



2019 U.S. Forest Service National Urban and Community Forestry Challenge Cost-Share Grant Program

Request for Proposals (RFP)

Proposals are to be received by 11:59 PM Eastern, **April 30, 2018**

INTRODUCTION

The Secretary of Agriculture has a congressionally designated advisory council that assists the U.S. Forest Service in establishing the grant categories and recommendations of final proposals for the Forest Service to consider. This is the National Urban and Community Forestry Advisory Council (Council).

The Council serves to advise the Secretary of Agriculture on the status of the nation's urban and community forests and related natural resources. The Council seeks to establish sustainable urban and community forests, by encouraging communities of all sizes to manage and protect their natural resources, which, if well managed, improves the public's health, well-being, economic vitality, and creates resilient ecosystems for present and future generations.

Urban and Community Forestry Program Requirements

The Council recommends urban and community forestry projects that **have national or multi-state** application and impact through the U.S. Forest Service's competitive Urban and Community Forestry Challenge Cost-Share Grant Program. A proposal's content must meet the Urban and Community Forestry program authorities as designated by Congress in the Cooperative Forestry Assistance Act, (Section 9 PDF, pp. 19-24) [State & Private Cooperative Forestry Handbook of Programs](#) and the annual criteria set forth by the Council. A listing of the previously funded projects can be viewed at [Urban Forestry South list of past NUCFAC grants](#)

DEFINITIONS

Urban and Community Forestry: The art, science, and technology of managing trees, forests, and natural systems on public lands in and around towns, suburbs and cities, for the health and well-being of all people.

Underserved Communities: Underserved Communities are communities that do not receive equitable financial and technical assistance as other communities might, in maximizing the benefits from the conservation and management of their natural resources. In this context we consider underserved as low income, under represented racial / ethnic minorities; Native Americans; people with disabilities and the elderly.

Ecologically Underserved: Communities lacking sustainable ecosystem services due to inadequate urban forest structure and management that diminishes environmental, socioeconomic, and health benefits.

Green Infrastructure: Green infrastructure is strategically planned and managed networks of natural lands, working landscapes and other open spaces that conserve ecosystem values and functions and provide associated benefits to human populations.

Nontraditional: Organizations, agencies, businesses not traditionally involved in urban and community forestry.

GRANT PROGRAM OVERVIEW

Available Funding: The U.S. Forest Service anticipates that the statutory authority (Sub Title 9 of the Cooperative Forestry Assistance Act) for the Fiscal Year 2019 Urban and Community Forestry (U&CF) Program may provide, approximately \$900,000 in grant funds to be awarded through the 2019 National Urban and Community Forestry Challenge Cost-Share Grant Program. **Funds are to support national urban and community forestry projects on nonfederal public land that have a national or multi-state impact and application.** All awards are based on the availability of funding, which may be subject to change.

Eligible Applicants: Any U.S. non-Federal organization and Tribal agencies, operating within the United States or its territories, may apply for the Challenge Cost-Share grant. While collaboration with Federal agencies is encouraged, a Federal agency **may not** receive funding **or be used as match** to the Federal funds being requested. Individuals and private land are not eligible. Proposals are required to address National or multi-state, multi-tribal land urban and community forestry issues. The Forest Service will address any conflicts of interest.

Not Eligible: If an entity has a local/State tree-planting projects, capital improvements to property of any ownership, and/or projects that have only a **local impact and applicability are not eligible** and they should contact their State Urban and Community Forestry Coordinator for assistance in identifying funding alternatives at the local level. The list of State Coordinators may be found at the following website at the bottom of the page: [State Urban Foresters' Contact List](#)

Matching Requirements: All grant funds must be matched at least equally (dollar for dollar) with non-Federal source funds. This match may include in-kind donations, volunteer assistance, and private and public (non-federal) monetary contributions. All matching funds must be directly related to the proposed project. The source of matching funds must be identified and grantees must comply with all applicable Federal regulations.

Award, Reporting and Presentations: Following the final review and selection process, the Forest Service will notify a grant recipient of their award and when they may proceed in writing. Written progress reports are to be submitted bi-annually to their respective Forest Service Urban Forestry Program Manager for verification and approval. Financial progress reports are required to be submitted quarterly.

Grantees may also be asked to present, in person/webcast, their project progress report at one of the Councils' annual meetings. The grantee shall notify the Forest Service, thirty days prior to an active grant's information or data being presented to the public or peers.

Grant Writing Assistance: There are various internet sites that provide valuable grant writing tips and guidance for developing competitive grant proposals. One in particular is the Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance website at: [Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance Website](#).

Acknowledgement of the U.S. Forest Service Urban and Community Forestry Assistance Program:

All applicants that receive grant awards will be required to acknowledge the Forest Service and the National Urban and Community Advisory Council in any written, electronic, or verbal, documents, websites, publications, emails, video, photos, power points, webinars etc. that the Federal grant dollars supported.

Written statements may use:

"This project is funded in full or in part by the U.S. Forest Service National Urban and Community Forestry Assistance Program as recommended by the National Urban and Community Forestry Advisory Council."

Inquiries: All questions regarding the program should be directed to Nancy Stremple, Executive Staff to the Council, at (202) 309-9873 from 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. (Eastern).

INNOVATION GRANT CATEGORY

The National Urban and Community Forestry Advisory Council seeks innovative (new, cutting-edge or builds upon existing studies) grant proposals for program development, study, and collaboration that will address strategies in the National Ten Year Urban Forestry Action Plan (2016-2026). This Request for Proposals is to address the following priority issues within the research needs of the action plan:

D: Prepare for Pests, Threats, Natural Disasters and Associated Changes and Risks

Detailed information about the category follows this section. Proposals are to address the request and intent of the category.

Organizations, local governments, tribal agencies, and partnerships are encouraged to submit proposals that will demonstrate the reach, resources, and expertise needed to address the priority issues noted in ways that will lead to meaningful, replicable results across the country.

Potential Innovation grantees are should work collaboratively with other organizations and entities not traditionally involved in urban and community forestry, as well as other geographical areas to test the national application.

Applicants should consider multi-year projects and other sources of funds, which may include other Federal cooperative conservation sources.

While other Federal dollars or technical support may contribute to the project, they may not be used to match these Federal grant program dollars.

The grant review process takes about nine months to a year to review the proposals once they are received. Applicants should state their start and end date accordingly on their SF424.

Each year, grant categories vary from subject matter to the number of different categories in which an applicant can select. When the RFP lists multiple categories, each category is considered separate and requires its own application. In these cases, please do not merge more than one category content or intent into one proposal. This can result in disqualification of the proposal. Applicants may submit separate proposals for more than one category.

2019 National Urban and Community Forestry Grant Category

Grant Category: Prepare for Pests, Threats, Natural Disasters and Associated Changes and Risks

Background/Intent:

Towns, cities and regions are encouraged to conduct tree canopy assessments or tree inventories, set community forest goals and policies, and adopt management plans to promote consistent, stable forest management programs. Yet ever more communities are experiencing abrupt changes and threats. Some change transcends their local forest system, such as, hurricane or tornado damage that impacts all community infrastructure systems, including their forests. National Assessments have summarized the impacts of natural disasters in the United States, now and in the future, and identify the wide-ranging changes and threats for all communities, including natural infrastructure resources.

Other changes are tree-focused, threatening the health or productivity of the forest, such as an insect pest or virulent disease. Some threats are abrupt, showing consequences in hours or days, and others simmer for years with gradual implications (such as invasive plant species).

Research, studies, technology, and, policy are needed to better understand and monitor current threats, to diminish tree loss, maintain forest health, and to sustain a community's forest ecological services. Studies are also needed to help anticipate emergent threats or negative conditions to enable proactive management response.

Proposals may include, but are not limited to, networks of diverse communities and scientists that will integrate threats such as flooding, extreme heat, and, drought. Finally, social or policy studies can help to reveal the institutional best practices that can be put in place for threat prevention, response, and citizen engagement for forest and community sustainability. Subject matter should focus on one or more of the following:

Emergent Objectives

- Given likely increase of in invasive species and extreme weather events, effort is needed to better understand and work within change trending to anticipate and integrate Urban and Community Forestry Goals with likely futures, and study of vulnerable situations (such as found in the decimation of our of our Ash and western pine forests) can provide insight for broader patterns and responses.
- Continue and expand studies of natural disasters and urban and community forest ecosystems implications to develop stakeholder awareness, better prioritized community response, policy and programs. That leads to a community's resiliency to such negative events.
- Clearly define and describe, then quantify urban forest threats and impacts from national to local scales, to include invasive plant species, insect pest invasions, land use development, city/town wildfire, and weather/natural disaster scenarios.

- Create models and decision tools to support community and urban threat forecasting and management response, including trade-offs analysis for policy and budget scenarios.
- Use current and new evidence to construct best practices for tree/forest/ecosystem threat planning and management. Correlate these best practices and threat impacts to a community's socio and economic impacts.
- Communicate and educate our citizens of these threats and their impact of the economic, environmental and community well-being.

Proposals are to include the following:

Prior to developing your proposal, **applicants are required to contact their Forest Service Regional/Area Urban Forestry Program Manager** to assist with any program authorities, questions, and/or resources. Please click on the link to find your Forest Service Urban Forestry Program Manager: [_Contact a Federal Program Manager \(PDF\)_...](#)

- Applicants should demonstrate through the proposal an understanding of the impacts disasters and insect and disease outbreaks have on urban forests and green infrastructure as community assets on a local, regional and national level.
- Proposals should provide (using actual data/references/documentation) a specific process for comprehensively identifying, collecting, combining and assessing all factors used in model construction or data/inputs used. Proposed processes should be able to measure costs and benefits, as well as sensitivity analysis
- All proposals are to include an evaluation of the final product. Applicants should address the anticipated indicator(s) that will demonstrate the success of the process/product within their narrative.
- Proposals should include independent validation of assumptions, formulae, models, etc., by relevant subject matter experts.
- Any process models proposed should be designed in a way to be user friendly, with a high potential for adoption by cities and towns nationwide.
- Partnership collaboration is required - two or more related stakeholders will be involved in any applicable research, planning, design, implementation, utilization, adoption and/or advocacy of this category. All proposals will include formal letters of partnership. They may also include letters of support from other key stakeholder entities, as applicable.
- Applicants should reference the National Ten Year Action Plan Research Needs Findings as a reference to address the National Research Methodology request. (See Page 16) [National Ten Year Action Plan Research Needs Findings Document](#)

Successful proposals shall be national in scope and thus have the potential to serve all communities, especially State and Federal programs. Multiple testing sites are required to fully demonstrate a proposals national applicability. Any proposal focusing on just one region must expressly demonstrate through its narrative the capacity for it to be utilized on a national scale for it to be considered.

ESSENTIAL REQUIREMENTS

Fill in the provided template to submit the proposal. The template package should be one document (PDF or Word) with the exception of the SF424 forms, which may be separate.

The abstract is not to exceed 200 words, summarizing the proposal.

Develop a clear and explicit proposal that include narratives explaining the challenge, general methods, expected outcomes, partners (with letters documenting participation and support), utilization of literature review to support one's statements, time line, deliverables, technology transfer components, and approximate cost.

Proposals are to be national in scale and their results are to be replicable across the country. This may require multiple sites across the country to test the applicability.

Localized projects will not be considered, unless they represent a clearly stated national purpose.

Include appropriate national, non-traditional partners, meaning those not typically involved in urban and community forestry efforts. It is important to include and/or address underserved communities and their needs. The Council seeks to fund proposals that clearly broaden the base of participation through the involvement of such non-traditional partnerships and the inclusion of underserved communities with applicable local, state and/or national urban forestry contacts.

Develop clear, effective, and innovative technology transfer components to the proposal. This includes a wide dissemination of, and public access to, completed project results. Identify the key stakeholder groups that will utilize the project results.

The production of only CDs, presenting at peer conferences, and posting to websites is a minimum step, and will be considered an inadequate means of technology transfer by the proposal review panel. Applicants are to incorporate adequate means to transfer their findings to the applicable stakeholders.

APPLICATION PROCESS

The 2019 Urban and Community Forestry Challenge Cost Share Grant Program will require proposals that clearly define their intent, methodology and deliverables. Only those proposals selected to respond to the review panel's comments will be considered for potential funding. The review process can take nine months to a year complete.

All proposal applications are to be submitted to **Grants.gov**, unless one does not have the capacity to use or have the availability of a computer. They may contact Nancy Stremple, executive staff nstremple@fs.fed.us, Cell: 202-309-9873 for application information to be mailed to them.

A copy of the grant package will also be available on the Forest Service Urban and Community Forestry Advisory Council, (NUCFAC) Website: [NUCFAC Website](#).

All application information is available on [Grants.gov](#) (Search: Opportunity: **USDA-FS-UCF-01-2019**, or CFDA, 10.675, Agency Forest Service).

New Grants.gov Application Submission and Receipt Procedures

This section provides the application submission and receipt instructions for US Forest Service grant program applications. Please read the following instructions carefully and completely.

1. Electronic Delivery

US Forest Service is participating in the Grants.gov initiative to provide the grant community with a single site to find and apply for grant funding opportunities. US Forest Service encourages applicants to submit their applications online through Grants.gov.

2. How to Register to Apply through Grants.gov

a. *Instructions:* Read the instructions below about registering to apply for US Forest Service funds. Applicants should read the registration instructions carefully and prepare the information requested before beginning the registration process. Reviewing and assembling the required information before beginning the registration process will alleviate last-minute searches for required information.

Organizations must have a Data Universal Numbering System (DUNS) Number, an active System for Award Management (SAM) registration, and, a Grants.gov account to apply for grants.

Creating a Grants.gov account can be completed online in minutes, but DUNS and SAM registrations may take several weeks. Therefore, an organization's registration should be done in sufficient time to ensure it does not impact the entity's ability to meet required application submission deadlines.

Complete organization instructions can be found on Grants.gov here:

<https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/applicants/organization-registration.html>

1) **Obtain a DUNS Number:** All entities applying for funding, including renewal funding, must have a DUNS Number from Dun & Bradstreet (D&B). Applicants must enter the DUNS Number in the data entry field labeled "Organizational DUNS" on the SF-424 form. For more detailed instructions for obtaining a DUNS Number, refer to:

<https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/applicants/organization-registration/step-1-obtain-duns-number.html>

2) **Register with SAM:** All organizations applying online through Grants.gov must register with the System for Award Management (SAM). Failure to register with SAM will prevent your organization from applying through Grants.gov. SAM registration must be renewed annually. For more detailed instructions for registering with SAM, refer to:

<https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/applicants/organization-registration/step-2-register-with-sam.html>

3) **Create a Grants.gov Account:** The next step is to register an account with Grants.gov. Follow the on-screen instructions or refer to the detailed instructions here:

<https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/applicants/registration.html>

4) **Add a Profile to a Grants.gov Account:** A profile in Grants.gov corresponds to a single applicant organization the user represents (i.e., an applicant) or an individual applicant. If you work for or consult with multiple organizations and have a profile for each, you may log in to one Grants.gov account to access all of your grant applications. To add an organizational profile to your Grants.gov account, enter the DUNS Number for the organization in the DUNS field while adding a profile. For more detailed instructions about creating a profile on Grants.gov, refer to: <https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/applicants/registration/add-profile.html>

5) **EBiz POC Authorized Profile Roles:** After you register with Grants.gov and create an Organization Applicant Profile, the organization applicant's request for Grants.gov roles and access is sent to the EBiz (Point of Contact) POC. The EBiz POC will then log in to Grants.gov and authorize the appropriate roles, which may include the AOR role, thereby giving you permission to complete and submit applications on behalf of the organization. You will be able to submit your application online any time after you have been assigned the AOR role. For more detailed instructions about creating a profile on Grants.gov, refer to:

<https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/applicants/registration/authorize-roles.html>

6) **Track Role Status:** To track your role request, refer to:

<https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/applicants/registration/track-role-status.html>

b. **Electronic Signature:** When applications are submitted through Grants.gov, the name of the organization applicant with the (Authorized Organization Representative), AOR role that submitted the application is inserted into the signature line of the application, serving as the electronic

signature. The EBiz POC **must** authorize people who are able to make legally binding commitments on behalf of the organization as a user with the AOR role; **this step is often missed and it is crucial for valid and timely submissions.**

3. How to Submit an Application to US Forest Service via Grants.gov

Grants.gov applicants can apply online using “Workspace”. “Workspace” is a shared, online environment where members of a grant team may simultaneously access and edit different web forms within an application. For each funding opportunity announcement (FOA), you can create individual instances of a “Workspace”.

Below is an overview of applying on Grants.gov. For access to complete instructions on how to apply for opportunities, refer to:

<https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/applicants/Workspace-overview.html>

1) *Create a “Workspace”*: Creating a “Workspace” allows you to complete it online and route it through your organization for review before submitting.

2) *Complete a “Workspace”*: Add participants to the “Workspace” to work on the application together, complete all the required forms online or by downloading PDF versions, and check for errors before submission. The “Workspace” progress bar will display the state of your application process as you apply. As you apply using “Workspace”, you may click the blue question mark icon near the upper-right corner of each page to access context-sensitive help.

a. *Adobe Reader*: If you decide not to apply by filling out web forms you can download individual PDF forms in “Workspace”. The individual PDF forms can be downloaded and saved to your local device storage, network drive(s), or external drives, then accessed through Adobe Reader.

NOTE: Visit the Adobe Software Compatibility page on Grants.gov to download the appropriate version of the software at:

<https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/applicants/adobe-software-compatibility.html>

b. *Mandatory Fields in Forms*: In the forms, you will note fields marked with an asterisk and a different background color. These fields are mandatory fields that must be completed to successfully submit your application.

c. *Complete SF-424 Fields First*: The forms are designed to fill in common required fields across other forms, such as the applicant name, address, and DUNS Number. Once it is completed, the information will transfer to the other forms.

3) *Submit a “Workspace”*: An application may be submitted through “Workspace” by clicking the Sign and Submit button on the Manage “Workspace” page, under the Forms tab. Grants.gov recommends submitting your application package at least 24-48 hours prior to

the close date to provide you with time to correct any potential technical issues that may disrupt the application submission.

4) *Track a “Workspace” Submission:* After successfully submitting a “Workspace” application, a Grants.gov Tracking Number (GRANTXXXXXXXX) is automatically assigned to the application. The number will be listed on the Confirmation page that is generated after submission. Using the tracking number, access the Track My Application page under the Applicants tab or the Details tab in the submitted “Workspace”.

For additional training resources, including video tutorials, refer to:

<https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/applicants/applicant-training.html>

Applicant Support: Grants.gov provides applicants 24/7 support via the toll-free number 1-800-518-4726 and email at support@grants.gov. For questions related to the specific grant opportunity, contact the number listed in the application package of the grant you are applying for.

If you are experiencing difficulties with your submission, it is best to call the Grants.gov Support Center and get a ticket number. The Support Center ticket number will assist the US Forest Service with tracking your issue and understanding background information on the issue.

4. Timely Receipt Requirements and Proof of Timely Submission

a. *Online Submission.* All applications must be received by **11:30 PM Eastern time** on the due date established for each program. Proof of timely submission is automatically recorded by Grants.gov. An electronic date/time stamp is generated within the system when the application is successfully received by Grants.gov. The applicant with the AOR role who submitted the application will receive an acknowledgement of receipt and a tracking number (GRANTXXXXXXXX) from Grants.gov with the successful transmission of their application. This applicant with the AOR role will also receive the official date/time stamp and Grants.gov Tracking number in an email serving as proof of their timely submission.

When the US Forest Service successfully retrieves the application from Grants.gov, and acknowledges the download of submissions, Grants.gov will provide an electronic acknowledgment of receipt of the application to the email address of the applicant with the AOR role who submitted the application. Again, proof of timely submission shall be the official date and time that Grants.gov receives your application. Applications received by Grants.gov after the established due date for the program will be considered late and will not be considered for funding by US Forest Service.

Applicants using slow internet, such as dial-up connections, should be aware that transmission can take some time before Grants.gov receives your application. Again, Grants.gov will provide either an error or a successfully received transmission in the form of an email sent to the applicant with the AOR role attempting to submit the application. The Grants.gov Support Center reports that some applicants end the transmission because they think that nothing is occurring during the transmission process. Please be patient and give the system time to process the application. **G.gov**

Applicants are to fill out the on-line application, the SF424, SF424A and SF424B forms.

Other formats will not be accepted.

Narratives: All narratives are to be single spaced, Times New Roman font, 12-point type, 1" margins. (See evaluation criteria, and examples of a filled 424 (a) and budget narrative table)

The application package to be uploaded into Grants.gov are to include the following:

- The Cover Application Form.
- Abstract (limit 200 words) summarizing the proposal, explaining what you plan to do, clarify the challenge, general methods, expected outcomes, partners (with letters documenting participation and support), post-project information, technology transfer, and approximate cost.
- Partnering organization letters of those partners who will be assisting with the implementation and national delivery of the proposal findings. Specifically state their role in the project proposal. The narrative is to specifically note the roles and responsibilities of the partners.
- The narrative template is not to exceed 10 pages.
- Support letters from key stakeholders that will be affected by the proposals findings. (Part of Appendix)
- The Literature Review– The cited literature is to identify what prior research supports the approach and/or the framing of the issue to be address? (Part of Appendix)
- Originality and Innovation – Please explain what aspects of the proposed project are innovative and why.
- **Federal financial forms Federal financial forms SF424 Family List**
Select SF 424 Family -Select Grants.gov forms:
SF424 Application for Federal Assistance, SF424 Form
SF424A Budget Information Non Construction, SF424A form,
and, SF424B Assurances, and Non Construction and Certification forms, SF424B Form
There is also a form where applicants can upload their attachments- Other Attachments Form. Please make sure all attachments are in order as one PDF, Attachments Form
- If the underserved boxes on the cover sheet, they will be required to explain either how they are an underserved applicant and/or what specific cultural group(s) they are going to be serving and explain their outreach strategy in the narrative.
- Budget Narrative Table, which specifically breaks down funds being requested and matched. Show other sources of funding, hourly rates for those working on project, supplies, contracts and their rates, travel, negotiated indirect cost rate(NICR), and any estimated program income. (Part of Appendix)

- Statement of Key Personnel Qualifications that will be working on the proposal.

All selected proposal finalists, as a group, will have an opportunity to discuss their grant proposal with the review panel in a proposal conference or conference call. The review panel will forward their recommended selections to the Forest Service.

Response Proposals

Only those proposals that have been asked to respond to the review panel's questions and comments will be considered for potential funding under this solicitation.

Final Council recommended proposals will be required to include:

- Negotiated indirect cost rate of the primary or cognizant Federal agency.
- Provide a statement of key personnel qualifications.
- Any additional information requested by the review panel.
- Full proposals will require the following forms to be included in their package:
 - o **AD-1047** - Certification Regarding Debarment, Suspension Certification Regarding Debarment, Suspension Form
 - o **AD-1048** – Certification Regarding Debarment, Suspension, Ineligibility and Voluntary Exclusion-Lower Tier Covered Transactions Certification Regarding Debarment, Suspension, Ineligibility and Voluntary Exclusion-Lower Tier Covered Transactions Form
 - o **AD-1049** – Certificate Regarding Drug Free Workplace Requirements Alternative 1 Certificate Regarding Drug Free Workplace Requirements Form
 - o **Certificate Regarding Lobbying** Certificate Regarding Lobbying Form
 - o **AD-3030-FS Tax Delinquent Status for Corporate Non-Profit and Profit Applicants** FS Tax Delinquent Status for Corporate Non-Profit and Profit Applicants Form
 - o **FS_1500-22 Financial Capability Questionnaire**
Financial Capability Questionnaire.
 - o **FS-1700-0006A Civil Rights Compliance Review Record (Will be sent to Full Proposal applicants)**

Application Deadlines:

Proposals must be posted to Grants.gov or courier hard copies received by 11:59 PM Eastern, **April 30, 2018**.

Proposals requested to respond to the review panel's comments are (tentatively) due by 11:59 PM Eastern, September 17, 2018.

The U.S. Forest Service typically awards the successful projects as Federal Financial Assistance Grants no later than September 30, 2019.

NOTE: Successful applicants will receive formal notice of their grant award from the Forest Service grant official. Consequently, grantees may not begin their projects prior to official grant award notification.

Hardcopy applicants will be required to utilize a courier service (i.e. FedEx, UPS, etc.) to send their application to the Forest Service's National Urban and Community Forestry Specialist, Nancy Stremple.

Hardcopy applications should be submitted on white 8.5" x 11" paper. Please do not enclose proposals in folders or binders (staple in the top, left hand corner of each copy) and do not include unsolicited material as it will be removed and destroyed.

To apply by hardcopy, please use a courier service to send one hard copy and a copy on a disk to:

Nancy Stremple,
Executive Staff to NUCFAC
USDA Forest Service
201 14th. St. SW, Sidney Yates Bldg. 3SC-01B
Washington, D.C. 20024
Cell: 202-309-9873

**Note: To ensure delivery, include both the mail stop (3SC-01B) number and the street address when addressing your package for shipment.*

PROPOSAL EVALUATION CRITERIA

Proposals will be evaluated on how well they address each of the following template criteria. Proposals that do not include all of the requested information will not score well in the evaluation process.

An **automatic disqualification** may occur if the proposal does not demonstrate how it has national application / benefits the entire country; does not meet the 1:1 matching requirement, does not apply to urban and community forestry program authorities and/or does not utilize the proposal template format.

Proposal Template Narrative- Section Descriptions

1. Project Description (20 points)

Describe what you are going to do. Why is it important and relevant to urban and community forestry at a national level? Be clear about which category you are applying to. Describe your intended audience.

2. Originality and Innovation (5 points)

Tell us why your project is original and innovative.

3. Literature Review (5 points) (long lists maybe placed in appendix but should be referenced in the narrative, as appropriate)

Perform a thorough literature review to indicate the background information you are basing your approach upon, or other work that supports the importance of this project.

4. Project planning and timeline (10 points)

Describe the steps in the project. Indicate how each step helps to achieve the desired outcome and goals of the project. Describe the logical steps that will be performed to reach the desired goal(s). This includes, but is not limited to, the clarity of the proposal and effectiveness and efficiency of the project's methodology. Timelines may vary dependent on the scope of work and average 1-3 years.

5. Product (10 points)

Provide a detailed description of the deliverable product(s) and identify the recipients/stake holders. How will the product or information be disseminated beyond the basic urban forestry or Forest Service network? How many will be produced? Will there be a fee to receive a copy of the final product(s)? If so, what will the fee be? If not, how many will be provided free? Has the applicant included the economic development, jobs creation, and cost-saving benefits from the topic category's perspective and approach to urban and community forestry? Please note that simply posting to YouTube or creating a website does not constitute national outreach. Please describe how you will gain awareness of these (or other) resources you make available from your project.

6. Collaboration (15 points)

Applicants are to specifically address how the project will be delivered in collaboration w/ other entities.

Applicants are to team up with partner organizations, agencies or institutions to have the greatest impact on the issue, or with key target audiences. It is particularly important to have applicable

national organization(s) as part of one's team and use this opportunity to include nontraditional partners as appropriate.

7. National Distribution/Technology Transfer of Your Findings (10 Points)

Every successful grant project should have a comprehensive plan to distribute the results to those who will benefit most from the findings. Ask yourself; "Does the distribution plan of your findings reach the target audience?" For example, if your project is on the psychological effects of trees on residents in nursing homes, how will you distribute your findings to nursing home developers and administrators across the country? Include a brief list of key words that can describe your project for future electronic searches.

8. Project Evaluation (10 points)

All grant proposals are to include a detailed evaluation plan, focusing on the successes, failures, and recommended changes for the project results. Proposals are to include time and funding needed to complete the evaluation. A final evaluation report is to be submitted to the Council's executive staff, Nancy Stremple nstremple@fs.fed.us. Proposals should describe how the project will increase the public's knowledge of the importance of urban and community forestry. Identify the criteria that will be used to judge the success of the project in regard to heightening the public's awareness of the importance of urban and community forestry? What metrics will be used to measure the project's success? Measures should be specific, measurable, and trackable over the period of the grant and any identified period after the project has been completed.

To assist applicants in identifying what is sometimes called "SMART" goals (specific, measurable, attainable, realistic, and timely); a website is available by visiting links and overview provided here:

[SMART criteria weblink](#)

9. Experience/Personnel/Adequacy of Resources (5 points)

Describe the experience and training in the fields relating to the project and any other qualifications that pertain to the quality of the product. Provide past experience with similar projects. Are there adequate resources (e.g., personnel, facilities, equipment, supplies, and time) available to carry out the project? Innovation Grants are to include, as part of the application, letters of partnership that describe the collaborating partner's role in the project and contact information, (place letters in the appendix.)

10. Budget Justification (10 points)

Federal Financial Application Forms: (Place in appendix or maybe separate forms in grants.gov)

Please use the downloadable Federal financial forms: [SF424 Form Family List of Forms](#). Use the SF 424 Form Family (Government wide), Attachments SF 424a Budget Information Non Construction and, SF 424b, Assurances, and Non Construction and Certification forms. These may be available on the Grants.gov website. (Part of the Appendix).

Be sure that costs are reasonable in relationship to the project's objective and scope.

See examples of the SF 424-A budget form, Example 1, and narrative budget table, Example 2 below to assist in filling out these forms. Please confirm that the math is accurate and that the matching dollars equal or exceed the amount of Federal funds being requested.

In addition to the Federal Financial Forms SF 424, 424 A and 424 B, a detailed budget narrative table that compliments the narrative should contain itemized details of the line items. (Part of the Appendix)

The budget line items should coincide with the work elements provided in the narrative plan of work. The detailed budget and budget justification should provide sufficient details (e.g., personnel, equipment, consultants, supplies, administration, partnership contributions) to reflect costs needed to complete activities identified in the work plan.

Matching amounts, if listed as in-kind contributions (e.g., personnel time, donated equipment, materials, and matching non-Federal grants), should be based on realistic calculated values. Costs should also provide enough detail to determine if they are reasonable and allowable. The budget should also identify the source of non-Federal resources and the ability to meet matching requirements.

If indirect costs are included in the budget, please provide a copy of the negotiated indirect cost rate agreement or a copy of the submitted application to the primary funding federal agency. NOTE REGARDING INDIRECT COSTS- Although indirect costs are allowable in Federal Financial Assistance Grants, the Council prefers that indirect costs are shared or covered by matching funds.

Example of SF 424 A - Example_1

BUDGET INFORMATION - Non-Construction Programs

OMB Approval No. 0348-0044

SECTION A - BUDGET SUMMARY						
Grant Program Function or Activity (a)	Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance Number (b)	Estimated Unobligated Funds		New or Revised Budget		
		Federal (c)	Non-Federal (d)	Federal (e)	Non-Federal (f)	Total (g)
1. National Urban and Community Forestry Challenge Cost Share Grant	10.675	\$	\$	\$ 75,000.00	\$ 150,000.00	\$ 225,000.00
2.						
3.						
4.						
5. Totals		\$	\$	\$ 75,000.00	\$ 150,000.00	\$ 225,000.00
SECTION B - BUDGET CATEGORIES						
6. Object Class Categories	GRANT PROGRAM, FUNCTION OR ACTIVITY					Total
	Federal (1)	Match (2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	
a. Personnel	\$ 25,000.	\$ 50,000.	\$	\$	\$ 75,000	
b. Fringe Benefits	2,000.	5,000			7,000	
c. Travel	5,000.	15,000.			20,000	
d. Equipment		12,500.			12,500	
e. Supplies	3,000.	10,000			13,000	
f. Contractual	15,000.	40,000.			55,000	
g. Construction	0	0			0	
h. Other	10,000.	10,000.			20,000	

i. Total Direct Charges (sum of 6a-6h)					0
j. Indirect Charges		7,500.			7,500.
k. TOTALS (sum of 6i-6j)	\$ 75,000.	\$ 150,000.	\$	\$	\$ 225,000.00
7. Program Income	\$ 0	\$ 0	\$	\$	\$

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Prescribed by OMB Circular A-102

SECTION C - NON-FEDERAL RESOURCES					
(a) Grant Program	(b) Applicant	(c) State	(d) Other Sources	(e) TOTALS	
8. Forest Service Urban and Community Forestry Program	\$ 137,000	\$	\$12,500	\$ 150,000	
9.					
10.					
11.					
12. TOTAL (sum of lines 8-11)	\$ 137,000	\$	\$ 12,500	\$150,000	
SECTION D - FORECASTED CASH NEEDS					
	Total for 1st Year	1st Quarter	2nd Quarter	3rd Quarter	4th Quarter
13. Federal	\$ 75,000	\$ 25,000	\$ 25,000	\$ 20,000	\$ 5,000
14. Non-Federal	150,000	75,000	50,000	20,000	5,000
15. TOTAL (sum of lines 13 and 14)	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$
SECTION E - BUDGET ESTIMATES OF FEDERAL FUNDS NEEDED FOR BALANCE OF THE PROJECT					
(a) Grant Program	FUTURE FUNDING PERIODS (Years)				
	(b) First	(c) Second	(d) Third	(e) Fourth	
16.	\$	\$	\$	\$	
17.					
18.					

19.				
20. TOTAL (sum of lines 16-19)	\$	\$	\$	\$
SECTION F - OTHER BUDGET INFORMATION				
21. Direct Charges: 75,000.		22. Indirect Charges: 0		
23. Remarks: See appendix for negotiated indirect cost rate. Equipment provided by Partners Society of Municipal Arborists. Other Covers Website design, postings, printing costs and				

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Standard Form 424A (Rev. 7-97) Page 2

Example 2: Budget Narrative Table

NOTE: The Federal dollars requested **may not** be used to purchase trees, plant materials, food, (equipment, with a cost of \$5,000 or greater) or capital improvements to property of any ownership. If one is unsure if the item they are proposing is eligible, please contact the executive staff, Nancy Stremple.

This Narrative Budget Table should be cited in the narrative when the applicant is discussing the work to be performed and the cost to execute the specific work activity.

Applicant: ABC University

Project: Develop and distribute tree care information in Spanish

	Federal Funds (requested)	Non-federal Match Cash / In-kind		Total	Source of Matching Funds
Personnel*	\$8,200	\$4,200		\$12,400	ABC University.
Brochure layout	\$1,000	\$800	\$200	\$2,000	XYZ Design
Printing costs**	\$9,000	\$3,000		\$12,000	EZ Printing Co.
Distribution costs***	\$1,800	\$5,000		\$6,800	Green Foundation and local volunteers
Travel to meetings^	\$2,400	\$3,000		\$5,400	ABC University
Sub Total		\$6,600		\$6,600	
Total Cost:	\$22,400	Total Match = \$22,800		\$45,200	

*Personnel:

1. 300 hours @ \$14 per hour = \$4,200
2. 100 hours @ \$10 per hour = \$1,000
3. 500 hours @ \$ 6 per hour = \$3000

**Printing: 20,000 copies, 8-pages each, 4 colors.

***Distribution: copies will be sent to federal and state urban forestry coordinators and will be available on request to all callers for at least one year from date of completion.

^ Travel for 2 people to present at two conferences.

Make sure a break-down of hours is listed

CHECK-OFF LIST FOR ELECTRONIC AND HARD COPY APPLICATION PROCEDURES

Did the applicant contact the Forest Service regional coordinator for guidance and feedback?

If applicable, did the applicant coordinate the project with the State/local urban forester?

Is the application one complete document (PDF/word doc) with the exception of the SF424 forms? This may vary if it is a grants.gov on-line application.

- In Times New Roman font?
- In 12-point pitch?
- In a format with empty 1-inch margins on the top and bottom of the document and in the left and right margins?
- Is the application narrative formatted to match the numbered evaluation criteria template?
- Have you addressed all the criteria in your narrative and labeled each selection criteria accordingly?

Is the proposal template filled out in correct order as shown?

- The grant category was selected?
- Proposal Cover Sheet, with completed contact information,
- Proposal title,
- Requested dollar and matching amount
- If applicable, outreach check box,
- Contact list of project partners,
- Contact list of project supporters,
- Abstract,
- Ten page narrative addressing all the evaluation criteria

Appendix:

- Completed SF 424, 424 (a), 424(b) forms - Does the budget reflect, as a minimum, a non-Federal match dollar-for-dollar? Did it include the DUNS number on your SF 424?
- Budget narrative
- A copy of your indirect cost rate?
- Literature Review
- Letters of Partnership and Letters of Support – Do the partner and support letters, explain the partner's role or why the stakeholders support the proposal?

Please do not attach unsolicited documentation to the Proposal as it will be removed and destroyed.

If, electronic copy:

- Are the narrative package documents uploaded into Grants.gov?
- Is the electronic form able to be open and the title, abstract and narrative are able to be read in full?
- It is strongly encourage that applicants review the new Grants.gov on-line application process and submit their grant proposals early before the due date. There may also be delays due to the volume of applicants submitting for other grant programs at that time and may slow or shut-down the grants.gov system.

If, hard copy:

- Is the proposal stapled in the top, left-hand corner?
- **Do not enclose the proposal in any bindings or folders.**
- Are a hardcopy copy and a CD copy of the proposal included in the package?
- Has a proper delivery service been reserved to ensure that the proposal will be received, (not postmarked) by 11:59 p.m. Eastern Standard Time on **April 13, 2018.**

Please make sure you follow the proposal template below when writing your proposal.

PROPOSAL TEMPLATE

Forest Service use only.

Control Number: _____

COVER SHEET

2018 U.S. Forest Service

National Urban and Community Forestry Challenge Cost-Share Grant Program

Proposals are due by **April 30, 2018, 11:59 PM Eastern**

INNOVATION GRANT CATEGORY:

(An estimated total amount of \$900,000, may be available, the amount varies.)

D: Prepare for Pests, Threats, Natural Disasters and Associated Changes and Risks

PROJECT CONTACT NAME, ORGANIZATION, ADDRESS, PHONE NUMBER, FAX NUMBER AND EMAIL:

PROJECT TITLE:

FUNDING REQUEST AND MATCH (Note: Matching amount must at a minimum equal requested amount.)

REQUESTED: \$ + MATCHING: \$ = TOTAL PROJECT: \$

OUTREACH:

Note: if one check “Yes” in either of the boxes below, the applicant will be required to describe either how they plan to outreach to the identified population and/or provide a description of your underserved organization.

Is this project being developed to reach a minority or underserved population? ___Yes ___No

Is this proposal being submitted by a minority or underserved population

(owned/operated/directed) business, organization or college/university? ___Yes ___No

Applicants should also address how the issue impacts underserved communities and how the proposal can address or minimize these impacts when applicable.

LIST PROJECT PARTNERS: Project Partner letters are to describe their role and contribution with the project.

[Provide: NAME, ADDRESS Phone Number and Email:]

LETTER OF SUPPORT INCLUDED: YES/ NO

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

LIST STAKEHOLDER SUPPORT: Support letters from stakeholders are to describe why the proposal end results are needed and how it will benefit them and their community.

[Provide: NAME, ADDRESS Phone Number and Email:]

LETTER OF SUPPORT INCLUDED: ___ YES ___ NO

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.

ABSTRACT: Summarize the proposed project in 200 words or less.

Proposal Narrative Template: *(The Innovation proposal narrative is not to be more than 10 single spaced pages.) Please make sure each page is numbered.*

1. Project Description (20 points), only one category may be selected per submission:

2. Originality and Innovation (5 points):

3. Literature Review (5 points):

4. Project planning and timeline (10 points):

5. Product (10 points):

6. Collaboration (15 points):

7. National Distribution/Technology Transfer of Your Findings (10 Points):

8. Project Evaluation (10 points):

9. Experience/Personnel/Adequacy of Resources (5 points):

10. Budget Justification (10 points):

Appendix: (Not part of the 10 page narrative)

- Federal Financial Application Forms: (Place in appendix if submitting hardcopy, otherwise these are the only documents that may be separate the narrative package)
- Partner and Support letters
- Literature Review Lists
- Experience/Personnel/Adequacy of Resources support documents