



# Preservation Trust Fund (PTF)

## Overview

Established by the Virginia General Assembly in 1997 and administered by the Virginia Outdoors Foundation (VOF), the Open-Space Lands Preservation Trust Fund (PTF) provides grants for acquisitions, easements, rights of way, and other methods of protecting open space for farming, forestry, recreation, wildlife, water quality, and more. A right, privilege, or interest in real estate must be conveyed to either VOF or a locality, pursuant to Virginia's Open-Space Lands Act, to be eligible for PTF funding.

## Current Opportunity

VOF is seeking proposals for projects that provide new or expanded public access to open space, such as parks, preserves, trails, greenways, outdoor classrooms, beaches, and boat launches, as well as projects that protect exceptional natural and cultural resources for the benefit of the Commonwealth. Proposals may be submitted for both public and private lands.

The application deadline is 5:00 p.m. on August 22, 2022. Projects must meet protection standards under the Virginia Open-Space Lands Act. Options include fee-simple conveyance, open-space easement, right of way, lease, or other real estate interest conveyed to either VOF or a locality. Grant awards will be announced at the October 11, 2022 meeting of the Virginia Outdoors Foundation's board of trustees.

## Applicant Eligibility

PTF grants may be awarded to any person, organization, or locality with a real estate interest to convey on either public or private land. The real estate interest must be conveyed to VOF or a locality. The land protection partner must be specified with documented support of the project submitted with the application.

## Funds Available

There is approximately \$1.8 million available for the first Fiscal Year 2023 grant round. Historically, grant awards on average have not exceeded \$150,000 per project. However, there is no absolute cap and projects with substantiated needs have been funded at higher amounts. Partial funding is a possibility.

## Project Prioritization

While VOF is offering grant awards for both public access and exceptional natural and cultural resource protection projects, VOF is prioritizing those projects where the interest in real estate includes a provision to provide access to the property by the public, with reasonable management policies for the safety of both visitors and the resource. The access must comply with local and state laws governing the public's rights to access certain types of properties, such as cemeteries, waterways, public roads, etc. It must also ensure equitable access to all people.

Funding for resource protection easements will be prioritized for those projects that show exceptional characteristics in the following categories: historic and cultural, water quality, scenic and open space, habitat, agriculture and forestry, and policy alignment. Deed restrictions will protect the highest conservation values of a property.

## Eligible Costs

PTF grants may pay for any costs that are associated with the conveyance of an interest, right, or privilege in open space to VOF or a locality, including fee-simple acquisition, development rights, public access rights of way, leases, legal costs, and survey costs. Components critical for public use of the land may also be included in the grant request such as infrastructure and the associated necessary engineering, design, and planning.

## Application Process

Applications are being accepted through an online process exclusively, which can be accessed at <https://www.vof.org/protect/grants/ptf/>. The deadline to apply for the current grant round is 5:00 pm on August 22, 2022.

Please contact grant program staff at [grants@vof.org](mailto:grants@vof.org) with any questions about the application process or project eligibility.