



Grassroots Grant Program

A program of City Parks Foundation and Partnerships for Parks

Fall 2025 Program Guidelines



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Deadline for submissions:
Friday, August 22, 2025
11:59 p.m. ET

Generous private support for the NYC Green Fund is provided by the Albert Giving Fund, Altman Foundation, Booth Ferris Foundation, The Charles H. Revson Foundation, Con Edison, Essex Avenue Foundation, Freedom Together Foundation, The J.M. Kaplan Fund, Klein Family Foundation, Leon Levy Foundation, The Leona M. and Harry B. Helmsley Charitable Trust, Libra Fund, The Monarch Foundation, The New York Community Trust, The Thompson Family Foundation, and Treebed LLC.

The NYC Green Fund's Urban Forest Grants are brought to you by Con Edison. Additional support provided by The Leona M. and Harry B. Helmsley Charitable Trust and Treebed LLC.



NYC Green Fund Grassroots Grant Program Guidelines

Vision

The NYC Green Fund seeks to support an equitable and resilient network of parks and open spaces to benefit the well-being of all New Yorkers.

Program Description

The NYC Green Fund Grassroots grant program is intended to advance the viability of grassroots initiatives across parks and open spaces in all five boroughs and to foster a resilient network of equitable public green spaces. The NYC Green Fund Grassroots grant program provides support for a range of programming areas including stewardship, environmental action, organizational development, health and wellness, youth development, arts and culture, and Urban Forest Grants brought to you by Con Edison. With direct funding and technical assistance, diverse community groups will receive support in their work to activate and enrich parks and open spaces across NYC.

Organizations whose total expenses were under \$175,000 in the last calendar year may be awarded one- or two-year grants of up to \$40,000 per year. The average grant size in 2024 was \$5,000, and the largest grant awarded was \$36,800.

Note: Grants will be awarded for one- or two-year commitments, pending funding raised for the NYC Green Fund in the subsequent year. In order to be eligible to apply for two-year funding, an organization must have received a grant from Partnerships for Parks (PfP) or City Parks Foundation (CPF) since 2020 and submitted all required interim and final reports. (See “Funding Limits” on pg. 4 for more information.)

Key Dates

The application deadline is **Friday, August 22, 2025 at 11:59pm ET**. Applications and reports must be submitted through City Parks Foundation's online grants management system, OpenWater. The application is available for submission [here](#).

We will be hosting a series of public webinars, one per week, throughout the application period. In these webinars, we will cover everything that you need to know to craft a competitive application. Participation is optional, but strongly recommended. [RSVP here](#) for one of the sessions below:

- Monday, July 21, 6-7:30pm
- Wednesday, July 30, 12-1:30pm
- Tuesday, August 5, 6-7:30pm
- Thursday, August 14, 6-7:30pm
- Monday, August 18, 6-7:30pm

Applicants will be notified of their award determination by November 2025, and awards will be disbursed following the return of their signed grant agreement. No grant funded activities should be planned for dates prior to November 2025.

An interim report will be required halfway through the grant term and a final report will be required once the grant term is complete.

Program Contacts

Partnerships for Parks is a joint program of City Parks Foundation and NYC Parks. CPF conducts fundraising for the NYC Green Fund on an annual basis. PpP manages the day-to-day administration of the NYC Green Fund Grassroots grant program.

If you have questions about the information presented in this document, please review the [NYC Green Fund - Grassroots FAQ](#) or email our PpP grants team at: GreenFundGrassroots@cityparksfoundation.org.

Eligibility Checklist

All grant applicants are required to meet the prerequisites below:

- ☐ Applications must be submitted by a member of a group/organization of two or more people.
- ☐ Applications must be submitted on behalf of a 501(c)3 organization or a group utilizing a fiscal sponsor.* Applications submitted by LLCs or 501(c)4 organizations are not eligible.
- ☐ Applicants' total expenses for the most recently completed calendar year must be less than \$175,000.
- ☐ If an applicant has received a grant from CPF or PpP since 2020, all interim and final reports must be submitted prior to applying for new funding.
- ☐ Applicants must possess demonstrated experience working in NYC's publicly accessible open spaces and have a strong connection to the community/communities they are working in.
- ☐ Applicants' proposals must support work in NYC's publicly accessible open spaces, such as:
 - Parks
 - Playgrounds
 - Community gardens
 - Street trees**
 - NYCHA properties
 - Public plazas
 - Open Streets
 - Waterfronts

** Groups without 501(c)3 status or an existing fiscal sponsor may be eligible to receive one-time fiscal sponsorship from City Parks Foundation.*

*** See "Urban Forest Grants brought to you by Con Edison" on pg.6 for details about special funding available this year for proposals focused on urban forestry and tree care work.*

Funding Limits

The NYC Green Fund Grassroots grant program will provide funding for **one- or two-year proposals** to organizations whose total expenses for the most recently completed calendar year were less than \$175,000.

- The minimum amount of funding organizations may apply for is \$1,000, while the maximum amount organizations may apply for is dependent upon their total expenses for the most recently completed calendar year. No organization may request more than \$40,000, regardless of their total expenses.
 - Organizations whose total expenses were between \$0-\$9,999 may apply for up to \$2,500, per year of their proposal.

- Organizations whose total expenses were \$10,000 or higher may apply for funding up to 25% of their total expenses, per year of their proposal.

Two-Year Grant Support

In order to be eligible to apply for two-year funding, an organization must have received a PfP or CPF grant since 2020 and submitted all required interim and final reports.

If approved for two-year grant support, grantees will receive the first year's award payment at the beginning of the grant cycle (Fall 2025) and the second award the following year (Fall 2026). The second year of funding is contingent on completion of required reporting and funding raised for the NYC Green Fund in the subsequent year.

Types of Work Supported

Applicants may apply for funding to support work in up to three of the following categories.

1. **Stewardship:** Community-led care of open spaces such as volunteer service and beautification projects.
 - *Examples: planting a native flower garden, caring for a dog run, or beach clean-ups.*
2. **Environmental Action:** Educational and awareness-building programs that provide people with the knowledge and skills to take responsible actions to protect the environment.
 - *Examples: a teach-in on the impacts of shore erosion, a petition in support of public composting, or a public awareness campaign against local sources of pollution.*
3. **Organizational Development:** Resources that support your organization's internal growth and capacity to activate public space. Grant recipients of this category may receive pro-bono design support from Partnerships for Parks' art director for print and digital marketing materials.
 - *Examples: flyers for events supported by the NYC Green Fund, conflict resolution training, leadership development opportunities, or working with a consultant to develop a five-year plan.*
4. **Youth Development:** Programs that inspire children under 18 and young adults (18-24) to pursue "green" jobs through hands-on service learning, paid work opportunities, and professional skills training.
 - *Examples: a career day for local elementary school students, paid internships at your organization, or a mentorship program with professionals in the environmental sector.*
5. **Health and Wellness:** Activities that promote the physical, mental, and emotional health of people using NYC's parks and open spaces.
 - *Examples: yoga in the park, a free neighborhood basketball league, or weekly nature walks.*
6. **Arts and Culture:** Arts and community-oriented cultural programming in public open spaces.
 - *Examples: a celebration of traditional cultural dance, public theater performances, a movie night, arts and crafts making workshops, or a music festival.*
7. **Urban Forest Grants brought to you by Con Edison:** Activities that promote the health and development of NYC's urban canopy through stewardship or educational programming.

- *Examples: planting in or cleaning up a street tree bed, installing tree guards, hosting tree care education workshops, or providing members of your organization with professional development opportunities (such as Citizen Pruner certification).*



conEdison Urban Forest Grants brought to you by Con Edison

Generous funding provided by Con Edison, The Leona M. and Harry B. Helmsley Charitable Trust, and Treebed LLC has been reserved for proposals focused on urban forestry and tree care work. Our objective is to increase the capacity of communities across NYC to care for our existing tree canopy and to help grow our Urban Forest from 22% to 30% tree canopy coverage. We aim to engage new and returning tree stewards to monitor, protect, and support the health of our trees and tree beds.

We encourage applicants interested in an Urban Forest Grant to explore the resources below:

- [Tree Time](#) can install tree guards, plant trees, and repair sidewalks. Tree Time works with qualified contractors who follow city specifications and standards so you can be assured that you will receive the highest quality work. Learn more and contact Tree Time [here](#).
- [Tree guards](#): Tree guards are fences around the perimeter of a tree pit that provide a physical barrier between a tree and our sometimes harsh urban environment. Tree guards have been proven to extend the longevity of trees, reduce mortality rates, and can also provide a small protected planting bed for gardening. You can review costs and a Tree Guard Inquiry form via Tree Time [here](#).
- [NYC Parks Stewardship](#): By becoming a steward of NYC's green spaces, you can help ensure that our city's natural resources are kept safe for future generations. Sign up for Super Steward training, review tip sheets for tree care and planting, and request to host a volunteer project [here](#).
- [Forest for All NYC](#) is a broad and diverse coalition formed to carry out the 12 actions outlined in the [NYC Urban Forest Agenda](#). The coalition's vision: a healthy, biodiverse, robust, accessible, well-understood, and resilient urban forest to benefit all New Yorkers in a way that is just and equitable and that helps the city adapt to and mitigate climate change. Learn more at www.ForestForAll.nyc or contact s.e.moncadaleiva@tnc.org for information on joining.
- Review the USDA Forest Services' tools including [iTree](#), a state-of-the-art, peer-reviewed software suite from the USDA Forest Service that provides urban and rural forestry analysis and benefits assessment tools.
- The NYC Urban Forest Plan: required by a [NYC law](#) passed in 2023 to increase the city's tree canopy to 30%, this plan is currently being drafted by a coalition led by the Mayor's Office of Climate and Environmental Justice, in partnership with City Parks Foundation, Partnerships for Parks, the Forest for All NYC coalition, the Natural Areas Conservancy, NYC Parks, and many others. The plan will be completed in 2025 and requires public input.

Items Eligible for Funding

Eligible expenses include:

- Equipment, tools, plant material, and supplies
- Consultants, vendors, contractors, or professional fees
- Staffing costs*
- Stipends for volunteers**
- Programming costs
- Impact assessment costs
- Marketing and outreach costs

**Support for staffing costs are only available to 501(c)3 organizations and should not account for a majority of an organization's funding request.*

*** Stipends may not exceed \$600 per person.*

Ineligible expenses include:

- Maintenance work conducted by anyone other than volunteers or interns***
- Office overhead
- Electioneering
- Lobbying
- Litigation

**** Maintenance work restrictions do not apply to tree-related maintenance work.*

Evaluation Criteria & Priorities

Funding decisions will be based on the following criteria and priorities:

1. Equity and Communities Served	
1.1.	Proposals planned for properties deemed <u>parkland</u> in NYC are prioritized, although all publicly accessible open spaces in NYC are eligible.
1.2.	Priority will be given to parks and open space proposals located in and serving Environmental Justice Areas (EJAs) recognized by the NYC Mayor's Office of Climate & Environmental Justice. An EJA map is available here .
1.3.	Priority will be given to applicant organizations led in majority (at least 50%) by people who are Black, Indigenous, or other People of Color.
2. Strategic Alignment	
2.1.	The proposal aligns with NYC Green Fund Grassroots' guidelines as outlined in this document.
2.2.	The proposal should actively engage community members in the planning and execution of the work through direct participation and/or robust community input.
3. Feasibility	
3.1.	The intended outcomes of the proposal and reporting required for this grant are feasible considering the applicant's resources, relationships, and experience.
3.1.1.	For Urban Forest projects, priority will be given to applicants that have history

working with or have a clear plan for coordinating with the following partners:

[Tree Time](#)

[NYC Parks Stewardship](#)

[Forest for All NYC Coalition](#)

- 3.2. The proposal timeline should be reasonable given the scope of work and programmatic restrictions. (No grant funded activities should be planned for dates prior to November 2025.)
- 3.3. If the proposed project includes environmental alterations such as landscaping or animal husbandry, the proposal must describe how the applicant will provide long-term care for the site.

4. Budget

- 4.1. Organizations whose total expenses were less than \$50,000 in the most recently completed calendar year will be prioritized, with additional prioritization of organizations whose total expenses were less than \$10,000.
- 4.2. The funding request falls within the limits described in the NYC Green Fund Grassroots guidelines. (See "Funding Limits" pg. 4)
- 4.3. The funding request is reasonable considering the activities of the proposal and the applicant's total expenses for the most recently completed calendar year.
- 4.4. The proposal should demonstrate a clear and pressing need for funding.

Review Process

Partnerships for Parks staff vet all applications for completeness and programmatic alignment. Applications are then reviewed by a diverse team of panelists from PfP, CPF, and affiliated organizations. All funding decisions are subject to a secondary approval process carried out by PfP and CPF leadership, as well as donors to the NYC Green Fund.

Grants Management

Grants will be made by Partnerships for Parks and all reporting information will be submitted to Partnerships for Parks.

For more information visit [CityParksFoundation.org/nycgreenfund](https://cityparksfoundation.org/nycgreenfund) or email GreenFundGrassroots@cityparksfoundation.org.

NYC Green Fund Grassroots Grant Program: Application Walkthrough

Below is a walkthrough of the Fall 2025 Green Fund Grassroots application. Applications must be submitted through City Parks Foundation's online grants management system, OpenWater, by the deadline on **Friday, August 22, 2025 at 11:59pm ET**. The application is available for submission [here](#).

Application Page 1 of 3: Eligibility

Are you applying on behalf of a group or organization with demonstrated experience working in NYC's parks and/or open spaces?

- ☐ Yes
☐ No

Were your organization's total expenses less than \$175,000 for the most recently completed calendar year?

- ☐ Yes
☐ No

Has your organization received a grant from City Parks Foundation / Partnerships for Parks since 2020?

- ☐ Yes
☐ No
- IF YES: Have you completed all required interim and final reports?
☐ Yes
☐ No

Are you requesting funding for activities that will take place in or support work in one or more of the listed publicly accessible open spaces?

- Parks
- Playgrounds
- Community Gardens
- Street trees
- NYCHA properties
- Public plazas
- Open Streets
- Waterfronts

- ☐ Yes
☐ No

Application Page 2 of 3: General Information

Primary Contact Information

- First Name
- Last Name
- Role/Title
- Email Address
- Phone Number

NYC Green Fund Feedback (Optional): How did you first learn about the NYC Green Fund Grassroots grant program?

- ☐ CPF Website
- ☐ CPF/PfP Newsletter
- ☐ CPF/PfP Social Media
- ☐ CPF/PfP Event
 - Which event?
- ☐ PfP Community Engagement Coordinator/Catalyst Organizer
 - Who?
- ☐ From a partner organization
 - Which organization?
- ☐ Other
 - _____

Partnerships for Parks Newsletter (Optional): Check the box below if you would like to receive the Partnerships for Parks newsletter to the email associated with this application.

- ☐ Yes

Organization Details

- Name of Organization
- Year Founded
- Website
- Facebook
- X
- Instagram

Organization Description: Briefly summarize your organization's purpose/guiding vision. (100 words)

History with NYC Open Spaces: Summarize your organization's history in NYC's parks and public open spaces. Please also describe any relationships your organization holds with the staff responsible for maintaining the park or open space where you will be working. (150 words)

Organization Leadership: Please describe your organization's leadership structure. This may include your Board of Directors, executive staff, and/or other members of leadership relevant to your proposal. (100 words)

BIPOC Leadership: Is the majority (at least 50%) of leadership in your organization, as described above, people who are Black, Indigenous, or other People of Color?

- ☐ Yes
 - Please briefly list the roles held by Black, Indigenous, and other POC in leadership. (100 words)
- ☐ No
 - How has your organization worked to increase the diversity of leadership or how do you plan to address this in the future? (100 words)

Organization's Financial Status

Tax-exempt Status (select one of the following options):

- ☐ We are a 501(c)(3) organization.
 - Please list your Employer Identification Number (EIN).
 - Please attach a copy of your IRS certification.
 - Please attach a copy of your most recent IRS Form 990.

- ☐ We have an external fiscal sponsor.
 - What is the name of your fiscal sponsor?
 - Please list your fiscal sponsor's Employer Identification Number (EIN).
- ☐ We are fiscally sponsored by Partnerships for Parks through City Parks Foundation.
 - Please list your FC number.
- ☐ We are a volunteer group that would like to request one-time fiscal sponsorship from Partnerships for Parks through City Parks Foundation.

Total Expenses:

What were your organization's total expenses for the most recently completed calendar year? (\$)

Confirm Total Expenses:

Please upload a file (spreadsheet, PDF, document, etc.) that details your organization's total expenses for the most recently completed calendar year. If you did not have any organizational expenses last year, please upload a document with a written explanation of your situation. If you require help with this step, please reach out to GreenFundGrassroots@cityparksfoundation.org. (File Upload, Max size: 50MB)

Geographic Area Served

Please answer the following set of questions for each open space (up to 3) that will be activated through this proposal.

- Name of open space
- Please select the type of open space you are applying to work in:
 - ☐ Park
 - ☐ Playground
 - ☐ Community garden
 - ☐ Street trees
 - ☐ NYCHA property
 - ☐ Public plaza
 - ☐ Open Street
 - ☐ Waterfront
- Please provide the closest physical address for this open space to provide a geographic sense of your work.
 - ☐ Street Address Line 1
 - ☐ Street Address Line 2
 - ☐ City
 - ☐ State
 - ☐ ZIP/Postal Code
- Which borough is this open space located in? -> Which community district is this open space located in? (Please use the [NYC Planning Community District Profiles](#) to select your district.)
 - ☐ The Bronx
 - ☐ Bronx Community District 1-12
 - ☐ Brooklyn
 - ☐ Brooklyn Community District 1-18
 - ☐ Manhattan
 - ☐ Manhattan Community District 1-12
 - ☐ Queens

- ☐ Queens Community District 1-14
- ☐ Staten Island
 - ☐ Staten Island Community District 1-3
- Which Council district is this open space located in?
Please use the new [NYC Council Map](#) to confirm the Council district for your open space.
 - ☐ Select: Council District 1-51
- Is this open space located in a designated Environmental Justice Area?
Please use the [NYC MOCEJ's map of Environmental Justice Areas](#) for reference.
 - ☐ Yes, Designated as DAC (Disadvantaged Community)
 - ☐ No, Not designated as DAC (Disadvantaged Community)
- Total acreage of open space served:
This field is required for all organizations applying for support of activities on NYC parkland (parks, playgrounds, etc.). If this is not applicable to your organization, or you can not find your open space using the instructions below, please write N/A.

This information can be found on the [NYC Parks website](#) by typing in the name of the open space in the search bar at the top of the page and selecting your park/open space from the list of results on the right underneath the map. The total acreage will be listed near the bottom of the following page in the sidebar on the right-hand side of the screen.

Application Page 3 of 3: Proposal Narrative and Financials

Proposal Name: _____

Programming Areas

Please select up to 3 of the following program areas you feel are most relevant to your proposal. A single activity may combine multiple programming areas, or you may choose to address each program area through separate activities within your proposal.

To see more details about each of these programming areas and examples of supported activities, see "Types of Work Supported" pg. 5-6.

- ☐ Stewardship
- ☐ Environmental Action
- ☐ Organizational Development
- ☐ Youth Development
- ☐ Health and Wellness
- ☐ Arts and Culture
- ☐ Urban Forest Grants brought to you by Con Edison

Proposal Narrative

Please respond to each prompt to the best of your abilities.

- Proposal Overview: Please summarize the activities for which you are requesting funding. In your response, try to answer the questions of who, what, where, when, and how. (300 words)
- Community Needs: Please describe the community that your organization intends to serve with this proposal, the needs being addressed, and how your organization is positioned to meet

those needs. Your answer should explain why this proposal would be important to the specific community you are working in. (200 words)

- Goals & Measurable Outcomes: Please share between one to three (1-3) goals that you will use to measure the success of your proposed activities. Each goal should include a measurable target (i.e. number), a short explanation of steps you will take to achieve your goal, and how you will measure the outcomes of your work.

Examples:

Goal 1: We aim to support 100 hours of volunteer stewardship work through our bi-weekly park clean-ups. We will attend local community board meetings to promote our work and measure volunteer hours using volunteer sign-in and sign-out sheets at every event.

Goal 2: We will increase the average number of children served by our healthy eating workshops by 50% (from 20 in 2023). We will accomplish this by flyer-ing near local schools ahead of each workshop and measure our numbers with a combination of online RSVPs and photographs of the event.

Goal 3: We plan to weed, mulch, and plant flowers in 30 street tree beds in our neighborhood through monthly stewardship events. We will keep track of our work by recording an initial health assessment of all trees before receiving care, take photos of each tree bed after stewardship events, and conduct a final tree health assessment at the end of the grant cycle.

- Goal #1 (100 words)
 - Goal #2 (100 words)
 - Goal #3 (100 words)
- Proposal Timeline: Please provide a list of key dates for your proposal with a focus on event start dates and important milestones. No grant funded activities should be planned for dates prior to November 2025. (100 words)
- Organizational Partners: Briefly list any of your community partners or affiliated organizations that will play an active role in carrying out your proposal, if applicable. If this is not applicable to your organization, please write N/A. (150 words)

Financials

Select the range that aligns with your organization's total expenses provided on Page 2 of this application.

☐ **\$0-\$9,999**

- Have you received a grant from Partnerships for Parks / City Parks Foundation since 2020?

☐ Yes

- Are you requesting one-year or two-year funding support?

☐ One Year: You are eligible to apply for one-year funding support between \$1,000 - \$2,500.

■ Total Funding Request (\$)

☐ Two Years: You are eligible to apply for funding support between \$1,000 - \$2,500 per year. The amount entered below will be disbursed at the beginning of year one and year two of your grant agreement.

■ Total Funding Requested Per Year (\$)

☐ No

- You are eligible to apply for one-year funding support between \$1,000 - \$2,500.

■ Total Funding Request (\$)

☐ **\$10,000+**

- Have you received a grant from Partnerships for Parks / City Parks Foundation since 2020?

☐ Yes

- Are you requesting one-year or two-year funding support?

☐ One Year: You may apply for funding support up to 25% of your total expenses for the most recently completed calendar year, with a maximum of \$40,000.

■ Total Funding Request (\$)

☐ Two Years: You may apply for funding support up to 25% of your total expenses for the most recently completed calendar year, with a maximum of \$40,000 per year. The amount entered below will be the total amount disbursed at the beginning of year one and year two of your grant agreement.

■ Total Funding Requested Per Year (\$)

☐ No

- You are eligible to apply for one-year funding support up to 25% of your total expenses for the most recently completed calendar year, with a maximum of \$40,000.

■ Total Funding Requested Per Year (\$)

- Funding Request: Please attach a budget for your proposal that details the total estimated costs associated with the activities outlined in this grant proposal. Only include expenses that will be paid for using your NYC Green Fund Grassroots award.

The budget should be reasonable considering the activities, output, and scale of the project. The funding request should NOT exceed the Total Funding Request you provided above. When submitting your Funding Request, keep in mind the eligible and ineligible expenses detailed in "Items Eligible for Funding" on pg. 7. If applying for a two-year grant, please include a two-year project budget.

A budget template is available [here](#) for support, but this template is not required. An example is available for review [here](#). (File Upload, Max size: 50MB)

- Additional Sources of Revenue: Briefly list any additional confirmed sources of revenue (including the amounts) that you will use to carry out the activities outlined in this grant proposal. If this is not applicable to your organization, please write N/A. (100 words)
- Funding Need: Please describe the current state of your organization's finances and why securing funding support from the NYC Green Fund is an immediate financial need. (100 words)

Supplemental Materials (Optional)

If you would like to provide any additional information or materials for the NYC Green Fund Grassroots grant committee to review, please share below.

- Upload 1 (File Upload, Max size: 50MB)
- Upload 2 (File Upload, Max size: 50MB)
- Link to Online Material: You may provide a link to relevant online material, such as a YouTube video featuring your organization or a news article discussing your work.
- Is there anything else you want us to know that you haven't had the chance to say? (100 words)

Final Certification

- ☐ I certify that I am authorized to submit this application on behalf of my group and that the information provided on this form is true to the best of my knowledge.
- ☐ I certify that my organization is authorized to complete the work included in this application and will obtain all permissions necessary prior to implementation.

City Parks Foundation reserves the right to share information provided on this application during the evaluation, reporting, and promotion of this grant program.