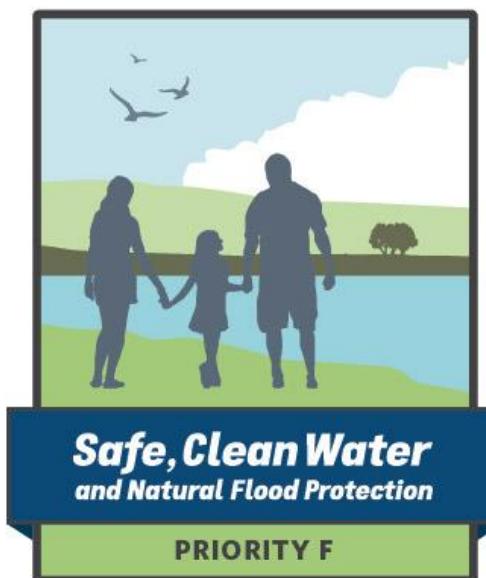


**SAFE, CLEAN WATER AND  
NATURAL FLOOD PROTECTION PROGRAM**

**GRANTS & PARTNERSHIPS**

**2025 STANDARD GRANT GUIDELINES**



**Safe, Clean Water and Natural Flood Protection Program  
Funded by a Special Parcel Tax**

**YOUR TAX DOLLARS AT WORK**



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# SAFE, CLEAN WATER AND NATURAL FLOOD PROTECTION PROGRAM

## 2025 STANDARD GRANT GUIDELINES

### 1. ABOUT SANTA CLARA VALLEY WATER DISTRICT

Santa Clara Valley Water District (Valley Water) is a public agency providing water supply, flood risk reduction, and stream stewardship for Santa Clara County. Valley Water manages an integrated water resources system that includes the supply of clean safe water, flood risk reduction and stewardship of streams on behalf of Santa Clara County's two million residents. Valley Water effectively manages the county's groundwater resources, ten dams and surface water reservoirs, three water treatment plants, a purification center, a state-of-the-art water quality laboratory, and approximately 333 miles of streams.

Valley Water's mission is to provide Silicon Valley safe, clean water for a healthy life, environment, and economy.

### 2. ABOUT THE SAFE, CLEAN WATER PROGRAM

The Safe, Clean Water and Natural Flood Protection Program was first passed by voters in 2000 as the Clean, Safe Creeks and Natural Flood Protection Plan, then again in 2012 as the Safe, Clean Water and Natural Flood Protection Program. In November 2020, voters in Santa Clara County overwhelmingly approved Measure S, a renewal of Valley Water's Safe, Clean Water and Natural Flood Protection (Safe, Clean Water) Program. The renewal of the Safe, Clean Water Program provides approximately \$47 million annually for local projects that deliver safe, clean water, natural flood protection, and environmental stewardship to all the communities in Santa Clara County.

As part of Priority F, Support Public Health, and Public Safety for Our Community, funding for community grants and partnerships is organized under Project F9: Grants and Partnerships for Safe, Clean Water, Flood Protection, and Environmental Stewardship.

#### 2.1. Project F9: Grants and Partnerships for Safe, Clean Water, Flood Protection, and Environmental Stewardship

- a. Project F9 provides grants and partnerships for agencies, organizations and individuals for water conservation, pollution prevention, creek cleanups and education, wildlife habitat restoration and wildlife corridors and crossings, and access to trails and open space. Eligible projects include water conservation; recycled water programs and infrastructure; pollution prevention programs; watershed stewardship; creek cleanups; education; and developing plans and/or implementing projects that create or enhance wetland, riparian and tidal marsh habitat; protect special status species; improve fish passage and habitat; remove non-native, invasive plant species; plant native species; partnerships to remove flood-

inducing blockages, and provide access to creekside trails or trails that provide a significant link to the creekside trail network.

(1) Project F9 Benefits

- (a) Leverages community resources for efficient use of funds to implement projects that conserve water, prevent trash and contaminants from entering our waterways and groundwater, enhance creek and bay ecosystems, and expand trail and open space access.
- (b) Increases collaborations and partnerships with cities, the county, nonprofit organizations, schools and other stakeholders.
- (c) Promotes public involvement, awareness and education of safe, clean drinking water, flood protection and environmental stewardship through community-led projects.

(2) Key Performance Indicators (FY22–36)

- (a) Provide a Standard Grant and partnership cycle each year for projects related to safe, clean drinking water, flood protection and environmental stewardship.
- (b) Provide annual funding for bottle filling stations to increase drinking water accessibility, with priority for installations in economically disadvantaged communities and locations that serve school-age children and students.
- (c) Provide annual mini-grant funding opportunity for projects related to safe, clean drinking water, flood protection and environmental stewardship.

### 3. SAFE, CLEAN WATER GRANTS AND PARTNERSHIPS PROGRAM

#### 3.1. Program Administration

- a. The Safe, Clean Water Grants and Partnership Program (Grants Program) is housed in the Office of Civic Engagement (OCE) within the External Affairs Division. OCE partners with the community through grants, volunteer opportunities, and educational activities to raise public awareness and interest in water management resource issues, water pollution prevention, water conservation and build understanding, trust, and support of Valley Water's goals and mission.
- b. Grants Program staff are responsible for managing day-to-day grant administration and ensuring the grant application and evaluation processes are open, fair, and transparent.

### **3.2. Grants and Partnerships Program Redesign**

- a. Valley Water initiated the Grants Program Redesign Project (Redesign Project) in Fiscal Year (FY) 2023 to update and improve the Grants Program, align with the changes adopted through the passage of Measure S, and address the recommendations from the 2021 Grants Management Performance Audit Report.
- b. The approach for implementing the Grants Program Redesign consists of two parts: streamlining grant administration and updating the Standard Grant Program (Standard Grants) criteria.
  - (1) Streamlining the Grants Program administration will address the audit recommendations that apply to standard grants, including scaling the application and reporting requirements to fit each grant's size, risk, and complexity and aligning with the expanded Safe, Clean Water Program under Measure S.
- c. On May 27, 2024, Valley Water's Board of Directors (Board) approved significant improvements to the Safe, Clean Water Grants and Partnerships (Grants) Program, paving the way for their implementation in FY 2025.
- d. The new updates that apply to Standard Grants include:
  - (1) Recategorizing grant types into the following categories:
    - (a) Education Grants
    - (b) Planning Grants
    - (c) Stewardship (Program) Grants
    - (d) Implementation Grants (available in FY 2026)
  - (2) Implementing alternating grant categories every other year (Implementation Grant opportunities will be available in FY 2026).
  - (3) Reducing the match funding requirement to 15% for Stewardship and Implementation Grant categories.
  - (4) Eliminating a match funding requirement for Education and Planning Grants.
  - (5) Establishing a minimum and maximum grant request amount per project (\$10,001 to \$150,000 for Education, Planning, and Stewardship Grants).
  - (6) Streamlining the Application and Agreement development processes.

- (7) Updating the eligibility requirements for applicants.
- (8) Making grantee insurance costs associated with the grant project eligible for reimbursement.

## **4. STANDARD GRANTS**

### **4.1. Purpose**

- a. The purpose of the Standard Grants is to provide competitive grant funding opportunities for community projects related to safe, clean drinking water, flood protection, and environmental stewardship.
- b. This *Safe, Clean Water and Natural Flood Protection Program Grants and Partnerships 2025 Standard Grant Guidelines* (Guidelines) document provides information about the Standard Grants funding opportunities available.

### **4.2. Funding**

- a. In the FY 2025 Standard Grants cycle, a total of \$1,870,000 in grants is available to fund a diverse range of project types, project locations, and project sizes within the eligible categories.
- b. A project may be authorized for the full Requested Funding Amount. Valley Water's goal is to award full funding up to \$150,000 per project; however, the Valley Water Board will ultimately determine the final Grant Award Amount(s).
- c. The funding amount available is subject to change.
- d. Not all projects that meet minimum requirements are guaranteed to receive funding.
- e. Projects must be completed within three (3) years for Education Grants and Planning Grants, and five (5) years for Stewardship Grants following the Agreement Effective Date.
- f. Awards will be provided on a reimbursement basis. The final ten percent (10%) of the reimbursable Grant Award Amount will be retained until project completion.
- g. Funds may not be used for:
  - (1) Pre-award costs
  - (2) Proprietary work, the results of which cannot be released to the public
  - (3) Ineligible costs (as defined in Section 4.6 Ineligible Costs)

#### **4.3. Eligible Applicants**

- a. Eligible entities for the Education, Planning, and Stewardship Grant opportunities include:
  - (1) Local cities, towns, and county agencies
  - (2) Local nonprofit organizations with a 501(c)(3) tax exempt status
  - (3) Water agencies/districts (public, not-for-profit)
  - (4) Open space, resource conservation, and special districts
  - (5) Schools, community colleges, and colleges/universities (public, not-for-profit)
- b. Eligible Applicants may seek grant funding for more than one project; however, Valley Water will only award one grant per project.

#### **4.4. Eligible Projects**

- a. Proposed projects must be located within Santa Clara County<sup>1</sup> and support at least one of the following Safe, Clean Water Program priorities:
  - (1) Safe, clean drinking water and water conservation
  - (2) Flood risk reduction
  - (3) Environmental stewardship
- b. In FY 2025, the following Standard Grant categories are available:
  - (1) ***Education Grants*** are for projects with activities that are strictly educational. Examples include presentations, curriculum or material development, educational videos, and field trips or tours (including transportation). These projects would not involve direct or foreseeable physical changes to the environment, such as soil removal, construction activities, and plantings.
  - (2) ***Planning Grants*** are for projects that consist solely of activities related to planning, design, environmental resource investigations, academic research, or feasibility studies that do not have an implementation element. These projects would either not result in direct or foreseeable physical changes, such as soil removal, construction activities, and plantings, to the environment, or would only involve minor physical changes associated with investigative sampling, surveying, and testing activities.

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<sup>1</sup> For projects that occur in multiple counties, Valley Water will only fund activities that occur within the portion of the project that lies within and benefits Santa Clara County.

(3) **Stewardship Grants** are for smaller-scale implementation or capital projects such as litter/pollution cleanups, native plant community gardens, water conservation projects, minor habitat restoration (under 5 acres), minor construction of structures/facilities, or alteration/improvement to existing facilities.<sup>2</sup>

c. **Implementation Grants** are not available in the FY 2025 Standard Grant Cycle.<sup>3</sup>

#### **4.5. Ineligible Projects**

a. The following projects and activities will not be considered for award:

- (1) Projects located outside of Santa Clara County and/or do not benefit residents of Santa Clara County.
- (2) Projects with advocacy or political components, including political endorsements, petitions, fundraising, legislation, or any other activity directed toward the success or failure of a political party, candidate, political office, or political group.
- (3) Projects that are inaccessible to the general public or that require mandatory payment or fees for participation.
- (4) Mitigation projects.
- (5) Projects designed to meet regulatory or permit obligations (unless grant funding is for project activities above and beyond required activities).
- (6) Operations and maintenance of existing mitigation or enhancement projects.
- (7) Operations and maintenance of existing projects, programs, or Applicant's general ongoing and day-to-day operations.

#### **4.6. Ineligible Costs**

a. The following project activities and costs will not be considered for funding or reimbursement:

- (1) Pre-award expenditures.
- (2) Land acquisition.
- (3) Supplement other Valley Water funds for the same project or work at the same time. For example, if an applicant is under contract through another program at Valley Water, then they cannot apply for grant funding for the same project or scope during the same period.

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<sup>2</sup> Stewardship Grants were formally known and approved by the Board as "Program" Grants. For clarity, the name has been changed, but all other aspects of this grant category remain the same.

<sup>3</sup> Standard grant categories will alternate every other year. Implementation Grant opportunities will be available in FY 2026.

- (4) Supplement other Valley Water programs, such as adopting a creek or receiving a landscape rebate.
- (5) Any costs that are not directly related to the project, including, but not limited to:
  - (a) Airfare, long-distance travel, lodging, and gasoline<sup>4</sup>
  - (b) Professional development, conferences, professional licensing or accreditations.
  - (c) Operational costs such as office rent, utilities, office equipment, taxes, general insurance costs, audiovisual equipment, electronics, business advertising, cellular phones, etc.
  - (d) Food and beverages for staff-only meetings or events.
  - (e) Alcohol, marijuana, or medications.
  - (f) Purchase, repair, or maintenance of vehicles.
  - (g) Construction equipment.

#### **4.7. Diversity, Inclusion, Equity, and Environmental Justice**

- a. Valley Water is committed to environmental justice and the fair treatment and meaningful engagement of all people regardless of race, color, gender identity, disability status, national origin, tribe, culture, income, immigration status, or English language proficiency, with respect to the planning, projects, policies, services, operations, and funding of Valley Water.
- b. Definition of Disadvantaged Community
  - (1) Valley Water defines a Disadvantaged Community as an area whose residents are disproportionately impacted from a combination of economic, health, and environmental burdens, such as poverty, high unemployment, environmental pollution, the presence of hazardous waste, or environmental degradation. These communities are often comprised of people who have suffered historical discrimination based on race, color, national origin, tribe, culture, income, immigration status, or English language proficiency.
  - (2) For the purposes of Valley Water policies, projects, services, and programs, Disadvantaged Communities include any of the following:
    - (a) Low-income households (household incomes below 80 percent of the Area Median Income (AMI) for Santa Clara County). As of 2024, the low-income limit for a

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<sup>4</sup> Funds may be used for local mileage using the federal approved mileage rate however Grantee must provide documentation and details for reimbursement.

household of three is \$131,500, however, AMI is updated annually.

- (b) Low-income census tracts (census tracts where aggregated household incomes are less than 80% of the AMI for Santa Clara County). As of 2024, the low-income limit for a household of three is \$131,500, however, AMI is updated annually.
- (c) An area defined by California Environmental Protection Agency (pursuant to Section 39711 of the California Health and Safety Code), using the [CalEnviroScreen tool](#), which was developed to determine communities most burdened by environmental, socioeconomic and health factors.

## 5. STANDARD GRANTS IN-PERSON OPEN HOUSE

Valley Water will host an in-person open house event to gather prospective applicants and previous grantees for a chance to learn more about the redesigned Standard Grants. This unique in-person opportunity allows participants to learn more about Valley Water, meet with Valley Water Grants staff and subject matter experts, and connect with other local organizations.

Participants will also get additional in-depth information about the grant cycle through two comprehensive workshops at the open house:

- 1) Standard Grants Program Overview – An introduction to standard grant categories and the application process.
- 2) Maximizing Your Standard Grant Application – Tips on creating a strong project scope, schedule, and budget.

Event details:

**Wednesday, February 12, 2025, from 9:00 to 11:30 a.m.**

Santa Clara Valley Water District Headquarters Building – Boardroom  
5700 Almaden Expressway  
San Jose, CA 95118

Please check [valleywater.org/grants](http://valleywater.org/grants) for event updates and additional information. Participation is strongly recommended but not mandatory.

To register for this event, please check [surveymonkey.com/r/vwopenhouse2025](https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/vwopenhouse2025).

## 6. VIRTUAL WORKSHOPS

Valley Water will conduct informational workshops to provide a condensed version of the Standard Grants In-Person Open House presentations:

- 1) Standard Grant Program Overview and
- 2) Maximizing Your Standard Grant Application.

Virtual event details:

**Tuesday, February 18, 2025, noon to 1:30 p.m.**

Register for the online Zoom session:

[https://valleywater.zoom.us/webinar/register/5117374926370/WN\\_YD4KI6LnRh2dsAGKPZdx\\_g](https://valleywater.zoom.us/webinar/register/5117374926370/WN_YD4KI6LnRh2dsAGKPZdx_g)

**Thursday, February 27, 2025, 5:00 to 6:30 p.m.**

Register for the online Zoom session:

[https://valleywater.zoom.us/webinar/register/4217374926631/WN\\_8ASTxZrHSCugDdiBe7uwSA](https://valleywater.zoom.us/webinar/register/4217374926631/WN_8ASTxZrHSCugDdiBe7uwSA)

**NOTE:** Please register at the links above to receive the online Zoom meeting link. Recordings of the virtual workshops will be made available at [valleywater.org/grants](http://valleywater.org/grants) post event.

If you need assistance with registering or have any questions, contact Grants Program staff at (408) 630-2080 or [grants@valleywater.org](mailto:grants@valleywater.org).

## 7. KEY APPLICATION DATES AND DEADLINES

Activity	Schedule
Release the Request for Proposals (RFP) and open Applications for online submission	January 23, 2025
In-person Open House Event	February 12, 9:00 a.m. - 11:30 a.m.
Virtual Informational Workshop #1	February 18, noon - 1:30 p.m.
Virtual Informational Workshop #2	February 27, 5:00 p.m. - 6:30 p.m.
Grant Application Deadline for online grant proposal submission	Friday, March 28, 2025 at 11:59 p.m. (PST)
Review and evaluate grant proposals by a panel of Valley Water staff and/or external members	March 31, 2025 – May 9, 2025
Present evaluated proposals and recommend grant awards to the Valley Water Board of Directors for approval	June 2025
Issue notices of award to successful grant Applicants	July 2025
CEO executes grant agreements	August - December 2025

**NOTE:** The above dates are subject to change.

## 8. APPLICATION PREPARATION & SUBMISSION

## **8.1. Online Application**

- a. Application Submissions
  - (1) All grant Applications must be submitted electronically through the Fluxx web portal at [valleywater.fluxx.io](https://valleywater.fluxx.io).
  - (2) See Attachment 1, Fluxx Grants Management System, for instructions.
- b. Grant Application Deadline
  - (1) Online Application and all supporting documentation must be submitted by **Friday, March 28, at 11:59 p.m. (PST)**.
- c. Late Submittals
  - (1) Valley Water will not accept grant Applications after the Grant Application Deadline stated above.
  - (2) Further, Valley Water will not be responsible for slow and/or delayed grant Application submissions regardless of whether it is caused by, by way of example and not of limitation, the World Wide Web, Internet Service Provider, third-party system, Fluxx or Valley Water security system or infrastructure.
  - (3) Applicants are encouraged to submit all required Application materials and documentation well BEFORE the Grant Application Deadline.
  - (4) Valley Water reserves the right to request additional clarification, information, and documentation as part of the evaluation process, from applicants before and after the Grant Application Deadline.
- d. Valley Water Contact
  - (1) All questions shall be directed to the Supervising Program Administrator, Amy Fonseca, via email at [grants@valleywater.org](mailto:grants@valleywater.org).

## **8.2. Grant Evaluation and Award**

- a. Valley Water releases online Application for grant proposals.
- b. Applicants submit grant proposals online by Grant Application Deadline stated in Section 8.1, Online Application, paragraph b., Grant Application Deadline.
- c. Valley Water evaluates all Applications based on eligibility and evaluation criteria described in these Guidelines; the Application review panel is comprised of Valley Water staff and/or external members (Panel).

- d. Valley Water Grants Program staff will present the funding recommendations to the Board based on the Panel's score of the Applications. The Board will make final approval decisions on grant funding at a public Board meeting.

### **8.3. Grant Lifecycle**

- a. Following the Board's approval of the grant awards, Valley Water will inform all Applicants of the grant award status. Grantees will begin the process of executing the Agreement. Valley Water and the Applicant/Grantee complete the Agreement within six months of the grant award.
- b. Grantee commences work on the project and submits invoices throughout project implementation. Invoices may be submitted as frequently as monthly. The final ten percent (10%) of the reimbursable Grant Award Amount is held as retention until project completion.
- c. Grantee submits quarterly reports, with or without an invoice, during the duration of the Agreement Term. Reports must be submitted using Valley Water's Fluxx Grants Management System (Fluxx) ([valleywater.fluxx.io](http://valleywater.fluxx.io)) using the template(s) provided upon agreement execution. For invoice submittals, reports must include: a claim for reimbursement, invoices, interim deliverables/project documents, and a brief description of project status.
- d. Grantee completes the project.
- e. Grantee submits all required documentation, deliverables, and a final project fact sheet no later than thirty (30) days before the expiration of the Agreement. Grantee shall revise all or part of the report, if needed, based on comments from Valley Water. The final report is due on or before the expiration of the Agreement unless otherwise approved by Valley Water in writing.
- f. Grantee submits the final invoice.
- g. Valley Water may perform a final on-site project inspection as needed.
  - (1) **NOTE:** Valley Water reserves the right to request site visits prior to completion of the project.
- h. Valley Water processes the final payment.
- i. Valley Water may conduct an audit of the completed project in compliance with the Agreement.

## **9. STANDARD PROVISIONS AND INSURANCE REQUIREMENTS**

The following outlines key provisions in Valley Water's Standard Grant Agreement

(Agreement). By submitting an application, applicants acknowledge that they will agree to these provisions if their project is awarded grant funding. A sample agreement with Valley Water's entire standard terms and conditions is available at [valleywater.org/grant-resources](http://valleywater.org/grant-resources)<sup>5</sup>. Valley Water reserves the right to change or update any terms and conditions until an Agreement is fully executed by all parties.

### **9.1. General Provisions**

- a. Agreement should be signed and fully executed by the Grantee and Valley Water within six months of the grant award.
- b. The Grantee must complete the funded project and submit the final documentation within the project performance period before the expiration of the Agreement.
- c. The Grantee must submit reimbursements for work within the Agreement Term, beginning upon execution of the Agreement by both parties and no later than the end of the expiration of the Agreement.
- d. All grant funds not expended by Grantee will revert to the Safe, Clean Water Program reserve fund and be available for reallocation by Valley Water to other projects in Valley Water's sole discretion.
- e. If applicable, Grantee must own the land or hold a lease or other long-term interest in the land that is the subject of the project. Exceptions to the rule include projects proposing the use of Valley Water-owned land, such as the use of a maintenance road for a multiple-use trail, in which case a Joint Use Agreement would be required prior to construction and opening to public access. If the Grantee does not own the land or hold a lease or other long-term interest in the land that is the subject of the project, the Grantee must obtain written permission from the property owner and provide it to Valley Water.
- f. If applicable, Grantee must obtain proper Valley Water encroachment permits to access and for proposed improvements on Valley Water property prior to commencing of proposed work.
- g. Maintain and operate the property funded pursuant to the Agreement for a period that is commensurate with the type of project and the proportion of funds or property allocated to the capital costs of the project. For that reason, a lease or other short-term agreement cannot be revocable at will by the lessor during the project period.
- h. Grant funds are not available for expenditure until they are authorized by the Board and appropriated pursuant to a written document (i.e., Agreement) that has been executed between Valley Water and Grantee.  
**Pre-award expenditures are not covered.**

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<sup>5</sup> Capitalized Terms in Section 9 are defined in Attachment 3 Definitions and in the sample agreement posted on the website.

(1) **NOTE:** Grantees are advised not to commence grant-funded activities until Agreement has been fully executed by both parties. Expenditures incurred outside of the Agreement Term will not be eligible for reimbursement.

- i. Matching funds of 15% of the total project cost are required for Stewardship Grants. See the Stewardship Grants section for further details and requirements. Match funds are not required for Education or Planning Grants.
- j. Prior to implementation and/or billing for eligible implementation-related costs, the Grantee must comply with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) and provide documentation for Valley Water's environmental review process. The required documentation must include the final, approved environmental document. Valley Water must also have access to the Lead Agency record of project approval. If a Notice of Determination was filed for the project, a copy of the Lead Agency's filing receipt must be provided.
- k. Prior to beginning implementation of a grant project, the Grantee is responsible for procuring any permits and property owner approvals associated with said project. Grantee must also provide documentation and/or copies of the permits and approvals to Valley Water staff.
- l. Grantee must comply with all federal, state, and local laws and regulations, and Valley Water policies, rules, and regulations, including, but not limited to, legal requirements for construction contracts, building codes, health and safety codes, and disabled access laws.
- m. All collateral materials associated with the Grantee's project, including, but not limited to, signage, educational, and marketing materials, must include Valley Water's Safe, Clean Water Program logo.
  - (1) If signage identifying project funding sources is posted at a grant-funded project site, the sign must acknowledge Valley Water's financial contribution.
  - (2) All signage and collateral materials must be reviewed and approved by Valley Water prior to usage of the Valley Water name or logo.

## 9.2. Insurance Requirements

- a. Grantee shall adhere to the insurance requirements detailed in Attachment 7, Grantee Insurance Requirements.
- b. Final insurance requirements will be issued on a case-by-case basis for each project. Details will be included as part of the Agreement.
- c. Grantee may request reimbursement for insurance costs. The insurance costs should be included in the Application, Project Budget, and Requested Grant Amount.

- d. Documentation of compliance with all Insurance Requirements must be provided by Grantee prior to Agreement execution. Grantee may request reimbursement for the cost of complying with all project-specific Insurance Requirements as stated in the Agreement.

### **9.3. Environmental Compliance and Permitting**

- a. Projects must comply with all applicable local, state, and federal environmental laws, regulations, and permit requirements.
- b. Applicants are responsible for identifying, coordinating, and obtaining all permits necessary to complete project work. Applicants must secure permission letters from the property owner(s) as needed. All permits and related documents must be submitted to Valley Water before any work related to the grant project begins.
- c. As a public agency, Valley Water is required to comply with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA).
- d. For most projects, Valley Water will serve as a Responsible Agency under CEQA. If there is no other public agency responsible for carrying out or approving the project for which the Applicant seeks funding, then Valley Water may serve as a Lead Agency for Education, Planning, and Stewardship Grants only. Proposals should demonstrate that CEQA compliance will be complete prior to the execution of the Agreement.
- e. In instances where Valley Water will act as the CEQA Lead Agency, Applicants should note that CEQA requires Valley Water to analyze a project's potential environmental impacts.
- f. Applicants will need to provide adequate detailed information about the project activities to allow Valley Water to complete an environmental review, including details about site locations and access routes, species and habitat(s) that could be affected, ground-disturbing activities, work schedule, and any environmental concerns that may exist.
- g. Valley Water will consider CEQA complete when the Lead Agency has filed a Notice of Determination (NOD) with the Santa Clara County Clerk-Recorder, or upon adequate documentation that the project qualifies for an exemption.
- h. Valley Water's concurrence of the Lead Agency's CEQA documents is fully discretionary and will constitute a condition precedent to any work for which it is required.
- i. Valley Water will exercise its independent judgment about whether a project qualifies for a statutory or categorical CEQA exemption.
- j. If the project requires discretionary approval (e.g., permits) from any state agency, the Lead Agency shall also have filed the NOD with the state Office of Planning and Research.

## **10. GRANT ADMINISTRATION POST AWARD PROVISIONS**

## **10.1. Changes to Project Scope and Schedule**

- a. Valley Water will not approve changes to the Project Scope, Project Budget, and Project Schedule unless the revision supports the original Application.
- b. Any revisions to the Project Scope, Project Budget, and Project Schedule following the execution of the Agreement require written approval from Valley Water or a formal amendment executed by both parties, depending on the changes requested.
- c. Requests for changes and amendments must be signed by the Authorized Signatory and received by Valley Water a minimum of 60 days before an executed agreement expires.
- d. Valley Water will not accept requests to increase the Grant Award Amount. Changes to the Project Budget that do not increase the Grant Award Amount Total may be allowed on a case-by-case basis and require written documentation.

## **10.2. Project Withdrawals**

- a. Grantees may withdraw an Application or cancel an Agreement by notifying Valley Water in writing. An Authorized Signatory must sign the notification.
- b. In cases of cancellation after the project commences, all invoices paid by Valley Water must be repaid to Valley Water within 45 days of cancellation notification.

## **10.3. Payment Process**

- a. The Grant Program operates on a reimbursement basis. Applicants should consider this before applying and plan their projects accordingly.
- b. All Payment Request Forms will be made available through Fluxx ([valleywater.fluxx.io](http://valleywater.fluxx.io)). Templates will be provided upon execution of the Agreement. All requests for reimbursement must be accompanied by a status report and documentation substantiating all supplies and services-related expenses (i.e., subcontractor invoices, receipts, photographs, etc.) and proof the correlating tasks and deliverables have been accomplished.
- c. Labor/personnel pay stubs and timesheets will be required for the first invoice. Subsequent copies may need to be submitted with later invoices on a case-by-case basis. Valley Water reserves the right to request these documents at any time. Grantee is required to maintain all records as specified in the Grant Agreement.
- d. Grantee may invoice Valley Water as often as once a month.

- e. For the duration of the project, the Grantee may invoice up to 90 percent (90%) of the total Grant Award Amount for reimbursement for work completed; however, the final 10 percent (10%) of the Grant Award Amount will only be reimbursed upon the completion of the project.

#### **10.4. Loss of Funding**

- a. The following actions may result in a Grantee's loss of funding:
  - (1) Grantee and Valley Water fail to enter into an Agreement within six months after Grant Award Date.
  - (2) Grantee fails to complete the project and/or fails to submit all documentation within the timeframes specified in the Agreement.
  - (3) Grantee fails to utilize the funds for the purposes designated in the Agreement.
  - (4) Grantee submits misleading or inaccurate information in the Application for funding a project that is not feasible.
  - (5) Grantee may not charge for or profit from items or activities that Valley Water funds or has funded as part of the grant.
    - (a) Valley Water reserves the right to cancel any amount of Grant Award Amount if it is determined that any of these actions are met and warrant such a decision.
    - (b) In cases of cancellation after the project commences, all invoices paid by Valley Water must be repaid to Valley Water within 45 days of cancellation notification.

#### **10.5. Site Visits**

Grantee shall permit periodic on-site visits by Valley Water staff, including a final inspection of the completed project, to evaluate consistency with the approved Project Scope.

#### **10.6. Public Access**

- a. Grantee shall provide public access to the project, as deemed appropriate and described in the Project Scope, in accordance with the intent of the Safe, Clean Water Program.
- b. The project, or portions of the project, should be located on property accessible to the public and will be open to members of the public generally during hours specified by the Grantee.
- c. Access by the public must not require payment or mandatory fees for participation. If there is a process for waiving participation fees or costs, Applicants should provide this information in their Application.

#### **10.7. Project Completion**

- a. Projects must be completed within the timeframe specified in the executed Agreement and Agreement Term.
- b. Upon project completion, Grantee submits the final payment request, final project costs, final project factsheet, and certification that project and its deliverables are complete.
- c. Project details, videos, and photographs may be posted on Valley Water's website and other channels, such as Valley Water blogs, social media, videos, news releases, and reports.
- d. If requested, the Grantee will provide a presentation to the Valley Water Board.

#### **10.8. Valley Water Board of Directors Involvement**

- a. Thirty (30) days prior to any event and/or ceremony related to projects that have received grant funding from Valley Water, Grantee shall provide the Board an opportunity to designate a person to speak at such event and/or ceremony. Events shall include, but are not limited to, groundbreaking ceremonies, project opening ceremonies, and any other event where similar public officials with an interest in the project receive an invite.

#### **10.9. Audit Provisions**

- a. Audit
  - (1) Projects are subject to audit by Valley Water for three (3) years following the final payment of grant funds. The audit shall include all books, papers, accounts, documents, or other records of Grantee as they relate to the project for which the funds were granted.
  - (2) Grantee shall have the project records, including the source documents and cancelled warrants, readily available to an auditor. The Grantee shall also provide a representative with knowledge of the project to assist the auditor. Grantee shall provide a copy of any document, paper, record, or the like requested by Valley Water.

- b. Financial Statements

- (1) Nonprofit organization Grantees must provide their IRS Form 990 and/or internally-prepared audited financial statements for the previous two years. Schools, school districts, and public agencies must provide their annual budget for the previous two years.

- c. Accounting Requirements

Grantee shall maintain an accounting system that does the following:

- (1) Accurately reflects fiscal transactions, with the necessary controls and safeguards.

- (2) Provides good audit trails, especially the source documents (purchase orders, receipts, progress payments, invoices, timecards, cancelled warrants, warrant numbers, etc.).
- (3) Provides accounting data so the total cost of each individual project can be readily determined.

d. Records Retention

- (1) In addition to the three-year retention of project records, the Grantee must retain all project records for at least one year following an audit.

e. Pre- and Post-Surveys

- (1) Any projects with a community outreach and/or educational component will be required to submit pre- and post-surveys accounting for the knowledge gained by program participants and demographic information, which may include age, ethnicity, education level, location of residency, and household income.

f. Grant Agreement Term Extension Limits

- (1) Applications are awarded for grant funding based on demonstration that the project can be completed within the Agreement Term. Valley Water may consider an extension to the Agreement Term subject to approval and written documentation.

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## **EDUCATION GRANTS**

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## **EDUCATION GRANTS**

### **11. EDUCATION GRANTS CATEGORY ELIGIBILITY, REQUIREMENTS AND CRITERIA**

Review this description and requirements to determine if your project meets the minimum requirements.

#### **11.1. Education Grant Description**

- a. The goal of the *Education Grant* is to support curriculum and community learning in Santa Clara County to spread awareness of the importance of safe, clean water, water conservation, flood preparedness, environmental stewardship, and other water-related topics such as purification, ecosystems, etc. Valley Water seeks projects that provide the public with high-quality learning experiences that empower participants to actively participate in water-focused solutions within their communities.
- b. This grant opportunity provides funding for educational activities to help residents of all ages increase their awareness of Safe, Clean Water Program priorities and support Valley Water's mission.

#### **11.2. Grant Request Range**

- a. \$10,001 to \$150,000 per project.

#### **11.3. Match Requirement**

- a. Not required for Education Grants.

#### **11.4. Eligible Projects**

- a. Education Grants are for projects that strictly involve educational activities.
  - (1) Examples of project activities could include presentations, curriculum or material development, classroom activities, educational videos, field trips or tours, etc.
- b. Projects must be located within Santa Clara County<sup>6</sup> and benefit residents of Santa Clara County.
- c. Projects must demonstrate a strong focus on at least one of the following Safe, Clean Water Program priorities:
  - (1) Safe, clean drinking water and water conservation

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<sup>6</sup> For projects that occur in multiple counties, Valley Water will only fund activities that occur within and/or benefits Santa Clara County.

- (2) Flood risk reduction
- (3) Environmental stewardship

### **11.5. Ineligible Projects**

The following projects will **not** be considered for funding under the *Education Grant* category:

- a. Projects that do not have an educational focus.
- b. Projects with activities involving implementation elements, such as construction, development, land alterations, or restorations, that have been approved, adopted, or funded.
  - (1) If your project includes ground-disturbing activities such as site cleanups or plantings, consider whether it should be a Stewardship Grant. Contact Grants Program staff if you have questions or need assistance.
- c. Projects with advocacy or political components, including political endorsements, petitions, fundraising, or any other activity directed toward the success or failure of a political party, candidate, political office, or political group.
- d. Projects that require mandatory payment or fees for participation.
- e. Operations and maintenance of existing projects, programs, or Applicant's general ongoing and day-to-day operations.

## **12. EDUCATION GENERAL APPLICATION GUIDANCE**

To maximize your score, address the relevant aspects of the proposed project as outlined in the following guidance. Responses will be scored based on the quality of the project and the clarity and responsiveness to the following considerations within each proposal section. Be sure to review the scoring rubric described in these Guidelines, as well as the following components of each criterion as you formulate your responses.

### **12.1. Project Summary**

- a. Your project Summary should briefly describe your proposed project. It should clearly identify the goals and how they relate to Valley Water's mission and the Safe, Clean Water Program priorities.

### **12.2. Project Location**

- a. Your response should include a brief description of the location(s) where your project activities will take place. If any of the questions do not apply to your project, just indicate that in the response.

- b. Additional questions about the project location are included to help Valley Water assess CEQA requirements and make a CEQA determination.
- c. Select the “virtual/no physical location” option if your project implementation activities will occur virtually.
- d. If your project location(s) have not been determined prior to Application, provide general information about where the activities will likely occur, including possible sites.
  - (1) If the site(s)/location(s) have not been determined or changed, you must provide Valley Water with the information as soon as it is available.
- e. If applicable, you should also include any site permissions, agreements, leases, and/or permits you have or plan to obtain. This will help determine project readiness.

### **12.3. Public Access**

- a. Describe public access for your project.
  - (1) If applicable, describe how the project and deliverables (findings, reports, curriculum, etc.) will be accessible to the public.
  - (2) The Applicant must include details required for general participation and any fees or costs.
    - (a) If fees, tuition, or costs are required for participation, the Applicant is required to include any options or alternative processes to remove financial barriers to participation, such as fee waivers, scholarships, etc.

### **12.4. Project Benefits**

- a. Describe the specific, quantifiable project benefits to Santa Clara County that support Valley Water’s mission and Safe, Clean Water Program priorities. In your description, include as applicable:
  - (1) Any community needs that the proposed project will address.
  - (2) Any lasting impacts your project will bring to the community, including after the grant funds have been exhausted.
  - (3) Details about communities served and engaged, including Disadvantaged Communities, Tribal, or Indigenous communities.
- b. Provide measurable benefits that the proposed project will provide, for instance:
  - (1) Number of participants engaged.

- (2) Increased knowledge of specific topic(s).
- (3) Number of lessons developed and delivered.
- (4) Number of events or classes.
- (5) Other specific measures of success appropriate to your project.

## 12.5. Project Scope

- a. Your Scope is your project's roadmap. It should clearly and succinctly describe the actions needed to accomplish your project's goals and deliverables.
  - (1) Tasks, task deliverables, and task durations should be appropriate, clearly described, thorough, well-designed, complete, and detailed enough to demonstrate that the proposed project can be satisfactorily completed and achieve the stated benefits and goals.
  - (2) A deliverable is a tangible or intangible good or service produced as a result of a project's activities. Examples can be a completed product or a component or building block of an overall project, such as report drafts, pre-event registration reports, design and planning documents, site surveys, outreach plans, etc.
    - (a) Grantees will be expected to provide all deliverables and supporting documentation to demonstrate the status of project goals, milestones, and tasks.
    - (b) Some deliverables may require the review of a Valley Water Subject Matter Expert before they can be accepted as complete by Valley Water. Once awarded, Grants staff will work with Grantees to identify and coordinate these reviews, on an as-needed basis.
- b. Methodology, Supporting Evidence, and Best Practices
  - (1) If applicable, Applicants are encouraged to reference any specific Best Practices, Reference Standards, Published Guidance, or Valley Water Guidance Materials and show how the project aligns and supports their methodology.
    - (a) Include any details about the best practices that support the project, proposed activities, and approach to achieving the identified goals.
    - (b) Examples may include Common Core State Standards, Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM), etc. See Attachment 5, Sample References, for more examples.

## **12.6. Project Budget**

- a. Applicants must provide a breakdown of anticipated costs for each task using the Project Budget Template in Fluxx.
  - (1) Amount requested must be broken out by task in the budget spreadsheet template.
- b. Other funding sources are not required for *Education Grants*; however, if your project includes other funding sources, Applicants should include them in their Project Budget. Other funding sources could include staff hours, cash or in-kind services, funds from other non-Valley Water grants, or partnerships with other organizations needed to complete the project.
  - (1) To calculate the in-kind value of volunteer hours, please use the Independent Sector's estimated hourly rate for volunteer time. In 2023, the California volunteer value was estimated at \$38.61 per hour, per person. Please visit the website here:  
<https://independentsector.org/resource/value-of-volunteer-time/>
- c. Insurance costs specific to the project are reimbursable expenses. This does not include the cost of insurance for day-to-day operations but rather the added costs to meet Valley Water's insurance requirements.
- d. Please review Section 9, Standard Provisions and Insurance Requirements, which provides guidance on several common budget items.
- e. Scoring will consider the Project Budget's reasonableness and cost-effectiveness and how costs are linked to specific tasks and deliverables.
- f. Applicants are encouraged to thoroughly research project costs before applying.
  - (1) The Grantee is responsible for any cost increases for the duration of the project. Valley Water will not increase the project Award Amount. This includes any unanticipated costs.
  - (2) Grantees will be required to document and justify project costs for reimbursement.

## **12.7. Project Schedule**

- a. Include the estimated start and completion for each task. Grantee may need to revise and adjust these dates during the Agreement development.

## **12.8. Project Readiness**

- a. Applicants should demonstrate how ready they are to start and successfully implement their project. Please include:

- (1) Any details about the preparation and research done to date. If applicable, describe any agreements or commitments with schools or other organizations that will host or assist with your project activities.
- (2) Applicants can upload letters of commitment from your proposed hosting organization(s), if appropriate.

b. **Organizational Capacity:** Applicants are encouraged to summarize their organization's ability to implement the proposed project successfully. Include details such as:

- (1) Experience with similar projects and community proposing to serve.
- (2) Key staff qualifications.
- (3) Systems in place to administer the grant, such as accounting and tracking tools/systems, staff and volunteers, etc.
- (4) Any partnering organization's role as well as their experience or expertise.
- (5) **Financial Capacity**
  - (a) Include a description of your organization's financial resources, and its ability to carry out the project on a cost reimbursement basis.
  - (b) Include descriptions of any other financial resources or contributors, such as other grants, partners, volunteers, etc.

c. Applicants can upload any documents to clearly substantiate your organization's ability to complete this work successfully. This is optional.

### **13. GENERAL RATING GUIDANCE, 0 TO 5-POINT SCALE RUBRIC**

- 13.1.** Scoring will be based on a zero-to-five-point scale, described below.
- 13.2.** This general rating scale will be multiplied by the designated weight for each section to produce a final criterion score. All section scores will be added to produce a final score for the proposal, with a maximum of 100 points available.
- 13.3.** To give consistent ratings, the evaluator will rate the overall balance between positives and negatives for each response. The criteria have a list of considerations, and the evaluator must consider overall how well the proposal meets those, in addition to whether the Applicant has provided adequate rationale or documentation to support their application and proposed approach.

**13.4. Evaluators will follow this scale to rate each section:**

**a. Excellent - 5 points**

(1) Outstanding response in all respects; fully addresses all components of the criterion; essentially no weaknesses; provides excellent rationale and/or documentation to support the response, so that evaluators have no doubt that Applicant will succeed.

**b. Very Good - 4 points**

(1) High-quality response in nearly all respects. Responds well to most components of the criterion and provides good rationale and/or documentation to support the response. Significantly more positives than negatives.

**c. Good - 3 points**

(1) Quality, meritorious response to most aspects of the criterion; on balance, response addresses and supports more positive aspects of the overall criterion than not.

**d. Fair - 2 points**

(1) The response lacks one or more critical aspects; some key issues need to be addressed. On balance, the response has more negatives than positives.

**e. Poor - 1 point**

(1) The response has serious deficiencies, with few positives.

**f. Unacceptable - 0 points**

(1) The applicant does not address the topic or proposes an approach that is unacceptable.

## 14. EDUCATION GRANT APPLICATION CHECKLIST

This checklist is provided for reference. Applicants are encouraged to read the full requirements and descriptions in the Guidelines to determine eligibility.

ORGANIZATION ELIGIBILITY	Checkbox
Organization identifies as one of the following entities: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Local cities, towns, and county agencies</li> <li>Local nonprofit organizations with a 501(c)(3) tax exempt status</li> <li>Water agencies/districts (public, not-for-profit)</li> <li>Open space, resource conservation, and special districts</li> <li>Schools, community colleges, and colleges/universities (public, not-for-profit)</li> </ul>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Organization is able to complete the proposed project on a reimbursement-based payment arrangement.	<input type="checkbox"/>
MINIMUM PROJECT REQUIREMENTS	Checkbox
Project is located in Santa Clara County	<input type="checkbox"/>
Project benefits Santa Clara County	<input type="checkbox"/>
Project supports Safe, Clean Water Program priorities and the project's main goal(s) and outcomes relate to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Safe, clean drinking water and water conservation;</li> <li>Flood risk reduction; or</li> <li>Environmental stewardship.</li> </ul>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Project can be completed within three (3) years following the Agreement Effective Date	<input type="checkbox"/>
EDUCATION GRANT REQUIREMENTS	Checkbox
The requested Grant Request Amount is between \$10,001 and \$150,000	<input type="checkbox"/>
The project consists solely of educational activities such as presentations, curriculum/material development, educational videos, and field trips/tours	<input type="checkbox"/>
The project would not involve direct or foreseeable physical changes to the environment, such as soil removal, construction activities, and plantings	<input type="checkbox"/>
FLUXX APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS	Checkbox
Online Application	<input type="checkbox"/>
Project Budget	<input type="checkbox"/>
Resolution	<input type="checkbox"/>
501(c)(3) Determination Letter (if applicable)	<input type="checkbox"/>
W-9 Form	<input type="checkbox"/>
Form 990 (for 501(c)(3) organizations only)	<input type="checkbox"/>
Audited Financial Statements	<input type="checkbox"/>
Organizational Budget	<input type="checkbox"/>
Resumes of Key Staff	<input type="checkbox"/>

## 15. EDUCATION GRANTS EVALUATION & SCORING GUIDE

Education Grants Evaluation & Scoring Guide	Raw Score (0-5)	Weight	Total Score (Raw Score x Weight)
<b>Section #1 Project Benefits</b>			
<p>The proposed project provides specific, quantifiable, and long-lasting benefits to Santa Clara County that support Valley Water's mission to provide Silicon Valley with safe, clean water for a healthy life, environment, and economy.</p> <p>The Applicant should clearly articulate how the project aligns with the Safe, Clean Water Program priorities, effectively linking these objectives to specific, measurable, and long-lasting benefits. It details current conditions and/or needs, demonstrating a well-thought-out understanding of the project's potential impact.</p> <p>As applicable, the Applicant should describe the communities that will participate and which communities will benefit and how.</p>		5	
<b>Section #2 Project Scope</b>			
<p>The proposed project includes a well-defined and realistic scope (see application in Fluxx) which clearly identifies the following within each task:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Actions</li> <li>• Deliverables</li> </ul> <p>The tasks' actions, deliverables, and duration are clearly defined, specific, measurable, and achievable. The scope is well developed and demonstrates that all elements have been considered to ensure the project's success.</p> <p>As applicable, Applicant has included specific, actional plans for meaningful engagement, including how the Applicant will incorporate community input. Plans for community engagement should consider equity, inclusion, and environmental justice.</p> <p>Include any details about the methodology, supporting evidence, or best practices that support your proposed activities, if applicable. This includes principles of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion.</p>		7	
<b>Section #3 Project Budget</b>			
<p>The proposed project includes a well-defined budget that clearly identifies the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tasks</li> <li>• Resources</li> </ul> <p>All budget items align well with those described in the scope. All elements of the project have been considered. Based on the information and detail provided, the budget is well thought out and realistic. Budget only includes eligible costs.</p>		4	

Education Grants Evaluation & Scoring Guide	Raw Score (0-5)	Weight	Total Score (Raw Score x Weight)
<b>Section #4 Project Schedule</b>			
Schedule includes the estimated start and completion for each task. Applicant has considered all elements of each task, and their estimated task durations appear reasonable.		1	
<b>Section #5 Long-Term Maintenance and Management</b>			
Not applicable to <i>Education Grants</i> .	N/A	N/A	N/A
<b>Section #6 Project Readiness</b>			
Applicant has demonstrated that they are ready to start and successfully implement their project. Application includes details about preparation, planning, and research done to date.  The project team is clearly defined, and the team members' roles and relevant experience demonstrate their competency to complete the project successfully. The project team can include partnering organizations.  Assess whether the team has experience with grant opportunities (Valley Water and otherwise) and has been successful. The team has successfully completed similar projects in the past.  Where applicable, the Applicant has demonstrated that the project team and partner organizations have the experience, cultural competency, and skills to engage with and effectively work with communities identified and/or located in the project area.		3	

Weighted Total out of 100	
Would you recommend this project for 100% funding?	YES      NO

## **PLANNING GRANTS**

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## **PLANNING GRANTS**

### **16. PLANNING GRANTS CATEGORY ELIGIBILITY, REQUIREMENTS AND CRITERIA**

Review this description and requirements to determine if your project meets the minimum requirements.

#### **16.1. Planning Grant Description**

- a. The goal of the Planning Grant is to provide funding for planning or design activities needed to complete large-scale implementation projects that will advance Safe, Clean Water Program priorities and support Valley Water's mission.
- b. The Planning Grant opportunity is available for environmental planning, feasibility studies, academic research, and/or design activities supporting later capital project implementation. Projects should result in a detailed analysis and evaluation of the implementation project's impact and all reasonable alternatives.
- c. Proposed Planning Grant projects must demonstrate a strong connection to Valley Water's mission. Examples include planning or studies related to water conservation, habitat restoration or protection, creek stewardship, and wildlife crossings.
- d. Grantees awarded a Planning Grant may apply for a subsequent Implementation Grant to complete all phases of the Grantee's project; however, Implementation Grant funding is not guaranteed.

#### **16.2. Grant Request Range**

- a. \$10,001 to \$150,000 per project.

#### **16.3. Match Requirement**

- a. Not required for Planning Grants.

#### **16.4. Eligible Projects**

- a. Planning Grants are for projects that consist solely of activities related to planning, design, environmental resource investigations, academic research, or feasibility studies.
  - (1) Planning Grant project activities must not result in direct or foreseeable physical changes to the environment, such as soil removal, construction activities, and plantings unless those activities involve minor physical changes associated with investigative sampling, surveying, and testing activities.

- b. Projects must be located within Santa Clara County<sup>7</sup> and benefit residents of Santa Clara County.
- c. Demonstrate a strong focus on at least one of the following Safe, Clean Water Program priorities:
  - (1) Safe, clean drinking water and water conservation
  - (2) Flood risk reduction
  - (3) Environmental stewardship

## 16.5. Ineligible Projects

The following projects will **not** be considered for funding under the *Planning Grant* category:

- a. Projects that do not have a planning, study, or design focus.
- b. Projects with activities involving direct or foreseeable physical changes to the environment, such as soil removal, gardening, digging, planting, construction activities, etc. unless those activities would involve minor physical changes associated with investigative sampling, surveying, and testing activities.
  - (1) If your project includes ground-disturbing activities, consider whether you should apply under a *Stewardship Grant*. Contact Grants Program staff if you have questions or need assistance.
- c. Projects with advocacy or political components, including political endorsements, petitions, fundraising, or any other activity directed toward the success or failure of a political party, candidate, political office, or political group.
- d. Project deliverables that are inaccessible to the general public or that require mandatory payment or fees to access the deliverables.
- e. Mitigation projects.
- f. Projects designed to meet regulatory or permit obligations (unless grant funding is for project activities above and beyond required activities).
- g. Operations and maintenance of existing mitigation or enhancement projects.
- h. Operations and maintenance of existing projects, programs, or Applicant's general ongoing and day-to-day operations.
- i. Land acquisition, unless parcel(s) or title acquired will be specifically deemed for use in habitat or species restoration or protection.

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<sup>7</sup> For projects that occur in multiple counties, Valley Water will only fund activities that occur within and/or benefits Santa Clara County.

## **17. PLANNING GRANT GENERAL APPLICATION GUIDANCE**

To maximize your score, address the relevant aspects of the proposed project as outlined in the following guidance. Responses will be scored based on the quality of the project and the clarity and responsiveness to the following considerations within each section. Be sure to review the scoring rubric described in these Guidelines and the following components of each criterion as you formulate your responses.

### **17.1. Project Summary**

- a. Your project Summary should briefly describe your proposed project. It should clearly identify the goals and how they relate to Valley Water's mission and the Safe, Clean Water Program priorities.

### **17.2. Project Location**

- a. Your response should include a brief description of the location(s) where your project activities will take place. If any questions do not apply to your project, just indicate that in the response.
- b. Additional questions about the project location and activities are included to help Valley Water assess CEQA requirements and make a CEQA determination.
- c. If your project activities will occur virtually, select the "virtual/no physical location" option.
- d. If your project location(s) have not been determined prior to Application, provide general information about where the activities will likely occur, including possible sites.
  - (1) If the site(s)/location(s) have not been determined or will change, you will be required to provide Valley Water with the information as soon as it is available.
- e. If applicable, you should also include any site permissions, agreements, leases, and/or permits you have or plan to obtain. This will help determine project readiness.

### **17.3. Public Access**

- a. Describe public access to your project.
  - (1) Describe how the project deliverables (findings, reports, documents, etc.) will be accessible to the public, if applicable.

### **17.4. Project Benefits**

- a. Describe the specific, quantifiable project benefits to Santa Clara County that support Valley Water's mission and Safe, Clean Water Program priorities. In your description, include as applicable:
  - (1) Any community needs that the proposed project will address.

- (2) Any lasting impacts your project will bring to the community, including after the grant funds have been exhausted.
- (3) Details about communities served and engaged, including Disadvantaged Communities, Tribal, or Indigenous communities.

b. Provide measurable benefits that the proposed project will provide, as appropriate for your project.

## **17.5. Project Scope**

- a. Your Scope is your project's roadmap. It should clearly and succinctly describe the actions needed to accomplish your project's goals and deliverables.
  - (1) Tasks, task deliverables, and task durations should be appropriate, clearly described, thorough, well-designed, complete, and detailed enough to demonstrate that the proposed project can be satisfactorily completed and achieve the stated benefits and goals.
  - (2) A deliverable is a tangible or intangible good or service produced as a result of a project's activities. Examples can be a completed product or a component or building block of an overall project, such as report drafts, pre-event registration reports, design and planning documents, site surveys, outreach plans, etc.
    - (a) Grantees will be expected to provide all deliverables and supporting documentation to demonstrate the status of project goals, milestones, and tasks.
    - (b) Some deliverables may require the review of a Valley Water Subject Matter Expert before they can be accepted as complete by Valley Water. Once awarded, Grants staff will work with Grantees to identify and coordinate these reviews, on an as-needed basis.
- b. Methodology, Supporting Evidence, and Best Practices
  - (1) If applicable, Applicants are encouraged to reference any specific Best Practices, Reference Standards, Published Guidance, or Valley Water Guidance Materials and show how the project aligns and supports their methodology.
    - (a) Include any details about the best practices that support the project, proposed activities, and approach to achieving the identified goals.
    - (b) Examples may include feasibility studies, geotechnical reports, biological opinions, published scientific papers/studies, etc. See Attachment 5, Sample References, for more examples.

## 17.6. Project Budget

- a. Applicants must provide a breakdown of anticipated costs for each task using the Project Budget Template in Fluxx.
- b. Amount requested must be broken out by task in the budget spreadsheet template.
- c. Other funding sources are not required for *Planning Grants*; however, if your project includes other funding sources, Applicants should include them in their Project Budget. Other funding sources could include staff hours, cash or in-kind services, funds from other non-Valley Water grants, or partnerships with other organizations needed to complete the project.
  - (1) To calculate the in-kind value of volunteer hours, please use the Independent Sector's estimated hourly rate for volunteer time. In 2023, the California volunteer value was estimated at \$38.61 per hour, per person. Please visit the website here:  
<https://independentsector.org/resource/value-of-volunteer-time>.
- d. Insurance costs specific to the project are reimbursable expenses. This does not include the cost of insurance for day-to-day operations but rather the added costs to meet Valley Water's insurance requirements.
  - (1) Please review Section 9, Standard Provisions and Insurance Requirements, which provides guidance on several common budget items.
- e. Scoring will consider the Project Budget's reasonableness and cost-effectiveness and how costs are linked to specific tasks and deliverables.
- f. Applicants are encouraged to thoroughly research project costs before applying.
  - (1) The Grantee is responsible for any cost increases for the duration of the project. Valley Water will not increase the project Award Amount. This includes any unanticipated costs.
  - (2) Grantees will be required to document and justify project costs submitted for reimbursement.

## 17.7. Project Schedule

- a. Include the estimated start and completion for each task. Grantee may need to revise and adjust these dates during the Agreement development.

## 17.8. Project Readiness

- a. Applicants should demonstrate how ready they are to start and successfully implement their project.
  - (1) Include any details about the preparation and research done to date.

- (2) Demonstrate understanding and coordinating any permitting requirements (construction, environmental, regulatory) that have been obtained or will need to be obtained. This can include use, entry, and encroachment permits.
- (3) If your project does not require any permits, please state that in this section.
- (4) If applicable, describe how the proposed activities would advance a larger implementation project to a “shovel-ready” stage.

b. Site Access

- (1) Describe anticipated site access requirements to implement the full project and how those will be achieved, including any activities that have already been completed.
- (2) Applicants are encouraged to provide all required site access permissions that have been obtained or initiated.
  - (a) This is not required for funding; however, projects that are further along in the process will be awarded higher points.

c. CEQA, Environmental Compliance, and other Permits

- (1) CEQA or Permits are not expected to be complete during the Application stage, but points will be awarded based on how far along the process is. Applicants are encouraged to describe the status of CEQA and any required permits for the full project being planned.

d. Organizational Capacity: Applicants are encouraged to summarize their organization’s ability to successfully implement the proposed project. Include details such as:

- (1) Experience with similar projects and Community Served;
- (2) Key staff qualifications;
- (3) Systems in place to administer the grant, such as accounting and tracking tools/systems, staff and volunteers, etc.
- (4) Any partnering organization’s role as well as their experience or expertise.
- (5) Financial Capacity
  - (a) Include a description of your organization’s financial resources and its ability to carry out the project on a cost-reimbursement basis.

- (b) Include descriptions of any other financial resources or contributors, such as other grants, partners, volunteers, etc.
- e. Applicants can upload any documents to clearly substantiate their organization's ability to complete this work successfully. This is optional.
- f. Scoring considers the organization's ability to implement the proposed project successfully.

## **18. GENERAL RATING GUIDANCE, 0 TO 5-POINT SCALE RUBRIC**

- 18.1.** Scoring will be based on a zero-to-five-point scale, described below.
- 18.2.** This general rating scale will be multiplied by the designated weight for each section to produce a final criterion score. All section scores will be added to produce a final score for the proposal, with a maximum of 100 points available.
- 18.3.** To give consistent ratings, the evaluator will rate the overall balance between positives and negatives for each response. The criteria have a list of considerations, and the evaluator must consider overall how well the proposal meets those, in addition to whether the Applicant has provided adequate rationale or documentation to support their application and proposed approach.

### **18.4. Evaluators will follow this scale to rate each section:**

- a. Excellent - 5 points**
  - (1) Outstanding response in all respects; fully addresses all components of the criterion; essentially no weaknesses; provides excellent rationale and/or documentation to support the response, so that evaluators have no doubt that Applicant will succeed.
- b. Very Good - 4 points**
  - (1) High-quality response in nearly all respects. Responds well to most components of the criterion and provides good rationale and/or documentation to support the response. Significantly more positives than negatives.
- c. Good - 3 points**
  - (1) Quality, meritorious response to most aspects of the criterion; on balance, response addresses and supports more positive aspects of the overall criterion than not.
- d. Fair - 2 points**
  - (1) The response lacks one or more critical aspects; some key issues need to be addressed. On balance, the response has more negatives than positives.

**e. Poor - 1 point**

(1) The response has serious deficiencies, with few positives.

**f. Unacceptable - 0 points**

(1) The applicant does not address the topic or proposes an approach that is unacceptable.

## 19. PLANNING GRANT APPLICATION CHECKLIST

This checklist is provided for reference. Applicants are encouraged to read the full requirements and descriptions in the Guidelines to determine eligibility.

ORGANIZATION ELIGIBILITY	Checkbox
Organization identifies as one of the following entities: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Local cities, towns, and county agencies</li> <li>• Local nonprofit organizations with a 501(c)(3) tax exempt status</li> <li>• Water agencies/districts (public, not-for-profit)</li> <li>• Open space, resource conservation, and special districts</li> <li>• Schools, community colleges, and colleges/universities (public, not-for-profit)</li> </ul>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Organization is able to complete the proposed project on a reimbursement-based payment arrangement.	<input type="checkbox"/>
MINIMUM PROJECT REQUIREMENTS	Checkbox
Project is located in Santa Clara County	<input type="checkbox"/>
Project benefits Santa Clara County	<input type="checkbox"/>
Project supports the Safe, Clean Water Program priorities and the project's main goal(s) and outcomes relate to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Safe, clean drinking water and water conservation;</li> <li>• Flood risk reduction; or</li> <li>• Environmental stewardship.</li> </ul>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Project can be completed within three (3) years following the Agreement Effective Date	<input type="checkbox"/>
PLANNING GRANT REQUIREMENTS	Checkbox
The Grant Request Amount is between \$10,001 and \$150,000	<input type="checkbox"/>
The project consists solely of activities related to planning, design, Environmental Resource Investigations, academic research, or feasibility studies that do not have an implementation element.	<input type="checkbox"/>
Project activities do not involve direct or foreseeable physical changes to the environment, such as soil removal, gardening, digging, planting, construction activities, etc. <u>unless</u> those activities would involve minor physical changes associated with investigative sampling, surveying, and testing activities.	<input type="checkbox"/>
FLUXX APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS	Checkbox
Online Application	<input type="checkbox"/>
Project Budget	<input type="checkbox"/>
Resolution	<input type="checkbox"/>
501(c)(3) Determination Letter (if applicable)	<input type="checkbox"/>
W-9 Form	<input type="checkbox"/>
Form 990 (for 501(c)(3) organizations only)	<input type="checkbox"/>
Audited Financial Statements	<input type="checkbox"/>
Organizational Budget	<input type="checkbox"/>
Resumes of Key Staff	<input type="checkbox"/>

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## 20. PLANNING GRANTS EVALUATION & SCORING GUIDE

Planning Grants Evaluation & Scoring Guide	Raw Score (0-5)	Weight	Total Score (Raw Score x Weight)
<b>Section #1 Project Benefits</b>			
<p>The proposed project provides specific, quantifiable, and long-lasting benefits to Santa Clara County that support Valley Water's mission to provide Silicon Valley with safe, clean water for a healthy life, environment, and economy.</p> <p>The Applicant should clearly articulate how the project aligns with the Safe, Clean Water Project priorities, effectively linking these objectives to specific, measurable, and long-lasting benefits. It details current conditions and/or needs, demonstrating a well-thought-out understanding of the project's potential impact.</p> <p>As applicable, the Applicant should describe the communities that will participate and which communities will benefit and how.</p>		5	
<b>Section #2 Project Scope</b>			
<p>The proposed project includes a well-defined and realistic scope (see application in Fluxx) which clearly identifies the following within each task:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Actions</li> <li>• Deliverables</li> </ul> <p>The tasks' actions, deliverables, and duration are clearly defined, specific, measurable, and achievable. The scope is well developed and demonstrates that all elements have been considered to ensure the project's success.</p> <p>As applicable, Applicant has included specific, actional plans for meaningful engagement, including how the Applicant will incorporate community input. Plans for community engagement should consider equity, inclusion, and environmental justice.</p> <p>Include any details about the methodology, supporting evidence, or best practices that support your proposed activities, if applicable. This includes principles of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion.</p>		6	
<b>Section #3 Project Budget</b>			
<p>The proposed project includes a well-defined budget that clearly identifies the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tasks</li> <li>• Resources</li> </ul> <p>All budget items align well with those described in the scope. All elements of the project have been considered. Based on the information and detail provided, the budget is well thought out and realistic. Budget only includes eligible costs.</p>		3	

Planning Grants Evaluation & Scoring Guide	Raw Score (0-5)	Weight	Total Score (Raw Score x Weight)
<b>Section #4 Project Schedule</b>			
Schedule includes the estimated start and completion for each task. Applicant has considered all elements of each task, and their estimated task durations appear reasonable.		1	
<b>Section #5 Long-Term Maintenance and Management</b>			
Not applicable for <i>Planning Grants</i> .	N/A	N/A	N/A
<b>Section #6 Project Readiness</b>			
<p>Applicant has demonstrated that they are ready to start and successfully implement their project. Application includes details about preparation, planning, and research done to date.</p> <p>The project team is clearly defined, and the team members' roles and relevant experience demonstrate their competency to complete the project successfully. The project team can include partnering organizations.</p> <p>Assess whether the team has experience with grant opportunities (Valley Water and otherwise) and has been successful. The team has successfully completed similar projects in the past.</p> <p>Where applicable, the Applicant has demonstrated that the project team and partner organizations have the experience, cultural competency, and skills to engage with and effectively work with communities identified and/or located in the project area.</p>		3	

Weighted Total out of 100	
Would you recommend this project for 100% funding?	YES      NO

## **STEWARDSHIP GRANTS**

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## **STEWARDSHIP GRANTS**

### **21. STEWARDSHIP GRANTS CATEGORY ELIGIBILITY, REQUIREMENTS AND CRITERIA**

Review this description and requirements to determine if your project meets the minimum requirements.

#### **21.1. Stewardship Grant Description**

- a. The goal of the Stewardship Grant is to provide funds for a wide variety of projects that will advance Safe, Clean Water Program priorities and support Valley Water's mission. The Stewardship Grant opportunity is Valley Water's broadest grant category and can encompass many different activities and multi-benefit elements related to Valley Water's mission.
- b. The Stewardship Grant opportunity is available for smaller-scale implementation projects such as litter/pollution cleanups, community gardens, minor habitat restoration (under 5 acres), minor construction of structures/facilities, or alteration/improvement to existing facilities such as structures, walls, small park amenities, museum exhibits, etc.
- c. Under the Stewardship Grant category, projects with educational or planning elements that include implementation activities, such as soil removal, small-scale construction, and plantings, can apply.
- d. Proposed Stewardship Grant projects must demonstrate support for Valley Water's mission. Example projects may include, but are not limited to:
  - (1) **Water conservation** projects that provide, enhance, or install innovative water conservation technologies in public spaces, such as parks, gardens, government facilities, schools, utility facilities, and community buildings.
  - (2) **Pollution prevention** projects that reduce contaminants, including emerging contaminants, in surface or groundwater, such as public education and technical assistance to help growers protect groundwater and keep agricultural pollutants away from surface water, and partnerships to reduce litter and graffiti.
  - (3) **Volunteer cleanup and stewardship** projects that support creek cleanup and litter removal, or that provide hands-on watershed stewardship activities.
  - (4) **Small-scale wildlife habitat** projects that support, restore, and/or conserve native plant and wildlife habitat; protecting special status species; removing non-native/invasive plant species; and planting native species.

## **21.2. Grant Request Range**

- a. \$10,001 to \$150,000 per project.

## **21.3. Match Requirement**

- a. Matching funds of fifteen percent (15%) are required for Stewardship Grants.
  - (1) Matching funds may include staff hours, cash or in-kind services, other non-Valley Water grants, or partnerships with other organizations.
  - (2) Matching funds must not include other Valley Water resources, such as grants, volunteer programs, supplies, contracts, agreements, etc.
  - (3) To calculate the in-kind value of volunteer hours, please use the Independent Sector's estimated hourly rate for volunteer time. In 2023, the California volunteer value was estimated at \$38.61 per hour, per person. Please visit the website here:  
<https://independentsector.org/resource/value-of-volunteer-time>.

## **21.4. Eligible Projects**

- a. Stewardship Grants are for community projects with smaller-scale implementation activities focusing on water and watershed stewardship.
  - (1) Examples include litter/pollution cleanups, water conservation, community gardens, minor habitat restoration (under 5 acres), minor construction of structures/facilities, or alteration/improvement to existing facilities.
- b. Projects must be located within Santa Clara County<sup>8</sup> and benefit residents of Santa Clara County.
- c. Projects must demonstrate a strong focus on at least one of the following Safe, Clean Water Program priorities:
  - (1) Safe, clean drinking water and water conservation
  - (2) Flood risk reduction
  - (3) Environmental stewardship

## **21.5. Ineligible Projects**

The following projects will **not** be considered for funding under the *Stewardship Grant* category:

- a. Projects that do not have an implementation element.

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<sup>8</sup> For projects that occur in multiple counties, Valley Water will only fund activities that occur within the portion of the project that lies within and benefits Santa Clara County.

- b. Project with activities that:
  - (1) Require the use of onsite heavy machinery or construction equipment beyond hand tools, such as excavators, graders, compactors, backhoes, cranes, dump trucks, pile drivers, etc.
  - (2) Would involve the release of runoff, debris, and/or waste materials into existing waterways (rivers, creeks, ponds, riparian habitat, etc.).
  - (3) May involve ground disturbance (i.e., soil removal, vegetation removal, construction, excavation) within sensitive biological habitats, including wetlands, riparian lands, or waterways.
  - (4) If your project includes any ineligible conditions above, consider whether it should be considered an Implementation Grant. Contact Grants Program staff if you have questions or need assistance.
- c. Projects with advocacy or political components, including political endorsements, petitions, fundraising, or any other activity directed toward the success or failure of a political party, candidate, political office, or political group.
- d. Projects and/or deliverables that are inaccessible to the general public or require mandatory participation payment or fees.
- e. Mitigation projects.
- f. Projects designed to meet regulatory or permit obligations (unless grant funding is for project activities above and beyond required activities).
- g. Operations and maintenance of existing mitigation or enhancement projects.
- h. Operations and maintenance of existing projects, programs, or Applicant's general ongoing and day-to-day operations.
- i. Land acquisition, unless parcel(s) or title acquired will be specifically deemed for use in habitat or species restoration or protection.

## **22. STEWARDSHIP GRANT GENERAL APPLICATION GUIDANCE**

To maximize your score, address the relevant aspects of the proposed project as outlined in the following guidance. Responses will be scored based on the quality of the project and the clarity and responsiveness to the following considerations within each section. Be sure to review the scoring rubric described in these Guidelines, as well as the following components of each criterion as you formulate your responses.

### **22.1. Project Summary**

- a. Your project Summary should briefly describe your proposed project. It should clearly identify the goals and how they relate to Valley Water's mission and the Safe, Clean Water Program priorities.

## **22.2. Project Location**

- a. Your response should include a brief description of the location(s) where your project activities will take place. If any of the questions are not applicable to your project, just indicate that in the response
- b. Additional questions about the project location are included to help Valley Water assess CEQA requirements and make a CEQA determination.
- c. If your project location(s) have not been determined prior to Application, provide general information about where the activities will likely occur, including possible sites.
  - (1) If the site(s)/location(s) have not been determined or will change, you will be required to provide Valley Water with the information as soon as it is available.
- d. If applicable, you should also include any site permission(s), agreement(s), lease(s), and/or permits you have or plan to obtain. This will help determine project readiness.

## **22.3. Public Access**

- a. Describe public access to your project.
  - (1) If applicable, describe how the project, any project site(s), and project deliverables (gardens, events, art, restoration locations, etc.) will be accessible to the public.
  - (2) The Applicant must include details required for general participation, open hours of operation/access, and any fees or costs.
    - (a) If participation fees, tuition, or costs are required, the Applicant must include any options or alternative processes in place to remove financial barriers to participation, such as fee waivers, scholarships, reduced entry fees, etc.

## **22.4. Project Benefits**

- a. Describe the specific, quantifiable project benefits to Santa Clara County that support the Safe, Clean Water Program priorities. In your description, include as applicable:
  - (1) Any community needs that the proposed project will address.
  - (2) Any lasting impacts your project will bring to the community, including after the grant funds have been exhausted.
  - (3) Details about communities served and engaged, including Disadvantaged Communities, Tribal, or Indigenous communities.

b. Provide measurable benefits that the proposed project will provide, for instance:

- (1) Number of participants engaged.
- (2) Number of events held.
- (3) Number of acres to be cleaned and/or restored.
- (4) Approximate number and/or square footage of native plants installed.
- (5) Types of native plants and species that will benefit.
- (6) Amount of water that is estimated to be conserved or captured for beneficial use based on existing studies, literature, best practices, or other established metrics.
- (7) Or other specific measures of success appropriate to your project.

c. Describe the lasting impacts your project will bring to the community, including after the grant funds have been exhausted.

- (1) Will your project bring sustainable change?
- (2) For ecological work, evaluators will consider how the proposed remedial activities will improve the existing natural environment.

## **22.5. Project Scope**

a. Your Scope is your project's roadmap. It should clearly and succinctly describe the actions needed to accomplish your project's goals and deliverables.

- (1) Tasks, task deliverables, and task durations should be appropriate, clearly described, thorough, well-designed, complete, and detailed enough to demonstrate that the proposed project can be satisfactorily completed and achieve the stated benefits and goals.
- (2) A deliverable is a tangible or intangible good or service produced as a result of a project's activities. Examples can be a completed product or a component or building block of an overall project, such as report drafts, pre-event registration reports, design and planning documents, site surveys, outreach plans, etc.
  - (a) Grantees will be expected to provide all deliverables and supporting documentation to demonstrate the status of project goals, milestones, and tasks.

(b) Some deliverables may require the review of a Valley Water Subject Matter Expert before they can be accepted as complete by Valley Water. Once awarded, Grants staff will work with Grantees to identify and coordinate these reviews, on an as-needed basis.

b. Methodology, Supporting Evidence, and Best Practices

(1) If applicable, Applicants are encouraged to reference any specific Best Practices, Reference Standards, Published Guidance, or Valley Water Guidance Materials and show how the project aligns and supports their methodology.

(a) Include any details about the best practices that support the project, proposed activities, and approach to achieving the identified goals.

(b) Examples may include approved planting lists, general plans, certified environmental documents, published scientific papers/studies, etc. See Attachment 5, Sample References, for more examples.

## **22.6. Long-Term Maintenance and Management**

a. If applicable, provide a clear description of plans for maintaining the project in the future, including:

(1) Party responsible for maintaining the project and/or project site.

(2) Maintenance activities needed and their duration after project completion.

(3) Plan for how this will be funded.

b. If applicable, describe monitoring that will be done after completion to establish that the project's goals will be met and that benefits will be sustained beyond the funding cycle.

c. If follow-up and monitoring is not appropriate for the proposed work, describe why.

## **22.7. Project Budget**

a. Applicants must provide a breakdown of anticipated costs for each task using the Project Budget template in Fluxx.

b. Amount requested must be broken out by task in the budget spreadsheet template.

- c. Matching funds of fifteen percent (15%) of the total project cost are required for Stewardship Grants as described in Section 21.3 Match Requirement.
- d. Please review Section 9, Standard Provisions and Insurance Requirements, which provides guidance on several common budget items.
- e. The Project Budget must reflect the total project cost as well as match the Grant Request Amount and be within the range established for the grant category.
- f. Insurance costs specific to the project are reimbursable expenses. This does not include the cost of insurance for day-to-day operations but rather the added costs to meet Valley Water's insurance requirements.
- g. Scoring will consider the Project Budget's reasonableness and cost-effectiveness and how costs are linked to specific tasks and deliverables.
- h. Applicants are encouraged to thoroughly research project costs before applying.
  - (1) The Grantee is responsible for any cost increases for the duration of the project. Valley Water will not increase the project Award Amount. This includes any unanticipated costs.
  - (2) Grantees will be required to document and justify project costs submitted for reimbursement.

## **22.8. Project Schedule**

- a. Include the estimated start and completion for each task. Grantee may need to revise and adjust these dates during the Agreement development.

## **22.9. Project Readiness**

- a. Applicants should demonstrate how ready they are to start and successfully implement their project.
  - (1) Include any details about the preparation and research done to date.
  - (2) Summarize your project's "shovel-readiness," as applicable, to your project. Examples might include, but are not limited to, CEQA, environmental compliance, and other permits.
  - (a) Describe the status of the CEQA compliance process, if applicable.

- (b) Demonstrate understanding and coordinating any permitting requirements (construction, environmental, regulatory) that have been obtained or will need to be obtained, if applicable. This can include use, entry, and encroachment permits.
  - (c) If your project requires no permits, please indicate so in this section.
- b. Site Access
  - (1) As applicable to your project, describe anticipated site access requirements to implement the full project and how those will be achieved, including any activities that have already been completed.
    - (a) Applicants are encouraged to provide all required site access permissions that have been obtained or imitated.
  - (2) If needed, CEQA or permits are not expected to be complete during the Application stage, but points will be awarded based on how far along the process is.
    - (a) This is not required for funding; however, projects that are further along in the process may be awarded higher points.
- c. Organizational Capacity: Applicants are encouraged to summarize their organization's ability to implement the proposed project successfully. Include details such as:
  - (1) Experience with similar projects and Community Served.
  - (2) Key staff qualifications.
  - (3) Systems in place to administer the grant, such as accounting and tracking tools/systems, staff and volunteers, etc.
  - (4) Any partnering organization's role and experience or expertise.
  - (5) Financial Capacity
    - (a) Include a description of your organization's financial resources and its ability to carry out the project on a cost-reimbursement basis.
    - (b) Include descriptions of any other financial resources or contributors, such as other grants, partners, volunteers, etc.
- d. Applicants can upload any documents to clearly substantiate your organization's ability to complete this work successfully. This is optional.
- e. Scoring considers the organization's ability to implement the proposed project successfully.

## **23. GENERAL RATING GUIDANCE, 0 TO 5-POINT SCALE RUBRIC**

- 23.1.** Scoring will be based on a zero-to-five-point scale, described below.
- 23.2.** This general rating scale will be multiplied by the designated weight for each section to produce a final criterion score. All section scores will be added to produce a final score for the proposal, with a maximum of 100 points available.
- 23.3.** To give consistent ratings, the evaluator will rate the overall balance between positives and negatives for each response. The criteria have a list of considerations, and the evaluator must consider overall how well the proposal meets those, in addition to whether the Applicant has provided adequate rationale or documentation to support their application and proposed approach.

### **23.4. Evaluators will follow this scale to rate each section:**

#### **a. Excellent - 5 points**

- (1) Outstanding response in all respects; fully addresses all components of the criterion; essentially no weaknesses; provides excellent rationale and/or documentation to support the response, so that evaluators have no doubt that Applicant will succeed.

#### **b. Very Good - 4 points**

- (1) High-quality response in nearly all respects. Responds well to most components of the criterion and provides good rationale and/or documentation to support the response. Significantly more positives than negatives.

#### **c. Good - 3 points**

- (1) Quality, meritorious response to most aspects of the criterion; on balance, response addresses and supports more positive aspects of the overall criterion than not.

#### **d. Fair - 2 points**

- (1) The response lacks one or more critical aspects; some key issues need to be addressed. On balance, the response has more negatives than positives.

#### **e. Poor - 1 point**

- (1) The response has serious deficiencies, with few positives.

#### **f. Unacceptable - 0 points**

- (1) The applicant does not address the topic or proposes an approach that is unacceptable.

## 24. STEWARDSHIP GRANT APPLICATION CHECKLIST

This checklist is provided for reference. Applicants are encouraged to read the full requirements and descriptions in the Guidelines to determine eligibility.

ORGANIZATION ELIGIBILITY	Checkbox
Organization identifies as one of the following entities: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Local cities, towns, and county agencies</li> <li>Local nonprofit organizations with a 501(c)(3) tax exempt status</li> <li>Water agencies/districts (public, not-for-profit)</li> <li>Open space, resource conservation, and special districts</li> <li>Schools, community colleges, and colleges/universities (public, not-for-profit)</li> </ul>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Organization is able to complete the proposed project on a reimbursement-based payment arrangement.	<input type="checkbox"/>
MINIMUM PROJECT REQUIREMENTS	Checkbox
Project is located in Santa Clara County	<input type="checkbox"/>
Project benefits Santa Clara County	<input type="checkbox"/>
Project supports Safe, Clean Water Program priorities and the project's main goal(s) and outcomes relate to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Safe, clean drinking water and water conservation;</li> <li>Flood risk reduction; or</li> <li>Environmental stewardship.</li> </ul>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Project can be completed within five (5) years following the Agreement Effective Date	<input type="checkbox"/>
STEWARDSHIP GRANT REQUIREMENTS	Checkbox
The Grant Request Amount is between \$10,001 and \$150,000	<input type="checkbox"/>
Applicant demonstrates matching funds of 15% of the total project cost in the form of monetary or in-kind services. Match does not include other Valley Water resources or supplies.	<input type="checkbox"/>
Project activities: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Do not require the use of onsite heavy machinery or construction equipment beyond hand tools;</li> <li>Do not involve the release of runoff, debris, and/or waste materials into existing waterways (rivers, creeks, ponds, riparian habitat, etc.); and/or</li> <li>May involve ground disturbance (e.g., soil removal, vegetation removal, construction, excavation) adjacent to or within sensitive biological habitats, including wetlands or riparian lands or within waterways.</li> </ul>	<input type="checkbox"/>
FLUXX APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS	Checkbox
Online Application	<input type="checkbox"/>
Project Budget	<input type="checkbox"/>
Resolution	<input type="checkbox"/>
501(c)(3) Determination Letter (if applicable)	<input type="checkbox"/>
W-9 Form	<input type="checkbox"/>
Form 990 (for 501(c)(3) organizations only)	<input type="checkbox"/>
Audited Financial Statements	<input type="checkbox"/>
Organizational Budget	<input type="checkbox"/>
Resumes of Key Staff	<input type="checkbox"/>

## 25. STEWARDSHIP GRANTS EVALUATION & SCORING GUIDE

Stewardship Grants Evaluation & Scoring Guide		Raw Score (0-5)	Weight	Total Score (Raw Score x Weight)
<b>Section #1 Project Benefits</b>				
The proposed project provides specific, quantifiable, and long-lasting benefits to Santa Clara County that support Valley Water's mission to provide Silicon Valley with safe, clean water for a healthy life, environment, and economy.  The Applicant should clearly articulate how the project aligns with Safe, Clean Water Program priorities, effectively linking these objectives to specific, measurable, and long-lasting benefits. It details current conditions and/or needs, demonstrating a well-thought-out understanding of the project's potential impact.  As applicable, the Applicant should describe the communities that will participate and which communities will benefit and how.			3	
<b>Section #2 Project Scope</b>				
The proposed project includes a well-defined and realistic scope (see application in Fluxx) which clearly identifies the following within each task: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Actions</li><li>• Deliverables</li></ul> The tasks' actions, deliverables, and duration are clearly defined, specific, measurable, and achievable. The scope is well developed and demonstrates that all elements have been considered to ensure the project's success.  As applicable, Applicant has included specific, actional plans for meaningful engagement, including how the Applicant will incorporate community input. Plans for community engagement should consider equity, inclusion, and environmental justice.  Include any details about the methodology, supporting evidence, or best practices that support your proposed activities, if applicable. This includes principles of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion.			6	
<b>Section #3 Project Budget</b>				
The proposed project includes a well-defined budget that clearly identifies the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Tasks</li><li>• Resources</li></ul> All budget items align well with those described in the scope. All elements of the project have been considered. Based on the information and detail provided, the budget is well thought out and realistic. Budget only includes eligible costs.			3	

<b>Stewardship Grants Evaluation &amp; Scoring Guide</b>	<b>Raw Score (0-5)</b>	<b>Weight</b>	<b>Total Score (Raw Score x Weight)</b>
<b>Section #4 Project Schedule</b>			
Schedule includes the estimated start and completion for each task. Applicant has considered all elements of each task, and their estimated task durations appear reasonable.		1	
<b>Section #5 Long-Term Maintenance and Management</b>			
The Applicant assesses the long-term operation, upkeep, and/or maintenance of the project after the grant agreement term ends. Elements include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Maintenance activities</li> <li>• Maintenance/management durations</li> <li>• Identification of responsible parties and funding sources.</li> </ul> A long-term maintenance plan is complete and provided. The plan includes detailed maintenance activities, responsible parties, and durations.		2	
<b>Section #6 Project Readiness</b>			
Applicant has demonstrated that they are ready to start and successfully implement their project. Application includes details about preparation, planning, and research done to date.  The project team is clearly defined, and the team members' roles and relevant experience demonstrate their competency to complete the project successfully. The project team can include partnering organizations.  Assess whether the team has experience with grant opportunities (Valley Water and otherwise) and has been successful. The team has successfully completed similar projects in the past.  Where applicable, the Applicant has demonstrated that the project team and partner organizations have the experience, cultural competency, and skills to engage with and effectively work with communities identified and/or located in the project area.  As applicable, readiness of CEQA documents (proposals demonstrate CEQA compliance) and Lead Agency identified. Projects will likely obtain all necessary permits, and land authorizations will be completed prior to the agreement's execution. Examples may include environmental permits, property agreements, encroachment permits, construction permits, etc. (Give maximum score if no permits are required).		5	

<b>Weighted Total out of 100</b>	
<b>Would you recommend this project for 100% funding?</b>	<b>YES</b> <b>NO</b>

## **ATTACHMENT 1**

### **Fluxx Grants Management System**

All Applications, reports, and invoices must be submitted through Valley Water's grants management system - Fluxx. Emailed submissions will not be accepted.

#### **WHY FLUXX?**

- Streamlines the Application, invoicing and reporting process for current grantees and prospective Applicants.
- Greater transparency and ability for Applicants and grantees to track both their Applications and reports/invoices through the approval process.
- Ability for Applicants to pull historical info on their respective organizations, including past grant applications.

#### **HOW TO REGISTER (for Prospective Grantees)**

If your organization has not previously applied for a grant from Valley Water, you will have to register as a first-time user in Valley Water's Fluxx Grants Management System. To do so, please follow these steps:

- Please note that the information for organizations that have existing active grant projects were automatically migrated into the Fluxx system. Thus, these organizations will not need to create a new account, and the Valley Water Grants staff will provide them with login credentials via email.
  1. Go to the Landing Page using the following link: [valleywater.fluxx.io](http://valleywater.fluxx.io).
  2. Click the "Create an Account Now" button on the right side of the Landing Page.
  3. Fill out the Eligibility Questionnaire and click the submit button when you are finished. If you do not pass the Eligibility Questionnaire, you will not be able to register for an account or apply for a grant.
  4. Fill out the Organization Information and Primary Contact Information on the following page. When you are finished, click the Submit Request button at the bottom.
  5. Your registration request will be sent to the Valley Water Grants Program staff, and confirmation of its submission will be sent to you via the email you provide under Primary Contact Information. You will be notified of its approval via the same email, along with information on how to log into the grantee portal.
    - This account is the master account for your organization, and the person attached to it via registration will be the Primary Contact for that account. If you would like to create accounts for other employees or associates of your organization or project, email the Valley Water Grants Program staff with the name(s) and email address(s) of the person(s) for whom you would like to create account(s). Valley Water Grants Program staff will create an account for each person, link them to your organization, and send them temporary login credentials so they can access Fluxx.

## **HOW TO REGISTER (for Current and Past Grantees)**

If your organization is a current or past grantee with Valley Water, you should have a registered account. Please use Fluxx's "Reset or create password" function if you forgot the password.

Please contact Valley Water Grants Program staff at [grants@valleywater.org](mailto:grants@valleywater.org) if you need further assistance. **NOTE:** If you would like to assign additional login credentials to other staff members at your organization, please contact [grants@valleywater.org](mailto:grants@valleywater.org).

## **ATTACHMENT 2**

### **STANDARD GRANT APPLICATION QUESTIONS**

These grant application questions are provided for information only. **Applications must be completed and submitted in Fluxx** - Valley Water will not accept Applications by any other method.

#### **1. ORGANIZATION INFORMATION**

**1.1. Grantee:**

**1.2. Primary Contact:**

**1.3. Authorized Signatory who will sign the grant agreement:**

*An authorized signatory is a person in your organization who is allowed to sign legal documents like contracts and bills. Please add proof in the Documents section that shows who is allowed to sign (this is also called Delegation of Authority). If your authorized signatory is not listed, please contact [grants@valleywater.org](mailto:grants@valleywater.org).*

The information above is taken from your organization's profile. Please review it to ensure everything is current. To make any updates, go to "Organization" in the navigation bar and update your organization's details.

#### **2. DOCUMENTS**

**Required:** Please upload the following documents. If you need to delete an uploaded document, click the delete button (red circle with dash) then save your application.

***Please upload images in PNG or JPEG format and other documents in PDF format.***

W-9 Form  
Resolution  
Organizational Budget  
Audited Financials

#### **3. PAST AGREEMENTS WITH VALLEY WATER**

**If you represent a non-government organization or agency, have you had in the past or do you currently have any agreements with Valley Water? This could include prior Safe, Clean Water grants, contracts, or other arrangements such as memorandums of understanding.**

#### **4. PROJECT INFORMATION**

**4.1. Project category: Select an item.**

*Access the standard grant guidelines, including detailed information on the category, by [clicking here](#).*

**4.2. Project title:**

**4.3. Project Summary:**

a. Briefly describe your proposed project. What will your project accomplish and what work will be done? How does your project support the goals selected in the previous question?

**4.4. Description of project site(s):**

a. Please provide details about your project site(s):

(1) Project site(s) name(s):

(2) Is it a physical site, online, or both?

(a) Project site address(es):

Please add the name of the location as well as the address. If you do not know the address, you can provide a brief description of the location instead.

(b) Will there be any physical changes to the site as part of your proposed project?

Examples include digging/excavation, planting, new structures/facilities, use of staging areas, etc.

If “No”, move to next question.

*If “Yes”* – Briefly describe the project site, such as size and site access/entry.

(c) **Required:** Please upload the following attachments to support this request (please note you will not be able to submit until you have uploaded the documents).

Location map and site plan (Please label site addresses, city, watershed, adjacent water bodies, and creeks)

**Optional/Not Required** documents to upload (please note these are not required and you will be able to submit without uploading these):

Photos of Project site(s) (Optional)

(d) Is this Project part of a larger project that is being developed? This would also include being part of a master plan or maintenance plan.

*If “Yes” - Please explain:*

If “No” - move to next question.

(e) Is your organization the property owner?

*If “Yes” - move to next question.*

(f) *If “No” - What type of permission, agreement, lease, and/or permits would you need to obtain, if applicable, to use the site?*

(g) Will the Project site AND Project-related materials (findings, reports, etc.) be accessible to the public at all times? If the Project will not be physically accessible at all times, then what days and times will it be open to the public? Are there fees to participate or interact with your project?

(h) *If “Online” – If it is an online site, please share the website(s) and/or platform(s) that you will use.*

#### **4.5. Project Benefits**

a. Valley Water’s mission is to provide Silicon Valley with safe, clean water for a healthy life, environment, and economy. The Safe, Clean Water Grants and Partnership Program provides grant funding for projects related to safe, clean drinking water, flood protection, and environmental stewardship. Which of these goals does your project support? (check all that apply)

- Safe, clean drinking water and water conservation (examples include water conservation technology, enhancements or education, and pollution prevention)
- Flood protection (examples include cleanup of creek blockages and flood preparedness outreach)

- Environmental stewardship (examples include creek cleanups, pollution prevention, supporting native plants and species, and educational programs)
- b. How will this Project support Valley Water's mission? How will your project improve existing conditions? Measure and explain the benefits as best you can with specific details. Make sure the benefits are connected to the goals you selected above.
- c. **Community Served:** If applicable, describe the communities that will participate in the project. Which communities will benefit and in what ways? If applicable, on how the project will serve or engage disadvantaged communities or Tribal and Indigenous communities.

*Please describe all active partnerships with other community organizations. If an organization is also providing partnership funding or in-kind contributions, please specify these amounts.*

- d. Is there existing community support for the project? Describe community and project support, as applicable.
- e. **Optional/Not Required:** *You may upload letters of support from partner organizations or community entities (please note these are not required and you will be able to submit without uploading these).*

#### **4.6. Project Scope**

- a. Divide the steps of your project into four main tasks: Planning and Design, Outreach and Community Participation, Implementation, and Evaluation and Closeout. For each task, clearly explain what you will do (actions) and what you hope to achieve (deliverables). Your deliverables should be clear and measurable, as you'll need to list them in your final project fact sheet.
- b. Actions: These are the specific steps you'll take to complete the task.
- c. Deliverables: These are the clear and measurable outcomes you expect to produce from your actions. Check our Grant Resources for information and tips on writing project tasks.

### Task 1: Planning and Design

**Please briefly describe the actions you will need to do to achieve this task.** What steps are needed to plan and design your project? What work should be completed before the project can start? If applicable, include any plans for community involvement and input into the development of the project plans. Examples include research, design, getting permits and permissions, getting insurance, hosting community input meetings, or finding guest speakers.

Include any details about the methodology, supporting evidence, or best practices that support your proposed activities, if applicable. Specific project types may call for different “best practices.” Examples may include geotechnical investigations, biological and cultural resource surveys, feasibility studies, graduate research, project proposal development, Valley Water’s Water Conservation Strategic Plan, Valley Water’s One Water Program, Valley Water Resources Protection Manual, etc. See the Standard Grant Guidelines for more information and resources.

### Please list your deliverables for this task.

Deliverables are the results or outcomes of this task. They will be different for each project. Examples include a project plan, site permits, lesson plans, a list of confirmed guest speakers, a garden plan, or a pre-event survey.

### Task 2: Outreach and Community Participation (OPTIONAL for Planning Grants)

**Please briefly describe the actions you will need to do to achieve this task.** What steps are needed to reach and engage the community? How will you encourage participation? Examples making flyers, posters, webpages, social media posts, or newsletters.

Describe how your methodology, supporting evidence, and/or best practices that you described in Task 1 support these actions.

**Please list your deliverables for this task.** Deliverables are the results or outcomes of this task. They will be different for each project. Examples include an outreach or media plan, a list of community members contacted by email, copies of flyers or newsletters, an RSVP list, or video files.

### Task 3: Implementation

**Please briefly describe the actions you will need to do to achieve this task.** Implementation means putting your plans into action. What will you do to complete your project? Examples include organizing an event, giving a presentation, painting, picking up trash, leading a tour, educating students, or gardening.

Describe how your methodology, supporting evidence, and/or best practices that you described in Task 1 support these actions.

**Please list your Deliverables for this task.** Deliverables are the results or outcomes of this task. They will be different for each project. Examples include sign-in sheets, photos, a mural, a research report, student projects, pounds of trash removed, or a list of participants.

#### **Task 4: Evaluation and Closeout**

**Please briefly describe the actions you will need to do to achieve this task.** How will you manage the work needed for the grant? How will you know if the project is successful? Examples include, monitoring project tasks, collecting a post-event survey, certificate of completion, and gathering information for the Final Project Fact Sheet.

**Please list your Deliverables for this task.** Deliverables are the results or outcomes of this task. They will be different for each project. Examples include learning assessments, lessons-learned summaries, participant surveys, testimonials, before-and-after photos or videos, and the Final Project Fact sheet.

#### **4.7. Project Schedule**

Describe the anticipated project dates and duration for each task. The earliest project start date can be from the date of agreement execution, anticipated to be in December 2025.

Task	Start Date	End Date
Planning and Design	MM/DD/YR	MM/DD/YR
Outreach and Community Participation	MM/DD/YR	MM/DD/YR
Implementation	MM/DD/YR	MM/DD/YR
Evaluation and Closeout	MM/DD/YR	MM/DD/YR

Please save the application to update the dates in the Project Schedule table.

#### **4.8. Long-Term Maintenance and Management**

Long-Term: Referring to the operation, upkeep, and/or maintenance of the project after the grant agreement term ends.

Describe the lifetime of the project and any plans for operating and maintaining the project elements, such as plantings, educational materials and programs, and facilities operation, in the future, including how this will be funded. Will your site or project require maintenance after completion? If so, please describe your

maintenance plan. Who will be responsible for maintaining the project and site? What maintenance activities will they do and for how long? If long-term maintenance and/or management is not required for the site or project, describe why.

#### **4.9. Project Budget**

- a. Enter a grant request between \$10,001 and \$150,000 and ensure it matches the total request amount in the table; submission is not allowed if they differ.

#### **4.10. Requested Grant Amount:**

- 4.11. The Grantee Contribution and Other Contributions include in-kind (goods or services) and monetary contributions. Please list other organizations or agencies that are contributing monetarily to this project and describe how they will support the project activities that are listed in your scope. Please note that your project is not eligible for a grant if it is part of another Valley Water program (for example, Adopt-A-Creek, event sponsorships, rebates).

**Required:** *Please upload your project budget (please note you will not be able to submit until you have uploaded the documents). Click here to download the required budget template:*

#### **4.12. Project Readiness**

- a. Organizational Capacity
  - (1) Summarize your organization's ability to successfully implement the proposed project, including any experience with similar projects. If applicable, identify any project partners who will directly carry out the work (e.g., subcontractors) and describe their roles and expertise.
  - (2) Provide the name, position, and qualifications of key staff involved in the project.
- b. Financial Capacity
  - (1) Include a description of your organization's financial resources, and its ability to carry out the project on a cost reimbursement basis.

c. CEQA/Permitting

- (1) Summarize your project's CEQA-readiness, including the status of the CEQA compliance process, and Lead Agency designation (if applicable).
  
- (2) Summarize your project's permitting requirements, as well as any permits (construction, environmental, regulatory) that have been obtained or will need to be obtained. If your project does not require any permits, please state N/A in this section.

d. **Required Upload:** You may upload documents that substantiate your organization's ability to successfully complete this work. Resumes, relevant certifications of key staff members, and financial statements are required and must be uploaded prior to submittal of your application.

## **ATTACHMENT 3**

### **Definitions**

*The terms used in these Guidelines shall have the following meanings unless otherwise stated:*

**Agreement:** A contract between Valley Water and the Applicant specifying the payment of funds by Valley Water's Clean, Safe Creeks and Natural Flood Protection Special Tax for the performance of the Project Scope within the Project Period by the Grantee.

**Agreement Term:** The period beginning on the Agreement Effective Date and ending on the date of termination or expiration of the Agreement.

**Agreement Effective Date:** The Agreement Effective Date is the date when the Agreement becomes legally binding and active and the terms of the Agreement apply.

**Applicant:** An individual or organization that requests a Safe, Clean Water Standard Grant but has not yet been awarded one.

**Application:** The FY25 Safe, Clean Water Program Standard Grant Program Application and accompanying attachments submitted to Valley Water for Safe, Clean Water Grant Program.

**Authorized Signatory:** The individual is who can sign agreements and invoices on behalf of the organization. The organization must provide written documentation from its governing body to verify this authorization.

**CEQA:** The California Environmental Quality Act, *Public Resources Code*, Section 21000 et. seq.; Title 14, *California Code of Regulations* Section 15000 et. Seq.

**Construction Costs:** Expenses directly resulting from new construction of physical works. Maintenance work where existing facilities are replaced in kind is not considered construction.

**Development:** Means improvements to real property by construction of new facilities or additions to existing facilities.

**Disadvantaged Community:** Valley Water defines a Disadvantaged Community as an area whose residents are disproportionately impacted from a combination of economic, health, and environmental burdens, such as poverty, high unemployment, environmental pollution, the presence of hazardous waste, or environmental degradation. These communities are often comprised of people who have suffered historical discrimination based on race, color, national origin, tribe, culture, income, immigration status, or English language proficiency. For the purposes of Valley Water policies, projects, services, and programs, Disadvantaged Communities include any of the following:

- Low-income households (Household incomes below 80 percent of the Area Median Income (AMI) in Santa Clara County), as of 2020 AMI for average household of three is \$100,950, however AMI is updated annually;
- Low-income census tracts (Census tracts where aggregated household incomes are less than 80 percent of the Area Median Income (AMI) in Santa Clara County), as of 2020 AMI for average household of three is \$100,950, however AMI is updated annually;

- An area defined by California Environmental Protection Agency (pursuant to Section 39711 of the California Health and Safety Code), using the [CalEnviroScreen tool](#), which was developed to determine communities most burdened by environmental, socioeconomic and health factors.

**Direct Costs:** Project expenses attributable only to the project itself such as construction costs.

**Environmental Enhancement:** Action taken by Valley Water that benefits the environment, is NOT mitigation, and is undertaken voluntarily. Enhancement actions may include environmental restoration, rehabilitation, preservation, or creation. In instances where enhancements are in the same vicinity as a mitigation project, actions must exceed required compliance to compensate for environmental impacts to be considered environmental enhancements.

**Environmental Resource Investigation:** formal inquiry or systematic study related to environmental resources. Examples may include geotechnical or water testing, cultural resource investigations, or biological surveys.

**Grantee:** An agency or organization receiving funding from this Grant Program.

**Grant Application Deadline:** The exact date and time the Application must be submitted via Fluxx for acceptance by Valley Water.

**Grant Award Amount:** The not-to-exceed amount awarded to the Grantee by the Valley Water Board of Directors for the Project.

**Grant Request Amount:** The total grant dollar amount requested by the Applicant in the Project Budget.

**Indirect Costs:** Expenses that are not attributable to a project itself but are an overhead or support cost including non-project-related personnel and administrative expenses.

**Lead Agency:** the public agency that has the principal responsibility for carrying out or approving a project.

**Mitigation:** Action taken to fulfill CEQA/NEPA, permit requirements and court mandated mitigation to avoid, minimize, rectify, or reduce adverse environmental impacts, or compensate for the impact(s) by replacing or providing substitute resources or environments.

**Non-construction Costs:** Project-related expenses that do not result in a Capital Improvement but are considered necessary to achieve the Project Scope, e.g., permit Application fees, signage, or public outreach.

**Preservation:** Action taken by Valley Water to protect an ecosystem or habitat area by removing a threat to that ecosystem or habitat, including regulatory actions and the purchase of land and easements.

**Primary Contact:** The individual responsible for communication between the Applicant organization and Valley Water. This person manages all correspondence, provides updates on the projects, and ensures that any questions or requirements from Valley Water are addressed promptly.

**Project:** The planned activity, or development to be accomplished with Valley Water grant funds. Projects are unique, time-bound initiatives with specific deliverables and definite start and endpoints. If the activity is part of a larger effort, clear delineation must be shown for the scope, schedule, and budget of what Valley Water is funding.

**Project Budget:** The full cost of the project, including funds from all funding sources.

**Project Schedule:** The estimated start and end date for each task.

**Project Scope:** The description of activities to be accomplished to fulfill the project Agreement.

**Responsible Agency:** the public agency which proposes to carry out or approve a project for which a lead agency is preparing or has prepared an environmental document.

**Safe, Clean Water Program:** Safe, Clean Water and Natural Flood Protection Program

**Stewardship:** Stewardship means to entrust the careful and responsible management of the environment and natural resources to one's care for the benefit of the greater community.

**Valley Water:** Santa Clara Valley Water District

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## **ATTACHMENT 4** **Sample Resolution**

**RESOLUTION NO. \_\_\_\_\_**

### **RESOLUTION OF THE (TITLE OF GRANTEE'S GOVERNING BODY) (APPLICANT'S GOVERNING BODY) APPROVING (APPLICANT NAME) (APPLICANT) TO APPLY FOR GRANT FUNDS UNDER THE SAFE, CLEAN WATER AND NATURAL FLOOD PROTECTION PROGRAM**

WHEREAS, the Santa Clara Valley Water District has enacted the **FY2025** Safe Clean Water Grant Program (Safe Clean Water), which provides funds for Education Grants, Planning Grants, and Stewardship (Program) Grants; and

WHEREAS, the Santa Clara Valley Water District's Office of Civic Engagement has been delegated the responsibility for the administration of the grant program, and establishing necessary implementation procedures; and

WHEREAS, said procedures established by the Santa Clara Valley Water District require Applicant's Governing Body to certify by resolution Applicant's approval to apply for and accept grant program funds; and

WHEREAS, Applicant will enter into a Grant Agreement with the Santa Clara Valley Water District.

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Applicant's Governing Body hereby:

1. Approves the submission of an Application for grant funds from the Safe, Clean Water and Natural Flood Protection Program;
2. Approves the acceptance of grant funds from the Safe, Clean Water and Natural Flood Protection Program, upon approval of grant funding for the Project by appropriate authorities;
3. Certifies that Applicant has or will have sufficient funds to operate and maintain the Project(s);
4. Certifies that Applicant will maintain an accounting system that:
  - a. Accurately reflects fiscal transactions, with the necessary controls and safeguards;
  - b. Provides good audit trails, especially the source documents; and
  - c. Provides accounting data so the total cost of each individual project can be readily determined.
5. Certifies that Applicant will review and agree to all terms and conditions stated in the Agreement including the Special Provisions, General Provisions, Financial Provisions, and Insurance Requirements contained in the Agreement; and
6. Appoints the (designated position) as its authorized agent to conduct all negotiations, execute and submit all documents and reports including, but not limited to applications, agreements, payment requests and so on, which may be necessary for the performance and completion of the Project.

Approved and Adopted on the (day) day of (month), 20<sup>(XX)</sup>. I, the undersigned, hereby certify that the foregoing Resolution was duly adopted by (Applicant's Governing Body) following a roll call vote:

AYES:

NOES:

ABSENT:

**(Clerk)**

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## **ATTACHMENT 5**

### **Sample References**

This partial list can be used to develop application materials and as references for Best Practices.

This list is not exhaustive; Applicants are encouraged to locate and use reference materials specific to their projects.

#### **Valley Water Publications**

Santa Clara Valley Water District Act

<https://www.valleywater.org/sites/default/files/Santa%20Clara%20Valley%20Water%20District%20-%20District%20Act.pdf>

Water Resources Protection Ordinance, 2008

<https://www.valleywater.org/sites/default/files/WRPO.pdf>

Water Resources Protection Ordinance No. 24 – Establishing Prohibitions within Water Resources Protection Zones, 2024

<https://scwd.legistar.com/LegislationDetail.aspx?ID=7024364&GUID=FD9451A3-5A2B-40E5-93E6-CE5395E8802A&Options=&Search=>

Santa Clara Valley Water District Mission, Vision, Values

<https://www.valleywater.org/how-we-operate/about-valley-water/mission-vision-values>

Valley Water's *One Water, Santa Clara Countywide Framework: An Intergraded Approach to Water Resource Management*, 2022

<https://www.valleywater.org/project-updates/one-water-plan>

Valley Water's Safe, Clean Water and Natural Flood Protection Program, including Information on six priorities, 2020

- Priority A: Ensure a Safe, Reliable Water Supply
- Priority B: Reduce Toxins, Hazards and Contaminants in Our Waterways
- Priority C: Protect Our Water Supply and Dams from Earthquakes and Other Natural Disasters
- Priority D: Restore Wildlife Habitat and Provide Open Space
- Priority E: Provide Flood Protection to Homes, Businesses, Schools, Streets and Highways
- Priority F: Support Public Health and Public Safety for Our Community

<https://www.valleywater.org/safe-clean-water-and-natural-flood-protection-program>

Compendium of Water Conservation Program Studies and Reports since 2002  
<https://www.valleywater.org/droughtsaving-water/studies-and-reports>

- Water Conservation Guiding Principles - Board of Directors, Santa Clara Valley Water District, Resolution No. 23-52, Calling for Water Conservation as a Way of Life in Santa Clara County <https://s3.us-west-1.amazonaws.com/valleywater.org.us-west-1/s3fs-public/23-52%20061323%20-%20Calling%20for%20Water%20Conservation%20as%20a%20Way%20of%20Life%20in%20Santa%20Clara%20County.pdf>
- 2020 Urban Water Management Plan  
<https://www.valleywater.org/your-water/water-supply-planning/urban-water-management-plan>
- 2040 Water Supply Master Plan and 2050 Water Supply Master Plan (*under development*)  
<https://www.valleywater.org/your-water/water-supply-planning/water-supply-master-plan>

Guidelines and Standards for Land Use Near Streams, 2006

<https://www.valleywater.org/contractors/doing-businesses-with-the-district/permits-working-district-land-or-easement/guidelines-and-standards-land-use-near-streams>

Encroachment Permits for work near Valley Water streams

<https://www.valleywater.org/contractors/doing-businesses-with-the-district/permits-working-district-land-or-easement/encroachment-permits>

Water Resources Protection Manual (covering topics related to projects near streams), 2006

<https://www.valleywater.org/contractors/doing-businesses-with-the-district/permits-working-district-land-or-easement/water-resources-protection-manual>

**Including:**

Design Guide, Use of Local Native Species (including list of native plant species)  
<https://www.valleywater.org/sites/default/files/WRPM%20Ch%203%20Native.pdf>

Design Guide, Riparian Revegetation or Mitigation Projects  
<https://www.valleywater.org/sites/default/files/WRPM%20Ch%203%20Riparian.pdf>

Plant Species for Vegetated Buffers and Swales  
<https://www.valleywater.org/sites/default/files/WRPM%20Ch%203%20Plant%20Species.pdf>

Guidance for Trail Design, Policy Criteria, and Policy Guidance  
<https://s3.us-west-1.amazonaws.com/valleywater.org.us-west-1/s3fs-public/Guidance%20for%20Trail%20Design%20-%20Chapter%203%20Water%20Resources%20Protection%20Manual.pdf>

Bank Protection/ Erosion Repair Design Guide  
<https://www.valleywater.org/contractors/doing-businesses-with-the-district/permits-working-district-land-or-easement/water-resources-protection-manual>

Safe, Clean Water and Natural Flood Protection Program

Grants and Partnerships

FY25 Standard Grant Guidelines

Ver. 02/05/25

## **Santa Clara Valley-Wide Publications**

Santa Clara Valley Urban Runoff Pollution Prevention Program, providing guidance on pollution prevention and stormwater management, including:

General information with links to technical guidance

<https://scvurppp.org/>

Descriptions and Guidance on Elements of Pollution Prevention

- Green Stormwater Infrastructure
- New Development & Redevelopment
- Trash Reduction
- PCBs & Mercury Reduction
- Pesticide Toxicity reduction
- Copper Reduction
- Construction Site Controls
- Public Education & Outreach
- Water Quality Monitoring
- Other Elements

<https://scvurppp.org/program-elements/>

## **State of California Publications**

California Final Designation of Disadvantaged Communities (SB 535), (May 2022), interactive web-based map

<https://oehha.ca.gov/calenviroscreen/sb535>

California Communities Environmental Health Screening Tool, a screening methodology that can be used to help identify California communities that are disproportionately burdened by multiple sources of pollution

<https://oehha.ca.gov/calenviroscreen/report/calenviroscreen-40>

California Common Core State Standards, English Language Arts & Literacy in History/Social Studies, Science, and Technical Subjects, 2013

<https://www.cde.ca.gov/be/st/ss/documents/finalelaccsstandards.pdf>

California Common Core State Standards, General Information

<https://www.cde.ca.gov/re/cc/>

## **National Publications**

Exploring Topics Across the Network, by Government Alliance on Race and Equity (GARE)

<https://www.racialequityalliance.org/resources/topics>

How to Facilitate Inclusive Community Outreach and Engagement, by ICMA

<https://icma.org/articles/pm-magazine/how-facilitate-inclusive-community-outreach-and-engagement>

PRSSA Diversity Toolkit 2024-2025, by Public Relations Student Society of America (PRSSA)

[https://www.prsa.org/docs/default-source/prssa-docs/about/prssa-diversity-toolkit.pdf?sfvrsn=ce66173c\\_12](https://www.prsa.org/docs/default-source/prssa-docs/about/prssa-diversity-toolkit.pdf?sfvrsn=ce66173c_12)

Value of Volunteer Time, by Independent Sector

<https://independentsector.org/resource/value-of-volunteer-time/>

Public Law 111-274-Plain Writing Act of 2010

<https://www.govinfo.gov/app/details/PLAW-111publ274/summary>

Federal Plain Language Guidelines, Revision 1 (May 2011)

<https://www.plainlanguage.gov/guidelines/>

## ATTACHMENT 6

### Project Budget Template

## APPENDIX C - BUDGET SPREADSHEET TEMPLATE

<b>Organization</b>	
<b>Project Title</b>	

Personnel/Labor								
Position Title	Loaded Hourly Rate	Number of Hours	Task 1 Planning and Design	Task 2 Outreach and Community Participation	Task 3 Implementation	Task 4 Evaluation and Closeout	Sub-total	Notes
							\$0.00	
							\$0.00	
							\$0.00	
							\$0.00	
							\$0.00	
							\$0.00	
							\$0.00	
							\$0.00	
							\$0.00	
							\$0.00	
							\$0.00	
Total Personnel/Labor Expenses			\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	

Supplies & Services						
Expense	Task 1 Planning and Design	Task 2 Outreach and Community Participation	Task 3 Implementation	Task 4 Evaluation and Closeout	Sub-total	Notes
					\$0.00	
					\$0.00	
					\$0.00	
					\$0.00	
					\$0.00	
					\$0.00	
					\$0.00	
					\$0.00	
<b>Total Supplies &amp; Services Expenses</b>	<b>\$0.00</b>	<b>\$0.00</b>	<b>\$0.00</b>	<b>\$0.00</b>	<b>\$0.00</b>	

Other Funding Sources*			
Funding Source (Include description)	Status	Type	Amount

\*Other Funding Sources are also considered Match Funds for Stewardship Grants only. Stewardship Grants require a minimum Match Fund of 15% of the Total Project Cost. Match Funds are not required for Education or Planning Grants.

	Task 1 Planning and Design	Task 2 Outreach and Community Participation	Task 3 Implementation	Task 4 Evaluation and Closeout	Sub-total
Combined Sub-total	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
				Other Funding Sources Sub-Total	\$0.00
				Total Project Cost	\$0.00

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## **ATTACHMENT 7** **Grantee Insurance Requirements**

**Please Note: Failure to comply with the instructions below could result in a delay in executing the Agreement. Valley Water will not be responsible for time lost or costs incurred due to failure to comply with these requirements. Please note the checklist of documents needed at the end of this Attachment Two Insurance Requirements.**

Without limiting the Grantee's indemnification of, or liability to, the Santa Clara Valley Water District ("Valley Water"), the Grantee must provide and maintain at its own expense, during the term of this Agreement, or as may be further required herein, the following insurance coverages and provisions as listed below.

Grantee must provide its insurance broker(s)/agent(s) with a copy of these requirements and warrants that these requirements have been reviewed by Grantee's insurance agent(s) and/or broker(s), who have been instructed by Grantee to procure the insurance coverage required herein.

In addition to certificates, Grantee must furnish Valley Water with copies of all original endorsements affecting coverage required by this Attachment Two Insurance Requirements. The certificates and endorsements are to be signed by a person authorized by that insurer to bind coverage on its behalf. **All endorsements and certificates are to be received and approved by Valley Water before the Agreement is effective.** In the event of a claim or dispute, Valley Water has the right to require Grantee's insurer to provide complete, certified copies of all required pertinent insurance policies, including endorsements affecting the coverage required by this Attachment Two Insurance Requirements.

If your insurance broker has any questions about the above requirements, please advise him/her to email the Valley Water Risk Manager at: [RiskManager@valleywater.org](mailto:RiskManager@valleywater.org).

### **A. CERTIFICATES OF INSURANCE**

Grantee shall furnish Valley Water with a Certificate of Insurance. The certificates will be issued on a standard ACORD Form.

Grantee shall instruct their insurance broker/agent to submit all insurance certificates and required notices electronically in PDF format to the designated Valley Water Project Administrator and email a copy to [RiskManager@valleywater.org](mailto:RiskManager@valleywater.org) and [grants@valleywater.org](mailto:grants@valleywater.org).

The certificates will:

1. Identify the underwriters, the types of insurance, the insurance limits, the deductibles and the policy term;
2. Include copies of all the actual policy endorsements required herein; and
3. In the "Certificate Holder" box include:

**Santa Clara Valley Water District  
Attention: Amy Fonseca  
5750 Almaden Expressway  
San Jose, CA 95118  
Agreement No.**

**IMPORTANT: The agreement number must be included.**

In the Description of Operations/Locations/Vehicles/Special Items Box:

1. Certificate Holder shall be named as Additional Insured;
2. Valley Water agreement or project number shall appear;
3. The list of policies scheduled as underlying on the Umbrella policy shall be listed; and
4. Waiver of Subrogation must be indicated as endorsed to all policies.

**If Grantee receives any notice that any of the insurance policies required by this Attachment Two Insurance Requirements may be cancelled or coverage reduced for any reason whatsoever, Grantee or insurer shall immediately provide written notice to the designated Valley Water Program Administrator that such insurance policy required by this Attachment Two Insurance Requirements is canceled or coverage is reduced.**

## **B. MAINTENANCE OF INSURANCE**

If Grantee fails to maintain such insurance as is called for herein, Valley Water, at its option, may suspend payment for work performed and/or may order Grantee to suspend all Grantee's work at Grantee's expense until a new policy of insurance is in effect.

## **C. RENEWAL OF INSURANCE**

Grantee will provide Valley Water with a current Certificate of Insurance and endorsements within Thirty (30) business days from the expiration of insurance.

Grantee shall instruct its insurance broker/agent to:

1. Submit all renewals of insurance certificates and required notices electronically in PDF format to: **RiskManager@valleywater.org** and **grants@valleywater.org**.
2. Provide the following information in the "Certificate Holder" box:

**Santa Clara Valley Water District  
Attention: Amy Fonseca  
5750 Almaden Expressway  
San Jose, CA 95118  
Agreement No.**

**IMPORTANT: The agreement number must be included.**

Grantee must, at its sole cost and expense, procure and maintain during the entire period of this Agreement the following insurance coverage(s).

## **D. REQUIRED COVERAGES**

1. **Commercial General/Business Liability Insurance** with coverage as indicated:

**\$1,000,000** per occurrence/**\$1,000,000** aggregate limits for bodily injury and property damage.

**\$1,000,000** Products/Completed Operations aggregate (to be maintained for at least three (3) years following acceptance of the work by Valley Water.

General Liability insurance must:

- a. Be written on standard ISO forms and approved by Valley Water Risk Manager.
- b. Include coverage at least as broad as found in standard ISO form CG 0001.
- c. Include Premises and Operations.
- d. Include Contractual Liability expressly including liability assumed under this contract.
- e. If Grantee will be working within fifty (50) feet of a railroad or light rail operation, any exclusion as to performance of operations within the vicinity of any railroad bridge, trestle, track, roadbed, tunnel, overpass, underpass, or crossway must be deleted, or a railroad protective policy in the above amounts provided.
- f. Include Owners and Grantee's Protective liability.
- g. Include Severability of Interest.
- h. Include Explosion, Collapse and Underground Hazards, (X, C, and U).
- i. Include Broad Form Property Damage liability.
- j. Contain no restrictive exclusions (such as but not limited to CG 2153, CG 2144 or CG 2294).

Valley Water reserves the right to require certain restrictive exclusions be removed to ensure compliance with the above.

**2. Business Auto Liability Insurance** with coverage as indicated:

**\$1,000,000** combined single limit for bodily injury and property damage per occurrence, covering all owned, non-owned and hired vehicles.

**Excess or Umbrella policies** may be used to reach the above limits for the General Liability and/or Business Auto Liability insurance limits; however, all such policies must contain a primacy clause (See Section 2, General Conditions) and meet all other General Conditions below.

**3. Workers' Compensation and Employer's Liability Insurance**

Statutory California Workers' Compensation coverage covering all work to be performed for Valley Water.

Employer Liability coverage for not less than **\$1,000,000** per occurrence.

## E. GENERAL REQUIREMENTS

**With respect to all coverages noted above, the following additional requirements apply:**

1. **Additional Insured Endorsement(s):** Grantee must provide an additional insured endorsement for Commercial General/Business Liability and Business Automobile liability coverage naming the **Santa Clara Valley Water District, its Directors, officers, employees, and agents, individually and collectively**, as additional insureds, and must provide coverage for acts, omissions, etc., arising out of the named insureds' activities and work. **NOTE:** This section does not apply to the Workers' Compensation.
2. **Primacy Clause:** Grantee will provide evidence (either through the Certificate of Insurance, endorsement or language in the insurance contract) that Grantee's insurance is primary with respect to any other insurance which may be carried by Valley Water, its Directors, its officers, agents and employees, and Valley Water's coverage must not be called upon to contribute or share in the loss. **NOTE:** This section does not apply to the Workers' Compensation policies.
3. **Cancellation Clause:** Grantee will provide endorsements for all policies stating that the policy will not be cancelled without 30 days prior notification to Valley Water.
4. **Acceptability of Insurers:** All coverages must be issued by companies admitted to conduct business in the State of California, which hold a current policy holder's alphabetic and financial size category rating of not less than A- V, according to the current Best's Key Rating Guide or a company of equal financial stability that is approved by Valley Water's Risk Manager. Non-Admitted companies may be substituted on a very limited basis at the Risk Manager's sole discretion.
5. **Self-Insured Retentions or Deductibles:** Any deductibles or self-insured retentions must be declared to and approved by Valley Water. At the option of Valley Water, either: the insurer shall reduce or eliminate such deductibles or self-insured retentions as respects Valley Water, its officers, officials, employees and volunteers; or the Grantee shall provide a financial guarantee satisfactory to the Entity guaranteeing payment of losses and related investigations, claim administration, and defense expenses. Grantee agrees that in the event of a claim they will pay down any agreed upon SIR in a prompt manner as soon as bills are incurred in order to trigger the insurance related to the SIR.
6. **Subcontractors:** The Grantee shall secure and maintain or shall be responsible for ensuring that all subcontractors performing the Contract Services secure and maintain all insurance coverages appropriate to their tier and scope of work in a form and from insurance companies reasonably acceptable to Valley Water.

7. **Amount of Liability Not Limited to Amount of Insurance:** The insurance procured by Grantee for the benefit of Valley Water must not be deemed to release or limit any liability of Grantee. Damages recoverable by Valley Water for any liability of Grantee must, in any event, not be limited by the amount of the required insurance coverage.
8. **Coverage to be Occurrence Based:** Except for Professional Liability, all coverage must be occurrence-based coverage. Claims-made coverage is not allowed.
9. **Waiver of Subrogation:** Grantee agrees to waive subrogation against Valley Water to the extent any loss suffered by Grantee is covered by any Commercial General Liability policy, Automobile policy, Workers' Compensation policy described in Required Coverages above. Grantee agrees to advise its broker/agent/insurer and agrees to provide evidence (either through the Certificate of Insurance, endorsement or language in the insurance contract) that subrogation has been waived by its insurer.
10. **Non-compliance:** Valley Water reserves the right to withhold payments to the Grantee in the event of material noncompliance with the insurance requirements outlined above.

## CHECKLIST OF DOCUMENTS NEEDED

<b>General Liability:</b>	A.	Limits ( <b>\$1,000,000</b> )	
	B.	Additional Insured (Endorsement)	
	C.	Waiver of Subrogation (COI, Endorsement or policy language)	
	D.	Primacy (COI, Endorsement or policy language)	
	E.	Cancellation Endorsement	
<b>Auto Liability:</b>	A.	Limits ( <b>\$1,000,000</b> )	
	B.	Additional Insured (Endorsement)	
	C.	Waiver of Subrogation (COI, Endorsement or policy language)	
	D.	Primacy (COI, Endorsement or policy language)	
	E.	Cancellation Endorsement	
<b>Umbrella:</b>	A.	Limits (\$ )	
	B.	Primacy (Endorsement or policy language)	
<b>Workers' Comp:</b>	A.	Limits ( <b>\$1,000,000</b> )	
	B.	Waiver of Subrogation (Endorsement or policy language)	
	C.	Cancellation Endorsement	

Attachment Two, Mini-GrantsGL\_rev. 01.26.24

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