



Invites Proposals for the 2022 Environmental Education Program

Grant Application Deadlines

Spring Cycle

Online Application Opens: January 14, 2022

Application Due: March 11, 2022 by midnight

Grant Award Notification: By mid-May 2022

We are also offering a second cycle later this year with the following timeline:

Fall Cycle

Online Application Opens: August 13, 2022

Application Due: October 1, 2022

Grant Award Notification: End of November 2022

Funds Available

In 2022, we have \$515,000 available to support grants to environmental education organizations. We anticipate awarding up to 20-25 grants of between \$5,000-\$25,000 each.

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 outdoor, environmental, climate education and land-based 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 impact of the COVID-19 pandemic has continued to have wide-reaching effects on communities across the state of Oregon – and organizations that provide and support environmental education have been significantly impacted. We recognize the uncertainty that organizations, educators, and families continue to face when connecting with youth during and outside of school.

In 2022 Gray Family Foundation is continuing to seek applications from organizations that will inspire and promote outdoor, environmental, land-based, and/or climate education in formal and informal K-12 educational environments and increase outdoor experiences for youth – either during the school day, as part of distance or virtual learning, or as a service or opportunity offered to families and youth outside of the context of the school setting.

For 2022 we are adjusting our previous guidelines and scope of proposals:

1. Organizations, projects, or programs supporting outdoor, environmental, land-based and/or climate education reaching and benefiting **K-8 youth** in school, out-of-school time, or other similar settings are eligible to apply. *
2. Mission-aligned organizations and programs can apply for general operating support to allow more flexible use of funds to support the overall work of the organization or education program.

Gray FF's Environmental Education program seeks to increase:

- Diversity of youth and communities engaged in outdoor, environmental, land-based, and climate education learning experiences.
- 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.
- Educators' (K-12 teachers, administrators, and informal educators) preparedness to integrate environmental, outdoor, and climate education across subjects.
- Educators' preparedness to support K-12 student needs utilizing best practices and rigor.
- K-12 professionals' preparedness to use the natural and built environments and systems as a context for learning.

Funds can be used to support:

- General operating expenses for a mission-aligned organizations or program or project expenses within an organization (i.e. an organizations' education program or a new project within an organization). This can include but is not limited to:
 - Dedicated staff time.
 - Training and professional development for educators (in person or virtual).
 - Costs associated with developing and implementing in person or virtual curricula and programming (e.g., classroom materials, books, toolkits, virtual field trips, etc.).
 - Costs associated with facilitating learning experiences outside the classroom either on or near school grounds or, if possible, away from school grounds.

- Administrative support.

Funding is not eligible to support:

- 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

*Programs or projects that benefit a broader age range than K-8th grade are still eligible to apply, we just ask that your budget request reflects the proportion of your programming that serves K-8th grade students.

Grant Type Overview

We are interested in reviewing proposals for a range of funding levels that best serve the specific needs of your organization or program. We 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.

During this grant cycle, we are also interested in supporting opportunities for organizations, schools, and/or school districts to use and integrate outdoor spaces (e.g., schoolyards, playgrounds, nearby parks, or natural areas) into student learning as a method for both engaging students and reducing risk for students and educators during the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic.

Requests should be between \$5,000-\$25,000 per year for up to three years. If you are a requesting a multi-year award, please include a budget covering multiple years. If approved, the second and/or third year of renewal funding will be pending annual approval by our Board of Directors based on site visit/renewal conversations with your Program Officer.

In 2022, we are offering two options through our Environmental Education grant program.

Option 1: General operating support for mission-aligned organizations

We will consider general operating support requests from organizations where the mission and the majority of programming or services provided by the organization is aligned with our Environmental Education grant program. This can include organizations serving a broader age range of youth and families – beyond K-8, acknowledging that the request will be proportional to the amount of programming or services aligned with this grant program.

Option 2: Program/project support

Similar to previous years, if you are interested in requesting more specific support for a program and project and are not an organization where the majority of your work is aligned with the focus of our Environmental Education grant program, we will consider requests that include any of the below components:

- **Equity-focused capacity building:** This includes capacity-building support for multi-cultural or culturally-specific/reflective organizations seeking to integrate best practices

in environmental education into youth programming AND/OR organizations seeking to build their staff and organizational capacity to effectively engage with and support communities where they are implementing programming (i.e. Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion trainings, Trauma-Informed training and/or curriculum development, community engagement and partnership work, etc.). Eligible organizations should have or be planning for programming that engages K- 8th grade youth.

- **Youth field experiences:** We will consider programmatic grant requests to support in-person, virtual, or self-directed field experiences related to the outdoors, environment, and/or climate for K - 8th grade youth. Program grants may also support work done in collaboration with or in parallel to schools/school districts in leveraging outdoor spaces (e.g. playgrounds, gardens, nearby natural areas) to support student learning during the COVID-19 pandemic.
- **Educator training and professional development:** We will consider programmatic grant requests to support educator professional development that specifically prepares educators to deliver outdoor, environmental, and/or climate-based education programming to youth. This can include curriculum development, professional learning communities, trainings, networking, and other supports for educators.

Timeline

Proposal Due:	March 11, 2022
Proposals Reviewed:	March 2020 - April 2020
Award Notification:	By mid-May 2022
Grant Implementation:	Single Year: May 1, 2022 - May 1, 2023 Multi-Year: May 1, 2022 - May 1, 2024

Reporting Requirements

Gray Family Foundation appreciates the work of our grantee organizations and wants to ensure organization staff are able to dedicate time to projects versus meeting complex reporting requirements. In lieu of a formal written report, organizations will be asked to provide a verbal update at the end of the grant period using simple questions that can be found in the report template on our website here: <https://grayff.org/grants/grantee-reporting/>. Organizations and educators may also submit a written report if that is preferred. Award letters will include more details on reporting expectations.

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 January 14, 2020. 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 completing several fields providing organizational background information, organizational financials, an organization/project/program description, to upload a single or multi-year project budget: <https://grayff.org/wp->

[content/uploads/2022/01/Gray-FF-Budget-Template-Update-111020.xlsx](#), and responses to our narrative questions (included below for your reference). You will also be required to upload 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, which are recommended if your organization/project/program relies on partners to implement your work.

Specific questions to address in your project description are written below and will be posted in the MyOCF system. (**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. **Summary:** Please provide a summary of your organization/project(s)/program(s) and how they align with the goals of the Environmental Education Grant Program outlined in this RFP.
2. **Process:** Please describe how you (will) accomplish the proposed program(s) and/or project, including your planned methods and/or activities and a brief timeline for the work.
3. **Goals:** Please describe what you hope to achieve by the end of the grant period. This includes any deliverables you plan to develop, who you anticipate will benefit from your programming or resources (i.e. number of students or educators potentially reached, grade levels, etc), how those individuals have been involved in informing your project goals, and how this project/program supports the goals of your organization. Please also share any plans for sharing your deliverables or activities with others.
4. **Opportunity:** Please describe what makes your project or request unique. What unique need or opportunity are you addressing through your project? How would you differentiate this project from others in your community? For example, are you increasing access where there is none? Are you reaching a unique set of youth or community members? Is your project building on previous work that will build the capacity of your organization?
5. **Qualifications/Experience:** Please briefly describe your qualifications as educators and/or organizations supporting environmental education, K-12 education, or other related work (experience and expertise as educators, lived experiences, knowledge of communities, etc.). *Please use this as an opportunity to describe expertise in identifying opportunities to support and serve your target communities as well as work internally and externally your organization is doing to support equity & inclusion.* Please also describe any resources, consultants, or organizations that may help inform your work.
6. **Partners:** If applicable, please describe any partners you plan to work with and your plan for engaging them. Please include how or if you plan to compensate them for their contributions.

[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.

Review Process

Preference will be given to proposals that:

- Clearly identify a unique opportunity and related expertise in advancing equity & inclusion in outdoor, environmental, or climate-based education.
- Support the development of partnerships or collaborations that leverage collective strengths and share resources to increase potential impact across Oregon.
- 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.

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/cross-sector) 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).

Proposals are reviewed by a volunteer committee of peers in environmental, outdoor, and K-12 education that make 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.](#)

Questions

If you have questions about completing your application, eligibility, or require any additional support, please feel free to contact Nell Tessman, Program Officer, at ntessman@grayff.org or at 503-552-3500. We will also be offering office hours in January and February and those dates/times can be found on our website here <https://grayff.org/grants/environmental-education/> - but feel free to contact us directly with any questions as well.