

A note about federal funding:

This grant is funded through a federal grant from the US Department of Agriculture, US Forest Service. We have a signed grant agreement through UNL to complete our objectives of tree planting, removal, care, and workforce development over the next five years for a total of \$10 million (\$8 million going directly to on-the-ground projects). At this time, we have not received a stop work order from our federal partners. If we do receive a stop work order, we will update the information on plantnebraska.org.

Application Process

Q: Does our application receive bonus points or get funded before the award alert date if we turn it in earlier?

A: No. Take your time to write well-crafted answers. The applications are not scored on a “first come, first served” basis. Turning your application in early during the submission period will not result in extra points or an early award.

Q: Do I need a UEI? Can I use my Tax ID number as a UEI? Isn't it the same thing?

A: The project sponsor MUST have a UEI to receive an award. UEIs are made up of a combination of 12 letters and numbers. Submissions from applicants without a UEI will be rejected. You can receive a UEI for free at [Sam.gov](http://sam.gov). Be aware, scammers use confusion with the UEI and SAM system to try to get money from organizations. UEIs are free. Do not pay anyone to provide you with a UEI.

Get your UEI here: <https://sam.gov/>

Info about UEIs from the National League of Cities here:
<https://www.nlc.org/article/2022/09/23/transitioning-from-duns-to-unique-entity-ids-uei/>

Q: Our organization has never managed a federal grant or applied for something like this. Do you know of organizations who could help us?

A: Our goal is to make this grant as accessible as possible so that organizations that have never received a grant before could still apply and manage their award. We strive to help all of our awardees fully understand the requirements and how to have a successful project. However, we recognize that your organization may not feel comfortable wading into these uncertain waters. In that case we recommend you reach out to possible partners who could include your project in their application or act as a fiscal sponsor for your project. MANY nonprofit organizations and city governments are working on applications for this opportunity; reach out to those you have good relationships with and ask if they are interested in partnering. This is common practice for large grants; the Statewide Arboretum has been on both sides of this relationship for grant applications.

Q: I have a lot of project partners, should I provide letters of support in my application?

A: No. We are not asking for letters of support at this time. However, it is important that your partners are aware of their involvement in the project prior to submitting your application. Do not submit a grant that includes deliverables from a partner unless you have an agreement from them to provide those deliverables.

Q: How do I find an arborist to be involved in my project? Can Nebraska Forest Service or Nebraska Statewide Arboretum serve in this role?

A: We recommend using the Nebraska Arborist Association website to find an arborist, the link is below. Our staff cannot serve in this role for this grant.

NAA Website: <https://www.nearborists.org/find-an-arborist-1>

Budget Development

Q: I have no idea what it could cost to remove a tree or grind stumps. How do I figure out what a reasonable estimate is for my project?

A: A good approach to determining reasonable estimates for project costs is to make some inquiries to local businesses who offer those goods or services—they should be able to give you at least a ballpark idea of costs. We understand that some costs can be highly variable (i.e. tree removal costs vary dramatically depending on size, access, etc.), so we don't expect your estimates to be exact. If you need to make budget adjustments after you receive an award, your grant manager will be able to help you do that.

Q: If we need to pay legal counsel to develop necessary documents for this project, such as a Release of Liability or updating the city code for hazard tree management, is that a qualifying expense we could include in the project budget?

A: Yes. Please include this in the appropriate category. If you are using city/town resources (internal counsel) then it should be in the salary category. If you will be contracting legal counsel, please include it under the appropriate project activity's contractor line item.

Q: Can I include an administrative fee for managing the grant?

A: Please include appropriate expenses for managing the grant in the correct category, not a flat fee. That could be salary/benefits of a grant administrator, a portion of a fee for an accounting service (listed under other), or similar expenses. Be sure you can justify the expense in the budget.

Project Specifications

Q: Do the hazard trees have to be identified by a Certified Arborist?

A: Yes, an arborist certified by the Nebraska Arborist Association or the International Society of Arboriculture must be the one to determine which trees qualify for removal. However, the arborist performing the removal work does not need to be certified, only licensed by the city per their code/ordinance.

Q: What are the bidding requirements for these projects?

A: Bids must follow the local ordinances, or precedent if no ordinances are in place, of the community. Bids must also follow all state procurement laws and requirements.