Santa Cruz Valley National Heritage Area
2025-2026 Grant Guidelines and Eligibility
(revised 9-10-25)

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1.   PROGRAM INTENTION

This grant program is intended to further the [mission](#) and [management plan](#) activities of the Santa Cruz Valley National Heritage Area (SCVNHA) through conservation, preservation, and interpretation projects and programming that enhance the natural, cultural, and historic assets of the region within our defined [interpretive themes](#). **Regardless of the project's main category, we encourage all projects to include a public education element to increase heritage awareness and inspire long-term stewardship. Applicants must align project with at least one action within the management plan.**

Please access our management plan using the above link and use the find function to search for key words relevant to your project.

2.   ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS

2a. Eligible Organizations

Past grant recipients may apply for grants year-over-year but shall not have two awarded projects active at the same time.

Entities must have operated within the boundaries of the SCVNHA for a minimum of two years AND must qualify as one of the following OR secure a fiscal sponsor* that meet these eligibility requirements:

- 501(c)(3) nonprofits (IRS tax determination letter required)
- Local, State, or Tribal Governments
- Educational institutions

All recipients, whether using a fiscal sponsor or not, must have an active Unique Entity Identifier (UEI) number from [SAM.gov](#) to be awarded federal funding, and must not be debarred, suspended or ineligible from receiving federal funds. **PLEASE NOTE: Obtaining and renewing a UEI is FREE. <u>Registration must be active.</u>**

* In this instance, a fiscal sponsor is an eligible organization that agrees to provide fiduciary oversight, financial management, and other administrative services to support the project deliverables of an awarded organization that does not have 501(c)(3) status or has not been in operation for at least 2 years.

2b. Eligible Projects

SCVNHA seeks to fund projects or programming that interpret, celebrate, and/or preserve the area's natural, cultural, and historic assets. Projects and programming must:

- Occur within the [boundaries of the SCVNHA](#)
- Be clearly aligned with the SCVNHA's [mission](#), [management plan](#) activities, and interpretive [themes](#)

Examples include:

- Conservation projects and partner initiatives in defined landscape areas or
- ecosystems (e.g. sky islands, desert streams, watersheds, Sonoran Desert, bird habitats) that restore, preserve, or protect biotic communities, including those that involve adaptive management (see Management Plan 2.2.2)
- Using interpretation and recreation as means to inform the public about ecosystems and biotic communities, and to build awareness and support for conservation action (MP 2.2.5).
- Projects that identify properties eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places and assist entities/organizations to list these properties in the National
- Register of Historic Places (MP 3.3.3)
- Identification, restoration, planning, and feasibility of historic preservation sites, and actively support and assist historic preservation initiatives of communities and
- partners (MP 3.6)
- Projects that consider the opportunities, needs, perspectives, and expectations of different types of audiences in the development of interpretive exhibits and programs (MP 4.2.1)
- Wayfinding projects that increase and facilitate tours of self-guided interpretive sites (see MP 4.3.5)
- Public art and creative outdoor landscape installations to interpret publicly accessible parks, trails, and community places (MP 4.3.6)
- Development of new or enhanced visitor programming (MP 4.3.7)
- Development of workshops or educational curriculum focused on the area's history, ethnic heritage, food heritage, or natural conservation (MP 4.5.4; 5.4.1)
- Community events that celebrate our culture, history, or natural environment
- We encourage projects that emphasize the use of sustainable materials.

2c. Ineligible Activities and Expenses

The following shall not be included as activities within your application's scope of work. However, these activities may be included outside your application scope of work. No expenses related to these activities should be included in your application budget (either as an award amount or as a match *). If you have questions about how these activities may be undertaken, please do not hesitate to reach out to grants@santacruzheritage.org.

- Political lobbying
- Fundraising
- Acquisition or any interest of real property
- General operating expenses, including staff salaries outside of project scope
- Catering, food and beverage, entertainment costs
- Expenses incurred prior to the award date or Grant Agreement date
- Gifts, memorabilia, or promotional items
- Any expenses outside the approved Scope of Work
- Purchase of equipment *

* The Purchase of Equipment is eligible as a Match, if the equipment is purchased with non-federal funds.

If you are unsure of eligibility or allowable expenses, please email grants@santacruzheritage.org for clarification.

3.   FUNDING PROVISIONS

- Grant funds are disbursed as reimbursements of approved, eligible, paid expenses with supporting documentation required.
- Awarded funds will be reimbursed based on actual expenses NOT budgeted rates.
- All awarded funds must be matched 100%. Projects demonstrating an ability to exceed the 1:1 match requirement are preferred and will be granted bonus points in the scoring phase of the application. Funds may be withheld if the match amount is not adequate to meet reimbursement amount or if the documentation provided does not meet requirements. Match MUST be from non-federal sources through cash, in-kind products and services, or volunteer services.
- All grants are federally funded and, therefore, require adherence to federal guidelines and regulations such as the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA), National Environmental Policy Act, and other Office of Management and Budget Circulars such as 2 CFR 200. Compliance with these standards is a criterion for funding.

- Indirect costs (overhead) are limited to 15% of the project total.
- Award amount of Employer-Related Personnel Expenses for assigned project personnel is limited to FICA, or 7.65% of gross wages for Social Security tax and Medicare tax. Other employer-paid benefits for assigned project personnel may be claimed as a match to the award.
- Applicant must itemize anticipated matching funds and their sources in the Project Application Budget.
- In the event that the SCVNHA's federal appropriations are delayed, recipient will need to cover all project expenses until federal funds are released to the SCVNHA account.

4.   TYPES OF HERITAGE GRANTS

Large Fund Competitive Grants (LFCG) award up to 50% of your total project budget with a funding cap of $25,000. This competitive grant cycle opens once per year and projects are evaluated on a competitive basis. It is preferred that projects be completed within a one-year period. Four (4) Quarterly Reports and one cumulative Final Report are required.

Small Fund Rolling Grants (SFRG) award up to 50% of your total project budget with a funding cap of $10,000. SFRGs are available throughout the year and operate on a first-come/first-served basis. There is no limitation to how many times an organization is allowed to apply, but the SCVNHA will only award one rolling grant per organization per cycle. Funds will remain open to applicants until funds are fully awarded.

A recipient of a Large Fund Competitive Grant may not apply for a SFRG during the active term of their LFCG project. SFRG recipients will submit one reimbursement request after the project has been fully expensed, and one final report due within one month of the project's completion date.

5.   GRANTEE REQUIREMENTS

Grantees must agree to the following:

1. Provide a minimum 1:1 match of SCVNHA award. Match MUST be from non-federal sources through cash, in-kind products and services, or volunteer services. All match sources must be fully disclosed as federal sources are unallowed. Grantee matches exceeding a 1:1 ratio are highly encouraged, and proof of such will result in additional points in the application scoring rubric. Volunteer hours and in-kind services or materials must reflect substantiated rate values and hours. Entire match

does not have to be secured/in-hand at the time of the grant application, but applicant must illustrate plan to achieve match.

2. Sign a grant agreement outlining the funding terms and conditions.
3. Attend a grantee orientation meeting. Failure to attend will result in loss of funding.
4. Comply with expenditure reimbursement requirements.
5. Submit progress and expense reports as outlined in the Grant Cycle Schedule.
6. Facilitate any audits requested by the grantor.
7. Finish the project within the Grant Cycle Schedule. Or, no less than 30 days prior to grant expiration date, submit in writing to the SCVNHA Board of Directors a request for extension outlining legitimate, verifiable reason for extension.
8. Acknowledge in press releases and promotional platforms the Santa Cruz Valley National Heritage Area for its funding support and provide collateral proof demonstrating such.
9. Abide by all federal and state laws, rules, regulations, and executive orders of the governor of the State of Arizona. Failure to do so will put the grantee at risk of losing grant funds.
10. Secure the following minimum insurance requirements, and provide SCVHA with signed certificates, and notify SCVHA within two (2) business days of any cancellation:
    a. Business Automobile Liability coverage for bodily injury and property damage on any owned, leased, hired, and/or non-owned autos assigned to or used in the performance of project not less than $300,000 each accident.
    b. Workers' Compensation and Employers' Liability coverage with limits of $1,000,000 each accident and an aggregate limitation of $3,000,000 for any number of claims arising from any one incident.
    c. Grantee must either include all subcontractors as additional insured under its required insurance policies or require each subcontractor to separately meet all Insurance Requirements and verify that each subcontractor has done so.
    d. Name the SCVHA as additional insured within recipient's policy.
    e. Provide assertion of required compliance and, if requested, provide necessary documentation.

Failure to comply with these conditions will result in disqualification of the recipient organization from receiving future SCVNHA funding.

6.   SELECTION CRITERIA

The SCVNHA Grant Evaluation Committee will select grant recipients by considering, among other points, the following (listed in no particular order):

- The project's ability to advance the SCVNHA's mission and management plan activities
- The expressed significance, need for funding, and urgency of the project
- The project's budget, with supporting estimates, documentation of secured or solicited non-federal matching funds, in-kind/volunteer match and resources (additional points for exceeding 1:1 match)
    - Equal match = 1 point
    - Up to 1.5 x match = 2 points
    - Up to 2 x match = 3 points
    - Up to 2.5 x match = 4 points
    - Above 2.5 x match = 5 points
- Evidence of community support for the project
- The project's timeline, with scheduled completion within one year of award
- The project's long-term objectives or impact
- The qualifications of the key personnel, including consultants
- The applicant's demonstrated ability to complete projects
- Location(s) or communities served with the SCVNHA.
- Recipient performance (project activities and reporting) from prior funding will be reviewed for consideration of new application

7.   SCHEDULE

7a. Large Fund Competitive Grants:

April 15, 2025:	Application opens
June 2, 2025:	Submission Deadline
August 1, 2025:	Awards announced
August 29, 2025:	Orientation
September 1, 2025:	Project work may begin
October 1, 2025:	Funds available for reimbursement
December 30, 2025:	1st Quarterly Progress Report Due
March 31, 2026:	2nd Quarterly Progress Report Due

June 30, 2026:	3rd Quarterly Progress Report Due
August 31, 2026:	Suggested Project Completion Date
September 30, 2026:	4th Quarterly Progress Report Due
October 31, 2026:	Final Project Report Due

7b. Small Fund Rolling Grants:

Open April 15, 2025

Submissions accepted, reviewed and approved on a first-come, first-served basis. Applications received by the 15th of each month will be evaluated and notified by the

end of the following month. Applications will be accepted until the budgeted funds are fully allocated.

8.   HOW TO APPLY

8a. Large Fund Competitive Grants

Applications must be completed via our Submittable platform. To apply for a Large Fund Competitive Grant, click here and follow instructions on Submittable to:

- Create a free account or sign in with Google or Facebook credentials.
- Complete your Application.
- Submit your Application on or before June 2, 2025.

If you have any questions, please email grants@santacruzheritage.org.

8b. Small Fund Rolling Grants

Applications must be completed via our Submittable platform. To apply for a Small Fund Rolling Grant, click here and follow instructions on Submittable to:

- Create a free account or sign in with Google or Facebook credentials.
- Complete your Application.
- Submit your Application.

Applications received by the 15th of each month will be evaluated and notified by the end of the following month.

There is no limit to how many times an organization is allowed to apply, but the SCVNHA will only award one rolling grant per organization per cycle.

9.   INSTRUCTIONS FOR COMPLETING YOUR APPLICATION

In the Budget Sections, include the basis of your calculation for all line items:

SECTION A: Project Personnel

Personnel are staff or volunteers employed by the applicant organization and costs may only include time spent working directly on the project. Please do not include costs for consultants, contractors, or vendors in this section.

Identify personnel by position. Include estimated project hours, hourly wage, and hourly fringe rate under Basis for Estimate (e.g., 20 hrs at $25/hr).

If project hours are attributed to multiple employees with the same position (e.g. Technicians working 80 hours) the number of employees for the group must be identified.

SECTION B: Travel

All travel must be necessary and directly related to the project.

Budgeted amounts should remain consistent with travel costs incurred by an organization during normal business operations and based on the organization's written travel policy. In the absence of a written travel policy, organizations must follow the regulations prescribed by the General Services Administration (GSA): www.gsa.gov.

SECTION C: Equipment

The Purchase of Equipment is ONLY eligible as a Match, and ONLY if the equipment is purchased with non-federal funds.

For rentals, include purpose, rate, and time duration needed.

SECTION D: Supplies/Materials/Rentals

Supplies are generally defined as items with an acquisition cost of $10,000 or less and a useful life expectancy of less than one year. Supply items must be direct costs to the project and largely, if not fully, consumed during the project.

List all supplies, noting their purpose in the project and the basis of cost (e.g., vendor quotes, catalog prices, prior invoices, etc.).

SECTION E: Contractual Services (Contractors & Vendors)

A contractor is a legal entity contracted to provide goods and services within normal business operations, provides similar goods or services to many different purchasers, operates in a competitive environment, provides goods or services that are ancillary to the

operation of the grant project, and is not subject to compliance requirements of the Federal program. All characteristics above may not be present.

List all vendors supplying commercial supplies or services used to support the project. All vendor work must be competitively selected.

SECTION F: Construction

Construction is generally defined as construction, alteration, or repair (including dredging, excavating, and painting) of buildings, structures, or other real property. List all proposed construction, providing a basis of cost such as engineering estimates, adobe repair, etc., and purpose as it applies to the Project Objectives.

SECTION G: Other Direct Costs

Other direct costs are items required for the project which do not fit clearly into other categories. Indirect Costs should not be included in this section.

Basis of cost should be based on vendor quotes, prior purchases of similar or like items, published price list, established organizational rates, etc.

SECTION H: Indirect Costs

Itemize all expenses included as an indirect cost (for example, rent, utilities). Insurance premiums may only be included as a match, not an award amount.

Indirect costs shall not exceed 15 percent of the total project budget.

10. SUBMISSION CHECKLIST

- o Please read the application form carefully and follow instructions. Contact grants@santacruzheritage.org for clarification.
- o The requested information or the term "Not Applicable" should be entered in the space provided. Do not leave items blank.
- o Incomplete, faxed, or handwritten applications will not be considered.
- o Submissions of videos and oversized documents are discouraged.
- o Please keep attachments to a minimum.
- o The following materials must be submitted for your application to be considered:
    1. An electronically signed copy of the completed application (with all sections completed adequately)
    2. The applicant's Articles of Incorporation (for nonprofit organizations)
    3. A list of applicant's current board of directors (for nonprofit organizations)

4. Applicant's Internal Revenue Service determination letter of tax-exempt status. If tax-exempt status has not been fully approved by the IRS, please provide evidence of filing for certification and letter of opinion from an attorney concerning the applicant's tax status (for nonprofit organizations)
5. Documentation that the applicant is part of a federal, state, county, or local government (public agencies)
6. Evidence of secured or pending non-federal matching funds
7. A minimum of two letters of endorsement from pertinent, verifiable, interested stakeholders (not paid vendors or consultants)
1. Four different digital images, submitted electronically, identified by project name, location, and date. Photos must include at least one overall view of the property. Please include photo credit information.
2. A signed Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) of consent between property owner and applicant stating who will own and maintain property after completion of project (if the applicant does not own the property).
3. If project includes construction, contractor must provide proof of insurance, license, bond, and AZ ROC number.