Fiscal Year 2027 Information Package & Grant Process Guidelines

Published January 2026

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MGIA GRANT PROGRAM SUCCESS STORIES

Park County

The MGIA Grant Program dramatically improved addressing in Park Community, especially with regard to NG9-1-1. In addition to improving addresses, the MGIA Grant Program improved special accuracy of the parcels and other data that aligns to the section township and range. By improving the data accuracy, it not only improved their department's efficiency, but also increased credibility with the citizens.

Custer County

The MGIA Grant Program helped Custer County improve NG9-1-1 readiness by supporting field collection of critical infrastructure, including culverts, cattleguards, bridges, and fire apparatus and staging locations, which strengthened addressing accuracy and emergency response coordination. The culvert data will also provide important ground-truth observations to support future USGS 3D Hydrography Program surface-water modeling efforts.

A second MGIA grant established a new RTN (Real-Time Network) GNSS station in southeastern Montana, filling a major coverage gap and strengthening the statewide MTSRN (Montana State Reference Network) while improving high-accuracy data collection for local and regional users. Together, these projects improved data reliability, reduced reliance on outside contractors, and increased the County's ability to maintain critical GIS data locally.

GRANT PROGRAM OVERVIEW

The Montana Geospatial Information Act (MGIA) establishes a grant program to support the Montana State Library (MSL) in meeting the purpose of the act: ensuring that digital geospatial information is collected consistently, maintained accurately in accordance with standards, and made available in common ways for all potential uses and users, both private and public.

The Montana Geospatial Information Plan created by the MSL, in consultation with the Montana Geospatial Information Advisory Council (MGIAC), establishes priorities to meet the purpose of the MGIA, which includes, but is not limited to prioritizing the needs to collect, maintain, and disseminate geospatial information including the Montana Spatial Data Infrastructure (MSDI) themes; priorities for geospatial coordination; and priorities for grant awards.

The MGIA Grant program is open to local governments, state agencies, the Montana University System, and tribal governments who seek the opportunity coordinate and collaborate with the Montana State Library on advancing the priorities of the Plan.

A foundational principle of the MGIA, including the grant program, is that all products created or updated with MGIA funds must be made publicly available. This mandate is not just

procedural—it is a pillar of the Act and central to building an effective and impactful Montana Spatial Data Infrastructure (MSDI). By ensuring public availability, the program:

- Promotes transparency and accessibility of geospatial data.
- Supports statewide collaboration among state/local/tribal agencies, organizations, and the geospatial community.
- Aligns Montana's geospatial standards and best practices, ensuring consistency and interoperability.
- Maximizes the impact of MGIA grant investments, allowing data products to benefit the widest possible audience.

The MGIA grant program application and granting process are established by the MSL in consultation with the Council. Through the application process the MSL prioritizes funding and considers the grant recommendations by the Council.

It is required for all interested applicants, their consultants and partners, to read through this entire MGIA Grant Program Information Package and the Geospatial Information Plan. And it is highly encouraged that they review the Montana Geospatial Information Act; MSDI web sites, best practices, standards, and other resources; and information from the MGIAC before applying to ensure their grant project proposals align with statewide priorities and standards.

IMPORTANT PROGRAM UPDATES

In 2023, the MGIA's associated administrative rules that establish the grant applicating and granting process were updated. First, the period for grants has been changed from funding one-year grant projects to allow to fund two-year grant projects. The ARM allows for multiyear projects and previously approved multiyear phased projects that meet grant criteria, comply with procedures, and warrant approval, projects will be placed at the top of the priority list.

The Montana State Library will open a two-year cycle each even-numbered year. The MSL, with advice from the Council, will identify and prioritize funding for grant applications that meet the grant criteria and warrant approval, by May 1st of each even-numbered year. By May 15th of each even-numbered year, the State Library commission, with advice of the council, will approve the award grants.

In January of 2026, the MGIA Grant Program will open and beginning with the FY2027 grant cycle, grants will be awarded in a two-year cycle. FY2027 projects will begin **after July 1, 2026, and be completed by June 30, 2028**. Applicants/grantees will not be penalized for proposing a project that can be completed in less that the two-year grant cycle.

NEW MGIA GRANT CYCLE – THE NEXT FOUR YEARS

FY2027 MGIA GRANT CYCLE
- January 2026 | MSL Open Application Process
- May 15, 2026 | Grant awards finalized
- July 1, 2026 | 2-year grant cycle begins
- June 30, 2028 | 2-year grant cycle ends

FY2029 MGIA GRANT CYCLE
- January 2028 | MSL Open Application Process
- May 15, 2028 | Grant awards finalized
- July 1, 2028 | 2-year grant cycle begins
- June 30, 2030 | 2-year grant cycle ends

GRANTEE ELIGIBILITY

Applicants must represent one of the following forms of government within Montana:

- Any department, agency, board, commission, or other division of state government.
  - Includes the Montana University System
- Any city, county, or other division of local government.
- A tribal government within the state.

KEY GRANT DETAILS

For the FY2027 grant cycle, grants will be awarded based on the following two-year period of performance: July 1, 2026 – June 30, 2028.

The approved FY2027 Projected MGIA Budget allows for $500,000 in total for the two-year cycle. At the November 13, 2025, MGIA Council Meeting, the Council took action to allow for Approved FY2025 MGIA Grant Projects that meet the priorities of the current Plan be prioritized for funding for the FY2027 MGIA Grant Cycle. The FY2025 MGIA Grant Program was cancelled, and no projects were funded due to funding shortfalls.

Applicants should request grant funding in the amount necessary to complete a two-year project that meets the Plan's priorities. Reasonable administrative costs may be included in the request – see appendix A: Administrative Cost Guidelines.

The MGIA Grant Program allows for phased projects that take place over multiple grant cycles. Previously approved multiyear (over multiple cycles) projects must be placed at the top of the final priority list, if they meet the grant criteria and warrant approval.

Key dates for the FY2027 application cycle are:

- January 15, 2026 – Application materials released.
- February 25, 2026 – Application period closes.
- By May 1, 2026 – Grant Funding Priorities endorsed by the Council.
- By May 15, 2026 – MSL Commission will award grant funds.

MGIA GRANT PROGRAM PRIORITIES

Priorities for FY2027 MGIA Grants, defined by the Geospatial Information Plan, allows for funding project proposals that directly impact the improvement of the following MSDI Framework Themes and Geospatial Data Initiatives. Applicants are required to identify one or more priorities when developing grant proposals. Applicants are encouraged to reach out to the MSDI Theme Leads for technical questions regarding the MSDI Framework Theme Priorities.

MSDI Framework Theme Grant Priorities	
Administrative Boundaries	Hydrography
Cadastral	Transportation
Elevation	Structures & Addresses

Key Geospatial Data Initiatives:
NG9-1-1 Data Development
Geo-Enabling Montana's Elections
3DHP/Elevation Derived Hydrography

- Improving the MSDI Framework Theme Data Layers: Administrative Boundaries, Cadastral, Elevation, Hydrography, Transportation, and Structures & Addresses Themes:

    - Administrative Boundaries Framework: Creating or improving sub-theme data layers recognized by the MSDI Administrative Boundaries Theme.

    - Cadastral Framework: Improving the digital representation of the Public Land Survey System (PLSS) and associated datasets (e.g., tax parcels) by collecting new survey control data or the digitization and dissemination of documents related to PLSS corners.

    - Elevation Framework: Creating Lidar-derived products, such as contours, building footprints, etc., that integrate into statewide Elevation Theme datasets. Participating in 3DEP, the USGS' 3D Elevation Program for the purpose of the collecting new lidar for Montana.

    - Hydrography Framework: Participating in the 3DHP, USGS' 3D Hydrography Program, for the purposes of the developing elevation derived hydrography data for Montana. (See Appendix E).

    - Transportation: Creating or improving road centerlines that are NENA (National Emergency Number Association) standard compliant and meet requirements for integration into the MSDI Transportation theme.

- <u>Prioritized Key Geospatial Data Initiatives</u>

  - <u>Next Generation 9-1-1 (NG9-1-1) Data Development</u>. Projects that create or improve GIS datasets needed for NG9-1-1. See Appendix D.

    - Boundaries – Development of the Public Safety Answering Point (PSAP) boundaries, service boundaries (police, fire, emergency medical services), and/or provisioning boundaries.

    - Addresses – Development of address data that are NENA standard compliant that can be integrated into the MSDI Structures and Addresses theme.

    - Road Centerlines – Development of road centerline data that are NENA standard compliant and meet requirements for integration into the MSDI Transportation theme.

  - <u>Geo-Enabled Elections</u>: projects that integrate GIS into election planning and operations, for example, collaboration across local government to:

    - Create or improve address points that are NENA NG9-1-1 standard compliant and meet the requirements for elections.

    - Create or improve essential election boundary datasets that meet the MSDI Administrative Boundaries standards requirements for elections.

  - <u>3D Hydrography (EDH / 3DHP)</u>

    - Participating in the 3DHP, USGS' 3D Hydrography Program, for the purposes of the developing elevation derived hydrography data for Montana. (See Appendix E).

GRANT COMPLIANCE

COMMUNICATION

For all questions about the MGIA Grant Program please email MGIAgrants@mt.gov. This email address will be monitored by multiple MSL team members and is likely to be answered more quickly that contacting on person individually.

Sign up for email or TXT notifications about MSL's Geospatial Data Services & Applications, including the MGIA Grant program here: GovDelivery General GIS Coordination News & Updates.

MGIA FUNDING INFORMATION

- MGIA Grant Funds are established as state special revenue funds from recordation fees.
  - *These are not Federal funds.*
- Projected FY2027 MGIA Grant funds for the two-year grant cycle: $500,000.
  - Grant proposals scoped for less than two-years will be accepted.
- Grant proposals requesting MGIA funding that exceeds the amount available will not be considered.
- Requests for MGIA grant funds may include reasonable administrative costs - see *Appendix A: Grant Administrative Costs Guidelines*.
- Grantees may not pass granted funds back to an MSDI stewarding agency for work on MSDI Themes.
- MGIA Grant Funds are only disbursed to awarded MGIA grantees. Funds cannot be disbursed directly to contractors or other third parties.
- Grantees may request up to 80% of the total awarded grant funds, and the final 20% of the awarded grant funds will be withheld until approval of the project's completion, unless negotiated otherwise.
- Grantees will be expected to travel and should account for these travel costs in their requests for funding and described in budgets. Travel will include but is not limited to attending the in-person kick-off meeting, presentations, travel to conferences, will be reimbursed in accordance with Title 2, Chapter 18, Part 5, Montana Code Annotated (MCA).

PUBLIC ACCESSIBILITY

Upon award, all data, information, products, code, media, etc. created or updated through a Montana Geospatial Information Act Grant must be made publicly available.

- All deliverables created or updated are considered public information and can and will be freely used by the Montana State Library.
- All deliverables created or updated through an MGIA Grant must reference the Montana State Library and, if possible, utilize the official Montana State Library logo.
- Sensitive or private information must not be collected through an MGIA Grant project.

MGIA GRANT PROJECT MANAGER

The designated MGIA Grant Project Manager (PM) serves as the primary contact with the Montana State Library (MSL) for the duration of the MGIA Grant Project. If awarded, the PM must meet the following requirements and expectations:

1. Be an employee of the eligible grant applicant's organization.
2. Coordinate the negotiation and execution of the MGIA Grant Project Statement of Work (contract).
3. Ensure the overall success and completion of the MGIA Grant Project.
4. Attend the mandatory two-day, in-person Grant Kick-Off Meeting and Training with MSL staff in Helena during the week of August 10, 2026, unless otherwise negotiated.
5. Direct and manage all phases of the project from start to finish; this responsibility may not be delegated to a hired consultant.
6. Submit all required documentation, including invoices, financial reports, quarterly progress reports, data deliverables, contract amendment requests, and the final project report.
7. Prepare and submit all project reports from the perspective of the grantee organization, not a consultant.
8. Oversee publishing of all related metadata in the GIS Data List.
9. Serve as the main point of contact for all technical matters.
10. Maintain direct communication with the MSL Grant Project Manager; MSL will communicate only with the grantee, not hired contractors or consultants.
11. Present project outcomes to the Montana Geospatial Information Advisory Council, the Montana State Library Commission, or at the Montana Association of Geographic Information Professionals Annual Conference.
12. The PM must be fully capable of managing all aspects of the project and possess the expertise to ensure its successful completion.

PRESENTATIONS, SITE VISITS, & REPORTING REQUIREMENTS

There is a <u>mandatory, in-person</u> kick-off meeting for awarded grantees on August 10, 2026. This meeting will be held at the Montana State Library in Helena, MT.

The MSL uses online reporting through ArcGIS Survey123. Awarded Grantee PMs will be trained on how to submit these reports.

- Project Status Reports: These reports will inform the MSL on any/all summary of the tasks, goals, spending to date. There will be a total of 3 project status reports due during the length of the award, roughly every 6 months from beginning of grant cycle. This is assuming a two-year timeline; shorter timelines may be negotiated otherwise.

- Final Status Report: Due by the project closeout, the report includes:

  - Summary of project,
  - Financial report,
  - Description of methods for data creation/collection,
  - Data and its associated metadata,
  - Proof data has been published to the Montana GIS Data List (if applicable),
  - Map depicting the project, and
  - All negotiated project deliverables.

The MSL PM and the Grantee PM will work together to negotiate the best time to present the project for the Montana State Library's MGIA Council and/or Commission. Presentations can be completed remotely, but in-person will be preferred.

MGIA GRANT FUNDING PARTNERS

A funding partner from the MGIA Grant Program perspective is either a **funding source** or a **funding recipient**.

- A **funding source** is an entity providing anything of value (in-kind or cash).
- A **funding recipient** is an entity that is directly receiving MGIA Grant dollars. All funding recipients must be eligible grant recipients.

The value of geospatial data holdings is not considered appropriate for in-kind matches; therefore, data providers are not considered funding partners. Data providers and other project participants should not be treated as funding partners; however, their role should be documented in the Relevance and Public Benefit sections of the application.

AUTHORIZATION

Applicants must provide the contact information for an individual responsible for signing a grant funding agreement. The signer <u>must</u> be authorized to enter into a grant funding agreement with the Montana State Library.

The State of Montana uses DocuSign to execute electronic signatures. Accommodations can be made for those eligible applicants that are unable to execute digital signatures through DocuSign.

APPLICATION GUIDE

The Montana State Library application submittal process uses Microsoft Office documents, fillable PDFs, and DocuSign. Submission of application materials will be completed via email.

Sign up for updates about the release of the MGIA grant registration and application process here: GovDelivery General GIS Coordination News & Updates.

GRANT APPLICATION SUBMITTAL

Application Materials and Availability
All required materials will be available for download at the MGIA Grant Information page beginning January 15, 2026. Applicants should download the single compressed (.zip) folder containing all forms, instructions, and supporting documents.

Application Period
Applications will be accepted from January 15, 2026, through February 25, 2026 at 11:59pm. Submissions received after the deadline will not be considered.

Preparing the Application
Applicants will complete the provided forms by directly editing the documents within the downloaded package. Please retain the original file formats (e.g., .docx, .xlsx) and avoid converting files to PDF unless specifically instructed.

When saving completed materials, include your organization name in each filename, using the format: OriginalFileName_FY27_[City/County/Agency/TribeName]_Application.docx

> Example: *MGIA_FY27_MontanaStateLibrary_Application.docx.*

Applicant Support and Webinars
MSL will host informational Q&A webinars (dates to be announced) to assist applicants with eligibility, forms, and submission procedures. Recordings and related materials will be posted on the MGIA Grant Information website for later viewing.

Reminders
Email reminders to submit applications will begin February 9, 2026.

Submitting the Application
Applicants must email their completed application materials as attachments to mgiagrants@mt.gov. The subject line should follow this format:

> *MGIA Grant Application: [City/County/Agency/Tribe Name]*

> Example: *MGIA FY2027 Grant Application: Montana State Library.*

All materials must be submitted in their original file formats (.docx, .xlsx, etc.).

MSL will confirm receipt of completed applications within 24 hours. If an applicant does not receive confirmation within that timeframe, they should contact MSL by emailing mgiagrants@mt.gov.

Applicant Responsibility
Applicants are solely responsible for ensuring the completeness and accuracy of their submissions. MSL will not correct or modify application materials on behalf of applicants. If errors or missing documents are discovered, a new, complete application package must be re-submitted before the deadline.

Accessibility and Clarity
To ensure equitable participation, all application forms use standard, accessible formats compatible with Microsoft Office and common open-source alternatives. Instructions are written in plain language, and assistance is available during webinars or by contacting the MSL team at mgiagrants@mt.gov.

Application Completeness Checklist

- ✓ Completed Grant Application
- ✓ Budget spreadsheet
- ✓ Letter(s) of support from funding partner(s) (if applicable)
- ✓ Completed Proposed Survey Control Point Collection spreadsheet (if applicable)
- ✓ Invoice sample

GRANT APPLICATION WALKTHROUGH

1. Information about the government organization.
2. MGIA Grant Funding Request & Match information.
3. Proposal Information
   - o Define the FY2027/2028 MGIA Grant Program priority the proposed grant project addresses.
   - o Identify if the proposed project is one or multiple years.
   - o Write an executive summary for the proposed project.
     - ▪ 400-word limit.
     - ▪ Use of AI is permitted, but we also encourage close review of any and all content produced using AI.
4. Identify all funding partners.
   - o Funding Partners are *not* contractors who may be hired to complete the project.

GRANT EVALUATION CRITERIA

Applications will be considered for funding based on the completeness of documentation, ability to follow directions, meeting of stated basic eligibility, well written narratives, performance on past MGIA Grants, and merit in meeting the goals and strategies as stated in the Montana Geospatial Information Plan for Fiscal Year 2027. Budget information is evaluated for reasonableness and appropriateness to the purpose of the MGIA as well as to the applicant's project goals.

A subcommittee of the MGIA Council will review and rank every complete grant application according to scoring procedures based on the criteria percentages. The scored and ranked proposals and supporting documentation will be provided to the greater MGIA Council and the Montana State Library Commission for final review and decision.

Complete grant applications will be evaluated based on the following parts. Failure to complete any of these sections will result in the application being automatically failed, and will not be evaluated.

PUBLIC BENEFIT | 10% OF TOTAL SCORE

Describe the public benefit of the project by clearly connecting it to the defined MGIA Grant Priority and to practical, on-the-ground value for Montana communities. Use this section to make the "why this matters" case for reviewers.

When drafting this narrative:

- Align to the MSDI Framework Themes and Geospatial Data Initiatives
    - Identify the specific MGIA Grant Priorities, MSDI Theme(s) or Geospatial Data Initiative(s) your project supports and clearly state how this project will improve that priority. For example, align to existing data standards, collect information that does not exist, improve data accuracy, etc.
- Show benefits for multiple agencies and jurisdictions
    - Explain how the new or improved data will support the geospatial information needs of more than one department, agency, or jurisdiction.
    - Describe how your project will reduce duplication of effort and identify any expected time or cost savings for participating entities.
- Describe benefits to the citizens of Montana
    - Explain how people, places, and infrastructure will be better served because of this project (for example, improved public safety, better planning decisions, or more accurate information for the public).

- Whenever possible, quantify the impact (such as number of parcels or residents affected, area covered, dollars/time saved, or measurable accuracy improvements) and note any economies of scale where you are extending or connecting to nearby completed work.

PROJECT MANAGEMENT & ORGANIZATIONAL CAPABILITY
10% OF TOTAL SCORE

Organizational Capability – The applicant must demonstrate the organization's past record of performance with similar projects; the ability to implement the methodology described in the scope of work; and the organization's capability to support and sustain the project. All players in this proposed project must be identified: project managers, key personnel, and funding partners.

Invoicing Methodology – In order for the MSL to distribute awarded grant funds for incurred authorized project costs, the MGIA grant award recipient must invoice MSL for reimbursement. The applicant must provide a sample, in PDF format, of the applicant's official invoice document and cover memo.
NOTE: Invoicing may be different if project involves Federal partners. In these cases, grantees will work with their MSL project manager on specific procedures.

Project Management – The applicant must identify both a primary and a secondary project manager and provide contact information for each. The applicant must demonstrate the skills, qualifications, and relevant experience of defined project managers, key personnel, and funding partners.

1. **Management Plan** – The applicant must demonstrate how the defined project manager—not the hired consultant—will manage the entire project, including meeting the mandatory reporting requirements, communicating with the State Library, fulfilling data requirements, and managing all hired consultants.
2. **Past Record of Performance** – The applicant must demonstrate the defined project managers' GIS project management experience, grant management experience, ***and*** (if applicable) consultant management experience. If applicable, applicants should list all similar projects completed. The applicant must provide concrete examples of each and explain how the experience gained in those projects relates to the current proposal.
3. **Hiring a Consultant (if applicable)** – If the applicant has an existing contract with a consultant or plans to hire a consultant, the procurement process for acquiring professional services must be described in detail.
   a. If a consultant has been hired, please identify the consultant, define the amount of time, identify key personnel, and the consultant's procured services and work completed relevant to the proposal.

SCOPE OF WORK | 40% OF TOTAL SCORE

Use the Scope of Work section to show how the applicant will carry out the project from start to finish and that the applicant is prepared to meet MGIA technical expectations. This section should make it clear what work will be done, when, and how it will follow relevant standards and best practices from the Technical Guidelines and MSDI resources.

- Confirm that your goals, objectives, and tasks reflect adequate research and preparation for your project type and MGIA priority.

- Use the template structure to lay out a complete project timeline, adding any additional tasks needed and assigning realistic completion dates; make sure the order of tasks shows how they depend on one another.

- Indicate how you will follow applicable data standards, best practices, and data models (for example, NG9-1-1, MSDI, or other standards cited in the appendices).

- Briefly describe how you will apply quality control and quality assurance (QC/QA) procedures for any data created or edited, including work by both consultants and your own staff.

- Projects collecting Survey Control must include a completed Proposed Survey Control Point Collection Form as part of the Scope of Work materials.

Before submitting, check that the Scope of Work is consistent with the narrative, budget, and sustainability plan and that it provides a clear, technically sound roadmap for completing the project within the grant period.

In this section, applicants must demonstrate adequate research and preparation; demonstrate knowledge of existing data standards/best practices and existing data models; and include a complete project timeline of defined project tasks and outline their interdependencies. The proposal must include how the applicant will apply quality control/quality assurance procedures for data (features/attributes) collected and/or edited by any identified consultants and the applicant.

Mandatory Requirements

1. Refer to all hired or potential consultants/contractors as "consultant." Do not use individual or company names, e.g., Raster & Vector GIS Firm
2. Collecting Survey Control – Applicant must submit the "FY2027 MGIA Grant Application - Proposed Survey Control Point Collection" form, provided with application materials when registered, to identify the proposed collection.
3. 4 page-limit.

Mandatory Formatting Requirements

Scope of Work (SOW) templates are included in the application materials. These templates are pre-formatted to help you organize goals, objectives, and tasks correctly. We strongly recommend completing your SOW using the provided template files first. Once finalized, copy the completed SOW into the designated section of your application document. The example below has been formatted as a multilevel list, available in the application document and SOW templates.

Goal 1.Goal Statement/Title
    Objective 1.1.   Objective Statement/Title
       Task 1.1.1.   Brief Task Name – Full Explanation of the Task.
                -Completion Date: Month/Date/Year
       Task 1.1.2.   Brief Task Name – Full Explanation of the Task.
                -Completion Date: Month/Date/Year
    Objective 1.2.   Objective Statement/Title
       Task 1.2.1.   Brief Task Name – Full Explanation of the Task.
                -Completion Date: Month/Date/Year

Goals and Objectives – List the project goal or goals and objectives. Goals are separate and distinct from objectives. Project goals should be broad and provide a general statement of the project purpose. Each goal should have at least one measurable objective. Each objective should describe a specific outcome of the project and when this outcome will be achieved.

Tasks – *Tasks must be described in chronological order necessary to accomplish the work under each objective*. This description must provide sufficient detail to show that the tasks are achievable and will accomplish the objectives stated in the application. The description also should provide detail concerning the specific results of each task.

1. All tasks must list a completion date.
2. Projects must be completed within the two-year grant period, but may be completed sooner.
3. All equipment purchases must be listed as separate tasks. Each equipment purchase must be clearly described and include specific justification for how the purchase will help achieve the applicant's goals and objectives.
   a. Equipment purchases must comply with section 90-1-411 (1), MCA, which states that *"Money […] may be used only for the purposes of this part, including purchasing technology to assist in collecting, maintaining, or disseminating geographic information systems, geospatial information, or geospatial technologies, and funding the budget required under 90-1-410."*
4. Please refer to *Appendix B* for requirements for collecting survey control.

Deliverables – Provide complete list of all project deliverables: i.e., data sets, scripting code, maps, training materials, photographs, written workflows, video. Assure that this information aligns with the tasks identified in the Goals, Objectives & Tasks.

BUDGET JUSTIFICATION & BUDGET TABLES | 30% OF TOTAL SCORE

Applicants must demonstrate that the project can be completed within the proposed budget, fully justify all project expenditures, leverage existing funds, and explain long-term funding plans. The applicant must present a clear financial picture of all funds used for the purposes of successfully completing this proposed project. Refer to all hired or potential consultants/contractors as "consultant." Do not use individual or company names, e.g., Raster & Vector GIS Firm.

Budget Narrative – Applicant must clearly state the assumptions used to develop the proposed budget, including all sources of contracted and subcontracted cost estimates. If the applicant's share is to be considered in-kind funds, the source of those in-kind funds must be documented. Matching in-kind funds must be specific to the project and be fully justified. They may be monetary or in other forms such as staffing, infrastructure, or technology support. All funding sources listed in the subsequent budget forms must be fully explained. If grant funds are to be distributed to multiple funding recipients through contractual agreements or other means, those must be explained in the narrative. (*2 page-limit*)

Budget Tables – Applicants must complete the provided table (excel) "MGIA Grant Detailed Budget," to define the budget, complete instructions can be found within the provided excel document.

Funding Partner and Required Statements of Support – All funding partners, funding sources/recipients, must be identified. Statements of support are required for each identified funding partner. Any funds pledged to this proposal must be reflected in the statements of support. See MGIA Grant Compliance – MGIA Grant Funding Partners section for the definition of a funding partner. Please attach a PDF version of each statement of support to the grant application.

Matching Funds – Matching funds—either cash or in-kind—are not required by the MGIA Grant Program. However, matching funds from the applicant and any funding partners do demonstrate the applicant's commitment to the proposed project. Therefore, applicants proposing higher levels of matching funds will be scored more highly than applicants pledging little or no matching funds.

PROJECT SUSTAINABILITY | 10% OF TOTAL SCORE

Sustainability is one of the key pillars of the Montana Geospatial Information Act's purpose. In this section, the applicant must demonstrate future project sustainability and include a plan for long-term funding and future enhancements.

Please explain how the project will be maintained in the long term, including staffing and funding plans and reducing dependencies on MGIA funding. If the grant proposal has identified improving an existing MSDI data layer, please explain how the applicant will coordinate with the Montana State Library to ensure the information will be made available. Explain any projected future enhancements that may require additional third-party funding. (300-word limit)

RENEWABLE GRANT ACCOUNTABILITY | NOT SCORED

The applicant must identify all past awarded MGIA/MLIA Grants to their organization. All MGIA/MLIA grants awarded to the applicant's governmental entity/agency must be accounted for. State government applicants must only report for their respective agency. Performance on previously awarded MLIA grant projects will be taken into consideration in the final prioritization. This section is not scored, but past performance will be considered in prioritization of funds.

Please use this Grants History Dashboard to research and identify past awarded Montana Land Information Act (MLIA) Grants.

Applicants awarded MLIA Grants within the past five program years, must include the following reporting. Please note the gap due to no grant program from state fiscal years 2025-2026:

- FY2020 - FY2024 MGIA/MLIA Grantees: Provide a written narrative for each grant awarded, outlining the successes and failures of the grant. Explain how tasks, timelines, and deliverables of the project were or were not met. Demonstrate how past project failures will ensure future successes. (*200-word limit*).

APPENDIX A – GRANT ADMINISTRATIVE COST GUIDELINES

One MGIA grant evaluation criteria is how much of the MGIA dollar is spent directly accomplishing the proposed project goals/objectives vs. the amount of MGIA funds spent on organizational administrative costs. MGIA grant submissions may include reasonable administrative costs; the question arises as to what is "reasonable." Any definition of "reasonable administrative costs" is subjective, so the criteria is not intended to exclude any rational administrative costs; certainly, none that use these costs as "matching" funds in support of the MGIA project goals.

Therefore, the State Library and the MGIA Council will consider any administrative costs up to 10%[1] of the total MGIA funds requested "reasonable" upon their face value. If the MGIA administrative costs funds requested exceed 10%, the grant requestor must detail and individually justify each administrative cost. When evaluating the "above 10%" submissions, the Subcommittee and the State Library will consider the:

- Ratio of the total MGIA funded administrative costs to the total MGIA grant funds requested: the higher the ratio, the lower the overall grant score.
- Justification for each administrative cost category and their application to the goals and objectives of the MGIA Geospatial Information Plan.
- The mix of current grant submissions and the relative value of this submission to the short and long-term goals of the MGIA Council.

If administrative costs are considered unreasonable, the Subcommittee may:

- Reject the grant,
- Ask the grant requestor to modify the administrative costs,
- Rate the grant lower in the MGIA grant funding priority list, and/or
- Accept the administrative costs as submitted.

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[1] Indirect costs are defined in CFR 200.414. For the sake of consistency, the MT State Library utilizes the Federal de minimis rate.

APPENDIX B – COLLECTING MAPPING/SURVEY CONTROL

Technical Requirements

1) Survey Control must be collected by or under the direct supervision of (ARM 24.183.303(4)) a land surveyor licensed to practice in Montana.
2) The Global Navigation Satellite Systems (GNSS) will be used for data collection.
   a) Use of a public or private Real Time Network that is tied to the National Spatial Reference System (NSRS) is preferred.
   b) If in the surveyor's judgement GNSS cannot be used for an observation, another surveying method, preferably a total station solution with GPS control, will be used.
3) The surveyor will follow the [Standards for Positional Accuracy for Cadastral Surveys Using Global Navigation Satellite Systems (GNSS)](#) and the [Guidelines for the Use of Global Navigation Satellite Systems (GNSS) in Cadastral Surveys](#).
   a) Local Accuracy Standards per Guidelines shall be used

Application	Semi-major axis 95 percent error ellipse
Project Control	≤ 0.025 (m)
PLSS Corner Measurement	≤ 0.050 (m)

   b) Document any variations from these guidelines
4) Survey Control must be submitted as follows:
   a) Reference Frame:
      i) If available
         (1) Horizontal: NATRF2022
         (2) Vertical: NAPGD2022 GEOID2022
      ii) Otherwise
         (1) Horizontal: NAD1983 (2011) Epoch 2010.0
         (2) Vertical: NAVD1988 GEOID18
   b) Units:
      i) Latitude & Longitude: Decimal Degrees or Degrees Minutes and Decimal Seconds
      ii) Ellipsoidal, Orthometric, and Antenna Reference Point (ARP) Height: Meters
   c) Reporting Requirements:
      i) Make and Model of the GNSS receiver, Antenna, and related equipment
      ii) If the surveyor uses an electronic data collector a digital copy of the original field data prior to any manipulation or adjustments will be provided in a mutually agreeable format.
         (1) A metadata report will be provided which details:
            (a) Data format
            (b) All descriptive codes and their meaning

d) Network adjustment results including a summary of covariances, standard deviation or RMS values and the software and version number used. The NGS OPUS reports should be included if it was used in place of a network.

e) Final adjusted coordinates must be submitted using the [Montana Control Point Database (MCPD) spreadsheet](#).

    i) Surveyor will report Latitude, Longitude, Ellipsoid Height, Orthometric Height, Antenna Make & Model Number, Antenna Reference Point (ARP) Height, Local Horizontal Accuracy, Network Horizontal Accuracy, Local Vertical Accuracy, Network Vertical Accuracy.

f) Documentation:

    i) One PDF per corner which contains in order:

        (1) Certified Corner Records (CCR)

            (a) By descending date if there are multiple records

        (2) Monument Photo

        (3) Site Photo

Additional Information Submittal and Collection Requirements

1) Applicant must submit the MGIA Proposed Survey Control Point Collection, with the MGIA Grant Application form, and list all Survey Control points proposed for collection. For assistance with determining proposed survey control points for collection, please contact Jeff Hedstrom, MSDI Cadastral Theme Lead.

    a) The Montana State Library will review proposed Survey Control points for relevance and optimal distribution for the enhancement of digital representation of the PLSS. If awarded, the MSL will work with MGIA Grant Award Recipient to ensure the best plan for collection, considering cost and the overall improvement to the PLSS.

2) The MSL requires certified corner records documents for the entire county to aid in the enhancement of the digital representation of the Public Land Survey System (PLSS).

    a) If certified corner record documents for the county(s) are available in a digital format, the grantee will submit all digital corner record documents for the county.

        i) One PDF document per corner

            (1) Order by descending date if there are multiple records

    b) If certified corner record documents for the county(s) are not available in a digital format: MSL will work with the grantee to obtain needed corner record documents from the county.

APPENDIX C – REFERENCED DOCUMENTS & WEBSITES

Montana Geospatial Information Act – Statutes and Administrative Rules:
https://msl.mt.gov/about/commission_councils/montana_land_information_advisory_council/statutes

Montana Geospatial Information Plan:
https://msl.mt.gov/geoinfo/GIS_Community/GIS_Coordination/Land_Information_Plans

Montana Geospatial Information Advisory Council:
https://msl.mt.gov/about/commission_councils/montana_land_information_advisory_council/

Montana State Library Commission:
https://msl.mt.gov/about/commission_councils/commission/

Montana Spatial Data Infrastructure Theme Stewards:
http://msl.mt.gov/GIS/msdi

MGIA Grant Information:
http:/msl.mt.gov/MGIAGrant

MGIA Grants History Dashboard:
https://arcg.is/11bfP

Montana GIS Data List:
http://msl.mt.gov/GIS/DataList

Montana Control Point Database Submission Spreadsheet:
https://ftpgeoinfo.msl.mt.gov/Data/Spatial/MSDI/control_reporting_2026-01-07.xlsx

APPENDIX D – NG9-1-1 DATA VALIDATION & AGGREGATION TOOL

Grants awarded under the priority of Next Generation 9-1-1 (NG9-1-1) Data Development will be required to use the MSL GIS Data Validation and Aggregation Portal (https://mt911.my.1spatial.com/). The MSL GIS Data Validation and Aggregation Portal (Portal) is a web-based service that registered 9-1-1 GIS data providers, either local/tribal governments or their contracted GIS data vendors, can use to validate that the required GIS data meet NG9-1-1 standards and requirements for geospatial call routing. Additionally, the Portal is the means GIS data providers will use to submit their GIS data for aggregation to statewide datasets and provision their required GIS data for use in the State's eventual NG9-1-1 system.

A high-level workflow for validating NG9-1-1 GIS data:

A. GIS data providers submit data compliant with the NENA Standard for NG9-1-1 GIS Data Model (NENA-STA-006.2a-2022) to validate that a given dataset(s) meets NG9-1-1 standards and requirements.
B. Users can download markup GIS datasets that provide feedback on potential issues with the data and enable the user to zoom to the feature.
C. After fixing issues, the user can submit the dataset again to validate the issue has been fixed.
D. When minimum requirements are met, users have the ability to submit their datasets for aggregation to statewide datasets.
E. As changes are made to the local data, users repeat steps a.-d., as needed.

APPENDIX E – MSDI HYDROGRAPHY

Montana's surface water mapping, based on the National Hydrography Dataset (NHD) and Watershed Boundary Dataset (WBD), is outdated and inconsistent. The 3D Hydrography Program (3DHP) through the U.S. Geological Survey (USGS) aims to refresh this mapping with the most precise, accurate, and consistent nationwide hydrography dataset ever developed. Currently, there are limited 3DHP projects underway within Montana. Additional projects are desired throughout the state.

Grants awarded under the MSDI Hydrography Priority should target partnering with the United States Geological Survey (USGS) by applying for a Fiscal Year 2027 3DHP Data Collaboration Announcement (DCA).

Grants should target at least two, ideally more, 10-digit Hydrologic Units for the project area of interest. Consideration will be given to projects that align with USGS 3DHP guidance provided at the following link (see 3DHP Important Information and 3DHP Project Evaluation Considerations in the DCA.

APPENDIX F – STATE PLANE COORDINATE SYSTEM UPDATES

It is anticipated that the State Plane Coordinate System updates will be implemented and available during this grant cycle. The MSL will work with all awarded grantees on how we will integrate the new datum changes.