



Inflation Reduction Act – Urban and Community Forestry

The following is a summary of the USDA Forest Service Urban and Community Forestry Inflation Reduction Act program and priorities.

The Inflation Reduction Act, Subtitle D, Sec. 23003 (a). State and Private Forestry Conservation Programs Appropriations purpose is to provide support for tree planting and related activities under the existing authorities in the Cooperative Forestry Assistance Act of 1978 (PL 95-313), Section 9. Funding will be made available through competitive subawards to nature-deprived populations and disadvantaged communities for activities such as **urban wood utilization, urban food forests, extreme heat mitigation and workforce development**.

The USDA Forest Service Urban and Community Forestry Program is a covered program under the Agency's [Justice40 Initiative](#) established through Executive Order 13985. To advance the mission of Justice40, proposals that deliver 40% of the benefits of IRA investments through established partnerships with local organizations working to support disadvantaged communities will receive priority consideration.

The USDA has signed the Interagency **Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) on Promoting Equitable Access to Nature in Nature-Deprived Communities**, which seeks to reduce the number of people without access to parks and nature in their communities. The [America the Beautiful Initiative](#) supports the prioritization of locally led conservation and park projects in communities that disproportionately lack access to nature and its benefits.

Request for Applications

Applications are now being accepted for USDA Forest Service Urban and Community Forestry Inflation Reduction Act funding assistance. Funding helps eligible organizations complete urban and community forestry projects located in disadvantaged communities.

- Application period
 - Opens Oct. 1, 2023 and closes at 5 p.m. EST Oct. 31, 2023.
- Eligible Organizations
 - Local governments
 - 501c3 organizations
 - Public schools, colleges and universities
 - Tribal governments
- Requirements and Match Waiver
 - All prerequisites detailed on our Financial Assistance and U&CF Practices and Activities webpages apply.
 - Projects must provide 100% benefit to disadvantaged communities as defined by the [Climate and Economic Justice Screening Tool \(CEJST\)](#). The work must exclusively impact residents of or be located within one or more of these CEJST Disadvantaged Census Tracts within a municipality.
 - Match requirement is waived. Applicants and grantees are required to provide the CEJST track number(s) identifying the location of the project and a written explanation of how the project will impact the disadvantaged community(s).
 - **Eighty percent** of the project cost must deliver urban and community forestry programming benefits to the Disadvantaged Census Tracts targeted in the project. **Twenty percent** of the project cost is available for administrative costs to facilitate delivery of these program benefits.
 - All products, publications or signage created with funding from this program we be required to include language acknowledging the contribution of the USDA IRA U&CF program.

**N.C. Forest Service Urban and Community Forestry Financial Assistance
2023-3 Request for Applications
Urban and Community Forestry Inflation Reduction Act Program**



- Grant Contract
 - Awardees will enter a grant contract with the N.C. Forest Service.
 - The awardee will complete the work, pay for the completion of the work, submit a reimbursement request to us for approval and reimbursement.
 - Reporting – Awardees will be required to maintain and submit documentation proving project expenses, provide interim progress reports, deliverable accomplishment and a final report in accordance with respective federal, state and NCFS policies and procedures. The final report will be an approximately two-page infographic style report sharing the project need, objectives and accomplishments.
- Award
 - See [NCFS U&CF Financial Assistance webpage](#). for awarding information.
 - Awards and grant contracts will be issued by Feb. 1, 2024 at the latest.
- Project Development
 - You will develop a project with a primary project objective to complete a community forestry activity, urban forestry practice, or administration and staffing. Completing your primary project objective will most likely, but not necessarily, require the completion of additional objectives, community forestry activities and urban forestry practices. Visit and review the NCFS U&CF Financial Assistance webpage, the companion Financial Assistance Practices & Activities webpage and U&CF Resources & Specifications webpage for more information, guidance and planning tools.
 - Complete the project planning process as instructed utilizing the following documents which can be found on the U&CF Resources & Specifications webpage.
 - U&CF Financial Assistance Project Planner document.
 - Financial Assistance Project Schedule and Description document
 - NCFS Financial Assistance No Match Budget Worksheet
 - Reimbursable project work may not begin on an awarded project until there is an executed grant contract in place between the grantee and the NCFS. You may plan for a project start date of Feb. 1, 2024.
 - **Note: This RFA is the first offering of biannual RFAs that will be offered in January and July each year forward.** Take the time necessary to develop a well-planned project with clear objectives, schedule and budget. Incomplete applications will be rejected. Well-planned projects that meet all the guidelines of the program will rank the highest in award ranking. If you are not ready now, apply at the next RFA offering.
 - Informational and training webinars and workshops will be held periodically. Select **Subscribe** in the **Follow Us** section at the bottom of any NCFS webpage to receive U&CF news and training opportunities.
 - NCFS U&CF staff and NCFS county staff are available for guidance.
- Application
 - There are three electronic applications to choose from depending on your project's primary objective are as follows: Administration and Staffing, Community Forestry Projects and Urban Forestry Projects.
 - The information you developed in your project planning process will be used to complete your application. You will need the following to complete your application.
 - A copy of the respective application found on the NCFS U&CF Resources & Specifications webpage. This shows the questions you will be asked and all the information you will need to complete the application.
 - Completed U&CF Financial Assistance Project Planner document.

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- Completed Financial Assistance Project Schedule and Description document. This document must also be emailed as instructed in the application before the close of the application deadline.
- Completed NCFS Financial Assistance No Match Budget Worksheet. This document must also be emailed as instructed in the application before the close of the application deadline.
- U&CF Administration and Staffing projects – A proposed staff job description or consulting contract services specification is required. This document must also be emailed as instructed in the application before the close of the application deadline.
- **IRA Administration and Staffing Application** -- Add community forestry staff, and travel expenses and office equipment and supplies needed to engage disadvantaged communities and lead the development and implementation of urban and community forestry projects.
 - Financial Assistance
 - A total of \$2,000,000 in assistance is available.
 - Term – 12 to 18 months
 - Maximum Project Cost -- \$100,000
 - Eligible Activities
 - Full-time staff -- Proposed staff job description required.
 - Part-time staff -- Proposed staff job description required.
 - U&CF consulting contract – Proposed consulting contract services specification required.
 - Travel expenses
 - Office equipment and supplies

[Apply for Administration and Staffing by Clicking Here](#)

- **IRA Community Forestry Projects Application** – Primary project objective is to complete a community forestry activity but may include completing urban forestry practices, and administration and staffing.
 - Financial Assistance
 - A total of \$1,237,500 in assistance is available.
 - Project Term – up to three years
 - Maximum Project Cost -- \$300,000
 - Eligible Community Forestry Activity Categories
 - Community Forestry Plans
 - Education and Outreach Events
 - Media Products and Campaigns
 - Stakeholder Surveys
 - Volunteer Stewardship Program
 - Advocacy Group Development
 - Workforce Development
 - USDA IRA U&CF Project Priorities Application Guidance
 - Food Forest – The primary objective will be to develop a Food Forest community forestry plan, found under Community Forestry Plans. Developing a Food Forest will



require the completion of several community forestry activities and urban forestry practices.

- Workforce Development -- The primary objective will be to develop a Workforce Development program. Participants in the program must be residents of a CEJST Disadvantaged Census Tract. Developing a Workforce Development program will require the completion of several community forestry activities, perhaps administration and staffing, and urban forestry practices.

[Apply for Community Forestry Project by Clicking Here](#)

- **IRA Urban Forestry Projects Application** -- Primary project objective is to complete an urban forestry practice but may include completing community forestry activities, and administration and staffing.
 - Financial Assistance
 - A total of \$1,237,500 in assistance is available.
 - Project Term – up to three years
 - Maximum Project Cost -- \$300,000
 - Eligible Urban Forestry Practice Categories
 - Inventories and Assessments
 - Plan Development
 - Ordinances and Policy Development
 - Tree Planting and Maintenance
 - Completing practices on private property are eligible. See U&CF Resources and Specifications/Financial Assistance webpage for guidelines.
 - USDA IRA U&CF Project Priorities Application Guidance
 - Extreme Heat Mitigation -- The primary project objective will be to develop and implement an Urban Forestry Plan that begins with completing an Urban Heat Island Assessment. It will also require the completion of several urban forestry practices and perhaps community forestry activities.
 - Urban Wood Utilization – The primary project objective will be to develop and implement an urban wood utilization urban forestry practice plan. It will also require the completion of several urban forestry practices and perhaps community forestry activities.

[Apply for Urban Forestry Project by Clicking Here](#)