

WHALE TAIL[®] Competitive Grants Program

Deadline: November 6, 2023

GRANT GUIDELINES

Funded by:



A project of:



California Coastal Commission
455 Market Street, Suite 200, Room 228
San Francisco, CA 94105

www.coastal.ca.gov/whaletailgrant

Contact: Annie Kohut Frankel, Annie.Frankel@coastal.ca.gov

2023 WHALE TAIL[®] COMPETITIVE GRANTS PROGRAM GUIDELINES

Read these guidelines before beginning your grant proposal. Download the grant application form at www.coastal.ca.gov/whaletailgrant.

INTRODUCTION

The California Coastal Commission's WHALE TAIL[®] Grants Program funds projects that connect the public to the California Coast and its watersheds through experiential education, stewardship, and outdoor experiences. Education and stewardship projects relating to climate change as it impacts the coast and ocean are eligible and encouraged. Adopt-A-Beach[®] programs, as well as other beach maintenance and coastal habitat restoration projects that have an educational component, are also eligible for the grants. WHALE TAIL[®] Grants focus on reaching communities that have historically received fewer marine education and stewardship opportunities, and the program strives for a broad geographic distribution throughout California. Attachment A contains summaries of some past grant recipients.

BACKGROUND

The California Coastal Commission started the WHALE TAIL[®] Competitive Grants Program in 1998, with sole funding from purchases of California's WHALE TAIL[®] License Plate. In 2014, the [Protect Our Coast and Oceans Fund](#) was added to the California state tax return's Voluntary Contributions section to provide taxpayers the option to contribute to the WHALE TAIL[®] Grants Program. In 2021, funds were also allocated for this program through the state budget.

The California Coastal Commission is a state regulatory and planning agency that operates under the 1976 Coastal Act to manage the conservation and development of coastal resources in California. The Commission's Public Education Program works to increase public knowledge of coastal and marine resources and to engage the public in coastal protection and restoration activities.

OTHER RESOURCES

In addition to WHALE TAIL[®] Grants, the Coastal Commission's Public Education Program offers a wide variety of free curricular resources and programs for teachers and students. Find them at www.coastal.ca.gov/publiced/directory/educate.html and coastforyou.org.

When appropriate, educators may consider integrating into their projects the [principles and concepts of ocean literacy](#), California's [Environmental Principles and Concepts](#), and applicable [California State Content Standards](#).

PROGRAM OVERVIEW

- **Size of Grants:** You can request any amount up to \$50,000. At least 25% of funded projects will be small grants of up to \$20,000. Approximately \$2,000,000 will be distributed.
- **Categories of Grants:** The WHALE TAIL® Grants Program will fund projects that fall into one or more of the following four categories: 1) youth education programs, 2) programs for educating the general public or adults, 3) climate change education and stewardship, 4) shoreline cleanup and enhancement programs with community involvement (such as Adopt-A-Beach®). We strongly encourage projects that engage communities that have historically received fewer opportunities for coastal and marine education and stewardship, and applicant organizations based in and composed of the communities they are engaging.
- **Deadline and Submission Process:** The deadline is 5:00pm November 6, 2023. Download the WHALE TAIL® Grant application form from www.coastal.ca.gov/whaletailgrant. There are three options for submission: email, digital upload, **OR** postal mail.
 - **Email.** For email, send your packet as one or more attachments to whaletailgrant@coastal.ca.gov by 5:00pm California time on November 6, 2023. Do *not* submit your proposal as a link to a cloud document, such as a Google Drive link. (Supplementary materials, such as curriculum samples, may be sent as links if necessary, but your proposal itself must be attached to the email. Please ensure that any links are accessible to us.) The maximum file attachment size for our email system is 30 Mb. If your grant proposal is saved as a PDF, you can use the “Reduce File Size” tool in the “File” menu to reduce your file size. If necessary, you can send attachments in separate emails. If you have files larger than 30 Mb, consider using the upload option rather than email. Please do not zip your files.
 - **Upload.** If you prefer to upload your packet, make sure all files have your organization name in the file name and upload them to this [Dropbox folder](#) by 5:00pm California time on November 6, 2023. Uploading a folder rather than separately uploading multiple documents one at a time is preferred if possible. Please do not zip your files.
 - **Postal Mail.** If you choose to use postal mail, your package must be *postmarked* no later than November 6, 2023. Mail your application packet to Whale Tail Grants, California Coastal Commission, 455 Market Street, Suite 200, Room 228, San Francisco, CA 94105. Please print double-sided and *do not* include binders, plastic overlays, or other extra packaging. If you would like to use email but have a curriculum sample or other supplementary material that you need to mail, you can do that separately (by the same deadline as above), including a clear explanation of which grant proposal it is connected to.
- **Project Selection and Notification:** All proposals will be reviewed, and funding recommendations will be made to the Coastal Commission, who will vote at their February 2024 meeting. We will notify all applicants by email and postal mail following the Commission vote, most likely by the end of February 2024. Applicants being recommended for funding will be notified by email prior to the Coastal Commission meeting. Emails will be sent from Annie.Frankel@coastal.ca.gov or coast4u@coastal.ca.gov.

IMPORTANT RULES AND ELIGIBILITY FOR APPLICANTS AND PROJECTS

- **Eligible Applicants:** Non-profit 501(c)(3) organizations, projects of a non-profit fiscal sponsor, public schools or districts, government entities, Federally Recognized Tribes and other California Native American Tribes as defined by Governor's Executive Order B-10-11.
- **Participants:** Projects funded by WHALE TAIL® Grants must engage audiences in California.
- **Things we can't fund:** Grants will not be awarded to provide for an organization's general, ongoing administrative costs; to fund political advocacy work; for projects that include religious content in their programming; for travel outside of California; or for the purchase of vehicles, insurance, prizes, incentives, gift cards, cash gifts, or items that will be sold.
- **Educational Focus:** The WHALE TAIL® Grants Program focuses on education about coastal and marine environments. If a project will take place in an inland area or on a bay, the proposal should address how the project includes coastal and marine educational content, including how the connection to the coast and ocean will be emphasized.
- **Reimbursement Grant:** Grant funds are not available in advance of expenditures. Expenses will be **reimbursed** no more than once per month upon submission of an invoice by the grantee, for hours already worked or purchases already made.
- **Project Timing:** Grant project tasks must begin between March 20 and June 30, 2024. Project funding must end by April 15, 2026.
- **Funding Credit:** You must agree to credit the California Coastal Commission's WHALE TAIL® Grants Program as part of your project implementation, for example when doing outreach for, promoting, or presenting grant-funded programming, and you must put the [funding credit logo](#) on any printed or online content produced for the project, including linking from the logo to the Commission website as appropriate.
- **Liability:** You must agree to hold the California Coastal Commission harmless.
- **Project Administration:** You must assume responsibility for administering the project, including employing any necessary staff or consultants, maintaining complete accounting and time records, providing fiscal management, and submitting progress reports and a final report. In preparing the grant application, you should refer to Attachment B (administrative requirements for grant agreements if a grant is awarded).
- **Existing Grants:** If you have an open, competitive WHALE TAIL® Grant, please do not apply for a new grant until after you've completed your project and submitted your final grant report.

CRITERIA FOR SELECTING GRANT RECIPIENTS (out of 100 points)

Grant proposals will be reviewed based on the following criteria, using the information you provide in your application.

1. Educational Impact and/or Environmental Improvement (25 points): Strong proposals will demonstrate educational impact featuring the marine or coastal environment and/or improvement of coastal or marine habitats through community involvement. Strong proposals

may include multiple methods and pathways for achieving positive outcomes. Examples include experiential, hands-on learning and stewardship; positive nature experiences; longer and/or repeated experiences with opportunities for reflection; age-appropriate content and delivery; strategies for long-term positive impact (which might stem from educational outcomes, or aspects such as leadership development opportunities or family involvement); and/or strong evidence for ecological need and projected improvement.

2. Purpose and Audience (25 points): Projects will be assessed on the degree to which they are connected to a specific issue, interest, and/or need (which might be educational, ecological, social, cultural, etc.). Proposals should explain the issue, interest, and/or need, and how it was identified for the project audience. Strong proposals will engage communities that have historically received fewer marine education and stewardship opportunities, such as communities with low incomes; Black communities; Indigenous communities; communities of color; speakers of languages other than English/dual language learners; people with disabilities; foster and transition age youth; LGBTQ2S+ communities; and residents of under-resourced rural and/or inland areas.

3. Project Concept (20 points): Strong proposals will demonstrate that the project is relevant and appropriately designed for the project audience or participants and will have a reasonable budget that is clearly connected to the project goals. Projects should be ecologically responsible. The degree to which a project could potentially be continued after the grant ends, build organizational capacity, build lasting collaborations, and/or create useful tools for others in the field will be considered, as will whether it uses new or creative approaches.

4. Proposal Content and Project Implementation (30 points): Proposals should demonstrate that the concept has been fully thought out and developed into a feasible project with clear, realistic goals and objectives; a plan for reaching the intended audience; a workable project design; a clear plan for implementation; and appropriate staffing. The proposal should explain how the organization and staff is particularly suited to carrying out the project and working with the audience. A plan for tracking and assessing the project's success should be included, as should detailed and accurate cost information. A strong proposal will demonstrate how the project objectives and goals will be successfully achieved. All requested elements of the application packet, as applicable, should be included in the proposal.

QUESTIONS?

A webinar will be offered on Wednesday, September 20, 2023, from 3:30-5:00pm, to provide a walk-through of the WHALE TAIL[®] Grant application and for an opportunity to ask general questions about the process. [Register for the webinar](#). If you miss it, the presentation will be posted on the [grant webpage](#).

We encourage prospective applicants to contact us with any questions or to discuss your project idea. Please contact Annie Kohut Frankel at Annie.Frankel@coastal.ca.gov or Chris Parry at Chris.Parry@coastal.ca.gov.

If you would like to adopt a beach, please visit the [program website](#) to learn how. Contact us if you are interested in starting a new Adopt-A-Beach[®] program in an area that does not currently have one. [Adopt-A-Beach[®] Managers](#) are designated by Coastal Commission staff to operate the program in a particular geographic area and serve as the liaison with the Commission.

Example Summaries of Some Past WHALE TAIL® Grants

Jug Handle Creek Farm & Nature Center \$18,261

Project Title: *Pomo Coast Connect*
Project Location: *Lake and Mendocino Counties*

In a partnership with six tribes, multi-day retreats will connect participants to the ocean and traditional Pomo lands with regenerative cultural activities, nature education and restoration activities, and other fun activities on the coast. The program will be customized for each visit, such as with a nighttime fire circle with songs and storytelling, kayaking Big River Estuary, a beach trip, a cultural practices walk, a whale watching trek, tidepooling, and a traditional seafood feast.

Napa County Library \$25,390

Project Title: *H₂O Superheroes Project*
Project Location: *Napa County*

The Napa County Library will provide local families with community involvement opportunities focused on watershed conservation, stewardship, and climate change. The project will increase the number of English and Spanish children's books about coastal and marine environments; allow library patrons to check out birding kits (including binoculars, guidebooks, and checklists) and cleanup kits (including a bucket, litter grabber, and gloves); hold story times focusing on taking care of local watersheds; and offer guided watershed hikes, native planting events, and birding walks along local waterways. Library staff will form and strengthen partnerships with multiple community organizations to offer programs.

The Center for Independent Living \$47,649

Project Title: *Youth Coastal Connections Program*
Project Location: *East San Francisco Bay*

The Youth Coastal Connections Program will provide public transit and environmental education workshops and bring cohorts of youth with disabilities to coastal environments around the Bay Area via public transit. Each cohort will engage in a six-week program, with one to two meetings per week. The grantee will collaborate with coastal organizations to teach students about coastal environments and to host travel training and trip planning workshops to prepare students to take public transit to coastal regions. Each cohort will participate in two excursions via transit, one a coastal education field trip, and the other for a beach cleanup. Participants will create a presentation on their overall program experience and a topic related to accessibility or natural environments that they learned about during the program.

SLO Beaver Brigade	\$41,480
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Project Title: *Beaver Education in SLO County*
Project Location: *San Luis Obispo County*

SLO Beaver Brigade will lead twice-monthly experiential tours to beaver wetlands, including Spanish language and wheelchair-accessible tours, and host monthly cleanups along waterways that are beaver habitats. The grantee will create and install two new educational interpretive panels at trailheads that lead to active beaver wetlands on the Salinas River, and a mural in Atascadero, that show the benefits of beavers to the Salinas River watershed. The grantee will also create new Spanish educational materials about the environmental and climate benefits of beavers and the connection of local waterways to the ocean.

Fernandeño Tataviam Band of Mission Indians	\$47,675
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Project Title: *Traveling Tataveaveat: Áhëvëve mëmët (On the Ocean Shore)*
Project Location: *Tataveaveat (Tataviam lands)*

The Traveling Tataveaveat: Áhëvëve mëmët will introduce youth to traditional Fernandeño Tataviam villages and cultural and natural sites. Youth will engage with outdoor educators and naturalists to gain knowledge of local conservation efforts, while also gaining leadership skills, peer mentoring opportunities, and personal growth in culturally appropriate practices. The project will take place on four Saturdays during the academic year and during Camp Tamit during the summer. Youth will engage with Tribal Ecological Knowledge, cultural education regarding neighboring and coastal tribes, tomol history, and modern-day practices and traditions. Participants will have access to the LA River, kayaking, aquariums, programs at local beaches, outdoor recreation, Catalina Island trips, hikes, and an overnight camping trip.

Paddle for Peace	\$19,600
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Project Title: *Diversity in our Coastal Spaces*
Project Location: *San Diego County*

Paddle for Peace will provide a free, Sunday morning beach recreational program with participants recruited from BIPOC communities of San Diego. The program will include an educational component to teach students about the coast, inspiring them to return as stewards or pursue a job in coastal conservation. Along with ocean safety instruction, beach recreational activities such as surfing, boogie boarding, beach volleyball and soccer will be offered for students to participate in if comfortable, with additional alternative beachside recreational activities available. The grant also will support an end of session family celebration, and a community-wide beach event for Juneteenth and Father's Day.

Administrative Requirements

This attachment specifies some of the rules and requirements for WHALE TAIL® Grant awards.

BUDGET AND PAYMENTS

Payment provisions shall be on a cost-reimbursement basis with documentation of all expenses, and the grant agreement shall specify the maximum dollar amount payable by the agency. The grant budget must set forth in detail the reimbursable items, unit rates as applicable, and extended total amounts for each line item. Monthly, weekly, or hourly rates as appropriate and personnel classifications should be specified when salaries and wages are a reimbursable item.

Reimbursable rates for personnel must not exceed salaries payable to State personnel for similar classifications. Any reimbursable salary that exceeds State rates must have a compelling reason for the higher rate and an explanation of how the awarding agency's interests are served by the grant agreement.

Meals and travel shall be reimbursed based on rules specified in the grant award. See the budget form in the grant application for more information. No travel outside the State of California shall be reimbursed.

SUBCONTRACTORS

Grantees shall receive prior authorization in writing by the Commission before reimbursement for any subcontract exceeding \$10,000.00. Grantees seeking contractors to perform any services exceeding the cost of \$10,000.00 shall select those contractors pursuant to a process that seeks three competitive quotations or adequate justification for the absence of bidding.

PROPERTY PURCHASED

Grantees shall receive prior authorization in writing by the Commission before any purchase exceeding \$10,000.00. Grantees shall provide in the request for authorization all particulars necessary for evaluation of the necessity or desirability of incurring such cost and the reasonableness of the price or cost.

Grantees agree to continue using property purchased under the grant agreement for the purposes outlined in the agreement or similar activities until it is either fully distributed, damaged, worn-out, or becomes obsolete.

TERMS AND CONDITIONS

Grant awards will include Standard Conditions and Special Conditions. Standard Conditions include items such as an indemnification requirement, an agreement to be audited, and a

non-discrimination clause. Special Conditions include items such as a requirement to provide funding credit.

ANTI-DISCRIMINATION

Applicants should be aware that Government Code Section 11135(a) states in part that no person shall be unlawfully denied full and equal access to the benefits of any program or activity that is funded or receives any financial assistance by the State on the basis of sex, race, color, religion, ancestry, national origin, ethnic group identification, age, mental disability, physical disability, medical condition, genetic information, marital status, or sexual orientation.

GRANTEE CERTIFICATION CLAUSES

All grantees must sign GCC 1015, which includes clauses such as a drug-free workplace requirement and compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act.