

Request to Apply for Grant

Grant: 2026 Fall Competitive Grant

Grant Provider: Mackinac Island Community Foundation

Application Opens: September 1, 2026

Application Closes: October 1, 2026

MICF GRANT APPLICATION DRAFT

Project Title: Ice & Water Rescue Equipment Enhancements

Organization Applicant Name: Mackinac Island Fire Department

Tax ID:

Project Details

Amount Request from MICF: \$5000

Total Project Expenses: \$5000

Financials

Spreadsheet attached in email. Three potential vendors have been identified, with the top choices being Feld Fire. Finances at this point have been calculated for just equipment, with the assumption that shipping costs will bring totals near to the ask of \$5000. Any remaining funds from the grant would be allocated towards less expensive rescue equipment ie. helmets or life jackets and will be dependent on the vendor and shipping costs.

Primary Field of Interest: Public Safety

Secondary Field of Interest: Disaster Relief

Begin Date of Project: Nov 1. 2026/When Funds Become Available

End Date of Project: July 1. 2027/ Post Trainings on New Equipment

What will the funds be spent on? Be very specific.

Funds will be spent on 1) “Mustang Ice Commander Suits” and 2) “Mustang Survival Water Rescue Kits”. The Mustang Ice Commander Suits are modular, fully enclosed dry suits designed to keep rescuers safe specifically during Ice Rescues. The water rescue kits each contain a Personal Flotation Device, Rescue Stick (Inflatable Emergency Flotation to be tossed to victims), and a throw bag. These kits provide resources that can be used by first responders in both water and ice rescue scenarios by first responders on scene.

Why is this project important to Mackinac Island?

Enhancing/replacing, building the Mackinac Island Fire Department (MIFD) capacity to efficiently and effectively perform water and ice rescues is foremost important to the safety of the Mackinac Island

Mackinac Island Fire Department

community and guests. The safety of the community is at the core of the MIFD and by ensuring our first responders have access to proper equipment, they can better protect the community.

Who will the project serve? Share who your target audience is.

This project aims to serve all who live on or visit Mackinac Island and use the water/ice surrounding it for transportation or recreation. During winter, this serves all community members and tourists who traverse the ice bridge and those who recreate on the ice. During the summer, this potentially serves anyone experiencing a water emergency along the 8.2 miles of the island's shoreline.

What evidence do you have to support the need for this project? Please cite your organization's needs assessment or strategic plan, research or forensic evidence.

Evidence to support the need for new/additional water rescue kits:

- Current active kits: 6
 - While current active kits have been strategically allocated to members, having only six kits place an additional burden on several members.
 - Current kits have been purchased over the past 10 years and older kits are beginning to age. Automatic inflation devices have gone off or failed, resulting in the department needing to take kits out of service.

Evidence to support the need for new/additional ice commander suits:

- Current Commander Suits: 5
 - Status of Suits: Several of the suits have tears to internal warmth and while still functional and safe, signs of use and degradation are evident.
 - Limitations of 5 suits:
 - Using the example of the ice rescue in March 2026, all 5 suits were used at once in a very geographically narrow area. In the case of multiple people missing/endangered at once or across an unknown area, the potential for first responders to cover a broader distance safely (rescuers in pairs, etc) is limited.
 - In the case of back to back rescues, suits may be drying out of commission after having recently been used. In order to prevent degradation of suits, they should be properly dried and inspected for damage. In the event of back to back rescues, the importance of having gear ready to go is essential.

Is this an ongoing or recurring project/program?

No

Will you be partnering with other island or county organizations? If yes, please list your partners.

The nature of MIFD as a first responder organization raises the potential to partner with other emergency response services on Mackinac Island.

Please check items that apply to your grant application:

- Capacity: Builds the Capacity of Our NonProfit
- Wellbeing: Focuses on health, safety, and overall quality of life for all residents and seasonal workers on Mackinac Island

Goals, Objectives, and Metrics

Project Goal: What is the overall goal of the project? What are you trying to accomplish?

The overall goal of this project is to enhance the efficiency and effectiveness of MIFD ice and water rescue operations, thereby providing the highest level of service and protection to the community. Currently, the MIFD performs exceptionally, but response actions can be restricted as a result of equipment limitations.

Objective 1: What are the specific objectives for this project? These should be specific, actionable steps you will take to meet your goal.

Objective 1: Purchase and inventory new ice and water rescue equipment within 2 months of being awarded a grant.

Objective 2: What are the specific objectives for this project? These should be specific, actionable steps you will take to meet your goal.

Objective 2: Conduct ice and water rescue training, with a focus on how additional equipment can build the capacity of the department and impact potential responses. Allocate equipment (with members/on apparatus) in a method that builds the capabilities of the department to respond swiftly and effectively.

What metrics or indicators will you use to measure and evaluate your success?

The MIFD will measure and evaluate our success by analyzing the responses to our water and ice rescue incidents. Specific metrics that can be used include total number of incidents, response time to scene, response time to clear scene, outcome of incident, and wear/degradation of equipment.

Timeline for your project:

Funding: Acquire Gear (1 Month- 2 month)

Inventory all gear (1 Month -2 Month)

Provide Annual Training on Ice Rescue (3 Months)

Provide Annual Training on Water Rescue (6 Months)

- In conjunction w/ MMR?

Conduct Monthly Inspections of all gear

Document all equipment use and outcomes

Project/Program Financials

Partial Funding Priorities:

Priorities lie in acquiring the water rescue kits. One of the MIFDs strengths is its response time to calls, given individual members of the fire department can respond directly to the scene and provide a size up.

Long Term Funding Strategies:

Long term funding strategies for this project will be assessed as gear is used. Due to the current financial strain of the city, funding can be reassessed when the fire department has a more standard budget.