partnerships, if applicable

Incomplete applications or submissions missing required documentation may be deemed nonresponsive and may not be reviewed.

Post-Award Procedures

Awarded entities must comply with the [General Grant Conditions included in the Grant Agreement](#).

The Authority may publicly recognize awards, including through an award announcement, check presentation, photograph, or other public-facing communication.

The Grantee shall report progress as specified in the grant notification letter. Grantees must notify the Authority of material scope, timeline, budget, or compliance issues.

Upon completion of the project, grantees must submit a closeout report summarizing what was implemented, itemization of grant fund expenditures, key outcomes, attendance or participation metrics where applicable, photographs or other documentation, and lessons learned.

Activities must occur within six (6) months of the Application Period End Date.

Rights Reserved by the Authority

- The Authority reserves the right to reject any or all applications, award funding in part, or waive technical defects or irregularities.
- The Authority is not responsible for any costs incurred in preparing or submitting an application.
- The Authority may amend, suspend, or cancel the Program at any time if deemed to be in the best interest of the Authority.

8. Contact & Support

For questions or assistance with the application, organizations may contact:

funding@ctportauthority.com