

**Office of Sustainability
4R's (Reduce, Reuse, Recycle, Rot – Compost) Grants Program
Program Guidelines**

The Office of Sustainability 4R's (Reduce, Reuse, Recycle, Rot – Compost) Grants Program offers two tiers of grants: 4R's Grants (up to \$25,000) and 4R's Mini-Grants (\$1,000 to \$5,000).

4R's Grants (up to \$25,000)

Purpose:

To help eligible organizations initiate or expand programs that promote reuse, waste reduction, recycling, and composting or education about these environmental issues in San Mateo County.

Who May Apply:

Eligible organizations include nonprofits, schools, or government agencies located in San Mateo County.

General Requirements:

To be considered for a 4R's Grant a project must:

- Serve and provide benefit to the community of San Mateo County (countywide)
- Provide an innovative service in the county and/or fill a need that is not currently being met
- Have outcomes that align with the purpose of the grant program
- Comply with all federal, state, and local land use, regulatory and permit requirements and must be located within San Mateo County

Examples of Proposals that 4R's Grants can fund:

- Food waste reduction and reuse programs
- Countywide recycling and composting education programs
- Repair cafes and fix-it clinics
- Creative reuse programs

Eligible Expenses for Funding by a 4R's Grant include:

- Equipment and materials
- Start up costs
- Leasing costs, build out, etc.
- Promotional materials

A 4R's Grant cannot be used for:

- Legal fees
- Repayment of debts
- Loan or bank fees
- Development, architectural, or engineering fees

Additional information may be requested of applicants before a grant determination is made.

All grantees will be required to sign a grant agreement with San Mateo County that includes reporting requirements to the County.

Recommendations for the award of a 4R's Grant will be made by a team comprised of Office of Sustainability staff and will be authorized by the Director of Office of Sustainability. Grants or partial grants may be awarded up to the maximum of \$25,000 per program.

4R's Mini-Grants (up to \$5,000)

Purpose:

To support and fund small projects that will educate, increase awareness, reduce waste, increase recycling, increase or implement composting, increase reuse, and build better structures using salvaged or recycled materials for educational purposes. 4R's Mini-Grants are designed to serve a variety of potential applicants who need access to small amounts of funding for a limited time and for a specific purpose that supports County objectives and priorities.

Objectives:

The following objectives are intended as guidance to the applicant in determining how well the intended proposal fits into the 4R's Grants Program. The objectives are not listed in any particular order. For a project to be considered the majority of the following objectives needs to be met. The more objectives the project meets the higher the consideration for the proposal.

1. Grant projects serve or benefit a community in San Mateo County such as a neighborhood, city, or school.
2. Materials or equipment funded by the grant can be used repeatedly.
3. Grant projects provide initial funding for long-term projects.
4. Grant projects serve the disadvantaged populations in the County.
5. Grant projects support training or education on the practices of the 4R's.
6. Proposals from schools, teachers, districts, childcare centers, school or after-school clubs and nonprofits that serve children / youth are given special consideration.
7. Innovative grant projects can be duplicated by others in the County.

Who May Apply:

An application may come from a nonprofit organization, school, government agency, club, or individual located in San Mateo County or serving San Mateo County.

Past proposals that were awarded include the Resource Area for Teachers (RAFT) and on-site small scale composting systems.

General Requirements for 4R's Mini-Grants

- Serve a community within San Mateo County. Applications that serve a greater area will only be considered for the portion that serves San Mateo County
- Have outcomes that align with the priorities of the County
- Individuals may apply; however, applications must identify an organizational destination where materials, equipment and other durable items will be stored and made available to others. For instance, a teacher may apply for books for her classroom but these books should become property of the school or school library as designated by the applicant

Examples of Proposals that a 4R's Mini-Grant can fund:

All projects must include an aspect of the 4R's (Reduce, Reuse, Recycle, Rot – compost).

- Field trip costs for environmental outings to waste or recycling facilities, natural areas (parks and beaches), museums or interpretive centers, nonprofit workshops or classes. Trip destination must be within or near San Mateo County
- Classroom workshops or activities by nonprofits
- Fix-it clinics or other reuse/repair projects
- School garden start-up funding
- Books, materials and equipment which will be utilized by teachers and students over the years
- Events related to environmental education
- Recycling and composting bins, signs, and outreach materials
- Training opportunities
- Service learning projects
- Materials and costs associated with improving or implementing a campus-wide recycling, reuse or waste reduction program
- Outreach items that promote all the 4R's (Reduce, Reuse, Recycle, Rot-compost) or one aspect of the 4R's

A 4R's Mini-Grant cannot be used for projects that have already been initiated or which have been completed.

Recipients of 4R's Mini-Grant will be required to sign a grant agreement with San Mateo County, which includes provisions for providing the County with information regarding the use of the funds and the outcome of the project as delineated in the grant acceptance letter. Reporting requirements will be simple and straightforward and will allow Sustainability staff to report on the activities funded in the grants program. Photos and photo releases via email may be requested in order to feature the grant project on the County of San Mateo's websites.

4R's Mini-Grant awards will be determined by a team of Sustainability staff and authorized by the Director of Office of Sustainability.

4R's Grants and Mini-Grants Details

Applicants will be notified of acceptance approximately four weeks after the application deadline date. The grant cycle may be repeated within a four-month period until grant funding is depleted.

Evaluation Criteria

All submitted proposals that are in compliance with the grant application requirements and application instructions will be evaluated and rated according to the following criteria:

Project Concept – Proposal is clear and comprehensible with a realistic timeline; project activities are well defined and technically feasible.

Outcomes – Goals and objectives are clearly stated, specific, realistic, and measurable.

Organizational Capacity – Management, staff, or students are qualified to implement project and achieve stated objectives.

Financial Viability – Organization demonstrates sound fiscal management; project budget is realistic and cost effective.

Priorities – How well the proposal fits within the priorities and purposes of the two grant options.

Application Instructions for 4R's Grants and Mini-Grants:

1. Application must be signed by an adult.
2. Application form must be fully filled out.
3. Application must be emailed to the Office of Sustainability.
4. Provide a brief overview of the project for which you are requesting funds.
5. Describe the project design and relevant information, including a timeline for project and detailed budget.
6. Describe who in San Mateo County will benefit from or be served by this project and in what way.
7. Identify goals and objectives.
8. Indicate how you will measure and evaluate the effectiveness of the project.
9. List responsible staff or students and their qualifications, as appropriate.

All materials submitted become the property of the County and will not be returned. Funds awarded are public funds and any information submitted or generated is subject to public disclosure requirements.

The County reserves the right, at its sole discretion, to waive minor irregularities in submittal requirements, to request modifications of the proposal, to accept or reject any or all proposals received, to grant full or partial funding of any request, and/or to cancel all or part of this grant solicitation at any time prior to awards. There is no appeal process.

For inquiries or clarification of the Office of Sustainability 4R's Grant Program, please email gschwartz@smcgov.org.