



Connecticut Commission  
on Culture & Tourism

## **CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT GRANTS**

### **Historic Restoration Fund Grant-in-Aid: FAQ**

#### **Who is the Historic Restoration Fund (HRF) contact at the Commission on Culture & Tourism (CCT)?**

Wayne Gannaway, Construction Grants Coordinator  
Wayne.Gannaway@ct.gov 860-256-2757; (fax) 860-256-2811

#### **Does the HRF only fund historic building preservation?**

No, the HRF has helped fund the restoration of historic ships, monuments, designed landscapes, sculptures, acquisition of buildings, and more.

#### **Who is eligible for a grant?**

Grant applicants are strictly limited to Connecticut municipalities or non-profit organizations that have tax-exempt status under Section 501(c)(3) of the U. S. Internal Revenue Code for at least two years. Federal and state agencies are not eligible to apply.

#### **What properties are eligible for grant funding?**

Eligible properties include any Connecticut building, structure, object or archaeological site which is listed on the State Register of Historic Places or the National Register of Historic Places and owned by a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization or municipality or leased long-term (20 years at the time of application) by a nonprofit organization from a municipality. State and federally-owned properties are ineligible. "Friends" groups for federal or state properties are not eligible to apply.

#### **How can I find out if our property is listed on the State Register of Historic Places or National Register of Places?**

Contact Stacey Vairo, National Register Coordinator, 860-256-2766,  
stacey.vairo@ct.gov.

#### **Why is a Professional Project Consultant required for an HRF project?**

All HRF projects must be consistent with the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties (<http://www.nps.gov/history/hps/tps/standguide/>). A professional project consultant who meets the Secretary of the Interior's Historic Preservation Professional Qualifications will help the project meet those standards ([http://www.nps.gov/history/local-law/arch\\_stnds\\_9.htm](http://www.nps.gov/history/local-law/arch_stnds_9.htm)). In most cases, the consultant will be an architect or structural engineer licensed to practice in Connecticut, or, in the case of archaeological investigations or conservation of historic

sculptures or monuments, an individual or firm with professional qualifications that meet the standards.

**Since the HRF does not pay for a Professional Project Consultant to create plans and specifications, how do we pay for those?**

One option is to apply for a Historic Preservation Technical Assistance Grant (HPTAG) through the Connecticut Trust for Historic Preservation. Call Todd Levine at the Connecticut Trust at 203-562-6312 for more information or visit [www.cttrust.org](http://www.cttrust.org). Nonprofit organizations may also contact Mary Donohue (860-256-2755; [mary.donohue@ct.gov](mailto:mary.donohue@ct.gov)) for information on the Historic Preservation Activities Grants program. Municipalities may contact Mary Dunne (860-256-2756; [mary.dunne@ct.gov](mailto:mary.dunne@ct.gov)) regarding the Certified Local Government program and related grants.

**Our historic building has a preservation emergency (i.e., leaky roof or flooded basement, storm damage, etc.), does the HRF fund emergency repairs?**

No. All awards are made through the established public process and grantees must go through the established procurement procedures. The HRF is not an appropriate funding source for emergency repairs.

**Can we do our project in phases?**

Yes. Many nonprofit organizations must complete projects in phases, due to funding constraints. However, CCT staff will want to see a master plan or preservation plan to ensure that subsequent phases will protect HRF investments and be consistent with the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties.

**How many Capital Improvement Grants can we have at one time?**

One. Any existing grant must be closed-out before your organization or municipality can be awarded a new grant.

**Can I begin work before the grant agreement contract is signed by all the required signatories?**

No. You do not have a live project until you get a fully executed copy of the grant agreement and a written notice-to-proceed from the Commission on Culture & Tourism

**We already had a contractor doing work that the grant is supposed to cover. Can the grant "reach back" to reimburse for that work?**

No. The HRF will not fund work that began prior to the execution of the grant agreement contract, approval of the procurement process and notice-to-proceed.

**What does procurement mean?**

Procurement is the state-approved public bidding process by which the grantee seeks out and secures construction services. Grantees must obtain CCT-approval of bidding materials prior to seeking bids.

**Can our qualified preservation consultant also bid on the construction work?**

No. Even if your qualified preservation consultant is also a contractor (which is not typical), he or she cannot bid on the same project they helped design. To do so is a conflict of interest and is illegal.

**What do we do if we advertise as per procurement requirements but we receive less than three bids from contractors?**

If the project budget is less than \$100,000, you need to demonstrate that you followed approved procurement procedures. If your project is more than \$100,000, you must re-bid.

**What if bids come in higher than the budgeted amount?**

Before you create your bid package, ask your preservation architect to include “add/alternates” to the base bid. This gives you options in case bids come in high. If, after your bids come in and they exceed your budget you can 1) reduce your scope of work and re-bid, or 2) as the grantee your organization or municipality can invest more of its own money in the project.

**Where should we post the project sign?**

Minimum overall size of project sign shall be no less than 2 feet high and 4 feet wide; grantees may not use more than \$200.00 in state funds to help defray the cost of procuring the project sign; project signs must be prominently displayed throughout the duration of the grant project in a location which is clearly visible from principle street adjacent to the property site.