

Albany County and City of Laramie Community Partner Organization Funding Request Application FY2027

ALL APPLICATIONS ARE DUE ON OR BEFORE 5:00 P.M. ON WEDNESDAY, MARCH 11TH 2026 AND WILL ONLY BE CONSIDERED IF ALL PREVIOUS FINAL REPORTS HAVE BEEN COMPLETED.

The City of Laramie and Albany County provide funding to local community partner organizations through their annual budget making processes. Organizations receiving these funds do not operate within the formal structure of city or county governments but may utilize support from these governments to achieve their missions or fund special projects. Community partner organizations generally have a strong presence within the community and provide vital services, products, or activities that serve to improve the community in a variety of ways. Only non-profit/not-for-profit entities are eligible to apply for funding. For-profit entities are ineligible.

Historically, organizations requesting funding fall within the following three categories:

Recreational/Arts and Culture: These organizations exist to promote, sustain, and develop recreational, cultural, and leisure activities within the community. These organizations may also sponsor educational and community events and celebrations designed to encourage a diverse cultural and active lifestyle while promoting a strong sense of community.

Social Services: The primary objective of these organizations is to support or engage in activities designed to enhance the wellbeing of individuals and families within the community. These organizations provide a variety of services that focus on basic human needs, access to programs and services designed to maintain human dignity and health, and the overall welfare of citizens.

Civic Organizations/Quasi-Governmental: These organizations have been established within our community to A) work for the overall improvement, advancement, and economic health through civic involvement, economic development initiatives, and fostering community spirit; or B) provide services, programs and other opportunities for the betterment of the community through the organization of Joint Powers Boards or other Quasi-Governmental Organizations that work collaboratively with the City of Laramie and/or Albany County on shared goals, concerns, and interests.

This Community Partner Funding is available from funds collected via Albany County's 5th Penny Tax and historically has funded approximately \$250,000 in County requests and \$235,000 in City requests. In their sole discretion, the City and County each reserve the right to waive any informality in any application and/or reject any application.

Organizations can submit a request to both the City and County. If an organization is awarded funding, the organization is solely responsible for its costs including, but not limited to, operations, personnel, taxes,

maintenance, and insurance coverage against public liability and property damage.

Priority of requests is as follows:

- Requests that improve the community.
- Requests that are not more than 20% of organization's general operating budget and do not exceed \$20,000 each from City or County.
- Requests to either City or County that are less than 20% of organization's general operating budget but in excess of \$20,000 are considered on a case by case basis and may affect the priority of the organization's request.
- Demonstration of multiple revenue sources for organization.
- The number of people served by organization.
- Clear identification of those who benefit from the organization's work.
- Demonstration of the organization's partnership with other organizations in the community.
- Requests that do not duplicate efforts already existing in the community.

For-profit entities are not eligible to apply. Only non-profit/not-for-profit entities are eligible to apply for funding.

Presentation dates are as follows:

City-Only and Joint City/County Applicants:

March 24th, 2026 beginning at 5:30pm.

City Hall-Council Chambers, 406 Iverson Ave.

County-Only Applications:

April 7th, 2026 beginning at 9:30 am

County Courthouse, County Commissioners Room, Room 105.

*****Send presentation materials to Nancy Oakland-Potter noaklandpotter@cityoflaramie.org by 5:00 p.m. on Friday, March 13th*****

Schedule for Decision Making Process and Availability of Funds:

City: Laramie City Council intends to make its preliminary funding decisions in early to mid-April 2026 and final funding decisions will be announced upon adoption of the City's FY2026/2027 Budget in June 2026. The City's award payments to successful organizations will be made on or around August 1, 2026, pending receipt of the fully executed agreement.

County: The Albany County Commissioners make their final funding decisions upon the adoption of the County's FY2026/2027 Budget in June 2026. Agreements will be sent to successful organizations in July 2026. Pending the County's receipt of the fully executed Agreement, the County's award payments to successful organizations will only be made on a reimbursement basis.

All information on this form and all requested documentation must be complete and submitted before the application will be considered. Applications that are incomplete or are missing required materials may be rejected. If there are additional questions from City Council or the Albany County Commissioners after review of the applications Nancy Oakland-Potter or Bailey Quick will reach out to the organization for additional information.

Contact the following for assistance:

City of Laramie: Nancy Oakland-Potter, noaklandpotter@cityoflaramie.org, 307-721-5226

Albany County: Bailey Quick, grants@albanycountywy.gov, 307-721-1803

Email *

commonoutdoorground@gmail.com

The organization has read, understands, and agrees to the above guidelines? *

Yes

No

Applicant Information

Please provide the following information about your organization:

Organization Name: *

Common Outdoor Ground

Contact Name, Title: *

Nicole Foss, Director of Operations and Development

Mailing Address: *

2124 Rainbow Ave, Laramie WY, 82070

Contact Phone: *

719-304-4049

Contact E-Mail: *

commonoutdoorground@gmail.com

Type of Organization: *

Recreation/Arts and Culture

Social Service

Civic/Quasi-Governmental

Non-Profit Agency (501(c)(3))

Not-for-Profit Agency (501(c)(4) or 501(c)(7))

Other: _____

Are you a first time applicant for Community Partner Funding? *

- Yes
- No

Requested Amount from the City of Laramie: *

Enter dollar amount only

4000

Requested Amount from Albany County: *

Enter dollar amount only

10000

Will this amount be used to leverage additional funds through grants or other means? *

- Yes
- No

If yes, indicate the dollar amount of additional funds that will be leveraged.

72000

Provide examples of grants the organization has received in the past 2 years. *

(Excluding prior City of Laramie and Albany County Community Partner Funds programs)

We have received \$27,500 for each of the past two years from the Ellbogen Foundation to support our Outdoor School program, \$22,000 from the Intertie program at the Wyoming Community Foundation, and \$10,000 per year from the WCF competitive granting cycle. (We have received grants from other sources as well, but this is a good sample of the types of grants we receive.)

List organization board of director(s), indicating officers. *

Carrie Bennett (Board President), Emily Parsons (Treasurer), Clare Gunshenen (Secretary), Ken Cramer, JD Dixon, Sara Brodnax, Ashley Quick, Bonnie Johnson

Description of request:

Provide a detailed explanation of how the requested funds would be utilized by the organization. *

Include any additional funding sources and amounts received by the organization. Maximum character count is 2,500, including spaces.

Common Outdoor Ground (COG) provides community support for the sustainability of public lands in southeast Wyoming. Funds from this grant will pay a portion of the off-season salary for our Operations Director. This key position works year-round to develop partnerships and programs so we can be "shovel ready" when our season starts each year. Thanks to sustainable and increasing funding, we have been able to expand programming into the spring and fall, developed youth programming with our incredibly successful Outdoor School, and increased the total number of volunteer hours served every year since 2020, including over 2000 hours in 2026 alone. The administrative work that this grant will help fund is difficult to fund with project-based grant sources, and that's why the support of the city and county is so vital to COG's continued growth. Last year, we were able to leverage the support we receive from community partner funds into approximately \$100,000 from other grantmakers and donors. This grant helps us demonstrate our connection to the community, making our applications to other funders much more competitive. We also receive funding from the Ellbogen Foundation (\$27,500 for Outdoor School), the Wyoming Community Foundation (\$10,000 competitive grant), the Intertie Project Fund (\$12,000 to support a recreation technician this summer), and the USFS (projected \$15,000 for a second recreation technician and management).

Describe the positive effects and benefits the requested funds would provide to the organization and the community, including goals the organization hopes to accomplish. *

Maximum character count is 2,500, including spaces.

COG's work benefits all residents and visitors to Albany County, through our maintenance of outdoor recreation infrastructure. Outdoor recreation accounts for 4.5% of Wyoming's GDP: the third highest percentage in the nation (trailing only Montana and Hawaii). Albany County is home to several world-class recreation opportunities, including cross country skiing, snowmobiling, hiking, and wildlife viewing. Residents of Laramie and Albany County enjoy unparalleled access to these activities via public lands. COG's volunteer events focus on maintaining outdoor recreation infrastructure and supporting public land managers who are experiencing decreased budgets and staff capacity. In order to contribute to a culture of land stewardship and community building, we aim to work with 3 new volunteer groups in 2026. This will allow us to expand our base of reliable and engaged volunteers and help us connect folks who really want opportunities for land stewardship to the public lands around us. We are also expanding our conservation-based projects this year, including a new partnership with Trout Unlimited constructing beaver dam analogues. Our k-12 educational work is also actively building the public land stewards of tomorrow. Albany County Outdoor School provides a lifelong memory and a forum for kids to connect with the land that belongs to all of us together. If we foster this connection to public land at an early age, it will pay dividends for years to come. We annually donate thousands of hours of labor to public lands; last year those hours were worth over \$60,000. That kind of value is what is created when neighbors come together to take care of each other and the land that we all love.

Describe your organization's partnerships with other organizations in the community and how your organization avoids duplication of efforts while carrying out impactful work in your service area. *

Maximum character count is 2,500, including spaces.

COG is explicitly collaborative. We were founded to connect passionate public land users to the needs of Forest Service employees struggling to maintain an enormous recreation infrastructure with an ever shrinking budget. COG volunteers love the outdoors, and are driven to donate time, resources, and connections. In addition to that initial mission, we are now proud to act as connectors in our community more broadly, searching for ways to leverage existing initiatives and skill bases to achieve environmental goals in southeastern Wyoming. We are an active participant in the Southeast Wyoming Outdoor Recreation Collaborative, and we've worked with tons of other partners, including BikeNet, Pilot Hill, Wyoming Game and Fish, the Mule Deer Foundation, Wyoming Pathways, the Southeast Wyoming Climbers Coalition, Visit Laramie, the BLM, and more.

Our Albany County Outdoor School program is an excellent example of this philosophy. It was the perfect storm of events in the spring of 2024: we heard a desire from parents and elementary educators to re-establish a place-based outdoor learning experience into their curriculum without the logistical and financial burdens presented by past visits to the Teton Science School. At the same time, we found in our own work that it is essential to engage and teach principles of environmental stewardship at all ages in order to ensure the sustainability of public lands. We were also working with different arms of UW's outreach efforts (including the Biodiversity Institute, the Science Initiative/ Science Roadshow, the WORTH Institute, the Wyoming Naturalists, and the Haub School), and we knew we could connect all of these partners to create something really special in our community, meeting the needs of all.

Is this a new or existing project, or ongoing operations? *

- New Project
- Existing Project
- Ongoing Operations

Is this a one-time request or an ongoing expense? *

- One-time request
- Ongoing expense

Number of individuals your organization serves annually. *

30000

Populations served: *

Check all boxes that apply


- Children Ages 0-5
- Children Ages 6-10
- Children Ages 11-18
- Adults Ages 18-25
- Adults Ages 26-40
- Adult Ages 41-64
- Adults Ages 65+
- K-12 School/School District
- Veterans
- Low to Moderate Income
- LGBTQIA+
- Persons with Disabilities
- College/University
- Tribal Organizations
- Other: _____


Additional information in support of this application?

Maximum character count is 1,000, including spaces.

Provide your organization's financial statements for the most recent fiscal year. *

File must be saved as a .pdf labeled by the organization requesting funding (ex. LaramieSoupKitchen2025FinancialStatment)


 CommonOutdoor...

 Add file

Provide an itemized budget for this request and include other revenue sources as applicable. *

Budget Template available in the link below.


File must be saved as a .pdf labeled by the organization requesting funding (ex. LaramieSoupKitchenFY27Budget)


 CommonOutdoor...

 Add file

Provide organization's most recent Form 990, 990-EZ, or 990-N, including all schedules. *

File must be saved as a .pdf labeled by the organization requesting funding (ex. LaramieSoupKitchen2025_990-N)

 Common Outdoo...

 Add file

FY2025 City Award Information

Please complete the following additional questions if you are applying for City funds. If you are only applying for County funds you may skip this section.

Amount of **City** funds awarded in FY2025?

2507

Has your organization spent all awarded FY2025 **City** Funds?

Yes

No

If organization has not spent all awarded FY2025 **City** funds, note the remaining amount and the date by which you intend to expend those funds.

Assurance and Signature

Please review all previous questions to ensure their completeness and accuracy, and make sure all files have been attached.

We, as the Grantee Organization, understand that we are responsible for signing an Agreement * with Albany County and/or the City of Laramie if funds are awarded:

Yes

No

We, as the Grantee Organization, understand that a final report **must** be submitted to the awarding agency as part of this funding: *

Yes

No

We, as the Grantee Organization, understand that a representative must present to the City Council and/or County Commission at the appointed date to be eligible for funding: *

Yes

No

We, as a Grantee Organization, have submitted all previous required final reporting to each funding agency. *

Yes

No

We, as the Grantee Organization, understand that all funding awarded through **Albany County** will be on a reimbursement basis: *

Yes

No

We, as the Grantee Organization, understand that submission of this application is not a guarantee of funding: *

Yes

No

Digital Signature, Title: *

Nicole Foss, Director of Operations and Development

Date: *

MM DD YYYY

03 / 11 / 2025

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Profit and Loss
Common Outdoor Ground (COG)
 January-December, 2025

DISTRIBUTION ACCOUNT	TOTAL
Income	
4010 Public Donations	28,270.10
4020 Restricted Donations	45,000.00
4050 Grant Revenue	62,578.66
Total for Income	\$135,848.76
Cost of Goods Sold	
5000 Direct Program Expenditures	780.30
Total for Cost of Goods Sold	\$780.30
Gross Profit	\$135,068.46
Expenses	
6110 Advertising & Marketing	1,107.04
6120 Automobile	\$9.52
6122 Auto Gas & Fuel	28.24
Total for 6120 Automobile	\$37.76
6320 Commission & Fees	357.50
6330 Contract Labor	2,000.00
6420 Dues & Subscriptions	100.00
6510 Education & Training	345.72
6910 Insurance	2,580.58
7310 Program Supplies - Volunteer Meals	2,094.35
7311 Staff and Business Meals (non program)	685.75
7620 Payroll	
7621 Salaries & Wages	44,684.74
7623 Payroll Taxes	
7624 FICA Taxes	3,418.37
7625 FUTA Taxes	0.00
7626 SUTA Taxes	76.37
Total for 7623 Payroll Taxes	\$3,494.74
7627 Worker's Comp	137.68
7628 Employee Benefits	315.84
Total for 7620 Payroll	\$48,633.00
7640 Professional Services	
7642 Accounting Fees	3,280.00
Total for 7640 Professional Services	\$3,280.00
7810 Rent & Lease	
7811 Building Lease	600.00
7812 Equipment Lease	149.25
Total for 7810 Rent & Lease	\$749.25
7910 Shipping & Postage	113.52
7920 Small Tools & Equipment	2,745.91

Profit and Loss
Common Outdoor Ground (COG)
 January-December, 2025

DISTRIBUTION ACCOUNT	TOTAL
7930 Software Subscriptions	3,018.48
7940 Supplies	\$9,249.25
7950 Volunteer Appreciation	325.00
Total for 7940 Supplies	\$9,574.25
8010 Taxes & Licenses	
8012 Licenses	27.25
Total for 8010 Taxes & Licenses	\$27.25
8030 Travel	\$300.00
8036 Mileage Reimbursement	2,448.75
Total for 8030 Travel	\$2,748.75
8110 Utilities	
8113 Trash Removal	410.00
Total for 8110 Utilities	\$410.00
Purchases	2,067.00
Total for Expenses	\$82,676.11
Net Operating Income	\$52,392.35
Net Other Income	
Net Income	\$52,392.35

Additional Budget Narrative:

In 2025 COG exceeded income targets and simultaneously controlled costs in significant ways. Specifically, we completed several projects in the Medicine Bow Routt National Forest with funding from the National Forest Foundation. While COG had expected to complete much of this work through paid contractors (at considerable expense), we were ultimately able to recruit volunteers and use our existing staff to complete these projects. Beyond the cost savings, our volunteers completed the work in a more timely way than we could have done it with contractors while still ensuring quality workmanship and care for these recreation sites.

The strength of our volunteers, recruited, coordinated, and appreciated with our paid staff, and the windfall of funds received has allowed us to fund a reserve account and take some calculated risks in our 2026 budget. Given the uncertainty of future federal funding and economic uncertainty more broadly impacting our individual donors, we are grateful to have these financial reserves. As we navigate various transitions and stages of growth as an organization, we will continue to carefully steward our resources to ensure long-term stability and consistent program delivery.

Common Outdoor Ground (COG)

Budget Overview: Budget_FY26_P&L - FY26 P&L

January - December 2026

	TOTAL
Revenue	
4010 Public Donations	16,500.00
4020 Restricted Donations	27,800.00
4030 Services	15,000.00
4050 Grant Revenue	28,000.00
Total Revenue	\$87,300.00
GROSS PROFIT	\$87,300.00
Expenditures	
6110 Advertising & Marketing	1,333.91
6320 Commission & Fees	357.50
6420 Dues & Subscriptions	100.00
6510 Education & Training	500.00
6910 Insurance	3,000.00
7310 Program Supplies - Volunteer Meals	300.00
7620 Payroll	0.00
7621 Salaries & Wages	50,950.00
7623 Payroll Taxes	
7624 FICA Taxes	3,898.00
7625 FUTA Taxes	0.00
7626 SUTA Taxes	390.00
Total 7623 Payroll Taxes	4,288.00
7627 Worker's Comp	350.00
7628 Employee Benefits	1,170.00
Total 7620 Payroll	56,758.00
7640 Professional Services	0.00
7642 Accounting Fees	2,500.00
7644 Digital Services	1,500.00
Total 7640 Professional Services	4,000.00
7810 Rent & Lease	0.00
7811 Building Lease	600.00
7812 Equipment Lease	149.25
Total 7810 Rent & Lease	749.25
7910 Shipping & Postage	93.33
7920 Small Tools & Equipment	2,037.07
7930 Software Subscriptions	2,933.96
7940 Supplies	11,400.00
7950 Volunteer Appreciation	325.00
Total 7940 Supplies	11,725.00
8010 Taxes & Licenses	0.00
8012 Licenses	27.25
Total 8010 Taxes & Licenses	27.25
8030 Travel	
8034 Lodging	600.00

Common Outdoor Ground (COG)

Budget Overview: Budget_FY26_P&L - FY26 P&L

January - December 2026

	TOTAL
8036 Mileage Reimbursement	2,500.00
Total 8030 Travel	3,100.00
8110 Utilities	0.00
8113 Trash Removal	200.00
Total 8110 Utilities	200.00
Total Expenditures	\$87,215.27
NET OPERATING REVENUE	\$84.73
NET REVENUE	\$84.73

Additional Budget Narrative:

In 2026 COG will fund programs through a mix of donations, grant revenue, and fees for service. Specifically, we solicit public donations three times a year (spring, summer, and late fall/winter) and hope to raise \$16,500 from these efforts in 2026. Additionally, we hope to earn roughly \$15,000 through service agreements, primarily with the National Forest Foundation and the United States Forest Service. Finally, COG receives funds from a variety of grants. For 2026 we have already been awarded funds from the John P Elbogen Foundation and from the Wyoming Intertie Community Investment Program. We hope to compliment these resources with additional support from the Wyoming Community Foundation, the Albany County Recreation Board, the Wyoming State Forestry Division, and with this request for support from the City of Laramie and Albany County.