

Charlotte County Boater Improvement Fund / West Coast Inland Navigation District

FY 2026/2027 Grant Application

Application deadline is January 31, 2025

Effective December 11, 2024, applicants may apply for grant assistance from the Florida Boater Improvement Fund (BIF) revenues collected from boat registration fees, as well as, from the West Coast Inland Navigation District (WCIND) revenues collected from property tax assessments. No applications will be accepted or considered after the application deadline.

Who May Apply: Charlotte County government agencies and non-government organizations may apply for these funds.

Types of Grant Funding Available: There are 3 sources of grant funding available. In addition to the following specific criteria, all projects must serve a **public purpose** and benefit the community as a whole.

- **WCIND.** Funding for public navigation channels, boating access facilities, waterfront parks, and piers; as well as, marine and environmental education and safety programs. Projects are categorized into 5 groups; marine law enforcement (funded 100%), navigation improvement (funded 100%), environmental education (funded 100%), boater safety/education (50% match required), and boater recreation (50% match required). WCIND funding may not be used for general operations and maintenance.
- **BIF-State.** Recreational channel marking and other uniform waterway markers, public boat ramps, lifts and hoists, marine railways, public launching facilities, removal of derelict vessels, hazardous floating structures. (funded 100%)
- **BIF-Local.** Patrol, regulation, and maintenance of the lakes, rivers, and waters, as well as, other boating-related activities. (Up to 100% funding available)

General Information: This is a **cost reimbursement** program for projects that will be completed within one fiscal year; which is from **October 1, 2025 to September 30, 2026**. All unspent grant funds remaining at the end of the grant period will be retained by Charlotte County and unobligated. For extenuating circumstances, a project extension may be approved upon written request.

With submittal of the application, all non-governmental applicants must provide their organization's Articles of Incorporation, current Florida Not for Profit Corporation Annual Report, and/or Department of Treasury document showing 501(C)3 status and the legal name of the organization.

If awarded, the recipient of grant funds will be required to sign a funding agreement with Charlotte County outlining the obligations of both parties as it relates to the grant. A sample of this agreement is available on the Charlotte County public website at <https://www.charlottecountyfl.gov/boards-committees/mac/Pages/BoaterImprovementFund.aspx>.

Agencies awarded grant funds will be required to provide Charlotte County **quarterly reports** of project status. Additionally, agencies awarded funds for equipment, goods, or services exceeding \$5,000 in value will be required to provide Charlotte County:

- No less than 3 written bids for approval prior to purchase. If an item or service is determined by the recipient to be available from only one vendor, the recipient may request, in writing, a "sole-source" purchase authorization from Charlotte County.
- An annual report of any equipment's current use and value until the asset value falls below \$5,000.
- A formal request for disposition of equipment if it is no longer needed or used for the purpose grant funds were awarded.

Grant Application Processing Schedule:

- **12/11/2024 – 01/31/2025-** Application Period. No applications will be accepted or considered after the deadline.
- **03/13/2025-** Charlotte County Marine Advisory Committee (MAC) review and prioritization of applications for formal recommendation to Board of County Commissioners (BCC).
- **May 2025-** BCC reviews MAC recommendation and votes on applications.
- **July 2025-** WCIND board votes on district applications for funding.
- **July – September 2025-** Grant contracts developed and signed.
- **10/01/2025.** Grant term begins.

Application Instructions:

The name of the applicant's organization must be the legal title of that entity as provided on documents of incorporation or governmental designation. If a corporation, ensure the appropriate corporate designation (i.e. LLC, INC, Inc.) is included. Applicants must provide documents verifying their organization's legal name (Articles of Incorporation, Florida Not for Profit Corporation Annual Report, Department of Treasury 501(C)3 designation).

The Principal Officer identified must be the official who is authorized to legally bind the organization contractually.

Projects for grant funding must fall into at least one of the several categories of work. Select the category or categories that best describe your project's scope.

Briefly describe the project on the application. More detailed descriptions of the project should be attached to the application.

The applicant will indicate the total amount of grant funding requested, as well as, any funds the applicant will contribute towards the project. Not all projects require an applicant to contribute project funds; however, two categories of projects available for grant funding from WCIND require the applicant to pay for 50% of the project; referred to as matching funds. These projects are associated with boater safety and education, and boater recreation. If the applicant is requesting BIF-Local funding from Charlotte County to fund all, or a portion of, the applicant's required 50% matching funds, provide a statement as to how this additional funding is in the County's best interest.

Project permits, engineering, plans, and specifications must be paid for by the applicant, and should be complete and current at the time of application. Enter the required permits, their status, and expiration. Attach permits to the application.

The applicant must complete the project budget sheet attached to the application. Be sure to fill out all columns of the grant budget to distinguish Grant Funds budgeting and Matching Funds budgeting. If the attached budget template is insufficient for your project, the applicant may attach an alternative budget format.

You may submit your signed application via e-mail to Debbie.Thibideau@CharlotteCountyFL.gov. You may also mail or drop your application off to the following address:

Charlotte County Fiscal Services Division
Attn: Debbie Thibideau
18500 Murdock Circle
Suite B-109
Port Charlotte, FL 33948

Applications must be received by 1/31/2025 at the Fiscal Services Division address in order to be considered for the FY2026/2027 grant cycle. Please direct questions regarding this granting opportunity to Debbie Thibideau at 941-743-1308



Budget and Administrative Services Department
Fiscal Services Division, Grants Section

Attention: Debbie Thibideau
18500 Murdock Circle, Suite B-109 Port Charlotte, FL 33948
Phone: 941-743-1308

Charlotte County Boater Improvement Fund Grant Application

Fiscal Year 2026 (10/1/2025 to 9/30/2026) – Application Deadline 1/31/2025

Name of Organization: _____

Principal Officer: _____ Title: _____

Address: _____

Telephone Number: _____ Email: _____

Any project for which funds are requested must have a public purpose, and must apply to one or more of the following categories: (select applicable category)

- | | |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Waterway Management | <input type="checkbox"/> Marine Debris Removal |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Marine Law Enforcement | <input type="checkbox"/> Dredging |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Environmental Education | <input type="checkbox"/> Boater Recreation |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Protection of Marine Life & Aquatic Environment | <input type="checkbox"/> Aids to Navigation |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Public Boat Ramps & Launching Facilities | <input type="checkbox"/> Boaters' Safety & Education |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other Projects for Boater & Waterway Enhancement | |

Project Name: _____

Project Description: _____

Explain how the project benefits the community as a whole: _____

Total Amount of Grant Funding Requested: _____

Total Amount of Matching Funds Provided: _____

Boater Safety/Education and Boater Recreation Projects require 50% applicant matching funds. Is Applicant requesting supplemental BIF-Local funds to pay all, or a portion of the 50% required match? Yes ☐ No ☐

If yes, provide justification. _____

Project Location: _____

Estimated Completion Date: _____

Are there other sources of funding for this project? _____

Is a permit required for this project? Yes ☐ No ☐ If yes, list each, its type, and status. Attach all permits that have been issued or applied for: _____

Complete attached budget. Attach additional supporting documentation you feel is pertinent to your request.

Applicants should be available to the Marine Advisory Committee on the date of review to answer questions regarding the project. Dates of review will be posted on the Charlotte County public website at <https://www.CharlotteCountyFL.gov/Boards-Committees/MAC>.

Signature of individual authorized to legally bind the organization contractually.

Signature

Date

Printed Name

Title

You may submit your signed application via e-mail to Debbie.Thibideau@CharlotteCountyFL.gov. You may also mail or drop your application off to the following address:

Charlotte County Fiscal Services Division
Attn: Debbie Thibideau
18500 Murdock Circle
Suite B-109
Port Charlotte, FL 33948

Applications must be received by 1/31/2025 at the Fiscal Services Division address to be considered for the FY2026/2027 grant cycle. Please direct questions regarding this granting opportunity to Debbie Thibideau at 941-743-1308.

Please complete your project's budget:

BUDGET ESTIMATE DETAIL	Grant Funds	Matching Funds ¹	Total
Construction Expenses (specify)			
Contractual Services (specify)			
Materials (specify)			
Equipment (specify)			
Salaries ² (specify)			
Promotional materials (Specify)			
GRAND TOTAL			

The budget may be adjusted between categories; however, the scope of the project may not change.

¹ Matching funds are **required** for WCIND Boating Safety/Education and Recreation projects.
² Salaries are eligible toward BIF grants. Salaries allowed for WCIND grant **only** for Law Enforcement projects.