



**MISSISSIPPI  
WATERSHED  
MANAGEMENT  
ORGANIZATION**

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## STEWARDSHIP FUND PROGRAM

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### Frequently Asked Questions

#### Eligibility

***Is my organization or project eligible for funding?***

See [Eligibility Requirements](#) for details on this topic.

***Can the MWMO fund projects that are affiliated with an organization if they cannot prove various nonprofit legal statuses?***

Neighborhood groups that are officially recognized by the city in which they reside may be eligible. For example, the City of Minneapolis has a list of these types of organizations. Please talk to MWMO staff if you are in a different community, or are a different type of officially recognized group, and want to clarify your eligibility.

***When a private party and eligible applicant partner to apply for a grant, does it matter which entity submits the application?***

The eligible applicant should complete and submit the application, listing the private party as a partner.

***Can applicants act as their own consultants on a project?***

The eligible applicant is funded by the MWMO to administer the details of the grant. Eligible applicants may not serve a dual role as project manager and project consultant. In other words, the MWMO cannot fund consulting services (e.g. design, engineering, technical services) by the applicant.

***Can applicants apply for more than one grant at a time?***

Applicants may apply for concurrent funding for projects that are unrelated to each other. Applicants may also apply for funding on the same project through sequential grant cycles.

***Can applicants apply for more than one grant over time?***

An eligible organization may apply for multiple Stewardship Fund grants over time as long as their requests a). Don't exceed a total of \$63,000 in Stewardship Fund grants for the same project location or b). Are not for funds to support the same project as in a past grant.

## **Funding**

***Is there a cap on MWMO grant funds per project?***

A single property may be awarded the maximum amount of \$63,000. This is the equivalent of one Mini, one Planning, and one Action Grant. Applicants do not have to seek grants in this sequence or in this combination of grants types. The MWMO cannot guarantee that a property will receive up to \$63,000, as variables could change during each funding cycle that alter project funding.

***Can MWMO grant funds be applied retroactively to a project?***

No. Funding can only be used to reimburse activities that occur after the Agreement has been signed. Similarly, only matching fund activities, or in-kind services, conducted after the Agreement has been signed can be applied to the required match. All expenditures towards the grant must happen during the contracted period.

***When is the money provided to the grantee?***

Mini Grant disbursement is 50 percent at the beginning of the Agreement and 50 percent upon MWMO approval of project completion. Planning and Action Grant disbursement is 25 percent at the beginning of the Agreement, 65 percent reimbursed upon completion of activities or deliverables, and the remaining 10 percent upon MWMO approval of project completion. Reimbursements will be contingent upon documentation of the expenditure of matching funds.

***Are there defined hourly rates to record on the budget form for staff and volunteer time?***

To calculate staff overhead costs, multiply staff rate/hour by 1.2 and record the dollar amount in the budget form.

To estimate the value of volunteer time, use the current Independent Sector's nationally recognized hourly rate: [http://www.independentsector.org/volunteer\\_time](http://www.independentsector.org/volunteer_time).

### ***Are there certain things MWMO cannot fund in my construction project?***

Yes. In addition to those items listed as *not eligible* in [this document](#), MWMO grant funding must be specifically used for stormwater best management practices. For example, if a parking lot is being reconstructed to include raingardens, MWMO funding could be used toward construction of the raingarden (soils, plants, pipes, etc.) but **CANNOT** be used toward the parking lot (asphalt, curbs, aggregate sub-base, etc.). Contact MWMO staff to discuss more specifics on eligible expenses.

## **Project Details**

### ***What are the MWMO's expectations for grantees?***

- Meet with MWMO staff
- Attend an Orientation Meeting
- Prepare and sign MWMO Agreement
- Maintain open lines of communication
- Update MWMO about project events and timeline
- Work with MWMO to problem solve issues
- Promote your project and MWMO partnership
- Stay within budgetary restrictions and provide documentation of project costs
- Submit timely reimbursement requests/deliverables

### ***Are there certain types of projects the MWMO is more interested in funding?***

The MWMO is particularly interested in supporting engagement or physical projects that will reach underserved populations (neighborhoods or residents not previously involved in MWMO projects) and projects located in environmentally sensitive areas as defined by the MWMO Watershed Management Plan or the MWMO Board of Commissioners.

***Why does the MWMO need to know if your project will disturb contaminated soil?***

Soil contamination in urban areas is common and implementation of projects that infiltrate water will be contingent upon successful demonstration that there is no contamination of concern, remediation has occurred, or there is no potential for negative impact on surface or ground water resources.

***Does the MWMO require any type of permitting?***

The MWMO is not a regulatory agency; it does not generate permits for projects. Check in with your city regulatory department to ensure the project has proper permitting. The MWMO does have water quality standards, as defined by the MWMO Watershed Management Plan, which will be used as a measure of project impact. The MWMO Stewardship Fund Grants may not be used to fund projects installed solely to meet regulatory requirements. Projects may be initiated due to a regulatory requirement; however, Stewardship Fund grants may only be used to fund portions of the project that implement water quality innovations that exceed regulatory requirements or provide demonstration of new, innovative practices.