

NNORTH DAKOTA
NATURAL RESOURCES
TRUST

Small Grant Program

Program Manual

Updated 2024

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PROGRAM BACKGROUND & INFORMATION

BACKGROUND

The North Dakota Natural Resources Trust (Trust), originally the North Dakota Wetlands Trust, was created in 1986. The Trust is under the direction of a six-member board of directors. Three of the directors are appointed by the governor of North Dakota, one by the National Audubon Society, one by the National Wildlife Federation, and one by the North Dakota Chapter of The Wildlife Society. The North Dakota Game and Fish Department director is an ex-officio member. The Trust is also comprised of seven staff members.

The mission of the Trust is “to promote the retention, restoration, creation and wildlife friendly management of wetlands, grasslands and riparian areas by presenting practical conservation opportunities throughout North Dakota.” The Trust has a long history of distributing grants to help deliver its mission; and in 2014, the Trust created the Small Grant Program to specifically address promoting the awareness of North Dakota’s natural resources through education.

The Trust is seeking grant proposals that address our Statement of Need, to assist in the implementation of our mission, and the education elements identified in our 2023-2027 Strategic Plan, to support projects which produce educational aspects around the value of prairie landscapes, healthy soils, and grass-based regenerative practices.

INFORMATION

Statement of Need

Small grant proposals should address the Program’s Statement of Need:

Public awareness and education of the value of grassland, wetland, and riparian landscapes, healthy soils, grass-based regenerative practices, and the importance of North Dakota’s natural resources.

Application Deadline

April 22nd, 2024

Funding Amount

The Trust will consider grant proposals for one- or two-year funding requests. The grant request cannot exceed \$10,000 of funding per year, or \$20,000 maximum for a two-year funding request.

The Small Grant Program is NOT intended to be the permanent or continuous funding source for a project or program.

Eligibility

Any organization or group is eligible for the Small Grant Program, regardless of location. However, funding will only be approved for projects and activities that occur within North Dakota.

Reimbursement

The Small Grant Program offers reimbursement-based grants. Funding will be distributed to the grant recipient after expenses have been incurred.

Documents

Application and instruction documents can be found on the Trust website, on the Small Grant Program page.

<http://ndnrt.com/programs/small-grant-program/>

Contact/Questions

For more information, guidance on application submission, or questions about the program, call the Trust office at (701) 223-8501 or email Brenda at brenda@naturalresourcestrust.com.

APPLICATION INSTRUCTIONS & GUIDELINES

APPLICATION INSTRUCTIONS

Applicant Information

Organization, Address, Primary Contact Person, Phone, Email: Enter your organization and the contact information for the primary person responsible for managing the grant.

Organization Information: Briefly describe your organization and its capacity to complete the project in terms of expertise and experience.

Project Information

Project Title: Give a short, descriptive name that will distinguish it from other proposals and indicate the project purpose.

Project Start & End Dates: To your best estimate, provide a project start date and project end date. The grant agreement starts when you sign the 'Grant Participation and Indemnity Agreement' upon application approval. A one-year grant agreement lasts approximately 18 months (until Dec 31st of the following year). A two-year agreement will last approximately 30 months (until Dec 31st of the 2nd year). To see a sample agreement, visit: <http://www.ndnrt.com/programs/small-grant-program/>

Example of Grant Agreement Length:
Grant Approved: End of May 2023
Year 1 Funding Expires: December 31st, 2024
Year 2 Funding Expires: December 31st, 2025

Target Audience: Check all boxes that apply to the audience who will be receiving education through your proposed project. If you check underserved communities/populations, please explain the audience.

Sustainability: Is your project a one-time event or building the foundation for a larger project? Check the box that applies and explain your choice in the project description.

Project Description: Summarize your proposed project. Please address **1)** the purpose, location, and major activities of your project, **2)** when you plan for those activities to take place, **3)** approximately how many people you plan to educate through your project (directly and or indirectly), **4)** explain how your project addresses the statement of need, **5)** whether it is a singular project or part of something on-going and **6)** list any partners that are involved in the project.

Please be as descriptive as possible, so we can get a clear idea of your project.

Project Budget

Funding Amount Request & Years: Check the box that corresponds with your grant funding request length: 1-year or 2-year funding. Fill in the funding amount you are requesting for each appropriate year.

The Trust will consider grant proposals up to \$10,000 per year, not to exceed two years for a total of \$20,000.

Budget Table: Provide a budget table in the application, or in a separate attached document. Indicate total project expenditures by category and year(s). Include match funding amounts. (See an example

budget table below). A budget table is required. If you don't know the exact amounts you will expend in each category of your budget, please provide your best estimate.

Indirect costs are allowed at 10%.

Match funding is not required but applications that have some or 1:1 match will receive more scoring points for consideration.

EXAMPLE PROJECT BUDGET TABLE				
	Year One		Year Two (if applicable)	
<i>Example Budget Categories</i>	<i>Requested Funds</i>	<i>Match Funds</i>	<i>Requested Funds</i>	<i>Match Funds</i>
Staff Time	\$2,000.00	\$1000.00	\$	\$
Printing Costs	\$500.00	\$	\$	\$
Facility Use	\$600.00	\$	\$	\$
Equipment	\$	\$200.00	\$	\$
Transportation	\$	\$150.00	\$	\$
Subtotal	\$3,100.00	\$1,350.00	\$	\$
TOTAL Project Cost	\$4,450.00		\$	

Budget Narrative: The narrative should be written in such a way that someone not familiar with the project can understand the purpose of each category and how you arrived at the calculation. Please explain each budget category and how they apply to the project and what items they will cover. Define how you calculated the totals for each category. Explain where match funding is derived and how it is used to support your project budget.

Funding Need: Explain how activities for the project would or would not move forward if you did not receive funding through the Small Grant Program.

Goals & Evaluation

Project Goals and Evaluation: Summarize what you want to achieve through your project. List your project goals and describe how each goal will be achieved. Include how you plan to measure your goals and provide a preliminary estimate of your measurable goals. Explain how you intend to evaluate the success of your project relative to our Statements of Need and make sure your measurement of success is tied to the goals you outlined.

Project results cannot always be measured quantitatively. However, the key to clarity and to assisting us in evaluating your proposal is to set clear goals and objectives and use them in developing your measurement criteria. If you can't quantify expected or measured results, be as clear as possible about which subjective measurement criteria you plan to use and how you plan to apply them.

Partnership Recognition: Explain how you would recognize the Small Grant Program in your project if you receive funding. For example, the use of the Trust logo on print materials created or recognition of the Small Grant Program at events.

Length

Limit your application length to 5 pages.

SCORING CRITERIA

Proposals will be evaluated based on the extent to which they meet the scoring criteria.

The scoring sheet is used as a tool to evaluate the applications, but the final decision on awards ultimately rests with the Trust Board.

See the scoring criteria sheet in the Appendix.

HOW TO SUBMIT YOUR POPOSAL

Applications should be emailed to brenda@naturalresourcestrust.com. Final approvals of awarded grants are made at the May board meeting.

For questions, please contact Brenda Newton at the Trust: (701) 223-8501 or email brenda@naturalresourcestrust.com

Timeline

Application Deadline: April 22nd, 2024, by end of day

Review Period: Mid-April to Mid-May

Awards Announced: End of May (notified through email)

APPROVED GRANTS

AGREEMENT, REPORTING & REIMBURSEMENTS

Grant Approval

For grant proposals that are selected for funding, a 'Grant Participation and Indemnity Agreement' between the grantee and the Trust will be required. The Trust will provide funding on a reimbursement basis only. **Please note, if at any time during the agreement your contact information changes, it is the responsibility of the grantee to inform the Trust with updated information.**

Agreement Length

In the interest of getting your good work implemented and having the Trust's dollars put to use, one-year funding agreements will be issued for **approximately 18 months** (shorter durations can be written upon request). Two-year funding agreements will be issued for **approximately 30 months**. If your funding cannot be used within that timeframe, **you can apply for a one-time 6-month extension request**, which needs to be submitted 30 days or more prior to the agreement's expiration. ***If no extension request is filed and the expiration date passes, the agreement is void and any unreimbursed portion of approved grants will be returned to the Trust.*** If you foresee needing an extension and have questions, please contact the Trust. We want our grantees to succeed.

Example of Agreement Lengths:

Grant Approved: End of May 2023

Year 1 Funding Expires: December 31st, 2024

Year 2 Funding Expires: December 31st, 2025

Reimbursements

Reimbursements should be requested in a timely fashion and a status update will be required with each reimbursement request. Reimbursements are issued after expenses have occurred. You may request a reimbursement as often as every month. To ensure a payment, requests must be received before the 25th of each month. Payments are issued by check on the last working day of every month. You will receive a payment within 7-10 days of issue date.

- * All reimbursement requests must be accompanied by receipts or supportive documentation for each item.
- * Indirect costs are allowed at 10% of the total grant funding amount.
- * All reimbursement requests must include a short status update.

Status Updates and Reports

Status Updates: Status updates must be included with each reimbursement request. A status update does not need to be long.

- Briefly summarize the success of your project to date, and how the items listed for reimbursement support your project so far. (e.g. education materials developed, planned events, objectives that have occurred).

Interim Progress Reports: An interim progress report is required at the end of each funding year. The reporting date will be included in your agreement.

- Summarize in 1-2 paragraphs your accomplishments so far and what you expect to accomplish in the next several months?
- If you have made a reimbursement request within 3 months prior to the interim progress report due date and you provided a project update AND there are no additional updates to provide, you DO NOT need to submit an interim progress report.

Final Progress Reports: A final project report is required with the final reimbursement request, no more than 30 days after the agreement expiration.

For the Final Report, provide in a word document:

- 1) How was funding spent?
- 2) If an event was held, explain when it was held, the number of participants and what activities were completed?
- 3) What (if anything) would you have changed about implementation?
- 4) How did you measure the success of your grant (participant surveys, some type of subjective measurement, etc.) and what were the findings?
- 5) Include a few pictures of your project, if possible, and a copy of created materials (ie. brochures, signs, educational material).

Appendix

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Small Grant Application

Scoring Criteria Form

Example Participation & Indemnity Agreement

Reimbursement Form

Application Deadline: April 22nd, 2024

2024 SMALL GRANT PROGRAM APPLICATION

APPLICANT INFORMATION

Organization:

Address:

Primary Contact Person:

Phone:

Email:

Organization Information: (Briefly tell us about your organization and its capacity to complete the project in terms of expertise and experience.)

PROJECT INFORMATION

Project Title:

Project Start & End Dates:

Target Audience: (check all boxes that apply)

- K – 12 Agriculture Producers General Public
- Underserved Communities/Population (please describe) _____

Sustainability: (Is your project a one-time event or building the foundation for a larger project? Check the box that applies and explain in the project description.)

- One-Time Event Ongoing Project

Project Description: (Summarize your proposed project. Please address **1**) the purpose, location, and major activities of your project, **2**) when you plan for those activities to take place, **3**) approximately how many people you plan to educate through your project (directly and or indirectly), **4**) explain how your project addresses the statement of need, **5**) whether it is a singular project or part of something ongoing and **6**) list any partners that are involved in the project.)

PROJECT BUDGET

Funding Amount Request: (Check the appropriate box and fill in funding request amount.)

1 YEAR: Amount Requesting \$ _____

2 YEARS: Amount Requesting 1st Year \$ _____ 2nd Year \$ _____

Budget Table: (Provide a budget table, either in your application or in a separate attached document. Indicate total project expenditures by category and year(s). Include any match funding amounts. An example budget table is provided below for reference. You can use the table provided or create your own to fit your project needs.)

BUDGET TABLE				
	Year One		Year Two (if applicable)	
<i>Budget Categories</i>	<i>Requested Funds</i>	<i>Match Funds</i>	<i>Requested Funds</i>	<i>Match Funds</i>
	\$	\$	\$	\$
	\$	\$	\$	\$
	\$	\$	\$	\$
	\$	\$	\$	\$
	\$	\$	\$	\$
Subtotal	\$	\$	\$	\$
TOTAL Project Cost	\$		\$	

Budget Narrative: (Please explain each budget category you list and how they apply to the project and what items they will cover. Define how you calculated the totals for each category. Explain where match funding is derived and how it is used to support your project budget.)

Funding Need: (Please explain how activities for the project would or would not move forward if you did not receive funding through the Small Grant Program.)

GOALS & EVALUATION

Project Goals and Evaluation: (List your project goals and describe how each goal will be achieved. Please include how you plan to measure your goals and provide a preliminary estimate of your measurable goals. Explain how you plan to evaluate your goals at the end of the project.)

Partnership Recognition: (How would you recognize the Small Grant Program in your project if you receive funding? E.g. Trust logo on print materials created or recognition of the Small Grant Program at events)

****Please limit application length to 5 pages.**

Scoring Criteria

- 1) Organizational Information and Capacity: Does the applicant have the right amount of staff to carry out the grant, and if not, is that addressed in the application? Does the applicant have a history of completing projects that fit their mission.
 - 0 = Organizational information and capacity not described
 - 1 = Some expression of organization's purpose, but actions no clearly linked to mission
 - 2 = Clear expression of organization's purpose, but actions mostly linked to mission
 - 3 = Clear expression of organization's purpose and all actions driven by mission and vision

- 2) Does the project have a timeline?
 - 0 = No timeline is defined
 - 1 = A loose timeline is given, but not well defined
 - 2 = A timeline is defined and described with some unknowns
 - 3 = The timeline is well thought out and ready to start and be completed within the grant timeframe

- 3) Does the project description meet the Statement of Need?
 - 0 = Project does not meet or address Statement of Need
 - 2 = Project lacks clarity and somewhat meets the Statement of Need
 - 4 = Project meets the Statement of Need, but needs more clarification in the project description
 - 6 = Project meets the Statement of Need and provides a clear project description

- 4) Is the project budget cost-effective and provides a clear budget table and narrative that explains each budget category.
 - 0 = No budget table or narrative is given
 - 2 = A budget table is given, but categories are unclear or not described in the budget narrative
 - 4 = A detailed budget is given, with clear categories, but the narrative is lacking, and the project is not characterized as cost-effective.
 - 6 = A detailed budget table is provided, and the narrative explains each category clearly. The project budget reflects the most economically efficient way to meet project objectives.

- 5) Match funding is provided and clearly described. (Match funding is not required, but projects that provide some will receive extra points.)
 - 0 = No match funding is provided or noted
 - 1 = Project provides 0% - 33% match
 - 2 = Project provides 34% - 66% match
 - 3 = Project provides 67% - 100% match

6) Has the applicant been compliant and shown successful delivery of past grants?

0 = Applicant was unable to complete a grant, was uncommunicative to requests, or incurred several extensions due to poor project management

1 = Applicant was able to complete past grant(s), but needed an extension(s)

2 = New Applicant (never received a small grant in the past, but may have previously applied)

3 = Applicant delivered a successful grant and submitted all reports and payment requests on time, no extensions needed.

7) Project has measurable goals and an evaluation method of the outcomes.

0 = No project goals or evaluation method is described

2 = Weak goals are described, but no evaluation method is provided

4 = Clear goals are described and a baseline measurement is provided, but no evaluation for outcomes is given

6 = Clear measurable goals and an independent evaluation method for outcomes is described

Maximum score available = 30

This scoring sheet will be used as a tool to evaluate the applications, but final decision on awards ultimately rests with the Trust Board.

**SMALL GRANT PROGRAM
PARTICIPATION AND INDEMNITY AGREEMENT**

WHEREAS, the *Awardee Organization Name* (Sponsored) is seeking financial assistance for "*Project Title*" described as (Project); and

WHEREAS, the North Dakota Natural Resources Trust (Trust), 1605 E. Capitol Ave., Ste. 101, Bismarck, North Dakota, 58501-2102, wishes to financially assist in the Project.

NOW, THEREFORE, based upon the mutual covenants contained herein, the parties agree as follows:

1. The Trust shall contribute to the Sponsor a total of \$*Funding Amount* (*Funding Amt Written Out*) in financial support for the Project for Year 1 funding request only. Payments totaling the above sum will be made pursuant to the following schedule:
 - The Sponsored agrees to provide a status update with each reimbursement submission, outlining Project accomplishments to date.
 - Reimbursement payment requests may be requested monthly. The Trust will make payment for the costs incurred, as outlined in the approved application, up to the total awarded amount above, if the Project meets the terms, conditions, and criteria of the approved grant agreement.
 - Payments are issued at month end. Receipt of the invoice and progress report must be by the 25th of the month in which Sponsored is requesting reimbursement. Invoices must include receipts or supportive documentation for each item listed on the invoice.
 - The Sponsored agrees to provide an interim progress report at the end of each funding year. The interim progress report is due December 31st, Year, or may be included with a reimbursement request within three months prior to the reporting date.
 - **The Sponsored will provide a final report prior to final payment of the Project.**
2. The Sponsored agrees that the Trust shall not be responsible for, nor have any involvement or liability for the design, implementation, or completion operation, or management of the Project.
3. The parties agree that the Trust is not an agent of the Sponsored nor is it a participant with the Sponsored in the Project except as provided herein.
4. The Sponsored will be responsible for procuring all necessary permits for the Project and it is understood that the Trust shall have no responsibility for any Project permits.
5. The Sponsored shall acknowledge the Trust's financial assistance in the Project through any promotional information or materials it disseminates to explain or promote the Project.

6. The Sponsored agrees to hold harmless, defend and indemnify the Trust from any claims, demands and/or lawsuits that may be made by any person or entity other than the Sponsored action for breach of this contract against the Trust in connection with this agreement. The Sponsored agreement to defend and indemnify the Trust shall include any claims or demands made by such other parties against Trust for payments made pursuant to this agreement. This Indemnity Agreement shall not apply to claims by Sponsored against Trust for payment pursuant to this Agreement.

7. If necessary, the Sponsored agrees to retain all rights to control the property and retain all responsibility for the property, including payment of taxes, insurance, and assessments.

8. The payments to be made by the Trust to the Sponsored under this agreement may not be assigned by the Sponsored without the express written consent of the Trust.

9. The agreement shall be subject to and governed by the laws of the State of North Dakota and this agreement may be amended only in writing and executed by the parties hereto.

10. This agreement is the entire agreement between the parties and shall be binding upon the parties, their agents, heirs and assigns.

11. If any disputes arise between the Sponsored and Trust which cannot be resolved through informal negotiations, the parties shall then proceed to non-binding mediation or another alternative dispute resolution processes to resolve the dispute and utilize all good-faith efforts to resolve the matter. If the dispute still remains unresolved between the parties and litigation is commenced, the matter shall be filed and held in the State District Court in Burleigh County, North Dakota.

12. This agreement shall expire upon the Sponsored receipt of final payment by Trust or December 31, Year, whichever occurs first. Final payment requests must be submitted **prior to** the expiration date. If necessary, a six (6) month extension may be offered to complete the unfinished work and submit payment requests. The extension request must be submitted for review 30 days or more prior to the agreement's expiration. If no extension request is filed and the expiration date passes, the agreement is void and any unreimbursed portion of approved grants will be returned to the Trust. The Trust maintains the right not to make final payments if timeframes are not met.

Dated: _____

Sponsored

Dated: _____

Executive Director
North Dakota Natural Resources Trust

