

USDA National Agroforestry Center - FY2020 Urban Agroforestry RFP

Frequently Asked Questions

Updated 05/11/2020

Many details about this USDA National Agroforestry Center (NAC) grant opportunity are included in the [Request for Proposals document](#). Answers to other questions we have received are summarized here.

For additional questions regarding this Request for Proposals or administrative regulations, contact Richard Straight (richard.straight@usda.gov) or Kate MacFarland (katherine.macfarland@usda.gov).

Eligibility

Do communities need to be a certain size to qualify for this grant?

No. There are no restrictions on community size or population.

Can universities or university extension offices apply for this funding opportunity?

No, however universities and extension offices can be partners or sub-awardees on this grant, with the applicant being one of the eligible entities: nonprofit organizations, units of local government, Tribal governments, or schools that serve any of grades kindergarten through grade 12.

How are units of local government defined?

Local government includes any unit of government within a state, including a county; borough; municipality; city; town; township; parish; local public authority, including any public housing agency under the United States Housing Act of 1937 (50 Stat. 888 (P.L. 75—412); special district; school district; intrastate district; council of governments, whether or not incorporated as a nonprofit corporation under State law; and any other agency or instrumentality of a multi-state, regional, or intra-state or local government.

Why are the eligible applicants limited to nonprofit organizations, units of local government, Tribal governments, and schools that serve any of grades kindergarten through grade 12?

In the funding legislation for the USDA Office of Urban Agriculture and Innovative Production, Congress designated these entities as eligible applicants.

Uses of Grant Funds

Can this grant be used to establish an urban agriculture system or pay for plant materials to add trees to an urban agriculture system?

No. The purpose of this grant is to develop outreach materials related to urban agroforestry. This is not an appropriate grant opportunity for purchasing plant materials. Other grant opportunities for planning and implementation from the USDA Office of Urban Agriculture and Innovative Production may better fit your funding needs. These are due July 6, 2020:

<https://www.farmers.gov/manage/urban/opportunities>

Can grant funds be spent on food?

No. Federal funds cannot be spent on food at meetings or outreach events. Food/meals for staff and cooperators can only be charged to federal funds as part of travel per diem (lodging, meals and incidentals). Federally recommended per diem rates for locations within the U.S. can be found at <https://www.gsa.gov/travel/plan-book/per-diem-rates>

Can grant funds be spent on printing?

No. We recognize that it can be beneficial to distribute print publications. However, these federal funds cannot be spent on printing. Do not include printing costs in your budget. As a federal agency, we are required to work with the Government Publishing Office to print publications.

Questions about Required Forms**When I click on a link for a form on the Urban Agroforestry RFP webpage, it does not display properly. What should I do?**

Try right clicking and downloading the form to your computer. If that does not work, you can search for the form number on grants.gov or email Richard Straight (richard.straight@usda.gov) or Kate MacFarland (katherine.macfarland@usda.gov) to receive a copy of the form via email.

What is the Funding Opportunity number, required on some of the forms?

This box can be left blank.

How do I fill out Boxes 10-13 on SF-424A?

These boxes can be left blank. They will be filled in by USDA Forest Service staff.

What are the start and end dates of the award?

As indicated in the Urban Agroforestry RFP, these agreements are generally for two years. Agreements are expected to be signed in September 2020, so you can specify a start date of September 15, 2020 and an end date of August 31, 2022. You can also specify an earlier end date if you'd prefer to finish the project within a shorter timeline. These dates may be adjusted as needed by the USDA Forest Service Grants & Agreements office before the agreement is signed.

Other Questions**Can I include a survey as part of my plan to accomplish this project?**

It is not recommended. Due to the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, it can be time consuming to administer surveys using these federal funds. The process involves getting approval from the Office of Management and Budget. Because of the two year time frame of these projects, we recommend not including surveys as part of the project plan. Informal questionnaires or evaluations of workshops or other activities are permissible.

What do you mean by “evidence-based technology transfer materials”?

Materials developed for this project should be based on your evidence and experience with these urban agriculture systems that incorporate agroforestry practices and/or perennial crops. They should not describe something you haven’t tried yet, but instead something you have significant experience with.

By technology transfer materials, we mean education and outreach publications, videos, and other media that show how an idea can be applied or transferred to other sites, locations, or conditions.

Does this grant require an applicant match?

This grant does not require the applicant to provide matching funds or in-kind services.

Can you tell me more about 508 Accessibility Compliance?

All agreements with NAC require that all materials produced with federal funds must be compliant with accessibility standards for screen readers and other assistive technologies (what we refer to in shorthand as “508 compliant”).

Use the following websites to learn more about 508 compliance in different forms of media:

- General information: <https://www.hhs.gov/web/section-508/index.html>
- USDA checklists: <https://www.ocio.usda.gov/document/section-508-checklists>
- GSA guides and tutorials: <https://www.gsa.gov/about-us/organization/office-of-the-chief-information-officer/office-of-deputy-cio/office-of-enterprise-planning-and-governance/enterprise-architecture-policy-planning/-section-508-and-accessibility/gsa-508-tutorials-guidance-checklists>

If you receive this grant, NAC will work with you further on ensuring the accessibility of the materials produced with these funds.

If our project is funded, can we share the outreach materials on our organization’s own website?

Yes. While materials should include the NAC name and website, USDA logo, and other details outlined in the RFP and will be linked from the NAC website, you can also share these materials from your organization’s website.