

**COMMONWEALTH OF VIRGINIA
DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY
WATER PLANNING DIVISION**

P.O. Box 1105

Richmond, VA 23218-1105

SUBJECT: 2026 Citizen Water Quality Monitoring Grant Request for Applications
TO: Interested Parties
FROM: Meighan Wisswell, Water Monitoring Coordinator
DATE: July 1, 2025
COPIES: Bryant Thomas, Liz McKercher, Sandra Mueller

We are pleased to make available the 2026 Citizen Water Quality Monitoring Grant Program Request for Applications (RFA). The primary purpose of these grants is to provide funding for groups and individuals to monitor the quality of Virginia's waters. The grant can be used in a variety of ways, including purchasing water quality monitoring equipment, training volunteers, lab analysis costs, and promoting stream monitoring efforts in locations where the Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) is not currently collecting water quality samples. Applications will be accepted no later than **August 31, 2025. Please ensure use of the 2026 application package when completing your proposal.** Funded activities may begin on Jan 1, 2026, once a contract with the agency is in place. Updates for this cycle can be found summarized on page 2 of the RFA.

Only one grant application per cycle is permitted. Multiple applications by the same organization will be rejected.

The grant options include:

1. **Mini-Grant:** Maximum award up to \$1,000. Open only to applicants who have not received a DEQ Citizen Monitoring Grant in the previous three years.
2. **Regular Grant:** Maximum award up to \$5,000. Open to any applicants who wish to apply but recommended for organizations already familiar with water quality monitoring.
3. **Coordination Grant:** Maximum award up to \$11,000. Open only to applicants who meet at least one of the below tracks:
 - a. Coordinate at least three monitoring organizations totaling 35 or more volunteers. Monitoring occurs at more than 50 sample sites covering at least three Virginia localities.
 - OR
 - b. Monitoring activities generate at least 1000 total Level II & Level III data points¹ with a least 500 of those being Level III data.

Please refer to the RFA for complete eligibility information and criteria.

All grantees that generate monitoring data must submit a copy of the data to DEQ following agency guidelines, and a data use authorization form must be included in the completed application package (see RFA for further instructions). All applicants that collect data intended for use in agency business (i.e., Level II or III data) must develop a DEQ approved Quality Assurance Project Plan (QAPP). The application package can be downloaded from the [DEQ Volunteer Monitoring webpage](#).

Collaboration between state agencies and volunteer monitors is important in developing monitoring programs that enhance Virginia's ability to assess, protect and restore the Commonwealth's water quality. In addition to offering the Citizen Water Quality Monitoring Grant Program, DEQ also provides technical assistance with developing water quality monitoring programs and QAPPs. Questions regarding the volunteer monitoring program should be directed to: citizenwater@deq.virginia.gov or you may call Meighan Wisswell at: 571-866-6494.

¹ For the purposes of this grant, a data point is an independent discrete measurement of a water quality parameter.