

Illinois Coastal Grants Program

Summer 2013 Grant Manual

Introduction

The Illinois Coastal Management Program (ICMP) is pleased to offer the first *Request for Applications* for the Illinois Coastal Grants Program. This round of funding will focus on projects pertaining to Lake Michigan coastal education and outreach. This focus will allow participation by municipal entities and local organizations throughout the Illinois Coastal Zone, allowing us to extend engagement with ICMP's program. We intend to raise awareness of Illinois Coastal Resources. As part of our award criteria, we focus on innovation, encouraging new, thoughtful approaches to education on coastal environmental topics. We anticipate future funding rounds will include the wider range of grant categories.

- The Illinois Coastal Management Program (ICMP) is a program within Illinois Department of Natural Resources (IDNR). It was founded in January 2012 with the goal of protecting, preserving, and restoring the natural and cultural resources along the Illinois Lake Michigan shoreline.
- Funding for this grant program comes from the National Atmospheric and Oceanic Administration (NOAA). NOAA's Office of Ocean and Coastal Resource Management (OCRM) partners with coastal states (including Great Lakes) and territories to manage coastal resources.
- This is a brand new grants program, and we're excited to focus our inaugural request for applications on quality environmental education and outreach projects. Subsequent grant cycles are expected to be broader and may have different award criteria.

Basic Information

- Submit an electronic copy and paper copy of your application.
- Application due date: July 1, 2013. Please submit electronic application before 5pm on this date. Paper application must be post marked by July 1, 2013.
- This is a reimbursement grant program. **The grantee must spend its money first and then ICMP will reimburse the grantee for eligible costs. Reimbursements will be made quarterly.**
- Grants will be awarded on a competitive basis
- Grants for this cycle range from \$30,000 to \$100,000
- Total funding available is \$500,000
- Grant period will be 12 months: October 1, 2013 until September 30, 2014. Extensions will not be available.

Project Priorities

The Summer 2013 ICMP Coastal Grant is exclusively for environmental education and outreach projects.

Environmental Education and Outreach are defined under this grant as educational and training activities, outreach, and information dissemination aimed at developing an environmentally literate citizenry with the 1) skills, 2) knowledge, and 3) inclination to make well-informed choices concerning the environment, and that 4) exercises these rights and responsibilities as members of the community. Scientifically-sound information about environmental processes and systems, critical thinking skills, decision-making skills, and personal and civic responsibility are underpinnings of effective environmental education.

- Funding may only be requested for projects within municipalities that are partially or fully contained within the Illinois Coastal Zone boundaries (henceforth “coastal communities”). Maps and a Google Earth layer of the Illinois Coastal Zone boundary are available at <http://www.dnr.illinois.gov/cmp/Pages/grants.aspx> .
- Project must be a stand-alone project that is not dependent upon potential future funding for completion. Adding or enhancing a coastal component of an existing environmental education program is permissible.
- Projects must be for public benefit.
- In order to be eligible, all projects must: (1) address at least one of the ICMP educational priorities listed below, (2) address at least one ICMP environmental priority listed below; and, (3) be for a project that satisfies the definition of environmental education and outreach above. The educational and environmental priorities listed below are not in order of importance or preference. Proposals may address more than one priority in each category. However, it is important that a proposal is clear as to what the focus of the project will be and how that focus will contribute to a replicable project that will model quality outputs and outcomes.

ICMP’s Educational Priorities

The following types of educational projects are the priority of this grant program. Applicants are strongly encouraged to integrate Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math (STEM), outdoor education, and/or service and experiential learning into all projects. Audiences may range from the very young through the elderly.

- **Community Projects:** Addressing environmental stewardship in the context of the Illinois Lake Michigan Coast in a local formal or informal educational context, and using outdoor, place-based, experiential, service learning and/or community-focused stewardship activities as the primary teaching tool(s). Applicants with projects in formal educational settings are encouraged to incorporate appropriate Illinois Learning Standards.
- **Teacher Professional Development:** Training educators or community leaders on how to teach about environmental issues, solutions and stewardship. Educators may work with students of any age group in formal or non-formal settings. This priority includes environmental education certification programs designed for teachers, naturalists, and other educators.

- **Outreach Projects:** Projects aimed at reaching local citizens to communicate environmental facts and stewardship opportunities that are relevant in their daily lives. Methods can include workshops, mailings, and public awareness campaigns, among others. Cannot be used for political advocacy.
- **Permanent Educational Displays:** Design, fabrication and installation of permanent exhibits, signs or displays within existing facilities that are open to the public with no fee for access. Designed to educate the public on Lake Michigan Coastal issues, stewardship, and related environmental issues and solutions. Outdoor signs or displays cannot involve more than minimal ground disturbance- please contact ICMP prior to the application deadline with any questions on whether your outdoor project is eligible for funding. These projects must be entirely within the Illinois Coastal Zone.
- **Exemplary and Innovative Projects:** Projects which combine two or more of the preceding categories or which use innovative techniques, media or venues to accomplish environmental education priorities.

ICMP's Environmental Priorities

The following issues, in context of the Illinois Lake Michigan Coast, are priority focus areas for environmental education grants under this program. The goals of the Illinois Coastal Grants Program include: to preserve, protect, and where possible, to restore or enhance, the resources of the Illinois' coastal area for this and future generations.

- **Restoring Habitat, Ecosystems, and Natural Areas:** These efforts bring scientifically-based understanding and service learning in coastal habitats, ecosystems, and natural areas to local citizens. The habitats in the Illinois Lake Michigan Coastal Zone support a wide range of native natural communities and contain important resident and migratory native species.
- **Preventing and Mitigating Nonpoint Source Pollution:** These efforts protect our waterbodies from nonpoint source pollutants such as sediment, nutrients, and road salt that threaten water quality.
- **Developing our Coast Sustainably:** These efforts help ensure that development meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.
- **Reducing Risks from Persistent Bio-Accumulative Toxins:** These efforts help protect the health of humans and ecosystems by reducing risks caused by persistent bio-accumulative toxins (PBTs). PBTs are toxic chemicals which persist in the environment and bioaccumulate in food chains. This topic includes fish consumption advisories and some of the beneficial use impairments in effect at Waukegan Harbor Area of Concern.
- **Encouraging Public Access and Nature-Based Recreation:** These efforts help increase the connection of people to the environment through opportunities to experience nature and the outdoors. Public access and outdoor recreation in the Lake Michigan basin are important components of the region's economy and quality of life.

- **Preventing and Managing Invasive Species:** These efforts promote scientifically-based understanding and service learning to help prevent the introduction of, and mitigate the impacts of plants and animals that have not co-evolved with existent species.
- **Addressing Climate Change:** These efforts ensure that citizens and ecosystems are prepared for, to the extent possible, the risks to coastal areas from climate change, such as changes in storms, flooding and runoff from changing weather patterns related to warming global temperatures, and impacts on Midwest water resources.
- **Coastal Economic Development:** These efforts will focus on the role of the Lake Michigan Coast on the Illinois economy, with a particular focus on transportation, recreation, tourism, and energy.
- **Valuing our Priority Waterways:** These efforts will focus on the following waterways in the Illinois Coastal Zone: Wilmette Harbor; the North Shore Channel; the North Branch of the Chicago River downstream of the North Branch Dam; the South Branch to its confluence with the Illinois Sanitary Ship Canal; Lake Calumet; the Calumet River; the Little Calumet River to its junction with the Cal-Sag Channel; Grand Calumet River to its junction with the Cal-Sag Channel. These waterways provide valuable habitat, recreational opportunities, and play a major role in the regional economy.

Eligibility Criteria

Eligible Applicants (submissions by ineligible organizations will not be considered)

- Units of local government
- State agencies
- Colleges, universities and other institutions of higher learning
- Park districts
- Conservancy districts
- Forest preserve districts
- School districts
- Port authorities
- Basin commissions
- Non-profit 501(c)(3) organizations whose mission includes environmental education and outreach
- **Restrictions to eligibility:** Funds are not available to private individuals, for-profit organizations, or entities on the Departmental Debarment list.

Grant and Match Amounts

- Minimum grant request: \$30,000
- Up to \$100,000 may be requested
- Most applicants are required to provide a 50% match, with the exception of governmental applicants from Economically Challenged Communities. Economically Challenged Communities are defined as being in the bottom quarter of municipalities in the Illinois Coastal Zone in terms of per capita equalized assessed valuation (EAV) and which also have more than 15% of the

population below the national poverty level. For 2013, the following municipalities qualify: North Chicago, Riverdale, Calumet Park, Blue Island, Dolton, and Burnham.

The reduced match criteria for Economically Challenged Communities is specific to the Summer 2013 Illinois Coastal Grants. It may be modified in subsequent grant rounds for this program to better assist such communities within the Coastal Zone in accessing this funding program.

- Federal funds cannot be used as match. Match may be cash or in-kind.

Match Guidance

All match, including cash and in-kind, shall be accepted as part of an applicant's cost sharing or matching when such contributions meet all of the following criteria:

- 1) Federal funds cannot be used as match
- 2) Must be verifiable from the applicant's records.
- 3) Cannot be included as contributions for any other federally-assisted project or program.
- 4) Must be necessary and reasonable for proper and efficient accomplishment of project or program objectives.
- 5) Must conform to all applicable federal, state, and local regulations

Volunteer Labor: Rates for volunteer services shall be consistent with those paid for similar work in the applicant's organization. Estimate the number of volunteer hours required for each task and multiply by this rate per hour. Grantees must submit and retain individual time records signed by all volunteers.

Volunteer Labor 16 and Under: Current Minimum Wage

Skilled Labor: Fair Market value of labor per hour with proper documentation

Donated Equipment: FEMA Equipment rates- see website

<http://www.fema.gov/government/grant/pa/eqrates.shtm>

Donated Materials: Fair market value of materials with proper documentation from provider

Other: Fair market value of In-kind match/donation with documentation and/or receipts of purchase

Indirect: General organizational operating costs (commonly referred to as "Overhead"), such as rent, utilities and other "indirect costs" may be used as match. These costs are ineligible for reimbursement under this grant. Indirect is allowable as match up to the grantee organization's approved Federal Negotiated Indirect Rate, to be charged as a fixed percentage on the direct costs incurred under this grant.

Documentation is required. If these rates have not been previously approved, the grantee is allowed an indirect rate up to 15% and may be asked to submit an explanation of the calculation for the utilized rate.

Project Budget Requirements

- To be eligible for reimbursement, costs must be identified and approved through the application process and incurred after grant approval.
- The ICMP project may be part of a larger project whose other elements are beyond the scope of the ICMP. If that is the case, the other elements of the project should not be included in the

ICMP or match funding. Those costs may be identified as additional leveraged funds, but not required match.

Timeline

Grant is for 12 months. Projects must be completed by September 30, 2014. **No time extensions will be granted.**

Eligible Project Categories

In order to be eligible, all projects must: (1) address at least one of the ICMP educational priorities listed above, (2) address at least one ICMP environmental priority listed above; and, (3) be for a project that satisfies the definition of environmental education and outreach above. The educational and environmental priorities listed below are not in order of importance or preference. Proposals may address more than one priority in each category. However, it is important that a proposal is clear as to what the focus of the project will be and how that focus will contribute to a replicable project that will model quality outputs and outcomes.

Application and Selection Timeline

Grant Workshop	Tuesday, June 4, 2013 from 2-4pm
Application Deadline	Monday, July 1, 2013 by 5 pm
Project Start Date	Tuesday, October 1, 2013
Project Completion Deadline	September 30, 2014. Extensions will NOT be available.

To attend the Grant Workshop, please RSVP to Luz Payan DNR.CMP@illinois.gov by the end of business day on June 3, 2013.

For consideration, completed and signed applications must be received by ICMP by the application deadline.

Submission Instructions

Application Materials can be found at <http://www.dnr.illinois.gov/cmp/Pages/grants.aspx>

1. Download and carefully read this Document, the Grant Application and the Grant Application Instructions
2. Complete Grant Application Packet
 - Application Form
 - Project Narrative Form
 - Detailed Proposed Budget Form
 - 501(c)(3) IRS letter of determination, if applicable
 - Letters of Commitment and/or Letters of Support (optional)

3. Please email completed and signed application packet to the Coastal Management Program (DNR.CMP@illinois.gov).

Application Evaluation

- Completed and signed applications which are received by the application deadline will be evaluated on whether they meet eligibility criteria and cost-share match minimums. Applications meeting these criteria will be evaluated by ICMP and IDNR staff following the procedures outlined below:
 - ICMP staff will select those projects that they determine best fit the purposes of the funding and will prepare a prioritized list of projects based on annual priorities as identified by the ICMP and fitting overall program goals as identified in Illinois Coastal Management Program document (Program Document).
 - NOAA staff will review and approve the prioritized grants recommended for funding.
 - The prioritized grants will be reviewed and commented on by the Technical Advisory Committee (TAC), as defined in the program Document, for technical merit, feasibility, and quality. The TAC consists of representatives from IDNR, Illinois Environmental Protection Agency, Illinois Natural History Survey, Illinois State Water Survey, Illinois Sustainable Technology Center and Illinois-Indiana Sea Grant.
 - The ICMP staff shall provide the IDNR Director a prioritized list of recommended projects deemed to be consistent with the purposes of the Coastal Grants Program.
- The Director shall make the final determination of what grants shall be awarded. Applicants shall be notified of the decision.
- **Conflict of Interest Policy:** A conflict of interest is defined as a situation in which the individual, one or more of their family members, or a for-profit or not-for-profit entity in which they have a substantive involvement or possible financial interest is likely to benefit if a proposal under consideration by ICMP is awarded funding. All reviewers will be required to sign a disclosure of conflict of interest statement in which they will disclose any possible financial conflicts of interest. In compliance with state law, reviewers will be required to recuse themselves from all evaluation, review and comment of proposals in which they have a conflict of interest

Project Evaluation Criteria

Ranking criteria include:

- 1) **Quality of proposal:** Projects will be evaluated whether the project goals and objectives are clear, the project approach is understandable and appropriate, and the extent to which the project leverages resources.
- 2) **Creativity, Innovation, and Uniqueness:** Projects will be evaluated on whether they use creative or innovative techniques or media.
- 3) **Need:** The following criteria will be evaluated: Does the project fill an identified un-filled niche? Is the project clear? How well does the project address one or more of the educational

priorities, and for classroom projects- Illinois Learning Standard(s) or STEM? How well does the project address on or more environmental priorities?

- 4) **Sound Methods and Science:** Projects will be evaluated based upon whether the approach is technically/scientifically sound.
- 5) **Anticipated Outputs and Outcomes:** Projects will be evaluated based upon the anticipated positive impact on coastal resources, the number of people served, and the quality of the plan to achieve this goal.
- 6) **Feasibility and Timeline:** Proposals will be evaluated based upon the extent to which the proposal clearly articulates through its budget, timeline, and narrative the feasibility of completing the project on time and on budget. The clarity of the plan to achieve outcomes will also be evaluated.
- 7) **Cost Effectiveness and Degree of Impact:** The reasonableness of the project cost in context of anticipated outcomes will be evaluated.
- 8) **Financial Integrity:** This is a reimbursement grant. Under this criterion, proposals will be evaluated based upon the extent to which the applicant can demonstrate ability to complete a reimbursal-grant funded project and provide required match.
- 9) **Organizational Capacity and Qualifications of Applicant:** Under this criterion, proposals will be evaluated based upon and the extent to which the applicant can demonstrate ability to complete a project on this scale, successfully meet grant requirements, and on whether the personnel are qualified.
- 10) **Partnerships and Local Support:** Proposals will be evaluated based upon the demonstrated level of local support for the project and demonstrated through partnerships and letters of support. Partnerships will receive more weight than letters of support.

Bonus Point Criteria

- 1) **Environmental Justice:** Projects which address the concerns and needs of segments of the population which have been disproportionately affected by adverse environmental impacts will receive extra consideration. This includes projects that address geographic areas with highly concentrated environment hazards and projects which extend work into communities historically neglected due to race and class.
- 2) **Participation in the Illinois Lake Michigan Implementation Plan (ILMIP) Watershed Central Wiki:** Applicants who create (or have created) a page in the Watershed Central Wiki as part of the ILMIP project will receive extra consideration.

Program Guidelines

Multiple Applications

- Multiple applications may be submitted from the same organization, but each application must be for a stand-alone project and shall not be dependent upon funding of other application(s).

Illinois Lake Michigan Implementation Plan Participation

- Applicants are strongly encouraged to create a Watershed Central Wiki page for their organization and project. See instructions posted at <http://www.dnr.illinois.gov/cmp/Pages/grants.aspx>

Partnerships

- Applicants may work with partners to develop, design and implement proposed projects. Partnerships are encouraged and can strengthen recruitment plans by increasing potential numbers and diversity of audiences, and can increase the variety of and accessibility to expertise needed to create a model project.
- Partners can assist in meeting the matching funds requirement. If an organization, other than the grantee, supplies any of the matching funds, this must be specified in the application. The grantee is legally responsible for the scope of work, maintaining records, and submitting progress reports and reimbursement requests. Reimbursement checks will only be payable to the grantee.

Subcontracts

- Subcontracting is permissible, however subcontracts must be disclosed to IDNR and subcontractors are held to the same standards as grantees. IDNR retains the right to approve the subcontracts involving funds from this grant program.

Reporting Requirements

- Successful applicants will be required to submit quarterly reports
- The following performance measures must be tracked and included in reports:
 - Date, number of participants, and topic of each education or training event

Additional Information for Applicants

- Confidentiality—Proposal information cannot be kept confidential. Grant proposals are considered public information under the Illinois Freedom of Information Act, 5 ILCS 140/2.5.
- Acceptance of Grant Contract—Successful applicants will be required to enter into a grant contract with the IDNR which includes standard terms and conditions which are not subject to modification. Failure of a successful applicant to accept these obligations will result in cancellation of the grant award.
- Successful applicants will be required to submit grant progress reports and reimbursal requests quarterly.

Contact Information

For information on the Coastal Grants Program, contact:

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Coastal Management Program
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