

REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

THE NATIONAL PARK FOUNDATION'S 2023 ParkVentures Grant Program

Grant Application Open – August 7 - October 5, 2023

In collaboration with the National Park Service, (NPS) the National Park Foundation (NPF) is excited to announce a Request for Proposals (RFP) for the ParkVentures program. This is the second round of the ParkVentures grants and there are some new program features, so please be sure to review all details.

The National Park Foundation works with national parks and partner organizations to engage all in the wonder of our national parks and to inspire a life-long love of the outdoors, history, culture and recreation. The ParkVentures program is intended to eliminate barriers, promote access, and cultivate connections to the social, mental and physical health benefits for individuals and communities who face challenges in authentically and joyfully embracing a national park experience. Our goal is to support a broad and inclusive narrative that everyone belongs in the outdoors and eliminate barriers have been historically underrepresented on National Park Service managed lands.

From improving accessibility infrastructure, to supporting affinity spaces for individuals with shared identities, to bringing together intergenerational families, ParkVentures is focused on creating equitable access to the power of participating in outdoor experiences.

Eligibility

This RFP is open to:

- All units and programs of the National Park Service
- Nonprofit organizations with a 501(c)(3) public charity designation by the IRS (or be fiscally sponsored by one)
- Native American tribal governments and organizations (federally recognized)
- Native American tribal governments and organizations (other than federally recognized)

*Fiscally sponsored projects will need to provide a copy of the sponsorship agreement prior to any grant award

Please apply to this program via [NPF's online grant system, Fluxx](#). Additional details on the application process may be found in "Section F: Proposal Instructions" and a copy of the online application can be found in Appendix A.

Informational Conference Call: An optional informational call to discuss this RFP and the proposal process is scheduled for **August 29, 2023 at 3:30 pm ET. A link to the video call can be accessed below.** All parties interested in submitting a proposal are welcome to attend the call, but it is not required that you join the call to submit a proposal. We will be posting the recording of the call on the Grant RFP page in the event you are not able to join.

August 29, 3:30-4:30 PM ET Meeting Link – <https://nationalparks-org.zoom.us/j/85810434769>

Meeting ID: 858 1043 4769

Contact Us: Alternatively, you can contact the NPF program staff listed below with any questions about your proposal idea or on how to submit your proposal, especially if you have never applied for an NPF grant. Outreach is welcomed.

Ron Hassel (he/him) – Senior Program Manager - rhassel@nationalparks.org

Rebecca Weinberg (she/her) – Program Coordinator - rweinberg@nationalparks.org

Deadline: Applications are due no later than **Thursday, October 5, 2023 by 11:59 pm EDT**

Award Amount: Applicants may request up to **\$40,000**. Please round your budget request up to the nearest dollar.

Notification: Applicants will be notified of award selections by mid-November 2023

Selection Process: All applications will be reviewed by a selection committee comprised of representatives from the National Park Foundation and the National Park Service.

RFP Contents:

- A. Program Overview**
- B. Program Criteria**
- C. Program Timeline**
- D. Program Evaluation**
- E. Proposal Instructions**
- F. Proposal Scoring Rubric**

Appendix A: Example of Online Application

Appendix B: Logging Into Fluxx Cheat Sheet

Appendix C: Getting Started in Fluxx Cheat Sheet

Appendix D: NPF Fluxx Grantee FAQ's

A. Program Overview

Following a series of conversations with key champions in the outdoor recreation and equity space, including staff of the National Park Service, NPF identified several barriers to communities accessing fun and meaningful recreation experiences in the outdoors and in national parks. The first barrier described is a lack of representation of historically excluded communities among visitors to National Park Service Managed lands, among National Park Service staff and volunteers, and as pictured in marketing materials. A second barrier is a lack of accessibility across four main themes summarized below.

- Lack of accessibility to equipment, transportation, training and/or guides for more immersive recreational experiences.
- Lack of accessibility to information regarding barriers found in facilities and along trails that prevent visitors with mobility challenges from participation. For visitors who may require accommodations, pre-trip planning is an important aspect to ensure a robust in-park experience.
- Lack of physical accessibility to facilities and trails and a deeper understanding of the spectrum of accommodations needed – from paths that support wheelchair access to scenic vistas to benches to support those who require regular stops for rest while hiking
- Lack of inclusion within interpretation. For example, using “we” statements to describe settler experiences in the West when settlers were predominantly from one homogenous background.

The ParkVentures program aims to identify, understand and address these barriers through funding projects where community partners and NPS staff work collaboratively. An additional focus of the program for this year is centered around the development of strong relationships between national park sites and community-based organizations who have long-standing relationships and close ties with communities who have been historically excluded from national parks. NPF is eager to support partnerships in which programming is co-developed in conjunction and collaboration with community members and leaders. Please be sure to highlight the park/partner relationship and how this funding opportunity may continue to support future activities for the specific community.

All applications should include recreational, cultural, and/or healing activities in the outdoors as the primary purpose of their request AND fundamentally address representation and access to our national parks. Parks and partners may propose scaffolded experiences that incorporate activities in a local or state park, but all proposals must include a national park connection within the grant period.

In addition, multi-purpose opportunities are encouraged, such as:

- Youth Employment – activities that offer paid opportunities, exposure to NPS careers, skill building, mentorship and/or leadership development for young people
- Family/Multigeneration – activities that bring together families for shared experiences
- Community Building – activities that foster social connections among individuals with shared identities
- Increased Access – activities that enhance, or add to, the accessibility of national park trails and/or other visitor amenities, including programs and access to information
- Healing – activities that offer individuals with opportunities to experience the mental and physical health benefits of the outdoors
- Cultural Connections – activities that are culturally affirming and relevant to the local community
- Stewardship – activities that encourage protection of natural and cultural resources, deepen connections to the land, and/or elevate Indigenous or local knowledge of these special places.

B. Program Criteria

1. Projects should address representation and access to national parks and the outdoors.
2. Grantees will be required to execute project activities between January 1, 2024 and December 31, 2024. A high-level timeline will be requested as part of the grant application.
3. Grantees will be required to report back on the items in Section E. and provide photos, where possible and appropriate participant permissions are secured.
4. In consultation between NPF program staff and individual grantees, grantees may be asked to include donor recognition language where appropriate.

C. Program Timeline

- August 7, 2023: RFP opens
- August 29, 2023: Information call with NPF program staff
- October 5, 2023: RFP submission closes
- Mid-November: Applicants notified of final decisions.
- January 1, 2024–December, 31, 2024: Program implementation
- October 31, 2024: Annual Reports due or due date to schedule conference call to discuss program impact.

D. Program Evaluation

Successful applicants will be required to complete an annual report by October 31, 2024 and a final report at the conclusion of their grant-funded activities. In the event that a final report is burdensome, grantees should reach out to NPF staff. At a minimum, all grantees will be asked to share the following:

- # of participants
- A description of the activities conducted with grant funding
- Examples of successes (as defined by the grantee)
- Examples of challenges (as defined by the grantee)
- Quotes, photos, and/or videos from participants

E. Proposal Instructions:

1. Read the RFP

Please read this RFP carefully and then use the online application system to submit between **August 7 – October 5, 2023**. Please be as specific as possible when answering application questions to help reviewers fully understand the scope and expected impact of your proposed project.

2. Online Application

Partner organizations should apply to this program by accessing [NPF's online grant system, Fluxx](#), and selecting "**ParkVentures Application**." A copy of the online application can be found in Appendix A for parties who are interested in reviewing the application prior to logging into the system; detailed instructions for navigating Fluxx may be found in Appendices B-D.

Here are some important tips below for completing the application:

All new users are required to create an account, which can be used to apply for future grants and complete final reports for NPF. Fluxx registration is a two-step process, as new accounts must be approved before grantees gain access to the portal. Please submit Fluxx registration requests as soon as possible to ensure ample time to finalize and submit grant proposals.

- a. If you have previously created an account in Fluxx, please sign in using your existing username and password.
- b. To register for an account in Fluxx, please go to <https://nationalparks.fluxx.io/> and click on “Create an Account Now” to fill out the form.
 - **Reminder:** Please register for Fluxx at least **two-days in advance** of RFP deadline to avoid technical delays and ensure timely submission of all grant proposals.
 - Once registration has been approved, grantees will receive an email link to set up an account password. Please check your junk/spam folder for an incoming email from Do-not-reply.grants07-us-east-1@fluxx.io.
- c. **To submit an application**, please log into the grantee portal, navigate to the left-hand menu, and click on “Apply for Funding”. On this webpage, select “ParkVentures Application” to get started.
 - **Reminder: Fluxx does not automatically save.** Click on the “Save” button frequently to ensure that no information is lost. You may save applications to continue working on it later. We recommend you complete your application in Word first to ensure you don’t lose any information.
- d. For assistance using Fluxx, please contact applications@nationalparks.org.
- e. **Start Online Application and Needing to “Save and Finish Later”**
After you have begun your submission, you may choose to save and complete it at a later date. You can exit the submission at any time and access it later by logging back into the Fluxx grants management system.
- f. **Complete and submit your finished application**
Press “Submit” on the last page of the online system. You will receive an automatic email confirming that your application has been submitted. If you do NOT receive an automatic email, your application has NOT been submitted. Please note, the Fluxx system **does not** autosave so please be sure to save any changes that are made before exiting the application.

Proposals are due no later than Thursday October 5, 2023 by 11:59 pm EST

F. Proposal Scoring Rubric

NPF recognizes that NPS sites, official park partners and a wide range of community partners are eligible to apply to this grant opportunity. The criteria listed below are a sample of items that the review panel will use to evaluate applications. Not all items will be applicable to all grantees. Please be thorough in your application in addressing items that are relevant and appropriate to your role in the relationship in serving historically excluded communities.

Activity Focus / Engagement with the Park

- Does the program encourage audiences who have historically been excluded from participation in the outdoors to enjoy history, culture, and recreation at national parks?
- Do activities empower participants to experience the mental/physical benefits of the outdoors?
- Does the program actively work to build and foster new or strengthen current relationships between community-based organizations and national park sites?

Inclusion / Audience

- Does the program address representation and support a broad and inclusive narrative that everyone belongs in the outdoors?
- Does the program foster social connections among individuals with shared identities?
- Does the program enhance accessibility of trails, visitor amenities, or other aspects such as access to information, if applicable?
- Has the program been co-designed with, or incorporated input from a historically underrepresented community?
- Do activities deepen connections to the land, and/or elevate Indigenous or local knowledge of these special places?

Program Components

- Does the program address barriers and challenges to participation, especially for communities historically underrepresented on National Park Service managed lands?
- Do details demonstrate a high likelihood of success? (i.e. staffing, capacity, existing partnerships, other resources (funding, partner support), relationship to communities trying to engage, letters of support, previous grant management experience)
- Does the program incorporate programmatic elements, such as community engagement, internships, cultural connections, ecology or climate change education, mentoring, and/or veteran or military family engagement?
- Does the program actively and equally engage both park and partner organization entities?
- Does the application showcase that the program can operate under the listed conditions? (What is the anticipated participation from NPF/NPS/other entities to ensure programmatic success?)

Budget

- Is the budget aligned with the proposed activities?
- Does the budget appropriately reflect all needs to fully support intended activities?
- Has the applicant thought about transportation, food, all supplies, entrance fees, marketing/communication, etc., if necessary?

Short Answer Questions

No point value is assigned to these questions; they are spaces for reviewers to leave notes.

- Does the program cultivate connections with new partners?
Do references to partner organization appear to be relational or transactional? Are non-traditional park partners included in support of effort to engage a wide variety of audiences?
- Is there an existing or future relationship with NPS?
Does the applicant have an existing relationship with NPS? Or a desire to work with NPS?

WORD VERSION OF PARKVENTURES APPLICATION

Appendix A

Copy of Fluxx Application (FOR REFERENCE ONLY)

Grant Applications Due: Thursday October 5, 2023 by 11:59 pm EST

NPS Details

Please input NPS information if you know which NPS site(s) you will be working with. If you don't already have all of this information, you may leave those sections blank and NPF staff will work with you on it after your application is submitted.

NPS Site Name: _____

Superintendent First Name: _____

Superintendent Last Name: _____

Superintendent Email: _____

NPS Project Lead First Name: _____

NPS Project Lead Last Name: _____

Phone: _____

E-mail: _____

Partner Organization Information

NPS applicants applying without a partner organization, please write N/A in the following fields.

Organization Name: _____

Executive Director Full Name: _____

Executive Director Email: _____

Grantee Project Lead First Name: _____

Grantee Project Lead Last Name: _____

Title: _____

Phone: _____

E-mail: _____

Mailing Address (Street): _____

City: _____ State: _____ ZIP: _____

APPLICATION STATEMENTS: Read and answer each item below.

Section One: Program Information

1. Program Title

Program title should be concise and capture the essence of the initiative.

2. Program Abstract

Please provide a one paragraph overview that concisely explains the program.

3. Recreation Activity/Program Description

Describe how you will use your grant funds. Be sure to include what recreation activity or activities will you engage your community in. Please also mention if you will include other programmatic aspects (i.e. Youth Employment, Healing, Stewardship, Community Engagement, etc.).

4. Participant Description

Describe the community/communities you seek to engage or support in your proposed program. How is your proposal rooted in the community you seek to engage? Does your organization have an existing relationship with the community? If so, please explain. If you do not have an existing relationship, what strategies will you employ to work to build trust with the community?

5. Program Timeline

Do you have an estimated timeline of when activities or key events will occur? You can give a range of months or dates as best you know them at this time.

6. Program Partner(s)

Please describe all partner organizations who will participate in the program, including all national park site locations. Please describe the role of the partners, as well as briefly explaining the extent of the relationship between any partners and the national park site(s).

7. Impact

What does success look like for your program?

8. Other

Section Two: Budget What else do you wish to tell us about your program, if anything?

1. Amount Requested

Please identify the total amount requested from NPF. The maximum amount is **\$40,000**, but you are not required to request the full amount. **Please round your budget request up to the nearest dollar.**

2. Project Budget

Please provide a budget for your proposed grant activities. You can attach an Excel or Word document in the attachments section. A simple template is provided below (Note: this is meant to be an example template and you do not need to fill in all categories or be restricted to these categories). There is no required partner match (either from the requesting partner or other organizations) for this funding.

Expense Line Items	Brief Description of Expense	Amount requested from NPF Grant (\$)	Amount supported through other funds (if any)
Staff			
Supplies and Equipment			
Youth or Elder Stipends			
Food			
Travel (Transportation/Hotel/etc.)			
Evaluation			
Overhead/Indirect Costs			
TOTAL BUDGET			

Section Three: Budget Allocation

Please indicate organization(s) and amount(s) for grant fund payments (including the NPS unit, if applicable). You may indicate whether EFT or check payment is preferred, and please include mailing address for check. For each new vendor third party, NPF needs a W9 for that organization (please upload in attachments section).

Section Four: Letter of Support

All applicants must submit a signed Superintendent letter of support. This should come from the park site you are looking to engage in your recreational activity. This requirement is to ensure success of the program and active participation from the National Park Service. If additional assistance is needed in connecting with park staff to complete this requirement, please contact Ron Hassel or Rebecca Weinberg at the emails listed below.

Ron Hassel (he/him) – Senior Program Manager - rhassel@nationalparks.org

Rebecca Weinberg (she/her) – Program Coordinator- rweinberg@nationalparks.org

APPENDIX B

GRANTEE CHEAT SHEET: LOGGING INTO FLUXX

These instructions will guide you through how to access the National Park Foundation's Fluxx Grantmaker system. Note: You must first register with NPF. If you have not yet registered, click **Create an account now** at <https://nationalparks.fluxx.io/>.

Logging In/ Resetting your Password:

Logging In

1. For optimum functionality, please use Chrome as your browser. To install Chrome, please download here: <https://www.google.com/chrome/>
2. Please go to: <https://nationalparks.fluxx.io/> and enter your user ID and password.
 - Under **Login Now**, type **User ID** (your email address)
 - Type **Password** (this field is case sensitive)
 - Click
3. When accessing the site for the first time, click "**Reset or create password**" link on the left side of the login page, then follow the steps in the next box below.

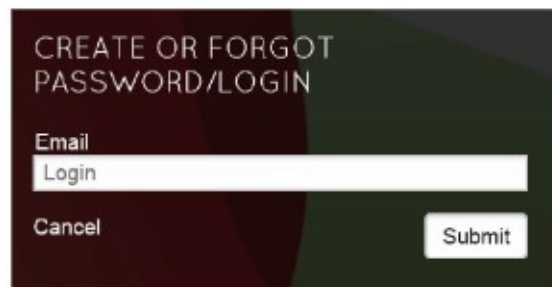
The next time you log in, you will follow the steps outlined in #2 above.



The screenshot shows the National Park Foundation Grants Portal login page. At the top left is the National Park Foundation logo. Below it, the text reads "Welcome to the National Park Foundation Grants Portal". There are two main sections: "Login Now" and "New to the Grants Portal?". The "Login Now" section contains a "User ID" field with "example@gmail.com" entered, a "Password" field with "*****" entered, and a "Sign in" button. Below these fields is a link for "Reset or create password". The "New to the Grants Portal?" section includes a "Create Your Organizational Profile" heading and a "Create an account now" button. At the bottom center, there is a "FLUXX" logo.

Reset or Create Password

1. Type in your **email address**. Your email address is your user ID.
 2. Click
 3. You will receive an email from the the Foundation with a link to reset your password. If you do not receive it after a few minutes, please check your junk/ spam folder.
- For security reasons, NPF requires strong passwords. Requirements will be included in the email you receive.



The screenshot shows a dark-themed form titled "CREATE OR FORGOT PASSWORD/LOGIN". It features an "Email" label above a "Login" input field. Below the input field are two buttons: "Cancel" on the left and "Submit" on the right.

APPENDIX C

GRANTEE CHEAT SHEET: GETTING AROUND (GENERAL NAVIGATION)

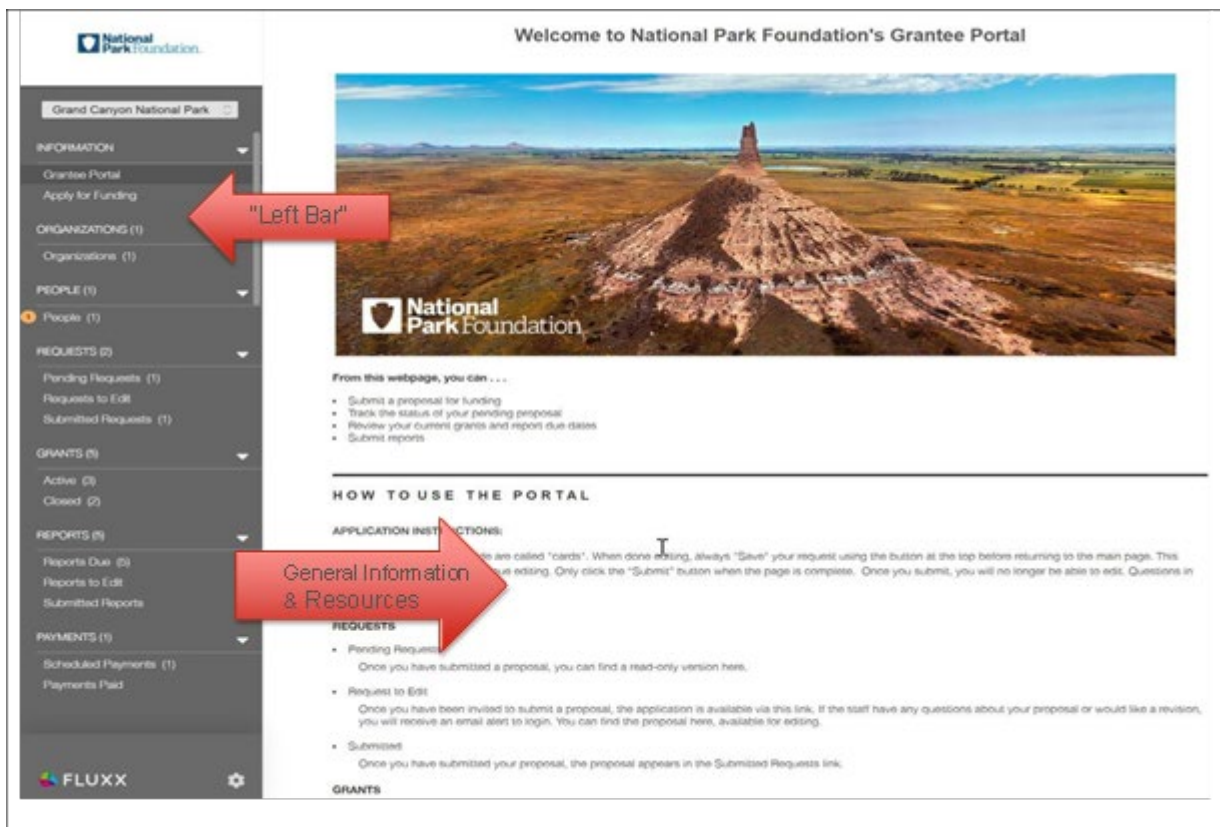
These instructions will guide you through how to navigate the main components of Fluxx (NPF's Grant Application System).

YOUR GRANTEE PORTAL

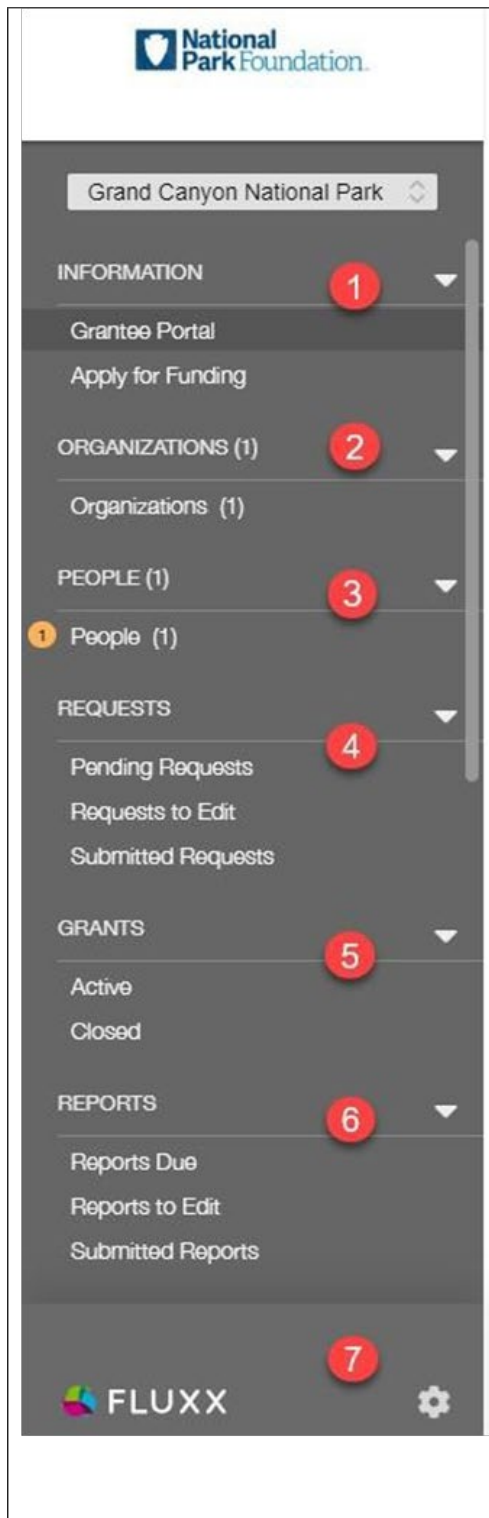
This "cheat sheet" covers basic terminology and navigation once you have logged into the system. Once you log in, you will arrive at the Grantee Portal. The grantee portal is where you will submit applications, upload supporting documents and check the status of applications and grant.

LANDING PAGE

When you first log into the National Park Foundation's grantee portal you will be presented with the landing page (see below) with two main sections, the "left bar" and the general information section. The general information also contains download links for additional resources you can use.



WORKING WITH FOLDERS IN THE LEFT BAR



Use the left bar to access information regarding your grant applications.

1. Information – Click on the Grantee Portal link any time to get back to this main page.

Click on Apply for Funding to access NPF's grant applications. There are two main applications: General and Accept and Administer. If you are withdrawing funds from an Accept & Administer account, please use the Accept & Administer application. For all other applicants, you should have received an email from your NPF program contact with instructions for which application to submit. If you did not receive this email, please contact <mailto:applications@nationalparks.org>.

2. Organizations – The Organizations folder contains information about your organization profile. Go here to view and update/request updates to your organizational information.

3. People – This section lists information about all contacts you've linked to your organization. Go here to update contact information.

4. Requests – All grant application requests can be found here, whether still in draft or in review:

- Pending Requests - these are your draft applications being developed. They will remain here until you formally submit them to the NPF. These applications have not yet been submitted to NPF.
- Requests to Edit – During review, if NPF staff have questions or require additional information, they will send the application back to you for edits and you will find them here. You will also receive an email notification if your application has been sent back to you for edits.
- Submitted Requests - All requests that are being considered for funding are located here.

5. Grants – Active and closed grant applications are listed here.

6. Reports – This section provides information on upcoming reports due, previous reports submitted and reports for which NPF has requested additional information.

7. This last section, "the gear" allows you to change your password and to logout.

APPENDIX D

National Park Foundation Grant Application FAQ

Welcome to the National Park Foundation's Online Grants Application System, built on Fluxx

1. How does an organization create a Fluxx account?

We have sent credentials for all current grantees, and for applicants who have pending requests submitted to NPF. An account will be established for the primary contact affiliated with the current grant or pending request. All organizations, including current grantees wishing to submit a new grant request must go through a registration process to access the system (below).

For new applicants wishing to apply for funding with NPF – To begin the registration process or to add additional organization contacts, access the login page (<https://nationalparks.fluxx.io/>), click on "Create an Account Now" on the lower right side of the page.

When you have completed the registration form, click "Submit". If approved, applicants will receive an email with login instructions to complete the process. We will complete the review process within 5-7 business days, so please consider this as you prepare to apply.

Existing applicants should have received an email with login instructions. If you did not receive this, please contact applications@nationalparks.org.

2. Can we have one account shared across our organization, or does each user need their own account?

For security and audit reasons, the NPF requests that all users of the system have individual accounts. We have simplified the process for adding new users and for resetting passwords through our portal.

3. How does an organization access their registered Fluxx account?

If you have completed the registration process, you can access the system by logging into <https://nationalparks.fluxx.io/> with the email address of the existing user and click "Reset or create password" to establish individual credentials in the grants management system. A link will be sent to the email address to establish a new password. If the email address is not linked to a previously you must use the "Create an Account Now" to register your account.

4. What is my account User-ID?

When you first register you will receive an email notification with your User ID. This is set to the email in which you provided when you registered.

5. What are the requirements for passwords?

To ensure strong security practices, NPF requires the following when setting up your password:

- a. Must be at least 8 characters or greater
- b. It cannot be the same as your user ID (your email address)