Frequently Asked Questions: Developing the Next Generation of Conservationists

Overall Program

- Must applications be submitted online through EasyGrants?
  Yes. All applications are processed online through our EasyGrants system available at www.nfwf.org/easygrants. NFWF will not accept paper applications.

- Can an organization submit a proposal for one project incorporating both categories?
  Yes, though in order to do this, NFWF staff will need to discuss the project with you. Contact one of the staff listed on the below.

- Should I add my project partners on the ‘Organization Information’ tab?
  No, you do not need to add your partners to the ‘Organization Information’ tab. Please include this information in your narrative.

- Can I back-date my project start date?
  If your project is selected to receive funding, we will work with you during contracting to back-date your start date on a case-by-case basis.

- What financial documents are required as part of the application?
  Required financial documents will be listed in the Uploads section in EasyGrants. Please note that all financials should be uploaded under their appropriate category in the Uploads section drop-down list. Do not upload financial documents under ‘Other Documents’. NFWF guidance on required financial documents is available here.

- How does my organization receive the awarded grant funds?
  Once the grant agreement is completed with NFWF, grantees can request reimbursement for expenditures or advances on future expenditures as needed. Grantees may request funds up front, at the end of the project, or throughout the grant period.

- Who should I address letters of support to?
  Letters of support can be addressed to Carrie Clingan or Danny Bowater at the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation. Letters should be included as uploads in Easy Grants and should NOT be mailed directly to NFWF.

Category One: Conservation Stewards

- Who may apply for funding?
  This funding is available for non-profit organizations, government agencies, academic institutions and tribal groups.
• What is the range and the average grant size for this category?
The program expects to fund Category 1 projects between $100,000 and $150,000 with an average of $125,000.

• How long should the project period be?
Projects in this category should last up to 30 months.

Category Two: Conservation Corps
• How do you define “young people” and “youth” in this category? High School and College-aged, 16-25. Qualifying veterans may be up to age 35.

• Who may apply for funding? This funding is available for non-profit organizations, government agencies, academic institutions and tribal groups. Please note that a strong nexus with the Bureau of Land Management (BLM), Forest Service (USFS) facilities, lands, adjacent areas, programs or mission and/or a connection to NFWF programs and landscapes is key to this RFP. Proposals that do not strongly reflect this connection will not be competitive. While projects do not necessarily need to take place on public lands, efforts need to clearly benefit agency lands, facilities, programs, or missions.

• Must applicants be members of the 21st Century Conservation Service Corps (21CSC) to be eligible for funding?
No, although priority consideration may be given to applicants who indicate that they are 21CSC members or are applying to become a 21CSC member.

• How can I reflect the connection with the BLM, Reclamation, and/or USFS? Applicants should work closely with a local federal agency unit to develop and coordinate their proposals. A letter of support from their Reclamation, BLM, and/or USFS partner must be submitted with the application prior to the RFP deadline in order for the application to be considered.

• If I have received a grant from this program in previous years, may I still apply?
Yes, though reviewers may show preference shown for new grantees.

• What is the range and the average grant size for this category?
Applicants seeking BLM funds will be limited to no more than $75,000, applicants seeking Reclamation, or FWS funds will be limited to no more than $50,000. Projects in partnership with multiple agencies will be considered at higher funding levels.

• Can I count individuals ages 26 to 35 towards the number of youth hired for the project?
No, this grant program defines “youth” as ages 16 to 25, and your outcome for the number of youth hired should follow this guideline. If your project will engage veterans ages 26 to 35, you should track that outcome separately from the number of youth hired.
Project Description and Abstract

- **What’s the difference between the description and the abstract?**
  The description should generally be around two sentences that state; what the project will do (including metrics helps), where the project will take place and the activities involved in achieving the outcomes. The abstract should include what is mentioned in the description but also expand upon this, including why the project is important overall and/or in this area and to the habitat and species affected.

**Description Example:**
Engage 49 youth to complete sage grouse habitat enhancements through fence removal, road obliteration, native plant restoration, and noxious weed removal. Project will also work with the Bureau of Reclamation to engage 38 participants on projects including Russian olive removal to support restoration of cottonwood galleries and willow stands, and a variety of fencing projects to remove wildlife hazards and manage recreational resources to minimize habitat degradation.

**Abstract Example:**
The Montana Conservation Corps (MCC) will work with the Bureau of Land Management to engage 49 youth for 16 weeks completing high priority projects. Projects will include enhancing core sage grouse habitat by removing or marking 15 miles of fence in central Montana and removing 11 miles of motorized roads in the Pryor Mountains and Wilderness Study Areas in the Great Yellowstone ecosystem. Crews will treat invasives through backpack spraying of 80 acres of knapweed and leafy spurge in the Bear Trap Wilderness and removal of Russian olive and tamarisk over 15 acres of riparian corridor in the Upper Missouri River Break National Monument. MCC will also work with the Bureau of Reclamation to engage 38 participants in 12 weeks of work on high priority projects. Projects will include removal of non-native Russian olive from one mile of shoreline at Canyon Ferry Reservoir to help restore native cottonwood galleries. Crews will also work at Keyhole Reservoir in Wyoming, Belle Fourche and Shadehill Reservoirs in South Dakota and Dickinson Reservoir in North Dakota to improve 10 miles of fence to remove wildlife hazards, delineate unit boundaries to manage recreation and improve resource management.

**Matching Contributions**

- **Is match required?**
  Yes. A minimum 1:1 match of **non-federal** cash and/or in-kind contribution is required. Projects with higher match ratios and diversity of matching funds will be given priority consideration.

- **Do matching funds need to be spent before we receive any grant funds?**
  No. Grantees will need to certify that the grant has been matched with the proposed matching funds by the close out date of the project.
• Do matching funds need to be cash?
  No. Matching funds can be in-kind or cash. Please value volunteer time based on the labor that the volunteer is providing at the activity’s market value. If the required skills being contributed are not found in the grant recipient’s organization, rates shall be consistent with those paid for similar work in the labor market in which the recipient competes for the kind of services involved.

• How should volunteer hours be tracked?
  Most organizations track volunteer hours by providing a sign-in sheet for volunteers that lists their name, address, and hours worked. A staff member from the recipient organization should supervise this activity and sign off on each sign-in sheet. Sheets should be retained by the recipient organization.

Proposal Budget
• Where do rentals go in the budget?
  Rentals should be listed as a contractual budget line item. Please list each separately. Detailed budget instructions are available here.

• How do I determine if an item should go in the Equipment or Supplies category?
  If one item costs $5,000 or more, applicants should list it under Equipment. All other items should be listed as Supplies.

• Should I include a narrative description of each line item in my budget?
  Yes, we highly encourage you to use the ‘notes’ feature in EasyGrants to describe each line item in your budget.

• What is NFWF’s policy on including indirect costs in the budget?
  NFWF’s indirect policy can be reviewed in detail by clicking here.

Mapping and Project Location
• My project locations span multiple states. Should I select ‘nationwide’ as the state?
  No. When selecting your project’s state under the Project Location tab, you should individually select all states where your project work will take place.

• How do I map my project location in EasyGrants?
  You can map your project location in one of the following ways:
  1. Upload a shapefile
  2. Manually draw your project area
  3. Select a layer (watershed, city, etc.)
  A detailed overview of the mapping tool is available here: http://www.nfwf.org/whatwedo/grants/applicants/Pages/mapping-tool.aspx
Can I map an entire state or an entire county as my project location? 
Your project location should be as specific as possible. Unless your project work spans the entire state or county, you should not map the whole region. If you will be working in multiple locations, map each location.

Contacts
For more information or questions, please contact:

Danny Bowater
Coordinator, Community-Based Conservation
202-595-2434
Daniel.Bowater@nfwf.org

Carrie Clingan
Program Director, Community Stewardship and Youth
202-595-2471
Carrie.Clingan@nfwf.org