

**ZOOS, BOTANICAL GARDENS and AQUARIA**

**Z B G A  
GRANTS PROGRAM**

**2021-2026 Cycle**

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Revised 2024



**New York State  
Parks, Recreation and  
Historic Preservation**

State of New York  
***Kathy Hochul, Governor***

Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation  
***Erik Kulleseid, Commissioner***

An Equal Opportunity/Affirmative Action Agency

## OVERVIEW

The Zoos, Botanical Gardens & Aquaria (ZBGA) Program is funded through annual appropriations from the New York State Environmental Protection Fund (EPF) and is administered by the New York State Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation (OPRHP or Agency).

These grants provide eligible local governments and not-for-profit organizations with timely and stable annual funding to maintain, operate, and secure permanent collections of natural specimens, and to offer robust educational programs interpreting those collections. Applicants will be evaluated based on the administrative and fiscal strength of their organization, the quality and care of its collections, and the level of service to the public.

## APPLICATION CYCLE

Applications will be for a five-year grant program. Contracts will begin April 1st and expire March 31st.

### Multi-year Grant Cycle

Contract Period/Year	SFY	
	<i>EXAMPLE</i>	
1	2021-22	April 1, 2021 – March 31, 2022
2	2022-23	April 1, 2022 – March 31, 2023
3	2023-24	April 1, 2023 – March 31, 2024
<b>4</b>	<b>2024-25</b>	<b>April 1, 2024 – March 31, 2025</b>
5	2025-26	April 1, 2025 – March 31, 2026

## FUNDING

Amount of funding is based on the ZBGA budget appropriation, the number of eligible participants and their associated budgets and reimbursable expenses.

Awardees who are new to the program will receive an introductory rate of \$15,000 annually or one-third of the organization's total operating budget for the NHC, whichever is less. No match is required.

Organizations that participated in previous grant cycles but did not apply in years one or two of the current cycle will be funded at the base rate tier or calculated rate tier based on submitted budgets and reimbursable expenses.

Regardless of the results of the grant award calculations, in no case will an institution receive an award more than one-third of the organization's total operating budget for the NHC, nor will the maximum award to any applicant/parent organization amount to more than one-third of the annual appropriation.

## ELIGIBILITY

To be determined eligible, applicants must be a municipality or not-for-profit organization that owns, houses, cares for, and interprets for the public living or systematically organized collections of biological specimens of natural origin. Such collections are defined as:

- (a) preserved and systematically organized biological objects such as vascular and nonvascular plants, vertebrate and invertebrate animals and fossils that are interpreted in conjunction with living collections
- (b) living animals and plants that are cared for and interpreted for the public in artificial or substitute habitats as captives or transplants
- (c) natural habitats of New York State that are formally dedicated in perpetuity to be maintained as viable, natural ecological associations for wild animals and plants, and that are interpreted for the public

For narrative purposes within this program, organizations that meet at least one of the above criteria may be referred to as Natural Heritage Institutions or Institutions. This category may include, but is not necessarily limited to zoos, botanical gardens, arboretums, aquariums, bird sanctuaries, natural habitat preserves, natural science museums, and nature and environmental centers. The collections they own, manage and interpret for the public may be referred to as Natural Heritage Collections (NHC).

In addition, each applicant must meet **ALL** of the following criteria:

- be a municipality or a not-for-profit organization
- exist on a permanent basis to act as or for a Natural Heritage Institution
- must have had annual operating expenses of at least \$15,000 in the last STATE fiscal year (April 1, 2022-March 31, 2023), and must expect to maintain such for SFYs 2024-2026
- have — as a primary purpose — an ongoing and robust education program that:
  - services children and adults, and
  - interprets the ecology of the Natural Heritage Collection
- support a facility from which to operate these programs and interpret the NHC that:
  - is open to the general public on a regular and predictable basis for at least seven consecutive months, and
  - has a continual full schedule of programs and services for the general public that interpret the Natural Heritage Collection
- have well-defined program goals
- support an organized and systematic program for care of the collection, in accordance with State and Federal standards
- have proven financial, administrative, and public service stability for a minimum of two years (not-for-profits must have maintained their status as a 501(c)(3) for the two State Fiscal Years preceding their application)
- conduct all institutional operations in accordance with requirements of Title VI of the Federal Civil Rights Act of 1964 and of the Rehabilitation Act of 1963, as amended, which bar discrimination on the basis of race, age, color, nationality, handicap or place of residence
- hold all captive animals and plants in accordance with State and Federal laws and maintain them in accordance with current professional standards of humane treatment and conservation
- comply with the Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) and Minority and Women-Owned Business Enterprise (M/WBE) requirements of Article 15A of the Executive Law
- adhere to applicable provisions of the:
  - 2019 NYS Gender Expression Non-Discrimination Act
  - Sexual Harassment Prevention in the Workplace Policy
  - Non-Discrimination Policy Related to Executive Order 177
  - Executive Order 16 Prohibiting State Agencies and Authorities from Contracting with Businesses Conducting Business in Russia

- if affiliated with a larger organization, the applicant must also have a separate budget

## PROGRAM RESTRICTIONS

The following entities, programs and activities **are not eligible** for funding under the Zoos, Botanical Gardens and Aquaria Program:

**Ineligible Entities** include:

- for-profit organizations
- public school districts or their components
- Federal agencies and their programs
- New York State agencies and departments
- cemeteries (501(c)(13))

**Ineligible Collections and Programs** include:

- natural history collections
- historical, archaeological, or anthropological collections
- art collections
- science-technology collections
- astronomy collections
- gardens and plantings that are primarily decorative, ornamental, or commercial
- programs primarily concerned with horticulture, i.e., the culture of plants for food, comfort, or beauty
- programs primarily concerned with genetically domesticated plants and/or animals (i.e., petting zoos, farms)

**Ineligible Activities** include:

- research projects
- land acquisitions
- program activities solely restricted to or directed towards an organization's membership or clients
- lobbying or political activities
- fundraising activities
- collection acquisitions
- primarily commercial activities
- rescue and rehabilitation
- food services
- overhead and other indirect expenses.

NOTE: Institutions with collections or programs that include both eligible and ineligible categories and otherwise meet all program eligibility criteria are eligible **ONLY** for assistance in areas **relating to the natural heritage portions** of their collections and public service programs.

## **ANNOUNCEMENTS**

Awards will be announced shortly after application review period.

## **CONTRACTING**

If awarded, the Agency will establish a contractual agreement with each awarded organization. This will define the relationship between the Agency and the awarded entity for the duration of the contract period, subject to amendments and formal modifications.

The process of establishing this contract will not begin prior to formal Agency award announcement and notification to the awarded organization. Contracting will occur in the NYS Grants Gateway and will entail the provision of various documents to the Agency that may include but is not limited to certificates of workers' compensation and disability insurance, a municipal resolution accepting funds, organization by-laws, proof of registration with the NYS Attorney General's Charities Bureau, completion of a Vendor Responsibility Questionnaire, and documents to establish vendor responsibility.

## **DISBURSEMENT**

Each organization must submit all necessary materials to allow payment within 60 days of the end of that fiscal year.

Reimbursement requests comprise of a State Aid Voucher, Expense Summary Report, and Grantee Certification. Backup documentation for all expenses must be readily available to be provided electronically within two business days upon request but should not be submitted with reimbursement requests. Backup documentation can take various forms including, but not limited to, copies of receipts, invoices, payroll registers, IRS form 941, employee signed and approved time sheets, check registers, bank statements and cancelled checks. Reimbursement requests should be submitted by e-mail to the Agency, unless directed otherwise.

The Agency preferred payment schedule is as follows. Organizations should adhere to this schedule insofar as possible.

Annual Reimbursement: Payments should be submitted in January or February of the SFY for which reimbursement is being requested.

Or

Quarterly Reimbursement: For SFY Q1-Q3, reimbursement should be requested within 30 days of quarter end. For Q4, reimbursement should be requested February or early March.

## **AFFIRMATIVE ACTION**

OPRHP is committed to programs of Affirmative Action and agency staff will assist organizations in undertaking Affirmative Action initiatives. Article 15A of the Executive Law pertains Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO).

## **PROCUREMENT**

All goods and services required for this project must be procured in a manner so as to assure the prudent and economical use of grant moneys, to facilitate the acquisition of goods and services of maximum quality at the lowest possible cost under the circumstances, and to guard against nepotism, favoritism, improvidence, extravagance, fraud and corruption.

1.If the Contractor is subject to General Municipal Law, documentation of the Contractor's compliance with the procurement and bidding requirements of General Municipal Law shall be included with the applicable request for reimbursement applicable to the relevant expenditures and/or documentation of the specific procurement process used for

2.If the total amount of the goods or services is less than the dollar threshold for competitive bidding, or if The Contractor is not subject to General Municipal Law, the Contractor must follow procurement procedures designed to achieve the purpose of this clause. Such procedures may include, but are not limited to, competitive bidding, the solicitation of three price quotes, written requests for proposals,etc. When submitting a request for reimbursement, the Contractor must include a copy of the organizational procurement policy applicable to the relevant expenditures and/or documentation of the specific procurement process used for those expenditures.

## **CONTACT**

ZBGAGrants@parks.ny.gov