



**Protect America's Climbing**

## **Climbing Conservation Grant Program Grant Guidelines**

### **Background:**

The Climbing Conservation Grant Program funds projects that preserve or enhance climbing access and opportunities and conserve the climbing environment throughout the United States. Because we're a member supported non-profit organization, we fund projects that demonstrate local climber support, collaboration with land managers, and a commitment to long-term change. Your group's efforts should be quantifiable, with specific objectives, a detailed budget, and measures for evaluating success. Most grant requests range from \$1,000 to \$4,000. The Access Fund considers requests for over \$10,000, but these projects should have national significance and utilize a high degree of matching funds. If requesting over \$10,000, please call the Access Fund at 303-545-6772 before submitting your application.

### **Who can apply:**

We welcome applications from local climbing organizations, government agencies, conservation organizations, land trusts, and individuals. Tax exempt 501(c)(3) status is not a pre-requisite.

**Grants to Individuals:** Individuals are required to report grant money as income. IRS Form 1099 will be issued for all grants in excess of \$600. Please consult your tax adviser for information regarding your specific reporting requirements.

Only one proposal from an organization will be considered per year. Applications from organizations that have never received AF funding will be given priority over applications from past grant recipients.

### **We fund work which:**

- is action-oriented
- builds local climber involvement and support
- is strategic in its targeting and goals
- accomplishes specific goals and objectives that can be effectively measured
- takes place in the United States
- encourages access or enhance opportunities for climbing
- develops knowledge about natural and cultural resource values where the information is used to open climbing areas or mitigate climbing impacts
- reduces climber impacts on natural and cultural resources within the climbing environment
- raises awareness about climber responsibility toward conserving the climbing environment
- is supported by the climbing community
- utilizes matching agency or local funds (ideally this will be at least 50%)
- incorporates a degree of volunteer labor and/or pro bono services

- research projects that increase our scientific understanding of climbing impacts, climber behavior, and economic impacts, and further improve best practices for climbing management. All projects must have a clear plan for distributing and communicating the results.

**We do not fund:**

- fixed anchors, bolts, bolt installation, etc. (see Anchor Replacement Fund for replacement projects)
- outdoor programs (e.g. taking groups climbing, at-risk programs, youth groups)
- climbing equipment
- marketing or membership recruitment
- facility construction (e.g. indoor climbing walls, artificial climbing facilities, ice parks)
- political campaigns
- Projects that do not benefit a technical climbing area, such as rock, ice, and alpine routes where climbers commonly rope up or bouldering areas
- Funds for paid professional services and travel stipends are limited and at the discretion of the grant committee (e.g. professional trail crews)

**Land manager approval:**

Any proposal for facilities, trail work or installation of signage on public lands requires land owner/manager permission and support. For example, building a trail on federal public lands often requires some level of environmental review and compliance with federal laws. State agencies may have their own environmental review procedures. This means that projects with a facility component require a long lead-time in the planning phase to gain the necessary approval. Check early on with the agency or landowner to gain understanding of their approval process. If your project does require agency approval, a letter from the landowner/manager must be submitted with your proposal.

**Land acquisitions:**

Considering the management and financial resources of land ownership, the Access Fund views land acquisitions as a tool of last resort and have adopted the following guidelines for land acquisition projects. If you are requesting funds for a land acquisitions please call the Access Fund before submitting your application. Since grant awards rarely exceed \$10,000, consider a [Climbing Conservation Loan](#) if additional short term financing is necessary to protect an imminently threatened climbing area and allow your organization more time to fundraise. Separate guidelines and requirements apply for a loan.

- The area must be imminently threatened with permanent closure or sale to an outside party that may consider land development opportunities or other uses threatening its climbing and/or access resources.
- The area can be acquired for a reasonable price (reasonable price being one that falls within existing market values and is not in excess of appraised value), together with a reasonable budget (including secured and pending funds)
- The applicant is qualified as a long-term landowner or is actively partnering with another land trust, nonprofit entity, or governmental agency to acquire and hold the land.
- A fully executed purchase agreement is required before Access Fund grant funds will be allocated to any acquisition.
- A high degree of matching funds is required. The Climbing Conservation Grant Program is as an additional, not primary, funding resource.

## Application Process

Please e-mail applications to [grantapplications@accessfund.org](mailto:grantapplications@accessfund.org).

*If you do not receive a confirmation email within two business days of submitting your application, please resend your application and call our office at 303-545-6772 ext. 107.*

### Step 1 - Review project suitability:

Review Climbing Conservation grant guidelines and assess whether your project is compatible with Access Fund's criteria. The Access Fund encourages applicants to call the Access Fund at the earliest stage to discuss their ideas with the Access Director or Operations Director to ensure that your proposal meets our grant award criteria before submission.

### Step 2 - When to apply:

If your work fits within our guidelines, we welcome your proposal prior to our grant deadlines. Grant applications are reviewed in two cycles each year. Applications MUST be received at the Access Fund by the deadline date.

Winter Deadline: March 1st

Summer Deadline: August 1st

### Step 3 - The application:

Please use the following grant application. Electronic submissions (Word or PDF), with attachments sent separately, are required. The proposal should not exceed eight pages in length.

[Grant application \(Word\)](#)

If applying as a 501(c)(3) tax-exempt organization, please include proof of 501(c)(3) tax-exempt status (IRS determination letter) with your application, including your EIN. If you have a fiscal sponsor, you will need to include their 501(c)(3) tax-exempt letter, along with a consent letter from the organization.

For grant requests over \$5,000, the grantee organization is required to submit a copy of their most recent annual financial statements, a copy of the organization's bylaws and articles of incorporation, a listing of current board of directors, the IRS determination letter (501(c)(3) or other tax status), and recent form 990. Individuals and governmental agencies are not subject to this requirement.

### Step 4 - Release of funds:

Grant recipients will have up to six months but no later than the end of the calendar year to claim grant money (recipients will need to resubmit a grant application in the following year if the money is not claimed by December 31), and funding will only be released for projects that begin within 6 months of the grant being awarded.

Prior to the release of funds all grant recipients shall agree in writing to:

- Submit a project report within 30 days of completion of the project. If the project is not completed in the calendar year for which the grant was awarded, grant recipients will need to

submit a progress report no later than the end of the calendar year. This should be 2-3 pages, and should include:

- A summary of expenditures (< 1 page) with copies of receipts and invoices attached.
- A short summary about the project with completion dates.
- Photos (if applicable) showing before and after shots of the project, or volunteers in action. The Access Fund may use these photos in our newsletter or on our web site.
- Any copies of local newspaper/magazine coverage.
- Return any unused funds. If the project is not completed within one year of Access Fund approval or the agreed time frame, or is completed at less than budgeted all unused funds shall be returned immediately to the Access Fund.
- Provide Access Fund recognition. **All projects must acknowledge the Access Fund by inclusion of the Access Fund logo on signage, publicity and/or outreach materials.** The following wording **MUST** be included: "This project was made possible by a grant from the Access Fund." Sample acknowledgement signage is available from the office. The Access Fund logo can be obtained electronically at [www.accessfund.org/logos](http://www.accessfund.org/logos).

#### **Step 5 - Use of funds:**

- Grantee will use the funds awarded solely for the purpose(s) stated in their application, and must repay to the Access Fund any portion of such funds not used for those purposes.
- Grantee will not attempt to influence legislation within the meaning of Section 501(c)(3) of the Code using any of the funds granted by the Access Fund.
- Grantee will not use any portion of funds awarded to participate or intervene in any political campaign on behalf of or in opposition to any candidate for public office, to cause any private inurement or improper private benefit to occur, or to take any other action inconsistent with 501(c)(3) of the Code.
- Grantee will notify the Access Fund immediately of any change in its operations as a tax-exempt entity.
- Grantee will indemnify and hold the Access Fund harmless from any liability or loss arising in connection with the performance of any work and the grant of funds described in grantee's application.