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Office of the State Forester

Arizona State Forestry
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August 2015

We are happy to announce the next grant cycle for the Community Challenge Grant Program! Please read all application materials thoroughly as there are changes from previous years. Grant applications are available on the Arizona State Forestry website: www.azsf.az.gov (mouse over 'Grants' on the top bar menu, then mouse over 'Community Forestry Grants', and click on 'Community Challenge Grants' tab at the top of the section). If you are unable to download the application materials from the website, contact me for an application packet to be mailed to you.

An applicant may submit only one grant application in a single grant-funding year. Grant program details are provided in the application materials including: funding amounts, eligibility, how to apply, cost-matching parameters, and examples of previously funded projects.

All grant applications should demonstrate partnerships and must meet one of the State's strategic goals for urban and community forestry. This year, priority will be given to applications that will build community capacity for urban forestry management through TREE MAINTENANCE and REPLACEMENT. The intent of these grants is to help communities of all sizes to strengthen their urban forest management and outreach efforts; projects must be community friendly and should include some level of training or educational component.

Urban forestry research proposals are also accepted, with the intent to improve understanding of a) tree physiology, morphology, and species adaptations; and b) the role of urban trees in conserving energy and mitigating the urban heat island. Communities with Tree City USA designation or those working toward Tree City USA designation (www.arboday.org) are strongly encouraged to apply. Applicants (cities, towns) with this designation do receive additional points in the grant scoring process.

Please read the application materials carefully and submit one (1) original copy. Do not include a cover letter. Specific instructions are included in the application. Applications should be submitted via email, snail mail, or in person. **Deadline for submissions is 5:00 P.M. on Friday, 23 October 2015.**

Community Challenge Grants are awarded through the Arizona State Forestry – Urban and Community Forestry Program in cooperation with the USDA Forest Service. This program focuses on the stewardship of urban natural resources, and is intended to encourage and promote citizen involvement in creating and supporting long-term and sustainable urban and community forestry programs at the local level.

Please contact me with any questions you may have (602.771.1427; AlixRogstad@azsf.gov). If you would like to add a contact or be removed from this notification list, please send me an email with your preference.

Alix Rogstad, Program Manager – Urban & Community Forestry

**ARIZONA STATE FORESTRY
URBAN AND COMMUNITY FORESTRY**

**2015
Community Challenge Grant Program
Proposal Guidelines**

Application Deadline

5:00 P.M., Friday, 23 October 2015

Urban and Community Forestry Community Challenge Grant Program Grant Guidelines

Project Timeframe: 1 January 2016 – 31 December 2016
Projects Closed:
(Final Reports and Reimbursement
Requests Due) 31 January 2017

Estimated Total Program Funding: \$80,000.00
Award Ceiling: \$20,000.00
Award Floor: \$5,000.00
Typical Granting Range: \$5,000.00 – \$10,000.00
Cost Sharing or Matching Requirement: 50% match from non-federal source

Submit Applications to: grants@azsf.gov

Community Challenge Grant Program
Arizona State Forestry
Urban and Community Forestry
1110 W Washington, Ste 100
Phoenix, AZ 85007-2935

Application Deadline: 5:00 PM
Friday, 23 October 2015

Award Notification: After Monday, 23 November 2015

Questions: Alix Rogstad, Program Manager –
Urban and Community Forestry
AlixRogstad@azsf.gov
602.771.1427

AZSF reserves the right not to accept the following:

- Hand-written applications (except for signature)
- Applications that do not meet the grant criteria

INTRODUCTION

Arizona State Forestry (AZSF) – Urban and Community Forestry in cooperation with the USDA Forest Service State and Private Forestry is pleased to offer for the 24th consecutive year, 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. The program is primarily directed toward projects that might not otherwise be funded through existing budgets. 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. In evaluating grant proposals, consideration will be given to projects that:

- Improve understanding of the benefits of protecting, maintaining, and preserving tree cover.
- Promote volunteerism, multi-cultural awareness and involvement of non-profit organizations, agencies, and the private sector in implementing urban and community forestry programs.
- Increase the number of communities assisted through technology transfer, training, and education in tree care or urban natural resource management.
- Increase the number of partnerships and cooperators in urban and community forestry activities through technical, financial, and in-kind support.
- Increase the number of communities given technical, financial, or other forms of urban and community forestry assistance (i.e. tree inventories, tree board establishment, ordinance development, management plans, or infrastructure).
- Enhance the technical skills of individuals involved in the planning, development and maintenance of urban and community forestry programs.
- Expand existing research intended to improve understanding of (a) tree growth and maintenance, tree physiology and morphology, and species adaptations in Arizona; and (b) the role of urban trees in conserving energy and mitigating the urban heat island.

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

Community tree volunteer groups, neighborhood associations, or civic groups may apply if they work through or in conjunction with one of the above groups. Non-governmental organizations must be a designated 501(c)3 non-profit by the Internal Revenue Service, or submit their application in partnership with another eligible entity.

Organizations that have previously received any grant from AZSF must be current on their quarterly reporting requirements per their signed grant agreement(s) prior to receiving a new award. *Arizona State Forestry 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. The Grantee Showcase typically occurs in Phoenix in the fall (October/November). 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 should fall under one or more of the following seven (7) project categories. Proposals that meet multiple categories are preferred; 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/conference/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 – Research

- Research projects

GRANT LIMITATIONS

1. No more than 25% of the total project dollars may be used for buying and planting trees. Funds used to purchase or plant 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. All projects must be completed by 31 December 2016 unless otherwise authorized by the grant administrator, or specified in the grant agreement.
3. 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.
4. The funding source for these grants is the USDA Forest Service and payments are contingent upon the availability of funds and reimbursement by them.
5. Funds may be used for specific projects only, and may not be used to meet ordinary operational expenses or to purchase food or beverages.
6. 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

Project approval by an authorized representative of the local governing body, organization, or institution applying for the grant is required for a complete application.

Further, applicants 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 and manage the correct accounting and administrative procedures for 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.

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. Recipients are subject to the following administrative requirements and cost principles based on their organizational structure:

Grantee Structure	Administrative Requirements	Cost Principles
Non-Profit Organization	2 CFR 200 – New!	2 CFR 200 – New!
Local and Tribal Government	State and Federal laws, regulations	2 CFR 200 – New!
State Agency	State and Federal laws, regulations	2 CFR 200 – New!
University	2 CFR 200 – New!	2 CFR 200 – New!

All CFR and OMB documents are available online at:

CFR (Code of Federal Regulations) – <http://www.ecfr.gov>

OMB (Office of Management and Budget) – www.whitehouse.gov/omb/grants

If grantees need assistance in obtaining any of these documents in electronic or printed form, please contact your Arizona State Forestry representative.

RECOGNIZING FUNDING SOURCES

All printed materials, signs, and other products resulting from this grant will recognize the source of funding as follows:

Funds for this project were provided by the Urban and Community Forestry Financial Assistance Program administered in cooperation with the Arizona State Forestry – Urban & Community Forestry Program and the USDA Forest Service.

USDA Forest Service support shall be acknowledged in any publications or audiovisuals in accordance with 7 CFR 3015, Subpart 4, 3015.200.

INTERIM AND FINAL REPORTS

Quarterly reports are required of the grantee. They are to be submitted 30 days after the end of each calendar quarter (30 April, 31 July, and 31 October, and 31 January). If these reports are not filed, the grant may be suspended or cancelled.

Upon completion of the project, a final report will document accomplishments, total expenditures, and other information pertinent to the project, and be submitted within 30 days.

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 Community Forestry Committee, and Committee members may represent organizations that submit applications for funding. If conflicts of interest exist, the following Recusal Procedures will be followed:

Recusal Procedures: Committee 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 committee votes through dialogue.

Conflict of Interest: A conflict of interest exists if a review committee 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 committee will be presented to the State Forester for consideration and final funding decision.

APPLICATION EVALUATION

In order to be evaluated, applications must meet the following minimum requirements:

1. The applications must be received in our office by the deadline; email submittal is preferred.
2. All portions of the application must be typed or computer generated; no handwritten applications (other than signature) will be considered.
3. The application must be signed by an authorized individual.
4. 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 Priority: Tree Maintenance and Replacement
- Project need and innovative concept (10 points)
- Community forestry program integration (20 points)
- Community impact and engagement (10 points)
- Budget clarity and financial commitment (20 points)
- Project planning and coordination (10 points)
- Evaluation and/or monitoring (10 points)
- Plan for sustainability (10 points)

Frequently Asked Questions

Can applications be overnight mailed? Will applications be accepted past the deadline?

You may overnight applications in order to meet the deadline, but you must call the office (602.771.1400) to let us know it is coming. If the delivery is not made or is delayed, we will accept it late. If you do not advise us and the delivery is late, it will not be accepted. Other applications that arrive by regular mail will not be accepted after the deadline has passed.

Can applications be emailed?

Yes. You may email your completed and signed application to grants@azsf.gov. If your emailed application arrives prior to the due date, your application will be considered.

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.

Does the application have to be typed?

Yes, it can be computer generated or completed on a typewriter. Applications with any portion handwritten will not be accepted.

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 Arizona State Forestry 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 \$20.00/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 indicating whether their application made the deadline and is being considered. After grant proposals are reviewed, applicants will be notified if their grant requests have been funded after 23 November 2015. The contract and a W-9 form will be emailed/snail mailed to the grant recipients for approval/execution. Billable, funded work on your grant can not begin until you receive a copy of the final executed grant agreement.

GRANT APPLICATION PACKAGE

Arizona Community Challenge Grant Program

Please attach all required information in the order provided below.

- Completed Grant Application Form – 1 page
- Completed Budget Proposal Form – 1 page
- Project Narrative – up to three (3) typewritten pages
- Budget Narrative – not to exceed two (2) pages
- Additional supporting material – not to exceed two (2) pages
- Letters of support – no more than three (3)

Do not attach a cover letter to the application materials. The top sheet of your completed application should be the “Grant Application Form”. If snail mailing your application materials, please do not bind them; a staple in the upper left hand corner is sufficient.

One (1) original copy of the completed proposal must be submitted (via email, postal service snail mail, or in person) to the following address no later than 5:00 P.M., Friday, 23 October 2015. **This means in the office by 23 October, not postmarked by 23 October.**

grants@azsf.gov

Arizona State Forestry
Urban & Community Forestry
1110 W. Washington, Ste100
Phoenix, AZ 85007-2935

Application deadline is Friday, 23 October 2015 at 5:00 P.M.



Project Number: _____

For U&CF Use Only

GRANT APPLICATION FORM

Arizona Community Challenge Grant Program

Project Title: _____

Category: _____

Location (City): _____

Tree City USA (if applicable): _____ Yes No

Name of Applicant: _____

Address of Applicant: _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Contact Person: _____ Daytime Phone #: _____

E-Mail: _____ Organization's Federal ID # _____

Brief Project Description: (Please attach a separate, maximum 3-page narrative that clearly states the project need, objectives, methods, and deliverables.)

Is this project currently funded? Yes No

Was this project previously funded? Yes No

Will this project be possible without grant funding? Yes No

Can this project occur without full requested amount? Yes No

(a) UCF Funds Requested \$ _____

(b) Local \$ Match Provided \$ _____

(c) Value of In-Kind Match \$ _____

Total Project Amount (a+b+c) \$ _____

Timetable: (Starting Date) _____ (Ending Date) _____

Volunteer Involvement [Name of Group(s)]: _____

Name of Representative

Title of Representative

Signature of Authorized Representative

Date

Upon authorization of approval for financial assistance, grantees will be assigned a grant number and a maximum dollar amount to expend. Prior to expending funds, applicants must submit an updated project workplan.



Project Number: _____

For U&CF Use Only

BUDGET PROPOSAL FORM

Arizona Community Challenge Grant Program

Applicant Name: _____

Project Title: _____

Item	Grant Share Direct Expenses or Cash Purchases	MATCH			Total
		Applicant Direct Expenses or Cash Purchases	Applicant In-kind Personnel Services: Volunteer and Staff Hours	Applicant In-kind Donated: Services, Supplies, or Equipment use	
Administration (Project-related Labor, staff time, volunteer time, and Fringe Benefits)					
Contractual Services (consultants, landscape architects, arborists, engineers, etc.)					
Supplies (itemize as necessary – plant materials, printing costs, educational materials, postage, etc.)					
Other (anything that doesn't fit into one of the categories above)					
Other					
TOTAL:					

This form is for the summary of your budget information. A detailed list of expenditures and a budget narrative should be provided if necessary (2-pages max).



APPLICATION INFORMATION

Arizona Community Challenge Grant Program

When drafting your proposal, please include the following information:

1. Completed Application Form
2. Completed Budget Proposal Form
3. Proposal Narrative
 - Applicant Information – A basic overview/description of applicant, including purpose or mission statement.
 - Project Need
 - Project Objectives and/or Goals
 - Anticipated Project Benefits – Benefits to the local urban and community forest program, public relations, education, and the potential for project sustainability should be included.
 - Project Methods – A narrative detailing how the project will be accomplished should include the following elements:
 - i. Activities (include scope of work)
 - ii. Participants (project personnel, volunteers, corporate sponsor, etc.)
 - iii. Facilities and equipment
 - iv. Timetable (include project start and end dates)
 - v. Outcome/Results
4. Budget Narrative – Discuss how each of the identified financial needs will be met.
5. Optional Materials
 - Supporting documents – Letters of community support (limit three (3)).
 - Proposed projects that include planting require the following additional documents:
 - i. A detailed five (5) year maintenance plan specifying the entity responsible for maintenance and how it will be accomplished.
 - ii. A stated intention of on-site inspection by an International Society of Arboriculture (ISA) certified arborist or Certified Landscape Professional (CLP). Forms will be provided if grant is awarded. (A completed inspection form will be required for reimbursement.)
 - iii. If trees will be planted within the Arizona Department of Transportation's right-of-way, Grantee must provide proof of permission prior to planting.