**Resilient Communities Program**

In response to the unprecedented disruption caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, Great Outdoors Colorado (GOCO) is launching a one-time, $15 million Resilient Communities Program to help partners advance outdoor recreation, stewardship, and land protection projects in a manner that best reflects community needs and priorities at this moment in time. Through the Resilient Communities Program, GOCO will fund one-time, immediate needs or opportunities that have emerged in direct response to the pandemic all within the context of GOCO’s five program values: resource conservation, outdoor stewardship, community vitality, equitable access, and youth connections.

The Resilient Communities Program is anchored in four themes intended to capture the breadth of needs and opportunities identified by partners through surveys and ongoing conversations as the most urgent and critical for GOCO’s investment. Proposed projects should address one or more of the following:

* *Capacity and Operations Support –* core capacity and operations with a direct connection to project and/or program outcomes
* *Stewardship –* stewardship and maintenance of outdoor recreation and natural resource infrastructure, especially resources experiencing increased impacts due to the pandemic
* *Community Vitality –* emergent needs that contribute to community vitality and resiliency
* *Urgent and Emergent Land Acquisitions* – critical land acquisitions with compelling urgency or those that have come to the fore as a result of the pandemic

We know a lot of uncertainty remains at this time, requiring GOCO to operate as a more dynamic and flexible funding partner. We look forward to working with partners on project development to ensure your valuable time is spent on projects that will compete well in this new program. We know the needs of our statewide network are vast and varied and while we won’t be able to support every important project, we intend to make an impact on as many communities and organizations as possible given available funding. We look forward to hearing your ideas and working with our partners to satisfy needs and opportunities throughout the state.

**ABOUT US:** GOCO invests a portion of Colorado Lottery proceeds to help preserve and enhance the state's parks, trails, wildlife, rivers, and open spaces. Our independent board awards competitive grants to local governments and land trusts and makes investments through Colorado Parks and Wildlife. Created by voters in 1992, GOCO has committed more than $1.2 billion in lottery proceeds to more than 5,300 projects in all 64 counties without any tax dollar support. For more information, please visit [www.GOCO.org](http://www.goco.org).

**General Guidance and Grant Information**

**BEFORE YOU BEGIN:** Contact a GOCO program officer to discuss your project in detailusing the contact information on our staff [webpage](https://goco.org/contact/staff).

**IMPORTANT DATES:** Please submit proposals via email to resilient@goco.org. GOCO will accept applications on a rolling basis for award decisions at the soonest available decision date, presented below. Staff will consider applications received roughly one month prior to each award date but cannot guarantee consideration for each funding round depending on the need for supplemental or clarifying information. GOCO intends to reserve funding for each of the four rounds and update our website with the total pool of funding available as awards are made. The following table lists the award decision dates and the associated due dates to have your project considered for a particular cycle.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
|  **Proposal Due Date** | **Award Decision Date** |
| July 17, 2020 | August 4, 2020 |
| August 7, 2020 | September 10, 2020 |
| October 16, 2020 | November 17, 2020 |
| February 2021 (Date TBD) | March 2021 (Date TBD) |

**APPLICANT ELIGIBILITY:** This program is open to entities eligible to receive GOCO open space and local government funds as listed below. Ineligible entities are encouraged to partner with an eligible entity to apply. As always, GOCO strongly encourages partnerships.

1. Colorado municipality or county
2. Title 32 special district eligible to receive distributions from the Conservation Trust Fund
3. Political subdivision of the State of Colorado that includes in its mission the identification, acquisition, or management of open space and natural areas
4. 501(c)(3) non-profit land conservation organization that includes in its mission the identification, acquisition, or management of open space and natural areas, e.g., land trusts
5. Colorado Parks and Wildlife

**PROGRAM VALUES:**Projects should encompass one or more of GOCO’s program values as identified in our [2020 strategic plan](https://www.goco.org/about-us/strategic-plan) :

*Resource conservation* | We value strategic land conservation and resource protection work.

*Outdoor stewardship* | We support sustainability of and improvements to the state’s natural and recreational resources.

*Community vitality* | We invest in conservation and outdoor recreation efforts that support communities and quality of life.

*Equitable access* | We partner with communities to break down barriers to the outdoors.

*Youth connections* | We believe children and their families deserve opportunities to get outside and experience all the benefits of doing so.

**GRANT AMOUNT AND MATCH REQUIREMENTS:** Given the unique needs of GOCO’s partners, this program was created with no maximum grant amount. That said, GOCO serves communities throughout Colorado and appreciates applicants keeping requests reasonable and reflective of expected outcomes. Please contact a program officer to discuss your project and requested funding amount. For this program, GOCO will fund up to 90% of the proposed project’s eligible costs with a minimum 10% match from other sources made up of any combination of cash or in-kind.

**PROPOSAL:** We encourage direct dialogue with GOCO’s program officers to generate a more holistic understanding of your project. Once a proposal is submitted, GOCO might ask clarifying questions of applicants to better understand your project. We may also seek additional written information for certain proposals e.g. land acquisitions. The content of conversations and any additional information submitted become part of the application and open for discussion during peer review as a means of vetting the merit of individual projects. It is to your advantage to submit well in advance of the due date to allow for review, conversation, and clarification of grant applications.

**PROPOSAL REVIEW AND SCORING:** We expect requested funding to exceed available funds. GOCO will convene a group of peer reviewers to help evaluate proposals received. Reviewers will assess the merits of each project, including any additional supplemental or clarifying information submitted, using general criteria including but not limited to the following:

* 1. Compelling urgency of the project.
	2. Needs and opportunities clearly tied to the pandemic and program values.
	3. Requested funds commensurate with the outcomes and reasonable given the applicant, geographic context, demonstrated financial constraints, etc.
	4. The total amount of funding available relative to that requested and the geographic, programmatic, and other diversity represented by proposals.

All projects will receive a thorough evaluation at one or more review meetings where staff and peer reviewers will reach consensus around which projects to recommend for funding. GOCO will rely on the collective wisdom of trusted reviewers in making award recommendations. As always, staff will provide feedback upon request for both awarded and declined proposals.

**TIMELINE FOR COMPLETION:** There is no prescribed completion date for projects funded through this program, however, compelling urgency is a primary criterion upon which GOCO will make award decisions. GOCO will prioritize projects that will commence immediately upon notice of award or execution of a grant agreement. Please provide a reasonable timeline for your proposal.

**ELIGIBLE COSTS AND MATCH:** The following table, though not comprehensive, outlines specific eligible costs for this program. Please discuss any potential project expenses with GOCO to determine the eligibility of those expenses prior to applying.

|  |
| --- |
| **ELIGIBLE COSTS** |
| Staff expenses incurred by the applicant and any contracted service providers for professional services directly related to grant outcomes and administration. |
| Vehicles, trailers, and/or equipment operation and/or rental. Please contact GOCO to determine if equipment purchases are allowable expenses.  |
| Travel/meal expenses related to the project. Please specify to whom these expenses will cover and do not use a “per diem” because we can only pay for expenses documented by receipts. |
| Costs of surveys, engineering, design, GIS/mapping, monitoring and evaluation services, land acquisition due diligence costs, etc. |
| Costs associated with project planning/coordination/implementation. |
| Costs associated with volunteer engagement and retention, e.g., prizes, awards, food, etc.  |
| Indirect expenses including administrative expenses, office supplies, grantee/partner rent or other occupancy expenses, insurance costs, and equipment use or services not otherwise included in your project budget.  |

**Grant Administration Information**

If a grant is awarded, GOCO will assign a Grants Officer to work with you on all aspects of grant administration including grant agreement execution, grant payment options, and reporting criteria. Please contact a Grants Officer now if grant administration information is a necessary consideration prior to application.You can find relevant contact information at the link below.

**Contact**

Our Grant Programs team is available to discuss your project and proposal so feel free to reach out using the contact information found on our staff [webpage](https://goco.org/contact/staff). We look forward to working with you!

**Project Summary Information**

Applicant Organization:

Applicant Name:

Partner Organization (if applicable):

Partner Name (if applicable):

Project Title:

Amount Requested:

Total Project Cost:

**Checklist**

[ ]  Responses to Proposal Narrative prompts (please limit narrative responses to 5 pages)[ ]  Budget

[ ]  Timeline

[ ]  Applicants may consider providing the following attachments:

[ ]  Maps, diagrams, planning documents

[ ]  Photos

[ ]  Letters of support from partners, customers, volunteers, etc.

**Proposal Narrative**

Please submit a concise narrative using the following prompts. Responses need not follow the formatting below but should answer all of the considerations put forth. Please limit narrative responses to 5 pages:

[ ]  Describe the proposed project and the community/organizational need and/or priority it will address related to the pandemic. Consider and describe any disproportionate impact experienced by your community.

[ ]  Discuss how your project will contribute to a more resilient community, organization and/or network.

[ ]  Discuss your current financial situation and any urgency, financial or otherwise, requiring GOCO’s funding assistance. *Please note this grant round is not intended to resolve pre-pandemic organizational economic shortfalls*.

**Budget and Timeline Forms**

Please use the GOCO budget and timeline forms found on our Resilient Communities [webpage](https://goco.org/grants/apply/resilient-communities-grants).