Greater Philadelphia Land Protection Program Funding Overview

A Guide for Prospective Applicants

Greater Philadelphia Land Protection Program | Open Space Institute, in partnership with the William Penn Foundation

About the Program

The Open Space Institute's (OSI) Greater Philadelphia Land Protection Program (GPLPP) is a three-year, $6.43 million investment supporting land protection, conservation planning, and community-led conservation across the greater Philadelphia–Camden region. The program is funded by a $6 million grant from the William Penn Foundation (WPF), supplemented by $433,000 in funds contributed by OSI.

The program aims to meet the demand for conservation by supporting local groups to protect at least 1,000 acres over three years while strengthening community-based conservation partnerships. This 1,000-acre target contributes to WPF's ten-year, 3,300-acre land protection goal as part of its Environment and Public Space Program's Land Conservation objective.

GPLPP funding is organized into two geographic pathways — the Outer Counties and the cities of Philadelphia and Camden — each with grant opportunities suited to different project types and stages. The program's design reflects thoughtful consideration of the distinct conservation contexts and opportunities across the region. Given the opportunity to continue partnering with WPF, over the ten-year initiative, funding is intended to be allocated evenly between the Outer Counties and the cities of Philadelphia and Camden, with acreage targets calibrated to reflect the differing conservation opportunities available within each geography.

Total Program Budget by Category and Year

The table below shows the full program budget, including program administration (OSI Implementation) alongside grant funding. Administration costs, which cover all or part of the staffing costs necessary for program management, make up 18% of the total budget, with the remaining 82% going to Capital Grants and Non-Capital Supports.

Category	Total
OSI Implementation	$1,163,000
Capital Grants	$4,170,000
Non-Capital Supports	$1,100,000
Total	$6,433,000

Funding by Grant Type

Currently, three grant types are available, depending on project and location:

Grant Type	Best For	Projected Grant Ranges
Capital Grant	Permanent protection of land through acquisition or conservation easement	$200,000–$400,000

Grant Type	Best For	Projected Grant Ranges
Catalyst Grant	Broad-scale conservation planning, mapping, or community engagement (Outer Counties)	Up to $20,000
Neighborhood Conservation Grant	Conservation planning and partnership development (Cities of Philadelphia/Camden)	$15,000–$40,000

Total Funding by Geography and Round

Capital Grants — for permanent land protection — total $4,170,000 across both rounds. Round 1 capital funding (Fall 2026) is available exclusively in the Outer Counties. Philadelphia and Camden City applicants will have access to Capital funding beginning in Round 2, following the Community Land Leadership Cohort process.

Geography	Round 1	Round 2	Total
Outer Counties	$1,230,000	$1,470,000	$2,700,000
Philadelphia / Camden City	—	$1,470,000	$1,470,000

Non-capital Supports— Catalyst Grants in the Outer Counties and Neighborhood Conservation Grants and Cohort Opportunities in cities of Philadelphia and Camden — total $1,100,000 across both rounds.

Geography	Round 1	Round 2	Total
Outer Counties (Catalyst)	$140,000	$200,000	$340,000
Philadelphia / Camden City (Neighborhood Conservation Grants and Cohort)	$340,000	$420,000	$760,000

Funding availability may change depending on demand and/or need.

What This Means for Applicants

- Outer Counties applicants: the Fall 2026 round is your first opportunity to apply for both Capital and Catalyst Grants, with proposals due September 25, 2026.
- Cities of Philadelphia/Camden applicants: The Community Land Leadership Cohort launches in Fall 2026, followed by Neighborhood Conservation Grants opening November 2026 with proposals due February 1st, 2027.
- A second round of funding is planned for both geographies in early 2028, so organizations not ready to apply in Round 1 will have another opportunity.
- All projects should advance one or more fund priorities: equitable access to green space, ecological health, and/or climate resilience.

For full eligibility criteria, application materials, and deadlines, visit openspaceinstitute.org/funds/gplpp.