



REQUEST FOR APPLICATION

Urban and Community Forestry Assistance Grant

Sponsored by USDA Forest Service

Application Deadline:

March 22, 2024

Submit via Email to:

URBAN AND COMMUNITY FORESTRY ASSISTANCE GRANT

Kentucky Division of Forestry

300 Sower Blvd, Frankfort, KY 40601

forestrygrants@ky.gov

502-782-3932

<https://eec.ky.gov/Natural-Resources/Forestry>

INTRODUCTION

The **Kentucky Division of Forestry**, in cooperation with the **United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) Forest Service (USFS)**, announces the Urban and Community Forestry (U&CF) Grant Assistance Program. The program is designed to encourage communities to create and support long-term and sustained urban and community forestry programs throughout Kentucky.

OBJECTIVES OF THE URBAN AND COMMUNITY FORESTRY PROGRAM

Legislative Authority

Subtitle D, Sec. 23003 (a). State and Private Forestry Conservation Programs via the Inflation Reduction Act (IRA) appropriated \$1,500,000,000 to provide multiyear, programmatic, competitive grants. Of this total allocation \$1,800,000 was allocated to Kentucky to be distributed over a 5-year period. Urban and Community Forestry (U&CF) is also covered under the Agency's Justice40 Initiative established through Executive Order 13985. To advance the mission of Justice40, proposals should deliver the benefits of IRA investments through established partnerships with local organizations working to support underserved and disadvantaged communities experiencing low tree canopy and environmental justice.

USDA is a partner on the Interagency Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) on Promoting Equitable Access to Nature in Nature-Deprived Communities, which seeks to reduce the number of people without access to parks and nature in their communities. The America the Beautiful Initiative supports the prioritization of locally led conservation and park projects in communities that disproportionately lack access to nature and its benefits.

Any products, language or signage associated with these activities will acknowledge the contribution of the USFS Inflation Reduction Act Urban and Community Forestry funding.

Federal Program Objectives

The objectives of the Urban and Community Forestry Grant Program are to:

- 1) Integrate Urban and Community Forestry into all scales of planning.
- 2) Promote the role of Urban and Community Forestry in human health and wellness.
- 3) Cultivate diversity, equity, and leadership within the Urban Forestry community.
- 4) Strengthen Urban and Community Forest health and biodiversity for long-term resilience.
- 5) Improve Urban and Community Forest management, maintenance, and stewardship.
- 6) Diversify, leverage, and increase funding for Urban and Community Forestry.
- 7) Increase public awareness and environmental education to promote stewardship.
- 8) Prioritize projects focusing work on extreme heat mitigation, urban wood utilization, urban food forests and workforce development.

State Program Goals

The Kentucky Division of Forestry's goals for the Urban and Community Program are to:

- 1) Promote the development and enhancement of self-sustaining urban and community forestry programs.
- 2) Increase equitable access to urban tree canopies and associated environmental, economic, and human health benefits.
- 3) Expand engagement in local community forestry planning.
- 4) Help make communities more resilient to climate change, pests, and natural disasters.
- 5) Improve levels of engagement and knowledge about trees and tree care across small and large communities.
- 6) Increase community preparedness by developing storm mitigation plans.
- 7) Prioritize projects focusing work on increasing urban and community tree canopies, mitigating heat islands, increasing stormwater benefits, and workforce development.

Available Funding

Funding available is \$1,800,000. The State reserves the right to reject and approve partial funding for any and all proposals. Consideration will be given to ensure smaller communities have equitable access to funding. Records will be maintained for at least 3 years following final close out of Urban and Community Forestry Assistance Grant project.

Eligibility Information

Funds may be awarded to units of local governments (city, town, county), 501(c)3 non-profit organizations, or educational institutions. Other organizations, such as community tree volunteer groups, neighborhood associations or civic groups which are not 501(c)3 are eligible but must apply in partnership with an eligible non-profit organization, educational, or local government. Organizations that have received Inflation Reduction Act funding through the USDA Forest Service NOFO may apply for funds through this grant for separate, unrelated projects from their initial award.

All applicants applying for a federally funded award must have BOTH a Federal Employer Identification Number (FEIN) and a Unique Entity Identifier (UEI). Information on UEI provided here: <https://www.gsa.gov/about-us/organization/federal-acquisition-service/office-of-systems-management/integrated-award-environment-iae/iae-systems-information-kit/unique-entity-identifier-update>

Proposals **must** deliver 100 percent of the funding/program benefits to underserved and disadvantaged communities. If awarded, applicants will **not** have to provide project match. Applications must clearly describe the scope of work to be performed in applicable underserved and disadvantaged communities as identified by the Climate and Economic Justice Screening Tool (CEJST). Additional tools can be used to identify disadvantaged and underserved

communities in addition to CEJST, but CEJST must be used. All work must be tracked at the level that designates underserved and disadvantaged communities. Applications **must** also delineate proposed project areas in the Kentucky Urban and Community Forestry Eligibility Map as part of application materials.

The following tools are required to be used:

- Climate and Economic Justice Screening Tool (CEJST)
<https://screeningtool.geoplatform.gov/en/>
- Kentucky Urban and Community Forestry Eligibility Map (a tool that incorporates CEJST and TES data)
<https://arcg.is/1TPPyP>

The following tools will be accepted in addition to the above:

- Tree Equity Score Map
<http://www.treeequityscore.org/>
- EPA Environmental Justice and Screening Mapping Tool (EJScreen)
<https://www.epa.gov/ejscreen>
- EPA EnviroAtlas Interactive Map, Opportunity Zones
<https://www.epa.gov/enviroatlas/enviroatlas-interactive-map>

Eligible Projects

Eligible Projects must meet Federal and State Program Objectives. The U&CF Grant Program is intended to support new initiatives, programs, projects, staff positions or activities not currently being funded through other sources. Grants will be limited to no more than 3 per locality (county, city, or town). Typical grant projects should range in size from \$1,000 to \$250,000.

Category 1 – Support for Local Governments

LOCAL GOVERNMENT STAFFING – Local governments can apply for funding to assist in the support of staff engaged in urban forestry activities in underserved or disadvantaged communities for a **limited duration** and be **project-specific**. Funds can be used for either full-time or part-time employees. Example: Professional staff such as an ISA-certified arborist on contract rather than a full-time employee. Grants can also be used to support professional certification of existing employees.

TREE MAINTENANCE AND REMOVALS – Localities can apply for funding to support the care and maintenance of their urban forest and trees. Example: Funds can be used to remove *Fraxinus* (ash) trees due to their susceptibility to emerald ash borer, or deadwood pruning on a Champion Big Tree. All maintenance expenses and removals must occur on public lands. All removals shall include tree replacement planting plans where feasible.

STORM READINESS, RESPONSE AND RECOVERY PROGRAM DEVELOPMENT – Natural Disasters happen, but there are ways to manage the urban forest so that the trees are better prepared for disasters. Funding can be used for developing a community forest resilience plan or debris management plan and necessary municipal pruning within critical zones on public lands.

URBAN TREE CANOPY ASSESSMENT – Projects to assess the urban tree canopy (UTC) of a specific underserved community and develop a goal to increase canopy based on data from the assessment are eligible. An implementation plan on how the community plans to achieve that UTC goal should be part of the project deliverables.

TREE INVENTORY FOR LOCAL GOVERNMENT – Projects designed to inventory public trees on streets, in parks, on school campuses, etc. will be funded. The applicant must demonstrate that the inventory will be tied to its tree maintenance activities as well as plans for future tree planting, and that the inventory will be maintained by local staff over the long term. The purchase of inventory software and supplies can be included.

TREE BOARD OR TREE COMMISSION DEVELOPMENT – Projects to organize a new tree board or commission to develop or administer an urban forestry program. The new tree board or commission should be charged by ordinance to act on behalf of local government in coordination with the community's urban forestry program.

PUBLIC TREE ORDINANCE/POLICY – Projects to develop or revise a local government tree ordinance or policy will be eligible. The ordinance or policy should address the establishment of municipal authority over public trees; assign responsibility to a public department, arborist position, or established tree board or commission; and/or set maintenance and management standards. The ordinance or policy may also address other issues such as landscape requirements and tree retention or replacement on development sites, riparian buffers, and for the protection of urban forest ecosystems.

URBAN HEAT ISLAND ANALYSIS AND EXTREME HEAT MITIGATION – Local governments may apply for funding to develop demonstration projects that focus low canopy cover areas to offset urban heat. This can include a GIS-based canopy analysis, sidewalk removal, soil rebuilding for trees and/or education and outreach campaigns about urban heat island effect.

Category 2 - Education

CONFERENCES, SEMINARS, WORKSHOPS – Non-profit organizations, local governments, and educational institutions may apply for funds to assist with the planning and implementation of a conference that has, whole or in part, an urban and community forestry focus. Grant funds can support printed materials, speakers, publicity, and administration. Grant funds can also be used to offer scholarships. Scholarships should go to students or others with limited means to attend. Food and beverage costs cannot be funded.

PUBLICATIONS AND COMMUNICATION – Projects that develop new and unique publications, exhibits, videos, or websites, etc. that increase public awareness and understanding of the benefits of urban forests are eligible. All communications as signage will attribute projects as made possible by a grant from the USDA Forest Service Urban and Community Forestry

Program as part of the Inflation Reduction Act. Communications can be included as part of another category.

Category 3 – Tree Planting Projects

All projects funded under this category should include a site plan, plant list, tree planting specifications, tree protection needs, site photos, and maintenance plan. Applications should include a letter of permission/support for the planting if the project and property access for maintenance if not on the applicant's property. Applicants must also complete the liability waiver provided as part of this Request for Application (RFA). Private property owners are not eligible unless applying in partnership with a non-profit organization or with their local government. Grant funds will not pay for trees larger than 4 inches in caliper.

RIPARIAN TREE PLANTING in non-Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP) areas, including urban areas and private lands. Plantings should be a minimum of 35 feet wide. A maximum of 435 seedlings per acre will be paid for by the grant on a 10 x 10 spacing.

URBAN ORCHARDS may be organized to address food insecurity on any public lands.

STREET TREE PLANTING projects including planting strips and cutouts. Cutouts must be at least 4 feet x 10 feet or equivalent to be considered for funding under the program. Proposed projects with planting strips or cutouts less than 3 feet wide will not be considered.

NEIGHBORHOOD OR NEIGHBORHOODS TREE PLANTINGS may be organized by the local civic groups or neighborhood associations or by the community government. Projects should be located in public right-of-ways.

TURF TO TREES PROJECTS include conversion of regularly mowed lawns greater than 0.1 acres to trees, usually using tree seedlings, saplings, or small potted trees. The cost of tree protection is an allowable expense. Annual mowing between the seedlings is also allowed.

COMMUNITY TREE PLANTING projects include any tree planting on public lands.

Category 4 – Demonstration Projects

PILOT URBAN WOOD UTILIZATION PROGRAMS – Non-profit organizations and local governments may apply for funding to develop demonstration projects that increase knowledge, awareness, and visibility of urban wood utilization and recycling. Grant funding may be applied to education and outreach materials, demonstration of specialized equipment and techniques for working on smaller interface woodlots, and assessments of the feasibility of recycling and processing urban waste wood. Funds can also be used to develop business plans for an emerging urban wood program.

DEMONSTRATION COMMUNITY GRAVEL BED – Non-profit organizations and local governments may apply for funding to develop a demonstration community gravel bed or *Missouri Gravel Bed* to safely hold bare-root or washed containerized trees or shrubs for 3 to 6 months on public land. Grant funding may be applied to materials, supplies, labor, education,

and outreach materials. Proposals should include a site and design plan, site photos, maintenance plan, and a commitment to the project's long-term success from specified personnel or individuals.

Category 5 - Non-profit Organization Support

NON-PROFIT ORGANIZATION SUPPORT – Non-profit organizations may apply for funds to hire staff to assist with program development, volunteer coordination, field work, in underserved communities etc. These funds should be viewed as start-up funds and not be relied on in subsequent grant cycles for continuation of the position.

Category 6 - Planning

(Applicants considering doing a category 6 planning project should contact the state prior to submitting the application)

OPEN SPACE MASTER PLAN / TREE PLANTING PLANS– Projects related to the development of comprehensive master plans for urban forest management and community tree care, maintenance, and planting will be funded. Projects funded in this category should be from communities with limited resources to develop plans internally.

GREENWAY DEVELOPMENT PLANNING – Projects related to the planning and development of community greenways are eligible for funding. Grant funding may be applied to corridor and resource assessment, feasibility studies, maps and drawings, promotional and educational materials, and organizational development and staffing.

Category 7 – Workforce Development

URBAN FORESTRY/ARBORICULTURE SECTOR WORKFORCE PROGRAM – Projects that help groups move toward a more diverse and inclusive workforce in urban forestry and arboriculture are eligible for funding. Grant funding may be used to build leadership, conduct outreach activities, increase capacity, or provide training and education to support local community development efforts.

Category 8 - Miscellaneous

Projects that meet the objectives of the Urban and Community Forestry Program (see page 2), and that do not fit into any of the previous categories, may be submitted under category 8. The maximum funding for any project approved in this category will depend upon the nature of the project.

Ineligible Projects/Activities

Ineligible projects include, but are not limited to:

- research
- property acquisition and related costs
- construction and capital improvement projects
- equipment purchases

- food or beverage purchases
- gift cards
- sub-granting of awarded funds

Grant Timeframe

Approved projects can begin only after receiving a fully executed copy of the grant contract agreement.

All applications must be received by 11:59 PM EST on March 22, 2024. All projects must be completed within four (4) years from the date of the executed grant contract agreement.

Reports

Quarterly progress reports and a final report will be required of all grantees. Final reports must be submitted at the conclusion of the project prior to final payout.

Payment Process

The funds awarded under the grant are available on a reimbursement basis after report submittal and in accordance with a payment schedule agreed to in advance. Grantees must file a *Request for Reimbursement* (included in award paperwork package) and send records of expenditures along with documentation of all costs to the Kentucky Division of Forestry. The Kentucky Division of Forestry reserves the right to make partial payments subject to completion of scheduled milestones. The Urban and Community Forestry Grant Program Coordinator will evaluate the progress of the project to determine eligibility for full payment.

All awardees must be registered in Kentucky's eMARS (Management Administrative & Reporting System) prior to a grant contract agreement being created. For more information about eMARS or to register visit <https://finance.ky.gov/office-of-the-controller/office-of-statewide-accounting-services/customer-resource-center>.

TIMETABLE

APPLICATIONS MUST BE RECEIVED no later than 11:59pm, March 22, 2024.

The Urban and Community Forestry Program Coordinator will notify successful applicants of funding approval as soon as possible. Successful applicants must submit required state and federal forms **within thirty (30) days** of the date of the award notice. Municipalities needing city/town council or Board of Supervisor approval must contact the Division of Forestry for an extension of this time, if needed.

APPLICATION FORMAT

Written proposals must be included in addition to the online Application Form and Budget Worksheet. The proposal narrative **should not exceed four pages**. Applicants may also include maps, photos, etc. in addition to the narrative. Clear and concise proposals should address an urban and community forestry need, and meet one or more of the objectives of the Urban and Community Forestry Assistance Program (see page 2-3). The information that should be presented in the narrative and budget includes:

1. The purpose, objective, or mission statement of the applying organization and the purpose and objectives of the project. The project's purpose should be explained in one concise paragraph.
2. Explain why the project is important. Identify the project audience, why they should be addressed and describe what condition will be changed because of the project. The narrative should include these elements:
 - ◆ **Activities** – List all the activities you will undertake to complete the project.
 - ◆ **Partnerships and Participants** – List project personnel, volunteers, participating organizations, etc.
 - ◆ **Public, Educational Benefits, and Community Engagement** – Strategies for the project should also be described. Communications and signage will attribute projects as made possible by a grant from the USDA Forest Service Urban and Community Forestry Program as part of the Inflation Reduction Act.
 - ◆ **Underserved and Disadvantaged Community Benefits** – Provide a written description of how funds will benefit underserved and disadvantaged communities. Location of project area in relation to underserved and disadvantaged communities must be delineated via the Kentucky Urban and Community Forestry Eligibility Map (see page 3).
 - ◆ **Administration** – Specify who will be responsible for project management and record keeping.
 - ◆ **Timetable** – Show project start date, project milestone completion dates, and total project completion dates. This may be written as a bulleted list with descriptions and clarification, or in chart form.
 - ◆ **End Product/Result** – List specific **deliverables** to be accomplished with funds (i.e., brochures, packets, videos, publications, websites, proposed newsletter articles, street tree inventory, management plans, etc.) and identify the recipients of or target audience for the deliverable (i.e., students, employees, civic organization, Chamber of Commerce, citizens in _____ community). This may be written as a bulleted list with descriptions and clarification.
3. A detailed project **budget** should include sources and description of materials, maintenance costs, and costs of professional services. Applicants should use the budget worksheet attached to this Request for Application Package. On the last page of this document is a budget worksheet example for reference. The budget will be compared to the project narrative to determine if proposed expenditures are reasonable and allowable. A maximum of 10% of the total award can be used towards indirect expenses. Additionally, a maximum of 20% of the total award can be used towards administrative costs; not including indirect expenses. All administrative costs must be specifically delineated in the project budget. Administrative costs included:
 - a. Direct personnel and fringe, and service contracts administrative support functions for the IRA UCF Program.

- b. Supplies such as printers and office supplies. Note: these costs should be included in indirect costs unless they are ONLY for the IRA UCF work.

Categories that must be used in the budget include:

- ◆ **Personnel*** – List all staff positions by title. Give annual salary, percentage of time assigned to the project, and total cost for the budget period.
- ◆ **Fringe Benefits** – Identify the percentage used, the basis for its computation, and the types of benefits included.
- ◆ **Travel** – Specify the mileage, per diem, estimated number of trips, and other costs for each type of travel. Per diem should be based on your agency/organization’s adopted travel rates. Please visit <https://finance.ky.gov/office-of-the-controller/office-of-statewide-accounting-services/Pages/state-employee-travel.aspx> to determine the appropriate State rates.
- ◆ **Supplies** – All tangible personal property other than “equipment” which is valued at \$5,000 or greater. Supplies must not exceed \$5,000 per individual item. The budget detail should identify supplies to be purchased.
- ◆ **Contractual*** – Identify each proposed contract and specify its purpose, nature, and estimated cost.
- ◆ **Other** – List each item in sufficient detail for grant administrators to determine the reasonableness of the cost.
- ◆ **Indirect** – A maximum of 10% of the total award can be used towards indirect expenses. Allowable indirect charges must have an indirect cost authorized by a cognizant agency.

*State assumes no liability for any contractors, volunteers, or local government employees working on any projects.

PROPOSAL SUBMISSION

1. Fill in survey and delineate proposed project area online through the **Kentucky Urban and Community forestry Eligibility Map**, <https://arcg.is/1TPPyP>. This must be completed with or prior to submittal of online proposal package.
2. Once the Eligibility Survey has been completed, applicants will receive an email directing them to the online application form.
3. Fill out the **online application form, budget worksheet, and upload all required documentation (W-9 form and Narrative Proposal)**. These documents must be submitted with your proposal package.
4. **Non-profit organizations must additionally upload documentation of 501(c)3 status (IRS letter).**
5. Please make sure you receive a confirmation email once your application is submitted.

GRANT PREPARATION ASSISTANCE

Assistance in developing proposals is available to all potential applicants from the Kentucky Division of Forestry. We will also provide guidance as to a project's suitability under this grant program. Applicants are strongly encouraged to discuss potential projects with the Division of Forestry before proposal submittal. Contact information is listed below to reach out with any questions.

Urban and Community Forestry Program Coordinator**Chris Wiedamann****300 Sower Blvd, Frankfort, KY 40601****cwiedamann@ky.gov****502-782-3932**

FUNDING CRITERIA AND PROPOSAL REVIEW

Only applications that meet all General Requirements will be reviewed. Proposals ranking is based on the following criteria:

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- ✓ Clearly defined purpose or objective of project.
 - ✓ Goals, purpose, or mission statement of the applicant is clear.
 - ✓ Meets a demonstrated urban forestry need.
 - ✓ Helps strengthen and develop local urban & community forestry capacity.
 - ✓ Meets federal and state program objectives.
 - ✓ Local visibility or awareness of the project.
 - ✓ Long-term benefit of the project.
 - ✓ Clarity of budget presentation and use of budget worksheet (enclosed).
 - ✓ Cost effectiveness.
 - ✓ Has a realistic time frame for completion.
 - ✓ Acknowledgment of IRA UCF contribution language/signage.
 - ✓ Can be duplicated and/or used as a model in other cities.
 - ✓ Demonstrated ability of the applicant to follow through on project completion.
 - ✓ Clearly defined maintenance plan for projects that involve any planting.
 - ✓ Scientifically sound plan/practices meeting professional standards.

Consideration will also be given to ensuring smaller population, rural-urban interface areas have equitable access to funding during proposal ranking process.

SAMPLE

Kentucky Urban and Community Forestry Assistance Grant BUDGET WORKSHEET

The City of Metropolis has received a grant to do an urban forestry inventory and management plan. They plan to conduct an inventory and develop a management plan with in-house staff and help from a volunteer group. They plan to contract with a consultant to do the management plan. The inventory and management plan components are shown separately.

Applicant: City of Metropolis
Project Name: Tree Inventory Project

ITEM	Grant Share Direct Expenses or Cash Purchases
Component: Inventory	
Personnel: Clark Kent – Supervisor 30 hrs. @ \$30.30	\$909.00
Project Outreach Staff – 30 hrs. @ \$25.00	\$750.00
Consultant Services	\$3,000.00
Pickup Rental-160 hours @ \$10.00 (Keep on Trucking)	\$1,000.00
Supplies – Tablets 5 @ \$300	\$1,500.00
Inventory Software	\$1,500.00
Total Direct Expenses	\$8,659.00
Indirect	\$865.90
TOTAL	\$9,524.90

Sample Application Form
 Urban and Community Forestry Assistance Grant
For informational purposes only. Do not Submit.

Project Information					
Project Title (10 words or less):					
Category (Top 3):					
Brief Description of Project (3 sentences or less):					
Applicant Information					
Organization Name:					
Organization's Federal ID No.:		Unique Entity ID (UEI):			
Project Manager (Person responsible for project reporting and activities. All correspondence will be directed to this contact.)					
First Name:		Last Name:			
Title:					
Mailing Address:					
City:		County:		State:	
Daytime Phone:					
E-Mail Address:					
Web Site:					
Financial Information					
<i>Funds Requested = Total Amount of Project</i>					
Funds Requested		\$			
Signature of Agreement					
<p>As the duly authorized representative of the applicant named above, I hereby certify that all parts of this grant application have been read and understood and that all information submitted herein is true and correct. If awarded a grant under the Urban and Community Forestry Assistance Grant of Kentucky, said organization agrees to comply with all Federal and State guidelines for completion of the grant.</p>					
_____ Signature of Authorized Representative				_____ Date	
_____ Name and Title of Authorized Representative (Please print or type)					