



**GREENPOINT  
COMMUNITY  
ENVIRONMENTAL  
FUND**

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# 2015 Greenpoint Community Environmental Fund Request for Proposals

The Greenpoint Community Environmental Fund (GCEF) is a community environmental grant program created by the New York State Attorney General's Office and the Department of Environmental Conservation (the State). Funding for the GCEF was obtained by the State in a settlement with ExxonMobil over oil and related environmental contamination at its Greenpoint, Brooklyn facility and in the surrounding community.

The goal of the GCEF is to secure significant environmental improvements in Greenpoint. Specifically, the GCEF is:

- Designed to support projects that address the community's environmental improvement priorities, such as improving water quality, groundwater, open space, toxic pollution, and air quality; and
- Committed to a transparent and objective process, and to engaging and partnering with the Greenpoint community. This includes ensuring the community has a direct, continuing role in guiding the GCEF's development and implementation.

This is the second Request for Proposals (RFP) for projects that address the community's environmental improvement priorities. It is expected that this will be the final grant cycle.

The State established a Greenpoint Community Advisory Panel (CAP) -- a group of Greenpoint residents, representatives of local organizations and elected officials -- to provide direct, ongoing input to the State on the GCEF. The CAP has played a central role in guiding the Fund's development and implementation, including providing guidance on the process for soliciting, evaluating, and selecting projects to receive grant funding. The CAP assisted in the development of this RFP.

A partnership of National Fish and Wildlife Foundation (NFWF) and the Greenpoint-based North Brooklyn Development Corporation (NBDC) was selected by the State through a competitive process to serve as the GCEF's General Administrator (GA). The GA is responsible for managing the day-to-day operations of the GCEF on behalf of the State.

## GRANT CATEGORIES & MATCH

### Small Grants

Grants ranging in value from \$5,000 to \$ 100,000 will be available for small- to medium-scale environmental improvement projects. Examples of Small Grant projects include (but are not limited to): installing one or multiple greenstreet improvements, reducing energy use in public buildings through energy efficiency improvements, citizen science air or water quality monitoring, installing a rain garden at a park; expanding tree boxes on a block; planting trees and/or native plant gardens at a school; holding a trash clean up event; planning for site environmental improvements conducting a reusable bag giveaway; and conducting an energy audit or an indoor air quality audit at public facilities. **Match:** Applicants are **encouraged** to provide a matching contribution of cash or in-kind support.

### Large Grants

Grants ranging in value from \$101,000 to \$ 600,000 will be available for environmental improvement projects that have a more significant scale and scope than Small Grants. These projects typically will involve multiple sites and/or projects at a single site that integrate multiple environmental benefits. Examples of Large Grant projects include (but are not limited to): green street projects; greening public facilities inside and out; implementing a community-wide litter reduction or anti-idling campaign; facilitating community-wide investment in renewable energy or energy efficiency; development of new community gardens; large-scale site or neighborhood-wide planning, design or engineering related to the development and implementation of environmental projects; reducing releases of toxic pollutants and minimizing public exposure to them; neighborhood-wide education and environmental stewardship programs with broad-based citizen participation; and acquiring and improving open spaces. **Match:** Applicants for Large Grants are **encouraged** to provide a 1:1 or greater match that can be any combination of cash or in-kind support (i.e., GCEF grant funds should make up a maximum of one-half of the total project costs).

### Legacy Grants

Grants ranging in value from \$601,000 to \$4,250,000 will be available for environmental improvement projects that provide exceptional benefits to the Greenpoint community. Such projects would provide one or more environmental benefits (e.g., air quality, water quality or open space, etc.) and as a result of, for example, their size or scale, the need to acquire land, the number of Greenpoint residents they serve, their expected life, the level of community support for the project or other specialized project characteristics require more funding than a Large Grant project. **Match:** Applicants for Legacy Grants **must** provide at least a 2:1 match that can be any combination of cash or in-kind support (i.e., GCEF grant funds should make up a maximum of one-third of the total project costs).

## GENERAL GUIDANCE FOR APPLICANTS

- Projects must be located in Greenpoint. For the purposes of the GCEF, Greenpoint is defined as the area of Brooklyn, New York encompassed by 11222 Zip Code and the entirety of McCarren Park as shown on the GCEF boundary map at [www.gcefund.org](http://www.gcefund.org).
- Projects must primarily benefit the Greenpoint public.

The primary benefit of projects must be a discernable environmental benefit. For the purposes of the GCEF, an environmental benefit is defined as the protection, improvement, or restoration of an environmental media (i.e., air, water, land) for the purpose of improving public health and/or the environment.

- Projects must address environmental areas of concern to the community, including, but not limited to: *water quality, groundwater, open space, reduction of toxic pollution, and air quality*.
- Legacy Grant proposals must describe the specialized project characteristics (e.g., project size or scale, need to acquire land for the project, number of Greenpoint residents serviced by the project, expected project life, level of community support for the project) that justify more funding than a Large Grant.
- The following project types are ineligible to receive funding from the GCEF: pure research, capital campaigns; creation of endowments; event sponsorships; and projects for re-granting purposes.
- GCEF funding cannot be used for political advocacy, lobbying, boycotts, litigation expenses, terrorist activities, or activities conducted in violation of the Foreign Corrupt Practices Act.
- Projects must also be consistent with the Consent Decree for the ExxonMobil settlement,<sup>1</sup> and the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation's (DEC) Environmental Benefits Policy.<sup>2</sup> Accordingly, a project cannot:
  - be a project of ExxonMobil, or others that are the result of legally mandated action(s) under local, state, or federal law and/or associated with administrative permit conditions or terms of settlement agreements;
  - be a project that ExxonMobil already intends to perform;
  - cover or reimburse costs the State would incur during the normal course of

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<sup>1</sup> Consent Decree in the matter of State of New York v. Exxon Mobil Corporation, No. 07-CV-2902 (KAM/RML) (E.D.N.Y.), ordered on March 1, 2011.

<sup>2</sup> New York State Department of Environmental Conservation, Commissioner Policy, CP-37 / Environmental Benefit Projects Policy.

business, including payments for State staff, except that the DEC Commissioner or DEC General Counsel may authorize an Environmental Benefit Project (EBP) that includes the reimbursement of extraordinary expenses incurred by the DEC in the implementation or oversight of a specific EBP; or

- generate revenue for the State.

In addition:

- a project shall not result in the State extending the time within which ExxonMobil must comply with the Consent Decree;
  - an educational project must be implemented by a third party not affiliated with ExxonMobil; and
  - a project must comply with all applicable laws and should be consistent with all applicable policies.
- Eligible applicants include non-profit 501(c) organizations, tribal and local governments, and academic and educational institutions. Individuals and for-profit businesses are not eligible applicants. Groups without 501(c) non-profit status may partner with an eligible applicant, including a fiscal sponsor. Fiscal sponsors are non-profit organizations that enable the movement of resources from funders to organizations that share the fiscal sponsor's mission. The fiscal sponsor handles donations and assumes fiduciary responsibility for the grant.
  - Recognizing that more technically complicated projects often require a phase of planning and design, applicants may request funding to support this phase of project development. Such funding may be used to support the preparation of conceptual designs, engineering plans, and detailed project budgets, to facilitate permitting processes, and to support other related tasks to position projects for successful implementation.
  - The application must be completed in the name of the applicant organization or, in the case where an application is to be submitted by a fiscal agent, the name of the fiscal agent. The application must be fully and properly executed by an authorized official of the applicant or where a fiscal agent is being used the authorized representative of that agent.
  - All certifications, filings, and other federal, state, and local requirements associated with the applicant's 501(c) status must be current at the time an application is submitted.
  - All applications submitted to the GCEF must be complete, including all required uploads, at the time of submission.
  - By submitting an application for GCEF funding, applicants authorize the GCEF to make available to the public the following information: name of the applicant organization,

project title, summary description of the proposed project, project partners, requested grant amount, match amount, name of key contact at applicant organization, and email and telephone number of key contact.

- To ensure long-term maintenance and sustainability, projects should include local partners who have technical expertise, local knowledge, and a demonstrated commitment to the Greenpoint community's well-being. These partnerships may include non-profit organizations, local businesses and associations, government agencies, as well as residents of Greenpoint.
- Projects led by organizations and agencies that are not based in Greenpoint must demonstrate strong local partnerships in the community and are strongly encouraged to bring significant matching contributions to the project.
- All projects that involve **the collection or use of environmental data must complete a *Data Quality Assurance and Data Quality Control Narrative Template*** with their application. If a project funded by the GCEF is required to submit a QAPP, the grant award will be contingent upon GCEF approval of that plan. The award may be withdrawn if the applicant fails to submit an approvable QAPP.

In general, a QAPP ensures that the quality of data collected or used by a project supports the project's intended application of these data. More specifically, a QAPP describes how an organization will structure its data quality system, defines and assigns quality assistance (QA) and quality control (QC) responsibilities, and describes the processes and procedures used to plan, implement, and assess the effectiveness of the quality system. Please refer to the document *GCEF 2015 QAPP Development Guide* for more information.

Accordingly, full proposal applicants should include time and resources in their project budget to complete this task. Refer to the *GCEF 2015 QAPP Development Guide*.

- All projects must begin implementation within six months of grant award. Small and Large Grants must be completed within two years of the start date. Legacy Grants must be completed within three years of the start date. Variances from these requirements may be provided under exceptional circumstances.

## **EXAMPLES OF COMMUNITY ENVIRONMENTAL IMPROVEMENT PRIORITIES**

Since GCEF's inception, the State, with CAP guidance, has implemented outreach designed to solicit input on the Greenpoint community's environmental improvement priorities. This outreach has engaged large numbers of Greenpoint residents, many of whom represent larger community associations and organizations, and generated a list of preliminary project ideas

that the GCEF has organized into five project “themes”.

The following list of project themes and associated project types broadly reflects environmental improvement priorities that have emerged from the Fund’s community outreach:

- **Green Streets and Other Community Greening.** The installation of a selection of environmental benefit projects along neighborhood streets to improve local water and air quality, reduce energy consumption, reduce the heat island effect, and improve neighborhood aesthetics. Example projects include: installing rain gardens; replacing impervious surfaces with pervious concrete or other permeable materials; expanding tree boxes and planting street trees; creating native plant gardens and community gardens in open space; installing green roofs; implementing campaigns to reduce litter; and installing solar-powered trash cans. Project proposals could include some combination of these or other practices that increase the environmental benefits of neighborhood streets in the community.
- **Waterfront Restoration and Infrastructure.** The creation of public access to the waterfront and efforts to restore its natural functions. Example projects include: acquiring and developing land for waterfront parks, including street-end parks; stabilizing river and stream banks and reconnecting natural floodplains; restoring wetlands; planting shade trees and native plants for cooling and to serve as natural buffers; installing rain gardens, pervious pavers, and other bio-retention practices to better filter water; and enhancing the usability of the waterfront through green projects.
- **Greening Community Buildings, Facilities and Infrastructure.** The reduction of the environmental impacts, both inside and out, of schools, libraries, community centers, the firehouse, and other community buildings. Example projects on these sites include: conducting indoor air quality audits and energy audits; painting "cool white roofs"; installing high efficiency lighting, solar electricity generation, or cisterns to capture and reuse rainwater; creating rain gardens; installing green roofs; planting shade trees; and planting native plant and pollinator gardens to provide habitat for butterflies, bees, and songbirds.
- **Parks and Open Space.** The acquisition, creation, and enhancement of parks and public spaces, including playgrounds and sports fields, as well as undeveloped areas. The purpose of such projects may be to reduce air and water pollution impacts in Greenpoint, while also providing recreational opportunities and enhancing community quality-of-life. Example projects include: design and development of new park space; resurfacing basketball and tennis courts with pervious pavement; installing solar-powered lighting; planting native trees and shrubs; holding park cleanups and installing dog waste stations; and providing or improving public access to natural areas.

- **Environmental Education and Stewardship.** The fostering of careful and responsible management of Greenpoint's environment, and the promotion of broad public environmental awareness. Example projects include: increasing public understanding and appreciation of natural resources and the environment; engaging students and citizens in monitoring air and/or water quality, and communicating data to the community; launching behavior change campaigns to tackle issues such as pet waste, car idling or littering; developing outreach, training and incentive programs to help residents and businesses implement environmental benefit projects on private property; providing "green jobs" training and work experience opportunities for young people.

## HOW TO APPLY TO THE GREENPOINT COMMUNITY ENVIRONMENTAL FUND

Proposals must be submitted electronically through NFWF's online application system, *Easygrants*. To make a submission:

- Go to [www.nfwf.org/easygrants](http://www.nfwf.org/easygrants) to register in our Easygrants online system. New users to the system will be prompted to register before starting the application. If you already are a registered user, use your existing login which is an email and the password created during the prior GCEF proposal cycle or as a result of applying to other NFWF grant programs. When you login, you will be on your personal Easygrants home page. Once on your homepage, click the "Apply for Funding" button and select the "GCEF 2015" "Funding Opportunity" from the list of options.
- Follow the instructions in Easygrants to complete your application. Once as application has been started, it may be saved and returned to at a later time for completion and submission.
- Refer to the *Tips for Preparing an Application* for quick reference while you are working through your application.

## PROPOSAL SCREENING, EVALUATION & DECISIONMAKING PROCESS

**Small Grant Proposal Screening, Evaluation, and Decisionmaking:** The GA will screen Small Grant proposals submitted to ensure they meet minimum standards (i.e., they are complete and meet the Grant Guidelines) and are feasible in terms of methods, budget, and timeline. The GA will provide an opportunity for applicants with proposals that have minor, correctable deficiencies to resolve them. Based on the evaluation criteria (below), the GA will score each proposal meeting minimum standards and deemed feasible. These scores, and associated review comments, will be used by the State to guide its decisionmaking on the selection of projects to receive GCEF Small Grant funding.

**Large or Legacy Proposal Screening, Evaluation, and Decisionmaking:** The GA will screen the Large and Legacy Grant proposals for completeness and eligibility based on the Grant Guidelines. Proposals deemed to be complete and eligible will be reviewed by an Independent Review Committee (IRC) comprised of neutral subject-matter experts with no relationship to any of the proposals under consideration. IRC scores, and associated review comments, will be used by the State to guide its selection of projects to participate in Greenpoint Community Preferencing (see below). The results of the community preferencing will be used by the State to guide its selection of projects to receive GCEF Large and/or Legacy Grant funding.

**Greenpoint Community Preferencing:** It is GCEF's goal to invest in projects that address the Greenpoint community's environmental improvement priorities. This goal includes a commitment by the State to engage and partner with the community, and follow a transparent and objective process. Greenpoint Community Preferencing is a central part of this commitment, as it ensures that Greenpoint residents have a direct role in guiding the selection of those projects that will be implemented in the community. Following the IRC review process and the State's selection of projects to participate in community preferencing, community meetings will be held in Greenpoint at which residents will have an opportunity to express their preferences among Large and Legacy projects under consideration for funding. The results of the preferencing will be used by the State in its decisionmaking on projects to receive GCEF Large and/or Legacy Grant funding.

## EVALUATION CRITERIA

All proposals will be evaluated and scored based on ***the extent to which*** they meet the criteria listed below. The scoring criteria (and approximate associated weighting) are:

**Environmental Results (35 points)** -- The project will secure one or more discernible environmental benefits for the Greenpoint public.

- The project will result in significant, quantifiable, and public environmental benefits, with highest scores to be awarded to those projects that will provide the most significant and quantifiable environmental benefits to the greatest number of Greenpoint residents.
- The benefits of the project are sustainable beyond its completion date. *For Legacy Grants*, the project's benefits must be sustainable beyond its completion date, thus producing a legacy for Greenpoint.
- *For Legacy Grants*, the project has special characteristics (e.g., significant, quantifiable and public environmental benefits, project size or scale, number of Greenpoint residents served by the project, expected project life, level of community support for the project) that justify more funding than a Large Grant.

**Work Plan (20 points)** – The project is technically sound and feasible, and the proposal sets forth a clear, logical and achievable work plan.



- The work plan demonstrates project design and approaches that are based on sound science, best available scientific information and practices.
- The work plan is clear and logical, will accomplish the activities, objectives and results described in the proposal.
- The work plan, including its implementation schedule, clearly addresses any permitting and/or property ownership issues or concerns.
- The work plan demonstrates how environmental results and benefits, and in the case of *Legacy Grants*, the additional results and benefits of special project characteristics will be measured and tracked.
- The project team has the appropriate expertise, training and experience to execute the project and achieve its goals.
- The work plan demonstrates that the activities, objectives and results can be accomplished within the program's two-year timeframe for Small and Large Grants and three-year timeframe for Legacy Grants.
- The work plan demonstrates the sustainability of the activities, objectives and environmental benefits beyond the project's completion date (i.e., two years from the project start date for Small and Large Grants, and three years from the project start date for Legacy Grants). *For Legacy Grants*, the work plan must demonstrate the project's benefits are sustainable beyond its completion date.
- If the project includes the collection or use of environmental data, the uploaded *Data Quality Assurance (QA) and Data Quality Control (QC) Narrative Template* provides a clear and scientifically sound method for addressing QA and QC, and provisions for its development and implementation.

**Budget (20 points)** – The project budget is cost-effective, reasonable, and leverages other partner contributions.

- The budget is cost-effective and reasonable.
- The budget provides enough detail to justify each budget line item.
- The budget is sufficient to accomplish the activities described in the work plan.
- The applicant has in place current, or explains how it have in place in a timely manner, institutional capacity, policies, and procedures necessary to track and administer the funds requested.
- *For Legacy Grants*, the relatively higher amount of requested budget is justified based the special characteristics of the projects, including significant, quantifiable, and sustainable benefits.
- If the project includes the collection or use of environmental data for the purpose of drawing conclusions about environmental conditions and/or health outcomes, the budget provides the necessary costs for developing and implementing a QAPP.

**Greenpoint Partnership (20 points)** – An appropriate community-based partnership exists to implement and sustain the project, and the project has significant community support.

- The applicant demonstrates significant support for the project from a broad-based group of community stakeholders.
- Community members and/or community-based organizations will be significantly engaged as project partners in implementing and sustaining the project after the life of the grant.
- *For Legacy Grants*, the applicant demonstrates and documents in all major components of the proposal (work plan and budget) the significant engagement of the community and/or community-based organizations in development or delivery of the project.

**Communication (5 points)** – The project includes a detailed plan to communicate information about the project to Greenpoint residents and other appropriate audiences. *For Legacy Grants*, the proposal identifies communication strategies and activities targeted to Greenpoint residents that will be executed to inform and engage the public in delivery of the project.

**Bonus Points (5 points):** Additional points may be awarded to those projects wherein the applicant or project partners will provide significant cash and/or in-kind contributions to match the grant.

- For Large Grants, match of 1:1 or greater is encouraged and, for Legacy Grants, match of at least 2:1 is required. City agencies seeking grants are encouraged to maximize their match.
- For Small and Large Grants, for which a match is not required, bonus points will be awarded to proposals that include a contribution of match that is 100% (1:1) of the total grant request. Additional bonus points will be awarded to proposals where the contribution of match greater than 100%.
- Matching contributions that are “committed” may receive more bonus points than matching contributions that are “pledged” or “intend to apply”.

## **OTHER CONDITIONS**

The GCEF reserves the right to:

- Reject any applications received that do not comply with the requirements contained in the GCEF RFP;
- Communicate with an applicant for the purpose of assuring a full understanding of responsiveness to the GCEF RFP;
- Modify minor irregularities in applications after notifying the applicant;
- Adjust or correct arithmetic errors in applications;
- Utilize any and all ideas submitted in the application received unless such ideas are covered by legal copyright, patent, or property rights, and National Fish and Wildlife Foundation is notified in the received submission;
- Adopt or utilize all or any part of an applicant's application; and
- Negotiate with the applicant on all aspects of the application to serve the best interests of the State of New York.

## IMPORTANT DATES

- All Proposals Due – Thursday, August 6, 2015, 11:59pm
- Announcement of Small Grant funding – October 2015
- Community Preferencing for Large and Legacy Grant funding – Week of November 16, 2016
- Announcement of Large and Legacy Grant funding - December 2015

## WORKSHOPS AND WEBINARS

We strongly encourage all prospective applicants to attend one or more GCEF workshop or webinar. These events will provide a broad overview of the grant program and tips for using the *Easygrants* online application system. Applicants planning to participate in a workshop or webinar must register in advance. The schedule of planned workshops and webinars is as follows:

- Thursday, May 14, 2015, 6:00pm – 8:00pm: Grants 101 & Networking. Geared to new prospective applicants or individuals/entities with early, unformed project ideas looking for feedback or partners.
- Thursday, May 21, 2015, 6:00pm-8:00pm: Grants 101 & Networking. Geared to new prospective applicants or individuals/entities with early, unformed project ideas looking for feedback or partners.
- Thursday, May 28, 2015, 1:30pm-3:00pm: Applicant Webinar. An overview of the grant program, tips for preparing a proposal and information about using the online application.
- Saturday, May 30, 2015, 10:00am-3:00pm: Applicant Bootcamp. An in depth event focused preparing a narrative and budget, quantifying environmental metrics, using the online system, and providing a lot of time for questions.
- Thursday, June 4, 2015, 6:00pm-8:00pm: Applicant Workshop. An overview of the grant program, tips for preparing a proposal and information about using the online application.
- Thursday, June 11, 2015, 11:30am – 1:00pm: Applicant Workshop. An overview of the grant program, tips for preparing a proposal and information about using the online application.

## NEED HELP DEVELOPING A PROPOSAL?

**One-on-One Assistance.** One-on-one assistance is available to help applicants develop proposals. To request one-on-one assistance, send an email to [gcefund@northbrooklyn.org](mailto:gcefund@northbrooklyn.org) or [lynn.dwyer@nfwf.org](mailto:lynn.dwyer@nfwf.org). Please include information on the type of assistance required. GCEF will either provide a written response or schedule an appointment to discuss the topic in more detail.

**Technical Assistance.** If you require specialized technical assistance to develop elements of a GCEF proposal (e.g., assessing permitting, design, environmental metrics, quality assurance, etc.), send an email to [lynn.dwyer@nfwf.org](mailto:lynn.dwyer@nfwf.org) and include information on your technical assistance needs.

**Online Application Assistance.** For Easygrants technical support or problem-solving, send an email to [Easygrants@nfwf.org](mailto:Easygrants@nfwf.org) or call the Easygrants Helpdesk at 202-595-2497. (Helpdesk hours are 9:00 AM to 5:00 PM EST, Mon-Fri; leave a message at other times). Please include your name, proposal ID # (the



number assigned to your proposal by Easygrants), e-mail address, phone number, program you are applying to (i.e., Greenpoint Community Environmental Fund), and a description of your assistance need.

**GCEF Website.** A host of general applicant resources are available on the GCEF website, [www.gcefund.org](http://www.gcefund.org).

Documents available include:

- Complete Request for Proposals
- Frequently Asked Questions
- Applicant Resources
- Fiscal Sponsorship Information
- Tips for Preparing an Application

**General Questions?** Contact the GCEF Community Liaison at [gcefund@northbrooklyn.org](mailto:gcefund@northbrooklyn.org) or 718-389-9044 ext. 15.