



### **Trees for Communities FAQ**

- 1. Are state park Friends groups eligible for these grants/ both for tree inventories and tree planting?**

*501c3 organizations are eligible to apply or community groups can apply through a fiscal sponsor (if they don't have 501c3 status). Tree inventories and planting are both eligible activities under this grant.*

- 2. Is it a requirement that the project be located in a census block location, or that the municipality have a census block location that would benefit in a broad capacity?**

*Projects located near or adjacent to designated blocks in the [Urban and Community Forestry Grant Eligibility Tool](#) are eligible to apply so long as they demonstrate clear and direct benefit to communities in the designated census block.*

- 3. Can types of invasive species related activities also please be clarified?**

*Invasive species management must be to encourage forest restoration (e.g. to encourage native tree regeneration/growth). Projects may include, but are not limited to, chemical or mechanical removal of invasive plant species, vine removal, tree planting, and other site treatments intended to slow the spread of invasive plants and promote regeneration of native tree species.*

- 4. Are you expecting to have more than one round of these grants?**

*No, only one round of funding is available.*

- 5. Can the same entity - eg town - submit more than one projects, or must they be combined if so desired ?**

*Multiple projects/proposals may be submitted by one entity, but we recommend combining projects into a single proposal if possible.*

- 6. Is there any risk of this funding being cut due to federal funding cuts? Or is the funding secured already at the state level?**

*While DEEP appreciates there is some uncertainty with respect to the status of federally awarded grants, it is important to keep in mind these funds were appropriated by Congress under duly adopted statutory authority and fully obligated. Therefore, DEEP is optimistic that the funding is secure. If this understanding changes and federal funds unexpectedly become unavailable, DEEP is prepared to seek alternative actions to proceed with this important work or to temporarily suspend work until additional sources of funding can be secured. We will apprise you of any changes concerning your award promptly.*

- 7. What are best practices in protecting newly planted trees/saplings and are water bags a healthy choice?**



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*See CT Tree Owners Manual for best practices in protecting newly planted trees/saplings:*

*<https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/deep/forestry/cttreeownersmanualpdf.pdf>*

- 8. How do we justify the purchase of equipment for \$5,000 or less when rentals are typically an option?**

*Proposed budgets must be cost-effective, applicants should consider cost-effectiveness when determining whether to request funds for the purchase or rental of equipment.*

- 9. What is the total pool of funding for this grant project?**

*~ \$1 million is available, awards are for up to \$200,000*

- 10. Is there a project too small?**

*There is no minimum award amount for this program.*

- 11. Is the purchase of existing GIS data that is offered to the City by a vendor (tree points - locations, heights, e.g.) an eligible action?**

*Yes, purchasing existing data is allowed as long as its use and relevance to urban forest management are clear.*

- 12. Would a GIS assessment of transportation corridors be eligible?**

*Yes, if the assessment clearly relates to urban forest management.*

- 13. I received notice of the subject Program this morning, and one question I have is that the announcement seems to contradict the RFP in that the announcement cites, in part, that projects can include “tree planting, stewardship, and maintenance” while the RFP cites a number of projects (given, it says “including but not limited to”) but maintenance is not included. That being said, and based on the “including but not limited to”, were the Town to submit a proposal for maintenance of a newly installed project, it is possible the project could be funded, correct**

*Generally, maintenance of trees planted with this award is eligible (e.g., purchase, planting, mulching, watering, and other care). Pruning of existing or mature trees may also be considered eligible maintenance.*

- 14. For the DEEP Trees for Communities grant, is this a monthly reimbursement that goes directly to the nonprofit, or does the city need to be a pass through of funds?**

*Reimbursements are typically quarterly but monthly requests can be made. Payments are issued directly to the applicant, whether a nonprofit or government entity.*

- 15. Also is there a process for advance payment?**

*No, advance payment is not available for this grant.*

- 16. We're also wondering if this grant can cover wages for apprentices in our workforce development program, as the program teaches apprentices to plant and maintain trees.**

*Yes, wages for apprentices are eligible. Credentialing programs (e.g., college credits, ISA certifications) may strengthen the workforce development component.*

- 17. Does receipt of another USDA grant impact competitiveness for this grant.**



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*No, each application is scored independently.*

**18. Quick question, is there a grant match requirement?**

*No, there is no match requirement. However, competitive applications often demonstrate strong community engagement, planning, and logistics to show “buy-in.”*

**19. Our organization does not currently have its SAM NUMBER. We are currently in the process of applying for it. Can we still go ahead and apply for the program grant, and hopefully receive our SAM # before the deadline, or are we necessarily expected to have the SAM # ready before submission of the application?**

*You do not need a SAM.gov UEI at the time of your application but you will need one before you can receive your award if selected for funding.*

**20. Are we able to combine projects such as pollinating and invasive species?**

*Yes, multiple objectives can be included if there is a “tree” focus. Pollinator projects focused on herbaceous plants are not eligible.*

**21. We would like to utilize the grant to aid in the removal of invasive species and tree plantings, with a future goal of creating walking trails. Does this sound like a project that could potentially be awarded funding?**

*Projects must have a forestry focus; invasive species removal for the sole purpose of trail creation is not eligible under this program. Instead, consider the [Connecticut Recreational Trails Funding](#).*

**22. Are award amounts expected to be only a portion of the \$200,000 max amount?**

*The \$200k limit is the maximum for a single project application.*

**23. Are COGs eligible entities for DEEP's Trees for Communities Grant Program?**

*Yes, Councils of Governments (COGs) are eligible to apply.*

**24. I see in the Trees for Communities NOFO that tree planting on private lands with permission of the landowner is an eligible project. Is tree planting on town-owned/public land also eligible?**

*Yes, planting on public land is eligible. Planting on land not owned by the grantee requires land-use authorization.*

**25. There is a forested area that needs attention to keep it healthy, going into the future. It is a great resource for removing air pollution from multiple adjacent roads along with other positive health effects for the adjacent neighborhoods. Is this a candidate for grant application or are you more interested in whole towns that are distressed?**

*If the project takes place in or will demonstrate clear benefit to eligible communities as indicated on this map: [Urban and Community Forestry Grant Eligibility Tool](#) then it is eligible.*