



**FY 2026-2027
CITY OF RICHMOND
COMMUNITY SERVICES DEPARTMENT
MINI-GRANT PROGRAM
GUIDELINES & APPLICATION**

REQUEST FOR APPLICATION (RFA)

All interested applicants should check the City's CSD Mini Grant website (<https://www.richmondca.gov/3250/Richmond-ECIA-Grants>) to ensure that they receive any addendums to this RFA, emails or special announcements.

Application is due on **Friday, March 13, 2026, at 11:59 p.m.** (NO EXCEPTIONS)

Materials must be submitted electronically to:

<http://richmondca.submittable.com/>



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BACKGROUND

The **Richmond Community Services Department (CSD) Mini-Grant**, a component of the Richmond Environmental Community Investment Agreement (ECIA) Grant Program (Category 4), was approved by the City Council in January 2017. In alignment with the ECIA Grant, the Community Services Mini-Grant provides support for those organizations that serve the needs of community, youth, and youth sports. The CSD Mini-Grant is designed to support organizations that are Richmond-serving and that partner with and/or consistently utilize facilities managed by the Community Services Department, Recreation Division.

It is proposed that **\$100,000** is allocated for Category 4 in the FY 2026-27 cycle for this mini-grant.

ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS

Organizations must meet the following conditions to be eligible to apply:

- Provide services focused on the community, youth, and/or youth sports to Richmond and North Richmond residents.
- Operate as a non-profit entity with 501(c)(3) tax status with current financial statements (i.e., Filed I.R.S. Form 990 or 990-N or current audited financials). Fiscal sponsors can be used.
- Provide services to Richmond residents (Richmond-serving)
 - A minimum of 80% of the organization's proposed grant-funded programs/services must be provided to Richmond residents. If awarded a mini-grant, grant funds can only be spent serving Richmond residents.
- **NOTE:** For Category 4/Mini-Grant, the proposal must support programs and/or projects that make use of the CSD's aquatic centers, community centers, parks, and the Richmond Memorial Auditorium.

Note: Organizations that received an ECIA grant award of more than \$10,000 during the previous (FY 2025-26) ECIA grant cycle are ineligible to apply in the current grant cycle (FY 2026-27).



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GRANT AWARD AMOUNTS AND CATEGORIES

Grant allocation amount: The total amount available for the overall ECIA Grant Program FY 2026-2027 grant cycle (July 1, 2026 – June 30, 2027) is \$715,000.

Minimum and maximum grant awards: The minimum grant award is \$5,000. The maximum grant award is \$10,000. **Applicants need to choose between a \$5,000 or a \$10,000 grant award.** Other amounts will not be accepted. The number of awards available will be determined based on the amount of each final award.

Number of applications per grant cycle: Organizations may submit only one application per grant cycle (applicants may submit one (1) application for this CSD Mini-Grant cycle and also one (1) for the ECIA cycle in the same fiscal year).

Award categories: \$715,000 available for grants is allocated over four (4) different categories listed below. **Category 4 is relevant to this Request for Application:**

	<u>Grant Award Options</u>	<u>Eligibility</u>	<u>Award Decision Made By</u>	<u>Award Range</u>	<u>Total Award Amount</u>
1	Competitive Grant Awards (900N)	Non-profit organizations reporting gross receipts of less than \$50,000 annually	City Council (Recommendations made by ECIA Review Panel)	\$10,000 - \$50,000	\$ 565,000
2	Competitive Grant Awards (900)	Non-profit organizations reporting gross receipts of more than \$50,000 annually	City Council (Recommendations made by ECIA Review Panel)		
3	City Council Approved Awards	Organizations that applied for the ECIA Grant (categories 1 and 2) but were not recommended for funding	City Council	Amounts based on Council discretion	\$ 50,000
4	Community Services Mini-Grant Awards (Relevant to this RFA)	Non-profit organizations with 501(c)(3) tax status with programming connected to the Community Services Department	Community Services Department	Either \$5,000 or \$10,000	\$ 100,000



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TOTAL	\$715,000
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GRANT PROGRAM TIMELINE

The timeline associated with the application is below. The City reserves the right to alter this timeline as necessary.

TASK	DATE
Application Release	Friday, January 23, 2026
FY 2026-27 ECIA Information Session (virtual)	February 4, 2026, 2:30 pm
Application Deadline	Friday, March 13, 2026 by 11:59 p.m.
Grant Application Review and Scoring	March – April 2026
Review and Approval	April 2026
Grant Award Notification	May 2026
Grant Award Period (Start Date is Dependent Upon Execution of Grant Agreement)	July 1, 2026 - June 30, 2027

ELIGIBLE AND INELIGIBLE USES OF GRANT FUNDS

Grants are available to support youth programs (through age 21), youth sports programs (through age 21), and community-focused programs and/or projects that make use of the CSD’s aquatic centers, community centers, parks, and the convention center.

Eligible uses include but may not be limited to:

- CSD facility fees
- Youth enrichment projects
- Summer camps
- Youth sports programs
- Programs that support health and wellness and eliminate health disparities
- Bike and pedestrian pathway enhancements and construction projects
- Programs that support students and parents at Richmond schools
- Service-learning programs
- Gardening and urban greening projects



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Ineligible uses include but may not be limited to:

- Repayment of existing debt or pre-existing tax liens or obligations
- Legal, loan, or bank fees
- Subsidization of existing contracts
- Political campaigns or lobbying
- Advancement of certain sectarian, politically partisan, or religious projects (grant funds should be used for specific programs and not to advance the causes of any of the stated groups)
- Fundraisers or other events not open to the general public.
- A project or program which is clearly intended for commercial gain
- A project or program that occurs before or after the grant award period
- Support of individuals
- For businesses established for personal benefit or profit
- To support annual fund drives
- To fund an agency's deficit or endowment
- To repay loans
- Furniture
- Cell phones
- Bonuses
- For the direct support of religious activities. Secular activities offered to the Richmond community that is provided by religious organizations regardless of congregational membership or statements of belief may be eligible for grant funds.

FISCAL SPONSORSHIPS

What types of organizations should utilize a fiscal sponsor?

- A non-governmental organization (sponsoree) that does not have 501(c)(3) tax status must utilize a fiscal sponsor to apply for this grant. It is the sole responsibility of the sponsoree to find an organization with 501(c)(3) tax status that is willing to serve as a fiscal sponsor.

What is fiscal sponsorship?

- Fiscal sponsorship allows organizations without 501(c)(3) tax status to apply for the ECIA grant, as well as other grants that require an organization to have such status.
- A fiscal sponsorship agreement should be entered into between the sponsoree and an organization that has 501(c)(3) tax status.



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- The fiscal sponsorship agreement allows the sponsoree to raise tax-deductible contributions through grants and individual donations.
- Tax-deductible funds are given to the fiscal sponsor and restricted to the use of the sponsoree.

How does a fiscal sponsorship work for the ECIA grant process?

- The fiscal sponsor will serve as the applicant. Fiscal sponsors will enter into a grant services agreement with the City of Richmond and must meet all requirements and submit all required documents.
- A signed agreement between the sponsoree and fiscal sponsor must be included in the submitted application. The organization actually implementing the program and performing the services will act as the sponsoree or fiscal sponsor's sub-grantee.
- Fiscal sponsors can also apply for grants.
- In addition to requesting funds for its own purposes, organizations may also act as a fiscal agent for other organizations.

APPLICATION SUBMISSION REQUIREMENTS

Applications must be completed and submitted electronically via <http://richmondca.submittable.com/> by **11:59 p.m. on Friday, March 13, 2026**. **Only applications submitted through the online portal will be accepted.** The inability to adhere to the requirements below may impact an organization's overall scores.

- Applicants need to create one (1) log on to submit their application
- Applicants are limited to one (1) Category 1/2 application and one (1) Category 4 application per organization.
- Responses to the narrative application questions shall have word limits within the online application. Word limits are not inclusive of budgets, résumés, descriptions of work experience, or documents requested as part of the application.
- Staff will correct organizational budgets to reflect audited financial statements submitted with the application.
- All uploaded materials should be typed in a 12 point font size and Arial font style.
- All costs incurred in the preparation of an application are the applicant's responsibility.
- Applications received after the published due date will not be considered and will not be eligible for review and scoring by the Review Panel.

The following materials must be submitted as part of a completed application packet (**feel free to use this section as a check-list**):

- Completed online application, including budget (all sections completed, and questions answered).
- Proof of 501(c)(3) status (Non-Profit Status Determination letter from the Internal



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- Revenue Service) or fiscal sponsor's corresponding documents City of Richmond.
- Financial statements – most recent (current) audited financials or Internal Revenue Service Form 990 or 990-N for tax-exempt organizations whose gross receipts are typically \$50,000 or less or fiscal sponsor's corresponding documents. Faith-based organizations may submit reviewed or annual financial statements.
- List of Board of Directors and affiliations or fiscal sponsor's corresponding documents
- Letter describing and authorizing collaboration (if with a governmental entity), if applicable
- Signed agreement between the organization and the fiscal sponsor, if applicable

Your application will be disqualified if your organization:

- Submits an application in a format other than the online form portal.
- Submits an incomplete application.
- Requests grant funding for one-time special events with no supplemental enrichment programming.
- Requests grant funding solely for sports teams travel expenses.

Note: City staff will confirm that the organization has filed the required document(s) in California and is authorized to carry out its business activities (California Secretary of State - <https://businesssearch.sos.ca.gov/> and the State of California Department of Justice - <https://oag.ca.gov/charities>). Applications submitted by organizations not identified with "active" or "current" status may be disqualified.

For organizations with 501(c)(3) tax status, City staff may check websites such as the Internal Revenue Service at www.irs.gov and GuideStar at www.guidestar.org to gather additional information about the applicant organization.

PAYMENT PROVISIONS

Upon case review and discretion by City staff, an initial advance payment of fifty percent (70%) of the total award amount may be advanced to all grantees as part of the application award process. The remaining fifteen percent (30%) will be reserved, contingent upon the submission of complete, adequate, and final reporting and all required documentation.

Payments will only be made for the eligible items and amounts specified in the approved grant agreement budget and in a manner consistent with the payment provisions contained in the executed grant agreement.



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REVIEW CRITERIA

Applications will be evaluated by a review panel which may consist of three to five reviewers, which can include CSD and/or City staff, Recreation and Parks Commissioners, and community members using the criteria listed below:

Total Points Available for Criteria Areas #1-5: 100 Points

Program/Project (Description and Concept) – 40 points

- Application is filled out appropriately and completely with all sections and parts of questions answered clearly and is easy to follow.
- Timeline is practical and the proposed activities are well-defined and technically feasible.
- Management and staff are qualified to implement the project or program and achieve stated goals and has experience working on the project or program and/or similar programs or projects.
- Project or program aligns with both organizational vision and goals of the grant.
- Project utilizes a CSD-managed site and/or park.

Impact and Goals – 40 points

- The program or project can positively contribute to the targeted population.
- Goals and outcomes are measurable, clear, and data-driven.
- An evaluation component is included and connected to the program goals.
- The organization has a plan on how to sustain the program or project after grant funds are expended.

Financial Viability – 20 points

- Program/project budget is included, meets all requirements listed in the guidelines, cost-effective, accurate, and feasible.
- Relationship between grant funds requested and the program budget is clearly shown.

Bonus Points – 3 points

- If the applying organization is based in Richmond, the applicant will receive 3 bonus points. Richmond-based is defined as maintaining principal offices, studios, or other



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facilities within the boundaries of the City of Richmond. Applicable to organizations providing services (sponsoree), not fiscal sponsors.

APPLICATION REVIEW AND SELECTION PROCESS

Grantees will be tentatively notified of decisions by April-May 2026. The selection process is divided into the following steps:

1. Applications are received by the due date.
2. All applications are reviewed in depth by City staff for responsiveness, completeness, and satisfaction of eligibility requirements. Based on this review, eligible claims will proceed to the application evaluation process.
3. All complete and eligible applications are forwarded to the Review Panel, which will review and score the applications using the criteria listed in the guidelines and make an award recommendation. The inability to adhere to the application requirements may impact an organization's overall scores. Grant awards can be less than the applicant's original request.
4. The Review Panel's recommendations are forwarded to City staff for review, discussion, and approval.

Any party applying shall not contact or lobby any City Council member, ECIA Review Panel member, City official, employee (except those specified for contact) or agent regarding the RFA. Any party attempting to influence or circumvent the RFA, application submittal, and/or review process may have their application rejected for violating this provision of the RFA.

All scores are final. There is no grievance process. Copies of Review Panel comments and scoring will be made available upon request.

LATE APPLICATIONS OR MODIFICATIONS TO APPLICATIONS

Applications submitted after the specified date and time **will not** be considered. Organizations assume responsibility for the timely submission of applications and all required documents. Any applications may be withdrawn or modified by a written request signed by the applicant.

TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE/CAPACITY BUILDING

The City, recognizing the technical, skill-based components of a grant application process, may provide free technical assistance/capacity-building workshops in 2026 prior to the



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application due date. The dates and times of all subsequent supports will be shared via the City's ECIA website. Although recommended, organizations are not required to attend any of the capacity-building workshops offered by the City. The City will release information separately from this RFA with regards to TA/CB supports.

QUESTIONS ABOUT OR ADDENDUMS TO THIS RFA

It is strongly recommended that organizations register on the City's E-Notify Me webpage (<http://www.ci.richmond.ca.us/list.aspx>) to ensure that they receive any addendums to or notifications regarding this RFA or the ECIA grant program.

Any requests for clarification or other questions concerning this RFA should be submitted in writing to City staff via eciagrants@ci.richmond.ca.us.

GRANTEE REQUIREMENTS

If awarded a grant, organizations will be required to do the following:

- A Grant Service Agreement with specific deliverables will be executed. All organizations are expected to initiate projects within three (3) months of execution of the grant agreement. The scope of work will be based on the application submitted.
- Submit progress reports and reimbursement requests (templates will be included as part of the executed grant agreement):
 - Progress and Final Report - Reports will be required and must provide detailed information about the services provided. Grantees that do not submit the required reports run the risk of forfeiting their funding. A final report at the conclusion of the project or program is also required.
 - Funding Requests – Requests must include the necessary documents to substantiate the disbursement (e.g., receipts, timecards, payroll records, etc.). Grantees that do not adhere to the invoicing requirements run the risk of forfeiting their funding.
- Host City staff and/or members of the Review Panel for one or more site visits and/or program evaluation.
- Published program materials shall include the City seal or logo and shall state, "Made possible in part by the Richmond ECIA CSD Mini-Grant Program." The material must be appropriate, relevant, and aligned with the approved project and should be reviewed and approved by City staff before release.
- Complete and submit a W-9 form and Supplemental Vendor Application.



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- Obtain a City of Richmond business license (if grant amount is over \$5,000. Organizations are responsible for all associated fees. Information can be found at <http://www.ci.richmond.ca.us/66/Business-Licenses>.
- Meet the City of Richmond insurance requirements. Fiscal sponsors, serving as the grantee, must have insurance that covers all actions of the non-profit and/or community-based organization acting as the sub-grantee. Organizations may use grant awards to cover insurance costs.

CITY STAFF CONTACT

For inquiries or clarification regarding this program or application, please contact ECIA staff at eciagrants@ci.richmond.ca.us.

GENERAL TERMS AND CONDITIONS

Background Checks: Organizations that provide services to youth or other vulnerable populations (elderly, people with disabilities, etc.) must require comprehensive background checks and fingerprinting of all employees and/or volunteers that work directly with youth or such other vulnerable populations.

Limitations: All facts and opinions stated herein are based upon available information and no representations or warranties are made with respect to their accuracy or completeness.

The application and the selection process shall in no way be deemed to create a binding contract, agreement, or offer of any kind between the City and the applicant organization. If the City selects a grantee pursuant to this RFA, any legal rights and obligations between the successful applicant, if any, and the City will come into existence only when a grant agreement is fully executed by the parties, and the legal rights and obligations of each party shall at that time be only those rights and obligations which are set forth in the grant agreement and any other documents specifically referred to in that grant agreement.

Each organization submitting applications in response to this RFA agrees that the preparation of all materials for submittal to the City are at the organization's sole cost and expense, and the City shall not, under any circumstances, be responsible for any costs or expenses incurred by any candidate. In addition, each organization agrees that all documentation and materials submitted in response to this RFA shall remain the property of the City and may be used by the City for any reason whatsoever. In accordance with California law relating to access to public records, the City may be required to publicly disclose all submitted information and materials to third parties requesting such information.



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Award: The City reserves the right to accept or reject any or all applications, to alter the selection process in any way, to postpone the selection process for its own convenience at any time for any reason whatsoever, to waive any defects in any application, to issue a new RFA at any time, or to provide a grant to any organization it deems appropriate in its sole and absolute discretion within or outside of the RFA evaluation process. City reserves the right to terminate a grant agreement within sixty (60) days without cause. All materials submitted become the property of the City and will not be returned. Funds awarded are public funds and any information submitted or generated is subject to public disclosure requirements, including the Public Records Act.

Federal, State and Local Laws: As part of the RFA process, the selected grantee will be required to comply with all applicable federal, state and local laws, including the City of Richmond's Nondiscrimination Ordinance (Chapter 2.28), Business Opportunity Ordinance (Chapter 2.50), Local Employment Program Ordinance (Chapter 2.56), and Living Wage Ordinance (Chapter 2.60), California Department of Justice, and Secretary of State requirements. Please contact the City Attorney's office for further information regarding the above requirements.