



Abby Beilman | Swampscott | April 28, 2021

Save the Harbor Seeks Great Ideas for 2021 Better Beaches Program Grants

Request for Proposals: \$250-\$5,000 grants available to organizations and individuals for free beach events from Nahant to Nantasket

A light blue rectangular graphic containing the "Better Beaches Program" logo. On the left is the "Save the Harbor Save the Bay" logo, which features a stylized green wave and the text "SAVE THE HARBOR" and "SAVE THE BAY" in white, with "MAKING WAVES SINCE 1986" at the bottom. On the right is the "dcr Massachusetts" logo, with "dcr" in a large, dark red, lowercase serif font, "Massachusetts" in a smaller, dark red, italicized serif font, and a circular dark red icon with a white leaf design below it.



In 2020 Save the Harbor made 34 grants to support free beach events and programs, including Fire Juggling On The Beach by the Boston Circus Guild and the Beats on the Beach music competition.

Save the Harbor/Save the Bay is now seeking proposals from organizations and creatives to help them “Reimagine the Beach” and find safe and unique ways to bring free public events and programs to the region’s beaches and the Boston Harbor waterfront this summer as part of their Better Beaches Program partnership with the Department of Conservation & Recreation.

Whether you are part of an organization, an artist collective, or are a creative individual, you can help Save the Harbor and DCR bring diversity and activity to the beaches in person or virtually in Boston’s waterfront neighborhoods and the region’s beachfront communities this year by submitting your proposal online today at <https://www.savetheharbor.org/better-beaches>. Grant applicants can come from any community, as long as the free event or program activates one of the metropolitan region’s public beaches from Nahant to Nantasket.

Better Beaches Program typically grants range from \$250-\$5,000, though in some cases Save the Harbor may consider larger grants. You can find information about past events and programs in Save the Harbor’s 2020 Youth & Beach Program Report, which is available at http://bit.ly/2020_YouthandBeach.

Funds to support the program come from a legislative appropriation to the Department of Conservation & Recreation and the proceeds from this year’s Virtual Harpoon Shamrock Splash, which raised more than \$50,000 in March.

In 2020, the Better Beaches Program awarded more than \$200,000 in grants to 22 organizations who ran creative and socially distanced summer programs, including virtual circus performances, community music contests, virtual wellness and fitness classes, and virtual youth programs. In 2020, 25% of the grants went to providing safety equipment and support as organizations faced the unprecedented challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic, as they worked to keep our beaches safe and open.

“The Better Beaches Program events are as diverse as the communities that host them,” said Metropolitan Beaches Commission Co-Chair, Senator Brendan Crighton of Lynn, “But one thing they all have in common is that they bring communities together to enjoy our region’s public beaches. Thank you to Save the Harbor/Save the Bay and DCR for working together to strengthen our beachfront communities and waterfront neighborhoods.”

Representative Adrian Madaro of East Boston, Metropolitan Beaches Commission Co-Chair, agreed saying, “Free beach events and programs are critical to Bostonians and the region’s residents who rely on these spectacular urban natural resources for recreation, especially during the pandemic.”

“Save the Harbor has recommitted ourselves to equity and anti-racism in our programs and on our beaches and we are excited to see the creative ways organizations and individuals will be activating our beaches this summer,” said Chris Mancini, the organization’s Executive Director. “This year more than \$40,000 in Better Beaches funds will be intentionally awarded to organizations, programs, individuals, and creatives who empower, amplify and invest in community members of color.”

“Our green and blue spaces are priceless locations and the betterment of these natural, cultural, and recreational resources continues to be a priority for DCR and the Baker-Polito Administration,” said DCR Commissioner Jim Montgomery. “I look forward to seeing Better Beaches programs that are accessible to many, work to achieve our shared goals and carry on DCR’s mission to protect, promote, and enhance the Massachusetts state parks system.”

From 2008-2019, Save the Harbor’s community partners in Nahant, Lynn, Revere, Winthrop, East Boston, South Boston, Dorchester, Quincy, and Hull have leveraged \$1,097,988 in small grants received through the Better Beaches Program with \$3,617,741 in organizational support from Save the Harbor and cash and in-kind contributions from local government and small businesses. That resulted in a total investment of \$4,715,749 in 870 free events and programs for the nearly 2 million regional residents who live within a short ride or drive to the beach.

The success of this program would not be possible without the support of Save the Harbor’s program partners and event sponsors, including Harpoon Brewery, JetBlue, Mix 104.1, The Blue Sky Collaborative, The Boston Foundation, The Richard Saltonstall Charitable Foundation, Beacon Capital Partners, P&G Gillette, National Grid, the Daily Catch, and Comcast.

Save the Harbor also thanks Metropolitan Beaches Commission Co-Chair's Senator Brendan Crighton of Lynn and Representative Adrian Madaro of East Boston and the legislative and community members of the Commission for their support for our beaches and our communities. They also thank the Baker-Polito Administration, the Massachusetts Legislature, their partners at the Department of Conservation and Recreation, the Boston Centers for Youth & Families, the YMCA of Greater Boston, and the hundreds of people who take part in the Harpoon Shamrock Splash every year, for their support.

For more information on how to apply for a Better Beaches Program Grant, please visit <https://www.savetheharbor.org/better-beaches> or contact Maya Smith at smith@savetheharbor.org.

“We are excited to collaborate with organizations and individuals to reimagine their beach and develop creative and safe ways to activate our region’s beaches this summer” said Save the Harbor/Save the Bay’s Community Engagement Manager Maya Smith. “So please reach out!”

Applications are due by May 14, 2021, after which Save the Harbor’s Better Beaches Grants Committee will review the proposals and announce this year’s recipients in early June.