

## MAP 2025: Connecting People to Forests Round 1 Request for Proposals

November 26, 2024

**Connecting People to Forests:** The Matching Awards Program (MAP), the National Forest Foundation's flagship competitive grant program, focuses on community engagement and completion of appropriate stewardship activities. Its goal is to create lasting change that provides all communities—particularly underserved ones—with opportunities to benefit from activities on National Forest lands or nearby public lands. This program focus was adopted in 2023 as a result of over two years of work to collect feedback to align the program with current National Forest System needs, and the NFF strategic plan.

## **Key Information**

**Geographic Restrictions:** Projects must take place on U.S. National Forests or Grasslands, or on

adjacent public lands, and demonstrate a benefit to the National Forest

System lands.

**Application Deadline:** Friday, February 7, 2025, 11:59 pm MST

**Funding Type:** Federal Funds in partnership with the U.S. Forest Service

(Federal Assistance Listing 10.682)

**Eligible Organizations:** Nonprofit organizations, Tribal governments and organizations, and

universities.

**Match Requirements:** 1:1 match of nonfederal cash funds directly received by the applicant

organization. The Award Recipient must expend the match within the NFF grant performance period and the completion of the same project. In-kind

contributions will not be considered.

**Performance Period:** Projects funded in this round will begin in May 2025 and may run for up to 18

months.

**Informational Webinar:** December 19, 2024, from 12:00-1:30 pm MST [Register Here].

**Applicant Resources:** MAP is highly competitive, and the NFF only funds projects that align

exceptionally well with programmatic criteria. To ensure that the applicant's time is well spent, use all the resources available to determine whether the

project is eligible, including:

This Request for Proposals

MAP Frequently Asked Questions

MAP Application Tips and Financial Plan Guidance Appendices

Program Contact: NFF Conservation Awards staff are available to answer questions about

eligibility, project scope, or the application process.

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## **Overview**

#### ABOUT THE NATIONAL FOREST FOUNDATION

The National Forest Foundation is the leading organization that inspires personal and meaningful connections to our National Forests, which are the centerpiece of America's public lands.

Working on behalf of the American public, the NFF leads forest conservation efforts and promotes responsible recreation. We believe these lands and all they provide are an American treasure vital to our communities' health.

#### MAP - PROGRAM OVERVIEW

The NFF funds projects benefiting America's National Forests and Grasslands through MAP by pairing federal funds provided through a cooperative agreement with the U.S. Forest Service with nonfederal dollars raised by award recipients, multiplying the resources available to benefit the National Forest System.

Building from applicant feedback and changes to the NFF strategic plan, the NFF shifted the focus of MAP in April 2023. Read more about the process in this NFF News Release. The NFF is proud of the results that partners have accomplished through the MAP program over the last 30 years and is eager to see how those results deepen and change due to this shift.

MAP funding criteria now focus on projects that inspire participants to get personally involved in caring for their public lands. Projects funded under MAP must involve the public through in-person engagement and provide benefits to the National Forest System. This refocus on engagement as a central component is intended to ensure that diverse communities have access to funding and the many benefits of public lands and are actively engaged in their care.

Through the program changes, some work previously eligible for funding under MAP, including stewardship efforts completed primarily by for-profit contractors, is now ineligible for MAP funding. The NFF continues to support these kinds of professional restoration and stewardship efforts through its other funding programs. Complete details about eligibility are described below.

## **Eligible Project Types**

#### **PROGRAM FOCUS AREAS**

The NFF requires that all projects proposed for funding must include community involvement and handson stewardship activities that are completed by project participants, and that benefit the <u>National Forest</u> <u>System</u>.

#### **Community Engagement**

Community engagement, defined as in-person involvement of the public, must be the primary focus of every project funded under MAP. The National Forest Foundation recognizes that communities across the country have varied histories and experiences with public lands and expects that effective and appropriate engagement experiences will vary.

Eligible occasions for community engagement in public lands include but are not limited to:

- Public lands days, clean-up days, and similar events
- Field trips for schools or collaborative groups
- Outdoor skills training
- Indigenous ecological practices
- Ceremonies or celebrations related to natural resources

- Nature-based therapeutic activities
- Trail or site ambassador programs
- Community science projects
- Implementation of natural resource stewardship projects (defined below) directly by community members

Eligible public involvement in those opportunities may be paid or volunteer. Involvement of youth conservation corps, other types of paid service crews, event attendees, and volunteer participants are all considered forms of public engagement.

Projects that result from or contribute to longer-term relationships will be prioritized in the proposal evaluation. In addition to describing the involvement of people in project implementation, proposals should explain whether the project's design and planning stages include leadership or direct involvement of the populations they will benefit. Proposals should specify the populations they aim to engage in the opportunity and how the opportunity is designed to help them or empower them through leadership and

decision-making opportunities. Applicants should demonstrate knowledge of any existing relationships with the populations.

#### **Stewardship Activities**

In addition to focusing on public engagement, stewardship activities must be a component of every project proposed to MAP. Specifically, the participants of the groups engaged must complete eligible stewardship-oriented activities that result in benefits to the National Forest System. Benefits may be direct, such as trail maintenance or trash clean-up, or indirect. Examples of stewardship activities with indirect benefits include collecting monitoring data, which the Forest Service or other public entities will use to inform management decisions, or educating other trail users to prevent resource damage. The NFF recognizes that different activities are appropriate for various types of participants. Therefore, various activities are allowed, resulting in large-scale or small-scale stewardship benefits.

Eligible participant stewardship activities include, and are not limited to:

- Recreation area clean-up
- Native tree and shrub planting
- Trail maintenance
- Invasive species control
- Forest and watershed restoration

- Hazardous fuels reduction
- Ecological or social monitoring to inform management decisions
- Educating other people using public lands about sustainable recreation principles

The NFF will consider proposed stewardship activities based on the applicant's ability to connect the particular populations the project is seeking to engage to public lands, not only on their scale of impact on the ground.

#### Advancing Diversity, Equity, and Long-Term Benefit

Through MAP, the NFF is reaffirming its interest in expanding environmental and conservation work and who participates in this work, acknowledging that Tribes and many underserved communities have historically not benefited or held decision-making power in investments in public lands. The selection committee will prioritize projects that aim to create opportunities to advance equitability and the diversity of beneficiaries and/ or collaborative leadership, whether during the MAP-funded performance period or in the future. Projects that are part of a long-term strategy to create or inspire connection to public lands will also receive priority.

Proposals should include a description of the benefits to the community engaged, including whether the project benefits or engages Tribes or underserved communities. For MAP, the NFF uses the following definitions, which align with the underserved communities identified in the <u>U.S. Forest Service Equity Action Plan</u>:

**Underserved Communities:** Populations sharing a particular characteristic, as well as geographic communities, that have been systematically denied a full opportunity to participate in aspects of economic, social, and civic life.

**Equity:** The consistent and systematic fair, just, and impartial treatment of all individuals, including individuals who belong to underserved communities that have been denied such treatment, such as Black, Latino, Indigenous and Native American persons, Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders and other persons of color; members of religious minorities; lesbian, gay,

bisexual, transgender, and queer (LGBTQ+) persons; persons with disabilities; persons who live in rural areas; and persons otherwise adversely affected by persistent poverty or inequality.

#### **INELIGIBLE ACTIVITIES**

In line with the MAP focus on community engagement in stewardship, applications are not accepted if the primary costs are for developing or improving hardened infrastructure via purchases or contractors. This includes the development of or major improvements to campgrounds, parking lots, restrooms, or visitor centers. The NFF will consider more minor scale activities at these locations completed as part of community engagement programming and if most of the proposed budget is for engagement-related costs. MAP funding is not intended to support wildland firefighting efforts, nor may it be used to support subcontracted stewardship efforts completed primarily by for-profit entities.

## **Funding and Match Requirements**

MAP funds are provided to the NFF by the USDA Forest Service, and recipients must treat the funds as Federal Awards under Federal Assistance Listing 10.682. To receive MAP funds, an award recipient must raise an equal amount of additional nonfederal cash funds as match. In-kind contributions and federal funding are NOT eligible to meet the MAP program's 1:1 cash match requirement.

Both MAP and required cash match funds:

- Must be paid to the applicant organization and deposited in the applicant organization's bank account by the project start date;
- Must support the same project activities and be expended within the same performance period;
- Must be used to advance the 501(c)(3) exempt mission of the NFF;
- Cannot support litigation or advocacy;
- Cannot support general administrative purposes beyond eligible indirect costs;
- Cannot be directed to the U.S. Forest Service or any other federal entity;
- Cannot be used to meet the matching requirements of any other federal funding program.

Upon selection for funding, award recipients must submit documentation to the NFF showing the receipt of eligible nonfederal matching funds.

## **Project Administrative Considerations**

#### **APPLICANT ELIGIBILITY**

Nonprofit organizations, Tribal governments and organizations, and universities are eligible to receive MAP grants. If an organization does not meet this eligibility requirement it must utilize an eligible fiscal sponsor consistent with the <a href="NFF Policy on Fiscal Sponsorship">NFF Policy on Fiscal Sponsorship</a>. The NFF does not consider MAP applications from federal or state agencies, local governments, individuals, or for-profit organizations.

#### **PROJECT TIMING**

Proposed project periods may be no more than 18 months long. For this round, grant performance periods will begin in May 2025 and extend for 12 or 18-month periods, depending on grantee preference.

All activities directly supported by MAP and the expenditure of associated match must occur within the performance period. If project completion cannot confidently occur within the period specified above, please contact the NFF well before the application deadline to discuss this.

#### **AWARD SIZE**

There is no official minimum or maximum award amount for the MAP program, and successful proposals vary widely in budget size. In recent years, NFF has considered applications ranging from less than \$5,000 to over \$70,000. The NFF suggests new MAP applicants submit applications requesting \$35,000 or less.

#### **FUNDING OVERLAP RESTRICTIONS**

There are limitations on the overlap of MAP awards and other NFF awards to foster the distribution of funds nationwide:

- A single organization may have only one active MAP award at any given time. Organizations with an existing MAP grant may reapply for MAP funding but must fully execute and close their existing award before May 1, 2025.
- A single project, as defined by its location, goals, and objectives, may have only one active NFF grant at a time.
  - When multiple organizations are partnering on the same project, they must coordinate to submit only one application.
  - o A project receiving funding from another NFF granting program may not receive MAP funding covering all or part of the same performance period.

Independently operating chapters of a national or regional organization are recognized as distinct organizations for the purpose of applying to MAP.

#### **ENVIRONMENTAL COMPLIANCE**

The NFF will not consider proposals unless all environmental compliance work is complete at the time of application. This includes but is not limited to: NEPA decisions and categorical exclusions, archaeological clearances, and any other mandatory Tribal, federal, state, or local clearances. No exceptions.

#### FOREST SERVICE LETTERS OF SUPPORT OR COOPERATION

All applications must include a letter of support or cooperation from the District Ranger of each National Forest or Grassland District included in a proposal. Tribal entities are encouraged to contact the NFF in advance to discuss alternative options for letters of support.

Applicants must upload letters of support with their online grant proposal when possible.

- In cases where the applicant does not receive their letter(s) of support prior to the application deadline, applicants may promptly email letters of support to <a href="mailto:grants@nationalforests.org">grants@nationalforests.org</a>.
- Proposals that include activities in multiple districts on one National Forest System unit may
  choose to obtain a single letter of support from the Forest Supervisor rather than a letter from
  each District Ranger. Similarly, proposals that include activities on multiple National Forest
  System units within any Forest Service Region may choose to obtain a letter of support from the
  Regional Forester rather than each Forest Supervisor.
- Support letters should be no more than a few months old and addressed to the National Forest Foundation Matching Awards Program or the applicant organization.
- Do not send letters of support via hard copy, fax, or any method other than direct upload or email.
- Do not send support letters signed by individuals other than the District Ranger, Forest Supervisor, Regional Forester, or their deputy.
- Do not submit any additional letters of support.

#### **GEOGRAPHIC RESTRICTIONS**

MAP funding is available for projects that take place on <u>U.S. National Forests and Grasslands</u>. Additionally, projects taking place on public lands adjacent to National Forests and Grasslands that can demonstrate clear National Forest benefits are eligible. Work that does not physically take place on National Forest System lands or adjacent public lands is ineligible for funding.

## **Proposal Review Process**

#### APPLICATION REVIEW PROCESS

A committee of National Forest Foundation staff, Board, and U.S. Forest Service representatives reviews proposals and makes funding recommendations. The review process is usually completed within three months of the application deadline. Due to differences in budget allocations, proposals for projects directly linked to NFF-initiated work planned for implementation in the NFF 2025 or 2026 Fiscal Year are evaluated separately from projects that are entirely independent of NFF-initiated work.

#### **EVALUATION CRITERIA**

Each member of the MAP review committee quantitatively evaluates applications based on the following criteria. Applications that receive funding generally receive high scores on every individual criterion.

#### Strength of Engagement

In this group of evaluation criteria, reviewers are asked to consider the engagement activities proposed, the population the project seeks to engage, and how the activities were designed:

• The extent to which the project increases capacity for participation and engagement in a measurable, active manner.

- The extent to which the population engaged had a voice or a leadership role in designing the program.
- The extent to which the engagement opportunity is well aligned with the population the applicant seeks to engage.

#### Potential for Diversifying Beneficiaries

In this group of evaluation criteria, reviewers are asked to consider the groups of people that currently benefit from public lands and whether the proposed project will advance that diversity. For example, a project may advance diversity through the participants engaged during the project period by supporting an affinity-based conservation crew for neurodivergent youth. Additionally, it may advance diversity because of the project activities' outcomes, such as completing an ADA-accessible trail. The criteria are:

- The extent to which the participants engaged in the proposed activities diversify the populations benefiting from public lands.
- The extent to which the proposed activities create opportunities or increase accessibility to diversify future beneficiaries of public lands.

#### **Stewardship Benefit**

In this group of evaluation criteria, reviewers are asked to consider the stewardship activities that the project participants will complete and the relevance and outcomes of those activities:

- The extent to which the proposed stewardship activities align with the described conservation or management needs.
- The extent to which the proposed stewardship activities provide measurable benefit to the National Forest System or adjacent public lands.

#### Potential for Long-term Impact

In this group of evaluation criteria, reviewers are asked to consider the methods for understanding and sharing the project results and the degree to which those results may have long-term impact:

- The extent to which the project readily and effectively transfers wise practices or shares lessons learned.
- The extent to which the project encourages, connects, or inspires participants to be personally involved in the National Forest System or adjacent public lands resources.
- The extent to which the means of evaluating and monitoring project outcomes are well defined and appropriate for the stated project goals.

#### Feasibility and Strength of Proposal

In this group of evaluation criteria, reviewers are asked to consider the planning elements of the proposal, whether a project is logistically possible, and whether it is responsive to the stated needs:

- The extent to which the NFF-funded portion of the project can reasonably be accomplished within the proposed timeframe.
- The extent to which project goals and objectives are consistent with the identified needs.
- The extent to which the amount requested is appropriate.

## **How to Apply**

Applicants complete and submit MAP applications through an online grant application platform. Refer to this RFP document and the following appendices as you complete the online form.

#### **HOW TO START A NEW APPLICATION**

- 1. Use this link <a href="https://form.typeform.com/to/AQID2dNg">https://form.typeform.com/to/AQID2dNg</a> to complete an approximately 10-question quiz ensuring the project and organization are eligible for MAP funding.
- 2. Upon successful completion of the eligibility quiz, you will receive an email with an access code and instructions that will allow you to initiate an application and save it for future access.

#### HOW TO RETURN TO THE APPLICATION YOU STARTED

If you have already completed the eligibility quiz, initiated an application and saved it, you can return to the application by following these steps:

- Go to the application login page at <u>https://www.grantinterface.com/Home/Logon?urlkey=nationalforests</u>
- 2. Log in with your existing account
- 3. Click "Edit Application" to the right of the name of your saved application

#### PROPOSAL ATTACHMENT FORMS

The NFF regularly updates its standard forms; applicants must download and use the current forms each grant round. Do not re-use NFF forms saved on your computer from previous rounds.

- NFF Master Financial Plan form
- NFF Expanded Budget form

## **Applicant Resources**

MAP is highly competitive, and the NFF only funds projects that align exceptionally with programmatic criteria. Previous applicants report spending an average of 33 hours completing a MAP application. To ensure that your time is well spent, use all the resources available to determine whether your project is eligible and ensure you have fully addressed the application requirements.

#### PERTINENT POLICIES AND DOCUMENTS

Prior to developing a MAP application, applicants should review and understand this RFP and the following policies:

- NFF Indirect Cost Rate Policy
- NFF Policy on Fiscal Sponsorship (if applicable)

Additional guidance on how to complete the NFF MAP application and budget forms are provided in these documents:

- MAP Application Tips This document contains detailed guidance on specific application
  questions and components, including instructions, tips, and checklists. This section is intended to
  help applicants develop and submit a competitive proposal.
- How to Complete the NFF Master Financial Plan This document covers definitions of expense categories and match sources and provides detailed examples of both the Master Financial Plan and Expanded Budget forms.
- <u>Guidance on Forest Service Letters of Support</u> This document provides guidance on obtaining a USFS Letter of Support.
- <u>Frequently Asked Questions</u> This document includes answers to potential questions you may have. It answers eligibility questions, what expenses may be covered under the grant, and more.

#### **INFORMATIONAL WEBINAR**

An informational webinar regarding MAP proposal requirements and the submission process will occur on Thursday, December 19, at 12:00 pm MST. Register in advance <a href="here">here</a>. The webinar will be recorded and posted on the NFF's MAP webpage.

#### ADDITIONAL OUESTIONS AND PROGRAM CONTACT

NFF Conservation Awards staff are available to answer questions about eligibility, project scope, or the application process. If you have read through the resources listed above and have additional questions regarding MAP or the grant application process, you are encouraged to reach out to NFF staff for quidance.

Requesting and receiving help will not affect an organization's competitiveness for the program.

Renán Zambrano, Conservation Awards Coordinator

Phone: 210.917.4719

Email: <a href="mailto:grants@nationalforests.org">grants@nationalforests.org</a>





#### Additional help on how to complete your NFF Matching Awards Program application

This document provides tips on answering certain questions in the Matching Awards Program application, with the intention of helping you submit a competitive proposal. Use this guidance as a supplement to, not a replacement for, the instructions in the online application form and eligibility information in the RFP.

#### **Character Counts**

Character counts include spaces and punctuation.

#### **Project Name**

<u>Tips:</u> Provide a concise, descriptive name for the proposed project. Avoid using acronyms.

#### **Amount Requested**

<u>Tips:</u> Indicate the amount you are requesting from the NFF for this project.

<u>Double Check:</u> Make sure this is consistent with the total NFF Request in the financial plan you upload (see below).

#### Location

Instruction: Describe the project location including where it is located in the National Forest System as well as the context of the surrounding communities. IF the project is on adjacent public lands, additionally describe their proximity to National Forest System lands. Consult this Forest Service brochure or this interactive Forest Service map.

<u>Tips</u>: Remember that MAP is a nationwide program and the people reviewing your proposal are not necessarily familiar with your state or region. If your project takes place on public lands adjacent to National Forest System lands, make sure to clearly demonstrate how the project will directly benefit the National Forests and Grasslands in later parts of the proposal.

#### Population(s) Targeted

Instruction: Identify the population(s) you seek to engage and/or benefit through this project, and why. Include any relevant details about the population's socio-economic status, history of access to or use of public lands, and whether you aim to particularly focus on underserved communities. If your project aims to recruit participation from the general public, describe the demographics of the location(s) from which you will be recruiting, and any specifics of how participants will be selected.

<u>Tips:</u> This section asks you to describe *WHO* you plan to engage in the project and *WHY* you plan to engage them. Keep in mind the proposal evaluation criteria around potential for diversifying beneficiaries when responding to this question.

### **History of Population(s)**

Instruction: Describe your organization's past involvement with the population(s) that you seek to engage and/or benefit through this project, and how this influenced the goals, objectives, or methods you are proposing. If this proposal includes lessons learned from previous work or interaction with the population(s), describe that here. Describe any ways

the population had a leadership role in defining your objectives for this project. Mention if this population has a voice on your organization's staff, Board, advisory councils, or in development of your strategic plans.

<u>Tips:</u> This section lets you describe your organization or program's expertise. Keep in mind the evaluation criteria around strength of engagement, and feasibility and strength of proposal when providing your response.

#### **Need for Stewardship Activities**

Instruction: In brief narrative form, succinctly describe the need for the stewardship activities you are proposing, and how the National Forest System will benefit from them. Indicate any relevant National Forest System management issues involved or alignment with broader-scale conservation initiatives.

<u>Tips:</u> This section allows you to describe how the stewardship activities you are proposing respond to natural resource needs on National Forest System lands. If you are proposing work on lands adjacent to a National Forest or Grassland, it is especially important for you to describe how work on adjacent lands will still address a need on National Forest System lands. Keep in mind the evaluation criteria around stewardship benefit when responding to this item.

#### Goals and Objectives

Instruction: In brief, bulleted sentences, list the specific goals and objectives the project will accomplish.

<u>Tips</u>: This section asks you to describe WHAT you plan to accomplish in the project and WHERE you plan to accomplish it. Succinctly describe the work you plan to complete under the grant. Describe specific location(s) of the work, and do not generalize. Successful applicants often use SMART criteria in their goals and objectives. All evaluation criteria are relevant to this section, but you will want to especially keep in mind the criterion regarding whether goals and objectives are consistent with the identified needs – both of the populations to be engaged, and the need for stewardship activities.

#### **Methods**

Instruction: In a succinct narrative or bulleted-paragraph format, describe the specific steps you will take to accomplish the project. Describe the planning and outreach, coordination with any partner organizations, how participants will be recruited and trained, and how the stewardship work will be accomplished. Include an implementation timeline that details discrete tasks and the individuals responsible for conducting each.

<u>Tips:</u> This section asks you to respond to the *HOW* of the project. Clearly describe the individual actions that your organization will complete to advance each goal or objective. The timeline should be monthly or quarterly and indicate staff involved. Include detail on the role that other organizations will play in the project. All evaluation criteria are relevant to this section, but you will want to especially keep in mind the criteria regarding feasibility and strength of proposal.

#### **Oualitative Outcomes**

Instruction: In brief narrative format, describe both short- and long-term qualitative impacts of the proposed activities. In particular, describe how participants will benefit, be inspired to continue to engage with their public lands, and how project activities will lead to building long-term engagement of this population.

<u>Tips:</u> This section asks you to detail the anticipated qualitative outcomes of the project. Be specific and describe the accomplishments you expect. All evaluation criteria are relevant to this section, but you will want to

especially keep in mind the criteria regarding strength of engagement, stewardship benefit, potential for diversifying beneficiaries, and potential for long-term impact.

#### **Quantitative Outcomes**

Instruction: Indicate any metrics that will help determine whether the project achieved the goals and objectives set out at the end of the proposed project period. In bulleted format, quantify expected outcomes in units. Include engagement outcomes (such as total number of participants, number of participants from targeted populations, or increase in knowledge), as well as stewardship outcomes (such as pounds of trash collected, number of miles maintained, acres improved, trees planted). Also include any metrics that indicate potential for ongoing engagement (such as number indicating they will return for similar work).

<u>Tips</u>: If you are tracking something easily countable, like number of participants, number of participants targeted from populations, or increased knowledge, put in a bulleted list or in brief bulleted sentences, and be sure to include numbers to indicate the what you expect to achieve. These should correlate to the qualitative impacts you hope to achieve.

#### **Evaluation**

Instruction: In brief narrative format, describe how your organization will determine whether the project achieved the outcomes described above. Provide details about who is responsible for monitoring the outcomes during the project, and how they will determine success. Describe how evaluation results will be incorporated into planning or design of future activities beyond the project period.

<u>Tips:</u> This section asks you to identify how you will know that you had an impact and accomplished your goals. All evaluation criteria are relevant to this section, but you will want to especially keep in mind the criteria around potential for long-term benefit when responding to this question.

- How will you determine whether the goals and objectives were completed, and how will you assess the quality of the work? How will this be incorporated in the future beyond the project?
- Clearly identify or describe who is responsible for monitoring the outcomes throughout the project.
- The NFF is interested in four primary types of monitoring in this context: baseline, implementation, effectiveness, and post-implementation. Describe how your project utilizes any or all of these.

#### **Dissemination**

Instruction: In brief narrative format, describe how the organization will externally communicate the project successes, challenges, and lessons learned once activities are completed. Describe the potential this information has to be incorporated into broader activities and strategies beyond your organization, and after the project period.

<u>Tips:</u> This section asks you to identify how you will share your successes and lessons learned. Describe how you will communicate the project outcomes externally. Are you only posting a photo on Facebook, or are you also presenting at a workshop or preparing an instructional handbook? How will this be incorporated into broader activities or strategies beyond your organization and into the community? All evaluation criteria are relevant to this section, but you will want to especially keep in mind the criteria around potential for long-term benefit when responding to this question.

#### **Contingency Planning**

Instruction: Describe any issues you foresee that could delay your project during your grant period, and planning or contingency measures you would put in place to deal with them.

<u>Tips:</u> Use this space to explain external or internal issues that could affect your project such as weather, permitting, or staffing. It is better to address potential issues directly and describe your contingencies, than to appear to have overlooked them. All evaluation criteria are relevant to this section, but you will want to especially keep in mind the criteria around feasibility when responding to this question.

#### **Budget Narrative**

Instruction: Provide a Budget Narrative that explains the need for the project costs listed in your expanded budget. This description should be detailed enough to communicate how anticipated expenditures are cost-effective, and supportive of equitable and sustainable organizational practice.

<u>Tips:</u> For each expense category, specifically describe how the project will spend NFF funds if awarded. Provide enough detail to show how the amount you are requesting relates to the project activities you describe in your narrative. All evaluation criteria are relevant to this section, but you will want to especially keep in mind the criteria around feasibility when responding to this question.

#### **Financial Plan Form**

Instruction: Upload a completed <u>NFF Financial Plan form</u> showing the budget for the project on the top half of the form (Part 1), and sources of the funds you plan to use as match on the bottom half of the form (Part 2).

<u>Tips:</u> Read through the guidance on <u>How to Complete the NFF Master Financial Plan</u> which includes definitions of expense categories, match, and other items, and provides examples of how to fill out the form. Also, be sure you understand and follow the <u>NFF Indirect Cost Rate Policy</u>.

**Do not re-use NFF forms saved on your computer from previous rounds** as the NFF regularly updates its standard forms and may disqualify proposals that do not include all the required information on the current version of this form.

#### **Double Check:**

Total NFF funds requested (cell B15) matches what you entered in the Amount Requested field of the online
application form (noted above).
Total of the column "(i) Non-Federal Cash Funding" (cell C15) is equal to or greater than total NFF funds
requested (cell B15) – this ensures you are meeting the MAP 1:1 match requirement.
The indirect rate is no more than 10% of the total direct charges. Or, if you have a NICRA, it should not be any
greater than your approved NICRA rate.

- Individual funders or categories of donors are listed in Part II of the form with the amount of their contributions.
- ☐ The degree to which every match contribution is committed is indicated.

#### **Expanded Budget Form**

Instruction: Upload the <u>NFF Expanded Budget form</u> to provide detail on the budget categories from the financial plan form. Double check that category totals match your financial plan form.

<u>Tips:</u> It is recommended that you complete your Expanded Budget prior to your Master Financial Plan. Read through the guidance on <u>How to Complete the NFF Master Financial Plan</u> which includes definitions of expense categories, match, and other items, and provides examples of both the Master Financial Plan and Expanded Budget Form.

Do not use expanded budget forms from other sources, and **do not re-use NFF forms saved on your computer from previous rounds** as the NFF regularly updates its standard forms and may disqualify proposals that do not include all the requested information on the current version of this form.

#### Double Check:

- ☐ Make sure the grand totals of each column in your Expanded Budget match the totals in your Financial Plan Form (cells B15, C15, D15, E15 and F15).
- Make sure the costs included in this spreadsheet are described in your budget narrative.

#### **Project Area Map**

Instruction: Upload a map of the project area.

<u>Tips:</u> The map should help reviewers who are not necessarily familiar with your state or region locate the project area(s) within the National Forest System and identify its proximity to other relevant locations. The more detailed the map(s) the better, but we encourage you to use what you already have. If the map consists of several pages, combine them into a PDF and upload a single file.

Do not include any information other than the attachment requested. Photos, narrative, and other information submitted with your attachment will be removed from your application and discarded prior to review.

#### Forest Service Letter(s) of Support

Instruction: Upload a letter of support from the District Ranger or Forest Supervisor of each National Forest or Grassland unit included in your proposal.

<u>Tips:</u> Read through the <u>Obtaining a Letter of Support</u> document, which includes an example letter of support from the Forest Service.

- Proposals that include work on multiple districts on one National Forest System unit may choose to
  obtain a single letter of support from the Forest Supervisor rather than a letter from each District
  Ranger. Similarly, proposals that include work on or multiple National Forest System units within any
  Forest Service Region may choose to obtain a letter of support from the Regional Forester rather than
  each Forest Supervisor.
- Tribal entities may submit a letter of partnership rather than a letter of support and are encouraged to contact the NFF to discuss alternate options.
- If not uploaded with the proposal, email letters of support to <u>grants@nationalforests.org</u> within a week of the proposal deadline.
- Do not send letters of support via hard copy, fax, or any method other than direct upload or email.
- Do not include any information other than the attachment requested. Photos, narrative, and other information submitted with your attachment will be removed from your application and discarded prior to review.

#### Safety

Instruction: The NFF is committed to working with all of our partners to complete projects in a safe manner. Please list all injuries and/or safety incidents that occurred within the last 36 months, if any. For major injuries or safety incidents, describe any changes your organization made to reduce their occurrence in the future.

<u>Tips:</u> We value your organization's efforts to perform work in a manner that protects volunteers, staff, community members, agency representatives, and any others involved in the project. Be open about any at-work

injuries or safety incidents that have happened over the last three years. What changes did you make to prevent something similar from happening again?

#### Unique Entity Identifier (UEI)

Instruction: State whether your organization has received a Unique Entity Identifier (UEI). If selected for MAP funding, the applicant must have or be able to obtain a UEI before completing a grant agreement.

- If your organization already has a UEI, add it to your organization's application profile by clicking your organization's name at the top of this form.
- If your organization does NOT yet have a UEI, you are strongly encouraged to begin the process at SAM.gov immediately. Normally you can quickly obtain one, but sometimes the process can be lengthy.

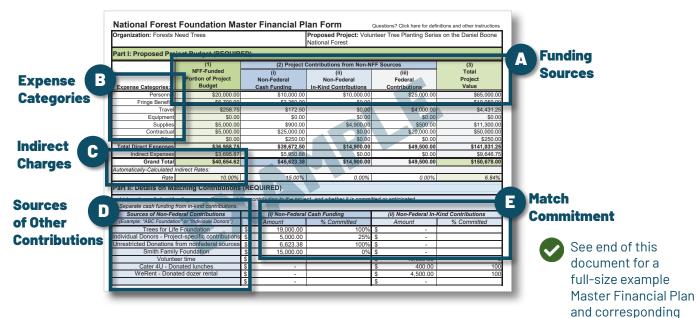
<u>Tips:</u> A Unique Entity Identifier (UEI) is a government-issued identification number that is required for organizations receiving federal funds (including MAP funds). If your organization previously had a DUNS number, it has been automatically assigned a UEI. Visit <u>SAM.gov</u> to receive or retrieve your organization's UEI number.

The process of obtaining a UEI is **free** and is generally quick, however if your organization does not already have a current UEI number, NFF recommends that you start the process immediately, as it can sometimes be lengthy. Follow the <u>Get Started</u> instructions on SAM.gov. To receive MAP funds, follow the instructions "Get a Unique Entity ID Only" (a full registration on SAM.gov is not required for MAP grantees).

## **How to Complete the NFF Master Financial Plan**



Expanded Budget Form.



## A Funding Sources

Part I: Proposed Project Budget (REQUIRED)										
	(3)									
	NFF-Funded (i) (ii) (iii)									
	Portion of Project	ject Non-Federal Non-Federal Federal								
Expense Categories:	Budget	Cash Funding	Value							
Personnel	\$20,000.00	\$10,000.00	\$10,000.00	\$25,000.00	\$65,000.00					
Fringe Benefits	\$6,700.00	\$3,350.00	\$0.00		\$10,050.00					
Travel	\$258.75	\$172.50	\$0.00	\$4,000.00	\$4,431.25					
Equipment	\$0.00	\$0.00			\$0.00					

#### (1) NFF-Funded Portion of Project Budget:

Use this column to show your proposed budget for how NFF funds would be spent.

Example: You are proposing that the NFF fund three volunteer tree-planting events, and your organization has received funding from various other sources to hold two additional events, so the project as a whole will complete five tree-planting events.

In column (1), list the costs for staff time, travel, supplies, etc. that are associated with the three events that NFF funding will cover.

#### (2) Project Contributions from Non-NFF Sources:

Use these three columns to show other contributions to the project including cash funding, and donated items. Separate contributions from federal sources from contributions from non-federal sources:

**(i) Non-Federal Cash Funding:** Use this column to show how other <u>funding</u> your organization has raised will be <u>spent</u> on this project.

**Example:** You have received a grant from another foundation that will cover staff time and supplies for two volunteer events that are part of the project. And, two major donors contributed unrestricted gifts to your general fund that you want to direct toward some of these project expenses.

(ii) Non-Federal In-Kind Contributions: Use this column to show other <u>non-cash</u> contributions (donated goods, services, etc.) that will contribute to your project.

**Example:** The value of volunteer hours during your volunteer events, the tools donated by the local hardware store, and the sandwiches donated by the catering company.

(iii) **Federal Contributions:** Use this column to show any federal contributions to the project, whether funding or in-kind contributions.

**Example:** The value of time of the Forest Service employee that will be directing the volunteers, and the items covered by the federal grant you received for part of the project.

## **Direct Expense Categories**

Part I: Proposed Project Budget (REQUIRED)						
	(1) NFF-Funded Portion of Project					
Expense Categories:	Budget					
Personnel	\$20,000.0					
Fringe Benefits	\$6,700.0					
Travel	<b>\$2</b> 58.7					
Equipment	\$0.0					
Supplies	\$5,000.0					
Contractual	\$5,000.0					
Other	\$0.0					
Total Direct Expenses	\$36,958.7					
Indirect Expenses	\$3,695.8					

**Personnel:** Use this line to indicate wages and salaries that will be paid to employees of the grantee organization for time that they will be directly involved in the proposed project's implementation.



Use actual and documentable salary or wage rates, not "loaded" or "padded" rates.



Do use this line for the value of volunteer time - list donated time in column (i) Non-Federal In-Kind Contributions.



Do not use this line item for individuals or organizations your organization will hire as contractors.

Fringe Benefits: Use this line for benefits for the personnel whose wages are listed above. Benefits may include employer's share of FICA, health insurance, workers' compensation, and paid time off. Use the budget narrative or expanded budget form to describe what specific fringe benefits are being charged to the grant, including the fringe benefit percentage.

Travel: Include any transportation or temporary lodging costs of personnel that are reasonable and necessary to effectively manage and carry out proposed project activities, provide oversight, or measure program effectiveness.



Travel costs may be budgeted on an actual basis, or on a per-diem or mileage basis.



🛕 The mileage rate used should be no more than the federally approved mileage rate.



Air travel, when necessary, must be obtained at the lowest possible customary standard.



💢 Do not include travel expenses of contractors on this line, include those in the "Contractual" line item.

Equipment: Equipment is defined as non-expendable personal property with a per-unit cost of \$5,000 or more and a useful life of more than one year.



⚠ Under nearly all circumstances, the NFF does not support equipment purchases. Contact the NFF in advance of submitting an application if you believe this is required for your project.

Supplies: Use this category for materials, tools, rentals, and all consumable items costing less than \$5,000 per unit. Examples include copy paper, pens and pencils, computers, GPS units, shovels, equipment rentals, etc.



Include associated shipping and delivery costs in this category.

Contractual: Use this line for the costs of services of partner organizations, contracted services, individuals who are not employees of your organization, and associated travel and materials that these entities will pay for.

Other: Use this line for any costs that are required to complete the proposed work but do not fit any of the aforementioned categories. Be sure to describe them fully in your budget narrative and/or expanded budget.

## **Indirect Charges**

Q20.00	ψυ,υυυ.υυ	Contractadi
	\$0.00	Other
\$39,67	\$36,958.75	Total Direct Expenses
\$5,95	\$3,695.87	Indirect Expenses
\$45,62	\$40,654.62	Grand Total
	Indirect Rates:	Automatically-Calculated I
15.	10.00%	Rate

**Indirect Charges:** The NFF encourages applicants to budget the allowable portion of their NFF grant to cover their organization's indirect (also known as "overhead") expenses.

Indirect expenses are costs that support the organization as a whole rather than the proposed project in particular. They include costs such as salaries of finance and human resources staff, administrative supplies, rent, utilities, tech support and other contracted services that serve the organization as a whole.

Refer to the NFF Indirect Cost Rate Policy for full details on how to calculate indirect charges. You may use one of the two following methods to determine the allowable portion of your proposed direct costs that may be added to your budget for indirect expenses:

- Option 1: If your organization has obtained a federally Negotiated Indirect Cost Rate Agreement (NICRA), you may budget for indirect costs at your current NICRA rate. Your current NICRA must be submitted with your application.
- Option 2: If your organization has never had a NICRA, you may budget for indirects at 10% of allowable direct costs.

Example: Your organization does not have a NICRA, and the Total Direct Charges in your proposed NFF project budget are \$15,600.00. You may add 10%, or \$1,560, to your budget to cover organizational indirect expenses. Therefore, your total NFF grant request will be for \$17,160.00.

Grand Total	\$40,654.62	\$45,623.38	\$14,900.00	\$49,500.00	\$150,678.00		
Automatically-Calculated Indirect	t Rates:						
Rate	10.00%	15.00%	0.00%	0.00%	6.84%		
Part II: Details on Matchin	g Contributions	(REQUIRED)					
List each non-federal funding :     Separate cash funding from in		t is contributing to the proje	ct, and whether it is commi	tted or anticipated.			
Sources of Non-Federal C	Contributions	(i) Non-Federal	Cash Funding	(ii) Non-Federal In-Kind Contributions			
(Example: "ABC Foundation" or "l	Individual Donors")	Amount	% Committed	Amount	% Committed		
Trees for Life Four	ndation	\$ 19,000.00	100%	\$ -			
Individual Donors - Project-spe	ecific contributions	\$ 5,000.00	25%	\$ -			
Unrestricted Donations from n	onfederal sources	\$ 6,623.38	100%	\$			
Smith Family Four	ndation	\$ 15,000.00	0%	\$			
Volunteer tim	ie	\$ -		\$ 10,000.00	0		
Cater 4U - Donated	lunches	\$ -		\$ 400.00	100		
WeRent - Donated do	ozer rental	\$ -		\$ 4,500.00	100		
		\$ -		\$ -			
		\$ -		\$ -			
	Total	\$ 45,623.38		\$ 14,900.00			

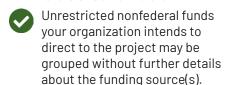
# Sources of Nonfederal Contributions

Use this column to list each nonfederal entity our group of donors that is contributing funding or donating items to make the proposed project possible.



Be specific about the name of the entity to make it clear that the source is nonfederal funding.

**Example:** List "California Forest Improvement Program grant" not "State of California Grant"



**Example:** List "Individual Donors" not "Julio Mendez and Jane Brown"

- Do not list sources of funding that will be received by any organization other than your own.
- Do not include sources of federal contributions.



## **Match Commitment**

**Amount:** Use these columns to provide details about the amount of funding or value of donated items from each source that will be directed to the proposed project budget.

The total of these columns should match the totals in your Part I budget columns for (i) Non-Federal Cash Funding and (ii) Non-Federal In-Kind Contributions.

% **Committed** Use these columns to indicate how much of the budgeted amount has been received or formally committed at the time of application to the NFF.



**Use 100**% to indicate funding that has been received and is in the bank, or for funding that are certain to receive because you have a documented commitment with the funder.

**Example:** A grant that has been received and is deposited in the bank.

**Example:** A grant that you are certain you will receive because you have a documented commitment from the funder (award letter or signed agreement).



Use 0% to indicate funding that is pending.

**Example:** A grant application that has been submitted but you have not yet heard whether it will be funded.

**Example:** Income from a fundraiser you expect to hold later in the year.



**Use 1-99**% to indicate how much of the budgeted amount has been received at time of application.

**Example:** Use 25% committed if you have already raised a quarter of the donations from individual donors you intend to contribute to the project, but still need to fundraise for the remaining 75%.

Organization: Forests Need Trees

Proposed Project: Volunteer Tree Planting Series on the Daniel Boone
National Forest

## Part I: Proposed Project Budget (REQUIRED)

	(1)	(2) Project (	(3)		
	NFF-Funded	(i)	(ii)	(iii)	Total
	Portion of Project	Non-Federal	Non-Federal	Federal	Project
Expense Categories:	Budget	Cash Funding	In-Kind Contributions	Contributions	Value
Personnel	\$20,000.00	\$10,000.00	\$10,000.00	\$25,000.00	\$65,000.00
Fringe Benefits	\$6,700.00	\$3,350.00	\$0.00		\$10,050.00
Travel	\$258.75	\$172.50	\$0.00	\$4,000.00	\$4,431.25
Equipment	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
Supplies	\$5,000.00	\$900.00	\$4,900.00	\$500.00	\$11,300.00
Contractual	\$5,000.00	\$25,000.00	\$0.00	\$20,000.00	\$50,000.00
Other	\$0.00	\$250.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$250.00
Total Direct Expenses	\$36,958.75	\$39,672.50	\$14,900.00	\$49,500.00	\$141,031.25
Indirect Expenses	\$3,695.87	\$5,950.88	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$9,646.75
Grand Total	\$40,654.62	\$45,623.38	\$14,900.00	\$49,500.00	\$150,678.00
Automatically-Calculated I	ndirect Rates:				
Rate	10.00%	15.00%	0.00%	0.00%	6.84%

## Part II: Details on Matching Contributions (REQUIRED)

- List each non-federal funding source, the amount it is contributing to the project, and whether it is committed or anticipated.
- Separate cash funding from in-kind contributions.

Sources of Non-Federal Contributions	(i) Non-Federa	l Cash Funding	(ii) Non-Federal In-Kind Contributions		
(Example: "ABC Foundation" or "Individual Donors")	Amount	% Committed	Amount	% Committed	
Trees for Life Foundation	\$ 19,000.00	100%	\$ -		
Individual Donors - Project-specific contributions	\$ 5,000.00	25%	\$ -		
Unrestricted Donations from nonfederal sources	\$ 6,623.38	100%	\$ -		
Smith Family Foundation	\$ 15,000.00	0%	\$ -		
Volunteer time	\$		\$ 10,000.00	0	
Cater 4U - Donated lunches	\$		\$ 400.00	100	
WeRent - Donated dozer rental	\$		\$ 4,500.00	100	
	\$		\$ -		
	\$ -		\$ -		
Total	\$ 45,623.38		\$ 14,900.00		

		(1)	(2) Project Contributions from Non-NFF Sources					(3)		
	ı	FF-Funded Portion of		(i) on-Federal ish Funding	N	(ii) on-Federal In-Kind	(iii) Federal Contributions		Total Project	
Expense Categories:	Pro	oject Budget	Ca	ish runding	Co	ntributions	Co	ntributions		Value
Personnel										
Position*Rate*Time										
Executive Director - \$60k annual salary *										
15% time on project Program Manager - \$50k annual salary *	\$	6,000.00	\$	3,000.00					\$	9,000.00
30% time on project  Volunteer Coordinator - \$15/hr * 400 hrs	\$	10,000.00	\$	5,000.00					\$	15,000.00
Volunteers - National rate \$25/hr * 400 hrs	\$	4,000.00	\$	2,000.00	Φ.	40.000.00			\$	6,000.00
Forest Service Staff estimated in-kind time			-		\$	10,000.00	\$	25,000.00	\$	10,000.00 25,000.00
Subtotal	\$	20,000.00	\$	10,000.00	\$	10,000.00	\$	25,000.00	\$	65,000.00
Fringe Benefits	Ť		Ť	10,000100	Ť	,	Ť		•	
Position*Rate*Time  Executive DIrector * 33.5% benefits rate	Φ.	2.040.00	<b>Φ</b>	4.005.00	ı				•	2.045.00
Program Manager * 33.5% benefits rate	\$	2,010.00 3,350.00	\$	1,005.00					\$	3,015.00
Volunteer Coordinator * 33.5% benefits	Ф	3,350.00	Ф	1,675.00					\$	5,025.00
rate	\$	1,340.00	\$	670.00					\$	2,010.00
Subtotal	\$	6,700.00	\$	3,350.00	\$	-	\$	-	\$	10,050.00
Travel #People*#Trips*Perdiem/Mileage										
1 van * 5 trips * 150 miles each * \$.575		050.75	_	470.50						2424.27
federal mileage rate Forest Service Staff travel	\$	258.75	\$	172.50			\$	4,000.00	\$	431.25
1 Grest Gervioe Gtair traver							Ψ	4,000.00	\$	4,000.00
Subtotal	\$	258.75	\$	172.50	\$		\$	4,000.00	\$	4,431.25
Equipment										
Type*Qty*Cost										
									\$	-
									\$	
Subtotal	\$	-	\$		\$	-	\$		<u>\$</u>	
Supplies	Ť		-				Ψ		_	
Type*Qty*Cost										
PPE sets for volunteers - 40 * \$15ea			\$	600.00					\$	600.00
Trees - 5000 * \$1ea	\$	5,000.00							\$	5,000.00
Shovels - 25 * \$7ea			\$	175.00						
Dozer rental - 5 days * \$900/day					\$	4,500.00				
Lunches \$10ea * 40 volunteers					\$	400.00				
Printing Recruitment Materials			\$	125.00						
Materials for site prep Subtotal	•		_	222.22		4 000 00	\$	500.00	\$	500.00
	\$	5,000.00	\$	900.00	\$	4,900.00	\$	500.00	\$	11,300.00
Contractual Individual Contract										
TreesRUs Youth Corps - \$10k/wk * 5 wks	\$	5,000.00	\$	25,000.00	Π		\$	20,000.00	\$	50,000.00
тементи сетре фтемент с пис	Ψ	0,000.00	Ψ	20,000.00			Ψ	20,000.00	\$	-
									\$	-
Subtotal	\$	5,000.00	\$	25,000.00	\$	-	\$	20,000.00	\$	50,000.00
Other Type*Qty*Cost										
Incentives for elementry school			_						_	
participation - 50 prizes costing \$5ea			\$	250.00					\$ \$	250.00
									\$	-
Subtotal	\$	-	\$	250.00	\$	-	\$	-	\$	250.00
Total Direct Expenses	\$	36,958.75	\$	39,672.50	\$	14,900.00	\$	49,500.00	\$	141,031.25
Indirect Expenses					ı					
At Federally Negotiated Indirect Rate or up		0% of Modified	l Tota	al Direct Costs						
Total Indirects	\$	3,695.87	\$	5,950.88	\$	-	\$	-	\$	9,646.75

45,623.38 \$

14,900.00 \$

49,500.00

150,678.00

40,654.62 \$

Grand Total