



Innovation Islands Mini-Grant Opportunity Grant Rubric

Context:

November 2021 marks the 25th anniversary of the establishment of Boston Harbor Islands National Recreation Area and the Boston Harbor Islands Partnership. The park and partners are planning for a year of robust programming and community engagement: “Connect people through parks by providing inspirational experiences for all, creating community through stewardship, and strengthening the BHI Partnership.”

We need you to help us engage with your community and welcome them into the park!

What: We are awarding micro-grants up to the amount of \$4,500.00 to local community leaders. You can use grant funds to design, promote, and facilitate programming on and around the Boston Harbor. Boston Harbor Islands partnership staff will provide program planning support. We are excited to learn from you about how we can shape the future of park offerings to better engage with your community.

Who: Applicants must be registered as a 501(c)(3). We hope to partner with groups that may be new to the island experience, including: veterans and active duty military and their families; Boston families and community members of color; families of children on the Autism spectrum; and individuals engaged in adaptive sports programs.

When: Applications must be submitted by March 30th, 2022. You should plan to lead your community program in June, July or August, 2022.

Where: Your program can take place at any of the publicly-accessible Boston Harbor Islands or Mainland Parks ([learn more here](#)).

These micro-grants seek to empower and invest in these community members, amplifying their impact, voices, and presence within our recreational spaces.

Why: The Boston Harbor Islands is *your* park! Together, we can grow individual and community access to and use of the harbor and islands in ways that best serve your community's needs and interests.

Expectations for Grant Recipients

Boston Harbor Now will provide each grant recipient with up to 200 ferry tickets, with a \$5,000.00 value, to support transport to Peddocks, Georges, or Spectacle Islands for programming. Grant recipients will design, promote, and facilitate park-based programming that meets the unique needs and interests of their communities. In addition, recipients will:

- Promote the program and manage program sign-up;
- Secure photo releases; program photos may be used in promotional materials and media;
- Arrange for any land transportation and other essential programming content, experiences, or support;
- Encourage participants to share feedback and ideas with Boston Harbor Islands staff;
- Provide final report with input and recommendations for building on and strengthening ties that enable the park, partners, and community leaders to achieve shared public health, wellness, and land stewardship goals.
- Share and encourage program participants to share their Harbor Islands experience via social media to heighten awareness of the islands as a place that enables all people to experience the full, multi-sensory joy of being in the outdoors with family, friends, and community.

Within your application, we ask that you:

- Describe your intended audience and why this opportunity would be a strong fit for your group.
- Explain why this innovative program was chosen specifically to meet your audience's needs. The project or program description should thoroughly address relevance and participation, and how opportunities for meaningful intellectual and emotional connections will be made.
- Share how this program will help your organization reach its own strategic goals.
- Include a detailed budget plan, with expenses properly broken out and a clear and realistic connection to the scope and scale of the project.

Rubric:

Criteria #1: Engage New or Strategic Audiences: (0 – 10 points)

Q1A: Who is the intended audience and why are they being targeted?

1A: Clearly define the intended audience and describe why this audience will be targeted (consider market research, statistics or demographics). (0 – 5 points)

- **0 Points:** Does not identify an audience.

- **1 Point:** Identified a broad or general audience to target. Presented a thin or weak case for why the audience was chosen, but did not identify data or strategy for how the audience was chosen.
- **3 Points:** Identified a specific audience. Described how reaching that audience fills a gap or solves an issue, but didn't use data or research.

5 Points: Clearly identified an intended audience that includes a unifying demographic, behavior, geography, or identity. Considered market research, statistics or demographics in identifying a target audience.

Q1B: How will this project/program increase engagement for its intended audience and how will you translate this into sustained engagement with the intended audience?

1B: Describe how this project or program will increase engagement for the intended audience. *(0 – 5 points)*

- **0 Points:** The proposal does not address how the project or program will increase or maintain increased engagement with the intended audience.
- **1 Point:** The proposal used techniques targeting an audience with limited opportunities for meaningful connections. Or it uses techniques not suited for the target audience.
- **3 Points:** The proposal articulates how the project or program will increase engagement with the intended audience, but the engagement is one-directional or one-dimensional (intellectual OR emotional, but not both).

5 Points: The proposal clearly describes why this innovative engagement was chosen specifically to meet their chosen audience's needs. The project or program description thoroughly addresses relevance, participation and how opportunities for meaningful intellectual and emotional connections will be made.

Criteria #2: Park Relevance (0 – 5 points)

Q2: How will the project/program increase relevance for the intended audience?

1: Describe how the project or program increases relevance for the intended audience. *(0 – 5 points)*

- **0 Points:** Does not address audience relevance.
- **1 Point:** General relevance is described, but it is not targeted toward a specific audience or resource.
- **3 Points:** Includes how the project or program was developed for or about the targeted audience so that the audience may identify with the resources.

5 Points: Includes how the project or program was developed by or with the targeted audience so that the audience clearly identifies with and finds value in the resources.

Criteria #3: Apply Strategic Alignment (0 – 5 Points)

Q3: How does this project align with community partners' strategic goals or missions?

3: Specify how the project aligns with community partner strategic goals or mission. (0 – 5 points)

- **0 Points:** Project/program does not demonstrate a connection to individual or group long term plans/needs.
- **1 Point:** Proposal uses broad, non-specific language in an attempt to identify goal(s) or need(s) that could be addressed through this project/program, but the description lacks any specific or direct reference to individual or group long term plans/needs.
- **3 Points:** Proposal identifies goal(s) or need(s) that would be addressed through this project/program, but the description lacks any specifics or direct references to individual or group long term plans/needs.

5 Points: Proposal clearly identifies what park strategic goal(s), management plan(s) and/or identified need(s) that would be met through this project/program and demonstrates organization-level management support for this effort by sighting current management planning documents, annual planning strategies or other formal process.

Criteria #4: Budget and Timeline (Total: 0 – 10 points)

Q4A: What is the program budget and the time frame in which allotted funds will be used?

4A: Include a budget which clearly, accurately and appropriately reflect the needs of the project with clear identified expense categories and realistic costs estimates (no lump sums). (0 – 5 points)

- **0 Points:** Lump Sum or Incomplete Budget.
- **1 Point:** Has minimal budget detail. Cost needs to be better identified and/or little to no information in the description column.
- **3 Points:** Has a detailed budget plan that specifically addresses the project. Expenses are broken out with minimal lumping.

5 Points: Has a detailed budget plan, with expenses properly broken out AND there is a clear and realistic connection to the scope and scale of the project.

Q4B: How is this project an effective use of limited resources?

4B: Describe how this project is an effective use of limited funding. (0 - 5 points)

- **0 Points:** No information in the description column. No explanation of budget strategy.
- **1 Point:** Limited information justifies this budget strategy and how it might efficiently and effectively meet the project goals.
- **3 Points:** Provides a justification for their budget strategy, but does not describe how that plan will support project goals or maximize the dollars spent.

5 Points: Includes adequate information in the description column. Includes an explanation in the description section that justifies this budget strategy and describes how that plan will efficiently and effectively meet the project goals and maximize the dollars spent.

Criteria #5: Innovation (Total: 0 – 5 points)

Q5: How does this program embrace innovation and creativity as they relate to the Boston Harbor Islands?

- **0 Points:** The program idea is unoriginal and does not employ innovative ideas for engagement.
- **1 Point:** Minimal amounts of creativity and innovation are included in the program.
- **3 Points:** The program includes several areas that promote creativity and innovative engagement with the resource.

5 Points: The program fully supports creative and innovative engagement with the resource.