

MAKING A
GREAT
PLACE



Nature in Neighborhoods conservation education grants pre-application handbook

Revised September 2014

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.

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Metro respects civil rights

Metro fully complies with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 that bans discrimination on the basis of race, color or national origin. For information on Metro's civil rights program, or to obtain a discrimination complaint form, visit www.oregonmetro.gov/civilrights or call 503-797-1536.

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 has more than doubled thanks to voter approval of Metro's 5-year local option levy in 2013. 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, projects 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

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

The application process is a two-stage process including a pre-application phase and a full application phase. Potential applicants must submit a pre-application describing the proposed program and how it meets the eligibility requirements. Full applications will only be accepted from applicants who have been invited to apply. 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.

Program purpose and goals

All applications must clearly meet the grant program’s purpose and fit one or more of the grant program’s 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.

Interested in reviewing grants?

Submit an interest form beginning in fall 2014. People with backgrounds in restoration, conservation education, program evaluation, philanthropy, grant management, fundraising, community partnership development and volunteer management are needed to review grant applications and make funding recommendations. Grant reviewers must disclose any conflicts of interest.

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 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 or 503-797-1739

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

SECTION 2: PRE-APPLICATION GUIDELINES AND EVALUATION

Potential applicants must submit a pre-application describing their proposed program. Metro staff and the grant review committee will use the pre-application as the primary basis to determine funding eligibility and to provide feedback on how the grant can best meet the Conservation Education grant program purpose and goals. Pre-application review may include follow-up communication with the applicant. 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 pre-application.

Successful applicants will be invited to submit a full application. Applicants who do not receive an invitation to submit a full application will be notified by Metro. Feedback from the grant review committee about how well the pre-application meets the program eligibility criteria, purpose, and goals may be provided. Upon request, information about other funding sources or suggestions for strengthening an application for a subsequent funding cycle may be provided.

Full applications will be accepted only from applicants who have been invited to apply following the pre-application process.

Pre-application Instructions

Organization, program, and contact information (one page maximum). Please provide organizational and contact information. Provide a preliminary budget estimate, including the total program cost, the requested funding and match. A 1:1 funding match is required. In-kind services, donations of materials and volunteer time can all be counted as match. The 20-45 word program summary serves as a short, stand-alone description of the program to be used to inform people who will not be reading the full application.

Statement of organizational preparedness (one page maximum). The statement should detail the organization's experience and capacity to conduct the program. It should also demonstrate approval from the governing body or management of the organization and/or permission by the landowner.

Program description (two pages maximum). The program description should make a convincing case that the application meets the intent of the grant program and explain how it supports the organization's strategic plan or mission. Information should be presented in a manner that is clear and concise. Please include a program narrative specifying how the program meets the grant program's purpose and goals (see page 3) and includes active partnerships. The program narrative shall be no more than two pages written on 8 ½ x 11" paper, using one inch margins, double-sided and with a font size no smaller than 11 point.

Location and program reach (two pages maximum). Provide a location/vicinity map that shows where programming will take place and/or where participating communities are located within the region. Describe the demographics, any unique characteristics, and from where in the region (e.g. city, school district, school boundaries, neighborhood) the program plans to recruit or engage

participants. Several mapping resources are available to assist you, including the [Regional Conservation Strategy viewer](#), [Regional Equity Atlas](#), [MetroMap](#), and [Urban Growth Boundary tool](#). See the resources section of this document for more information.

Submitting the pre-application. Digital submission is preferred. Please package the pre-application into one form. Please submit one Word version and one PDF version. Please email the two documents to: Crista Gardner, Grants Coordinator, NaturalAreasGrants@oregonmetro.gov. A confirmation email will be sent when the application is received. If you do not receive a confirmation, please let Crista Gardner know.

Pre-application evaluation criteria

Pre-applications will be evaluated based on the information submitted, the stated evaluation criteria, and the review committee's professional and collective judgment. The pre-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:

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, organizational capability and landowner permission to implement the program.

Well-crafted program

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

Goals: Meets the overall program purpose and directly addresses one or more of the grant program goals.

Partnerships: Demonstrates strong and active partnerships.

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.

Applying the evaluation criteria to the 2015 grant cycle

In 2014, Metro received many strong conservation education grant proposals. In making a recommendation to the Metro Council, the review committee considered the quality of individual proposals and how the proposals fit together as a whole package of grants. They recommended funding strong, proven programs, important new entrants to the field with the potential to provide culturally relevant conservation education programs and opportunities to build capacity for the sector as a whole.

The most compelling proposals had well-organized narratives, detailed budgets, clear goals and outcomes, strong partnerships (or strong commitments between new partners), program delivery depth, and/or ties to a larger framework, such as Next Generation Science standards. Proposals that focused on providing underserved communities environmental education programming were most compelling if applicants or active partners were from the community being served.

In the upcoming 2015 grant cycle, many of these same aspects will again be important to grant reviewers. However, please note that the grant evaluation criteria have changed slightly this year. The criteria reflect Metro's desire to focus more on program delivery. This includes broadening the reach of funded conservation education programs demographically and geographically, expanding nature education and access opportunities for diverse audiences and attention to cost/benefits per participant.

Community gardens with strong natural resource and/or water quality education curriculum will be considered but, in general, programs focused on food and/or edible gardens will not.

Proposals for Outdoor School support will not be considered in this grant cycle. Metro provides funding for Outdoor School through its Waste Reduction Education Program. For more information, please see www.oregonmetro.gov/schoolrecycling.

SECTION 3: PRE-APPLICATION FORM

A. Organization, program and contact information (one page maximum)

Please complete the organization, program and contact information below using no more than one page.

Date of application	
Organization name	
Organization address	
Organization website	
Program contact	
Name	
Title	
Phone	
Email	
Fiscal agent If different than the lead organization.	
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
Estimated funding	Estimated amount requested: \$ Estimated match funds: \$ Estimated in-kind match: \$ Estimated total program budget: \$

B. Organizational preparedness (one page maximum)

Please review the information below and use this guidance to describe organizational preparedness and approval from the governing body, and/or landowner. Delete the *italicized* text once you've reviewed it, and use the space below. Your answer should be no more than one page.

Organizational preparedness

- *Explain why your organization has the experience and capacity to conduct the program, including identification of key personnel, their roles in the program and their qualifications.*
- *If applicable, a brief statement should indicate that the organization has received approval to submit the pre-application from their governing body (e.g. board, council) or management.*
- *If applicable, state whether the program has permission to use the intended public or private property. All programs must have landowner permission at the time of full application.*

C. Program description (two pages maximum)

Please review the information below and use this guidance to describe your proposed program narrative, goals and partnerships. Delete the *italicized* text once you've reviewed it, and use the space below. Your answer should be no more than two pages.

Program narrative

- *Include information such as audience served, time spent in the field, how the activity will be organized and executed.*
- *Describe use of proven methods and best practices within your program.*
- *Explain why the program is important for your organization and community, such as how it fits your organization's strategic plan or mission.*

Goals (see page 3)

- *Describe the program and explain how it addresses the grant program goals and fits your organization's strategic plan or mission.*
- *Describe expected results and follow-up plans for the program goals.*
- *Present a summary of your plans to evaluate the effectiveness of the program, which you will elaborate on in the full application.*
- *Briefly describe expected outcomes of the program and why its activities are expected to achieve these outcomes.*

Partnerships

- *Show how partnerships and collaboration with other individuals, organizations and groups in your community will be formed, strengthened and extended through this program.*
- *Describe partners that are currently committed and those you anticipate approaching.*
- *Describe the future plans to sustain the program after the grant period.*

D. Location and program reach (two pages maximum)

Provide a location/vicinity map that shows where the program and/or participating communities are located within the region. Describe from where in the region (e.g. city, school district, school boundaries, neighborhood) the program plans to recruit or engage participants. Describe the demographics and any unique characteristics of the community the program plans to recruit (e.g. race and ethnicity, language spoken most of the time at home, English language proficiency, age, gender, annual household income, different abilities, special needs.)

SECTION 4: DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION

In order to serve the region's communities as broadly as possible, Metro is conducting a survey to learn whom our grants currently serve and to help improve community access. The demographic information you provide will not be used for the review of your grant application.

1. How did you find out about the Nature in Neighborhoods conservation education grants?

- | | |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Website | <input type="checkbox"/> Our Big backyard Newsletter |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Email | <input type="checkbox"/> Metro Employee |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Friend or colleague | <input type="checkbox"/> Workshop, meeting or other event |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Newspaper | <input type="checkbox"/> Other (Please specify): |

2. Does your organization consider itself to be a culturally-specific community based organization?¹

Primary Applicant Yes No please specify: _____

3. Please indicate, to the best of your ability, whether your project partners consider themselves to be a culturally-specific community based organization:

- | | | | |
|--------------|------------------------------|-----------------------------|-----------------------|
| Co-Applicant | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No | please specify: _____ |
| Partner 1 | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No | please specify: _____ |
| Partner 2 | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No | please specify: _____ |
| Partner 3 | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No | please specify: _____ |

¹ Definition: A culturally-specific community based organization meets the all of the following criteria:

- The majority of members and/or clients are from a particular (or multiple) community (or communities) of color, such as: African American, Asian/Pacific Islander, Native American, Latino, African Immigrant and Refugee, and Slavic.
- The staff, board and leadership reflects the community that is served.
- The organizational or programmatic environment is culturally focused and identified as such by members.
- The organization or program has a track record of successful community engagement and involvement with the community being served.
- The community being served recognizes the organization or program as a culturally-specific organization or program.

Source: Philanthropy and Communities of Color in Oregon: from strategic investments to assessable impacts amidst growing racial and ethnic diversity. PSU (2010).

4. For the education program outlined in your Nature in Neighborhoods conservation education grant proposal, do you expect to educate a majority (more than 51%) non-white population?
- Yes
- No
5. If yes, which population(s)?
- | | |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Asian | <input type="checkbox"/> American Indian/Alaskan Native |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Latino /Hispanic | <input type="checkbox"/> Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander |
| <input type="checkbox"/> African | <input type="checkbox"/> Slavic |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Black/African American | <input type="checkbox"/> Other (Please specify): |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Middle Eastern/North African | |
6. Please tell us what you based your answer(s) on (e.g. staff input, staff observation, census data, school demographic data, previous project).
7. To inform our evaluation outcomes reporting, Metro would like to learn what demographic information our grant applicants already collect. What demographic data does your organization collect about the population you serve?
- | | |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Race and ethnicity | <input type="checkbox"/> Gender |
| <input type="checkbox"/> English proficiency | <input type="checkbox"/> Age |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Primary language | <input type="checkbox"/> Special needs |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Geography/location | <input type="checkbox"/> Other (Please specify): |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Income | |
8. Please tell us about how you collect and use demographic data in your program.
9. We understand that demographic data can be highly personal both for individuals and organizations. Please describe any concerns you would have about sharing your demographic data about participants in programming related to this grant application.
10. Do you have any comments about this survey?

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 project 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>