Deerfield River Enhancement Fund 2026-27

Vermont Community Foundation

Application Guidelines

The Deerfield River Enhancement Fund was established in 1999 by USGen New England, Inc. (USGenNE) for the environmental preservation of the Deerfield River Watershed. The hydroelectric generating system is now owned and operated by Great River Hydro, LLC, who believes it is important to help preserve natural resources in the communities where it operates and established the Deerfield River Enhancement Fund for watershed conservation and improvement.

WHAT WE LOOK FOR:

The Deerfield River Enhancement Fund seeks to support watershed conservation, development of low impact recreational and educational facilities, and planning, design, maintenance and monitoring of such facilities in the Deerfield River Watershed. Projects must provide clear public benefits and contribute to the goals of enhancing low impact recreational, environmental education, or environmental protection opportunities directly related to the Deerfield River Watershed. Funds may be used for outdoor educational programs, including curriculum development and travel for students, interpretive materials, and signs.

WHO IS ELIGIBLE:

Eligible grant recipients include nonprofit organizations, educational institutions, and units of local and regional government within Vermont and Massachusetts. Projects must be located within the Deerfield River Basin or in towns with some portion falling within the basin. In the latter case, projects must be directly tied to the basin, e.g. a trail spur originating outside the basin that connects with a trail network within the basin.

Applications must be submitted by January 19, 2027, at 5 p.m. Applicants will be notified of grant decisions in Spring or Summer 2027.

Organization Information

Organization Name*

Name of organization applying to grant.

Character Limit: 100

Your Organization's Background*

A brief description of your history, mission, current services, and relation to the Deerfield Basin.

Character Limit: 500

What is your organization's annual operating budget?*

Character Limit: 20

Financial Statements - Current Fiscal Year*

Upload a copy of your organization's budget to actual, including both revenue and expenses, from its current fiscal year. Sample documents can be downloaded from the Community Foundation's website - visit ourOnline Grants Center FAQ (scroll to the middle section) for more details.

File Size Limit: 3 MB

Financial Statements - Complete Fiscal Year*

Upload a copy of your organization's profit/loss statement and balance sheet from its most recently completed fiscal year. Sample documents can be downloaded from the Community Foundation's website - visit our Online Grants Center FAQ (scroll to the middle section) for more details.

File Size Limit: 3 MB

What status best describes your organization?*

Deerfield River Enhancement grants must be paid to registered 501(c)(3) nonprofit organizations, educational institutions, or units of local and regional government within Vermont and Massachusetts. If your organization or group does not fall into one of these categories, you will need to use a fiscal sponsor. If you have questions, please contact 802-388-3355 opt.6, or email grants@vermontcf.org. We are happy to talk through your options.

Choices

Registered 501(c)(3) nonprofit
Educational Institution
Unit of local or regional government
Other - Please provide details in your answer to the next question.

Use this space to provide additional information about the applicant's status (if applicable).

If you have a fiscal sponsor—or if you operate under the umbrella of a larger registered nonprofit—provide their name below.

Character Limit: 200

Fiscal Sponsor Agreement Form (if applicable)

If using a fiscal sponsor, download a blank Fiscal Sponsor Agreement Form (click here to download the form) and forward it to your fiscal sponsor to print, fill out, and sign. The form must be filled out completely and you must use the official VCF form.

Please call 802-388-3355 opt 6 if you have questions.

File Size Limit: 4 MB

Application Questions

Project Name*
Character Limit: 250

Amount Requested*
Enter the dollar amount being request in the space below.

You may request up to $60,000.

The final award amount is subject to change, and grant staff will contact applicants if it is necessary to make budget adjustments prior to award.

The review committee may award one larger project or multiple smaller projects; applications for any amount less than $60,000 are invited.

Character Limit: 20

Describe the need for this project*
Character Limit: 800

Project goals and workplan*
Describe the project goals, the work you'll do, and the overall timeline for your project.

Explain how your project contributes to at least one of the following in the Deerfield River Watershed:

- watershed conservation,
- development of low impact recreational and educational facilities, or
- planning, design, maintenance and monitoring of such facilities

Grant activities must take place after June 1, 2027 to be eligible for funding.

Projects should be completed within one year unless the nature of the project requires a longer period of time. Under no circumstances should the project take longer than three years.

Character Limit: 3000

Geographic Area*

The *geographic area* within the Deerfield Basin the project will directly affect. If the project has a site-specific location, please upload a map with latitude/longitude points below.

Character Limit: 500

Geographic Area Cont.

If the project has a site-specific location, please upload a map with latitude/longitude points here.

File Size Limit: 3 MB

Methods for measuring project success*

What do you expect to learn through this grant and how will you know that you've achieved your goals? Consider the following in your response:

- Program participation (rates, retention, etc.)
- Participant feedback (surveys, interviews, etc.)
- Measurable outcomes (success and goal attainment)
- Reflection and revision – how do you envision the outcomes from this project being incorporated into future work?

Character Limit: 2500

Project Personnel*

List the personnel who will work on the project and their qualifications.

Character Limit: 1200

Project Funding*

Address the following:

- Explain how funds from the Deerfield River Enhancement Fund will be used.
- Give details of any funding you have already received or requested for your project (how much, from whom, and for what).
- If awarded, will these funds be used as a match for any other grant programs?

Character Limit: 1000

Partial Funding*

We may choose to award a partial grant that is less than the amount you requested. If you are awarded a partial grant, how would your ability to complete the project be impacted?

Character Limit: 750

Project Budget - Itemized*

Attach a copy of your estimated project budget. You should include both expenses and revenue, as well as pending and secured support.

Although not a requirement, we strongly encourage overhead expenses to be limited to 15% of the total project budget.

Sample documents can be downloaded from the Community Foundation's website - visit our Resources for Grantseekers page for more details.

File Size Limit: 4 MB

Optional: Additional Information

Anything else that might help us understand what you are trying to accomplish and why.

Character Limit: 850

Optional: Additional Upload 1

If relevant, you may upload a document that helps us understand your project.

Examples include:

- Pictures of project site, maps, diagrams, or other visual aids
- Letters of support from collaborating organizations
- Documentation of other secured funds

Please do not upload general promotional materials such as annual reports.

File Size Limit: 4 MB

Optional: Additional Upload 2

If relevant, you may upload a document that helps us understand your project.

Examples include:

- Pictures of project site, maps, diagrams, or other visual aids
- Letters of support from collaborating organizations
- Documentation of other secured funds

Please do not upload general promotional materials such as annual reports.

File Size Limit: 4 MB

Save and Submit

Please double check all attachments and text answers before submitting your application. Applications must be submitted by January 19, 2027, at 5 p.m. Applicants will be notified of grant decisions in Spring or Summer 2027.

By submitting your application to the Vermont Community Foundation, you give us permission to share your application with other potential funders, both individuals and foundations.