



Recycling Fund Grant Guidance Document

Alabama Department of Environmental Management

Materials Management Section

Solid Waste Branch

Recycling

The Alabama Recycling Fund (ARF) Program was established in 2008 when the Solid Wastes & Recyclable Materials Management Act (SWRMMA) was signed into law. The ARF Program helps to promote and fund recycling programs in local communities throughout Alabama. Funding of the program is provided through a \$1 per ton disposal fee placed on Solid Waste disposed of in Alabama Landfills. The grant program is administered through the Alabama Department of Environmental Management (ADEM). ADEM has awarded 321 grants to local governments, municipalities, nonprofits, and authorities. 37 million dollars have been awarded for infrastructure, personnel, professional services, education, and outreach through 2025.

This document provides guidance for applying to the Alabama Recycling Fund. Applicants should review this Guidance in its entirety and, if needed, attend the webinar prior to applying.

Contact: Recycling Staff
334-274-4201
recycle@adem.alabama.gov

Deadline: March 1st
Grant funding avg per year: \$2.2 million

What kinds of projects will be funded?

ADEM seeks well-planned recycling based projects in Alabama. The goal is to promote local recycling efforts by providing reimbursement grants to local governments to develop, implement, and enhance recycling programs.

Who is eligible?

The following organizations are eligible for funding:

- Municipalities
- Counties
- Solid waste authorities
- Quasi-governmental or joint agencies
- Nonprofit organizations (such as public schools) that partner with local governments

What projects are funded:

The Alabama Recycling Fund supports projects that expand or enhance recycling efforts across the state. Funding categories include infrastructure, personnel, professional services, education, and outreach. Examples of appropriate uses of grant funds include purchasing recycling bins and containers, construction of recycling centers or drop off locations, and

acquiring processing equipment and infrastructure. In addition, grants can cover public education and outreach materials to increase recycling participation. ADEM also allows funds to be used for revisions to local Solid Waste Management Plans, if updates are necessary to support new or expanded recycling efforts. All funding is used to expand or enhance recycling efforts in Alabama.

Funding period

After the grant is awarded, the grant contract period will begin October 1st and end September 30th of the following year. The applicant must spend funds within this contract period, unless the time is extended by written agreement between the applicant and ADEM. Extensions are possible but not guaranteed.

How will grant funds be disbursed to award recipients?

All funds for ARF grants are distributed on a reimbursement basis. Requests for reimbursements can be made at the time the semi-annual reports are due, April 15th and October 15th. Requests must include: (1) proof that funds were spent for the budgeted items in the grant contract, including proof of payment (cancelled checks and/or credit card statements), (2) invoices, and (3) narrative that you have received or completed that budgeted item. **Purchases made before October 1st will NOT be reimbursed. Likewise, purchases made after Sept 30th will NOT be reimbursed.**

How do you apply?

An Application Checklist is provided as an attachment to this document. This checklist describes information that applicants must submit for their application to be considered complete. *Applications that fail to provide all the required information will be deemed inadequate and will not be considered for funding.*

Grant ranking process:

The selection committee will use the criteria below to rank applications and make award decisions. Applicants are encouraged to consider the award scoring criteria as they develop their grant application. A total score of 100 points is available.

1) Program Need and Funding Justification- 30 points

Is there a clearly defined and critical recycling-based need? Is the justification for funding supported by relevant data or documented demand? Does it align with broader environmental goals (e.g., landfill diversion, underserved areas)? Does the project align with the local solid waste management plan?

2) Project Impact- 25 points

Who will benefit, and how will the impact be measured? Does the project have a wide reach across multiple communities, institutions, or age groups? Will it significantly reduce waste or increase participation?

3) Feasibility and Implementation- 20 points

Is there a clear, realistic plan with timelines, responsibilities, and resources? Are roles and processes defined to ensure successful implementation? Is there a plan for sustainability beyond the grant period?

4) *Budget and Cost Effectiveness- 15 points*

Is the budget detailed, reasonable, and aligned with project goals? Does it provide good value for the impact, with any cost-sharing or leveraged funds? Can the project be partially funded if the full funds requested are not available?

5) *Alignment with Infrastructure and/or Education Priorities* – 10 points

Does the project strongly align with infrastructure or education priorities? Does it directly support the stated goals of the ARF grant?

How do I submit an application?

All applications must be submitted on the Alabama Environmental Permitting and Compliance System ([AEPACS](#)). Applications must meet the requirements of the Alabama Recycling Fund Grants Program regulations found in ADEM Administrative Code 335-13-10.

Deadline for Application:

Applications for grants from the Program must be submitted electronically to the Department no later than March 1, or the next business day if March 1 falls on a weekend, of each year to be considered for funding from that fiscal year's Fund allocation. Applications received after the deadline will NOT be considered.

If selected for funding:

ADEM anticipates that applicants selected for funding will be notified by August. ADEM will notify the applicant with an email stating the amount of funding awarded. Following award notification, a grant agreement will be drafted and sent to the awardee.

Priority grants:

All proposed projects must also align with the Solid Waste Management Plan (SWMP) for the jurisdiction involved. Higher priority is given to projects that establish new recycling programs in areas that currently lack them. Additionally, projects that target a broad range of recyclable materials and multiple sources such as residential, commercial, or institutional waste are viewed more favorably than those with a narrower scope. For smaller communities, partnerships with other municipalities can strengthen recycling efforts. Finally, projects that can demonstrate financial support from additional funding sources beyond the ARF will receive competitive consideration.



Alabama Recycling Fund Grant Application Checklist

Alabama Department of Environmental Management

Materials Management Section

Solid Waste Branch

Recycling

Before submitting your grant application, use the checklist below to make sure you have included all necessary documents. Incomplete applications will not be considered.

_____ A complete grant application, typed with original signature

_____ Project Description & Justification

- Project Overview
 - Clear description of the recycling or waste reduction/minimization project.
 - Include business or accounting plans (if applicable).
 - Provide an itemized budget table.
 - Describe the project timeline with major project milestones. Examples include preparing bids, procuring equipment, completing installations, and conducting outreach events.
- Material Estimates
 - Estimate quantity, source, and type of materials to be collected/recycled under the proposed project or program.
 - Explain method of estimation.
 - Include volume of out-of-state waste (separate line in report).
- Facilities & Services
 - Describe all existing/proposed recycling facilities, collection centers, or related service centers in the project area.
 - For multi-jurisdictional/regional programs, list all facilities/services in the planning region (include ownership, capacity, type, service area).
- Need Statement
 - Explain why the grant is needed to achieve or surpass both the recycling or waste reduction/minimization efforts set forth in the approved local solid waste management plan and the purpose and goals of the Solid Wastes and Recyclable Materials Management Act of 2008.
 - Describe how existing public/private recycling efforts will be incorporated.
- Evaluation Methods
 - Describe how the project's success will be evaluated.
 - Include progress measurement methods for semi-annual reports.
- Education and Outreach Funding

- If asking for funding for education and outreach funding, please include a description of objectives that will be utilized to evaluate any education or public outreach component of the proposed project, and an explanation of how the educational component will directly promote the use of existing or planned local recycling projects.
- Examples or copies of text to be included on print materials.

_____ Recycling Plan

- Implementation
 - Explain how the project will be implemented.
 - Include a timetable for development/implementation.
- Coverage & Participation
 - Number of households covered (from latest U.S. Census).
 - Estimated percentage of population participating in recycling (with success/failure reasons).
 - Describe ongoing public/private recycling activities and their success rates.
- Waste Reduction Impact
 - Estimate annual percent reduction in waste disposed at solid waste facilities from existing programs.
 - Estimate avoided disposal costs from proposed project's recycling.
- Solid Waste Services
 - An estimate of the number of households (not population) within the proposed program area served by solid waste collection services.
 - Identify facilities where solid waste is disposed or processed.
 - Anticipated effect of project on these services/facilities.
- Materials
 - Describe/evaluate recyclable materials being handled (glass, metals, paper, yard waste, plastics, white goods, tires, etc.).
- Markets
 - Identify current and anticipated markets or uses for collected materials.
- Operating Costs & Revenue
 - Estimate operating and maintenance costs/revenue for existing and proposed projects.
 - If funding private programs, provide a summary of their costs/revenues.

_____ Goals

- Estimated increase in participation/recycling due to proposed program growth.

_____ Quotes including quantities, price/each, total price with shipping, equipment specs, pictures, and examples of printed material

_____ Agreements or MOU's between partners, if applicable

_____ Any written contracts, bids, or agreements related to project development/implementation.

_____ Local SWMP Revisions (only include relevant excerpts from SWMP, if requesting funds for revisions, include current and examples of proposed changes)

_____ Information on any previous state or federal grants received for the purpose of solid waste management or recycling received by the jurisdiction during the previous 36 months. This information shall include the grant amount and the grant period, and other information or data as set forth in the application forms.



Alabama Recycling Fund Grant Budget and Timeline

Alabama Department of Environmental Management

Materials Management Section

Solid Waste Branch

Recycling

REQUIRED: Attach quotes from vendors for the proposed items.

Alabama Recycling Fund Budget Table			
Item(s) (in order of priority)	Cost	Grant Amount	Cash Match*
Total Project Cost	\$	\$	\$

* Cash Match is not required for this grant. However, if you are providing funds in addition to this grant, please indicate it on the table above.