Recycling Market Development Grant
Request for Proposals (RFP)

The RFP assists applicants in applying for state grants. This document describes the Recycling Market Development Grant including information on who may apply for funding, priorities, activities eligible for funding and other information that will help the applicants plan their project and submit a competitive application. Applications are due no later than 4:00 pm CST on Friday, May 29, 2020.

The applicant should check the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency (MPCA) webpage for any updates, including questions, answers and addendums: http://www.pca.state.mn.us/waste/grant-recycling-markets.

Contents
1. Project overview ................................................................................................................................................ 1
2. Funding............................................................................................................................................................... 1
3. Eligible and ineligible applicants ........................................................................................................................ 2
4. Eligible and ineligible projects ............................................................................................................................ 2
5. Eligible and ineligible costs ................................................................................................................................ 3
6. Priorities ............................................................................................................................................................. 3
7. Application instructions ..................................................................................................................................... 4
8. Application questions ......................................................................................................................................... 4
9. Application review process ................................................................................................................................ 4
10. Grantee responsibilities ..................................................................................................................................... 4
Exhibit A: Application evaluation score sheet ............................................................................................................ 7

A sample grant agreement, grant application form, and affidavit of noncollusion can all be found at: http://www.pca.state.mn.us/waste/grant-recycling-markets.

1. Project overview

The MPCA seeks proposals that will build lasting capacity to support recycling markets in Minnesota. The grant money must help Minnesota businesses to use recyclable material in their products, thereby increasing local demand for recyclable material. Processing recyclable material into a higher value to use in making a product is also available for grant money. Businesses that use mixed paper, glass, or organics are priority projects, but projects using any type of recyclable material will be considered. The goal is to increase recycling feedstock value, increase end market capacity, divert recyclable materials from disposal, and create jobs in Minnesota.

The funding for this grant comes from Minnesota Session Laws 2019, 1st Special Session, ch. 4, subd. 7(h).

2. Funding

The MPCA anticipates awarding approximately $400,000 for these grants.

Maximum award – $250,000
Minimum award – $50,000
Match requirement
The applicants must provide at least 25% match of the grant award. This can be in-kind staff time or cash match. The MPCA reserves the right to award grant amounts that are lower than the amount requested by an applicant.

Payment schedule
Grant funding for eligible costs will be paid upon submission of invoices from the applicant and approval by the grant manager. No grant monies are disbursed upon grant agreement execution by both parties.

3. Eligible and ineligible applicants

Eligible applicants
- Businesses located in Minnesota or that have a facility located in Minnesota that makes a product from recyclable material
- A new business that will locate a facility in Minnesota and will use recycled material as a feedstock
- Businesses that conduct intermediary processing of recyclable material for use in manufacturing product
- Economic development districts that are financing a project that uses recycled material in its manufacturing process
- Non-profit organizations
- Local Governmental Units if they can show the grant money will directly result in increasing markets for a recyclable material

Ineligible applicants
- Businesses or other entities located outside of Minnesota or who do not have a business located in Minnesota
- The MPCA may also deem an applicant ineligible because of, but not limited to: enforcement issues, labor standards, tax status, or other such issues

4. Eligible and ineligible projects

Eligible projects
Eligible projects include, but are not limited to:
- Research, development, and testing of new products using recyclable material as a feedstock
- Research, development, and testing of existing products to use recyclable materials that currently use virgin materials as a feedstock
- Expand existing capacity to make recycled-content products
- Processing or production methods that add value to a recyclable material
- Equipment (other than rolling stock) to help process and handle material
- Facilities to process organic material into a product such as compost or biogas and digestate
- Priority projects as listed in number 6 below are eligible for 10 additional points as outlined in the evaluation score sheet

Ineligible projects
- Projects that do not use recyclable material as a feedstock
- Projects that do not process recyclable material
- Projects that turn recyclable material into liquid fuel
5. Eligible and ineligible costs

Eligible costs
Any cost that is directly related to the project and not deemed ineligible below or by MPCA staff.

Ineligible costs
Ineligible costs include costs that are not directly related to the project. The following costs, including but not limited to, even if they are directly related to the project, are ineligible:

- Any expenses incurred before the contract is fully executed including applicant’s expense for preparing the eligibility and cost applications
- Any expenses incurred during work plan application and final work plan development
- Bad debts, late payment fees, finance charges or contingency funds, interest, and investment management fees
- Attorney fees
- Employee worksite parking
- Lobbying, lobbyists and political contributions
- Mark-up on purchases and/or subcontracts
- Taxes, except sales tax on eligible equipment and expenses
- Activities associated with permit fees
- Activities addressing enforcement actions or that involve a financial penalty
- Memberships (including subscriptions and dues)
- Reimbursement to non-staff stakeholders for their attendance at stakeholder participation meetings
- Food (other than staff per diem)
- Alcoholic refreshments
- Entertainment, gifts, prizes and decorations
- Merit awards and bonuses
- Donations and fundraising
- Computer(s), tablets, and software, unless unique to the project and specifically approved by the MPCA as a direct expense
- Purchase or rental of mobile communication devices such as pagers, cell phones, and personal data assistants (PDAs), unless unique to the project and specifically approved by the MPCA
- A company’s general operating costs
- Marketing plans only
- Environmental remediation
- Real property
- Rolling stock

6. Priorities
It is the policy of the State of Minnesota to ensure fairness, precision, equity and consistency in competitive grant awards. This includes implementing diversity and inclusion in grant-making. The Policy on Rating Criteria for Competitive Grant Review establishes the expectation that grant programs intentionally identify how the grant serves diverse populations, especially populations experiencing inequities and/or disparities.

This grant prioritizes communities with higher concentrations of low-income residents and people of color, including tribal communities. Click here to see if the project is located in an area of concern for Environmental Justice: http://mpca.maps.arcgis.com/apps/MapSeries/index.html?appid=f5bf57c8dac24404b7f8ef1717f57d00
Businesses that use mixed paper, glass, or organics are priority projects, but projects using any type of recyclable material will be considered.

7. **Application instructions**

All applicants must complete and submit all required forms. Required forms include:

- Grant Application Form
- Workplan and budget
- Affidavit of non-collusion

Applications must be received electronically by the MPCA by **4:00 pm CST on Friday May 29, 2020**. The email properties header will reflect the date and time submissions are received. Application submissions received after the deadline will not be considered eligible. Email applications to grants.pca@state.mn.us with the subject line: "Recycling Market Development Grant 2020". The MPCA is not responsible for any errors or delays caused by technology-related issues.

Applications submitted via any other method, including but not limited to fax, mail, in-person deliveries, will not be accepted.

8. **Application questions**

We are obligated to be transparent in all aspects of our grant work. To meet our obligation, all questions must be submitted in the same manner, and answers are only provided via the MPCA website. It is the applicant’s responsibility to check the MPCA website for the most recent updates on a competitive grant, including questions and answers and addendums.

Applicants who have any questions regarding this RFP must email questions to grants.pca@state.mn.us, subject line: "Recycling Market Development Grant 2020 Question". Staff will gather questions and post answers on the website on an at-least weekly basis. All questions and answers will be posted by **Tuesday, May 26, 2020**.

MPCA personnel are not authorized to discuss this RFP with applicants. Contact regarding this RFP with any MPCA personnel may result in disqualification.

9. **Application review process**

Formal review of applications will be conducted by a team of MPCA staff and community-based grant reviewers. Late proposals will not be considered for review.

10. **Grantee responsibilities**

Awardees are required to be a registered vendor in SWIFT and will sign the grant agreement using Docusign. To register, go to the Supplier Portal webpage SWIFT and click on the Vendor Registration Link.

**Grant agreement**

Each awardee must enter into a grant agreement. The agreement will address the conditions of the award. Once the agreement is signed, the recipient is expected to comply with all conditions.

**Reporting requirements**

A final report is required before the final payment is disbursed. The report shall include a summary of how the project objectives were met, the results (measurable preferred), and the environmental benefits.

**Public data**

Applications are private or nonpublic until opened. Once the applications are opened, the name and address of the applicant and the amount requested is public. All other data in an application is private or nonpublic data until all agreements are fully executed. After all agreements are fully executed, all remaining data in the applications is public with the exception of trade secret data as defined and classified in Minn. Stat. § 13.37.
A statement by a grantee that the application is copyrighted or otherwise protected does not prevent public access to the application (Minn. Stat. § 13.599, subd. 3).

**Conflict of interest**

We will take steps to prevent individual and organizational conflicts of interest, both in reference to applicants and reviewers per Minn. Stat. § 16B.98 and Conflict of Interest Policy for State Grant-Making.

Organizational conflicts of interest occur when:

- A grantee or applicant is unable or potentially unable to render impartial assistance or advice to the Department due to competing duties or loyalties
- A grantee’s or applicant’s objectivity in carrying out the grant is or might be otherwise impaired due to competing duties or loyalties

In cases where a conflict of interest is suspected, disclosed, or discovered, the applicants or grantees will be notified and actions may be pursued, including but not limited to disqualification from eligibility for the grant award or termination of the grant agreement.

**Grant monitoring**

Minn. Stat. § 16B.97 and Policy on Grant Monitoring require the following:

- One monitoring visit during the grant period on all state grants of $50,000 and higher.
- Annual monitoring visits during the grant period on all grants of $250,000 and higher.
- Conducting a financial reconciliation of grantee’s expenditures at least once during the grant period on grants of $50,000 and higher. For this purpose, the grantee must make expense receipts, employee timesheets, invoices, and any other supporting documents available upon request by the State.

The monitoring schedule will be determined at a later date.

**Grantee bidding requirements**

For non-governmental organizations (NGOs)

Any grant-funded services and/or materials that are expected to cost:

- $100,000 or more must undergo a formal notice and bidding process
- Between $25,000 and $99,999 must be competitively awarded based on a minimum of three verbal quotes or bids
- Between $10,000 and $24,999 must be competitively awarded based on a minimum of two verbal quotes or bids or awarded to a targeted vendor

For grant-funded projects that include construction work of $25,000 or more, prevailing wage rules apply per; Minn. Stat. §§ 177.41 through 177.44. These rules require that the wages of laborers and workers should be comparable to wages paid for similar work in the community as a whole.

The grantee must take all necessary affirmative steps to assure that targeted vendors from businesses with active certifications through these entities are used when possible:

- State Department of Administration’s Certified Targeted Group, Economically Disadvantaged and Veteran-Owned Vendor List
- Metropolitan Council’s Targeted Vendor list: Minnesota Unified Certification Program
- Small Business Certification Program through Hennepin County, Ramsey County, and City of St. Paul: Central Certification Program

The grantee must maintain:

- Written standards of conduct covering conflicts of interest and governing the actions of its employees engaged in the selection, award and administration of contracts.
- Support documentation of the purchasing and/or bidding process utilized to contract services in their financial records, including support documentation justifying a single/sole source bid, if applicable.
The grantee must not contract with vendors who are suspended or debarred in Minnesota:
http://www.mmd.admin.state.mn.us/debarredreport.asp

For Municipalities

Grantees that are municipalities must follow:

- The contracting and bidding requirements in the Uniform Municipal Contracting Law as defined in Minn. Stat. § 471.345.
- The requirements of prevailing wage for grant-funded projects that include construction work of $25,000 or more, per Minn. Stat. §§ 177.41 through 177.44. These rules require that the wages of laborers and workers should be comparable to wages paid for similar work in the community as a whole.

The grantee must not contract with vendors who are suspended or debarred in Minnesota:
http://www.mmd.admin.state.mn.us/debarredreport.asp

Audits

Per Minn. Stat. § 16B.98, subd. 8, the grantee’s books, records, documents, and accounting procedures and practices of the grantee or other party that are relevant to the grant or transaction are subject to examination by the granting agency and either the legislative auditor or the state auditor, as appropriate. This requirement will last for a minimum of six years from the grant agreement end date, receipt, and approval of all final reports, or the required period of time to satisfy all state and program retention requirements, whichever is later.

Affirmative action and non-discrimination requirements for all grantees

A. The grantee agrees not to discriminate against any employee or applicant for employment because of race, color, creed, religion, national origin, sex, marital status, status in regard to public assistance, membership or activity in a local commission, disability, sexual orientation, or age in regard to any position for which the employee or applicant for employment is qualified. Minn. Stat. § 363A.02. The grantee agrees to take affirmative steps to employ, advance in employment, upgrade, train, and recruit minority persons, women, and persons with disabilities.

B. The grantee must not discriminate against any employee or applicant for employment because of physical or mental disability in regard to any position for which the employee or applicant for employment is qualified. The grantee agrees to take affirmative action to employ, advance in employment, and otherwise treat qualified disabled persons without discrimination based upon their physical or mental disability in all employment practices such as the following: employment, upgrading, demotion or transfer, recruitment, advertising, layoff or termination, rates of pay or other forms of compensation, and selection for training, including apprenticeship. Minn. R. 5000.3500.

C. The grantee agrees to comply with the rules and relevant orders of the Minnesota Department of Human Rights issued pursuant to the Minnesota Human Rights Act.

Voter registration requirement:

The grantee will comply with Minn. Stat. § 201.162 by providing voter registration services for its employees and for the public served by the grantee.
Exhibit A: Application evaluation score sheet

A 100-point scale will be used to evaluate eligible applications and develop final recommendations.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category and point assignment</th>
<th>Maximum points</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Preferred project: Projects that advance the use of mixed paper (54), glass, or organic material.</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Will the proposed project create a facility or an end product that advances the demand for mixed paper, glass, or organic material? If Yes, applicant will receive all 10 points.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The project will provide an increase in the capacity to process or use recyclable material. 500 tons/year = 20 points</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Will the proposed project lead to a clear, definitive impact on recyclable material, either directly through increased demand or increase in value of the material?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Project benefits areas of concern for environmental justice. Does the proposed project benefit communities with higher concentrations of low-income residents and/or people of color, including tribal communities in defined areas of concern for Environmental Justice?</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Probability of project success: The project is financially realistic and cost effective. Is the budget clear and reasonable? Are the specific proposed expenditures in line with normally expected item costs? Does the proposal include quotes from vendors for proposed project?</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clarity and completion of application. Is the proposed project understandable in terms of its intent and goals? Are all the questions answers satisfactorily?</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Need for the project: The project will add value to the recycling markets in Minnesota. Will the proposed project 1) Create demand for a recyclable material that is of low market value. 2) Processing recyclable material into a higher value to use in making a product. 3) A material that is could be recycled but is currently being disposed of as garbage.</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Project readiness: There are reasonable assets and resources available to the applicant to conduct the project. Are the assets and resources available to complete the project in a reasonable timeframe?</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Applicant’s qualifications and those that will perform the work are sufficient to complete a successful project. (credibility, capabilities and accomplishments) Does the proposal indicate sufficient business planning and experience to ensure the success of the proposed project? How well does the proposal address the essential elements of feedstock supply, recycling market development, financing, material handling and other key issues?</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total score</strong></td>
<td><strong>100</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>