

# Applicant's To-Do List

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## Outdoor Learning Grants (OLG)

This to-do list is designed to help applicants prepare and submit grant applications for the [Outdoor Learning Grants](#) grant program.

The Recreation and Conservation Office (RCO) administers OLG on behalf of the Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction. To score well in this highly competitive grant program, the proposed project must provide quality outdoor educational experiences for Washington public school students (pre-kindergarten through twelfth grade) who traditionally are underserved in science and outdoor learning opportunities.

RCO's application process is through PRISM Online. PRISM will guide applicants step-by-step through the grant proposal process. New applicants must request both a [SecureAccess Washington](#) account and a [PRISM account](#).

### Application Schedule

Agreements for this grant will be awarded in early fall 2025. Costs cannot be incurred before the agreement is in place.

PRISM Opens for Applications.....	April 9, 2025
Pre-Application Deadline (applications must be started by this date).....	May 20, 2025
Applications Due .....	June 3, 2025
RCO Review.....	June 4-17, 2025
Evaluation Period.....	June 18 to July 19, 2025
Tier Three Question and Answer Meetings with Evaluators via Zoom.....	July 17-18, 2025
Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction Approves Projects .....	September 2025 (estimate)
RCO Issues Grant Agreements.....	September 2025 (estimate)
Project Completion Date .....	June 30, 2027

## Step 1: Prepares for April 9 Opening of Grant Round

- Review RCO manuals for this grant project:
  - [Manual 26: Outdoor Learning Grants](#)
  - [Manual 8: Project Reimbursements](#) *\*This is a reimbursement-based grant.*
- If new to RCO grants, set up a PRISM account by following all of [Step 2, here](#). Everyone working on an application should have a separate account.
- Visit the [OLG web page](#) and return periodically for announcements.
- An applicant conducting any restoration or stewardship activities must contact a grants manager to discuss eligibility.
- Use the [OLG School Explorer Map](#) to find school demographic information.
- Every application must attach a [budget worksheet](#) and [Outdoor Learning Grants Supported Schools](#) spreadsheet.

## Step 2: Pre-Application Deadline May 20, 2025

Applications must be started in PRISM by 11:59 p.m. May 20. This simply means the applicant must have clicked +New Application from the PRISM dashboard and entered an applicant name, project name, and selected a tier to apply in. After May 20, no new applications may be started.

To start a grant application, go to [PRISM Online](#) to access the Application Wizard and select +New Application. Select the Outdoor Learning Grants program and Tier One, Two, or Three (information about the tiers is in the OLG manual, link above). Note, PRISM will not start a new OLG application after May 20..

## Step 3: Write and Submit Application in PRISM

### PRISM Application Tips

- Please read the application instructions on each PRISM page. They are there to help!
- To switch tiers during the process, please reach out to a grants manager. Do not begin a new application if one is started already.

- Follow the order of the application pages when making initial entries. If a page in the application is blank, that is probably because information wasn't entered on a previous page to populate it.
- All questions must be answered on the *Evaluation Criteria* page. The answers will be used by evaluators to score projects.
- Use the *i* icon next to each evaluation criteria to expand the question.
- On the *Metrics* pages, click the yellow notepad icon next to text fields to add additional information. Notes should always be added if *Other* is selected.
- If pasting in text from a Word document, be sure to proofread the entry because PRISM will sometimes alter the formatting and punctuation of pasted material.
- Character limits include spaces and punctuation.
- Please note, the terms "project" and "program" may be used interchangeably when referring to the applicant's educational program in need of funding. PRISM is designed to be used for many types of funding programs, so the embedded terms throughout the application may differ from typical education programming vocabulary.

## PRISM Attachments

There is an *Attachments* page in the PRISM Online application where every applicant must attach the following material:

### Budget Worksheet

- Enter the project's budget in an excel spreadsheet using the [Budget Worksheet template](#).
- Ensure numbers are consistent with the *Metrics* and *Cost* pages of the PRISM Online application.
- Successful grant recipients must attend one meeting in person in Olympia and travel costs are eligible for reimbursement. List associated costs in the subtotal area of budget worksheet and in the *Other* text field of *Project Costs* in the PRISM application.

### OLG Supported Schools Spreadsheet

- Enter the list of schools that will be supported by the application in the [OLG](#)

[Supported Schools form](#). Any schools that the applicant selected “yes” for should have a contract or Memorandum of Understanding uploaded to the application.

### Photographs

- One photo representing the application must be attached; more than one is allowed.
- Photographs must be in .jpg format.
- Photographs will be displayed on the Project Snapshot page of RCO’s website. Please have photograph releases for images of any children shown.
- Once uploaded, hover over each thumbnail and use arrows to rotate sideways photographs.

### Letters

- All letters must be combined into a single PDF. Evaluators will not open multiple letter attachments.
- Evaluators will review letters of commitment and letters of partnership to help them score the project.
- Letters should outline commitments from direct partners. Do not include general letters of support from participants, parents, etc.
- These letters are optional attachments but are strongly encouraged.

## Step 4: Application Due June 3, 2025

The application must be submitted by June 3, 2025, by 11:59 p.m. RCO staff then will review the application for eligibility, completeness, and clarity. An application deemed incomplete may be removed from the competition.

RCO strongly encourages the applicant to submit the application at least a few days before the deadline to ensure a smooth process. Staff will not be available in the evening to help with submission issues.

Grants managers are available to offer feedback about applications if requests are made well in advance of the due date.

#### **Step 4: Evaluators Score Projects–June 18 to August 8, 2025**

Evaluators will review and score the PRISM application along with supporting attachments (budget worksheet, OLG Supported Schools form, photographs, and one pdf with letters of commitment and partnership).

A Tier Three applicant will participate in a mandatory ten-minute Question and Answer session with evaluators live over Zoom August 5-7.

Once evaluators have scored the project, RCO staff will create a ranked list and present it to the Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction for approval. Next, RCO will announce the results of the evaluation and post the preliminary ranked list on its [OLG web page](#) under Grant Award History.

Funding will be awarded to projects on the list, in ranked order, after funding is approved by the state Legislature.

#### **Step 5: RCO Issues Agreements–September 2025 (estimated)**

RCO staff will issue grant agreements to funded projects in the fall of 2025. The agreement must be in place before work can begin and costs are not eligible for reimbursement before that time.

RCO strongly encourages all funded project sponsors to participate in the Successful Applicant Webinar during early September 2025. Watch the grant program web page for the date.