

NCF-Envirothon

Diversity Enhancement and Underserved Audience Grant Request for Proposals

Funded in partnership with the U.S. Forest Service

The National Conservation Foundation (NCF), working in conjunction with the U.S. Forest Service and the NCF-Envirothon Operating Committee, is pleased to announce the 2021 Diversity Enhancement and Underserved Audience Grant (Diversity Grant) program. The program is designed to help state and provincial Envirothon programs expand the diversity of student participation. This can be accomplished by reaching out to minority and underserved urban and/or rural students that lack access to hands-on, outdoor natural resource education opportunities.

Diversity Enhancement: Diversity Enhancement projects aim to facilitate environmental education for minorities of all kinds, including but not limited to race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, language, culture, religion, mental and physical ability, class, and immigration status.

Underserved Audiences: Underserved Audience projects seek to expand the reach of the Envirothon program to students who would not normally have access due to a variety of barriers, including but not limited to socioeconomic status, geographic location, limited educational opportunities, physical or mental disabilities, and learning differences.

The NCF will be awarding funds for selected projects during the FY 2021 grant cycle. Projects will provide students with exposure to the NCF-Envirothon program and areas of forestry, soils and land use, wildlife, aquatic ecology, and current environmental issues. This may be accomplished by upgrading state/provincial websites, securing educational materials, translations of resource materials into non-English languages, transportation to natural resource encounters ¹, and other innovative ideas.

Examples of projects include, but are not limited to:

- Participation Projects (which cover travel and registration costs for participation in state/provincial Envirothon competitions) ¹
- Outreach and Engagement Projects (for projects that initiate a training and/or marketing program for participants and advisors on Envirothon and natural resource education for youth)¹
- Community Partnership Projects (for projects developed by State/Provincial Envirothon programs in conjunction with local organizations)
- Cultural Inclusion Projects (for example, bringing Native American/First Nations culture into State/Provincial Envirothon competitions/programs/materials - in the form of

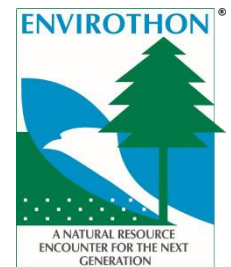
ceremonies, histories, oral traditions, indigenous systems of science, traditional ecological knowledge, etc.)

- Environmental Literacy and Experiential Learning Projects (for projects seeking to increase environmental literacy of youth, involving them in a hands-on approach to outdoor natural resources education)
- Accessibility Projects (adaptation of training/testing materials for hearing, visually or mobility impaired students)

First time U.S. state Envirothon program grant applicants can receive up to \$4,000. Returning applicants or Canadian provincial² Envirothon programs can receive up to \$2,000. Amounts awarded will depend, in part, on the number of applications received.

This document serves as a guide to the application process. Application questions are attached for your reference. Further questions should be directed to Jennifer Brooks at 1-800-825-5547 or administration@envirothon.org.

Sponsors:



1. *For any in-person events, please be sure to follow local health guidelines and regulations regarding COVID-19 safety.*
2. *Funding for Canadian provinces is provided solely by NCF. A maximum of one Canadian provincial project will be funded each year.*

Grant Overview

- **Eligibility:** State and Provincial NCF-Envirothon programs who are up to date on all membership dues may apply.
- **Funding Availability:** Grants for up to \$4,000* for first time applicants and up to \$2,000 for Canadian Provincial programs or those who have previously received a Diversity Enhancement and Underserved Audience Grant will be considered.

**A maximum of \$2,000 for Canadian Provincial Programs regardless of application history*

- **Match Requirements:** Applications must reflect a 25% match either in-kind/labor or cash (no additional points will be awarded for matches in excess of 25%). **Applications without the required match will not be considered.** Documentation of match will be required at time of application (letters from Boards or partner organizations verifying match will suffice). The match should be at least 25% of the **total project budget** (e.g. a 25% match for a \$5,333 total budget project would be \$1,333 if the awarded amount was \$4,000).

REMINDER: This is a match for this diversity project and not for your entire state/provincial Envirothon program.

- **Payment Disbursement:** Upon notification of award, Grant Recipients will be required to sign and return the General Condition of Acceptance Contract within 60 days. Recipients will receive up to 75% of awarded funds within 30 days of successful return of the General Condition of Acceptance Contract. The remaining 25% of funds will be paid to the recipient within 30 days of successful submission of the final project report.

Please note, Recipients will not receive any funds until a fully executed contract is on file for the grant project. Failure to return a signed contract within 60 days of award notification may result in project application being canceled and funds being reallocated.

- **Project Implementation Timeline:** Projects must begin within 60 days of grant award announcement and be completed within 14 months. An Interim Report and Final Report detailing your project will be required to the NCF-Envirothon during that time. The Interim Report is required at the 6-month mark of your project and the final report is due 30 days after the competition of your project. **Any extension requests for the interim report, the final report, or extension of the project beyond the 14-month period must be received 60 days prior to set deadlines to be eligible for an extension.**
- **Incomplete Applications:** All information requested in the application is required. Incomplete applications may be considered ineligible for funding.

Allowable/Unallowable Expenses

The NCF-Envirothon wants all state/provincial Envirothon programs to be successful in applying for an Envirothon Diversity Enhancement and Underserved Audience Grant. To help guide you as you prepare your grant request, we offer the following examples of allowable and non-allowable grant expenses. These are representative of generally accepted grant guidelines.

Examples of allowable use of grant funds:

- Stipends for teachers to attend Envirothon trainings ^{1,2}
- Substitute teacher pay (allowing advisor to travel to event) ^{1,2}
- Team registration to local, state/province Envirothon ¹
- Team travel to local, state/province Envirothon ¹
- Materials for training advisors and students for local and state/provincial Envirothon competitions

Examples of non-allowable use of grant funds:

- Salary, fringe benefits for Envirothon staff
- Salary, fringe benefits for contractual workers
- Most travel/lodging for grantee ^{1,3}
- Equipment and/or supplies not immediately related to the intent of the grants. (e.g. computers, copiers, cameras, etc.)
- Additionally, “passive” campaigns to reach proposed target audiences will receive lower consideration than “active” outreach proposals (e.g., a grant request to print posters, brochures, DVDs, etc., without a plan for onsite or in-person ¹ interaction with target audiences(s).)

1. For any in-person events, please be sure to follow local health guidelines and regulations regarding COVID-19 safety.

2. Expenditures for educator stipends/substitutes cannot exceed 40% of total request.

3. No more than 15% of the total grant funds may be applied toward travel/lodging/meals/mileage for grantee travel in fulfilling the proposed project.

Application: 2-Step Process

1. Fill out the 2021 NCF-Envirothon Diversity Grant Application [Budget Form](https://envirothon.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/12/2021_D.G.Budget-fillable-form.pdf) [https://envirothon.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/12/2021_D.G.Budget-fillable-form.pdf]
2. Fill out the [Online 2021 NCF-Envirothon Diversity Grant Application](https://www.envirothon.org/registration-forms/view.php?id=59859) [https://www.envirothon.org/registration-forms/view.php?id=59859] proposal form and upload the [Budget Form](#) (#1 above) and any other appropriate supporting materials by stated deadline

Anticipated Timeline

- December 2, 2020 – Application period open
- January 18, 2021 (11:59 pm EST) – Deadline to submit applications and attachments online
- March 5, 2021 – NCF announces funding decisions and awards contracts to grant recipients
- March 5 - May 5, 2021 – Grant Recipients sign and return the General Condition of Acceptance Contract
- April - June 2021 – Grant Recipients receive up to 75% of awarded funds within 30 days of successful return of the General Condition of Acceptance Contract. (The remaining 25% of funds will be paid to the recipient upon successful submission of the final project report.)

Selection Criteria

The NCF-Envirothon Diversity Grant Subcommittee will consider the following factors when selecting projects to fund:

1. **Audience.** Has the target audience been described? Does the project reach a diverse and underserved audience? **20 points max.**
2. **Needs Addressed.** Is the project clearly outlined? Does the project fulfill an environmental/natural resource/conservation education need? Is the project consistent with the goals of the NCF-Envirothon? **20 points max.**
3. **Timeline.** Has a realistic timeline been developed? Are tasks sufficiently outlined? Is there sufficient time to do the project? **10 points max.**
4. **Benefits.** Are the goals clearly stated? Is there a full description of the plan of work? How will the effectiveness of the project be measured? Are the measurements and evaluation methods reasonable? **30 points max.**

5. **Budget.** Is the project cost effective? Is the budget detailed and itemized? Is there adequate/measurable cooperation with or material support by other organizations on the project? What are the extent and sources of other matching funds being raised for the proposed project? **20 points max.**
6. **Additional Partners.** Have additional partners been identified? What level of support are they contributing? Are partnerships developed within the targeted audience? If so, who are key partners and how are they involved with proposed project? **15 points max.**
7. **Sustainability of the project.** Is the project sustainable? How will the project be sustained upon competition of the NCF-Envirothon Diversity Grant period? **10 points max.**
8. **Evaluation.** How will success of the proposed Diversity Grant Project be measured? **5 points max.**

Recipients Responsibilities

Grant recipients are required to:

- Strictly comply with all grant guidelines.
- Furnish NCF-Envirothon with financial accounting of expenditures, as well as provide interim and final project reports. (Reports should include information regarding the successes, failures or errors of the project, the number of students/schools reached, the number of additional teams formed, etc. Reports should also include start and competition dates and photos when possible.) The reporting templates will be furnished to you by the NCF-Envirothon.
- Supply additional information as requested by the NCF-Envirothon.
- Return any unused funds to the NCF-Envirothon.
- Please adhere to any local COVID-19 health guidelines and regulations for any in-person events.

Online Application

Application Notes - You do have the ability to save your application, allowing you to edit your application and change your answers until you hit 'Submit'. If you select to save your application and resume later, you will receive an email* with a link to edit your application. Once your application is complete you will need to hit 'Submit' to officially submit it. Once done, you will get an on-screen confirmation that your entry was received. You will also get an email* response of your answers.

**PLEASE NOTE these emails may end up in your spam folder. Please check your email filters to allow messages.*

Itemized Project Budget

PLEASE use the required “Excel Budget Form”; complete, save and upload to your online grant application.

Your itemized project budget should show how major expenses are estimated and how Diversity Grant funds are to be spent Include bids if available/applicable.

Questions

If you have questions, please contact the NCF-Envirothon by email at administration@envirothon.org or by phone at 1-800-825-5547.