Urban and Community Forestry Grants Program

Frequently Asked Questions

The grant guidelines can be found on the Urban and Community Forestry Grants webpage:
https://www.fire.ca.gov/grants/urban-and-community-forestry-grant-programs/

Subscribe to the Urban Forestry Grants announcement email list:
https://fire.us8.list-manage.com/subscribe?u=1eab3f5545f6a6e4d33c94dcb&id=c330a569ca

Who is the Regional Urban Forester for my area?

Region	Urban Forester	Email	Phone
Sacramento Valley / Northern California	Julia Gowin	Julia.Gowin@fire.ca.gov	(916) 201-8942
Bay Area	James Scheid	James.Scheid@fire.ca.gov	(415) 265-9059
Central Valley	Greg Dion	Greg.Dion@fire.ca.gov	(559) 753-3661
Inland Empire	Abigail Srader	Abigail.Srader@fire.ca.gov	(909) 553-8057
Los Angeles / Ventura	Henry Herrera	Henry.Herrera@fire.ca.gov	(213)200-7115
San Diego / Orange / Imperial	Lynnette Short	Lynnette.Short@fire.ca.gov	(619) 937-1410

See Appendix G in the grant guidelines to see a list of urban foresters by county.

How do I find out if a community is disadvantaged for the purposes of this grant program?

CalEnviroScreen 3.0 is our preferred tool for determining if a community is disadvantaged. The Office of Environmental Health Hazard Assessment (OEHHA) maintains this tool on the web:
https://oehha.ca.gov/calenviroscreen/report/calenviroscreen-30

Is there a tool to help calculate greenhouse gas savings and emissions?

You can find links to tools to help calculate GHG savings on page 6 of the grant guidelines.

How do we determine whether our project will require a California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) analysis?

If your project's ground disturbing footprint is an area that has been previously developed, then your project will most likely be exempt from the CEQA process. If it is an area that has never been developed or ground disturbed, then your project will most likely need some level of CEQA analysis. Look at our grant guidelines to read more about CEQA compliance (Appendix D: Environmental Checklist).

Our group does not have the capacity to provide education associated with our project. Should we partner with another organization to offer that component?

We encourage projects with partners.

Can a community HOA or fire-wise organization apply for a grant WITHOUT an eligible partner organization?

No. They must partner with a 501c3 organization.

I would like to know if the urban forest expansion and improvement project type, which provides an allowance for orchard/community gardens, extends to any sort of drought-tolerant landscaping in publicly accessible spaces (non-tree)? Some cities have asked to create water-wise demonstration gardens.

The urban forest expansion and improvement category is intended to plant trees, though associated vegetation is allowed as defined on page 23 of the grant guidelines.

Can an urban forestry management plan project include an inventory, plan, and full-fledged planting aspect?

Yes

Regarding the Urban Workforce Development Grant: If we have an urban forestry workforce training component to teach urban youth from disadvantage communities a specific vocational skill in the field, is there a requirement of where the field training needs to take place? For instance, can a training take place somewhere other than the city that the youth live in?

Yes, it may take place outside the city where youth reside.

Regarding the workforce development component, could this include an internship program within a city, particularly if the city has a certified arborist?

Yes. Keep in mind; requests must be for creating, developing, and implementing projects to help people develop the necessary knowledge/skills/abilities to enter a career in urban forestry or a closely related discipline in urban forestry or related profession.

Regarding the urban forest management activities project type, is there a distinction between an urban forestry MANAGEMENT plan and an urban forestry MASTER plan?

Either Urban Forest Management Plans or Urban Forest Master Plans are eligible for funding. There are differences in best practices that CAL FIRE would expect the applicant to adhere to.

If we submit three proposals, do they have to be for separate project types?

No. The limit is three proposals in total. Please keep in mind that submitting one well-written concept proposal may be more successful than submitting three rushed proposals.

If we have several projects that can cover all three areas (planting, inventory, training), do we submit separate grant applications?

It depends. Contact your Regional Urban Forester to discuss what category your project(s) would best fit under.

Is tree planting going to give you the most competitive advantage? We have previously received a CAL FIRE grant and completed a tree inventory and Urban Forestry Plan. The results of the plan indicated priority 1 removals and prunings. We would like to apply for this grant to perform these recommended maintenance activities but are not sure how competitive this will be. Should we propose a combination of priority 1 removals and pruning and replacement plantings?

No project category is preferred. This program should not be used to supplant local urban forestry costs such as priority tree pruning and removals. Contact your Regional Urban Forester for any questions about project eligibility.

Are trees with edible fruit or nuts eligible for grant funding?

Yes, you may want to discuss this option with your Regional Urban Forester.

Do you have a resource for the quantification of fruit trees?

The quantification calculator is applicable for any species and can be found on page 6 of the grant guidelines. Species that are not specifically listed can be categorized in general for benefits modeling. Most fruit trees would align with the broadleaf deciduous small tree general category.

Can we include bare root trees in our project?

Bare root trees are a possibility if the choice is justified in the project proposal.

Are Gator bags eligible costs?

Potentially. If you want to use this product as an irrigation source, the choice must be justified in the project proposal.

Is tree watering an eligible "establishment" cost? Is there a limit?

The grant guidelines allow watering tools and cost-effective water-efficient irrigation system supplies (pg.25). There is no specified cost limit. Instead costs will be reviewed in relation to industry norms.

Does the 20% cap on educational and/or outreach activities apply to the urban forestry education and workforce development project type?

No. See the description on pages 30-32 of the grant guidelines.

Does the 12% indirect cost apply only to the primary grantees or does that apply for partners and/or subcontractors as well?

Indirect costs are applied on a percentage basis on direct costs including supplies and contractors, however, the cost of equipment is excepted. Look up "indirect costs" in page 37 of the Grant Procedural Guidelines for more information.

If our City is a qualified disadvantaged community (DAC), will the lack of a match of 25% make us less competitive?

No, disadvantaged communities may have their matching requirement reduced or waived as described on pages 15-16 of the grant guidelines. Recognize that investment does relate to commitment to the project so offering volunteer labor provided as match is preferable to requesting the matching requirement be waived completely.

How do I calculate transportation costs for my project? Do I use my organization's hourly rate or the federal $0.58 per mile rate?

See "Travel" on page 36 of the grant guidelines for guidance on travel-related reimbursement rates.

Can an urban forestry project involve replacing invasive (and highly flammable) eucalyptus with native oaks and other trees in an urban forest?

Removal costs may be funded, but it may not be the best fit for this program. Reach out to your urban forester for further discussion. Visit CAL FIRE's Grant's page to find available grants that might best fit your project: https://www.fire.ca.gov/grants/

Would forest thinning/fuels reduction be an eligible activity under the forest management project type?

No, please see CAL FIRE's Fire Prevention Grant Program: https://www.fire.ca.gov/grants/fire-prevention-grants/. You can also check out available Forest Health Grants: https://www.fire.ca.gov/grants/forest-health-grants/

Will CAL FIRE be issuing grants to support wildfire mitigation and response efforts in the WUI?

Visit CAL FIRE's Grant's page to find available grants that best fit your project:
https://www.fire.ca.gov/grants/

What is a BMP?

Best Management Practice. See Appendix H of our grant guidelines for BMPs (CAL FIRE standards and specifications for purchasing, planting, and maintaining trees).

What is the due date to complete all the official documentation at project onset?

All official documentation will be due around November. Applicants will be notified of successful concept proposals around August - giving them September & October to compile all required documentation.

When do you anticipate the next grant cycle will take place (open date, close date) and will the level of documentation be similar so we can start now and be ready for the next cycle?

Grants are subject to funding allocations, which are uncertain from year to year. There has been past funding for Urban Forestry grants, though amounts and guidelines have varied. It is a good idea to use the current available documentation as a guide/resource to help prepare for the next funding opportunity. Subscribe to the Urban Forestry Grants announcement email list to keep up to date on funding opportunities when available: https://fire.us8.list-manage.com/subscribe?u=1eab3f5545f6a6e4d33c94dcb&id=c330a569ca

Since the application process is now online, can I work on it over time and save it, or do I have to input everything all at once?

Applicants need to complete the online form in one session. Therefore, drafting your answers to the proposal questions in a word processing (Word or similar) document so that you can save the content is recommended. Then you can copy and paste it into the online form. Keep character limits in mind.

The online grant application form has character count limitations. Does that include spaces or not?

Yes, spaces are counted as characters. The character limit is stated before each field on the concept proposal form. To count the characters in Microsoft Word, highlight the text you wish to count and click Review located on the toolbar. Then look for the word count feature (usually in the header), which should include an output for characters and spaces.