



NYS Companion Animal Capital Fund 2017-2018 Questions & Answers

11/2/2017 - Important application update: The RFP lists information regarding MWBE requirements in Section 12. The NYS Department of Agriculture and Markets has decided to remove the form titled “MWBE Utilization Plan” as a required proposal submission document. Should an organization be granted funding, MWBE forms will be requested from awardees at the time that their award is announced.

Q: Would a dog catching vehicle be an eligible expense under this grant program?

A: No, vehicles do not qualify under this grant program. Per the RFP, expenses must go toward capital (infrastructure) improvements.

Q: We have been having a problem with people coming to the animal shelter after hours and tying up dogs outside and abandoning them. We are looking at upgrading the external security features including lighting, cameras, etc. Would this be an eligible project?

A: Yes, such a project would be eligible. However, please keep in mind that there are minimum overall project costs expected depending on the size of your municipality. Per the RFP, the conditions are as follows:

- For projects serving an **individual municipality with a population of less than 2 million**, grants of not less than Fifty Thousand Dollars (\$50,000) and not more than Two Hundred Thousand Dollars (\$200,000), not to exceed fifty percent (50%) of the total project cost.
- For projects serving **two or more municipalities**, or an **individual municipality with a population of greater than 2 million**, grants of not less than One Hundred Thousand Dollars (\$100,000) and not more than Five Hundred Thousand Dollars (\$500,000), not to exceed seventy-five percent (75%) of the total project cost.

Your total overall project cost would need to be, at minimum, \$100,000 or \$200,000, based upon the size of your municipality(ies) served. The guidelines above describe the criteria in further detail.

Answer amended: Such a project would need to provide justification on the application as to how it would benefit the dogs and cats already being sheltered. An example might be to prevent break-ins.

Q: How can I find out if my organization is a registered vendor of NYS?

A: A vendor ID is used to identify entities that do business with New York State. Per the RFP, to find out if your organization has already registered as a vendor of NYS, enter its SFS Vendor ID number and search. If your organization is registered, the search result will include contact information for its delegated administrator, and you can contact this individual to request access to the system. If your organization is not registered, the search



result will provide a link to the Request Form for Administrator, which you will need to complete and submit pursuant to the instructions provided. If your organization is not currently doing business with NYS, you will need to submit a Substitute W-9 Form to obtain a NYS SFS Vendor ID, in addition to the Registration Form for Administrators, in order to register.

If you are unsure of whether you have an SFS Vendor ID, please contact the SFS help desk:

Phone: (518) 457-7717 or (855) 233-8363, Email: HelpDesk@sfs.ny.gov

To obtain an SFS Vendor ID, please visit <https://nyspro.ogs.ny.gov/content/obtaining-vendor-identification>.

Q: How do I become prequalified in the Grants Gateway?

A: All non-profit organizations applying for grants in NY State must be prequalified in the Grants Gateway prior to the grant application due date and time. Governmental entities (i.e. an organization operated directly by a municipality) are not required to be prequalified. You may work on your prequalification and grant applications simultaneously; you don't have to wait for prequalification to start an application. For information on becoming prequalified, please visit the [Application Instructions](#) and scroll to Page 5. There, you will find a link to a manual containing instructions on how to become prequalified.

Q: We are an independent and incorporated organization, but we do not have a contract with any government offices. Does an organization have to be under contract to apply for funding?

A: Per the RFP, in order to qualify for funding under this grant program, you must be either operated by or under contract with a municipality.

Q: I received your announcement letter about the new grant program, but the link listed in the letter doesn't work. Could you email a link to me?

A: I'm sorry the link didn't work for you. Please try: https://www.agriculture.ny.gov/AI/small_animals.html. If you follow the link to the NYS Companion Animal Capital Fund Grant Program section, you will find links to pertinent information regarding the grant program.

Q: My organization does not hold federal tax exemption 501(c)(3) status. Would we still be eligible to apply for grant funding?

A: Yes, your organization would still be eligible to apply for funding without 501(c)(3) status. Per the RFP, in order for a not-for-profit organization to apply, the organization must be registered with the Charities Bureau of the NYS Attorney General's office and have a registration number assigned. Otherwise, the organization cannot get prequalified in the Grants Gateway. The Charities Bureau does not require a federal tax exemption. For more information on registration with the Charities Bureau, please read section 3.3 of the RFP [here](#).



Q: Are equine rescues eligible for grants under the NYS Companion Animal Capital Fund?

A: Per the RFP, only dog and cat shelters are eligible for grants under the NYS Companion Animal Capital Fund.

Q: The main wish for our shelter is to build a hospital where we will be able to perform spays and neuters for both the animals coming into our shelter and animals in the community. We must first show architectural drawings to our city to be approved, but hiring an architect to accomplish this can be expensive. Our question is: will you need architectural plans in order for us to be considered for a grant?

A: No, we would not require architectural plans in order for your organization to be considered for a grant. However, applications are being scored on readiness to proceed with the project. In other words, organizations that are ready to begin construction once they receive funding are more likely to be the ones to receive a grant. In addition, per our RFP, paying an architect for their services would not be an eligible expense under this grant program. You can find more information on how applications are scored and eligible expenses on the RFP, which can be found at https://www.agriculture.ny.gov/AI/small_animals.html.

The Companion Animal Capital Fund is intended to make improvements to day-to-day care of sheltered dogs and cats. Since your project is geared toward spay/neuter services, this project may be more appropriate for an Animal Population Control Grant administered by the ASPCA:

<https://www.aspcapro.org/grant/2013/02/11/new-york-state-animal-population-control-program>.

Grants Gateway Application Update: In the Program Specific Questions section under Grant Eligibility Determination, Question 1I reads “Are you a municipality with a population of less than 2 million? If yes, answer questions 1K and 1L. If no, skip to question 1M.” **THIS IS INCORRECT.** The question should read, “Are you a municipality with a population of less than 2 million? If yes, answer questions 1J and 1K. If no, skip to question 1L.”

Q: What is the estimated time frame of when potential grant recipients would be notified of their application decision?

A: Below is the approximate time frame for the grant program:

RFP Posted	10/16/2017
Questions Due	12/27/2017
Answers Posted	1/05/2018
Proposals Due	1/10/2018 at 4:00 pm local time
Tentative Award Date	2/10/2018
Contract Start Date (2 year contracts)	3/1/2018



This time frame can be found on the RFP, located at https://www.agriculture.ny.gov/AI/small_animals.html.

Q: What constitutes "equipment" eligible for funding? Specifically, are dog control vehicles and equipment necessary to outfit the vehicle such as cages, snares, and specialty gloves to block biting, eligible expenses under this grant?

A: Per the RFP, a vehicle would not be an eligible expense under this grant program. The equipment must be necessary for the secure containment, health, and adequate care of sheltered dogs and cats. This grant program is meant to improve day-to-day care for cats and dogs that are being housed in an animal shelter. Some examples of eligible equipment are kennels, cages, and washing facilities within an existing or new shelter structure.

Q: If receive funding during this round of applications and our project is completed in 4-6 months, are we eligible to apply for funding again in 2019, should the grant program be available again? Or, is the funding an organization receives in 2018 all they will be eligible for 2 years?

A: An organization would be eligible for funding again in the future if the project from the previous contract has been completed.

Q: Can you clarify what it means to be under contract with a municipality?

A: Having a contract with a municipality means that you are contracted with your town or local government to provide services under Article 7. A copy of Article 7 can be found at: <https://www.agriculture.ny.gov/AI/Allaws/article7.pdf>. To qualify for this grant program, you must be under contract with one or more municipalities, or operated by a municipality.

Answer amended: Organizations must care for seized dogs under Article 7 to qualify for this grant program.

Q: Assuming the shelter only has one municipal contract, would an organization lose funding if they lose the contract they have with that municipality during the completion of the project?

A: As the RFP did not outline a requirement for an organization to maintain a contract with a municipality for the life of a grant, an organization would not lose funding if they lost their municipal contract during the completion of the project. However, should the organization apply for funding again in the future, it would need to have a current contract with a municipality.

Q: I process the proof of Workers' Compensation and Disability coverage for my organization and in order to apply for the grant, I need the full name and address of who administers this grant.

A: NYS Department of Agriculture and Markets
Division of Animal Industry
10B Airline Drive
Albany, NY 12235



Q: Do you have a specific MWBE utilization form to use with this proposal?

A: The NYS Department of Agriculture and Markets has decided to remove the form titled "MWBE Utilization Plan" as a required proposal submission document. Should an organization be granted funding, MWBE forms will be requested from awardees at the time that their award is announced.

Q: Does the source of match funding matter for the purposes of this grant program?

A: The source of funding does not matter, but must be specified on the application. Match funding must be in the form of cash on hand.

Q: Regarding matching funds, we have been promised a donation that we would like to use as part of the match. The stipulation is that it needs to be used by a certain date before the awarded date. Can we include this as a match even though we have to use it earlier?

A: The match must be available after the contract is awarded. Therefore, you will likely not be able to use that donation in particular for your match funding, unless the donors agree to extend the deadline.

Q: Regarding the 2-year contract period, we plan to systematically make renovations throughout the facility. Will the funds be released up-front or on a reimbursable procedure?

A: Funds are released on a reimbursable procedure. Per the RFP, awardees may request, at the discretion of the Department, an initial payment of up to twenty-five percent (25%) of the total grant award. The Department shall retain ten percent (10%) of the budget amount to be disbursed to the contractor until such time as the final report is accepted. A New York State Claim for Payment Form must be submitted to the Department in order for the contractor to be reimbursed for funds expended.

Q: Does the application have to reflect one cohesive project, or can several different facility acquisition and construction projects be put together: for example, construction in one part of the shelter, and facility-related purchases for other parts of the shelter?

A: Applications may include multiple components of eligible costs.

Q: Can all labor costs relating to construction or acquisition be included in our request, or are there only specific labor costs allowable?

A: Grants will cover construction done by outside employees (contractors, etc.), but **WILL NOT** cover construction done by shelter employees, volunteers, or shelter management. Grants will cover project oversight done by shelter management. Project oversight by shelter management or administration may be placed in the



“Administration” section of the Capital Budget. Project oversight by a shelter manager or administrator will NOT count towards match funding.

Q: Does blacktopping a driveway to our animal shelter qualify for the grant?

Secondly, can two projects be submitted for one grant as long as the amount of funding requested is within the limits? e.g. Replace the roof to our kennel building AND make repairs to the building that houses our cats (two different buildings).

A: Unfortunately, blacktopping a driveway would not qualify under this grant program. Per the RFP, projects must relate directly to the secure containment, health and adequate care of sheltered dogs and cats.

The two other projects mentioned – replacing the roof to the kennel building and repairing the building that houses the cats – are both eligible, and you may include both projects in one application. Any project(s) relating directly to the secure containment, health and adequate care of sheltered dogs and cats are acceptable.

Q: Does match funding need to be on hand at the time of application submission, or is it something we could fundraise for after being awarded a grant?

A: Match funding must be available after the contract is awarded. Organizations with funding at the time of application submission will be awarded more points on their applications, and therefore become more likely to get grant funding. Thus, it is recommended to raise funds before you know for sure whether your organization has been granted funding.

Q: Do shelters have to be located in New York to qualify for New York State Companion Animal Capital Fund grant?

A: Yes, shelters do need to be located in New York State in order to be qualified for the New York State Companion Animal Capital Fund.

Q: Would a ventilation system count as a capital project?

A: Yes, a ventilation system would count as a capital project and be qualified under this grant program, as long as you are able to clearly show how it would affect the health and wellbeing of animals in your shelter.

Q: We hold contracts with several municipalities but we also have several Memorandums of Understanding (MOUs). Do those count as well or do they have to be contracts?

A: If you have contracts with multiple municipalities, you are eligible for the \$100,000-\$500,000 range of grants, regardless of the MOUs.



Q: Our intended project will serve animals from the municipalities we are contracted with, as well as animals from municipalities that we are not contracted with. Would that be a problem?

A: No, this would not be a problem – serving animals from municipalities you are not contracted with would be acceptable.

Q: Sometimes the ACOs (Animal Control Officers) bring in dogs that are DOA (Dead on Arrival) and we cremate them onsite in our own crematorium. We are in need of a new freezer and hydraulic table for that building. Would this be allowable under the grant?

A: Yes, this project would be allowable under this grant program.

Q: If granted funding, once a reimbursement claim form is submitted, do you have any sense of how long it might take to be reimbursed?

A: There are too many variables to make an accurate estimation at this time.

Q: Can the grant funds be used to fund stackable kennels, as long as they comply with the ASV guidelines?

A: Yes, absolutely. Eligible projects will include direct costs related to the construction, renovation, rehabilitation, installation, acquisition, or expansion of buildings, equipment, or facilities that are necessary for the secure containment, health and adequate care of sheltered dogs and cats.

Q: If a town is building a new dog shelter on town-owned property adjacent to a park, is any archeological study eligible for reimbursement under the grant if it is required by SHPO?

A: No, an archeological study would not be eligible for reimbursement under this grant program. The only eligible costs are for construction, renovation, rehabilitation, installation, acquisition or expansion of buildings, equipment or facilities.

Q: What might be needed from an architect on the application, and are architect fees included?

A: Architect fees would not be eligible under this grant program. It is important to show readiness to begin the project, so if an architect can provide any drawings, renderings, written descriptions, estimates on bids on proposed work, photographs, etc., then this should be included on your application.

Q: Can the grant be used to purchase land to build a new shelter?

A: The only eligible costs are for construction, renovation, rehabilitation, installation, acquisition or expansion of buildings, equipment or facilities. Land would not be an eligible expense.



Q: What will happen if our shelter cannot find a MWBE contractor?

A: The standard Department goal is a total of 30% MWBE participation with 15% assigned to NYS Certified minority-owned business enterprise (“MBE”) and 15% assigned to NYS Certified women-owned business enterprise (“WBE”). The Prime contractor must search the Empire State Development Corporation’s Directory of Certified MWBE Vendors at <https://ny.newnycontracts.com/Default.asp?TN=ny&XID=5320MWBE> to locate possible vendors.

According to the MWBE Instructions and Requirements document released by the NYS Department of Agriculture Division of Fiscal Management, if a NYS Certified MWBE cannot be found or the prime contractor can only meet a portion of the goal, a total or partial waiver of the 30% goal may be requested.

The **MWBE EEO5-1 Request for Waiver Form** must be completed and submitted by the prime contractor. In addition, the prime contractor must demonstrate their need for a waiver by also submitting one of the following forms:

- a) **MWBE EEO5-3 MWBE Contractor Good Faith Efforts Certification** – The prime contractor must clearly illustrate the attempts made to identify certified MWBE vendor. This can be written at the bottom of this form or can be provided on a separate memo and should include documentation compiled during the search.
- b) **MWBE EEO5-5 MWBE Contractor Unavailability Certification** - This form is only to be used if a MWBE opportunity was identified but they will not perform the work. Please discuss the use of this form with the MWBE Liaison prior to submitting it.

Exemptions and exclusions must be approved by the State, prior to the contractor beginning work on the portion they are requesting be waived of goals.

Q: What level of detail are you looking for on the Capital Budget portion of the Grants Gateway application?

A: The only eligible costs under this grant program are for construction, renovation, rehabilitation, installation, acquisition or expansion of buildings, equipment or facilities. Therefore, the only categories under the Capital Budget section that should be filled out are “Acquisition” and “Construction.” We will be looking for detailed, itemized (where applicable) lists in the Capital Budget portion of the application. Larger concepts and goals, such as something you are planning to construct, should be explained throughout your application and on the Work Plan, whereas smaller concepts, such as supplies and labor, should be outlined in the budget.

Answer amended: If including the salary of a shelter manager or administrator for overseeing the project in the budget, this can be placed in the “Administration” section of the Capital Budget.



Q: On the Grants Gateway, the point values for the responses in Section 3 of the Program Specific Questions only add up to 19, yet it says that the total for that section is 20. Can you please clarify the point values for Section 3?

A: Thank you for bringing this to our attention. This was an error, as Section 3 should have a 20-point value. The point distribution is as follows:

3A) Are you able to begin the project once you receive funding? Describe when the project will begin once funding is received. (6 points)

3C) What is the time frame for completion of the project? (6 points)

3D) Does your organization have local support? Please upload letters of support from your municipal government and/or any organizations that you partner or collaborate with on an ongoing basis. Content of the letters should adequately describe the writer's knowledge of your organization and intended project. Multiple letters are encouraged. Note: Only one upload allowed; please combine multiple documents into a single PDF. (8 points)

Q: Does the labor (installation) aspect of a purchase we plan to make get listed in the “Construction” section of the Budget, or does it go into the “Acquisition” section where we note the item's purpose? For example, we propose to purchase a whole building generator, which has a purchase fee for materials and an installation fee. While it is clear the material/item fee gets listed in the Acquisition section, where should the installation fee be listed?

A: It is recommended to list labor/installation under the “Construction” section of the Capital Budget. Please remember that labor or installation completed by shelter management, employees, or volunteers will not be covered by this grant program. Project oversight by shelter management or administration may be placed in the “Administration” section of the Capital Budget.

Q: Do the costs entered in the Capital Budget need to equal exactly \$750,000 (\$500,000 grant and \$250,000 match)? Can items that total a small amount over the \$750,000 be listed if we are unable to arrive exactly the amount of \$750,000, or do we reduce one of the items to make up the difference to reach the exact amount of \$750,000? I remember Jeff making the statement that if the numbers are not correct, the application would be denied.

Note: This is an example specific to an organization that is eligible for a grant of \$500,000. Please apply the response to this question using the amount of funding specific to your application.

A: Your numbers may exceed \$750,000. It is understood that no project is going to cost exactly \$750,000. Jeff was referring to the accuracy of your match percentages when he mentioned the potential for applications to be denied – so, while your Capital Budget does not necessarily need to be exactly \$750,000, make sure you are filling out the match portion properly.



Q: The Q+A states that program oversight done by shelter staff would be an allowable expense under this grant, however in the webinar it was mentioned that the only allowable budget categories are acquisition and construction. If we would like to include a small percentage of a staff member's salary to oversee the construction project, where should we include that in our budget form?

A: You could place project oversight by shelter management under the “Administration” section of the Capital Budget.

Q: We will have costs that are not covered by the grant because we are proposing a large project that will exceed both the award amount and the required match. Should these still be included in our budget form or should we only include things that are covered by the grant/match?

A: You should include the entire budget, regardless of what will be covered by the grant and match funding.

Q: Is the MWBE percentage of 30% calculated on the total project cost, or just on the award amount?

A: The 30% is calculated on the amount awarded by the Department of Agriculture and Markets. The Department is not concerned with portions not tied to our award.

Q: Would replacing an old storage shed, where food and other operational supplies are stored, be an eligible cost for the grant funds?

A: As long as you are able to indicate on your application how the project relates to the secure containment, health and adequate care of sheltered dogs and cats, this project would be eligible.

Additional Information:

- **Match amounts** are calculated based on the amount of the grant awarded. For example, if your organization is eligible for a grant of \$50,000 to \$200,000, and you are awarded \$100,000, you would be expected to provide a 50% match of \$50,000, regardless of the total project cost. If your organization is eligible for a grant of \$100,000 to \$500,000, and you are awarded \$300,000, you would be expected to provide a 25% match of \$75,000, regardless of the total project cost.
- Organizations must care for seized dogs under Article 7 to qualify for this grant program.
- This grant program will not cover labor performed by shelter employees, volunteers, or management. Additionally, labor performed by shelter employees, volunteers, or management cannot be put towards match funding. This grant program WILL cover project oversight by shelter management.
- For a **letter of support** to be considered as part of an application, it must be **uploaded** onto the Grants Gateway under the appropriate question in the Program Specific Questions section. Multiple letters should be combined into one PDF, as the question will only accept one file.



Agriculture and Markets

ANDREW M. CUOMO
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LAST UPDATED: 01/05/2018

- The **prequalification process** is completed via the Grants Gateway. For issues involving accessing prequalification application or application status, please contact the Grants Gateway Helpdesk by calling 518-474-5595 or emailing grantsgateway@its.ny.gov.
- **“Acquisition”** under the **Capital Budget** section may include items, supplies, and/or equipment used during the project.