

**N.C. Forest Service Urban and Community Forestry Financial Assistance Program
2024-1 Request for Applications
Inflation Reduction Act Program**



Inflation Reduction Act – Urban and Community Forestry

For your information, 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 in urban areas located in disadvantaged census tracts as defined by the [Climate and Economic Justice Screening Tool \(CEJST\)](#) Version 1, Nov. 22, 2022.

- Application period
 - Opens Jan. 1, 2024, and closes Feb. 29, 2024, at 5 p.m.
- Eligible Organizations
 - Local governments
 - 501c3 organizations
 - Public schools, colleges and universities
 - Tribal governments
- Financial Assistance
 - Community forestry project goal - \$2,500,000 available for assistance.
 - Urban forestry project goal - \$2,500,000 available for assistance.
 - Term – 12 months
 - Maximum project cost - \$300,000 per year
- Eligible Project Goal and Objectives
 - Education and training - Development and delivery of educational and training products, events and programs. Attend training and acquire a U&CF professional credential.
 - Inventories and assessments - Resource inventories, assessments, program reviews and surveys.
 - Outreach - Development and delivery of outreach products and events to inform and engage the community in urban and community forestry.

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- Ordinances - Development of local ordinances defining local government's role in managing the urban forest.
- Plans - Urban and community forestry plans that guide a community's management at the community wide scale.
- Tree maintenance - Develop and completion of a tree removal and/or pruning project.
- Tree planting - Development and completion of a tree planting project.
- Maximum of six objectives per project application.
- Requirements and Match Waiver
 - All prerequisites detailed on our Financial Assistance Program webpage and in the NCFS U&CF FAP Objectives, Practices and Activities fact sheet apply.
 - Projects must provide full benefit to disadvantaged communities as defined by the [Climate and Economic Justice Screening Tool \(CEJST\)](#) Version 1, Nov. 22, 2022. 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 would be required to include language acknowledging the contribution of the USDA Forest Service IRA U&CF 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 and submit a reimbursement request to the N.C. Forest Service for approval and reimbursement.
 - Reimbursable project work may not begin on an awarded project until a grant contract is in place between the grantee and the N.C. Forest Service. Awardees may plan for a project start date of July 1, 2024.
 - 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 N.C. Forest Service policies and procedures. The final report must be professionally published in a infographic style report no more than four pages 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 May 31, 2024.
- Project Development
 - Visit and review the [NCFS U&CF Financial Assistance and U&CF Resources & Specifications](#) webpages for more information, guidance and planning tools.
 - Complete the project planning process as instructed utilizing the following documents found on the U&CF Resources and Specifications webpage.
 - FAP Objectives, Practices and Activities fact sheet
 - FAP Project Planner document.

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- FAP Work Plan
- FAP Budget Work Sheet-No Cost Share
- Applicants may plan for a project start date of July 1, 2024.
- **Note: This RFA will be offered in January and July each year.** Take the time necessary to develop a well planned project with a clear project need, goal, objectives, work plan and budget. Incomplete applications will be rejected. 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 N.C. Forest Service webpage to receive U&CF news and training opportunities.
- N.C. Forest Service U&CF staff and N.C. Forest Service county staff are available for guidance.
- Application
 - The application is electronic.
 - The information you developed in your project planning process will be used to complete your application. You will need the following documents to complete your application. These documents are found on the [NCFS U&CF Resources & Specifications webpage](#) under the Financial Assistance section.
 - A copy of the application. This shows the questions you will be asked and all the information you will need to complete the application.
 - Completed FAP Project Planner document.
 - Completed FAP Work Plan. This document must also be emailed as instructed in the application before the close of the application deadline.
 - Completed FAP Budget Work Sheet-No Cost Share. This document must also be emailed as instructed in the application before the close of the application deadline.

[Apply for Inflation Reduction Act U&CF Projects by Clicking Here](#)