

Community Challenge Grants Program

FY26 Solicitation



Figure 1: Page Street Mural. Photo by Masaki Omori

Introduction

CCG provides City funding for community-led, neighborhood improvements. We recognize our communities' interdependence and collective strength and fund neighborhood beautification projects that foster resilience, safety, and belonging in San Francisco. CCG offers grants in two program areas:

- **Infrastructure:** Supports physical improvements to public spaces such as sidewalk gardens, public art, or street amenities.
- **Activation:** Supports activities that bring people together and foster community use, such as cleanups, night markets, or youth training or apprenticeships related to beautification.

Eligibility

General eligibility includes:

- Applicants may submit only **one application per cycle**. Fiscal sponsors may support multiple sponsored projects.
- The applicant must be a **501(c)(3) nonprofit** or work with a qualifying **fiscal sponsor**.
- The applicant or key project staff must have successfully completed **projects of similar size and scope** or work with a qualifying fiscal sponsor.
- The proposed project must be within the **City and County of San Francisco**.

Detailed criteria are in the CCG Guidebook (Section 4.1: Minimum Qualifications Screening)

Grant Request Amount: \$50,000 to \$150,000

Application Deadline

Applications are due **Thursday, October 9, 2025, at 2:00 PM**.

For more information, visit www.sf.gov/fy26ccg or contact the Grant Administrator at ccg@sfgov.org.



Application Instructions

To apply for funding, please complete the following:

1. Download Application Materials: Access all templates and resources at the CCG website: <https://www.sf.gov/fy26ccg>.
2. Complete Required Documents:
 - Appendix B: Application Questions to be entered into the online form.
 - Appendices C1, C2, and C3: Property Owner/Tenant Letters (as applicable).
 - Appendix D: Budget Template.
 - Appendix E: Work Plan Template.
 - Organizational financial statement (most recent fiscal year).
3. Submit Online: Applications must be submitted via the online platform by the deadline. Incomplete or late submissions will not be considered.

Please review Section 3.2 How to Apply in the CCG Guidebook for more details.



Figure 2: Climate Career Corps youth cleaning up Dolores Park.

Application Review and Award Process

Once the application deadline passes, our team will first review submissions to ensure they meet the minimum eligibility requirements. If an application doesn't meet these criteria, we'll notify the applicant—it won't move forward in the review process.

Eligible applications will be reviewed and scored by a panel of City staff and subject matter experts using the published evaluation criteria. Applications will be ranked within their program area—Infrastructure or Activation—based on these scores.

Applicants with the highest-ranked proposals will receive a Notice of Intent to Award and be invited to begin the grant agreement process. During this stage, we may work with applicants to refine the project scope, timeline, or budget.

Please note that while being selected is an exciting step forward, funding is not guaranteed until a grant agreement is fully executed. If we're unable to finalize an agreement within three months of the award notice, CCG may offer the opportunity to the next highest-ranked applicant.

We aim to be good stewards of public funds and fair partners to all applicants. CCG reserves the right to adjust funding amounts or reissue this solicitation.



Figure 3: Mosaic mural making at San Francisco Community School

Application Screening Criteria

Category	Screening Criteria
501(c)(3) Status	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Is the applicant a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization, or applying with a fiscal sponsor that is a 501(c)(3)? Was the IRS determination letter issued on or before October 9, 2023, or If the IRS determination letter was issued AFTER October 9, 2023, does the organization have at least 25 percent of the grant request* available as cash assets as shown in the submitted financial statements? For example, an organization requesting \$150,000, would need to demonstrate \$75,000 of cash assets in their financial statements. <p>* A fiscal sponsor will need to have 25 percent of the total grant requests available for each application they are sponsoring. For example, if an organization is sponsoring three projects that are each requesting \$150,000 for a total of \$450,000, the fiscal sponsor would need cash assets of \$112,500.</p>
Good Standing	<p>Is the applicant (or fiscal sponsor) in good standing with all of the following?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> California Franchise Tax Board California Secretary of State California Attorney General's Registry of Charities and Fundraisers Not suspended or debarred by the City
Organizational Experience	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Has the applicant (or its project staff) successfully completed projects of similar size and scope? If not, is the applicant applying with a fiscal sponsor that meets this requirement?
Project Location	Is the proposed project located within the City and County of San Francisco ?
Property Owner/Tenant Letter	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Is a signed property owner letter (Appendix C1, C2, or C3) included with the application? Does the letter reflect the final project summary and location?
Public Benefit and Access	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Does the project provide a clear and substantial public benefit? If located on private property, is the benefit to the property owner incidental? For projects with restricted access, will at least 100 hours of public access per quarter be scheduled and posted one week in advance, both online and onsite?
Project Time Frame	<p>Will all grant-funded activities begin on or after January 1, 2026?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Will the project be completed within: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 18 months, or

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ 24 months, if a <i>Love Our Neighborhoods Tier 2</i> permit or similar scope applies?
Budget Request	Is the funding request between \$50,000 and \$150,000 ?
Project Manager	Has the applicant designated a Project Manager with experience appropriate to the project's scope?
Interpretive Signage	<p>Will the project include signage that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • (Infrastructure Projects only) Describes the project's purpose and community benefit? • (All Projects) Includes the CCG logo and funding acknowledgment?
Maintenance Plan (Infrastructure Projects only)	If applying under Program Area A: Infrastructure , does the application include a five-year maintenance plan ?
Murals	<p>If the project includes a mural:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Will the mural be finished with anti-graffiti coating? • Will the artist waive rights under the Visual Artists Rights Act and the California Art Preservation Act?
City Compliance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is the applicant willing and able to comply with all City, State, and Federal regulations if awarded? • If awarded, will the applicant: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Register as a City Supplier within 10 business days? ○ Meet City insurance and business tax requirements?



Figure 4: Homeowner participating in Climate Action New sidewalk landscaping on Chestnut Street.

Application Evaluation Criteria

Category	Evaluation Criteria	Total 100 Points
Public Purpose and Community Impact	Presents a well-researched, compelling solution to a community issue, particularly one affecting historically marginalized communities.	10
Community Involvement Indicators and Performance Measures	Indicators and selected performance measures are appropriate, measurable, and demonstrate meaningful community impact.	10
Project Location	The project is located in one or more areas of high environmental justice burden, social vulnerability, or economic distress.	10
Community Engagement	A diverse array of stakeholders shape and support the project, including neighbors, merchants, community groups, and youth.	10
	Solutions are proposed by those closest to the issue.	10
	Outreach plans are robust, realistic, and include strategies to engage underrepresented voices.	10
Project Budget and Resources	Budget is reasonable, complete, and reflects an understanding of City requirements.	10
	Identifies and leverages additional resources that enhance feasibility and demonstrate community investment.	5
Capacity and Planning	Demonstrates the organizational capacity, relevant experience, cultural competence, and financial health needed to complete the project.	10
	Work Plan is thorough and includes the necessary activities to implement the project, engage the community, and ensure long-term success.	5
Longevity	<p>Presents a clear, feasible plan for sustaining the project's value or service.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> For infrastructure projects, maintenance responsibilities and funding are well-defined. For activation projects, applicant shows a path to continued service or impact. 	10

Appendix A: Application Checklist

Applicants may use the RFP Submittal Checklist below to gather items in advance of entering their package to the online application page.

Minimum Qualifications

- ☐ **IRS letter of determination**
 - Verifies 501(c)(3) status

Application Documents

- ☐ **Completed Application** (*entered via online form at <https://forms.fillout.com/t/8oGFKBeboaus>*)
 - Use Appendix B to preview and prepare responses
- ☐ **Fiscal Sponsorship MOU** (*if applicable; Max size 20 MB*)
 - Memorandum of Understanding between applicant and fiscal sponsor
 - Fiscal sponsor must meet eligibility criteria
- ☐ **Property Owner Letter** (*Appendix C1, C2, or C3; Max size 20 MB*)
 - Signed letter approving use of the project site
 - Use Appendix C2 if the project is under the jurisdiction of the San Francisco Public Utilities Commission
 - Use Appendix C3 if the property is under the jurisdiction of the San Francisco Unified School District
 - Includes project summary and location
- ☐ **Appendix D: Budget Template** (*Excel*)
 - Submit as Excel file
 - Use only the provided template with formulas intact
- ☐ **Appendix E: Work Plan Template** (*Excel*)
 - Submit as Excel file
 - Aligns with the proposed grant term and scope
- ☐ **Financial Statements** (*1 combined PDF; Max size 20 MB*)
 - Profit & Loss Statement
 - Balance Sheet
 - If you are on a calendar year, upload January 1, 2024 – December 31, 2024; if you are on a fiscal year, upload July 1, 2024 – June 30, 2025.

Optional Uploads

- ☐ **Work Samples** (*Combined into 1 PDF. Max size 20 MB*)
 - Up to 10 images and/or 1 video link (max 3 minutes)
- ☐ **Letters of Support** (*combined into 1 PDF. Maximum 3; Max size 20 MB*)
 - From stakeholders with no financial interest in the project