JAMES RIVER WATER QUALITY IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM

SOLICITATION OF PROPOSALS
2020 GRANT ROUND

Applications Due No Later Than June 15, 2020

VEE is now soliciting proposals for the 2020 grant round for the James River Water Quality Improvement Program (JRWQIP). Grant applications are due to VEE no later than June 15, 2020.

In the two years of the Program’s operation, VEE has awarded nearly $8 million dollars to organizations working across the James River watershed on initiatives designed to help restore the water quality of the James River. Once again, VEE is looking for substantial proposals focused on producing significant water quality benefits through on-the-ground investments and initiatives. The JRWQIP Strategic Investment Plan will continue to help guide VEE’s funding decisions.

The funding priorities are:

- **Riparian buffer installation.** A top priority for investment will be the implementation of riparian forested or vegetative buffers, with a focus on agricultural and rural lands where there are restoration area opportunities which will generate significant pollution reductions. Permanent protection and long term maintenance of the riparian buffers will be a critical review element of this investment priority.

- **Accelerating implementation of agricultural pollution reduction practices.** VEE will look to invest in programs that enhance and accelerate the delivery and implementation of cost-effective farming best management practices along with other agricultural initiatives that reduce agricultural pollution and improve water quality.

- **Construction of living shorelines.** VEE has included a priority on investment in living shoreline construction, particularly in the Lower James River region. The “Virginia Shoreline and Tidal Marsh Inventory” as well as regional and county-level conservation and shoreline management plans will be factors in looking at priority restoration opportunity areas for investments in living shoreline projects. The incorporation of
riparian buffers as an element of the construction of the living shoreline along with permanent protection will be important factors when VEE considers proposals.

- **Stream restoration.** Investments in stream restoration can be expensive, so the Endowment will carefully examine the rationale for selection of any location proposed for restoration (with headwater areas of the River or streams that feed it offering the greatest water quality value); the inclusion of riparian buffers in any stream restoration proposal; and the co-location of other water quality improvement efforts with any stream restoration (e.g., the existence of a living shoreline on adjoining sites).

- **Investments in the Jamestown region (“Area of Potential Effects”) and surrounding jurisdictions.** The “Area of Potential Effects,” or APE, is a region upstream and downstream of Jamestown on both sides of the James River. (See [Map of Area of Potential Effects](#).) In addition to investments in the four priorities above, VEE investments in the APE and surrounding jurisdictions will include remediation of illicit sewage discharges (“straight pipes”) and failing septic systems as well as a limited number of cost-effective stormwater management initiatives. The cost-effective implementation of urban, suburban, and rural riparian forested buffers to reduce stormwater volume and accelerate reductions of nutrient and sediment pollution loads as well as reliance on targeted, strategic local and regional stormwater plans will play an important role in assessing stormwater management proposals.

Applicants that submit proposals which differ from VEE’s identified funding priorities will be expected to demonstrate the significance and cost effectiveness of the proposal to improving the water quality of the James River.

Current JRWQIP grantees as well as prior applicants are eligible to submit proposals. However, applicants may submit no more than two proposals and **applicants wishing to resubmit a previously submitted proposal must receive VEE approval in advance.** Proposals seeking funding for implementation costs will continue to receive priority over proposals seeking planning and maintenance costs as will proposals that demonstrate significant and measurable water quality improvements, such as reductions in nutrient, sediment, or toxic pollution. VEE does not provide funding for general support, overhead, indirect costs, capital projects, land purchases, building construction or renovation, endowments or lawsuits.

Proposals **with a completion date of one to three years and a minimum funding level request of $100,000 annually** for projects located within the James River watershed are eligible. Proposals for projects located outside of the watershed remain eligible for funding under VEE’s general Virginia Program, as do other James River proposals that do not meet the criteria for the JRWQIP.

Eligible grant recipients include non-profit, tax-exempt charitable organizations and institutions, local governments, soil and water conservation districts, state and federal agencies, state and federally recognized tribes, and educational institutions. **Individuals and for-profit entities are not eligible.**
VEE has historically leveraged its dollars to achieve maximum environmental improvement. While VEE does not require matching funds for the JRWQIP, it does encourage applicants to seek matching funds from other funding sources, public or private. Projects with matching funds from other funding sources will receive higher priority consideration. VEE does not consider in-kind volunteer services as matching funds.

To submit an application, please see and utilize the JRWQIP Application for Funding Consideration found on the website. VEE must receive an electronic copy of the Application, as a Word document, as well as two hard copies, signed by the applicant’s chief executive officer or board chair by the submission deadline of June 15.

- Email: jrwqip@vee.org
- Mailing address: James River Water Quality Improvement Program, Virginia Environmental Endowment, P.O. Box 790, Richmond, Virginia 23218-0790.
- Package delivery address: James River Water Quality Improvement Program, Virginia Environmental Endowment, SunTrust Center, 919 E Main Street, Suite 1070, Richmond, VA 23219 (phone number: 804-644-5000)

Applicants will need to utilize the JRWQIP Restoration Planner, a web-based application tool designed by the Chesapeake Conservancy’s Conservation Innovation Center that allows applicants to focus their efforts on high priority parcels and Restoration Opportunity Areas (ROAs) within the James River watershed. In reviewing JRWQIP grant applications, VEE will place a high value on those that target use of JRWQIP funds on high priority parcels and ROAs. For information on the Restoration Planner, see the link provided on the JRWQIP webpage. Please direct any questions on the Planner to Emily Mills at Chesapeake Conservancy. emills@chesapeakeconservancy.org or (443) 482-9016.

The VEE Board of Directors plans on making grant awards in October 2020. In accordance with the terms and provisions of a signed Grant Agreement, VEE will require grantees to submit periodic reports of progress, expenditures, and results, including tracking of JRWQIP grant progress via Field Doc, a tool created by Chesapeake Commons. Chesapeake Commons has designed a specific VEE User Guide for tracking VEE JRWQIP grant award implementation.

VEE will provide funding in installments on a reimbursement basis; VEE does not reimburse for expenses incurred prior to the authorization date of any grant award. The JRWQIP Grant Agreement Template is available on the JRWQIP webpage.

If you have any questions, contact jrwqip@vee.org.