

# Kerr-Tar

Regional Council  
Of Governments

## OPPORTUNITIES NEWSLETTER

Interested in applying?

Contact us to get started.

[alewis@kerrtarcog.org](mailto:alewis@kerrtarcog.org)

(252) 436-2040, ext. 2005

### Regional Project Manager's Notes:



Hello Kerr-Tar region! We have **FOUR** funding opportunities coming up for Digital Inclusion Planning, and we need to know if your community wants to be included in the proposals:

- **National Digital Inclusion Alliance**, "Trailblazer Grant" (announcement in early September)
- **National Telecommunications and Information Alliance** "Digital Equity Competitive Grant" (proposals are due September 23rd,
- **NC State and Local Cybersecurity Grant Program** (announcement in August 2024)
- **USDA: Broadband Technical Assistance (BTA) Grant** (proposals are due August 20th, 2024)

If you are passionate about broadband, please fill-out the **Kerr-Tar Regional Broadband Planning Committee interest form** to support the Digital Inclusion project efforts starting in September. Please reach out through email or phone with any technical assistance questions or to schedule a meeting.

Thank you,  
Amanda Lewis

Meeting  
Scheduler

# August 2024

## Donation Mini-Grant (DMG) Program



Donation Mini-Grants provide a maximum of \$50,000 for transaction, property management, and stewardship costs associated with the donation of property in fee simple or a permanent conservation agreement. All project acres must be restricted with a permanent conservation agreement to protect natural or cultural resources.

[Download the Manual.](#)

The value of the donation and at least 50% of any stewardship endowment request are required as matching funds.

The donation must be for at least one of the following purposes:

- Land that is within the first 300 feet from the top of the stream bank, or the width of the 100-year floodplain, whichever is greater for the purpose of protecting surface water quality or developing a riparian greenway.
- Land containing natural areas, element occurrences, or species of concern as defined by NC Natural Heritage Program or adjacent buffer land that is critical to protecting the viability of those areas for the purpose of protecting ecological diversity.
- Land buffering military installations for the purpose of minimizing incompatible land use for installations and training.
- Properties on which historic or cultural events can be interpreted and that help develop a balanced state program of historic properties.

[Learn More](#)

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## USDA: Broadband Technical Assistance (BTA)

The Broadband Technical Assistance (BTA) program provides financial assistance through cooperative agreements to eligible entities to receive or deliver broadband technical assistance and training. For a project to be eligible to receive federal funds from the BTA program, it must promote broadband expansion into a rural community.



- For the purposes of BTA, a rural area is defined as “any area not located in a city, town, or incorporated area with a population greater than 20,000, or an urbanized area next to a city, town or incorporated area with a population greater than 50,000 people.” Certain other exclusions apply.
- Eligible areas must be completely contained within a rural area or composed of multiple

rural areas. You will find a mapping tool with additional eligibility information at this link:  
[Map](#)

BTA does not have a cost share or matching requirement.

[Learn  
More](#)

## September 2024

### Recreational Trails Program Grant

The Great Trails State Program provides funding for new trail development and extension of existing trails anywhere in the state of North Carolina. This includes paved trails or greenways, natural surface trails, biking trails, equestrian trails, and any other type of trail recognized by the Department of Natural and Cultural Resources.



**Deadline:  
September 3rd**

Ineligible trails include a series of tourism attractions related to a particular theme that are jointly marketed based on that theme and are interconnected only by vehicular roadways. There will be one grant cycle distributing the full \$25 million dollars in non-recurring funding.

#### Planning and Feasibility

- In-depth corridor study for a trail alignment
- Not an overall comprehensive trail plan for an area
- Includes assessments of all elements in the trail project, including:
  - trail class (paved or natural surface)
  - target users
  - design aspects
  - trail corridor / land needed
  - partners to maintain the trail ensuring the overall feasibility of a trail and/or trail location from a technical, financial, and operational aspect.
- Will be able to lead directly into the design and engineering of the trail

#### Design and Engineering

- Create a set of design drawings that build upon the/a planning and feasibility study considering all assessments completed
- Provide technical details to construct sustainable trails and typically include surveys, geotechnical study (if needed), design drawings, construction specifications, and maintenance agreements
- Conclude with a set of construction documents that can be used to bid out the project for construction or construct the project

#### Acquisition

- Acquire land or easements for trail projects
- May include Planning and Feasibility, Design and Engineering, or Construction

#### Construction

- Construct trails, trail structures or trail amenities

- Trail structures include:
  - bridges
  - boardwalks
  - retaining walls
  - other structures that are necessary for visitors to use the trail to travel from one location to another
- Paddle trail structures include:
  - waterway access points
  - watercraft launch structures
- Trail amenities include:
  - markers
  - signage
  - benches
  - water fountains
  - restroom facilities
  - bathhouses
  - campsites
  - docks
  - boat ramps
  - parking facilities
  - picnic facilities
  - equipment rental facilities
  - other improvements or structures intended to enhance visitor experience for trail users

#### **Maintenance**

- Any activity to maintain the usability and sustainability of trails
- Ensuring trails are passable by the users for which they are managed
- Preventing environmental damage resulting from trail deterioration
- Protecting public safety
- Averting future deferred maintenance cost

#### **Project Minimums**

\$100,000 minimum for planning and design, acquisition (all types), construction of natural surface trails, and maintenance of natural surface trails

\$250,000 minimum for maintenance of paved trails

\$300,000 minimum for construction of paved trails

#### **Project Maximums**

Grants made under this program shall not exceed \$500,000 per project.

#### **Matching**

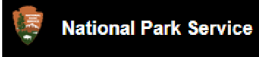
Tier 1 Counties \$1 non-state matching funds for every \$4 of state funds

Tier 2 Counties \$1 non-state matching funds for every \$2 of state funds

Tier 3 Counties \$1 non-state matching funds for every \$1 of state funds

\*\*If trail projects is located in more than one county, the match is based on lowest county tier.

**Learn  
More**



**Deadline:  
September 5th**

### African American Civil Rights

The African American Civil Rights (AACR) documents, interprets, and preserves sites and stories related to the African American struggle to gain equal rights as citizens. The 2008 NPS report Civil Rights in America, A Framework for Identifying Significant Sites serves as the foundation reference document for the grant program and for grant applicants to use in determining the appropriateness of proposed projects and properties. The grants are funded by the Historic Preservation Fund (HPF) and administered by the NPS. This competitive grant program provides grants to states, tribes, local governments (including Certified Local Governments), and nonprofits. Non-federal matching share is not required, but preference will be given to applications that show community commitment through non-federal match and partnership collaboration. Grants will fund a broad range of planning, development, and research projects for historic sites including: survey, inventory, documentation, interpretation, education, architectural services, historic structure reports, preservation plans, and "bricks and mortar" repair.

Projects are split into two categories: physical "**preservation projects**" and "**history projects**." "Preservation" grants are for the repair of historic properties. "History" grants are for more interpretive work, like exhibit design or even historical research.

Award Ceiling: History project \$75,000; Preservation project \$750,000  
Award Floor: \$15,000

**Grants.gov - History projects**

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### Recreational Trails Program Grant


The Trails Program staff are ready, willing and available to assist in all phases of the application process of projects that are construction ready for grant funding. These sustainable, "shovel-ready" projects leverage local funds to meet recreational trail and trail needs, in an effort to provide low infrastructure economic development opportunities through natural resource tourism.



**Deadline:  
September 6th  
@ 3pm**

The Trails Program staff are also available to assist applicants with conceptual projects, in order to meet the technical requirements of an RTP Grant before applying. The online Grants Management System (GMS) takes you from application to final payment. The GMS is auditable and integrated with the State of North Carolina's payment system. In order to get access to GMS, your agency must be registered in the North Carolina Financial System (NCFS).

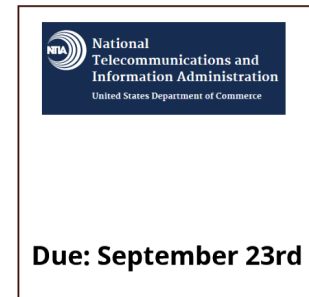
Funding ranger: \$10,000 - \$100,000\*  
Match Required: 25%\*  
\*based on 2023 NOFO



[Learn More](#)

## Digital Equity Competitive Grant Program

This Notice of Funding Opportunity (“NOFO”) solicits applications for the Digital Equity Competitive Grant Program (“Competitive Grant Program” or “Program”), the third of three digital equity programs authorized by the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act of 2021. The Competitive Grant Program will make funds available to a wide range of entities to address barriers to digital equity faced by Covered Populations.



### Grantees must secure at least 10% matching funds

Grant recipients must expend the grant amounts during the four (4) year period after the date on which the entity is awarded the grant. Grant recipients may continue to measure and evaluate the activities supported with the grant amounts for a period of one (1) year after the initial four (4) year Period of Performance. No extensions to the four (4) year Period of Performance or the one (1) year evaluation period will be granted.

Proposed programs, projects, and activities will support efforts to achieve digital equity, promote digital inclusion activities, and spur greater adoption and meaningful use of broadband among the Covered Populations.

Develop and implement digital inclusion activities that benefit one or more of the Covered Populations; Facilitate the adoption of broadband by the Covered Populations in order to provide educational and employment opportunities; Implement training programs for the Covered Populations that cover basic, advanced, and applied skills; Implement workforce development programs; Make available equipment, instrumentation, networking capability and digital network technology for broadband services to Covered Populations at low or no cost; Construct, upgrade, expand, or operate new or existing public access computing centers for Covered Populations through community anchor institutions; or undertake any other project or activity the Assistant Secretary finds to be consistent with the purposes of the Program. Grantees may also use not more than 10 percent of the grant amount to measure and evaluate the activities supported with the grant amounts.

[Learn More](#)

**October 2024**

## Aquatic Weed Control Program

For **Public Waters**, This Program Can Provide:

- Financial Assistance



NORTH CAROLINA  
*Environmental Quality*

**Deadline:  
October 15th**

- Technical Assistance
- Operational Support
- Aquatic Plant Identification
- Treatment Recommendations

Financial assistance and operational support are in the form of cost-share arrangements and are available to Counties, Municipalities, Soil & Water Districts, Drainage Districts, Public Utilities, and other government agencies.

Program staff provide a range of fieldwork services including site assessments, aquatic vegetation surveys and aquatic weed management operations. To provide these services, the program utilizes specialized equipment. Staff are trained on this equipment and have aquatic herbicide applicator licenses.

How to Apply for Financial Assistance:

- A telephone call, letter or email may serve as the initial communication. Be prepared to describe the problem in detail.
- Program staff will need to conduct a site visit in most circumstances.
- Submit a grant application. [Download application form.](#)
- Applications must be received no later than October 15 the year before the project begins.
- Applications will be considered for inclusion in the work-plan for the following year.

For **Private Waters**, This Program Can Provide:

- Technical Assistance
- Aquatic Plant Identification
- Recommend Treatments

Private landowners can also contact their county offices of the [Agricultural Extension Service](#) for further assistance.

**Learn  
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## Walmart - Local Community Grants

Local Community grants range from a minimum of \$250 to a maximum of \$5,000. Eligible nonprofit organizations must operate on the local level (or be an affiliate/chapter of a larger organization that operates locally) and directly benefit the service area of the facility from which they are requesting funding.

There are eight (8) areas of funding for which an organization can apply. Please review the areas listed below to ensure your organization’s goals fall within one of these areas.

Walmart  org

**Q1: April 15**

**Q2: July 15**

**Q3: October 15**

**Q4: December 31**

- Community and Economic Development: Improving local communities for the benefit of



- low-income individuals and families in the local service area
- Diversity and Inclusion: Fostering the building of relationships and understanding among diverse groups in the local service area
- Education: Providing after-school enrichment, tutoring or vocational training for low-income individuals and families in the local service area
- Environmental Sustainability: Preventing waste, increasing recycling, or supporting other programs that work to improve the environment in the local service area
- Health and Human Service: Providing medical screening, treatment, social services, or shelters for low-income individuals and families in the local service area
- Hunger Relief and Healthy Eating: Providing Federal or charitable meals/snacks for low-income individuals and families in the local service area
- Public Safety: Supporting public safety programs through training programs or equipment in the local service area
- Quality of Life: Improving access to recreation, arts or cultural experiences for low-income individuals and families in the local service area

[Learn More](#)

## November 2024

### Environmental and Climate Justice Community Change Grants Program

The **Environmental and Climate Justice Community Change Grant program (Community Change Grants)**, created by the Inflation Reduction Act, offers an unprecedented \$2 billion in grants under this Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO). The Community Change Grants will fund community-driven projects that address climate challenges and reduce pollution while strengthening communities through thoughtful implementation. This historic level of support will enable communities and their partners to overcome longstanding environmental challenges and implement meaningful solutions to meet community needs now and for generations to come. There will be two tracks of funding under this opportunity. Track I will fund approximately 150 large, transformational community-driven investment grants of \$10 million - \$20 million. Track II will fund approximately 20 meaningful engagement grants of \$1 million - \$3 million. Grants cannot exceed 3-years in duration. Please review the NOFO for further information about the exciting opportunities under the Community Change Grants program and details about the application process.



[Learn More](#)

## January 2025

Rural Energy for America Program Energy Audit & Renewable Energy Development Assistance Grants in North Carolina





**Deadline:**  
**January 31, 2025**

This program assists rural small businesses and agricultural producers by conducting and promoting energy audits and providing Renewable Energy Development Assistance (REDA).

**How may funds be used?**

The assistance must be provided to agricultural producers and rural small businesses. Rural small businesses must be located in **eligible rural areas**. This restriction does not apply to agricultural producers.

Assistance provided must consist of:

- Energy audits.
- Renewable energy technical assistance.
- Renewable energy site assessments.

Applicants must submit separate applications, limited to one energy audit and one Renewable Energy Development Assistance (REDA) per fiscal year. The maximum aggregate amount of an energy audit and REDA grant in a Federal fiscal year is \$100,000.

[Learn More](#)

## Training & Resources



### 2024 Sustainable Fleet Technology Conference & Expo

REGISTRATION IS NOW OPEN FOR THE August 13-15, 2024 | Durham Convention Center  
Discover the latest and greatest in sustainable fleet technology, operations, and implementation.

[Register Here](#)



### Benton Institute for Broadband

High-speed, affordable broadband is the infrastructure of opportunity. Our goal is to bring open, affordable, high-performance broadband to all people in the U.S. to ensure a thriving democracy. Benton believes that communications policy—rooted in the values of access, equity, and diversity—has the power to deliver new opportunities and strengthen communities.

[YouTube Channel: Benton Institute for Broadband](#)



### CSEN: The Cyber Security Entertainment Network

The National Cybersecurity Alliance excited to partner with Greatest Training Ever to bring you CSEN: The Cyber Security Entertainment Network! Led by renown newsman and on-air personality Chet Barkley, CSEN features an an ensemble cast that delivers fun, relevant, and timely cyber security tips and advice.

## YouTube Playlist: The Cyber Security Entertainment Network

StaySafeOnlineNCA is the official YouTube channel of the National Cybersecurity Alliance. NCA's mission is to educate and therefore empower a digital society to use the Internet safely and securely at home, work, and school, protecting the technology individuals use, the networks they connect to, and our shared digital assets. For more information, visit [www.staysafeonline.org](http://www.staysafeonline.org).

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