

# Harvard-Allston Public Realm Flexible Fund

## 2020 Grant Guidelines

For online application, up-to-date information on application deadline,  
and other important information please visit  
[bit.ly/harvardflexfund](https://bit.ly/harvardflexfund)

Inquiries to:

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## BACKGROUND

As part of a package of public benefits agreed to in 2013 and memorialized in a Cooperation Agreement with the Boston Redevelopment Authority (now doing business as Boston Planning and Development Agency or BPDA) dated July 10, 2014, Harvard University will provide \$5,350,000 to projects that contribute to the vision of *"a community transformed by a vibrant public realm of civic and cultural activity; ample open space for passive and active recreation; well-maintained, landscaped streets and parks; and a community enhanced by sustainable goals, thoughtful transportation modes, arts and culture."*

The Harvard-Allston Public Realm Flexible Fund (HAPRFF) is managed by an eight-member Executive Committee with input from residents of the neighborhood at large. The Executive Committee is charged with developing an application and review and selection process that ensures transparency, clear evaluation criteria, and annual reporting of grants awarded and outcomes.

The Executive Committee currently includes the following members:

- Gerald Autler, Boston Planning and Development Agency
- Lea Beaulieu, neighborhood resident
- Mark Handley, Harvard University
- Sabrina Dorsainvil, Mayor's Office of New Urban Mechanics
- Bruce Houghton, Harvard-Allston Task Force
- Elsa Rojas, neighborhood resident
- Johanna Bernstein, City of Boston Office of Budget Management

It is the goal of the Boston Planning and Development Agency to work with the Executive Committee and the broader community to identify, review and select projects, in accordance with the procedure outlined below, such that the Fund will be disbursed in full over the term of the Institutional Master Plan, ending on November 21, 2023.

## GRANT INFORMATION AND GUIDELINES

The criteria, guidelines, and procedures herein apply to this grant cycle and may be different for future grant cycles.

Purpose: The purpose of the HAPRFF is to support projects that enhance the public realm and for which public sources of financing may be unavailable or inadequate. Projects may include improvements in public parks and open space, neighborhood beautification, streetscape improvements (including street furniture such as benches or bike racks), and public safety projects.

Projects should be of broad public benefit to the Allston-Brighton neighborhood,

with particular emphasis on the North Allston/North Brighton area, i.e. the portion(s) of the neighborhood located north of I-90. Applicants will be expected to garner and demonstrate broad community support for their projects as part of the application and review process.

Allowable Grant Fund Uses: Grants are intended to help implement public realm improvements for which public funding is not available and might not typically be available, or for which public funding is available but insufficient to yield the quality of project desired. Grants are not intended to be used for routine maintenance of public infrastructure such as roads, sidewalks, or parks. However, grant funding could be sought in order to implement a higher standard of public realm or open space infrastructure by supplementing the level of public funding typically available for comparable projects. Grants can be used to support planning, design, capital improvements, programming, temporary installations, and other projects that, in the view of the Executive Committee, meet the broad goals set forth in the Cooperation Agreement.

***The Committee is interested in supporting public art; however, parties interested in applying for funds for this purpose should contact Gerald Autler for additional background and information.***

Applicant Eligibility: Grants are typically made to:

- Public agencies.
- Established 501(c)3 non-profit organizations.

In some cases, grants may also be made to:

- New non-profit organizations with a fiscal sponsor.
- Individuals or for-profit entities.

Award Criteria: Proposals will be selected based upon the criteria listed below.

Projects MUST:

- Advance the public realm goals described in the Cooperation Agreement and repeated in the first paragraph of this document.
- Be located in the Allston-Brighton neighborhood, with a preference for the portion of the neighborhood north of I-90.
- Be located on public property or on property with public access guaranteed by an easement or other legal instrument, or serve, in the view of the Executive Committee, to meaningfully enhance the public realm.
- For projects on public property, have a public agency as a proponent or partner.

- Demonstrate community support. Typical this is done with letters of support from elected officials, neighborhood associations, individuals, and other key stakeholders.
- Achieve one or more of the following goals:
  - Enhance the aesthetic quality and user experience of the public realm
  - Enhance public safety
  - Enhance local business and economic activity, either during implementation or permanently.
  - Improve accessibility and connectivity for non-vehicular modes of transportation
  - Promote community collaboration and civic and cultural growth
  - Showcase unique qualities of the neighborhood
- Demonstrate that it can be completed in a timely fashion, with preference given to those projects that can be completed within one year, or 2-3 years in the case of particularly large and complex projects requiring larger-than-average grants.
- Demonstrate that grant funding will not be used to pay organization salaries or operating expenses.
- Demonstrate that the proponent is in sound financial condition with adequate reporting and controls.
- Demonstrate that the proponent has the ability to execute the proposed project or program.

The Executive Committee will look favorably upon projects that ALSO:

- Demonstrate potential for public engagement as a project outcome.
- Demonstrate other sources of funding.

Other criteria to be considered include:

- Feasibility of the budget.
- Length of time proponent has been involved in local neighborhood activities and track record of proponent implementing similar successful projects.
- Partnerships with other organizations and utilization of community volunteers.
- Project readiness.

## APPLICATION, SELECTION, AND GRANT PROCESS

**Complete applications must be submitted online by 5:00 p.m. on the deadline. For the up-to-date deadline as well as a link to the online application please visit [bit.ly/harvardflexfund](http://bit.ly/harvardflexfund).**

**In the interest of fairness, no late applications will be considered.**

Review Process: The Executive Committee is the review body. After the application is received, it will be reviewed by the Executive Committee or a subset thereof for completeness and adherence to program guidelines. Applicants will be notified whether their application is complete or if additional information or corrections are necessary. The organization must meet all subsequent deadlines as specified in writing or the application will be considered withdrawn.

Those applications considered complete will be reviewed by the Executive Committee at one of more public meetings, according to the criteria set forth below. Organizations will be asked to present their proposal at a public meeting of the Executive Committee and may be asked to provide additional supporting materials.

Project Selection: The Executive Committee will vote to recommend or not recommend proposals for approval by the BPDA Board. The Executive Committee may also elect to recommend that a proponent resubmit a proposal with specific modifications for further consideration, whether during a future grant cycle or outside the regular cycles. Projects will not be considered definitively approved until a vote of the BPDA Board.

Notification: Applicants will be notified of outcome after final decisions are made.

Grant Agreement and Payment: Grant Agreement forms will be prepared and mailed to awardees. Execution of a Grant Agreement binds the grantee to a contract to perform all the services and purchase all the goods set forth in the proposal upon which the grant award is based. The Executive Committee reserves the right to periodically monitor contract performance and compliance with the terms of the Grant Agreement. The forms must be executed and applicants must meet all reporting requirements before grant funds are disbursed.

The Grant Agreement will set forth conditions under which the grant may be revoked on the basis of non-performance.

Only expenses incurred on or after the date of Grant Agreement approval will qualify as an eligible project expense. Previous expenses incurred are not reimbursable. A final report and accounting may be required after the project completion date.