

Urban and Community Forestry Assistance Grants



**Division of Urban and Communication Forestry
Virgin Islands Department of Agriculture**

UCF Grant Application Packet

**Applications Accepted:
First Monday in May
and
First Monday in November**

**Urban and Community Forestry
Virgin Islands Department of Agriculture
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Estate Lower Love
Kingshill, VI 00850
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URBAN AND COMMUNITY FORESTRY

ASSISTANCE GRANTS

Introduction

The Virgin Islands Urban and Community Forestry (U&CF) Assistance Program is designed to encourage citizen involvement in creating and supporting long term and sustained Urban and Community Forestry Programs throughout the territory. Through the competitive Challenge Cost Share Grant Program, the U&CF Program works to build local capacity for Urban and Community Forestry activities. The U&CF Program seeks proposals for project funding from local government, nonprofit organizations and civic and/or educational organizations. Groups with projects in line with the listed priorities for this program (page 4) are strongly encouraged to apply.

Background

The U&CF Program represents a collaborative effort between the U.S. Forest Service and the Virgin Islands Department of Agriculture. A sixteen member advisory Council supports the U&CF, with membership from public and private sectors within the territory. The Council works to promote education, leadership, technical support and policy development.

Program Goal: The primary goal of the U&CF Assistance Program is to encourage citizen involvement in creating and supporting long term and sustained Urban and Community Forestry programs throughout the U.S. Virgin Islands.

OVERVIEW

Eligible Applicants: Any nonfederal organization operating within the United States Virgin Islands may apply for a Challenge Cost-Share Grant (e.g. communities, nonprofit organizations, neighborhood associations, civic groups, educational institutions, volunteer groups, local govt., etc.). Projects must be in line with U&CF Program Priorities (page 4). Collaboration with federal agencies is encouraged. However, a federal agency may not receive funding through this grant program (conflict of interest issues will be addressed appropriately).

Available Funding: The recommended range for proposals is between \$1,000 and \$20,000. Please note: the total amount of funds available changes on an annual basis, as will the amount allocated to any one project.

Ineligible Proposals:

- Funding for every grant cycle is intended for programs, projects, or activities not currently being funded and cannot be used to substitute for existing funding needs.
- Urban and Community Forestry grants are not intended *solely* for beautification plantings.
- This is **NOT** a program that funds strictly agricultural projects such as community gardens. Every submitted project **MUST** have a forestry component to be considered for funding, as the funds

for this program come from the US Forest Service.

Administration: An appointed subcommittee of the U. S. Virgin Islands Urban & Community Forestry (U&CF) Council, Inc., will review applications and make recommendations to the Council and the State Forester for final approval.

Grant Period: Grantees will be given one year to complete their projects. The grant period begins when the contract between the VI Department of Agriculture and the grantees is signed by the Territorial Forester (the Commissioner of Agriculture).

Reporting and Payment of Funds: Payments are allocated on a quarterly basis. Quarterly payments are contingent on sufficient accomplishment reporting from grantees and the subsequent recommendation of the Urban and Community Forestry Coordinator. Failure to submit prompt and proper reports will result in the withholding of funds by the Urban and Community Forestry Program. Grantee reporting is imperative as it is the primary source of grant tracking by the U&CF Coordinator. Please notify the U&CF Coordinator if there are any delays and/or problems so they can be discussed and remedied in a timely manner.

Recognizing Funding Sources: All printed material, signs and other products resulting from this grant must recognize the source of funding (“This publication is made possible through a grant from the USDA Forest Service.”). In addition, any publications resulting from the project must include language that complies with federal Civil Rights laws. Publications or outreach materials must, at the very least, include the following statement: “This institution is an equal opportunity provider.”

Grant Preparation Assistance: Assistance in developing proposals is *strongly encouraged* to all potential applicants of the Urban and Community Forestry Assistance Program. The Coordinator will provide site consultation and writing assistance as well as provide guidance as to a project’s suitability under this grant program. Previous and experienced applicants are also encouraged to discuss potential projects with the program coordinator before proposal submittal.

Program Priorities:

- ❖ Information, communication, and the dissemination of technological knowledge are keys to strengthening urban forestry programs and empowering communities and urban forestry professionals.
- ❖ As part of a long-term plan for healthy urban and community forestry projects in the Virgin Islands, it is important to assess the values, perceptions, and needs of our growing multicultural population with respect to urban and community forestry. The development of multilingual educational materials will be a key to reaching these populations with an urban and community forestry message.
- ❖ Taking a holistic view of urban and community forestry, it is clear that both people and natural systems are part of every urban forest. A holistic view reveals a continuum of urban and community forestry related issues and concerns from inner city greening to wildfire and pest programs in rural interface areas. Finally, a holistic view of urban and community forestry shows

that a concern for urban trees cannot be entirely separated from concerns about urban air quality, storm water runoff, wildlife and fish habitat, and other related ecosystem concerns.

- ❖ Educating people about the importance of urban and community forests or marketing the value of urban and community forestry projects is a necessary part of a long-term strategy to develop and preserve healthy urban and community forests.
- ❖ Tools and techniques are needed for restoring ecosystems to a more natural state after they have been damaged by construction, storms, and invasive species. Restoring (urban) ecosystems to a more natural state includes planning for species diversity in both plants and wildlife, and using indigenous species where appropriate. Using these same tools and techniques on new projects can prevent many problems in the future.
- ❖ Understanding and practicing good urban forestry can benefit many small communities that are struggling to retain businesses or bring businesses back to a newly revitalized downtown area. Healthy urban forests give communities a more liveable image and can therefore assist in improving the economy.
- ❖ Stimulating the development of additional funding through unique partnerships or non-traditional sources, as well as cultivating private sector partnerships, is key to sustaining a long-term urban forest.
- ❖ An ethic that recognizes the value of trees, forests, and other related natural resources in protecting ecosystem functions must be instilled in land development and city revitalization efforts.

GRANT CATEGORIES

- 1. Education and Public Outreach about Urban Forests**
- 2. Urban Forest Inventory and Analysis**
- 3. Managing Existing Urban Forest**

Examples of fundable projects within each category include:

Education and Public Outreach about Urban Forests

- Number of Stakeholders Aware of the Urban and Community Forestry Program
 - Increase in numbers of community groups involved in U&CF Program Projects
- Protect and Publicize Remarkable/Heritage Trees
 - Increase in the numbers of remarkable/heritage trees protected and promoted

- Reduce Risk to Forest Health from Invasive Species
 - Increase percentage of nursery stock

Urban Forest Inventory and Analysis

- Collect data to determine wildlife usage of urban forests as corridors and habitats
 - Record numbers and kinds of wildlife using urban forests.
- Identify and manage Hazardous Trees
 - Inventory street trees on all islands and plan for continued maintenance

Managing existing Urban Forests

- Increase number of trees planted through an urban tree planting program
 - Numbers of trees planted
 - Number of acres converted/planted
- Develop and implement management plans for developed areas
 - Develop local Land and Water Use Plans
 - Handbook of Correct Development Options
- Development of certified arborists as a source of reliable technical expertise
 - Number of new and renewed certified arborists
- Write and enact a VI Tree Law
 - Enactment of a viable positive tree law
 - Help community associations create tree policies

APPLICATION PROCEDURE

Please submit your proposals according to the format on page 8 to the Urban and Community Forestry Coordinator at:

Email address: Preston.brooks.ctr@doa.vi.gov

You may also submit your full proposal by mail to:

Urban and Community Forestry Program Coordinator
VI Department of Agriculture
RR 1 Box 10345
Estate Lower Love
Kingshill VI, 00850

Proposals may also be sent or delivered to the St. Thomas and St. John offices of the VI Department of Agriculture.

Full proposals must be received by **5:00 p.m. on the first Monday of May and November each**

year. Proposals can be emailed to the Urban and Community Forestry Program Coordinator.

Applicants will be notified of the results by the Urban and Community Forestry Program Coordinator via regular mail, or by email if the address is provided. Results are normally available six weeks after the due date of the proposals.

PAYMENT PROCESS

The funds awarded under the grant are available on a reimbursement basis after verification of match and in accordance with a quarterly payment schedule, beginning with the start date of the project. Grantees must file a request for payment and send records of expenditures along with documented costs to the Virgin Islands Department of Agriculture, Forestry Division. In certain cases it is possible to obtain an advance of funds, however the U&CF Coordinator will evaluate the progress of the project to determine eligibility for receipt of advance of funds.

FEDERAL REGULATIONS

Grantees must comply with all Federal regulations pertaining to Federal grants. Federal requirements apply to different types of organizations that are awarded grants. Requirements include:

- 1) Federal Cost Principles
- 2) Federal Management Standards
- 3) Federal Audit Requirements
- 4) USDA implementing regulations

Requirements are defined through Office of Management and Budget (OMB) circulars, Federal Acquisition Regulations (FARs), and Code of Federal Regulations (CFRs). The following provides the applicable regulations and requirements by organization type.

<i>Cost Principles</i>	<i>Type of Organization</i>
OMB Circular A21	Educational Organization
OMB Circular A122	Nonprofit
OMB Circular A87	State and local governments
FAR, Part 31	Profit Organizations

<i>Federal Management Standards/USDA Regs.</i>	<i>Type of Organization</i>
OMB Circular A110	Profit, educational, nonprofit
OMB Circular A102	State and local government

<i>Federal Audit Requirements/USDA Regs.</i>	<i>Type of Organization</i>
OMB Circular A133	Educational, nonprofit, state and local govt's
Cognizant agency	Profit organizations

Copies of these documents can be accessed on the World Wide Web via the Internet at:

OMB Circulars

<http://www.whitehouse.gov/WH/EOP/OMB/html/circular.html>

FAR

<http://www.gsa.gov/far/9037/html>

CFRs

<http://www.access.gpo.gov/nara.cfr>

Grantees must have a current DUNS number to receive funds. Grantees must certify that they are not debarred from this grant program. Grantees should not conduct business with individuals or organizations debarred from Federal grant projects.

Applicants must document project approval by the authorized representation of the local governing body, organization or institution applying for the grant.

All Projects must have a work plan and tree planting projects also require a maintenance plan approved by the Territorial Forester (Commissioner of Agriculture) or his/her designee. Plant materials used in tree planting projects must, at a minimum, meet the American Standard for Nursery Stock, and tree protection and maintenance must meet American National Standards Institute (ANSI) standards.

Record Keeping Requirements

Records will be maintained according to all Federal Regulations. The financial management system of the grantees shall meet the following standards:

- Records shall comply with generally accepted accounting principles
- Records will document allowable costs
- Records will be supported by source documentation, such as cancelled checks, paid bills, payrolls, time and attendance records, contracts, etc. Invoices must be marked paid and be referenced as to how payment was made (i.e. check number). Records will be maintained for three years following final payment.

Proposal Format

Submitted proposals are required to be clear and concise as well as address an urban and community forestry need and meet the objectives of the U&CF Assistance Program. Examples of eligible projects are listed on pages 4 and 5.

Information to be presented includes:

1. A completed grant application cover sheet. **This is the only form that requires an original signature and must be mailed or scanned and emailed!**
2. A completed grant application. This consists of pages detailing:
 - The purpose, objective or mission statement of the applying organization as well as the purpose and objectives of the project. The project's single purpose should be explained in one or two sentences. Objectives can be multiple **however multiple projects should be submitted in separate applications.**

- A narrative that details how the project will be accomplished and include these elements:
 - I. Activities
 - II. Participants (project personnel, volunteers, corporate sponsor, etc)
 - III. Administration
 - IV. Facilities and equipment
 - V. Timetable
 - VI. End result: description of finalized project.
 - VII. Letter(s) of Support

Distinct project components must be itemized for ease of monitoring interim project status.

- A descriptive narrative of the project’s benefits that is limited to one page. Benefits to the local urban and community forestry program, public relations and educational benefits as well as potential for continuation of the project should be included. Corporate, volunteer and citizen involvement should be identified in the narrative.
- A detailed project budget should include financial assistance, sources and description of match, administrative costs, materials, maintenance costs, and costs of professional services. It is strongly encouraged that applicants use the budget worksheet contained in this request for proposals. A budget worksheet example is given on page 9.
- If the project involves tree planting, complete the tree application form plus include:
 - i. A detailed three year maintenance plan that specifies the entity responsible for maintenance.
 - ii. A resolution of endorsement from the appropriate government agency if planting is on government property (federal or local).
 - iii. Compliance with the Department of Public Works if planting is done on territorial rights- of-way.
 - iv. Consultation with WAPA to determine whether water or sewer lines are present.
- Letters of Support – A letter of support is required from each individual, agency, or organization listed as a cooperator, collaborator, or provider of in kind or financial support to the project.

Note: The Virgin Islands Department of Agriculture is not responsible for any contractors, volunteers, or local government employees working on a project.

Projects will be evaluated on **need, cost effectiveness, sustainability, environmental merit, visibility, partnership/volunteerism, demonstrated commitment, and vital communities reached.**

For Further Information

Contact:

Virgin Islands Urban and Community Forestry Assistance Program
 Department of Agriculture
 RR 1 Box 10345
 Estate Lower Love
 Kingshill, VI 00850
 Phone: (340) 778-0997 ext. 240

SAMPLE BUDGET

Applicant: Green Island, USVI

Project: Inventory and management plan

Total Cost: \$25,960.00

Amount Requested from U&CF: \$9,650

Amount of Match (\$ and In-kind): \$16,310.00

Green Island, USVI has received a grant to do an urban forestry inventory and management plan of roadside trees. They plan to conduct the inventory with help from in house staff and volunteer help. They will contract with a consultant and use in-house staff to write the management plan.

Item	Grant Share	Match \$	In-Kind Match	Total
Component: Inventory				
Personnel				
Staff -310 hrs @\$25/hr		\$7,750.00		\$7,750.00
Volunteers- 160 hrs @ \$22.50*			\$3,520.00	\$3,520.00
Consultant Services – 28 hours @ \$75/hr	\$2,100.00			\$2,100.00
Computer		\$1,400.00		\$1,400.00
Use of Truck- 160 hours @ \$9/hr			\$1,440.00	\$1,440.00
Inventory Software	\$1,550.00			\$1,550.00
Supplies and/ or equipment (specify)	\$0.00			\$0.00
Component: Management Plan				
Personnel: Staff 48hrs @ \$25/hr		\$1,200.00		\$1,200.00
Consultant: Tree People, LLC 120 hrs @\$50/hr	\$6,000.00			\$6,000.00
Printing		\$1,000.00		\$1,000.00
Total Cost	\$9,650.00	\$11,350.00	\$4,960.00	\$25,960.00

*federally accepted rate for volunteers, 2016 update