

USDA Forest Service National Urban Forest Resiliency 2021 Challenge Cost Share Grant Program

PROPOSAL EVALUATION - POINT VALUE:

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

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? Only one category may be selected per submission so be clear about which category you are applying. Describe your intended audience.

2. Originality and Innovation (5 points)

Tell us why your project is original and innovative as it relates to the topic category.

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, and/or other work that supports the importance of this project.

Limit your response to 1 page. You may upload a separate .pdf document of your Literature Review to the Grant Portal under the appropriate workflow step. You're uploaded response to this section will NOT count toward the 10-page maximum for this proposal narrative.

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 but can exceed to 4-5 years depending on the time needed and Forest Service approval.

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 with 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.

Limit your responses to 2 pages.

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 Forest Service's, UCF Program Specialist: [Nancy Stremple](#) at nancystremple@usda.gov.

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 regarding 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 of personnel in the fields relating to the project and any other qualifications that pertain to the quality of the product. Provide experience with similar projects. Are there adequate resources (e.g., personnel, facilities, equipment, supplies, and time) available to carry out the project? **Limit your responses to 2 pages.**

Innovation Grants are to also include, as part of the application, project partners and stakeholder supports. Partners and stakeholders should be identified along with any support letters describing their support and/or roles in the project. Partners and Stakeholders should be entered in the Grant Portal under the appropriate application workflow steps.

10. Budget Justification (10 points)

Use the [budget narrative/justification template](#) to adequately document your budget needs. Your budget justification/narrative should be uploaded to the Grant Portal as a separate .pdf document under the appropriate application workflow step. Your uploaded response to the Budget Justification section will NOT count towards the 10-page maximum for this proposal narrative.

Federal Financial Application Forms must also be included:

Please use the downloadable [Federal Financial forms](#) located under [Forms, Templates and Resources](#). 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.

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

To assist in filling out the SF-424A budget form and the detailed narrative budget table, see the [Federal Financial Forms Example](#) and [Budget Narrative/Justification Example](#).

Please confirm that the math is accurate and that the matching dollars equal or exceed the amount of Federal funds being requested on Coversheet, SF-424, SF-424A and budget narrative.

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 enough 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 federal funding agency. Your negotiated indirect cost rate agreement should be uploaded to the appropriate application workflow step.

NOTE REGARDING INDIRECT COSTS- Indirect cost rates should be reasonable. Applicants are encouraged to use a portion or all their indirect cost rate as match.