



Request for Proposals

Community Capacity Grants for Climate Solution Deployment Projects

Executive Summary

VertueLab is seeking to partner with frontline communities¹ in Oregon that are disproportionately impacted by the climate crisis, to support community-driven projects deploying climate tech solutions that address the causes and/or impacts of climate change.

This request for proposals is intended to provide members and leaders of communities with an avenue for sharing with VertueLab about their projects that have 1) the potential to meaningfully address the climate justice needs of their communities, and 2) the ability to make effective use of \$25,000 in grant funding and staff support from the Pacific Northwest's leading climate tech accelerator, to increase their odds of success.

VertueLab is a nonprofit organization committed to addressing both the causes and impacts of climate change in the Pacific Northwest. We fund and support both underserved innovators and climate solution adopters to address the climate crisis and capture a once-in-a-generation wealth creation opportunity.

This grant program is a core part of our new Frontline Impact programs, which are intended to improve access to climate solutions for and in partnership with the communities that need them most. Heat exposure, air quality, energy access, water quality, and many more environmental justice issues confront frontline communities in Oregon. Climate solutions are available to address these issues, and we want to help communities who want these solutions to put them in place.

About this Grant Opportunity

The community-based organizations (CBOs) selected from this RFP process will be partnered with VertueLab staff to support the success of their climate action projects. In addition to the financial support of the capacity grant, VertueLab will bring, through community-centered practice, our knowledge and network in the climate tech sector to support the selection and deployment of innovative technologies that meet the identified needs of the community.

¹ Frontline communities are those that experience continuing injustice – including people of color, immigrants, people with lower incomes, those in rural areas, and indigenous people—that face a legacy of systemic, largely racialized, inequity that influences their living and working places, the quality of their air and water, and their economic opportunities.



Intended outcomes of this program

1. Community-based organizations have their capacity supported by VertueLab and deepen their connections to the climate action community in the Pacific Northwest
2. Community-based organizations (CBOs) are connected with climate technologies that address their community's needs
3. Community-based organizations receive support from VertueLab in their efforts to secure hard-to-access capital to fund their climate action projects
4. Companies and entrepreneurs with the interest/potential to offer a climate solution are inspired and connected to technical assistance
5. More individuals and communities reap the positive benefits of climate innovation

VertueLab will provide \$25,000 in grant funding to support the capacity of selected partners for sustaining their engagement in the proposed projects. The grant funding is available to selected partners to build their capacity to complete their proposed project. VertueLab is offering our staff and/or services as in-kind support in addition to the cash award.

Source of Funds

The source of the funds for the two \$25,000 capacity grants are funds awarded to VertueLab by Business Oregon. Communities selected to receive these awards will be expected to allow VertueLab to share project information with our funders.

VertueLab's role and commitment to awardees

- \$25,000 capacity grant to the applicant
- VertueLab staff to provide opportunity scanning services to identify other potential project funding sources as well as provide consultation on proposal approach and final proposal review as needed
- VertueLab staff support to work with awardees to identify companies that provide the climate solutions their community seeks to deploy
- VertueLab staff support with community engagement strategy, including but not limited to identifying and supporting entrepreneurs within the community that have an interest in developing businesses delivering climate solutions

Who Should Respond to RFP

Community-Based Organizations (organizations created by communities and driven by community residents to address the needs of that community) that are non-profits duly organized, in good standing under Oregon state law, and have full power, authority, and legal right to execute and deliver on this partnership are encouraged to apply. Collaborative groups of multiple organizations and agencies are welcome to apply, but the lead applicant must meet the requirements above, and the application must clearly describe the role of each collaborating entity.

This funding will be available only to projects within the State of Oregon.



All proposals must be submitted by 11:59 pm on 12/16/2022. [Please follow this link to complete your application.](#)

Evaluation Process

VertueLab staff will evaluate submitted proposals after the close date. The evaluation is scored across five proposal elements which are detailed within the four sections of the application. If your application scores high on our application process, the project team will contact you for a follow-up online interview. The project team may contact you during or after the RFP review period to ask clarifying questions or solicit additional information.

Request for Clarification of the Request for Proposal

If any respondent has questions regarding the meaning of any part of this RFP, the respondent shall submit a written request to VertueLab's Community Engagement Manager, Benjamin Roldan at benjamin.roldan@vertuelab.org. Submitted questions and our responses to them will be posted publicly (without identifying the identity of the submitter) on the RFP webpage's FAQ section.

Timeline

Key Actions	Dates
Public Release of RFP	November 11
Proposal Deadline	December 16
Initial Proposal Screen for responsiveness	January 3
Committee Review and Scoring	January 3 through January 20
Finalists Announced	January 20
Finalist Interviews	January 23 through February 3
CBO selection/ Grant Agreement Drafting Begins Grant funds released upon completion of the Grant Agreement	February 10

**Timelines are subject to change at VertueLab's sole discretion.*

RFP Evaluation Criteria

A. Initial Proposal Screen for Responsiveness

- Submitted proposals will first be evaluated for whether the applicant meets eligibility criteria and whether all application elements have been completed.
- Ineligible applicants will be informed that they are ineligible for the grant program.
- Incomplete proposals will receive notice that their application is missing a particular element. If the missing or unclear element is minor in nature, VertueLab may offer the applicant an opportunity to clarify or complete so that the proposal can be reviewed by the selection committee.
- In order to be fair to applicants with fully completed proposals, VertueLab will not be able to allow substantially incomplete proposals to move forward to be reviewed by the selection committee.

B. Proposal Screen

Proposals will be evaluated based on the following criteria:



- Clear and concise articulation of the problem faced by the community served by the project, and how the proposed climate solution and partnership with VertueLab will support the community in addressing that problem
- Applicant's mission is aligned with VertueLab's mission and the overall goal of the proposed collaboration
- Evidence of meaningful and ongoing community involvement in the decision-making processes of the Applicant by a significant number of members of the community served by the proposed project
- The impact of the climate crisis on the community served by the proposed project has been demonstrated through the use of qualitative and quantitative data
- Evidence that the Applicant has done previous work to engage and inform residents about the climate crisis and its repercussions in the community

C. Online interview/ Follow up request

Online interviews will be conducted with the applications that score higher on our rubric. This conversation will be conducted with the founder(s) and team member(s) responsible for partnering with VertueLab in this project. In this interview, we will cover in-depth information about our goals, metrics, data-sharing requirements/capabilities, community engagement experiences, and expected roles and responsibilities. During this interview, the applicant has a chance to ask questions.

RFP Response Instructions

Please use the following link to input your responses to the following questions in our online proposal submission form: <https://vertuelab.org/frontline-impact-program>. The proposal submission form's questions are here for your reference only to help you prepare your responses prior to opening the form.

Note: You will notice we do not include a word or character limit in the text fields. Our intent is for applicants to be able to focus on getting the content across however they think best. We do not want or expect lengthy responses. We are looking for complete responses, and don't want to force applicants to spend undue time editing down to an artificial word limit.

PROPOSAL ELEMENTS

Section 1: Public Applicant Information (by completing this form, the Applicant organization consents to VertueLab sharing the responses to these three questions publicly as a part of program transparency)

1. Name of Applicant organization
2. Applicant organization website
3. Brief project description

Section 2: Applicant Background Information (this and all following information will be visible only to VertueLab staff and the selection committee, and only shared externally after being stripped of identifying information and aggregated)

4. Address of the Applicant organization
5. Primary Contact Name. (*The person with whom VertueLab will coordinate next steps*)



6. Contact Job Title
7. Contact Email
8. Contact Phone
9. Year Applicant organization was formed
10. Applicant Organization Overview – Provide a brief background about your organization. This is an opportunity to tell us about your mission and vision, why you were formed, and what you have accomplished together. This is an opportunity to tell us about your roots in the community.
11. If you are submitting a proposal as a group of organizations, please list the names of the collaborating organizations with whom you are submitting.
12. Please provide a brief description of the community you are serving through this partnership. This is an opportunity to paint a picture of what makes your community unique, whether that is social, cultural, economic, demographic, and/or environmental.

Section 3: Project Description

13. Please describe the nature of the challenges or impacts that the community has felt as a result of the climate crisis, using qualitative and quantitative data to support.
14. Please provide a narrative of the project you seek to support through this capacity grant and in-kind support from VertueLab. Describe the climate solutions you seek to implement with support from VertueLab, and how you foresee those technologies addressing the climate impacts you identified in the previous question. Use this opportunity to help us understand the scope and scale of the project, and its potential for impact.
15. Describe the current stage of your project development so that we can evaluate whether we are in a position to assist your project within the timeline available to us.
16. Outline the project roles and responsibilities of the Applicant organization and any partner organizations included in your project team.
17. How do you envision a collaboration with VertueLab will advance your proposed project's efforts? How do you intend to utilize the \$25,000 capacity grant and VertueLab's support to best increase the chances of your project's success?

Section 4: Community Engagement and Participation

18. Describe the process used to identify the proposed climate solution(s) and achieve and sustain community support. This is an opportunity to tell us about the strategies you've use to gain insight and input from members of the community, and to provide evidence that the solution is one that your community is eager to implement and maintain over time, and that you have a clear plan in place to sustain community involvement over the course of the project. Explain whether residents and community members will be informed and consulted, involved and collaborative, or decision makers.

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We look forward to learning more about your communities and projects! - The VertueLab Team