

Natural Areas Public Amenities and Events Grant Program for Government-owned Sites

Criteria and Guidelines

Eligible Applicants

501(c)(3) organizations only

Award Amount & Grant Period

Applicants may apply for one grant of up to \$5,500 *per* Eligible Project Site. The grant period is 18 months.

Eligible Site

Natural areas in Illinois that provide habitat for native plants and animals. All Project Sites must be open to the public and actively cared for by volunteers.

Government Approval

Applicants must submit proof of landowner's approval for the nonprofit organization to pay for amenities and host events at the government-owned Project Site. *Unless otherwise approved by the Foundation, the grantee organization must pay for amenities directly to be eligible for reimbursement from the Foundation.*

Public Amenities

The Foundation will *reimburse* grantee organizations for adding public amenities that are intended to improve public use and enjoyment of the Project Site.

- \$5,000, or 100% of the cost of the amenity, whichever is less, will be reimbursed.
- One or two large amenity purchases is preferred over a handful of smaller expenditures.
- Payment is based on actual amount paid by grantee organization. In-kind donations of labor and materials do not impact the amount paid.
- Grantees are required to submit a description of the amenities installed and the amounts paid after the project has been completed.
- Grantees retain records of payment, including paid invoices and receipts, for Foundation review.

Approved Amenities include:

picnic tables, pergolas, viewing platforms/overlooks, interpretive signage*, parking pad, a trail connector, benches, restroom facility, bike racks, boot brush stations, trail markers, and other items up to Foundation discretion. *Contact the Foundation for approval for items not on the above list. *All signage should acknowledge the grant support.*

Events

The Foundation will *reimburse* grantee organizations for hosting public events designed to increase public use and support of the Project Site.

- \$500, or 100% of the cost of hosting event(s), whichever is less.
- One event is preferable as opposed to multiple.
- Events are to be held at the Project Site.
- Grantees submit a description of the events and the number of attendees for payment.
- Grantees retain records of payment, including paid invoices and receipts, for Foundation review.

Approved Event expenditures include:

speaker fees, food and non-alcoholic beverages for attendees, educational handouts, table rental fees, monitoring equipment (i.e. dragonfly nets, magnifying glasses, etc.), and other items up to Foundation discretion. *Contact the Foundation for approval for items not on the above list.*

Photos

Grantees must submit "Before" and "After" photos to verify the installation of the amenities. The "Before" picture must be taken before the installation of the new amenities. Both photos must be taken from the same distance and vantage point.