

Coastal Stories Grant



2024 Announcement

Released: February 5, 2024

Submission Deadline: March 31, 2024 at 11:59 pm



The pre-application is attached to this announcement as Attachment 2.

- Submit the pre-application via email to grants@scc.ca.gov
- For questions, please email coastalstories@scc.ca.gov

Coastal Stories Grants Request for Pre-Applications

Introduction

The Conservancy's Coastal Stories Grant Program will be providing grants to tribes, nonprofit organizations, and public agencies to create storytelling installations or materials (such as murals, signage, or monuments) that represent communities and voices that have been historically excluded from the storytelling on California's coast and publicly accessible lands.

Pre-applications for grant funding can be submitted via email to grants@scc.ca.gov. Pre-applications are due by 11:59 pm on March 31, 2024. Based on this review, applicants may be invited to submit a full grant application or asked to provide further information on their project. We recommend applicants read through this full announcement before submitting.

About the State Coastal Conservancy

The [State Coastal Conservancy](#) ("Conservancy") is a state agency established in 1976 to work proactively with local communities to implement multi-benefit projects that achieve its mission:

"The State Coastal Conservancy's vision is of a beautiful, restored, and accessible coast for current and future generations of Californians. We act with others to protect, restore, and to increase public access to California's coast, ocean, coastal watersheds, and the San Francisco Bay Area."

Our jurisdiction is the California coast, which we define as watersheds that have rivers and streams that drain into the Pacific Ocean, the nine-county San Francisco Bay Area, and the Santa Ana River watershed. Attachment 1 includes a map of our jurisdiction.

Coastal Stories Grant Program Overview

Background

California's coast and outdoors have long been recognized and used as spaces of joy, relaxation, community, and healing for many Californians. However, the European-settler perspective dominates history and storytelling materials. This perspective teaches the public an incomplete history that often excludes Black, Indigenous, People of Color (BIPOC), immigrant, and other communities. As a result, these materials can send a message that some groups do not belong or are not welcome outdoors. To make California's outdoor spaces more welcoming and inclusive, we want to increase the representation of BIPOC and other historically excluded groups by amplifying their voices, perspectives, and stories. This is the third round of Conservancy funding for this grant program.

Program Overview

The Conservancy's Coastal Stories grant program will fund projects that develop and deliver content via installations and other products that represent the stories of communities who have been historically excluded from California's coast. By documenting and sharing these histories and stories, we aim to make outdoor spaces and interpretive centers feel welcoming and inclusive for all Californians.

The Coastal Stories grants build upon our existing Explore the Coast (ETC) program, funding projects that make the outdoors more welcoming to people and communities that face barriers to accessing or enjoying the coast. **Historically excluded communities include but are not limited to BIPOC people, people with disabilities, immigrant communities, and low-income communities.**

These are the priorities of the Coastal Stories grant program:

- Promote a sense of belonging in outdoor spaces by presenting perspectives that include historically excluded communities.
- Engage representatives of historically excluded communities to develop and share their coastal perspectives and stories.
- Improve educational content in California's outdoor spaces by correcting one-sided histories, retelling stories more appropriately and inclusively, and developing new content that shares untold stories.
- Use creative forms of community engagement.
- Create stories that are free and publicly accessible for the community and intended audiences.

Program Funding

Up to \$1.2 million will be awarded in this grant round. There are no maximum or minimum grant amounts for this funding; however, it is anticipated that most grants will be up to \$175,000. The budget for the requested amount should reflect the scale and effort required to implement the project.

Projects

Eligible Projects

Projects should research, develop, and present diverse stories of historically excluded communities in publicly accessible outdoor spaces on the coast, Santa Ana River watershed, and San Francisco Bay. Proposals that use creative forms of historical, ecological, and cultural storytelling are encouraged. The Conservancy envisions that these storytelling materials will foster representation of historically excluded groups in outdoor spaces, making the outdoors more inclusive and welcoming for all Californians.

All projects must present a story connected to outdoor spaces in a way that will reach the public and target audiences. We encourage applicants to be thoughtful about the community

whose story is being told and how it will represent their perspectives and/or contributions. We will fund planning and preparation activities such as hiring historians, storytellers, artists, community engagement, designing materials, acquiring permits and permissions, and the project's installation, creation, or implementation. Please see our [Inclusive Interpretive Signage Guidelines](#) for specific suggestions on producing inclusive content.

2024 Coastal Stories projects will be funded by Proposition 40, which is codified at Public Resources Code Sections 5096.600-5096.683. These funds may be used for “acquisition, development, rehabilitation, restoration, and protection of land and water resources.” Prop 40 defines “development” as: “improvement, rehabilitation, restoration, enhancement, preservation, protection, and interpretation.” It defines “preservation” as: “identification, evaluation, recordation, documentation, interpretation, protection, rehabilitation, restoration, stabilization, development, and reconstruction, or any combination of those activities.” Therefore, eligible projects include those that document and interpret land and water resources.

Examples of eligible projects:

- Developing and implementing storytelling products, including but not limited to signage, murals, monuments, and art installations. Digital content (web, video, or audio/audio tours) is fundable; however, the digital content needs to be linked to a physical product.
- Hiring local artists or community members to design and implement storytelling products.
- Hiring a historian or community members to research and write content for storytelling products.
- Adding storytelling or interpretive elements onto existing infrastructure (waterfronts, public accessways, interpretive centers, installations/education exhibits, etc.) in free public spaces.
- Projects that use creative forms of community engagement to develop and implement storytelling products.

Examples of ineligible projects include:

- Hiring historians, artists, or community members to write content, without presenting this content in a way that centers the historically excluded community’s perspective and/or contributions.
- Developing and implementing storytelling products that are not located in a publicly accessible outdoor space.
- Primarily social media campaigns/content.
- Producing digital content that isn’t connected to a physical installation.
- Projects that provide excursions to the coast. Please see the Conservancy’s [Explore the Coast grants](#) for this type of funding.
- Construction projects that do not involve storytelling. Please note, however, that the Conservancy has funded hundreds of projects to build new trails, trailheads, and other

amenities (beach stairways, bathrooms, overlooks, etc.) through other funding programs. Please contact us directly if you are pursuing this type of project.

We encourage you to contact us if you have any questions regarding the eligibility of your project: coastalstories@scc.ca.gov

Eligible Applicants

Federally recognized tribes or tribally led nonprofits, nonprofit organizations, and public agencies are eligible for funding. To be eligible, a nonprofit organization must qualify under the provisions of Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code. Other community-based organizations and tribes that are not federally recognized may apply with a 501(c)(3) fiscal sponsor.

Partnerships

Partnerships between landowners and community based organizations, historians, and other storytellers are highly encouraged. If the primary applicant is a landowner, they should provide details on how they will partner with a historically excluded community to elevate their voices, perspectives, and/or contributions to the outdoor space.

If the primary applicant represents a historically excluded community, they should provide details on how they are partnering with the landowner in order to implement the project and maintain the storytelling products thereafter. We are willing to help community storytellers connect and build partnerships with landowners – if interested, please contact us at coastalstories@scc.ca.gov.

If the applicant is not the landowner, they'll need to provide a support letter from the landowner at the time of full-proposal submission. Please note that if selected for Conservancy funding, projects conducted on another entity's land must have a signed landowner access agreement between the applicant and the landowner before the project can begin.

Maintenance Requirement

Most projects should be maintained for at least 15 years. Maintenance terms are based on the reasonable lifetime of each type of project. Conservancy staff can assist applicants with determining the maintenance requirement for their project.

Eligible Project Locations

Projects should take place on publicly accessible parks and lands within the Conservancy's jurisdiction, which includes the coast, watersheds of coastal draining rivers and streams, throughout the nine-county San Francisco Bay Area, and the Santa Ana River watershed. A map of our jurisdiction is attached to this RFP.

Project Duration

Applicants should apply for projects that could start in early 2025. Projects must be completed by February 2027.

Applying for Funding

Pre-application Submittal

The first step to apply to this grant program is to submit a pre-application. Projects that are a good fit and are competitive will be invited by staff to submit a full application.

Completed pre-applications should be submitted via email as a Word document (file type .doc or .docx) or PDF to grants@scc.ca.gov. Applicants are welcome to attach a small number of relevant maps and photos (preferably as jpg) with their submission; these attachments should not exceed 10MB in total.

Please be aware that all documents submitted to the Conservancy become public documents and cannot be considered confidential. The Conservancy will assume that submitted photos are permissible for use by the Conservancy unless the applicant clarifies otherwise. Please indicate if photos, maps, or other material submitted with your pre-application and proposal require crediting when reused by the Conservancy. You should indicate this on each document.

Before pre-application submission, we recommend that applicants:

- Participate in the optional technical assistance webinar on 02/22/2024 from 12:00-1:00PM or watch the posted webinar video if unable to participate live. The registration link for the webinar is [here](#).
- Request an optional initial project phone or Zoom consultation to help determine if a project idea is eligible (email coastalstories@scc.ca.gov to request a consultation). **New applicants are highly encouraged to request a consultation prior to pre-application submission.**
- Review the following materials for grantees on the Conservancy website to understand standard grantee requirements if your application were to be selected for funding.
 - **Typical Grant Agreement Terms:** <https://scc.ca.gov/files/2020/05/Typical-Grant-Agreement-Terms.pdf>
 - **Grantee Manual:** <https://scc.ca.gov/grants/grantee-manual/>

Next Steps in the Proposal & Grant Award Process

A. Full Grant Application

Within 60 days of receiving a pre-application via grants@scc.ca.gov, the Conservancy will notify the applicant that either (1) their pre-application is not eligible/competitive, (2) additional information or clarifications about the proposed project is required for further consideration, or (3) they are invited to submit a full grant application.

If invited to submit a full grant application, applicants will be provided with instructions, the full grant application form, and a deadline for submittal. Applicants who do not own the land or property which their projects will take place on will need to attach a letter from the landowner indicating their support.

Within 60 days of receiving of a full grant application: The Conservancy will notify the applicant via email that either (1) their full application will not be considered further, (2) their full application will require additional time for review, or (3) their proposed project will be recommended for funding at a future Conservancy meeting.

B. Conservancy Authorization of Grant

Grant awards must be authorized by the Coastal Conservancy at a public meeting. Conservancy staff plans to present projects at the November 2024 Conservancy Governing Board meeting, which can be attended in person (location TBD) or virtually on Zoom. Conservancy staff will provide details about the board meeting and the steps following funding authorization. Project funding will not be available until a grant agreement between the Conservancy and the grantee has been executed, which will generally take at least six weeks after board approval. Projects are expected to begin in early 2025 and must be completed by February 2027.

Grant Program Selection Criteria

The following criteria will be used to evaluate proposed projects:

- The extent to which the project meets Coastal Stories Program priorities:
 - Promote a sense of belonging in outdoor spaces by presenting perspectives and or contributions of historically excluded communities.
 - Engage representatives of historically excluded communities to develop and share their coastal perspectives and stories.
 - Improve educational content in California's outdoor spaces by correcting one-sided histories, retelling stories in inclusive ways, and developing new content that shares untold stories.
 - Use creative forms of community engagement to develop storytelling products.
 - Create stories that are free and accessible to the public, the community, and other intended audiences.
- The extent of leadership and participation by the historically excluded community whose story is being told.
- The extent to which the project promotes a more inclusive experience in the outdoors for all Californians by considering differences in cultural and social backgrounds, experiences, physical capabilities, knowledge, etc.
- Demonstration of meaningful outreach and community engagement in developing the story/ content.
- Demonstration that the project will reach its intended audience.

- Project description is clear, and the budget is reasonable.
- Project is ready to proceed early 2025 and **be completed by February 2027 or sooner**.
- Project includes a matching contribution. See the “Matching Contribution” paragraph below for more information.
- The applicant demonstrates their ability to carry out the proposed project, including having the necessary partnerships and the project team’s ability to maintain the project for its reasonable lifetime.
- Site feasibility (e.g. existing infrastructure, ADA compliance, permitting/zoning/park general plans, CEQA status, etc.).
- California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) compliance – The Conservancy must consider how CEQA applies to each funding decision. Many Coastal Stories projects are exempt from CEQA. For projects that are not exempt, the required CEQA documentation must be complete before the Conservancy authorizes a grant. CEQA documentation does not have to be complete to apply for a grant.

Staff reviewers will evaluate applications to determine if they fulfill the above criteria to a low, medium, or high degree. Applications that fulfill all or most criteria to a high degree will be more competitive. We recommend applicants request a consultation with staff if you would like more guidance on the above criteria. To request a consultation, email coastalstories@scc.ca.gov.

In addition, proposed projects will be reviewed by the Conservancy staff for consistency with [Division 21 of the Public Resources Code](#), Proposition 40, the Conservancy’s [Strategic Plan](#), and the Conservancy’s general [Project Selection Criteria](#).

Matching Contribution

Projects are not required to commit matching contributions, but projects with matching funds will get priority in the evaluation. Proposition 40 funding requires that “priority shall be given to projects that include a commitment for a matching contribution. Contributions may be in the form of money, property, or services.” Matching contributions could include funding or staff time (contributed by the applicant, project partners, or volunteers), donations of materials, or other services defined by the applicant. Match does NOT mean that an equal contribution is required. For the purposes of this grant program **there is no threshold or minimum requirement for matching contributions**.

If an applicant’s project is selected for an award, the applicant will need to document the matching contribution during the implementation of the project.

Contact Us for Assistance

Contact Information

Prospective applicants are encouraged to discuss their projects with the Conservancy staff before submitting their pre-applications. We are willing to help community storytellers connect

and build partnerships with landowners. You can also reach out to us with questions about the proposal process. You may email any questions and requests for consultations to coastalstories@scc.ca.gov.

Technical Assistance Webinar

The Conservancy will hold a webinar on **Thursday, February 22nd, 2024, from 12:00-1:00PM** to walk through the Coastal Stories Grant Program and address common questions regarding the pre-application. Potential project applicants are encouraged to attend. The registration link for the webinar is here: https://scc-ca-gov.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_az6KRsd5TjyNZfw6K1ElfQ. The recorded webinar will be posted on scc.ca.gov.