



WV Stream Partners Program

Guidelines for Applications, Grant Spending and Documentation
Updated October 8, 2024

I. Budgets

Grant applications require **detailed** budget proposals. The grantee must explain how the budget supports watershed improvement project implementation outlined in the application. We strongly suggest that your budget includes a narrative description of **itemized expenses** and how they support the project(s).

II. Funding of Staff

The Stream Partners Program was developed to support volunteer community efforts. We understand the importance of paid staff, but this program has a maximum limit of \$1,000 (20%) for staff support. VISTA Members are not considered staff, and therefore the \$1,000 limit does not apply to budget lines supporting a VISTA member. The full award (\$5,000) can go toward a VISTA. This limit is stated in the Legislative Rule 60CRS4 and applies to all salaries and services including Executive Directors, accountants, lawyers, equipment operators, etc. Grant applications requesting a VISTA match will be scored and funded based on the projects the VISTA will accomplish within the grant year.

III. Unallowable Expenses

The following types of expenses are unallowable under the WV Stream Partners Program:

- 1) Lobbying
- 2) Fundraising costs
- 3) Penalties or late fees – IRS late fees
- 4) Alcohol
- 5) Donations to other organizations
- 6) Trash bags, gloves and tongs (WVDEP)
- 7) Landfill disposal fees (WVDEP)
- 8) Adult trout for stocking (WVDNR)
- 9) Computers and printers
- 10) Boats
- 11) Hand tools including chainsaws and weed eaters
- 12) Lawn mowers
- 13) Gasoline

IV. Grant Application Budget Variance

The Stream Partners Program Review Team carefully reviews each Stream Partners Grant application and scores it based on proposed improvement project(s), alignment to SPP goals, and budget. When an application for funding is approved, **only** those items listed in the budget have been reviewed and approved by the Team. Budget proposals should be submitted with as much detail as possible so that the grantee can easily obtain goods and services and to ensure that expenses will be covered by the Stream Partners Grant. Any variance from the original budget, including amount spent or items purchased must be approved by the designated Basin Coordinator (BC). Guidelines for budget variance are as follows:

1. Any goods or services not itemized in the original budget that exceed \$100.00 must be approved by the BC prior to purchase. **For Example: a)** A purchase in the amount of \$35.00 for refreshments for a Watershed Association meeting would be acceptable without BC approval even though each individual

food item was not listed in the budget, assuming the original budget contained a food allotment. b) A Grantee wishing to purchase a \$250.00 dissolved oxygen water quality meter with a budget allowing \$750.00 for water monitoring supplies, but not specifically listing a dissolved oxygen meter in the grant application would need BC approval.

2. Money may be transferred from one category to another within the original budget with BC approval.
3. Projects and expenses not listed on the original budget may be funded through the Stream Partners Program if the changes are approved by the BC prior to spending. If budget change requests alter the scope of the project or exceed 10% of the total grant, approval must be granted by the **Stream Partners Review Team.**
4. All expenditures must fall under an approved category within the budget and all monies must be used toward the support and execution of watershed improvement.
5. **The WV Stream Partners Program has the right to refuse funding for any unauthorized purchase.**

V. Financial Reporting

Upon signing and submitting a Stream Partners Grant application, the grantee agrees to supply WV Stream Partners Program with a mid-term report, notarized final report, financial report and receipts for all purchases by the stated deadlines. The financial report must correspond with the approved budget.

1. Both the mid-term and final report will consist of a completed report form, a ledger sheet, a narrative summary of the projects and activities, and photographic documentation of the funded project. The ledger sheet will include date of payment, description of the item/service purchased, the amount paid and the number of the corresponding receipt and proof of purchase.
2. All financial reports must have supporting documentation in the grantee's (or their designated representative) accounting records to show evidence of reconciliation.
3. Retain your reports and supporting documentation for at least three years in case of audit. **If detail is not available, future requests for grant funds will be denied.**

VI. Required Documentation for Purchases

The financial report must be accompanied with documentation of all expenses. Grantees must have purchasing procedures that will be followed. Guidelines for grant spending and acceptable documentation for these reports are as follows:

1. **Copies of** receipts or invoices with a proof of payment for all purchases must be submitted to the WV Stream Partners Program. Grantees should keep all original receipts for their records for three years.
2. Receipts or invoices that qualify as acceptable documentation include **ALL** of the following:
 - a. Name and address of vendor
 - b. Date of purchase
 - c. A list of each item purchased
 - d. Cost of each item
 - e. **Receipt must be marked PAID or show zero balance**
3. If a receipt is lost and all means of obtaining a valid copy have been exhausted, then **alternative documentation** (see [WVSPP Required Grant Documentation](#) for details).
4. When no documentation is available then a [WVSPP No Proof of Purchase](#) form must be submitted. A copy of the canceled check or credit card statement should accompany this form. This should not occur frequently and reimbursement is not guaranteed.

VII. Reimbursement

Occasionally, the need to reimburse volunteers for purchases or other expenses will arise. Grantees are strongly urged to limit instances in which reimbursement is necessary. This will decrease the amount of paperwork required and ensure verifiable records. Guidelines for reimbursement are as follows:

1. Watershed Association accounts should be used for all purchases unless another organization is your fiscal agent. Individuals making purchases on behalf of the organization must follow the rules outlined in **Section VI. Acceptable Documentation and Invoices.**

2. Cash purchases over the amount of \$10.00 will **not** be accepted without prior approval from the Basin Coordinator.
3. Gasoline is not reimbursable by the Stream Partners Program. Volunteers are entitled to mileage reimbursement only. See ***XI. Travel and Conferences.***

VIII. Conflict of Interest

A Conflict of Interest arises when a volunteer or a family member of a volunteer will receive personal or financial gain through the activities of a Watershed Association. Grantees are encouraged to include or add a Code of Ethics into their by-laws to address this issue. For Stream Partners Program funds, the following constitutes as a Conflict of Interest and should be considered to maintain eligibility:

1. The purchase of equipment, office supplies, recreational gear, etc. that will be used by a volunteer or a family member of a volunteer for personal or professional purposes.
2. Watershed improvement projects such as bank stabilization, debris removal, trash removal, etc. that solely benefit a volunteer or a family member of a volunteer.
3. Billable services from a business owned or operated by a volunteer or a family member of a volunteer.

IX. Record Retention

The requirements in this section relate to all financial and programmatic records, supporting documentation, and any other records pertaining to the grantee as they relate to this award.

1. The State Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) applies to all records and files maintained by the grantee.
2. All grant records will be retained for three (3) years beginning on the date that the final report is submitted to the WV Stream Partners Program.
3. If any legal action, audit, or other investigation regarding the records of the grantee begins before the three (3) year period expires, all records are to be retained until action is completed and a resolution is made.
4. Grantees are to require that contractors and sub-contractors retain their records for three (3) years after final payment or any other pending matters are resolved.
5. The Stream Partners Program will maintain the right to access all records retained by the grantee beyond the three (3) year retention period. This access will be in effect as long as the records exist.

X. Non-Compliance

Elected board members of the Watershed Association are responsible for meeting the terms and conditions of the grant and participating in any required training. If the grantee does not complete the approved project and does not spend funds according to the approved budget, the WVSPP has the right to withdraw a grant and revoke future eligibility.

XI. Travel and Conferences

Travel and conference expenses must be in an approved detailed budget. Conference expenses are limited to one person per watershed association. A [WVSPP Mileage Reimbursement](#) form must be submitted for each mileage reimbursement request. WVSPP funds are state funds, due to this, watershed associations can only reimburse at the WV mileage rate, **not** the federal IRS mileage rate. WV mileage rates are set by the WV Purchasing Division each year and can be looked up at this site: <http://www.state.wv.us/admin/purchase/travel/mileage.html>.