



Tree Canopy & Workforce Community Grant Application Toolkit

In this toolkit you will find all the components of the application you will have to submit through the portal. You can use this toolkit to guide you as you gather the information you need to apply for this grant.

Please click on corresponding tips, links, and templates for support on the application components.



Faith in Place is the proud Illinois, Indiana & Wisconsin Affiliate of Interfaith Power & Light. This opportunity is made possible by the U.S. Department of Agriculture, Forest Service and is funded through the Inflation Reduction Act.

This institution is an equal opportunity provider.

Review the Rubric

Before you get started creating your application, we recommend you review the rubric criteria below our evaluation team will use to score applications. This will let you focus on the important areas. Each criterion will be scored on a scale of 1 to 5, with 1 being the lowest score (does not meet criteria) and 5 being the highest score (exceeds criteria).

1. Defined Clear and Realistic Goals

Criteria: The project plan should have clear goals that are specific, measurable, achievable, focused on results, and set to be completed within a certain time frame.

Score:

- 1: Goals are vague and unrealistic.
- 2: Goals are somewhat clear but lack specific metrics or time frames.
- 3: Goals are clear with some measurable metrics but not fully realistic.
- 4: Goals are clear, measurable, and mostly realistic.
- 5: Goals are specific, measurable, achievable, results-focused, and time-bound.

2. Chance of Success

Criteria: The project should have a good chance of success with a high likelihood of working well in the long term. This includes having a good selection of tree species and a strong maintenance plan to ensure the health of the trees.

Score:

- 1: Low likelihood of success with poor tree selection and weak maintenance plan.
- 2: Some potential for success but with significant risks in tree selection and maintenance.
- 3: Moderate likelihood of success with adequate tree selection and maintenance plan.
- 4: High likelihood of success with good tree selection and strong maintenance plan.
- 5: Very high likelihood of success with excellent tree selection and robust maintenance plan.

3. Building Urban Forestry Workforce

Criteria: The project should include a strong plan to support urban and community forestry jobs, particularly in environmental justice communities.

Score:

- 1: No mention of workforce development.
- 2: Minimal mention of workforce development.
- 3: Some mention of workforce development with limited details.
- 4: Clear plan for workforce development in environmental justice communities.
- 5: Strong and detailed plan for significant workforce development in environmental justice communities.

4. Environmental Benefits

Criteria: The project should have the potential to offer more environmental benefits beyond planting trees, such as involving young people in environmental activities or creating community support for environmental causes.

Score:

- 1: No additional environmental benefits.
- 2: Minimal additional environmental benefits.
- 3: Some additional environmental benefits.
- 4: Clear additional environmental benefits.
- 5: Strong and detailed additional environmental benefits.

5. Cost-Effective Budget

Criteria: The project should have a realistic budget that shows how the money will be used effectively.

Score:

- 1: Budget is unrealistic and not well justified.
- 2: Budget is somewhat realistic but lacks detailed justification.
- 3: Budget is realistic with some justification.
- 4: Budget is realistic and well justified.
- 5: Budget is very realistic, detailed, and well justified.

Summary Scoring

Total Possible Score: 25

Total Score: _____

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Applicant Information

- Organization's name, mailing address, phone number, website
- Organization type, mission
- Organization Employer Identification Number (EIN)
- Unique Entity Identifier (UEI) Number



If you don't have a UEI number, please follow this [Quick Start Guide](https://bit.ly/sam-guide) (bit.ly/sam-guide) to get one.

- Certificate of 501(c)(3) designation, if required:
 - Required for non-Houses of Worship applicants.
 - Not Required if you are a House of Worship applicant. However, if you have 501(c)(3) designation, please submit your IRS certificate of 501(c)(3) designation.

Key Personnel

- Organization's Executive Officer: Name, title, address, phone, and email address.



The Executive Officer is the individual that oversees the organization (e.g., Executive Director, Chief Executive Officer, President, Pastor, Principal (for schools), etc.) and has the authority to sign/execute award agreements on behalf of the organization.

- Organization's Committee Members who will oversee the grant implementation. You will include their names, titles (if applicable), and time associated with the organization or House of Worship.



To avoid conflict of interest issues, people who work for or are associated with for-profit entities (like maintenance companies, garden nurseries, etc) cannot serve as committee members or be the Executive Officer.

Other

Does your organization have a group of people or initiatives dedicated to environmental care? Please describe.

Did you attend or watch the complete recording of any of Faith in Place's workshops or webinars for technical assistance with this application?



In-person workshops and online webinars and recordings are listed on the website page here: bit.ly/community-canopy

Project Proposal

DOWNLOAD



Download a sample proposal (bit.ly/sample-tree-application) you can use as a Project Proposal Template

Project Summary: Provide a summary of your proposed project in 400 characters. Include the following elements:

Include the following elements:

- Description of your project
- Main goal and metrics of your project
- Total grant funds requested

Project Details: You will there be required to share the details of the project by answering the Who, What, Where, When, and How of your project plan. Find sample language in the sample proposal linked above.

What?

In 2000 characters or less, describe what your urban and community forestry project will entail. *

Describe your urban and community forestry project. If you will be planting trees, describe the type and number of trees (no more than 20 recommended) you will plant. You must only plant non-invasive trees found on this list of allowable species or request permission to plant trees not included on the list by emailing grants@faithinplace.org.

IMPORTANT

[View Recommended Tree Species List](http://bit.ly/fip-tree-list) (bit.ly/fip-tree-list)

Who?

Who: In 1500 characters or less, describe who will be involved in the project. *

Consider answering the following:

- Describe the team who will be managing the project.
- Will you be using contractors to support your project? If so, describe?

Where?

Where: In 1000 characters or less, describe the location of your proposed project. If planting trees, describe the location on the property where the trees will be planted. *

Collect the following information to describe where your property is and where you plan to carry out your project. For example:

- Describe where your property is located.
- Describe where on your site you plan to plant the trees. Include whether that location is in an accessible area.



Please only include planting on private organizational/institutional property and not residential property.



If your organization is not the property owner, you will need to submit written permission from the property owner to proceed with the project. You can find a template for that request letter [here](#).

Why?

Why: Describe the vision for your project in 2000 characters or less. Include who will benefit from the project and in what ways? *

Consider answering the following:

- Who will benefit from the project and in what ways?
- How will your project support environmental justice in your community?
- What benefits do you expect to see by increasing the number of trees in your area?
- Looking for examples of benefits trees bring to a community? Check out [this article](#) or [this article](#) for some ideas.

Optional: Is there potential for your project to provide other/additional benefits? (ex: environmental education, advocacy tie-ins) Be sure to include, if so!

When?

When: In 2500 characters or less, please describe your timeline for your urban and community forestry project. Include a description of what will be done and by when. *

- Items to consider and include:
 - A rationale for the planting timeline given the tree species you have selected.
 - Will you need to do any site preparation before tree planting can begin?

How?

How: In 2000 characters or less, describe how you will successfully carry out the goal of your urban and community forestry project. *

Please consider including the following two elements:

- **Planting & Maintenance Plan:**

- Describe how will you maintain the trees and ensure they survive in the long term. Please include a maintenance plan for 3 years that includes plans for watering, mulching, and education for those responsible for maintenance. Who will be responsible for maintaining the health of the trees long term? Reference the US Forest Service's Tree Owner Manual for guidance on planting and maintenance.
- Make sure your maintenance plan includes providing 10 gallons of water each week during the growing season. **Watering trees once per week with 10 gallons of water** from when the leaves come on in the spring until they drop in the fall is essential for good survival rates.
- **Don't forget!** Before digging, you must **call 1-888-258-0808 at least 72 hours in advance** to ensure you won't hit utility lines.

- **Communications Plan:**

- How will you share your accomplishments with the community? Do you have a communication plan to highlight your project's successes? Who will be involved and how will you publicize it?

How?

How: In 2000 characters or less, describe how your project supports urban and community forestry workforce development?

Example prompts:

- *Will you be able to use this project to inspire interest in urban forestry professions?*
- *Could you encourage and support formerly incarcerated residents' involvement with this project?*
- *Could your project translate into long term forestry workforce expansion beyond this project?*



Budget

The budget for your grant will require 2 components: the budget itself (template provided) and a description. Please only include allowable supplies and activities in your budget. Lists of what those include are also provided below.

Budget Excel Sheet

[Download Template and Sample Budget Here](https://bit.ly/tree-budget-sample) (<https://bit.ly/tree-budget-sample>)

This template includes the following components:

- Tree Cost (view allowable trees here: bit.ly/fip-tree-list)
- Planting and Maintenance Supplies (view allowable supplies here: bit.ly/allowed-supply-list)
- Labor for Planting, Follow up, Maintenance, other
- Signage

Budget Description: In 1500 characters or less, please provide a descriptive budget narrative to justify and explain costs. A budget narrative is a detailed explanation of the costs outlined in your project budget. It helps to justify and explain why each expense is necessary for the success of your project. Think of it as a story that accompanies your budget, providing context and details about how the funds will be used. Check out the example in the sample application for more guidance.

USDA NONDISCRIMINATION CLAUSE

To be eligible for selection, your organization must agree to the following non-discrimination clause:

In accordance with Federal civil rights law and U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) civil rights regulations and policies, the USDA, its Agencies, offices, and employees, and institutions participating in or administering USDA programs are prohibited from discriminating based on race, color, national origin, religion, sex, gender identity (including gender expression), sexual orientation, disability, age, marital status, family/parental status, income derived from a public assistance program, political beliefs, or reprisal or retaliation for prior civil rights activity, in any program or activity conducted or funded by USDA (not all bases apply to all programs). Remedies and complaint filing deadlines vary by program or incident.

Persons with disabilities who require alternative means of communication for program information (e.g., Braille, large print, audiotape, American Sign Language, etc.) should contact the responsible Agency or USDA's TARGET Center at (202) 720-2600 (voice and TTY) or contact USDA through the Federal Relay Service at (800) 877-8339. Additionally, program information may be made available in languages other than English.

To file a program discrimination complaint, complete the USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form, AD-3027, found online at [How to File a Program Discrimination Complaint](#) and at any USDA office or write a letter addressed to USDA and provide in the letter all of the information requested in the form. To request a copy of the complaint form, call (866) 632-9992. Submit your completed form or letter to USDA by: (1) mail: U.S. Department of Agriculture, Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights, 1400 Independence Avenue, SW, Washington, D.C. 20250-9410; (2) fax: (202) 690-7442; or (3) email: program.intake@usda.gov.

USDA is an equal opportunity provider, employer, and lender.