Water Quality Education Grants
2026 Request for Proposals

Mid-America Regional Council (MARC), on behalf of the Water Quality Education Committee, requests proposals from nonprofits, schools, and community groups to implement educational activities, events or projects promoting actions to improve water quality in the Greater Kansas City area. The Committee's workplan prioritizes educating citizens about how stormwater contributes to water pollution in area lakes, rivers and streams, and how residents can help to reduce such pollution.

Overview

This grant program, overseen by the MARC Water Quality Education Committee, funds nonprofits, schools, and community groups to develop educational activities, events and projects. Government entities are not eligible to apply for funding.

Grant funds must be used to support activity and/or event planning, project implementation and associated costs. In addition, proposals may be submitted for landscaping with native species to improve water quality and reduce excess water use. **Demonstration projects must include an establishment and maintenance plan, a detailed education plan (including educational signage), and anticipated measurable outcomes. *Grant applications will be scored based on anticipated outcomes.***

Outcomes demonstrate how your project will affect change. Examples of outcomes include:

- Increased awareness (i.e. knowledge of green infrastructure and environmental impacts)
- Behavior changes (i.e. recycling more, less water wasted)
- Skill development (i.e. ability to recognize native plants)

In addition to project **outcomes**, please include anticipated **outputs** in your proposal narrative. Examples of outputs include:

- Workshops or events
- Informational meetings
- Curricula or trainings

Demonstration projects must show clear ownership and cannot occur on municipal properties.

NOTE: Education plans can leverage existing municipal water quality resources for ongoing educational activities. Municipal and MARC resources **DO NOT** count towards organizational match.

Selected proposals must address at least one of the water quality education goals set out below:

- Provide public education about the adverse impacts of stormwater runoff and water pollution;
- Promote policies and management practices to reduce stormwater runoff and water pollution;
- Implement best management practices to reduce stormwater runoff and water pollution in area creeks, streams, and lakes.

Additional information about activities, events and projects funded through this program in previous years can be found on MARC's website https://www.marc.org/environment/water/water-funding.

Funding Levels

Project funding varies, but will not exceed $5,000 per project; awards have typically ranged from $2,000 to $3,000. A total of $15,000 is available. This grant is a reimbursement grant.

Grant funds may not exceed 50 percent of the total project cost (a 50 percent cash or in-kind match is required). Municipal activities and/or MARC resources do not count towards applicant match. Grant submissions involving multiple partners must be accompanied by letters of commitment from partners detailing their role in the grant project. The Committee reserves the right to partially fund projects. Past grant recipients are not guaranteed funding in this grant program. Grant recipients will be required to furnish evidence of general liability insurance and other insurance as determined by MARC to be appropriate for the project.

Grant awards are limited to projects performed in Water Quality Education Committee member cities and counties.

- Excelsior Springs, Missouri
- Kansas City, Missouri
- Lake Lotawana, Missouri
- Lee's Summit, Missouri
- Liberty, Missouri
- Independence, Missouri
- Jackson County, Missouri
- North Kansas City, Missouri
- Platte County, Missouri
- Raymore, Missouri
- Raytown, Missouri
- Bonner Springs, Kansas
- De Soto, Kansas
- Edgerton, Kansas
- Fairway, Kansas
- Gardner, Kansas
- Johnson County, Kansas
- Lake Quivira, Kansas
- Leawood, Kansas
- Lenexa, Kansas
- Merriam, Kansas
- Mission, Kansas
- Mission Hills, Kansas
- Mission Woods, Kansas
- Olathe, Kansas
- Overland Park, Kansas
- Prairie Village, Kansas
- Roeland Park, Kansas
- Shawnee, Kansas
- Spring Hill, Kansas
- Unified Government of Wyandotte County / Kansas City, Kansas
- Westwood, Kansas
- Westwood Hills, Kansas

Only one proposal may be submitted per organization. Applicants must have a 501(c)(3) nonprofit designation unless they are a registered public or private school. Grant recipients may be asked to give a short presentation of their finished project at a time to be determined by the grant committee.

Timeline

Proposals Due:	**4 p.m. Friday CDT, December 12, 2025****
Tentative Award Announcement:	**January 14, 2026 at WQEC January meeting**
Project Completion and Written Report Due:	**Friday, December 4, 2026**
Project Presentation:	TBA

**Please be prepared to provide any follow-up information following award selection by Friday, January 30, 2026, at 5pm.

Proposal Submission and Selection Process

Proposals for funding should be submitted using the online form by **4 p.m. CDT, December 12, 2025.** Upon receipt of proposal, MARC will reply with a confirmation e-mail. Applicants are responsible for ensuring that proposals are received by MARC.

A review committee comprised of Water Quality Education Committee members will evaluate proposals and recommend recipients to the full Committee for final approval. Previous grant performance, including reporting history, will be taken into consideration for those applicants who are past grant recipients. Committee members will use the proposal evaluation criteria outlined in the online submission form in the selection process.

Final Report

Upon execution of grant award contract, MARC staff will provide a final grant report template and outcomes and measurement form. Applicants will be required to submit a final report following project completion that includes:

1. Synopsis of event
2. Digital photos of activities
3. Description of lessons learned (challenges)
4. Number of participants/volunteers
5. Evaluation of project's success
6. Receipts and expense records including staff timesheets with rates

For additional information regarding this request for proposals, please contact Natalie Unruh at NUnruh@marc.org or (816) 701-8225.