

William Penn Foundation

Request for Proposals

Reducing Illegal Dumping in Philadelphia

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Introduction

The William Penn Foundation (WPF) has a long history of investing in efforts to improve environmental conditions for residents of Greater Philadelphia. The Foundation’s Environment and Public Space program was created to help improve and protect the natural and built environment in communities around the region. A full description of the Environment and Public Space program, its goal, and all its objectives can be found on the Foundation’s website. This Request for Proposals (RFP) was created to help organizations to advance the following objective, which was developed in consultation with many stakeholders around the region:

By 2035, reduce annual illegal dumping collections by 50% citywide.

The Foundation is interested in reducing the amount of illegal dumping that occurs in Philadelphia. We will use the amount that is collected on an annual basis as a metric to measure our progress.

The Foundation recognizes that sustainably reducing annual illegal dumping may well require a variety of strategies that focus on different aspects of the problem. With that in mind, we are imposing few limitations on the project designs or approaches that we will consider in response to this RFP. Proposals may focus on prevention, abatement, enforcement, or education, and may employ a variety of different tactics. Proposals may focus on one or more neighborhoods, or they may seek to make change on a citywide scale.

Regardless of the approach, all applicants should provide a compelling explanation for how their proposed work will advance the objective above. The specific criteria that will be used to assess all proposals can be found on pages 6-7 of this document.

Why is the Foundation using a Request for Proposals to advance this objective?

The Foundation has chosen to advance this objective using a Request for Proposals for several reasons. First, we believe that stakeholders across the region have a great deal of expertise and experience that can be supported to make progress on an objective that we heard was important to communities in our region. We want to hear about the impactful projects that are underway or could get underway and need funding. Second, we want to be as transparent as possible about the opportunity for non-profit organizations in the region to secure funding for work to advance this objective. Third, we heard from applicants and grantees in the past that our grant application process was overly burdensome, had unpredictable timelines, and did not provide sufficient information about the funding availability or the criteria used in selecting grantees. Fourth, we heard that applicants wanted an opportunity to show Foundation staff their work, not just tell them about it. The RFP process, including site visits as described below, is part of our effort to address all of this important feedback and to align with the Foundation's grantmaking values (as detailed on our website).

This RFP seeks project proposals that will help to reduce the amount of illegal dumping that occurs in Philadelphia, providing multiple additional benefits to neighborhoods across the city.

Background

Illegal dumping is a major concern for Philadelphia residents. Sixty percent of respondents to a Lenfest Institute for Journalism/SSRS poll indicated that reducing dumping should be a top priority for the city. This concern was expressed with particular intensity by the survey's low-income, Latino, and Black respondents. The focus on reducing dumping is not surprising, since research indicates that reduced illegal dumping is related to decreases in crime, increases in outdoor physical activity, increases in property values, and more positive feelings about residents' neighbors and neighborhoods.¹

7,731 tons

Between 2016 and 2021, on average Philadelphia collected 7,731 tons of illegally dumped materials each year.

70% of Black and Latino residents name dumping a top priority

A 2023 poll surveying more than 1,200 people about the quality of life in Philadelphia found that almost 70% of Black and Latino residents, as well as those making less than \$50,000 per year, named illegal dumping as a top priority.²



¹ [“To Combat Gun Violence, Clean Up the Neighborhood”](#) Eugenia C. South, New York Times, October 8, 2021; [“Around the US Illegal Dumping Creates Mental Health Challenges”](#), Noah Daly, Environmental Health News, February 5, 2024
² [Lenfest Institute for Journalism/SSRS poll \(Philadelphia Inquirer, March 29, 2023\)](#)

Opportunity Overview

WPF would like to support efforts that will reduce illegal dumping in Philadelphia.

We are requesting proposals for **one- to three-year projects**. After reviewing proposals, WPF will conduct site visits and gather additional information from a limited number of organizations.

Organizations that propose projects in partnership with other applicants will be considered on their individual merits. However, the Foundation recognizes that making significant progress on the objective is difficult and encourages organizations to include partnerships that leverage complementary strengths, resources, and expertise to reach proposed goals.

As we've noted, the Foundation recognizes that there are many different approaches and tactics that could be used to advance the objective stated above. All proposals that meet the criteria described below are encouraged.

WPF has **\$5 million available** to advance this objective through this RFP. There is no minimum or maximum amount that organizations may request. The grant amount requested should be commensurate with the contribution that the project will make to the overall objective.

Eligibility

Applicants must be recognized by the Internal Revenue Service as 501(c)3 public charities or operate under a public charity fiduciary. Public charities include community-based organizations, schools and educational institutions, and other types of public-serving groups. Government entities are also eligible to apply.

Proposed projects must occur in Philadelphia.

Review Criteria

Proposals will be judged on the following criteria. **Applicants should address these criteria in their narrative responses to the application questions.**

Alignment with Objective			
Absent	Emergent	Developing	Strong
Conveys no meaningful connection to the RFP objective.	Would make a marginal and/or uncertain contribution to advancing the RFP objective.	Proposed work would make a clear contribution to advancing the RFP objective.	Proposed work would make a clear and major contribution to advancing the RFP objective.
Beneficiaries			
Absent	Emergent	Developing	Strong
Does not identify expected beneficiaries of the project.	Identified beneficiaries of the project do not include prioritized communities.	Project beneficiaries are identified, include prioritized communities, and will significantly benefit from the proposed work.	Project beneficiaries are identified, include prioritized communities, and will receive significant and major benefits from the proposed work.
Meaningful Community Engagement			
Absent	Emergent	Developing	Strong
No meaningful engagement of community in preparation of proposal or implementation of proposed work.	Limited engagement of community in preparation of proposal or implementation of proposed work.	Meaningful engagement of community in development of proposal or implementation of project.	Robust and sustained engagement of community in preparation of proposal and implementation of proposed work.
Partnership and Collaboration			
Absent	Emergent	Developing	Strong
Does not address partnerships that will be necessary for success.	Identified relevant partners but does not describe the role that partners will play in the proposed work.	Identifies relevant partners and fully describes collaboration with those partners.	Identifies relevant partners, fully describes the role that partners will play in the proposed work, and provides evidence of partners' commitment to fulfilling the roles described such as through an included letter of support.
Organizational Capacity			
Absent	Emergent	Developing	Strong
Insufficient evidence of leadership, resources, staffing, partnerships, and/or experience necessary to achieve project goals.	Evidence of leadership, resources, staffing and/or partnerships, but insufficient evidence of ability to successfully implement work of the type being proposed.	Evidence of leadership, resources, staffing and partnerships, and some experience with successful implementation of the type of work being proposed.	Evidence of all necessary leadership, resources, staffing, and partnerships in place to achieve project goal. Applicant and/or partners also have extensive experience with successful implementation of the type of work being proposed.

Project Design and Feasibility			
Absent	Emergent	Developing	Strong
Does not provide a clear, specific, or realistic approach to the work. Project outcomes and success are not clear and well-defined.	Provides a clear approach to the work, but some aspects of the approach are vague or seem unrealistic. Project outcomes are defined, but are of uncertain achievability, based on the details provided.	Provides a clear approach to the work and successful outcomes are defined and achievable. Some aspects of the project design may require further clarification to assess feasibility.	Provides a clear approach to the work that describes the organizational capacity to carry out the proposed project, a feasible plan to implement the work, and a plan to track project outcomes and the impact on the RFP objective.

Additional expectations and considerations:

Prevention Over Cleanups	While proposals may include dumpsite cleanup activities, proposals that focus on preventing dumping in the first place will be more competitive.
Advance Other Objectives	Projects that strongly advance this objective and also contribute to other WPF objectives will be given additional consideration.
Budget	The requested budget is reasonable for the proposed activities and the stated results.

Learning and Evaluation

Grantees will be expected to complete a brief written report each year describing how they have made progress toward the objective above and what they have learned during the year.

In addition, organizations funded through this RFP will be convened in a Learning Community to build networks among those advancing a common objective, to share learning and best practices, and to identify ways in which progress could be enhanced. Grantees will help to determine the frequency, content, and specific goals of the Learning Community.



Webinar

Interested organizations are invited to participate in an optional informational webinar on **Monday, September 23, 2024 at 1:00 p.m. EST.**

Register for the webinar at <https://lu.ma/william penn foundation>.

Budget

Project budgets can cover **up to three years** of funding and may include up to three months for planning. Organizations are encouraged to build on their existing programs, using WPF funding to supplement or enhance those efforts.

Project budgets should be all-inclusive, including any stipends or fees to partner organizations or consultants. This information can be provided in the proposal narrative.

Except in rare circumstances, total funding from WPF should not exceed 25% of a participating organization's operating budget.

All aspects of project development and execution, including planning, design, materials, community engagement, staffing, and implementation, are eligible for funding.

In rare cases, it is possible that *everything* an organization does is focused on advancing the specific objective stated above. If that is the case, an organization may be eligible for general operating, rather than project support. If you believe that to be the case, please contact the Program Officer named below to discuss further.

Application Process

Before you apply, please review the primary question below. If you can confidently answer “yes,” this funding opportunity may be relevant to you. If you respond “no,” this opportunity is not a good match for your project, and you should not apply.

Is your project:

Likely to reduce the amount of illegal dumping that occurs in the City of Philadelphia?

YES NO

Please also review all of the criteria on pages 6 and 7 and make sure that your program aligns with those.

If you answered “yes” to the question above and meet the stated criteria and expectations, the application process begins by completing a proposal on our online submission system at <https://wpcf.my.site.com/grantee>. Submit your application by **5:00 PM EST on October 25, 2024**. A WPF team member will review all proposals and will notify applicants if they have been selected to move forward in the review process. **To download a working copy of the application to draft responses, please [click here](#).**

Selected organizations will take part in a site visit with WPF staff so that the Foundation can learn more about applicants’ work. Site visits will be approximately two hours in duration. We ask that organizations use this time to introduce key staff working on the proposed project, to show WPF staff where the work will take place, and to elevate the voices of the potential beneficiaries of the proposed project. Based on a combination of the written materials and the learning from the site visit, **a final slate of organizations** will be recommended to the WPF Board for consideration of their proposals.

This request or any subsequent response does not commit William Penn Foundation or the responding organization to any future funding or engagement. If you have any questions, contact Nathan Boon at nboon@williampennfoundation.org.

Timeline

September 18, 2024

Proposal submission period opens

September 23, 2024

Informational Webinar (see page 8)

October 25, 2024

Proposals due by 5:00PM EST

November 6-8, 2024

Select applicants notified that their proposals have been chosen for further consideration and a site visit. Other applicants will be notified that their proposals are not advancing in the process.

November 11-27, 2024

Site visits conducted by WPF staff with selected applicants

January 31, 2025

WPF Board reviews selected proposals

February 2025

Project implementation can begin