



## Evaluation Criteria

### 2025-2026 New York State Conservation Partnership Program

Applications are reviewed by a committee comprised of representatives from the Land Trust Alliance, New York State Department of Environmental Conservation, individuals with expertise in New York's land trust community and the foundation/grant-making sector. All decisions of the review committee are final. The committee's decisions will be based on the following considerations, summarized as primary and secondary evaluation criteria.

#### Primary Evaluation Criteria

- Project is aligned with the land trust's mission, goals and strategic priorities.
- Project has well defined metrics and deliverables.
- Project has a high likelihood of success.
- Project can be accomplished in the stated grant period.
- Source and status of land trust match is well explained.
- Applicant demonstrates sufficient organizational capacity and commitment to complete the project.
  
- Project advances the purpose of the specific grant category:
  - **Capacity & Excellence Grants:** Application demonstrates how the project will strengthen capacity through implementation of [Land Trust Standards & Practices](#).
  - **Conservation Catalyst Grants:** Application describes how the project will engage multiple partners and advance models for collaboration.
  - **Professional Development Grants:** Application demonstrates need for position(s), makes the case for how the additional capacity will strengthen the organization, and puts forth a commitment and plan for sustaining the position after the grant period.
  - **Stewardship & Resource Management Grants:** Application makes the case for capital investments in public access and/or on the ground stewardship of conserved properties.
  - **Transaction Grants:** Application demonstrates how the easement/fee acquisition will conserve environmentally significant lands and/or promote public enjoyment of the outdoors.
  
- Applicant demonstrates a high level of competence, accountability and due diligence, including timely submission of all reports and clear communication with the Alliance if or when issues arise with a grant funded project.

#### Secondary Evaluation Criteria

- Applicant is accredited or expresses intent to become accredited within the next 3 years.
- Project will benefit the community and/or advance state/regional/local conservation priorities.
- Land trust match is greater than minimum required.
- Application includes strong letters of support.
- Project has a high degree of innovation or creativity.