

Grant Writing: Using Grant Braiding for Local Match – April 21, 2023

The rules for achieving a project's local cost share, also known as **match**, vary among grants. Many projects involve "[braiding](#)" or "[stacking](#)." *Stacking* is when multiple grants fund components of a single project. *Braiding* takes stacking to the next level. It uses funds from one grant to meet the match requirements of another grant in the project. For instance, a municipality that will be constructing a sidewalk might use a grant award from the [AARP's Community Challenge program](#) as its local match to a grant award from VTrans' [Vermont Bicycle and Pedestrian Program](#).

As you consider project funding that involves braiding grants, it is important to consider several things.

- **First**, review the match requirements for each grant to determine what is allowed. Will Grant A allow you to use it as match to another grant, and will Grant B accept Grant A as matching funds? It is important to obtain a written answer (emails work!) to both of these questions from the respective grant funders.
- **Second**, are the scopes of work for each grant aligned for the project? Using the sidewalk example, would the AARP grant construct a portion of a larger sidewalk project or would it pay for materials only? If it would construct part of the larger project, the scope of work for the VTrans' grant must be that larger project - it's scope of work must include the portion to be paid by the AARP grant, not just the remainder of the project.
- **Third**, are the award start and end dates for both grants aligned to work together? Most grants do not allow you to begin work without a fully [executed grant agreement](#), certain terms/conditions being met, including procurement of contractors. If one grant is awarded 6-9 months prior to the second grant, is there sufficient time to complete its scope of work before the grant award close date? If not, then talk to your funder.
- **Fourth**, make sure you have your project fully funded and under agreement before starting any work, unless the project is being phased and this is allowed by your

fundes.

- **Finally**, can the municipality track costs for both grants separately within the project budget? Each funder will want to know that there is no duplication of payment (“double-dipping”) so be sure to work with the municipality's Treasurer and/or finance staff.

Braiding grants can be beneficial in reducing demands on a municipality's budget when care is taken to investigate and consider how multiple funding sources could work together in a project.