



Overview

About the Virginia 250 Preservation Fund

The Virginia Department of Historic Resources received \$20,000,000 in the [2024-2026 Virginia Biennial Budget](#) to initiate a grant program to support improvements at significant historic sites and history museums in Virginia in anticipation of the 250th anniversary of the American Revolution and the 1776 United States Declaration of Independence (also known as the nation’s semiquincentennial).

The [Virginia Department of Historic Resources](#) (DHR) has developed the following guidelines and criteria to facilitate the disbursement of this funding appropriated by the General Assembly. **The grant program is still in development, and these guidelines are subject to change.**

About the Virginia Department of Historic Resources

DHR is the State Historic Preservation Office of the Commonwealth. DHR fosters, encourages, and supports the stewardship and use of Virginia’s significant architectural, archaeological, and historic resources as valuable assets for the economic, educational, social, and cultural benefit of citizens and communities. A significant responsibility is the administration and review of state and federal historic preservation grant programs for financial and programmatic compliance.

Timeline

July 16, 2024	Preapplication Opens
August 30, 2024	Preapplication closes
September 9, 2024	Full application released (for applicants with an eligible preapplication)
October 14, 2024	Full application deadline
Late 2024	Grant Awards Announced

All dates subject to change

Eligibility Requirements

Eligible Applicants

Virginia 250 Preservation Fund grants may be awarded to state or federally recognized Indian tribes, non-profit organizations registered as tax exempt under the Internal Revenue Code (must provide proof of valid, current tax-exempt status under § 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code), and Virginia localities ([§ 1-221](#)). All applicants must be the owner of the project property or be able to submit a signed letter of support from the property owner and a copy of the recorded deed.

Federal governmental entities, Virginia state agencies, for-profit entities, and individuals are not eligible applicants.

Eligible Projects

Grant funds are restricted to the following project types, all of which fall under the umbrella of capital improvements that **support increased visitation** due to the semiquincentennial:

- Rehabilitation and/or stabilization of a historic resource undertaken in accordance with the [Secretary of the Interior's Standards](#)
- ADA accessibility improvements
- Infrastructure improvements to a historic site
- Site work (landscaping, parking improvements, lighting, wayfinding, interpretive signage)
- Reconstruction of a historic building following the [Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Reconstruction](#)
- Fabrication and installation of museum exhibits.

Eligibility is not limited to properties related to the American Revolution. Any historic site or museum that meets all the requirements is eligible to apply.

Priority will be given to project properties listed in the Virginia Landmarks Register (VLR), the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP), designated as a National Historic Landmark (NHL), or determined eligible for such listing by DHR. If the applicant is unsure of the eligibility status of a potential project property, please contact grants@dhr.virginia.gov. If the resource has not yet been evaluated for eligibility but the applicant is interested in completing the [Preliminary Information Form](#) (PIF) to have the eligibility status determined, please contact the [Regional Office](#) that serves the area where the property is located. For the purpose of this fund, eligibility will be determined by DHR's architectural and/or archaeological evaluation teams; PIFs do not have to be reviewed by the State Review Board for these applications.

History museums in non-historic buildings are also eligible for funding, but priority will be given to those properties eligible for the VLR and/or NRHP.

Priority will be given to large improvement projects that make significant impact at the site and have a measurable increase in visitation.

All material work must be completed in accordance with the applicable version of the [Secretary of the Interior's \(SOI\) Standards](#).

Ineligible Projects

Ineligible use of funds includes but is not limited to:

- Moving historic properties or work on moved historic properties that are no longer eligible for listing in the VLR and/or NRHP.
- Acquisition of collections, conservation of collections, or long-term maintenance or curatorial work.
- Projects involving establishment or enhancement of cash reserves, endowments, revolving funds, fund-raising costs, lobbying or advocacy activities.
- Projects already completed or fully funded through other state or federal programs.
- Increase of staff capacity.
- Environmental review and compliance.
- Architectural survey projects including those to list individual historic resources or districts on the Virginia Landmarks Register.

Funding requests for ineligible projects may be denied at DHR's sole discretion.

Grant Conditions and Requirements

Match

A minimum one-third match (one-third match against the requested grant amount—if \$750k is requested, grantee must match at \$250k) is a requirement of this grant program. Projects with a cash match will be prioritized, but in-kind match will also be accepted. In-kind match is not to include current staff time, costs associated with managing the grant or already completed work.

Other grants from the Commonwealth of Virginia may not be used as match, but federal and private grants are eligible. The Virginia 250 Preservation Fund can be used as match for other private, state, or federal grant programs pending any restrictions stemming from those programs.

Public Benefit

A condition of receiving grant funding from the State of Virginia is for the grantee to provide a measurable public benefit. A determination regarding the degree to which a project satisfies the public benefit requirement will be at the discretion of the Director of the Department of Historic Resources in coordination with the grantee.

Examples of potential public benefits as a result of this grant program:

- Perpetual Historic Preservation Easement
- Preservation Covenant (short term easement)
- Additional days open to the public and/or free admission days
- Enhanced visitor experience, such as increased accessibility and site interpretation

Eligible Costs

Eligible costs include but are not limited to:

- Architectural and/or engineering plans, reports, renderings, specifications, and/or drawings
- Construction costs including labor and materials
- Project and/or finance management
- Costs associated with acquisition of a preservation easement, such as title searches, title insurance policy, boundary survey, closing costs, appraisals and environmental reports

Application Information and Review

Application Information

The grant application will consist of a required two-step process:

1. **Preapplication:** The required short preapplication requests basic information about the applicant, project location, and project type. The applicant will be asked to briefly describe the objective of the project, as well as their organization's ability to successfully manage and complete the proposed project. Completion of the preapplication allows DHR staff to better guide the applicant and save them time before completing the full application. The preapplication is a **digital form**.
2. **Virginia 250 Preservation Fund Full Application:** The full application will be open to applicants notified that they have an eligible preapplication. The application requests required additional documents, including a full project description and narrative, property documentation, project budget, and project timeline. This application will be completed on DHR's WebGrants page (website currently under construction).

Application deadlines are outlined under the "[Timeline](#)" subheading of the manual.

Application Evaluation Criteria

A project scoring sheet as well as a project review criteria document will be used to evaluate each proposal (scoring sheet and review criteria document still in development, will be posted and linked here upon release of full grant application).

After determining that a project meets minimum eligibility requirements (see [Eligibility Requirements](#)), priority will be given to:

- Improvements to historic properties
- Projects that have a strong argument and metrics to support how the project will assist with increased visitation due to the semiquincentennial
- Projects that will have a measurable impact on their local and regional communities
- Projects that support buildings that are open to the public on a regular basis without an appointment
- Projects that can support an overmatch (match greater than one-third)
- Projects that are shovel ready

Grant Award Process

Funds Disbursement

Any organization, state and/or federally recognized American Indian Tribe, or locality that receives grant award funding must be registered as a payable entity with the Commonwealth of Virginia. Applicants that already possess and active [eVA vendor ID](#) will need only to ensure their record is current. Eligible applicants that are not already registered as payable entities with the Commonwealth of Virginia must fill out and return a Commonwealth of Virginia W-9 form (to be included in the application package) in order to be payable by the Commonwealth of Virginia.

Awardees will have the option to set up an Electronic Data Interchange (EDI) to receive funds electronically. Information on the process for applying for EDI payment processing will be sent to funded awardees.

Grantees will receive funds disbursement on a rolling basis. To ensure that all project work follows the [SOI Standards](#), DHR will need to review project work before it is completed, and funds can be released. This can be done by having the selected contractor supply an itemized project quote of work to be completed at the 25%, 50%, 75%, and 100% completion points. Other processes can also be implemented that may work better for an individual project with DHR approval. Once the work is approved, the funds will be released to the awardee and the approved project work can begin.

Media and Publicity

Following the announcement of awardees, the grant recipient may release information to the media informing the community of the grant award and acknowledging that it has received funding from DHR. All press releases and other printed materials and publications, audiovisuals, and signs pertaining to the project should reference the Virginia250 Grant Fund, DHR and include the VA250/DHR logo. DHR staff can assist with drafting and distributing press releases by request.

All material submitted as supporting documentation of a project’s progress, such as photographs, may be used by DHR to promote the grant program. Any publications will cite the source of the reprinted material. These records will also be deemed public records and subject to [Virginia’s Freedom of Information Act](#).

Fund Recapture

Grant funds can be recaptured or reduced at the discretion of DHR for reasons including, but not limited to:

- Failure to comply with the terms of the grant agreement
- Inadequate financial management or oversight
- Unauthorized changes in the scope of work
- Undertaking work without prior approval of DHR
- Significant delays in the grant project
- Non-compliance with the [SOI Standards](#)

Quarterly Reporting Requirements

All grantees are required to submit quarterly reporting to update DHR on a project’s progress. DHR will provide the reporting template. Reports shall be provided no later than the 15th of the following month at the end of the calendar quarter period, as shown in the reporting schedule below. Quarterly reports must be submitted throughout the entire length of time which a project is covered by grant funding.

Reporting schedule:

Months Covered in Quarter Period	Quarterly Report Due
January, February, and March	April 15th
April, May, and June	July 15th
July, August, and September	October 15th
October, November, and December	January 15th

Grant Completion

All grant-funded work must be completed by June 2026 to have buildings open and ready for increased visitation due to the semiquincentennial. Six to 12-month extensions may be considered, provided there is adequate justification for the delay and the applicant has given reasonable assurances that the project will be completed as approved.

At the close of the project, DHR will require a final report outlining what was accomplished with the grant funding and plans for future maintenance. DHR will provide the final report template.

Contact Information

Please send any questions to:

Caitlin Sylvester, Grant Coordinator
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Richmond, Virginia 23221
804-482-6461
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