



**REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS  
SMART GRANTS  
NOTICE OF AVAILABLE FUNDS  
February 6, 2020**

The Department of Energy and Environmental Protection (DEEP) is pleased to announce the availability of funding for municipalities and regions through the Save Money and Reduce Trash (SMART) Grants program (maximum award is \$70,000).

Funding is currently available for FY2020 and additional funds may become available for FY2021 and beyond. Applicants are encouraged to apply for projects on an ongoing basis and awards will be made as projects merit and funding is available. This RFP is posted to DEEP's [Municipal and Regional Grants and Technical Assistance webpage](#) or by visiting that link from [www.ct.gov/deep/MuniRecyclingResources](http://www.ct.gov/deep/MuniRecyclingResources).

**PROPOSAL DEADLINE:**

The SMART Grants program is ongoing and applications will be reviewed and awarded on a first-come first-serve basis for as long as funds are available.

- Mail **one (1) original and two (2) copies** (faxed and e-mailed applications will not be accepted) to:  
Maritza Pagan, Agency Contact  
Department of Energy and Environmental Protection  
Bureau of Materials Management and Compliance Assurance  
Waste Engineering and Enforcement Division  
79 Elm Street, Hartford, CT 06106-5127
- All applicants will be notified regarding a decision on their application following DEEP's review.
- Grants awarded by DEEP are administered through a grant contract and work may not proceed until such time as the contract is fully executed. Grantees will request reimbursement from DEEP for eligible expenses in accordance with the contract.
- This application and all attachments may be found on DEEP's [Municipal Recycling Resource Center](#) webpage (or [www.ct.gov/deep/MuniRecyclingResources](http://www.ct.gov/deep/MuniRecyclingResources)).
- For further information, contact: Maritza Pagan at (860) 424-3095 or [Maritza.Pagan@ct.gov](mailto:Maritza.Pagan@ct.gov)

**OVERVIEW**

The SMART Grants program supports Connecticut's Comprehensive Materials Management Strategy to increase diversion from disposal by 60% through targeted resources and incentives. These grants are designed for Connecticut municipalities and regional entities seriously considering the implementation of a Save Money and Reduce Trash (SMART) program or the expansion of an existing SMART program to involve additional households and/or businesses. SMART is a method of charging for trash disposal based on the amount disposed in the same way that residents are charged for electricity, gas and other utilities. This provides incentives for residents to not only increase the amount they recycle, but also to think about ways to generate less waste in the first place. SMART programs are flexible and can be implemented curbside or at transfer stations or drop-off centers and works with municipally funded trash pick-up programs as well as private subscription programs.

To apply, municipalities and regional entities must complete the SMART Grants Application (Attachment 1). Grant funds will be awarded to municipalities or regional entities with the strongest program design and timeframe for implementation.

**MINIMUM ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS**

To be eligible for funding, applicant must:

- Be a Connecticut municipality or Connecticut regional entity (e.g. council of governments, quasi-government agencies, regional planning agencies, resource recovery authorities, recycling operating committees, etc.).
- Be in compliance with relevant DEEP solid waste and recycling reporting requirements (Annual Municipal Recycling Report, Municipal Transfer Station Quarterly Reports, etc.)

Compliance status with other environmental regulations or statutes may impact eligibility.

**GRANT APPLICATION PROCESS**

Submission of complete and accurate information will enhance the possibility of the application being selected for funding. Applicants must:

- Meet Minimum Eligibility Requirements (see previous section) and Review Criteria (below);
- Submit a complete application (Attachment 1);
- Agree to report on the progress of the SMART Grant including a description of challenges and resolutions on a quarterly basis.

Grants are awarded only to municipalities or regions based on meeting the above criteria and subject to the Commissioner’s discretion. Approved projects will receive awards in the form of a contract, and work may not proceed until such time as the contract is fully executed. The recipient will have two years to use allocated funding and all reports and documentation of expenses must be submitted to DEEP not later than 90 days following the expiration date of the grant contract.

For those applicants who have previously received funding through the Department of Energy and Environmental Protection, past performance will be a factor considered in the approval process.

***Timeline***

Event Date	Event
February 6, 2020	RFP released
February 2020 – ongoing	Ongoing review of applications for SMART Grants

***Review Criteria***

Applications will be ranked and ultimately selected based upon a set of review criteria listed below.

1. Satisfaction of the Minimum Eligibility Requirements listed above;
2. Environmental compliance status of applicant (including [Electronics Recycling Law](#))
3. Sustainability of project, including ability to demonstrate funding and resource availability over the long term.
4. Ability to demonstrate program is likely to be successful in reducing waste and/or increasing recycling based on other successful applications and research
5. The applicant’s realistic and well thought out methodology and implementation plan, including but not limited to the:

- Strength of implementation plan;
  - Strength of education and promotion plan;
  - Percent of households, or residents served and/or number of businesses/institutions served;
  - Estimated diversion of materials;
  - Progress to date and demonstrated support from key stakeholders
6. As applicable, the extent to which the project would be matched by other sources of revenue or municipal services;
  7. Timeline for implementation of project - applicants are encouraged to implement program within one year of contract execution;

Submission of complete and accurate information will enhance the possibility of the application being selected for funding.

## **MULTIPLE SUBMISSIONS**

A Proposer may submit a maximum of one (1) proposal annually in response to this RFP.

## **INQUIRY PROCEDURES**

Applicants may reach out to Jennifer Weymouth at [Jennifer.Weymouth@ct.gov](mailto:Jennifer.Weymouth@ct.gov) with questions about the RFP.

## **CONFIDENTIAL INFORMATION**

Proposers are advised not to include in their proposals any proprietary information. The Connecticut Freedom of Information Act generally requires the disclosure of documents in the possession of the State upon request of any citizen, unless the content of the document falls within certain categories of exemption. An example of an exemption is a “trade secret,” as defined by statute (C.G.S. § 1-19(b)(5)). If the information is not readily available to the public from other sources and the Proposer submitting the information requests confidentiality, then the information generally is considered to be “given in confidence.” Confidential information must be isolated from other material in the proposal and labeled CONFIDENTIAL.

## **STYLE REQUIREMENTS**

Proposals must conform to the following requirements: (1) be word processed or typewritten, (2) be not more than 8 pages in length, (3) be printed double sided, and (4) preferably be printed on paper having a minimum of 30% post-consumer recycled content.

## **GRANT AWARD AMOUNT**

Applications will be accepted and reviewed on an ongoing basis. Grants will be calculated based on number of households participating in the SMART program. Requests for larger grants will be considered only for exceptional and well-justified applications. Awards may be adjusted to take into account previous SMART related grants.

Municipal awards will be based on the following:

- Base funding point is \$20,000;
- Add an additional \$2.00 to \$3.00 per household participating in the SMART program; and
- Maximum award of \$70,000.

Regional awards will be calculated using the above formula for each municipality participating in the SMART program. In addition, regional awards may also be eligible for up to a 10% bonus incentive.

## REQUIREMENTS FOR MUNICIPAL SMART PROGRAM

If grant funds are awarded, municipalities and regions will be required to acknowledge and agree to the terms and conditions below. These specifications will be included in the contract with DEEP.

- Operate the SMART program as an established and enduring program.
- Implement the SMART program preferably within a one year from date of contract.
- Pricing must be nearly proportional to incentivize residents to choose a smaller bag or container size and reduce waste. There must be a strong pricing differential between container and bag sizes (i.e., larger size must be close to double the smaller size).
- For programs utilizing bags at the curb or transfer station, set a fee structure that incentivizes waste reduction in a manner similar to cart example above.
- If a municipality makes provision for a degree of free disposal, the program may provide no more than one free 35 gallon bag or container per household per week.
- Provide a detailed implementation plan and timeline for the SMART program and written verification that the program has been approved and budgeted for by the appropriate decision-making body (e.g., Board of Selectmen, Town Meeting, and City Council).
- Comply with [C.G.S Sec. 22a-241j](#) requirement that municipalities offering curbside collection of trash must provide curbside collection of recyclables. Size of recycling collection containers must be equal to or greater than trash containers and large enough to contain the volume of recyclables that are generated at each household.
- Comply with [C.G.S Sec. 22a-241j](#) requirement that collectors include recycling collection charges integrated in the charge for solid waste collection (i.e., one bundled price for trash and recycling collection). This applies to private collectors operating within the municipality.

## USE OF GRANT FUNDS

SMART program implementation funds may be used to cover the costs of bags and tags for solid waste, educational materials, customer helpline, cameras to ensure SMART bags are being used, program staff, containers for solid waste (48 gallons or less), recycling containers, and other SMART start-up expenses pre-approved by DEEP.

Up to 20% of awarded funds may be used towards SMART activities deemed necessary prior to implementation of the program, such as free bags for residents, education, outreach, or consulting services, as approved by DEEP. These expenses may be reimbursed prior to implementation of the program.

Any funds not used for implementation of a SMART program may be used towards items listed below as long as SMART has been operating for at least 6 months. Alternative options may be pre-approved by the Commissioner prior to contracting.

- Education, outreach and enforcement activities or staff. May also include IT related expenses for development of website or other tools for sustainable materials management.
- Update ordinances to reflect recent statewide changes in recycling requirements and clarify responsibility of landlords to provide for recycling.
- Waste prevention and reuse projects including but not limited to:
  - Food waste prevention/reuse/recovery projects
  - School waste reduction or recycling assistance (must be district wide, approved by superintendent) (e.g., purchase reusable trays, dishes, utensils and dishwasher, composting program, water bottle filling stations, etc.)
  - Set-up and support of a “repair café”
  - Local reuse, swap shack and materials exchange programs

- Containers and equipment including but not limited to:
  - Residential and curbside collection carts –
    - Trash (approximately 32 or 48 gallon only)
    - Recycling (approx. 64 or 96 gallon only, and if trash is smaller than 64 gallon)
  - Organics containers (curbside, backyard, or kitchen)
  - Public space, outdoor, and/or workspace containers
  - Recycling equipment such as containers for source separated food waste; roll-offs for C&D wood, carpet, clean gypsum, bulky rigid plastics; compactor for cardboard, mixed recycling
- Planning and policy development activities including but not limited to:
  - Waste audit or characterization study to assess potential for increased diversion
  - Update of municipal solid waste and recycling management plan to include zero waste and sustainable materials management
  - Development of model municipal or regional policies, contracts, or permit requirements