



Vermont Mentoring Grants 2026-2027

Request for Proposals

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Contact grants@mentorvt.org with any questions.



Overview

Through the generous contributions of the Vermont Department for Children and Families, MENTOR Vermont provides annual funding to mentoring agencies, investing in the creation and support of quality, long-term, youth mentoring programs.

Grant Scope

The Vermont Mentoring Grants (VMG) fund nonprofits or schools with established youth mentoring programs (peer-based or youth-adult) in Vermont. VMG may also be used to support the implementation phase of new youth mentoring programs. Programs in the planning or start-up phase with no plans of implementation during the 2026-2027 grant year should reach out to MENTOR Vermont (chad@mentorvt.org) for assistance with their planning process and to inquire about potential funding support.

- **Program Model Requirements:**
 - One-to-One
 - While programs may have a group engagement component, youth must be matched with an individual mentor.
 - Youth-Adult
 - Mentors must be at least 18 years old and no longer in high school.
 - Peer-Based
 - Mentors must be middle school age or older.
- **Age:**
 - Mentees must be 5-22 years old.
 - Matches must have a minimum three-year age gap.
- **Time Commitment:** Matches agree to:
 - One program year (calendar or school, depending on program model)
 - In-person meetings on a regular basis that total a recommended minimum of four hours a month, or a minimum number of hours a month that are required by the program model of the mentoring program.
- **Program Year:** Operate at least 25 weeks of programming a year.
- **Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI):** Actively advancing DEI in their program (policies and procedures, program practices, training, staff personal exploration of bias, etc.).
 - [Click here](#) to read MENTOR Vermont's commitment to DEI.
- **Quality Mentoring:** Meet mentoring field best practices as defined by [The Elements of Effective Practice for Mentoring](#) and participate in the [National Quality Mentoring System](#).

MENTOR Vermont Will Provide

- **Program Coaching:** MENTOR Vermont offers the information and guidance you need to create a successful and sustainable mentoring program.
- **Resources:** MENTOR Vermont can help you find the resources and networks needed to create, maintain, and grow a quality mentoring program.



Grant Eligibility

Agencies with established mentoring programs or who intend to start a mentoring program during the grant year are eligible to apply for VMG funding if they meet the following criteria. Agencies will:

- Operate a mentoring program that is committed to quality, one-to-one, youth mentoring in Vermont.
- Operate in a school or under a non-profit organization.
- Commit to creating and sustaining a specific number of mentoring matches within the grant period.
- Commit to participating in the [National Quality Mentoring System](#) (NQMS). Grantees in operation for fewer than two years must strive to meet all best practices as outlined in the [Elements of Effective Practice for Mentoring](#). Grantees in operation for more than two years must be currently working with MENTOR Vermont on the NQMS process or engage in the NQMS process during the course of the grant term.
 - Grounded in evidence and a process for continuous improvement, the NQMS creates recognized standards and procedures for the operation of high-quality mentoring programs.
 - Grantees must participate in the NQMS process with MENTOR Vermont. This includes an in-depth review of policies, procedures, and practices every three years (at minimum) to ensure the grantee's program(s) have the structures and systems in place to meet best practices. During this review process, grantees will work with MENTOR Vermont to develop an Improvement and Innovation Plan (I&I) they will actively work on during the years between reviews.
- Commit to securing funding outside of the VMG that is equal to or greater than the grant award from MENTOR Vermont.
- Serve youth through the end of high school or collaborate with nearby mentoring programs to create pathways for match transitions and continuation through the youth's high school graduation.
- Commit to an evaluation plan aligned with the data requested through the VMG application, grant reporting requirements, and the applicant's mentoring program objectives.
- Participate in [MENTOR Vermont's Partnership Program](#) at either the [Partner or Certified Partner level](#).



Grant Term

The 2026–2027 Vermont Mentoring Grants offer two options for the length of the grant term:

- **Standard Grant** (one-year): Must meet the requirements outlined in the RFP grant eligibility language.
- **Strategic Grant** (three-year with annual renewal): Award agreements will be issued annually throughout the three-year period. Funding each year is contingent upon the State appropriating funds to MENTOR Vermont, without a reduction in the appropriated funds. To be eligible, organizations must meet the requirements outlined in the RFP grant eligibility language and:
 - Consistently meet grant requirements, renewing the organization’s commitment, annually.
 - Have a history of successfully meeting VMG goals.
 - Have completed the NQMS process with MENTOR Vermont within the last three years and be actively working on an I&I Plan.
 - Develop a Theory of Change (if one does not already exist) and revise the organization’s Comprehensive Evaluation Plan to align with the organization’s theory of change during the grant term.
 - Ensure program staff participate in the Elements of Effective Practice for Mentoring training series hosted by MENTOR Vermont at some point during the three-year grant period.

Note: VMG funding is secured by MENTOR Vermont through the State of Vermont budget. Both the Standard and Strategic Grants are contingent upon the appropriation of funds by the State to MENTOR Vermont.



Timeline & How to Apply

Timeline

- **July 12, 2026:** Grant Eligibility Form due
- **June 29 – August 7, 2026:** Pre-grant writing meetings
- **August 14, 2026:** Grant application due
- **September 1, 2026:** Grant decisions
- **October 20, 2026:** Quarterly financial report due
- **January 20, 2027:** Mid-year grant report and quarterly financial report due
- **April 20, 2027:** Quarterly financial report due
- **May 31, 2027:** Grant end date
- **June 20, 2027:** Year-end report and quarterly financial report due

How to Apply

All applicants must:

- **July 12th** - Grant Eligibility Form due (first time applicants will need to set up their agency) at https://webportalapp.com/sp/mentor_vermont_mentoring_grants_2026.
- **June 29th – August 7th** - Participate in a 50-minute virtual meeting with MENTOR Vermont Executive Director, Chad Butt. You will receive a link to schedule a meeting once you complete the *Grant Eligibility Form*. Do not submit your grant application prior to this meeting.
- **August 14th** - Complete all required fields in the VMG application in the [VT Mentoring Grants System](#).
 - All applicants must upload the following documents as part of the application.
 - A current Advisory Committee member list and their affiliations.
 - A current certificate of insurance for the following (*see appendix for details*)
 - Workers' Compensation
 - General Liability & Property Damage
 - Automobile Liability (if transporting youth)
 - Sexual Abuse and Molestation (Improper Sexual Conduct and Physical Abuse Liability is also acceptable)
 - An agency or fiscal sponsor IRS Tax Exempt Status Letter or Tax-Exempt Certificate.
 - A detailed program budget, clearly stating the total amount requested for the grant year. (**Note:** *Strategic Grant funding applicants must specify the same funding amount for each of the three years in the program budget.*)
 - Current NQMS Innovation & Improvement Plan (if applicable)
 - First-year implementation funding applicants must also submit:
 - A [New Program Plan](#) – if not already submitted.
 - A signed Statement of Commitment from a principal or superintendent (if affiliated with a school).



Grant Disbursement

This grant is a reimbursement grant that requires quarterly financial reports. Awardees in good standing can request quarterly advances. Payments are sent out to grantees within 15 days of when MENTOR Vermont receives payment from the State.

Report #	Report Type	Reporting Period	Due Date
1	1 st Quarter Reimbursement & Documentation 2 nd Quarter Optional Advance	07/01/26 - 09/30/26	10/20/26
2	2 nd Quarter Reimbursement & Documentation 3 rd Quarter Optional Advance	10/01/26 - 12/31/26	01/20/27
3	3 rd Quarter Reimbursement & Documentation 4 th Quarter Optional Advance	01/01/27 - 03/31/27	04/20/27
4	4 th Quarter Reimbursement & Documentation	04/01/27 - 05/31/27	06/20/27

Reporting Requirements

The 2026-2027 VMG reporting requirements are centered on measuring the impact of grant funding on programs, as well as evaluating key outcomes of MENTOR Vermont’s [Theory of Change](#), including its effectiveness in supporting the Vermont mentoring field. MENTOR Vermont is committed to only requesting data necessary to the following learning objectives:

- Identifying grantee strengths, challenges, opportunities for growth, and support.
- Better understanding the population served and community need for mentoring in the service areas where programs are funded.
- Gaining a firmer grasp on the breadth, reach, and collective impact of mentoring programs across the state.
- Assessing MENTOR Vermont progress toward achieving key [Theory of Change](#) outcomes.

Data collected through the VMG is central to a collaborative and unified approach of working with agencies to better understand the Vermont mentoring field. VMG data is woven together with a variety of other MENTOR Vermont data collection methods to paint a more accurate picture and a more relevant understanding of mentoring in Vermont. The benefits of this shared approach and obtaining consistent and reliable, statewide data on mentoring are vast, including:

- Demonstrating the reach and impact of mentoring statewide.
- Amplifying mentoring’s value to funders, legislators, surrounding communities, prospective mentors, youth, and families.
- Analyzing mentoring data alongside other relevant local, state and national data sources.
- Collecting more compelling data for advocacy efforts for mentoring, as well as a broader mentoring mindset across Vermont.

Reporting Requirements

All grantees must:

- Provide all requested data to MENTOR Vermont, unless otherwise specified.
- Submit all reports through the [Vermont Mentoring Grants System](#).
- Conduct a comprehensive yearly survey of mentees and mentors measuring quality and match experience (*60% minimum return rate*).
 - Grantees may use their own surveys for this or use any of the survey templates provided by MENTOR Vermont.
 - Grantees are encouraged to seek [Program Coaching](#) from MENTOR Vermont to develop comprehensive surveys tailored to measure the impact of grantees specific mentoring program(s).
- Follow all of MENTOR Vermont’s administration guidelines for collecting, defining, and recording the requested data in the application, mid-year, and year-end report.

Report #	Report Type	Reporting Period	Due Date
1	Mid-Year	06/01/26 - 12/31/26	01/20/27
2	Year-end	06/01/26 - 05/31/27	06/20/27

All Grantees will Report on the Following Areas

- **Financials**
 - Revenue and expense actuals, including accurate and complete documentation for all grant expenses (e.g. receipts, etc.)
- **Strategic Programmatic Improvements** (*strategic improvements are self-identified during the application process*)
 - Progress toward achieving three strategic improvements in mentoring best practices for the grant term
 - Progress toward achieving a strategic improvement in DEI for the grant term
- **Meeting Community Needs**
 - # of youth in the grantee's service area waiting to be matched with a mentor (*if a waitlist is utilized*)
 - Issues the agency has with meeting the mentoring needs of youth in the grantee's service area (*if they exist*)
 - Geographic gaps in mentoring
- **Program-Level Administrative Data**
 - Program(s) start and end dates
 - # of hours matches are required to meet each month
 - # of new mentor applications
 - # of new mentors recruited and completed new mentor orientation training
 - # of community-based and/or site-based youth matches
 - # of net new matches
 - % of matches that have been in place one year or longer
 - % of match transitions
 - % of match closures
 - % of quality-related closures
 - % of match retention
 - Demographics of youth served
 - Grade
 - Gender identity
 - Race/ethnicity
 - Geographic location
 - Socioeconomic status
 - Demographics of mentors
 - Gender identity
 - Race/ethnicity



- **Mentee Data Summary**

Grantees must administer the following questions to mentees (verbatim) and report on the data in the format requested below at the year-end report.

- 1. My mentor makes me feel like I matter.**

Response Options: 1 = Strongly Disagree; 2 = Disagree; 3 = Agree; 4 = Strongly Agree

___ # of youth who responded "Strongly Agree"

___ # of youth who responded "Agree"

___ # who responded to the item

- 2. Having a mentor has made a positive difference in my life.**

Response Options: 1 = Strongly Disagree; 2 = Disagree; 3 = Agree; 4 = Strongly Agree

___ # of youth who responded "Strongly Agree"

___ # of youth who responded "Agree"

___ # who responded to the item

- **Mentor Data Summary**

Grantees must administer the following questions to mentors (verbatim) and report on the data in the format requested below at the year-end report.

- 1. I have recommended mentoring to a friend, family member, or peer.**

Response Options: 0 = No; 1 = No, I haven't, but I absolutely would! 2 = Yes

___ # of mentors who responded "Yes"

___ # of mentors who responded "No, I haven't, but I absolutely would!"

___ # who responded to the item

- 2. The mentoring training and/or experience I had over the past year has made me a more effective mentor.**

Response Options: 1 = Strongly Disagree; 2 = Disagree; 3 = Agree; 4 = Strongly Agree

___ # of mentors who responded "Strongly Agree"

___ # of mentors who responded "Agree"

___ # who responded to the item

- 3. My confidence as a mentor has increased over the past year.**

Response Options: 1 = Strongly Disagree; 2 = Disagree; 3 = Agree; 4 = Strongly Agree

___ # of mentors who responded "Strongly Agree"

___ # of mentors who responded "Agree"

___ # who responded to the item

The reporting requirements outlined above may be modified or changed at any time during the grant period by MENTOR Vermont. All changes will be provided in writing to grantees with reasonable advance notice of acting on those changes.



Award Criteria

To ensure these funds sustainably address the needs and priorities of the collective Vermont mentoring community and to reflect a commitment to outcomes-based funding, MENTOR Vermont will use the *Vermont Mentoring Grant Review Rubric* (see appendix) to determine grant awards.

There are no maximum awards, but there is a one-to-one funding match requirement. Please use the following prompts to help determine what a realistic grant award might be for your application.

- **Program Growth (Number of Matches or Service Area):** Net-new matches are not a requirement for funding. Programs that can sustainably grow their program to serve underserved areas and/or reach more youth in their current service area may receive a larger grant award. Net-new matches will be measured based on past match totals and past grant goals.
- **Program Size:** Applicants that support a large number of matches can expect to receive a larger grant award. However, the funding per match for a larger program may be lower than the ratio for smaller programs.
- **Location:** What region in Vermont does the applicant serve? Is this area underserved? Are there fewer other funding options compared to other regions of the state?
- **Program Type:** Community-based or site-based? Youth-adult or peer-based?
- **Weeks/Hours of Programming:** How many weeks does the mentoring program run per year? On average how many hours does a mentor match meet per month when program is running?
- **Agency Structure:** Is the applicant part of a larger agency, part of a school system, or a standalone non-profit?
- **Years of Operation:** Is the applicant established or in their first year of program implementation?
- **Other Circumstances:** Does the applicant serve a population of youth that require greater support? Does the applicant have special circumstances not included in the factors above that warrant a higher level of funding per match?

Funding Per Match

Request ranges are estimates only, and included to help applicants shape their proposals. Grant awards will fluctuate depending on the identified need of each applicant through the grant process and the funding available. For applicants serving fewer than 150 total matches, the funding awarded per match will likely fall within the following range:

- Community-Based:
 - Youth-Adult: \$225-\$550 per match
- Site-Based:
 - Peer-Based: \$200-\$425 per match
 - Youth-Adult: \$200-\$375 per match

Agencies with compelling other circumstances or larger mentoring programs that serve more than 150 matches should plan to discuss an appropriate request range with MENTOR Vermont during the pre-grant writing meeting. Awarded funding per match may change based on the amount of funding available for the Vermont Mentoring Grants. Award amounts will be determined based on available funds and approval. If additional funding becomes available, strategic (three-year) grant recipients may request additional funds during the following year's grant renewal cycle. Contact grants@mentorvt.org with any questions.

Vermont Mentoring Grant Review Rubric

Criteria	Emerging	Developing	Strong
Past Grant Goals <i>(if applicable)</i>	Consistently fails to meet grant goals	Consistently meets some grant goals, but not others	Consistently meets all grant goals
Best Practices	Does not possess the necessary policies, procedures, and/or practices to run a quality program Tardy with the NQMS renewal process and unresponsive to MENTOR Vermont communication about it	Program is striving to meet NQMS best practices and is committed to completing the NQMS process during the grant year	Program possesses the necessary policies, procedures, and/or practices to run a quality program Active NQMS engagement and on time with renewal process
Diversity, Equity, & Inclusion (DEI)	Program does not demonstrate an intentional purpose for engaging in DEI work	Program expresses a clear interest in strengthening its DEI practices and is committed to taking initial steps toward this work during the grant year	Program values DEI and is actively engaged in strengthening its DEI practices
Funding Sustainability	Program does not stay within budget	Program stays within budget, but is reliant on limited or unsustainable funding sources Program is actively seeking to diversify funding	Program stays within budget and has diverse funding streams
Data Collection & Management	Failure to administer yearly surveys of youth and mentors Unreliable data collection methods Low survey response rate Quarterly reports are consistently inaccurate or frequently require follow up	Administers yearly surveys to youth and mentors Unreliable data collection methods Low survey response rate Quarterly reports are sometimes inaccurate and require some follow up	Administers yearly surveys to mentees and mentors Consistent and reliable data collection methods Meets minimum survey response rate Quarterly reports are accurate and rarely require follow up

Criteria	Inadequate	Needs Improvement	Acceptable
Program Model	<p>Works with only one age group</p> <p>No plans to transition matches as they age out of program</p> <p>or</p> <p>Has not reached out to other programs to explore taking on preexisting matches and has no system in place to do so</p>	<p>Works with younger youth only: Has plan for transitioning matches as they age out of program in action, but still perfecting it</p> <p>or</p> <p>Works with older youth: Has plan for taking on preexisting matches in action, but still perfecting it</p>	<p>Works with range of youth ages</p> <p>or</p> <p>Works with younger youth only: Has plan for transitioning matches as they age out of program in action</p> <p>or</p> <p>Works with older youth: Has plan for taking on preexisting matches in action</p>
Program Support & Buy-in	<p>Lacks support of community, town(s) and/or school(s)</p> <p>No formal advisory board</p>	<p>Some support from community, town(s) and/or school(s)</p> <p>Advisory board provides limited support to program</p>	<p>Adequate support from community, town(s) and/or school(s)</p> <p>Well-established advisory board effectively supporting program</p>

Appendix

Certificate of Insurance: Grantees must provide certificates of insurance to show that the following minimum coverages are in effect. It is the responsibility of the grantee to maintain current certificates of insurance on file with MENTOR Vermont throughout the grant term. No warranty is made that the coverages and limits listed herein are adequate to cover and protect the interests of grantee. These are solely minimums that have been established to protect the interests of MENTOR Vermont.

- a. *Workers Compensation:* With respect to all operations performed, the grantees shall carry workers' compensation insurance in accordance with the laws of the State of Vermont.
- b. *General Liability and Property Damage:* With respect to all operations performed under the VMG, the grantee shall carry general liability insurance having all major divisions of coverage including, but not limited to:
 - i. Premises - Operations
 - ii. Products and Completed Operations
 - iii. Personal Injury Liability
 - iv. Contractual Liability

The policy shall be on an occurrence form and limits shall not be less than:

- \$1,000,000 Each Occurrence
- \$2,000,000 General Aggregate
- \$1,000,000 Products/Completed Operations Aggregate
- \$1,000,000 Personal & Advertising Injury

- c. *Sexual Abuse and Molestation (Improper Sexual Conduct and Physical Abuse Liability is also acceptable):* With respect to all operations performed under the VMG, the grantee shall carry Sexual Abuse and Molestation coverage for any and all services performed under the VMG, with minimum coverage of \$1,000,000 per claim, \$1,000,000 aggregate. **Lower minimum coverage may be acceptable depending on organization size. MENTOR Vermont is still waiting on the State of Vermont's Risk Management Office for final determination. MENTOR Vermont cannot guarantee that lower coverage will be accepted.*
- d. *Automotive Liability:* If transporting youth as part of the mentoring program, the grantee shall carry automotive liability insurance covering all motor vehicles, including hired and non-owned coverage, used in connection with the Agreement. Limits of coverage shall not be less than \$500,000 combined single limit.
- e. *Additional Insured.* The General Liability and Property Damage coverages required for performance of MVG award shall include MENTOR Vermont and its agencies, officers and employees as Additional Insureds. If performance of this Agreement involves the transport of persons, then the required Automotive Liability coverage shall include MENTOR Vermont and its agencies, officers and employees as Additional Insureds. Coverage shall be primary and non-contributory with any other insurance and self-insurance. MENTOR Vermont should be named as follows:

MENTOR Vermont
PO Box 103, Burlington, VT 05402
(802) 658-1888
- f. *Notice of Cancellation or Change.* There shall be no cancellation, change, potential exhaustion of aggregate limits or non-renewal of insurance coverage(s) without thirty (30) days written prior written notice to MENTOR Vermont. It is the responsibility of the subgrantee to send updated Certificates after each renewal period.