



2022 State Fire Assistance (SFA) Grant Application Webinar Frequently Asked Questions

Contents

Eligibility:	1
Grant Activities:	2
Funding, Fiscal Sponsors, and Match:	3
Application Resources:	5
Links Referenced in 22 SFA Application Webinar:	7
Contact Information	8

Eligibility:

1. Are individuals eligible to apply for the 22 State Fire Assistance Grant Program?

No, individuals are not eligible to apply to the USFS-State Fire Assistance Grant Program through the California Fire Safe Council.

If you are looking for services for your home or property, we encourage you to search for and reach out to your local fire safe council using the **Find your local Fire Safe Council** map on the CFSC website: <https://cafiresafecouncil.org/>.

To use, navigate to the Find your Local Fire Safe Council search box and type in an address or choose Use current location or locate. Additionally, you can click on the map and navigate to the area of interest. Finally, you are able to click on the Fire Safe Council icon to learn more information about FSC's in your area.

2. Can for-profit organizations apply for this grant?

Yes, for-profits are eligible to apply.

3. Can the subrecipient be a nonprofit?

Yes, nonprofits are eligible, and they are one of the most common types of recipient organization.

4. Is a Mutual Water Company eligible to apply under the Nonprofit Organization?

Yes, if they are a legally incorporated non-profit organization or a public agency.

5. Do applicants need their own Commercial and Government Entity (CAGE) code to apply?

Yes, unless they have a fiscal sponsor. Then the fiscal sponsor will need to provide their CAGE code with the application. The SAM website is used to renew your annual CAGE code and Unique Entity ID: <http://www.sam.gov/>

6. Who assesses organizational risk for grant applications?

California Fire Safe Council grant specialists complete the risk assessment during the pre-award phase based on the documentation provided during pre-award.

7. We are a Home Owners Association (HOA) pursuing a grant to conduct brush clearance located in a portion of land that we own, but it is regulated by the California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW), would that affect our ability to receive an CFSC SFA grant?

No, that would not affect your organization's ability to receive funding for the 22 SFA grant, however additional permitting may be needed for the land managed by CDFW.

Grant Activities:

1. Does this funding support Home Hardening activities such as retrofitting roofs, vents, or other?

Construction costs are not allowable under this particular program. We are seeking further guidance and will send an update.

2. Does this funding opportunity allow for capacity building or general operating grants?

Capacity building activities can make up a portion of the federal costs or match, as long as they are a necessary part of efforts in support of the three program areas of Planning (such as CWPP's or Firewise plans), Education, or Fuel Reduction.

CFSC has resources in addition to 22 SFA grants that can be used to build capacity for local organizations. Sign up for our newsletter, check our website, or reach out to a CFSC grant specialist for any questions about capacity building grant programs.

3. Does mechanical treatment include exclusive use of hand tools?

There are a number of categories under mechanical treatment, including thinning and piling by hand.

4. Do websites and newsletters count as outreach activities?

Yes, these activities could be allowable as outreach.

Funding, Fiscal Sponsors, and Match:

1. Can federal funding be used as match for this grant?

No, federal funding cannot be used as match. Grantees must check with the match contributor to ensure that the origin of the match is not in any way paid for or funded by the federal government (Application Guide, pg. 28).

2. What is the definition of a “Fiscal Sponsor”?

Organizations that do not have legal standing may apply for grants with representation from a fiscal sponsor organization. The fiscal sponsor must meet the grant eligibility requirements and be able to receive the grant award, including meeting all terms and conditions in the subaward agreement on behalf of the organization it is sponsoring. The key role of the fiscal sponsor is to receive and manage the grant funds on behalf of the sponsored organization

Applicant organizations must be incorporated and have a Federal Employer ID# to be eligible to apply for federal grant funds. Applicant organizations must also meet the requirements for receiving federal grant funds. If your organization does not meet these requirements, you will need to partner with another organization that can serve as your “fiscal sponsor”.

3. Do Firewise communities qualify as nonprofits?

More information can be found in 22 SFA Application Guide, Page 10: <https://cafiresafecouncil.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/02/22-SFA-Combined-announcement-checklist-and-guide.pdf>

4. What is in-kind for the dollar-for-dollar match? Are there limits to using in-kind match?

In-kind match means non-cash contributions to accomplishing the project objectives and is allowable under this grant opportunity. There is no limit to using in-kind match.

5. Could the match be provided by funds from another existing CFSC grant?

Yes, if the other CFSC grant is non-federal and is utilized during the life of the new grant.

6. Are grant management activities available pro-bono or can they be added to the dollar-for-dollar costing if not? How about Fiscal Sponsors, pro bono, or included in expenses?

Project management by the grantee and/or fiscal sponsor are both allowable costs under these grants. They can also be allocated as match.

7. Can staff time be counted regarding matching of funds?

Yes, staff time that is spent toward grant activities can be used as match if it is not paid for on the grant award.

8. If staff time is used as match, is a letter of commitment needed?

Yes, you would need to include that in a letter of commitment from your own organization.

9. Can volunteer time be used as part of the match?

Yes, Volunteer time can be charged to the grant as in-kind match. Documentation and hour rates will be required in program reporting to CFSC.

10. For in kind support, how does one estimate the value of volunteer time? Is there a standard hourly rate?

There are a few ways. One is to use the rate that is charged for services in a commercial setting. Another is to find the value of the service on a site like the bureau of labor statistics. You can also use the value of volunteer time that is listed on independentsector.org

11. What percent of grant funds can be allocated for administration costs?

The answer depends on how an organization defines administration and whether an organization has an approved indirect cost rate. If there is an approved indirect cost rate, that percentage would be used for indirect costs. If there is not an approved indirect cost rate, federal grants allow use of a 10% indirect rate that would cover administrative costs.

12. Is a grant manager salary an eligible expense?

Yes, grant management and project management are allowable expenses, as long as they are properly documented and reasonable.

13. Do all grants provided by CFSC have matching requirements?

No. For the 22 SFA program, a one-to-one match is a requirement. Other funding programs through CFSC may have a lower cost share/match or not require any at all.

14. When implementing our project, are there any prevailing wage requirements?

CFSC has discussed this question with the federal funders in the past and they confirmed that prevailing wage is not a requirement for this program.

15. Is funding provided in increments up front, or on a reimbursement basis?

Funds are provided by advance. Funding is requested by recipients in increments, typically once per quarter.

Application Resources:

1. Will there be future rounds of this same opportunity?

It is very likely that we will have a similar program in 2023. There are also other grant opportunities that CFSC offers during the year and if you sign up for the newsletter you will receive announcements of open grant opportunities.

2. What if applicants have questions while preparing their applications about understanding what are allowable/allocable/reasonable/necessary/verifiable costs from the Code of Federal Regulations?

We encourage applicants to reach out to CFSC staff well before they submit their applications. CFSC staff can review applications for clarity and make sure that the proposed costs are allowable.

3. Will the Application Webinar be available to participants?

Yes, CFSC will have the recording and slides available on our website and can be located: <https://cafiresafecouncil.org/grants-and-funding/2022-sfa-grant-opportunity/>

4. What map is used for Fire Hazard Severity Zones (FHSZ)?

FHSZ maps can be found using the CFSC 22 Application Support site under the “FHSZ” tab: <https://cfsc.maps.arcgis.com/apps/MapSeries/index.html?appid=121941428e344608a1b6045f5dcf66f8>

General information on FHSZ: <http://www.fire.ca.gov>

5. Where can I get a copy of the 22 SFA Application Handbook?

The 22 SFA Application Handbook is a reference to use as you work through your application. Here is the link: <https://cafiresafecouncil.org/grants-and-funding/2022-sfa-grant-opportunity/>

6. Are we able to receive feedback on our application from CFSC before the submission due date?

CFSC staff can review your application for completion and errors before the deadline and give feedback as long as you leave a reasonable amount of time to complete the review. This can be an easy way to catch common errors and help make sure your application is clear. There is no guarantee that the application will be funded.

7. Are we able to receive feedback on past unfunded grant applications submitted to CFSC?

If you have questions about past CFSC applications, please reach out to a CFSC Grant Specialist. Contact information can be found: <https://cafiresafecouncil.org/grants-and-funding/2022-sfa-grant-opportunity/>

8. We are presently writing a CWPP specific to our community that will be in place by fall 2022. Our county Fire Department is also presently updating their CWPP. How can we reflect this in our grant application so that our renewed goals will be part of the grant submission? Would a letter from the agency helping us to do the CWPP be appropriate?

You can include specific updates or clarifications about your local or regional CWPP's in the narrative portion of the application.

Related to the CWPP status, question 20 of the application asks for the status of the CWPP or other related planning document. If your plan is being revised, you can describe the status there.

9. How is a letter of commitment different than the cover letter?

The cover letter is from the applicant organization and lists all the attached letters of commitment from third party organizations. It also includes a total of all the match commitment presented. It's still an important step to make sure the applicant and other match contributors have agreed on the nature of the match contributions.

10. Do we need to include locations adjacent to state land?

This information is not required for this grant application.

11. How do you get your community identified as a "Community at Risk?" if you met the conditions and you believe you were overlooked?

Cal Fire manages the CAR list so you would need to contact them about being added. Unfortunately, CFSC does not have specific details about that process at this moment.

Links Referenced in 22 SFA Application Webinar:

CFSC Website: <https://cafiresafecouncil.org/>

CFSC Apply for a Grant Page: <https://cafiresafecouncil.org/grants-and-funding/apply-for-a-grant/>

ZoomGrants: <https://www.zoomgrants.com/>

Grant Application: www.cafiresafecouncil.org/zoomgrantslogin

Use the CFSC 22 SFA Application Support site to find the following resources:

<https://cfsc.maps.arcgis.com/apps/MapSeries/index.html?appid=121941428e344608a1b6045f5dcf66f8>

- CA Land Ownership
- CA Senate & State Districts
- Congressional Districts
- FHSZ
- Communities at Risk
- Priority Populations
- Firewise
- Land Fire Regime

2 CFR 200: <https://www.ecfr.gov/current/title-2/subtitle-A/chapter-II/part-200?toc=1>

SAM website: <https://www.sam.gov/>

Zoom Grants Support Request: <https://zoomgrants.zendesk.com/hc/en-us/requests/new>

Communities At Risk (“CAR”): <https://osfm.fire.ca.gov/divisions/wildfire-planning-engineering/fire-plan/communities-at-risk/>

Firewise Communities Information: <http://www.firewise.org>

Cohesive Strategy: <http://www.forestsandrangelands.gov>

California Forest Action Plan:

<https://www.fire.ca.gov/media/ps4p2vck/californiawildfireandforestresilienceactionplan.pdf>

Fire Adapted Communities Information: <http://www.fireadapted.org>

Fire Hazard Severity Zone Information: <http://www.fire.ca.gov>

California Board of Forestry and Fire Protection Information Page:

<https://bof.fire.ca.gov/projects-and-programs/professional-foresters-registration/>

Registered Professional Forester (RPF) License List:

<https://caltreesplans.resources.ca.gov/Caltrees/customization/common/rpflicenselist.aspx>

RPF and CRM Rosters General Information: <https://bof.fire.ca.gov/projects-and-programs/professional-foresters-registration/rpf-crm-rosters/>

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