

NCF-Envirothon

2022 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, is pleased to announce the 2022 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 educational 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.

NCF will be awarding funds for selected projects during the FY 2022 grant cycle. Projects will provide students with exposure to the NCF-Envirothon program and to the areas of aquatic ecology, forestry, soils and land use, wildlife and current environmental issues. First time U.S. state Envirothon program grant applicants can receive up to \$4,000. Returning applicants and one Canadian provincial Envirothon program can receive up to \$2,000. *(Amounts awarded will depend, in part, on the number of applications received.)*

Examples of Diversity Grant projects* include, but are not limited to:

- Participation Projects (e.g., travel and registration costs for teams to participate in state/provincial Envirothon competitions when lack of funding in the past has prohibited participation)
- Outreach and Engagement Projects (e.g., projects that initiate a training and/or outreach program for participants and advisors to learn about the Envirothon, as well as conservation, natural resource and more)
 - “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 interaction with target audiences).

- Cultural Inclusion Projects (e.g., incorporating underrepresented culture into State/Provincial Envirothon competitions/programs (in the form of ceremonies, histories, oral traditions, indigenous systems of science, traditional ecological knowledge, etc.) or translation of education materials into languages other than English)
- Environmental Literacy and Experiential Learning Projects (e.g., projects seeking to increase environmental literacy of youth: involving them in a hands-on approach to outdoor natural resources education)
- Accessibility Projects (e.g., adaptation of training/testing materials for hearing, visually or mobility impaired students)

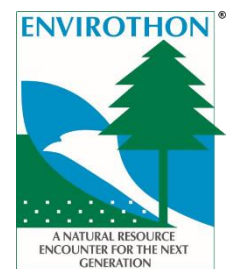
** For any in-person events, please be sure to follow local health guidelines and regulations regarding COVID-19 safety.*

2022 Diversity Grant Major Dates:

- December 2, 2021 – Application period opens.
- February 4, 2022 – Application period closes.
 - Deadline to submit complete application and attachments is at 11:59 pm EST.
- March 15, 2022 – Anticipated 2022 Diversity Grant Awards announcement.

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

Sponsors:



2022 Diversity Grant Application Overview

A. Eligibility:

- i. State and Provincial NCF-Envirothon programs who are up to date on all membership dues may apply.
- ii. An individual school, organization, conservation districts or other entity may be the sole focus, or project participant, of a Diversity Grant Project, but the local state/provincial Envirothon program must support/approve the project and agree to act as the fiscal agent, administering the grant funds, for the life of the project. (e.g., the grant funds will be sent to 'xyz State Envirothon' program to be administered.)

B. Funding Availability:

- i. First Time (U.S.) Applicants = up to \$4,000
- ii. Returning (U.S.) Applicants = up to \$2,000
- iii. Canadian Applicants (regardless of application history) = up to \$2,000

C. Match Requirements:

- i. Applications must reflect a 25% match (no additional points will be awarded for matches in excess of 25%)
- ii. The match can be from either In-Kind (such as staff or volunteer time/labor or Monetary (cash).
- iii. Applications without the required match will NOT be considered.
- iv. Documentation of match will be required at time of application (letters from Boards or partner organizations verifying match will suffice for in-kind matches).
- v. Match Calculation:
 - a. The match should be at least 25% of the **Total Project Budget** (e.g., If the total project budget is \$5,000, of which \$1,250 was provided by matching funds or in-kind sources, then the match percentage is 25% ($1250/5000 \times 100 = 25\%$))

D. Incomplete Applications:

- i. All information requested in the application is required. Incomplete applications will be considered ineligible for funding.

E. Allowable vs Unallowable Expenses

- i. Diversity Grant funds are restricted funds that are to be used for the specific purpose of expanding the diversity of student participation in Envirothon.
- ii. Certain activities or components are specifically designated as unallowable expenses for Diversity Grant funds, while others have strict guidelines or limitations that should be considered during the budget development process.
- iii. Examples of allowable and non-allowable grant expenses (representative of generally accepted grant guidelines):

ALLOWABLE	UNALLOWABLE
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Stipends for teachers to attend Envirothon trainings ¹• Substitute teachers pay (allowing advisor to travel to event) ¹• Team registration fees and/or travel funds to local, state/province Envirothon competitions• Materials specifically purchased for Envirothon trainings ³	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Operating and/or maintenance expenses of organizations, including salaries, fees, rents, and honorariums• Most travel/lodging for grantee (e.g., project manager) ²• Equipment (including computer software/hardware, digital cameras, tablets and other electronics) and/or supplies not specifically related to the intent of the grant ³• Virtual or online testing programs for state/provincial Envirothon competition• Project activities that are in-process/completed or components that were purchased prior to the official Project Start Date.⁴• Competition team awards and/or scholarships

1. Expenditures for educator stipends/substitutes **cannot exceed 40%** of total request.
2. **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.(e.g., project manager milage to travel to oversee project components)
3. The grant application **must** show:

- i. A clear need that demonstrates how the materials/supplies will directly and primarily benefit the increased diversity of student participation in Envirothon.
 - ii. A clear implementation plan explaining the use of the materials/supplies during the grant project that will increase the diversity of student participation in Envirothon.
4. Larger projects or on-going projects may be broken into phases, with the phase coinciding with the proposed 2022 Diversity Grant project scheduled to start in mid-spring 2022.

2022 Diversity Grant Application Process

A. Online Application and Required Budget Form:

- a. Download the [Diversity Grant Budget Template](#) [MS Excel] and complete.
- b. Fill out [2022 NCF-Envirothon Diversity Enhancement and Underserved Audience Grant Application](#) online form, upload Budget and submit.
 - i. You will 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.
 - ii. Be sure to upload the required Budget spreadsheet before submitting your completed application.
 - iii. Once your application is complete you will need to click the 'Submit' button to officially submit it. Once done, you will get an on-screen confirmation that your entry was received.

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

2022 Diversity Grant Selection Criteria

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

	Maximum Points
Audience. Has the target audience been described? Does the project reach a diverse and underserved audience?	20
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
Timeline. Has a realistic timeline been developed? Are tasks sufficiently outlined? Is there sufficient time to do the project?	10
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
Budget. Is the project cost effective? Is the budget detailed and itemized? What are the extent and sources of other matching funds being raised for the proposed project?	20
Additional Partners. Have additional partners been identified? What level of support are they contributing and in what ways? Are partnerships developed within the targeted audience? If so, who are key partners and how are they involved with proposed project?	15
Sustainability of the project. Is the project sustainable? How will the project be sustained upon completion of the NCF-Envirothon Diversity Grant period?	10
Evaluation. How will success of the proposed Diversity Grant Project be measured?	5

2022 Diversity Grant Awarded Projects

A. Awards Announcement and Contracting:

- i. The 2022 Diversity Grant Awards announcement will be made by email in mid-March (tentative date March 15, 2022).
- ii. Following award announcement, Award Recipients (Grantees) will receive a Diversity Grant General Condition of Acceptance Agreement. Upon receipt they are required to sign and return within 30-days.
 - a. Grantees will not receive any funds until a signed agreement is on file.
 - Failure to return a signed contract within 30-days of award notification

may result in the project application being canceled and funds being reallocated.

B. Grant Fund Disbursement:

- i. Upon the return of the signed Diversity Grant General Condition of Acceptance Agreement, Grantees will receive up to 75% of awarded funds.
- ii. The remaining 25% of funds will be paid to the Grantee upon successful submission of the final project report.

C. Project Timeline:

- i. Project Start Date – Work to accomplish project goals and objectives must begin within 60-days of grant award announcement.
- ii. Project End Date - All project components should be completed, and grant funds spent in full within 14-months of the Project Start Date.

D. Reports:

- i. An Interim Report will be due at the 7-month mark of the project.
- ii. A Final Report is due 30 days after the completion of the project.
- iii. The Interim and Final Report forms will be made available to award recipients in advance of their deadlines.

E. Project Revision or Extensions Requests:

- i. All requests will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis. Please note that not all requests will result in approval.
- ii. Project Revisions
 - a. If an unexpected issue or complication arises during the Project that requires a revision to a project component, timeline deliverable, expected outcome, etc. (e.g., a teacher workshop has to be canceled due to COVID-19 so funds will need to be reallocated) the Grantee should contact NCF-Envirothon staff immediately to discuss the situation and any requests BEFORE proceeding.
 - b. All grant project revisions must receive prior approval in order to be in compliance.

iii. Extensions

- a. Any extension requests for either the interim report or the final report must be made in writing 30 days prior to set deadlines. The requests will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis.
- b. Any request to extend the project beyond the original 14-month period must be made in writing 60 days prior to the Project End Date. The requests will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis. Please note that not all requests will result in approval for extensions.

Questions

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