

2023 Stewardship Grant Questions

Questions Asked in the Webinar

If you are awarded a grant for a tree inventory this year, would we be eligible to apply for a planting grant next year if they become available again?

The short answer is no. Communities may only have one open Stewardship grant with NJUCF and the work period for tree inventory grants is typically two (2) years. While it is possible to complete the work required for an inventory grant in one year, we have found that communities usually need the full 2-year period.

What is the cost of an inventory or what are the amounts available in these grants?

The cost of an inventory will vary depending on the project.

The 2023 Stewardship Grants may award up to \$15,000 with a 25% match requirement.

If my municipality/county failed to complete accreditation requirements for 2022 but has a current CFMP, is there any way we can be retroactively accredited?

Please contact Rachael Vannatta (Rachael.vannatta@dep.nj.gov) to discuss.

The foresters we want to hire to complete the forestry inventory are ISA certified and arborists but not NJ Tree Experts – is this a problem?

It depends on the information you plan to collect. According to the LTE law, an LTE must be involved to collect tree risk data. Including an individual with the ISA Tree Risk Assessment Qualification (TRAQ) is also recommended.

I manage a nature center owned by my municipality. We have a forest stewardship plan, but it is not a designated Community Forest Management Plan (CFMP). Would this still be applicable?

In order to be eligible to receive an NJUCF grant, the municipality or county must be NJUCF accredited. One of the requirements for NJUCF accreditation is to have a current, approved Community Forest Management Plan (CFMP). Thus, if the municipality or county is accredited, then they have a current, approved CFMP for the municipality/county as a whole.

Work done under NJUCF grants must take place on public property owned or maintained by a municipal or county government. So, to answer your question, as long as the municipality/county is accredited, the nature center is on public property owned or maintained by the municipality/county, and the grant application is filled out in partnership and collaboration with the municipal/county government, then the application will be acceptable. The work may take place at the nature center, regardless of whether or not the nature center has a stewardship plan, though it would be useful to include the stewardship plan in the application attachments on SAGE.

When the cost to conduct a survey/inventory exceeds what is offered by the Stewardship Grant, do you enter the projected total cost of the project?

The amount to conduct an inventory that is over and above the amount of the grant award can be used toward the matching requirement. This would be considered a Cash Match on the Budget page of the application. It can be combined with employee or volunteer time to meet the full match, if needed.

Frequently Asked Questions

Where do I find the 2022 NJUCF Steward Grants Request for Proposals (RFP)?

You can find a copy of the NJUCF RFP at [this link](#). There are appendices and examples in the document, so we highly encourage applicants read the document *in its entirety* before completing their application.

How do I view the webinar again so I can share it with my staff?

The webinar is available [on our website](#) as a link, or you can view it on [YouTube here](#).

Who is eligible to apply?

Only municipal and county governments in partnership and collaboration with their shade tree commissions, tree committees, tree boards, or tree councils who are legally responsible for tree and forest management are eligible to apply for a grant. Only projects carried out on public property owned or maintained by a municipal or county government are eligible for grant funding.

Applicants must be NJUCF Accredited according to the current program guidelines (www.communityforestry.nj.gov). Accreditation means that the applicant has:

- A current, approved Community Forest Management Plan (CFMP).
- Two (2) Core trained representatives - one (1) municipal employee and one (1) volunteer (an elected official may count for either).
- Satisfied the annual Continuing Education Unit (CEU) requirement - a total of eight (8) CEUs between at least two (2) individuals each calendar year. (This requirement does not apply to applicants who are in the initial year of CFMP implementation).
- Submitted an Annual Accomplishment Report by February 15 for the previous calendar year.

Applicants cannot have an open Community Stewardship Incentive Program (CSIP 2017, CSIP 2018) grant or NJUCF Stewardship Grant (2019, 2021, 2022) from the NJUCF Program.

Projects must provide a clear connection to the applicant's current, approved CFMP goals, objectives, and action items, and fall within the grant category detailed below to be eligible for funding consideration.

What is the grant work period?

For the 2023 NJUCF Stewardship Grants being offered, the typical work period is two (2) years from the day **that your community is awarded the grant**.

Can we write the same person in for all three DEP SAGE personnel roles?

No. You must add all roles into your organization page on SAGE and select the proper person for the roles of fiscal officer, clerk, authorized signatory, etc. Each of these individuals will have a function in the grant agreement and financial reporting process.

If our community plans to exceed the 25% match required for this grant, should we put this into the application?

The grant application requires applicants to detail how they plan to earn the match—by volunteer and/or municipal employee time. If you intend to exceed the matching requirement and you indicate this in your application, it will become a grant requirement. You must document that you have earned the amount of the match you proposed in the application. If instead you enter the 25% required match into your application, you can still submit volunteer and/or municipal employee time that exceeds the 25% requirement when the project is finished.

Does my NJUCF grant application earn points if my municipality/county has a current Tree City USA and/or Sustainable Jersey qualification?

Yes, points are awarded for participation in these programs.

How can we get a copy of our Community Forestry Management Plan (CFMP) from your office?

Please email Levon Bigelow (levon.bigelow@dep.nj.gov)

My question has not been answered, who do I contact?

First, *ensure that you have read the entirety of the 2023 RFP.* If your question has still not been answered, please email:

Levon Bigelow (levon.bigelow@dep.nj.gov) for assistance with grant eligibility or help with the DEP SAGE application, or

Patricia Shapella (Patricia.Shapella@dep.nj.gov) for financial questions related to the grant, or

Rachael Vannatta (rachael.vannatta@dep.nj.gov) for questions about CEUs and NJUCF accreditation.