

MAKING A
GREAT
PLACE



Nature in Neighborhoods conservation education grants full application handbook

Application accepted by invitation only

Application due 4 p.m., Friday, March 17, 2015

Grant workshop, 5:30 to 7 p.m., March 4, 2015

Revised February 2015

About Metro

Clean air and clean water do not stop at city limits or county lines. Neither does the need for jobs, a thriving economy, and sustainable transportation and living choices for people and businesses in the region. Voters have asked Metro to help with the challenges and opportunities that affect the 25 cities and three counties in the Portland metropolitan area.

A regional approach simply makes sense when it comes to providing services, operating venues and making decisions about how the region grows. Metro works with communities to support a resilient economy, keep nature close by and respond to a changing climate. Together we're making a great place, now and for generations to come.

Stay in touch with news, stories and things to do.

www.oregonmetro.gov/connect

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Public Information

All applications are subject to the Oregon Public Records Law.

Translation Services

Translation and interpretive services are available upon request at no cost to you. For more information, contact Crista Gardner at 503-797-1627 or crista.gardner@oregonmetro.gov.

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SECTION 1: CONSERVATION EDUCATION GRANTS

For nearly two decades, Metro has provided grants for habitat restoration, conservation education and other projects that connect people to nature close to home. Funding for Nature in Neighborhoods community grants more than doubled thanks to voter approval in 2013 of Metro's 5-year local option levy. The levy includes approximately \$3.7 million for grants focused in three areas: conservation education (\$1.6 million), restoration (\$1.6 million), and regional trails implementation (\$500,000).

Funding for 2015 conservation education grants is set at \$700,000 in total. Small grants have a maximum of \$25,000 and larger grants have a maximum of \$100,000. The final round of conservation education grants will be awarded in 2016.

Who may apply?

Individuals, community groups, businesses, neighborhoods, nonprofits, schools and school groups, government agencies, faith groups and service groups with nonprofit or other tax-exempt status may apply. Metro is not eligible to apply for or receive grant funds.

Conservation education grants are intended to serve people of all ages and abilities from all backgrounds. This includes funding for programs serving school-aged children to the elderly, job training and life skills for youth, and outreach and engagement programs for residents from around the region. Organizations are encouraged to submit applications for programs or projects that engage the underserved, low-income and/or communities of color, in program implementation, program delivery and outreach activities.

Nature in Neighborhood grants support partnerships. Successful applications typically feature multiple partners actively engaged in leveraging financial or in-kind services in order to make the program a success. Partnerships can maximize inclusiveness and lead to creative approaches that address multiple social, economic and ecological needs of the community.

Minimum qualifications

Program

- Programs must address at least one of the program goals.
- Programs require at least three partners. Applicants may partner in multiple grant applications.
- After being awarded the grant, programs must be completed within 24 months for small grants (up to \$25,000) and within 36 months for larger grants (up to \$100,000).

Financial

- Programs require a 1:1 match. The match should come from other funds and/or in-kind contribution(s) of materials, services or volunteer assistance.
- First year funding match must be secured at time of final application; funding match for additional years must be identified at time of final application. Funding from other grants managed through Metro cannot be applied towards match.
- Overhead costs are reimbursable up to 10 percent of the total grant award and as match up to 10 percent of the total program cost.

Location

- Programs must take place within Metro’s jurisdictional boundary, the Metro urban growth boundary, or directly serve Metro-area residents.
- Programs may be conducted on Metro property by other eligible organizations or individuals by obtaining a Metro [special use permit](#).
- Programs on private land must be able to show a clear public and environmental benefit.
- All programs must have written landowner permission at the time of full application.

APPLICATION PROCESS

Application review and selection

Full applications will only be accepted from applicants who have been invited to apply following the pre-application review. The application process is a two-stage process including a pre-application phase and an application phase. Following the review of pre-applications by the grant review committee, Metro will invite selected programs to submit a full application. The Metro Council will review and approve the final list of programs recommended for funding.

A team of Metro staff and other individuals with backgrounds in conservation education, program evaluation, philanthropy, grant management, fundraising, community partnership development and volunteer management will review applications and make funding recommendations. The Metro Council makes all grant awards. Applications will be evaluated based on the information submitted, responsiveness to the program’s purpose, categories and goals, the application evaluation criteria, and the review committee’s professional and collective judgment.

Program purpose, categories and goals

All applications must clearly meet the grant program’s purpose and fit one or more of the grant program’s categories and goals. See the glossary and resources section of this document for more information on the below referenced documents and terminology.

Purpose

Conservation education grants support and create partnerships in local communities that improve water quality, fish and wildlife habitat and connect people with nature.

Goals

Connecting people with nature

- Improve the ability of all communities, including underserved communities (e.g. low-income, communities of color), to learn about, help restore, experience and connect with nature and the region’s natural areas.
- Increase capacity within organizations to lead educational and culturally relevant conservation education programming in local parks and natural areas.
- Help diversify the conservation movement; support organizations providing conservation education programming to low-income people and people of color.

- Support new partnerships and programs that connect people of all ages and all backgrounds with nature close to home.

Environmental literacy

- Increase access to hands-on and place-based nature education and programs for school-aged children in local natural areas, with a special emphasis on underserved communities (e.g. low-income, communities of color).
- Integrate environmental education with formal, school-based learning and implement the Oregon Environmental Literacy Plan.
- Support residents of all ages becoming scientifically and ecologically literate, inspired with curiosity and motivated by their knowledge from around the region.
- Connect and teach people about their watershed and watershed health.
- Support community engagement and conservation education programs that include hands-on restoration activities, such as improving fish and wildlife habitat in local communities.
- Support region-wide conservation education initiatives, such as the Intertwine initiatives, Oregon Environmental Literacy Plan, or the Portland Metro STEM Partnership.

Develop conservation leaders

- Equip participants to become conservation leaders in their communities.
- Build longer-term relationships with program participants to extend learning and continued leadership development.
- Support mentorship, youth corps and job skill development or otherwise prepare participants for continuing careers and/or higher education in natural resources, conservation education or other related fields.
- Support participation by local residents in local scientific studies, research and monitoring of water quality and fish and wildlife habitat.

WHAT'S THE TIMELINE?

October 1, 2014	Availability of grant funds announced
November 5, 2014	Conservation Education grant workshop
January 13, 2015, 4 p.m.	Conservation Education pre-applications due to Metro
February 2015	Successful pre-applications invited to submit full applications
March 4, 2015	Full application grant workshop
4 p.m. March 17, 2015	Final applications due to Metro
May 2015	Grant awards announced
July 2015	Metro funds available

CONTACTS

For more information, visit www.oregonmetro.gov/grants or contact:

Heather Nelson Kent, Grants Program Manager, heathernelson.kent@oregonmetro.gov, 503-797-1739

Crista Gardner, Grants Coordinator, crista.gardner@oregonmetro.gov, 503-797-1627

SECTION 2: APPLICATION GUIDELINES

Full applications will be accepted only from applicants who have been invited to apply following the pre-application review. Feedback from the grant review committee about how well the pre-application meets the program eligibility criteria, purpose, categories and goals may be provided.

The grant review committee will use the combination of the pre-application and full application as the primary basis to determine funding eligibility. It is the responsibility of the applicant to ensure their program is sufficiently defined according to the guidelines so that the review committee can efficiently review the application. Application review may include follow-up communication with the applicant.

Metro will inform grant applicants if the grant application was successful. Upon request, information about other funding sources or suggestions for strengthening an application for a subsequent funding cycle may be provided.

FULL APPLICATION INSTRUCTIONS

The application shall be written on 8½ x 11" paper, one inch margins, double-sided and with a font size no smaller than 11 point.

Pre-application materials

Please submit the information you prepared for the pre-application, including **organizational preparedness** (one page maximum), **program description** (two pages maximum), and **location and program reach** (two pages maximum). Applicants may revise the pre-application materials based on feedback from the review committee or updated program information.

Full application attachments

Please submit the following additional attachments to support, expand on and provide additional detail about the program as described in the organizational preparedness, program description and location and program reach sections.

Letters of support (three letters minimum). Please provide three letters of support by active partners which strengthen the project narrative and describe the role of that partner.

Organizational preparedness (two pages maximum). Please provide the 501(c)(3) tax-exempt status statement or your organization's 501(c)(3) IRS determination letter (if applicant is not a school or government agency) and a letter stating permission to use property by land owner or manager if applicable to your program.

Budget (two pages maximum). Please provide a detailed program budget, including revenues and expenditures, which directly relates to the program narrative in your pre-application. Please use the budget narrative to explain how your figures are calculated.

Evaluation outcomes report and activity plan (two pages maximum). Please provide clear evaluation outcomes, activity plan, and schedule. The evaluation outcomes report and activity plan tells the story of what will be accomplished and documented at the end of the project or program. This information should directly relate to the program goals and purpose stated in your pre-application.

Submitting the application. Digital submission is preferred. Please package the application into one file. Submit one Word version and one PDF version. Please email the two documents to: NaturalAreasGrants@oregonmetro.gov by **4 p.m., March 17, 2015.**

A confirmation email will be sent when the application is received. If you do not receive a confirmation, please contact Crista Gardner.

FULL APPLICATION EVALUATION CRITERIA

Applications will be evaluated based on the information submitted in the combined pre-application and full application, the stated evaluation criteria, and the review committee's professional and collective judgment. The application should make a convincing case that the program meets the purpose of the grant program and is achievable.

Grant applications will be ranked according to how well they meet the following evaluation criteria from the pre-application and the full application:

Qualified program

Organization, program and contact information: Meets the minimum qualifications of three partnerships, 1:1 match and program location.

Organizational preparedness: Demonstrates leadership interest, capability of the applicant and key partners and landowner permission to implement the program.

Well-crafted program

Program narrative: Describes clearly and concisely a well-crafted program and its budget.

Goals: Meets the overall grants purpose and goals (page 2). Explains how the outcomes reported will be used to tell the story and illustrate how the project achieved its goals.

Partnerships: Demonstrates active and committed partnerships and clearly describes the role and responsibility of each of the key project partners.

Location: The full slate of awarded programs reaches communities from around the region.

Program reach: The full slate of awarded programs helps diversify the conservation movement.

CONTRACTING AND AGREEMENTS

If the Metro Council approves funding, Metro staff will work with the successful applicant to enter into the necessary agreements for the project or program between Metro and the applicant. The applicant will have up to 36 months from the time these agreements are signed to complete the project or program. Funding is available on a reimbursement basis only. Once a reimbursement request is complete, Metro will pay within 30 days.

Applicants who receive funding shall enter into a contractual agreement with Metro that specifies legal and contractual obligations, including insurance requirements and the use of a fiscal agent. Funds may not be pre-committed prior to a completed and signed contractual agreement. Grant project or programs are subject to Metro audits and reviews. Metro and the Nature in Neighborhoods program shall be acknowledged as grant sponsors on any written or published material, grant product and/or project or program signage.

New grant recipients are required to attend the Metro-sponsored “contracting basics” meeting prior to executing the contract. Applicant must be making reasonable progress towards the project or program goals and objectives within the first six months of award. A final evaluation report will be due upon project or program completion. Metro shall receive any grant products including but not limited to curriculum, videos, guides and brochures upon request.

SECTION 3: APPLICATION FORM

A. Organization, project and contact information (two pages maximum)

Please complete the organization, project and contact information below using no more than two pages.

Date of application	
Organization	
Website	
Program contact	
Name	
Title	
Phone	
Email	
Mailing address	
Fiscal agent If different than the lead organization.	
Fiscal agent contact	
Name	
Title	
Phone	
Email	
Mailing address	
Program partners Committed partner organizations.	
Potential partners Potential partner organizations.	
Program title	
Program summary Provide a 20-45-word summary that describes your program.	

Program length Select only one.	<input type="checkbox"/> One year <input type="checkbox"/> Up to two years <input type="checkbox"/> Up to three years
Site addresses Provide addresses of all known locations for educational activities.	
Estimated funding	Estimated amount requested: \$ Estimated match funds: \$ Estimated in-kind match: \$ Estimated total program budget: \$

B. Attachments

Please attach the following documents.

Pre-application materials (updated or revised, as necessary)

- Organizational preparedness (maximum one page)
- Program description: narrative, goals, partnerships (maximum two pages)
- Location and program reach (maximum two pages)

Attachments

- Organization 501(c)(3) IRS determination letter, if applicant is not a school or government agency, or the following 501(c)(3) tax-exempt status statement (maximum one page)

“I certify that the above information is correct and that I am authorized by the governing board of this organization to submit this grant application to Metro. Further, I certify that this organization is in good standing with the IRS and retains its official 501(c)(3) tax-exempt status and is further classified as public charity and *not* a private foundation OR qualifies for exempt status as a public school, government agency, or religious institution.” *Signed by the executive director or board member.*

- Letter stating permission to use property by land owner or manager, if applicable (maximum one page)
- Three letters of support by active partners (minimum three letters)
- Program budget worksheet and narrative (see page 10) (maximum two pages)
- Evaluation outcomes report and activity plan (see page 11) (maximum two pages)

C. Program Budget Worksheet and Narrative (two pages maximum)

Please describe the program budget and complete the budget chart below. Be as specific as possible.

BUDGET NARRATIVE

Please describe the program budget, including revenues and expenditures, which directly relates to your program narrative. Provide explanation of how figures were derived; describe personal and/or professional services costs (name of individual or company, rate, # of hours, etc.) and any other relevant information. Describe matching sources; list contributors and amounts. In order to qualify for Nature in Neighborhoods funding, you must have at a minimum the first year program contributions secured at time of full application.

BUDGET CHART

Activity	Amount requested			Match funds Year 1 must be secured			In-kind match	Total program budget
	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3		
Personal services List salaries and administration costs								
Volunteer labor Calculate at \$22.55/hour								
Professional services List activity and amount								
Materials & supplies List items, quantities, prices								
Transportation costs Please itemize								
Indirect or overhead costs¹ E.g. utilities, rent, telephone, fiscal administration								
Other Please describe								
Total								

¹ Only for expenses directly related to program. Costs are reimbursable up to 10 percent of total award; match up to 10 percent of total program cost

D. Evaluation Outcomes Report and Activities Plan (two pages maximum)

Please describe the program evaluation outcomes and complete the evaluation measures chart below.

Reporting how well community grants met their purpose and delivered on the intended outcomes will strengthen accountability with voters and the larger community in the Metro area. Therefore, Grantees will submit program progress reports every six months and a final outcomes report will be due upon program completion. The final outcomes report will include a summary of grant activities, the actual total budget and in-kind matching contributions, photos, follow-up activities, and an evaluation of the program, including a descriptive qualitative story and quantitative evaluation measures.

EVALUATION OUTCOMES AND ACTIVITIES PLAN NARRATIVE

Please describe here the outcomes you will report for your program, according to the overall purpose, categories and goals established for Metro's Nature in Neighborhoods conservation education grants.

- What stories do you hope to be able to tell about your program's success?
- How do you plan to overcome any challenges?
- What will you measure to illustrate the success of your program?
- How will you use the information to improve your work in the future?

EVALUATION OUTCOMES AND ACTIVITIES PLAN CHART

Please delete the instructions below and list here the quantitative and qualitative measures to be reported in the final outcomes report.

Goals	How will you know when you have been successful in fulfilling the Nature in Neighborhood goals and met your organization's goals?
Outcomes	<i>What do you hope to accomplish?</i>
Program reach	<i>Who is your target audience? (include demographic information about participants like age, race and ethnicity and socio-economic status)</i> <i>How many program participants do you expect to serve?</i>
Data collection method	<i>How will you gather the information necessary to know whether your program was successful?</i>

Activities Plan & Schedule

Activities	<i>What are your primary program activities?</i> <i>How many of each do you expect to complete? Be as specific as possible.</i>
Schedule or Timeline	<i>What is the schedule and timeline for your activities?</i>

SAMPLE EVALUATION MEASURES

For your reference, shown below are **sample evaluation measures** you might use for each of the grant funding categories and goals. Please develop your own evaluation measures based on your specific program.

Purpose: Conservation education grants support and create partnerships in local communities that improve water quality, fish and wildlife habitat and connect people with nature.

Goals **Connecting people with nature**

Improve the ability of all communities, including underserved communities (e.g. low-income, communities of color), to learn about, help restore, experience and connect with nature and the region's natural areas.

Increase capacity within organizations to lead educational and culturally relevant conservation education programming in local parks and natural areas

Help diversify the conservation movement; support organizations providing conservation education programming to low-income people and people of color.

Support new partnerships and programs that connect people of all ages and all backgrounds with nature close to home.

Environmental literacy

Increase access to hands-on and place-based nature education and programs for school-aged children in local natural areas, with a special emphasis on underserved communities (e.g. low-income, communities of color).

Integrate environmental education with formal, school-based learning and implement the Oregon Environmental Literacy Plan.

Support residents of all ages becoming scientifically and ecologically literate, inspired with curiosity and motivated by their knowledge from around the region.

Connect and teach people about their watershed and watershed health.

Support community engagement and conservation education programs that include hands-on restoration activities, such as improving fish and wildlife habitat in local communities.

Support region-wide conservation education initiatives, such as the Intertwine initiatives, Oregon Environmental Literacy Plan, or the Portland Metro STEM Partnership.

Develop conservation leaders

Equip participants to become conservation leaders in their communities.

Build longer-term relationships with program participants to extend learning and continued leadership development.

Support mentorship, youth corps and job skill development or otherwise prepare participants for continuing careers and/or higher education in natural resources, conservation education or other related fields.

Support participation by local residents in local scientific studies, research and monitoring of water quality and fish and wildlife habitat.

Outcomes	Partnerships with community-based organizations serving diverse audiences strengthened	
	Organizational capacity for conservation education increased	
	Capacity of organizations to accomplish their missions increased	
	Ability to lead programs (e.g. service learning, stewardship) promoting sustainability in schools and communities increased	
	Ability of teachers to align and integrate effective experiential, outdoor focused, place-based and inquiry-based learning into the curriculum increased	
	Institutional and/or organizational support for effective experiential, outdoor focused, place-based and inquiry-based learning increased	
	Numbers of participants in multiple programs or multi day programs	
	Participant environmental literacy knowledge and skills increased	
	Specific college and career readiness skills demonstrated	
	Understanding of natural systems and how humans are interconnected to these systems increased	
	Appreciation of the natural world and human relationships to it, especially in the Pacific Northwest increased	
	Percentage of participants who view themselves as conservation leaders within their communities increased.	
Program reach	New communities and/or community organizations participating in conservation education programs	
	Resources to advance conservation education leveraged or increased	
	Participant numbers	
	Demographic diversity of education program participants and/or volunteers	
	Contact hours (number of participants * hours * student/teacher ratio = contact hours)	
	Number of first-time schools and/or teachers participating in conservation education programs.	
Data collection method	New or expanded partnership agreements	Registration records
	New or expanded programming	Surveys
	New, renewed, ongoing or increased funding support	Pre- and post-surveys
	Recruitment, participation of new leaders	Anecdotes
	Development of new partnerships	Observation.
		Partner feedback
		Partner assessments
Activities Plan & Schedule	Classroom workshop	Capacity building workshop
	Natural areas field trip	Training
	Outreach tool development (e.g. website)	

GLOSSARY

Conservation education helps people of all ages understand and appreciate our natural resources and how to conserve those resources for future generations. Through structured educational experiences and activities targeted to varying age groups and populations, conservation education enables people to realize how natural resources and ecosystems affect each other and how resources can be used wisely (Intertwine Conservation Education Task Force).

Environmental education refers to organized efforts to teach about how natural environments function and, particularly, how human beings can manage their behavior and ecosystems in order to live sustainably. In practice, “environmental education” is usually used interchangeably with “sustainability education.” The state and national conversation is more focused on environmental/sustainability education than on conservation education (Intertwine Conservation Education Task Force).

Environmental literacy is an individual’s understanding, skills and motivation to make responsible decisions that consider his or her relationships to natural systems, communities and future generations (The Oregon Environmental Literacy Plan). Environmental Literacy encompasses the following dispositions and skills: (a) ecological knowledge; (b) verbal commitment; (c) actual commitment, or environmental behavior; (d) environmental sensitivity; (e) issue identification and issue analysis skills; and (f) action planning (Intertwine Conservation Education Task Force).

Stewardship is the responsible use (including conservation) of natural resources in a way that takes full and balanced account of the interests of society, future generations and other species, as well as of private needs, and accepts significant answerability to society (Intertwine Conservation Education Task Force).

Place and community-based education is an approach to teaching and learning that starts with the local community. It addresses two critical gaps in the experience of many children now growing up in the United States: contact with the natural world and contact with community. It offers a way to extend young people’s attention beyond the classroom to the world as it actually is, and to engage them in the process of devising solutions to the social and environmental problems they will confront as adults. By doing so, this distinct curricular approach can increase students’ engagement with learning and enhance their academic achievement (The Oregon Environmental Literacy Plan).

RESOURCES

Below are list of documents, maps and tools to assist with program research.

[The Oregon Environmental Literacy Plan](#): The Oregon Environmental Literacy Plan targets integration of conservation and environmental education into science, technology, engineering and math curriculum. The Oregon Environmental Literacy Aligning the Oregon Environmental Literacy Strands & the Academic Standards delineates specific curriculum adjustments to integrate environmental education into academic standards. www.ode.state.or.us/gradelevel/hs/oregon-environmental-literacy-plan.pdf; <http://eeao.org/>

[The Intertwine Conservation Education Task Force](#): The Intertwine outlines efforts to broaden regional collaboration and system building, tools to more effectively reach new and diverse audiences and address gaps in program delivery, and establish a clearinghouse of opportunities, research and resources for conservation education providers and users. www.theintertwine.org

[Portland Metro STEM Partnership](#): A regional collaboration of public and private organizations addressing a shared goal of transforming science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) education for K-12 students. www.pdxstem.org

[Diversifying the American Environmental Movement](#): As the nation continues to diversify, the environmental movement is left with one of the greatest challenges it will face this century. In order to become an influential and sustainable movement for generations to come, it needs to successfully address its diversity crisis. In this essay, the authors, Marcelo Bonta and Charles Jordan, analyze the problem, acknowledge past and current diversity efforts, provide a comprehensive and strategic approach to diversifying, and stress the importance of diversifying in the right way. They provide action-oriented solutions at the movement, organizational and individual levels. www.environmentaldiversity.org

[It's Our Nature outdoor immersion series](#): Metro offers a year-long field trip series for adults to immerse themselves in the region's natural areas and learn about natural history topics including geology, tracking, birding and ethnobotany. www.oregonmetro.gov

MAPPING RESOURCES

Below are list of mapping resources to assist in program development.

Regional Conservation Strategy viewer: The viewer provides easy access to the data for those without GIS capacity to view and obtain some quick summary statistics about land cover, high value habitat, and protected areas. The full Regional Conservation Strategy documents, GIS data, and modeled outputs are available for download and are an incredibly rich information resource.

<http://www.regionalconservationstrategy.org/site/viewer>

Regional Equity Atlas: Using maps, policy analysis, community-based research and other tools, the Equity Atlas project assesses how well different populations across the four-county Portland-Vancouver metro region can access key resources necessary for meeting their basic needs and advancing their health and well-being. By illuminating the region's geography of opportunity, the Equity Atlas is a powerful tool for promoting greater [regional equity](#). It can be used to inform a wide range of planning, policy and investment decisions, such as where to locate new housing, transit, parks, services, infrastructure and other amenities, and where to most effectively target public and private investments. <https://gis.oregonmetro.gov/equityAtlas/>

MetroMap: This is Metro's web mapping service where you can view and print maps or data specific to your area of interest. MetroMap allows you to view map-based information about a location of your choice. View information on parcel and tax assessment, zoning, political boundaries, planning, flood plain and special districts. The results can be displayed in text-only format or on a map. <https://gis.oregonmetro.gov/metromap/>

Urban Growth Boundary tool: Enter an address to see a map that shows whether a specific property is inside, was added to, or removed from the urban growth boundary. <http://gis.oregonmetro.gov/LookupTools/UGB/>

Portland comprehensive plan app: The City of Portland is updating its Comprehensive Plan, a long-range 20-year plan that sets the framework for the physical development of the city. To do so, Portland has created a mapping tool to view demographic, parks, natural resources, etc. www.portlandbps.com/gis/cpmapp/

School districts: One source of local demographic data is the neighborhood schools. Each public school maintains data on the percentage of students eligible for the free and reduced lunch program and students participating in English as a Second Language programs. Demographic statistics on schools can be found in the National Center for Education Statistics, Common Core of Data (CCD): <http://nces.ed.gov/ccd/index.asp>