

FY 2014 Challenge Cost Share Program (CCSP) Frequently Asked Questions

Q: What is the Challenge Cost Share Program?

A: The Challenge Cost Share Program provides funding to support local partnership projects that serve National Park Service (NPS) parks and programs and provide mutually beneficial outcomes. Every effort has been made to make the CCSP among the most responsive tools available to the NPS to strategically support the agency's partnership efforts. The process has been streamlined to minimize the burden on both the NPS applicant and the partner organization.

Q: How much money will be available?

A: In Fiscal Year 2014, approximately \$350,000 will be available. Projects can be funded up to a maximum of \$25,000.

Q: What types of partner organizations are eligible?

A: Partners may be educational institutions, private for-profit entities, or not-for-profit organizations. Municipalities or other governmental organizations are also eligible but a non-governmental co-applicant is encouraged. Any match must be from non-federal fund sources.

Q. What is the required partner match?

A. To leverage external resources, the Challenge Cost Share Program encourages an overall 50/50 non-federal matching contribution. Strong proposals with less than a 50/50 match will be considered. In addition to financial contributions, the partner match may also include in-kind contributions such as goods and services (including volunteer time). Roles and contributions of the partner must be clearly described.

Q: Can my project take place outside the boundaries of a national park area?

A: Yes, but the project must somehow relate to a national park area or program.

Q: Who submits the project?

A: Project applications must be submitted by staff members of NPS parks and programs.

Q: Who do I submit my application to?

A: Project applications are automatically submitted through the google doc form (see application).

Q: What is the deadline for submission?

A: Project applications must be submitted through the google doc form by August 11, 2014.

Q: What should be the focus of the projects?

A: The projects should focus on urban outreach, youth engagement and/or connecting people to the out-of-doors. Projects can address any or all of the themes.

Q: What is meant by "Urban Outreach"?

A: Projects that promote active healthy living; restore or conserve community natural and cultural assets; promote close-to-home recreation in urban settings.

Q: What is meant by “Youth Engagement”?

A: Projects that engage younger audiences (to the age of 25) through play, learn, serve, and work that is associated with NPS sites and programs.

Q: What is meant by “Connecting People to the Outdoors”?

A: Projects that provide tangible or intangible access to the outdoors that will provide increased active outdoor recreation opportunities.

Q: What are the application criteria?

A: 1) The project has specific results to be completed within 12 months; 2) Roles and contributions of the contributing partner are substantive and well defined; 3) There is support of both NPS and the partner for this project; 4) The anticipated benefit for the NPS, the partner organization, and the public is clear; 5) The project addresses and advances one or more of the three thematic categories.

Q: What type of documentation of projects results will be required?

A: Projects will be required to submit completion reports which include a full accounting of the cost of the project including the accounting for the match; the number of participants the results/accomplishments lead to; and photo documentation.

Q: How will the projects be financially supported?

A: Funding will be provided directly to the local partner from the national partner – the Outdoor Foundation, based on a project agreement. Local project funding will not go through NPS nor be accounted for in the government financial tracking systems.

Q: When will the awards be announced?

A: By the end of August. We hope that some of the projects begin in late summer and fall of 2014.