Arizona Department of Forestry and Fire Management
Urban and Community Forestry - Community Challenge Grant Program
Grant Guidelines

Project Timeframe: January 1, 2021 – December 31, 2021

Projects Closed:
(Final Reports and   January 31, 2022
Reimbursement Requests
Due)

Estimated Total Program $90,000.00
Funding:
Award Maximum: $20,000.00
Award Minimum: $5,000.00
Typical Granting Range: $5,000.00 – $10,000.00
Cost Sharing or Matching   50% (1:1) cost-share from non-federal source
Requirement:

Grant Theme: <u>Promoting the Value and Benefits of Trees in Underserved Communities</u>

Application Submittal: https://gn.ecivis.com/GO/gn_redir/T/zgeraawx0pcs

Application Deadline: 11:59 PM
                                    Thursday, October 22, 2020

Award Notification: After Monday, November 9, 2020

Questions: Cori Dolan
                                    UCF Program Manager
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DFFM reserves the right not to accept the following:
- Hand-written applications (except for signature)
- Applications that do not meet the grant criteria
- Incomplete applications

INTRODUCTION

Arizona Department of Forestry and Fire Management (DFFM) – Urban and Community Forestry in cooperation with the USDA Forest Service State and Private Forestry is pleased to offer the Community Challenge Grant program.

Urban and Community Forestry is a cooperative program that focuses on the stewardship of urban natural resources, and this program is designed to encourage projects that promote tree planting, the care of trees, the protection and enhancement of urban and community forest ecosystems, and education on tree issues in cities, towns and communities across the nation. Community Challenge Grants are awarded through this program to encourage and promote citizen involvement in creating and supporting long-term and sustainable urban and community forestry programs at the local level.

PROGRAM OBJECTIVES
The Community Challenge Grants are to be used to promote and enhance the quality of Arizona's urban and community forests. Research project funding is provided as seed-dollars. Projects should be aimed at improving the long-term health and care of the urban forest, or at initiating new urban forestry projects in Arizona communities that would not otherwise be funded through existing budgets.

STATE STRATEGIC GOALS AND PROGRAM PRIORITIES
In order to be eligible, all proposals must meet at least one of the State's strategic goals for urban and community forestry outlined in the Arizona Forest Action Plan (https://dffm.az.gov/sites/default/files/Arizona-Forest-Resource-Strategy-2010.pdf):

1. People and communities receive maximum benefits from forests and trees.
2. Resilient and diverse forest ecosystem structures, processes, and functions.
3. Increased resilience of forest ecosystems to climate change.
4. Broad public understanding of climate change science – Arizona's variable climate and current and future impacts on Arizona's forest systems.
5. Improved communication between cultural groups about varying perspectives and beliefs related to forests, trees, and other natural resources.

ELIGIBLE APPLICANTS
- Units of local government (counties, municipalities, cities, towns, and townships)
- Tribal governments
- Non-profit organizations with 501(c)3 status
- Public educational institutions

Organizations that have previously received <u>any grant</u> from DFFM must be current on their quarterly reporting requirements per their signed grant agreement(s) prior to receiving a new award. *DFFM does not discriminate against any person or organization because of race, color, religion, disability, sex, age or national origin.*

GRANTEE SHOWCASE
Each grant recipient will be required to participate in the annual Grantee Showcase during the year their grant is active. Travel costs associated with attendance and participation in the Grantee Showcase are an eligible budget item (either reimbursable or used as a match toward the grant).

ELIGIBLE PROJECTS
Proposals that meet this year's priority are preferred. Proposals should fall under one or more of the following seven (7) project categories. Proposals that meet multiple categories are desired; those that do not fall into at least one of the categories are ineligible.

Project Examples by Category. This is a non-exhaustive list of possible projects by category; other projects that fit the category are encouraged. These examples should not be construed as a guarantee of project funding for any year or under any category.

Category 1 – Information and Education
- Arbor Day programs
- Workshops/seminars with an urban forestry emphasis
- Urban forestry reference library development or enhancement
- Arborist and tree worker training classes
- Urban forestry youth programs or education

Category 2 – Planning
- Planning or management document development, (e.g., Street-tree Master Plan, Urban Forest Strategic Management Plan)
- Tree ordinance development or revision
- Efforts toward becoming an approved Tree City USA community
- Community forest management or shade master plans
- Urban forestry board or commission development

Category 3 – Community and Natural Resources Management
- Asset Management (that includes urban trees)
- Tree inventories (including protocol development)
- Canopy inventories (including protocol development)

Category 4 – Maintenance
- Hazard tree evaluation, removal, and replacement
- Contract pruning using International Society of Arboriculture standards
- Tree and sidewalk conflict resolution with an emphasis on tree-preservation
- Risk Management programs

Category 5 – Demonstration Projects
- Technology transfer
- Tree habitat restoration projects
- Market-driven Forest Fire Hazard Reduction in urban-rural interface areas

Category 6 – Climate Change Resiliency
- Strategies that build urban forest resiliency
- Urban forest vulnerability mapping (related to drought, flooding and other climate change impacts)

Category 7 – Assessment
- Expansion of existing assessments intended to improve understanding of tree growth and maintenance, tree physiology and morphology and species adaptations in Arizona.

- Projects that further explain the role of urban trees in human health, conserving energy, and mitigating the urban heat island.

GRANT LIMITATIONS

1. <u>No more than 20% of the *total project dollars* may be used for plant materials</u>. Funds used to purchase trees as part of the project may not be used to substitute for existing tree planting and care expenditures. Any project involving tree planting* must include a five-year (5-year) maintenance plan. This maintenance must be funded separately by the applicant. All trees purchased must meet the American Standard for Nursery Stock and Arizona Nursery Association Standards.
2. Administrative costs associated with the proposed activities may not exceed 10% of the reimbursable project costs.
3. All projects must be completed by December 31, 2021 unless otherwise authorized by the grant administrator or specified in the grant agreement.
4. This is a reimbursable grant program. At least 50% of the total cost of the project must be contributed by the applicant from sources other than the federal government. This amount may be in the form of cash, services, volunteer time, equipment usage, and/or in-kind contributions. Grant funds will be distributed on a 50% reimbursement basis, and at no time can they be used to cover more than 50% of the project cost. No grant funds will be distributed until project expenditures and local match have both incurred. Ten percent (10%) of the funds may be withheld from the final payment until the project is completed and approved by the Urban and Community Forestry representative.
5. The funding source for these grants is the USDA Forest Service and payments are contingent upon the availability of funds.
6. Funds may be used for specific projects only, and may not be used to meet ordinary operational expenses or to purchase food or beverages.
7. Grant funds can not be used to purchase capital equipment (i.e., costing >$5,000). However, they may be used to rent equipment.

*Note: Organizations that receive a grant related to planting must have a Certified Arborist or Certified Landscape Professional (CLP) on-hand at the time the plants are delivered and when planting occurs. If the applicant already has either on staff, they may perform this function and credit their time as a match toward their awarded grant.

FEDERAL AND STATE REGULATIONS

Grantees must comply with all applicable local, state, and federal laws, policies and procedures, including obtaining all permits and approvals necessary to proceed with proposed grant activities. Successful applicants must also comply with all regulations pertaining to Federal Grants. It will be the applicant's responsibility to develop, document, administer and manage the grant in accordance with all applicable Federal and State laws, including the Federal Government Single Audit Act and all relevant Office of Management and Budget (OMB) circulars. Awardees will be subject to the OMB requirements and guidance in subparts A through F of 2 CFR 200 as adopted and supplemented by USDA in 2 CFR part 400.

CFR (Code of Federal Regulations) – http://www.ecfr.gov. If grantee needs assistance in obtaining any of these documents in electronic or printed form, please contact DFFM for assistance.

All records for awarded grants must be maintained for five (5) years following final payment or longer if required by law. An audit requirement for all Federal grantees is provided in the Code of Federal Regulations: 2 CFR 200.

DUNS NUMBER AND SAM REGISTRATION

All sub-recipients of federal funding are required to provide a DUNS number to DFFM and to register in the Federal System for Award Management (SAM) prior to receiving an award. There is no cost for these registrations, but they must be maintained along with all related information through the full term of the agreement.

- **DUNS #.** A *Data Universal Numbering System* (DUNS) Number is a nine-digit number established and assigned by Dun and Bradstreet, Inc. (D&B) to uniquely identify business entities. A DUNS number may be obtained at no charge from D&B by telephone (currently 1.866.705.5711) or the Internet (http://fedgov.dnb.com/webform).
- **SAM Registration**. Registration within the System for Award Management (SAM) is required to receive grant funds. In order to register, you must have your DUNS #, Employer Identification Number (EIN), and bank routing number. Registration access: https://www.sam.gov.

GRANT REVIEW AND RANKING

The grant review policy promotes a process whereby each grant application submitted is independently evaluated on its own strengths and merits. Applications will be reviewed by members of the Urban and Community Forestry Advisory Council, and Council members may represent organizations that submit applications for funding. If conflicts of interest exist, the following Recusal Procedures will be followed:

Recusal Procedures: Council members with a conflict of interest for specific applicants will be asked to recuse themselves of discussions and ranking of those grant applications. Recusal includes leaving the room during discussions and refraining from influencing council votes through dialogue.

Conflict of Interest: A conflict of interest exists if a review council member, or member of their family, is a director, principal officer, key employee, or member of a committee with delegated powers who has a direct or indirect financial interest. A person has a financial interest if the individual has, directly or indirectly, any actual or potential ownership, investment, or compensation arrangement with the grant applicant.

Grant reviewers will be required to complete a Community Challenge Grant Application Evaluation Conflict of Interest Disclosure Form, which will be kept on file at the State Forester's Office. Grants awarded are discretionary funds. Recommendations from the review council will be presented to the State Forester for consideration and final funding decision.

APPLICATION EVALUATION

To be eligible, applications must meet the following *minimum requirements*:
1. The applications must be submitted online by the deadline.
2. Funding requested should fall within the granting range ($5,000 - $20,000).
3. The proposal must be consistent with all stated grant limitations.

Applications meeting the minimum requirements will be evaluated and ranked based on how the proposed project meets the following categories:

- Fitting this year's grant theme: <u>Promoting the Value and Benefit of Trees in Underserved Communities</u> (5 points)
- Project need and innovative concept (10 points)
- Community impact and engagement (10 points)
- Project planning and coordination (15 points)
- Evaluation and/or monitoring (10 points)
- Plan for project sustainability (15 points)
- Community forestry program integration (20 points)
- Financials and budget (20 points)
- Application quality (10 points)

Frequently Asked Questions

How do I submit my application?
Applications must be submitted online through the eCivis portal.
https://gn.ecivis.com/GO/gn_redir/T/zgeraawx0pcs

Do I need letters of support from my Board of Directors or contributors that are providing a cash and/or in-kind match with my application?
Letters of intent and signatures from volunteers that will be providing cash or in-kind match are not required. However, letters of support from sponsors, partnering organizations, and community leaders may help your application.

What is the allowable Overhead/ Administration rate?
It is intended that the majority of grant funding is required for specific project implementation and not general organizational support or administrative costs. Expectation is that less than 10% of grant funding will be utilized for general overhead expenses such as administrative labor, accounting, office expenses, etc. These expenses need to be allocable to the project and documented as any other direct project expenses. If "Indirect Costs" are proposed, an indirect cost rate plan must already be established by the organization, or be permitted under 2 CFR 200, and approved by DFFM prior to allowance of these expenses. Reimbursement of Indirect Costs greater than 10% will not be allowed.

Can I get funding for a project that has already been funded or started? Can money spent on another previous component be used as a match?
No, previously funded projects and on-going projects are not eligible. If the proposed project is a second phase or component to a previously funded project, you may apply for Community Challenge Grant funds. Matching funds for another grant project can not be used.

Will the grant funds be given out at the beginning of the grant cycle?
No, funds are only given out as the project is worked on and monies spent (reimbursement-based grant). No money will be given out without a fully documented report and supporting paperwork. Match greater than or equal to the costs incurred must be shown before a reimbursement is made.

What is the value of volunteer labor?
Volunteer time may be valued at the local market rate for equivalent work (children aged ≤14years at minimum wage). Hourly rates exceeding $20/hour will require specific support documentation for justification and approval. If you use consultants, forestry professionals, planners, etc., who donate their professional services, appropriate hourly rates may be documented in a letter from the individual or their organization.

When will I know if my grant was accepted? What is the next step?
Applicants will receive a confirmation email that their application was submitted. After grant proposals are reviewed, applicants will be notified if their grant requests have been funded. The contract will be emailed to the grant recipients for approval/execution. Billable, funded work on your project can not begin until you receive a copy of the final executed grant agreement.