



2022 Climate Ride Beneficiary FAQ

What is Climate Ride and what does it provide for beneficiaries?

Climate Ride **Climate Ride is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization** that organizes life-changing charitable cycling, hiking, running, and other outdoor adventures to raise awareness and support sustainability, active transportation, and environmental causes.

Our participants make an extraordinary contribution to green causes they care about. By participating, they provide much-needed financial support, raise awareness, and help to build a national network of supporters.

Climate Ride is not solely a fundraising event like many charity events. Climate Ride's nonprofit programs focus on community-building, civic engagement, environmental education, and active transportation advocacy — all coming together in a multi-day, inspiring experience.

When participants raise money to support their Climate Ride event, a portion of their fundraising goes into our grants program and is granted to the beneficiaries that the participants have chosen. Since 2008, Climate Ride has granted over \$7 Million to over 200 organizations working on sustainability, climate, renewable energy, and bicycle advocacy. Our grant program grows each year and channels critical funding to many important projects across the U.S.

Part of participants' fundraising goes to support Climate Ride's future growth, development, and fundraising support programs. We believe that sustainability, active transportation, and climate are serious issues that need to be addressed immediately and our intention is to utilize the funds generated by Climate Ride events to create a grassroots movement to move forward on these issues.

We are delighted to be able to provide the Climate Ride program, which inspires thousands of participants and benefits the organizations that they choose. We provide beneficiaries with the resources and guidance to establish teams and maximize the end-of-year grants.

Climate Ride:

- takes on the risk of production and costs of multi-day adventure events
- supports hundreds of participants in their fundraising, training, and preparations
- creates participant communities on social media
- manages all travel and logistics-related aspects of the events
- develops the evening speaker series
- pays donation software fees, credit card donation fees, and insurance
- processes thousands of online and mail-in donations
- provides a tax-deductible structure for donations

The Climate Ride program can be of great benefit to beneficiary organizations as a supplement to their development plan. In general, it would be expensive and unpredictable for most organizations to mount an event of this size and nature on their own.

Beneficiaries are not required to take on any risk or cost, but our selected beneficiaries must do outreach to their supporters to engage them to participate on their behalf.

We provide beneficiaries with outreach template text, photos, outreach strategies, and team fundraising pages. Climate Ride also helps beneficiaries strategize outreach opportunities and schedules meet and greet events to attract participants to register.

Climate Ride is a 501(c)3 nonprofit organization run by a Board of Directors and a staff of 3 full-time and 1 part-time employee. You can view the list of grants we've made to beneficiaries since 2008 on our [Financial Information page](#), and read our Annual Reports (at the bottom of that page) for a full picture of Climate Ride's programs, budget, and accomplishments.

Why should I fundraise as a Climate Ride participant when I could raise money directly for my own organization?

Many studies have shown that fundraising is more successful when tied to an event. There are currently about 29,000 charitable sporting events in the US each year and the public is very familiar with the fundraising event concept. An overwhelming number of Climate Ride participants report that fundraising for our events is easier than they expected. In fact, our top fundraisers have said they expected to raise the minimum but were met with such success that they continued on to raise more than \$10,000 each.

Additionally, when participants reach the minimum commitment they secure their spot on a multi-day, world-class endurance event, which is a great motivator. Many of your supporters who generally donate less than \$100 to your organization can be cultivated through Climate Ride to register and then raise thousands of dollars.

By recruiting participants, you'll strongly connect your supporters to your organization's mission. Through Climate Ride, you can convert your participants *and their donors* into more committed constituents, and bring them closer to your cause, in turn growing your pool of overall donors. Climate Ride is a creative supplement to your development strategy and a new and exciting way to message your supporters.

What exactly is required for my organization to receive a Climate Ride grant?

To maintain your beneficiary status, your organization *must* do outreach and inform its general membership that it is a beneficiary of Climate Ride events. Organizations promote their Climate Ride beneficiary status through their e-newsletters, blogs, social media, print publications, board members and more. Our largest grant recipients choose to go beyond basic outreach to form beneficiary teams; engage their staff, members, board, family, friends, and colleagues to participate; and then offer additional support to help those members in training and fundraising.

To be listed as a beneficiary, so that participants can choose your organization, you are obligated to do a *minimum level of outreach* to let people know that you are listed as a Climate Ride beneficiary. This

can take minimal staff and organizational time. You decide the level of engagement that's right for your organization but agree to some form of outreach throughout the year. You'll receive a grant at the end of the year based on the number of participants that have selected you and how much those participants raised.

If you choose to increase your involvement by increasing your outreach and/or developing a team, you could see significant increases in your grant amount.

Am I automatically listed year after year as a beneficiary when I submit the Beneficiary Agreement Form?

When your organization is approved for beneficiary status, it includes one year (all Climate Ride events with the exception of Glacier Ride and special Funders Trips). As long as at least *two participants* select you during the whole year (across events) and you do outreach to promote Climate Ride to your audience, you are automatically renewed for beneficiary status the following year. (Participants do not need to be on your team to select you.)

We review organizations annually at the start of the year and remove those who are inactive in the program in order to better serve those who have active participants. To ensure your status as a beneficiary, please keep in touch and be sure to reach out to inform us of staffing changes.

How do participants choose my organization?

During registration, participants see a list of all approved beneficiary organizations. There are 100+ organizations that a participant can choose from. We recommend that participants choose between one and five organizations. Climate Ride is drawing in participants from a variety of sources including advertising, outreach, email campaigns, and through word of mouth. As an approved beneficiary, all participants have the option to select your organization during registration for *ANY 'Climate Ride' event* (with the exception of Glacier Ride and special Funders Trips).

GRANTS

How much will my grant amount be?

Grant amounts depend on how many participants select your organization as a beneficiary, how many other beneficiaries they select, and how much they raise. Most organizations find that by increasing their level of effort put into outreach and engagement, they are able to recruit more participants and increase their grant amount.

Since 2008, Climate Ride has granted over \$7 Million to beneficiaries. These grants have grown from \$129,000 in 2008 to more than \$800,000 in 2019. In the past, individual grants have ranged from \$200 to \$86,000. Putting more effort into outreach and participant recruitment tends to result in a higher grant amount at the end of the year. Specifically, we've found that beneficiaries who set up teams and then actively work to recruit members who choose only their organization as the beneficiary have higher grant amounts. If you set up a beneficiary team for your organization's supporters, keep in mind that other participants will also be choosing you who may not be on your team, which will add to your overall grant amount. [Scroll down to learn more about beneficiary teams.]

Our recommendation is to develop a solid Climate Ride outreach plan and see how it fits into your current messaging. Then evaluate what works and what doesn't, and deploy strategies that build and maximize the largest amount of participants selecting your organization as possible.

How does Climate Ride determine my grant amount?

Once all events for the year are completed and all expenses are accounted for, Climate Ride begins the detailed process of computing tens of thousands of donations to participant fundraising. After hard costs, 80% of the proceeds go toward grants. Grants are calculated on an individual, per-participant basis. For events with a \$3,000 fundraising minimum, the grant amount from each participant to each of their selected beneficiaries is determined by the following equation:

$$\frac{(\text{Participant's Fundraising} - \$1,500 \text{ (Event Costs and Fees per participant)}) \times .80}{\text{Number of Beneficiaries Chosen by Participant}} = \text{Grant}$$

In other words, we take the total amount raised by a participant who has selected your organization, subtract the Climate Ride Event Costs per participant (\$1,500 for the events with a \$3,000 minimum), multiply by 80%, and then divide that number by how many beneficiaries the participant has chosen when they registered. Participants can choose between 1 to 100+ organizations (we recommend that participants choose 5 or fewer organizations). This process determines how much of each participant's fundraising will be included in the grant amount. We do this for each person who has selected you. Then, we add up those amounts and that total is your grant amount for the year.

The \$1,500 Event Cost includes the hard costs of the ride (all meals, overnights, permits, full leader support, programming) and the credit card and donation software fees that are part of fundraising (on average 3% for credit card donations and 4% for donation software).

The above grant equation is for Climate Ride's events with a \$3,000 fundraising commitment. For events with a \$3,000 fundraising minimum, the event costs and fees per participant are \$1,500. For events with a \$3,200 fundraising minimum, the event costs and fees per participant are \$1,600. For events with a \$2,400 fundraising minimum, the event costs and fees per participant are \$1,200.

For our Independent Challenge program, since we are not producing the event(s), 80% of funds raised go toward the end-of-year beneficiary grant and 20% supports Climate Ride (and covers the credit card and transaction fees and program support costs).

As we introduce events with different fundraising minimums, there will be different grant equations. Please get in touch if you have any questions about this.

How much of every dollar raised goes to beneficiary grants?

The grants depend on the number of people who participate in Climate Ride events and how much those participants fundraise for your organization. When we determine the grant amount for each organization, it's based on an individual, per-participant basis.

On average, across the board, the total of all Climate Ride revenue that goes to beneficiary grants varies between 50-52% annually. On average, 30% supports event costs. 18-20% goes to support

Climate Ride and its programs, which include the event programs, grant program, beneficiary support, Congressional visits, scholarships, advocacy, and more.

Our grant formula has been designed so that *after a participant reaches an initial \$1500 (or \$1600 if the event has a \$3,200 minimum) in fundraising (which is used to cover the participant's event costs and fees)*, 80% of every dollar goes to our grants program which issues grants to their beneficiary choices (with the remaining 20% going to support Climate Ride's programs and sustainability).

***Climate Ride reserves the right to make final determinations on costs per participant in the event of exceptional circumstances or if participant numbers are lower than expected.**

Accordingly, the percentage of each dollar going to each selected beneficiary depends on how much participants raise or self-pledge. The more a person raises and/or the more she self-pledges, the higher the overall percentage of her donations going directly to beneficiaries will be. If a participant raises or self-pledges only the minimum, the percentage will be lower.

Climate Ride's dedicated fundraising support staff works hard to try to make sure that participants raise above and beyond the fundraising minimum. If a beneficiary goes the extra mile to form teams and help support their participants' fundraising, they may see a higher percentage of funds directed to their organization. *On average, 80% of participants raise more than the minimum!*

We also work hard to keep our costs of production as low as possible, consistent with putting on first-rate events, because we strongly believe in the power of immersive outdoor experiences to deepen our connection to the environment and ignite activism, raise critical funds, and influence public opinion. We're at the same time working to build grant, sponsorship, and capital campaigns to offset event costs as much as possible.

How does Climate Ride determine the minimum fundraising amount for an event?

The minimum fundraising amount varies by event. With events that are longer duration, or have different services, the event minimum is higher. The minimum is an attempt to strike a balance of being low enough so that it does not pose a barrier to entry for new participants, yet high enough to guarantee that Climate Ride can cover its costs and disburse meaningful grant amounts to beneficiary organizations. Overall, Climate Ride's minimums are in line with, or lower than, other charitable events of equal length and quality of service. Climate Ride's quality of service and participant support is often notably higher than other charitable events. Climate Ride's minimum may need to increase in the future to account for inflation and event costs. But overall, we wish to keep it low enough to engage participants. By working individually with participants, we can help them to increase their fundraising over the minimum. We recommend that each participant set their fundraising goal above the fundraising minimum for their chosen event.

Does Climate Ride cover some of the event costs with corporate sponsorship and grants?

Climate Ride is committed to securing grants and sponsorship to help underwrite the costs of our programs. Many other charitable sporting events are supported by large companies that choose to support larger events that dovetail with their marketing strategy - and oftentimes these companies' core business does not align with causes that Climate Ride supports. We constantly seek funding and

sponsorships from socially responsible organizations to help support our cost to produce, but to ensure that our voice represents the values of our participants and beneficiaries, Climate Ride (the organization) relies mainly on small donations from individuals to operate. In spite of these challenges, we work as hard as we can to make Climate Ride not only viable but successful, and beneficial to the cause and your organization.

Can Climate Ride estimate my grant amount *before* the event?

We cannot. We don't know how many participants are going to choose your organization and how much they will raise. We do not recommend trying to guess your grant amount for your organization's budgeting purposes. The grant will vary year to year based on the number of participants who choose you and how much they raise.

Can Climate Ride estimate my grant amount *after* the event?

Yes, we can. We understand that your organization wants to estimate its grant amount for budgeting purposes. Climate Ride can provide you with estimates in November if requested.

Keep in mind it is an estimate and can change (because some participants continue fundraising all year and many matching donations come in at the end of the year). Furthermore, you are a beneficiary of all Climate Ride events so your end-of-year grant is a tally of all proceeds throughout the year.

When will I receive my grant check?

As a beneficiary, you are listed as a beneficiary on all events. We tally all fundraising for the year and then issue one grant check. Our office mails out all grant checks typically just before the end of the calendar year (e.g., 3rd week of December).

TEAMS

Is it required that a beneficiary set up a team?

No, it is not required. **Your organization can only set up a team if you have a designated participant who will captain your team. This is often a staff member, board member, or approved volunteer leader.** Once you determine a team captain, they can set up the team page, and if not, you can wait until you have a confirmed participant to set up your team page online.

What is the difference between a beneficiary team and a non-beneficiary team?

A beneficiary team is set up by the beneficiary organization and led by a designated team captain of the organization. Beneficiaries can offer their team members extra fundraising support, training events, and special benefits like team jerseys or memberships. Teams are a great way to build a new community of participants that support your organization, boost fundraising, and deepen your supporters' commitment to your mission.

Non-beneficiary teams are set up by participants who are not tied to a specific beneficiary organization. Examples of non-beneficiary teams include company teams, family teams, parent-child teams, and groups of friends who share a common bond.

Does my organization need to send a staff member to an event?

No, it is not required for you to have a staff member on any of the events.

Can participants on beneficiary teams 'pool' their fundraising?

No. We do not allow team members to pool or combine their fundraising. Part of the reason for this policy is that it can lead to awkward situations between team members (such as participants who don't know each other soliciting other team members for their hard-won donations). Overall, the 'no-pooling' policy benefits your organization because it increases the overall amount of money raised for your programs. In 2012, when pooling was allowed, data showed that participants who pooled funds on teams *raised less overall* than those who didn't pool.

What is the Team Fundraising Goal and how do I adjust it?

At the minimum, the team fundraising goal should be the number of participants on your team multiplied by the fundraising minimum of the event. **As fundraising progresses and team members are added, the team captain must adjust this number.** The Team Fundraising Goal does not update automatically as participants join your team. Captains can adjust the Team Fundraising Goal at any time by logging into their fundraising page.

*Keep in mind that if you set up a beneficiary team and your team members choose multiple beneficiaries, the proceeds will be allocated between those beneficiaries per the grant equation above. The amount shown as your team fundraising total does not represent the amount that will be in your final grant.

Can participants self-pledge to help cover their event costs?

Yes. Participants can self-pledge any amount up to and over their event's fundraising minimum. Self-pledges are processed the same way as other donations, through the fundraising software by credit card, or by cash or check offline.

Is Climate Ride a good fit for my organization?

The Climate Ride program may not be a good fit for every organization. Each organization should read through all of our supporting materials and determine if it's a good fit for your development program.

We highly recommend that you read the [POLICIES](#) page on the Climate Ride website.