



## **Invites Proposals for the 2020 Environmental Education Program**

### **Grant Deadlines**

**Online Application Opens:** October 1, 2019

**Application Due:** December 2, 2019

**Grant Award Notification:** No later than March 1, 2020

### **Statement of Purpose**

Beginning with John and Betty Gray, the Gray family have long been supporters of environmental education in Oregon. Since 2012, the family's legacy has continued through the Gray Family Foundation (Gray FF). Gray FF's Environmental Education program seeks to promote the inclusion of quality environmental education in formal and informal K-12 environments to increase opportunities for youth to connect with and learn in the outdoors. Through our investments in environmental education in Oregon, Gray FF seeks to support:

- Active youth stewardship of our natural and built environments;
- Systematic integration of environmental education in formal and informal K-12 education systems;
- High quality environmental education programming by schools, districts, and non-profits with and for their communities;
- Environmental education opportunities that include and reflect the experiences, perspectives, and knowledge of diverse populations across Oregon.

### **Eligibility**

We will consider proposals submitted by schools, districts, colleges, tribal entities, government agencies or 501(c)3 non-profit organizations serving Oregon. Sponsored programs should align with the applying organization's mission. For additional questions, [please contact Gray FF staff](#).

### **Scope of Proposals Sought**

The Gray Family Foundation seeks proposals that stimulate or promote the teaching of environmental education in formal and informal K-12 educational environments to increase outdoor experiences for youth. Gray FF will fund proposals that best demonstrate alignment with the below priorities and reflect our values towards equity, diversity, and inclusion (EDI).

#### **Gray FF's Environmental Education program priorities seek to increase:**

- Diversity of youth and communities engaged in outdoor and environmental education learning experiences.

- Educators' (K-12 teachers, administrators and informal educators) preparedness to integrate environmental education across subjects.
- Environmental educators' preparedness to support K-12 needs utilizing best practices and rigor.
- K-12 professionals' preparedness to use the natural and built community and systems as a context for learning.
- K-12 youth's ability to collaborate, problem solve and apply critical thinking to local and global environmental issues.
- K-12 youth's preparedness for success in careers inside and outside of the environmental field through increased participation in environmental education.

#### **Funds are typically used to support:**

- Dedicated staff time
- Training and professional development for educators
- Costs associated with developing and implementing curricula and programming (e.g. classroom materials, books)
- Costs associated with facilitating learning experiences outside the classroom
- Administrative support

#### **Funding is not eligible to support:**

- Recreational summer camp or day camp programs
- Student learning experiences outside the targeted 3<sup>th</sup>-8<sup>th</sup> grades
- Organizations that have received three consecutive years of Gray FF funding for Environmental Education
- Capital campaigns, site improvements, or acquisitions of land
- Purchases or activities that occur prior to grant decision
- Deficit funding or elimination of operating deficits
- Annual fund appeals or endowment funds
- Religious activities
- Grants or loans to individuals

## **Grant Type Overview**

In 2020, we are offering three options through our Environmental Education grant program. Gray FF is interested in reviewing proposals for a range of funding levels that best serve the specific needs of your program. Gray FF will award funds to the strongest eligible projects regardless of project type and encourage organizations to apply for the type of funding that will best serve their efforts.

### **Option 1: Capacity-Building**

We will consider capacity-building grant requests from \$5,000-\$20,000 focused on **advancing equity in environmental education**. This includes capacity-building support for culturally-specific organizations seeking to integrate best practices in environmental education into their youth programming AND/OR organizations seeking to build their capacity to effectively engage with and support communities where they are implementing programming. Eligible organizations should have or be planning for programming that engages 3<sup>rd</sup>-8<sup>th</sup> grade youth. Planning grants are one-year grants

with the opportunity to apply for programmatic grants in future years. **See page 5 for additional details on submission requirements.**

### **Option 2: Youth Field Experiences**

We will consider programmatic grant requests from \$5,000-\$25,000 per year to support field experiences for **3<sup>rd</sup> through 8<sup>th</sup> grade youth**. Program applicants may request multi-year funding (up to three years) pending annual grant renewals through the 2022-2023 school year. Programs requesting multi-year funding will be responsible for securing increasing matching funds in years two and three of the program as Gray FF will reduce its funding from year to year by 20% (e.g., \$10,000 year one, \$8,000 year two, \$6,400 year three). **See page 7 for additional details on submission requirements.**

### **Option 3: Educator Training and Professional Development**

We will consider programmatic grant requests from \$5,000-\$25,000 per year to support educator professional development. Program applicants may request multi-year funding (up to three years) pending annual grant renewals through the 2022-2023 school year. Programs requesting multi-year funding will be responsible for securing increasing matching funds in years two and three of the program as Gray FF will reduce its funding from year to year by 20% (e.g., \$10,000 year one, \$8,000 year two, \$6,400 year three). **See page 7 for additional details on submission requirements.**

## **Timeline**

**Proposal Due:** December 2, 2019

**Proposals Reviewed:** December 2019 - January 2020

**Award Notification:** No later than March 1, 2020

### **Grant Implementation Timeline:**

Single Year: March 1, 2020 - February 28, 2021

Multi-Year: March 1, 2020 - February 28, 2023

**Report Due Dates:** Single Year: Final report, March 30, 2021

Multi-year progress report / renewal request: December 1, 2020

Multi-year progress report / renewal request: December 1, 2021

Final report: March 30, 2023

## **Reporting Requirements**

Gray FF appreciates the opportunity to bear witness to successes and lessons learned. Annually you will be expected to complete a [grant report](#) as a final report or renewal of funds for multi-year grantees. This report will be brief and include the progress you made in your program's identified goals. Multi-year grantees may also negotiate another reporting format with their Program Officer (e.g. verbal presentation), if this is preferred. Future funding requests and annual renewals will not be considered without timely reporting.

## Questions?

More information about Gray FF grants programs can be found on our website [www.grayff.org](http://www.grayff.org).

If you have other questions, you may contact the Gray Family Foundation at 503-552-3500 or [grants@grayff.org](mailto:grants@grayff.org).

We will also be offering **office hours** during the month of November when our Program Officer will be available to answer questions, although you are welcome to call or email anytime. [Visit our website here for more details.](#)

## Detailed Proposal Submission Guidance

- [Click here for Capacity-Building Submission Guidance](#)
- [Click here for Field Experience or Professional Development Submission Guidance](#)
- [Click here for Proposal Scoring Criteria](#)

## Capacity-Building Grant Proposal Guidance

It is a priority for the Gray FF Environmental Education Program to support efforts that ensure environmental education programming reflects the perspectives, traditions, and knowledge of all communities across Oregon. We are pleased to invite environmental education providers, culturally-specific organizations, schools, and other institutions to apply for a capacity-building grant to help advance this vision.

Gray FF Capacity-Building Grants may be used to support training, partnership development, program planning, needs assessment or strengths mapping, as well as other work needed to lay the foundation for implementing environmental education programs that effectively engage and reflect the perspectives, traditions, and knowledge of diverse populations across Oregon.

Preference will be given to proposals that:

- Identify the unique need or opportunity for the organization(s) related to equity in environmental education.
- Support the development of partnerships or collaborations that leverage collective strengths to increase potential impact.
- Aligns with Gray Family Foundation's [statement on equity, diversity, and inclusion](#), including projects that are:
  - Engaging and benefiting rural communities across Oregon and/or;
  - Led by, informed by, and directly benefiting Black, Indigenous, Latinx, and/or other racial and ethnic communities facing current and historical policies and practices that have resulted in disparities.

## Capacity-Build Grant Application Procedures

Environmental Education applicants may submit a proposal through the Oregon Community Foundation's MyOCF online system which will be available via a link on our website on October 1, 2019. Applicants for our Environmental Education Grant that have not previously applied for an Oregon Community Foundation grant will need to create an account.

The online application will require submitting a brief organizational background, organizational financials, a project/program description, project budget information (for year 1), and to upload responses to our narrative questions (included below for your reference). You will also be required to upload a brief project timeline, detailed multi-year project budget for multi-year applications (template provided), organization financials (most recent audited financials if available or end-of-year financial statements from the prior year). There will also be the opportunity to upload letters of support.

Specific questions to address in your project description (**Note: There are no character limits, however we recommend keeping the total length of narrative to no more than 3-4 single-spaced pages in 12 pt. font**).

1. Describe the unique need or opportunity for your organization(s) related to equity in environmental education? What do you currently know about who has access to and is participating in environmental education opportunities in your community?
2. Describe the anticipated components of your capacity-building project and the primary goals you hope to accomplish during the grant period. Please include such information as a process for completing a needs assessment or strengths analysis and how you intend to convene stakeholders or engage the community where you work.
3. If you are partnering with other organizations or stakeholders to do this project, how will leadership be shared during this capacity-building process? Describe the process you expect to use.
4. Please share the types of technical assistance you anticipate would assist you during this process.

[Please contact Gray FF](#) for assistance or clarification on any part of the application process or if you require submitting your request in an alternative format than described.

## Field Experience and Professional Development Grant Proposal Guidance

The Gray Family Foundation seeks proposals that stimulate or promote the teaching of environmental education in K-12 formal and informal environments to increase opportunities for youth to learn in and experience the outdoors.

Program funding can support one to three years of support for student field experiences for 3<sup>rd</sup> through 8<sup>th</sup> grade youth and/or educator professional development. Gray FF will select programs that most closely align with Gray FF's Environmental Education program priorities (see ['Scope of Proposals Sought'](#)).

Preference will be given to proposals that include:

- Dedicated staff time.
- Demonstrated expertise in environmental education, K-12 instruction, and/or community engagement.
- K-12 administrative and/or partner buy-in via a letter of support.
- Additional contributed or earned support documented in the program budget (i.e. grants, business or individual donations, in-kind, program revenue, etc.).
- Alignment with Gray Family Foundation's [statement on equity, diversity, and inclusion](#), including projects that are:
  - Engaging and benefiting rural communities across Oregon and/or;
  - Led by, informed by, and directly benefiting Black, Indigenous, Latinx, and/or other racial and ethnic communities facing current and historical policies and practices that have resulted in disparities.

Programmatic grant expectations:

- Timely and complete [annual reporting](#).
- Participation in a Gray FF Environmental Education Convening in 2020 for multi-year grantees, date TBD (support will be provided by the Foundation to cover participation).
- Potential participation in one grant review cycle as a Gray FF grant review committee member for multi-year grantees at the request of Gray FF staff (commitment 8-16 hours).

## Program Grant Application Procedure

Environmental Education Program applicants may submit a proposal through the Oregon Community Foundation's MyOCF online system which will be available via a link on our website on **October 1, 2019**. Previous applicants for our Environmental Education Grant that have not previously applied through the Oregon Community Foundation website will need to create an account.

The online application will require submitting a brief organizational background, organizational financials, a project/program description, project budget information (for year 1), and to upload responses to our narrative questions (included below for your reference). You will also be required to upload a brief project timeline, detailed multi-

year project budget for multi-year applications (template provided), organization financials (most recent audited financials if available or end-of-year financial statements from the prior year). You are also provided the opportunity to upload letters of support.

Specific narrative questions (required) (**Note: There are no character limits, however we recommend keeping the total length of narrative to no more than 3-4 single-spaced pages in 12 pt. font).**:

1. Describe the program including how it meets Gray FF's priorities for funding.
2. What do you hope to accomplish through this program?
3. How would you differentiate your program from other similar programs in your community? (for example, do you provide access where there is none? Do you reach a unique set of youth? Do you engage community in improving your programming?)
4. How does this program support your organization's goals and build upon your staff and organization's strengths?
5. What was your process for researching and designing your approach?
6. How will you know the project has been successful?

**If you have submitted for additional grant support from other organizations, Gray FF will accept and review another organization's application in substitute of our own.** Please [contact Gray FF staff](#) if this is the case or if you have any questions.



## Proposal Scoring Criteria

Proposals are reviewed by a volunteer committee that makes recommendations for funding which staff present to the Gray FF Board of Directors for approval. [More details on our review process can be found here](#). Programs will be reviewed and scored based on the following categories and criteria:

### **Overall Proposal Strength**

The strongest proposals for **youth field experiences**:

1. Provide direct experiences for youth addressing local and global environmental issues.
2. Are academically and emotionally appropriate for the intended audience.
3. Align to education standards and/or best practices in youth development.
4. Foster youth's knowledge, attitudes, skills, and behaviors towards environmental systems and issues.
5. Integrate learning from the field into the classroom and the classroom to the field.
6. Makes use of interdisciplinary instruction.
7. Employ culturally-appropriate strategies.

The strongest proposals for **educator professional development** prepare educators to:

1. Integrate environmental education across subject areas.
2. Utilize the natural and built community and systems as a context for learning.
3. Use best practices such as project-based learning, cooperative learning strategies, service learning and inquiry-based instruction.
4. Articulate the benefits of environmental education to K-12 environments.

The strongest proposals for **capacity-building projects**:

1. Identify a unique opportunity or need in supporting equity in environmental education that could be supported through capacity-building funding.
2. Demonstrate a plan for engagement of partners, stakeholders and/or community in informing program planning.
3. Acknowledge the assumptions and practices that reinforce inequities amongst community and youth experiences.
4. Support the equitable distribution of grant funds to partners (if applicable).

### **Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion**

In evaluating all proposals related to our diversity, equity, and inclusion priorities, we prioritize proposals that:

1. Engage and benefit rural communities across Oregon and/or proposals that are;

2. Led by, informed by, and directly benefiting Black, Indigenous, Latinx, and/or other racial and ethnic communities facing current and historical policies and practices that have resulted in disparities.

In addition to the above items, we also seek proposals that:

1. Demonstrate a willingness to examine, challenge, and change assumptions and practice that reinforce inequities amongst communities and student experiences.
2. Respect and amplify the perspectives, traditions, and knowledge of diverse populations across Oregon.
3. Support creative partnerships (e.g. public/private) to address disparities amongst communities (if applicable).
4. Provide for shared leadership between partners, stakeholders, and community.
5. Offer equitable distribution of funds to project partners (if applicable).

### **Project Feasibility and Fit**

In evaluating proposals related to project feasibility and fit, we seek proposals from organizations that demonstrate the capacity to carry out the project including:

1. Clarity of project goals, design, and project timeline.
2. Appropriate qualifications of the project's personnel and/or using partners through new and existing networks to carry out the work.
3. Alignment of budget with requested funds.
4. Support from the community, organization, school, or district leadership demonstrated via at least one letter of support.