

**Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund
2010 Request for Proposals (RFP)**

LCCMR ID: 173-F

Project Title:

Eco Education Urban Environmental Education Initiative

LCCMR 2010 Funding Priority:

F. Environmental Education

Total Project Budget: \$ \$200,000

Proposed Project Time Period for the Funding Requested: 2 years, 2010 - 2012

Other Non-State Funds: \$ \$168,000

Summary:

The Urban Environmental Education Initiative encourages students in Minneapolis/St. Paul schools to identify, investigate and address urban environmental issues. Students build skills in problem solving, critical thinking, and communication.

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Sponsoring Organization: Eco Education

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Location:

Region: Metro

County Name: Hennepin, Ramsey

City / Township:

_____ Knowledge Base	_____ Broad App.	_____ Innovation
_____ Leverage	_____ Outcomes	
_____ Partnerships	_____ Urgency	_____ TOTAL

I. PROJECT STATEMENT:

1. Why this project needs to be done. Minnesota's current science standards lack the environmental education viewpoint found in national science standards, specifically Project 2061 Benchmarks developed by the American Association for the Advancement of Science (AAAS). Leading scientists acknowledge the importance of the integration of natural and social science in the creation of scientifically literate citizens. Without the intentional focus to develop depth of understanding and to operationalize the subject matter in the behavior of the student, learning is lost shortly after the class is over.

In Minnesota, environmental agencies, environmental advocacy organizations, and policy makers are working on the state's most pressing issues: cleaning up our contaminated lakes and rivers; developing clean, renewable sources of energy to reduce global warming gases, poor air quality, and environmental destruction; and protection of habitat and threatened lands under the strain of population and economic growth, to name a few.

2. Overall Goals. Eco Education provides a solution to these challenges by engaging Minneapolis and St. Paul students in their natural and built environments. By built environment we mean the interplay of people, cultures, natural cycles, social and economic, architecture, and transportation systems in the urban setting. The Eco Education curricula give teachers and students the knowledge and tools to actively participate in environmental issues that directly affect the health and vitality of their neighborhoods.

3. How the project will achieve those goals. Eco Education encouraging students to examine the vital environmental issues around them (**Community Assessment**), examine multiple perspectives of the issue (**Issue Investigation**), reach consensus on a course of action (**Solutions Analysis**), and lead others within the community to solve the problems they've identified (**Develop Action Plan**). In short: Eco Education students are examining the critical issues in our society and are seeking solutions to the challenges that these issues present. Eco Education encourages and develops the leaders and decision-makers of the Twin Cities of tomorrow.

II. DESCRIPTION OF PROJECT RESULTS:

The accomplishments and momentum of many successful organizations working to protect and enhance the quality of our natural, built and social urban environments, communities throughout the state diminish if we are not also working to protect our investments by preparing the next decision-makers to be skilled and motivated citizens that can effect lasting environmental protection.

Effective environmental education programs need to build the citizenry's capacity not only to recognize and generate solutions to our ever-more complex environmental problems, but also build their ability to implement those solutions within our increasingly urban society.

- **35** 7th-12th grade teachers trained in urban environmental education and community problem-solving
- **1,400** students research and address natural, built and social environmental issues using a community environmental problem-solving; each project has a tangible environmental impact
- **75** contacts with community partners that represent multiple perspectives by participating classrooms
- **10-15** environmental projects implemented in urban communities
- **5** presentations by students and teachers at environmental education related conferences in Minnesota

Result 1: 35 teachers participate in Professional Development workshops Budget: \$12,701

The Professional Development workshops engage teachers in exploring and learning about the community environmental problem-solving model. Teachers will complete information/resource gathering on community environmental issues of water, habitat, and energy in the school neighborhoods where they teach. Outside facilitators utilized. An evaluation tool will be distributed to assess effectiveness of the professional development upon its completion. Teachers unable to attend the training select alternative date to meet with program coordinators to ensure understanding of the "big picture" of the program and its requirements.

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Title: Eco Education – Urban Environmental Education

Deliverable

1. Teachers receive 33 contact hours of professional development including 3 day summer session, 2 mid-year development sessions and a reflection session. Teachers receive professional CEUs at the conclusion of each workshop.
2. Professional Develop Workshops are developed and facilitated by experienced, qualified Eco Education staff with support from community partners and experts. Staff demonstrates how the Eco Education curricula support the MN State Standards.

Result 2: 1,400 students engaged through classroom implementation Budget: \$38,782

Students acquire environmental knowledge by engaging in guided community assessments, intensive issue investigation, solutions analysis, and an action project. Eco Education uses Service Learning methodology that focus on process, youth voice, and community problem solving. Research has shown that the process of service-learning itself impacts youth in the following ways: **empowers** youth to be active decision makers; **improves** problem solving and critical thinking skills; **increases** skills in peer work and adult interactions; **develops** awareness of and concern for the community; **inspires** youth to continue making a positive impact.

Deliverable

1. Eco Education Program Coordinator builds relationship with teachers through frequent meetings and provides classroom support on schedule developed jointly.
2. Eco Education provides bus transportation for 2 field experiences per classroom during the Community Assessment and Issue Investigation Phases.
3. Students develop and present grant proposal to the Eco Education staff. Each proposal includes a clear action plan, budget and assessment of the community impact.
4. 10-15 environmental projects implemented in urban communities

Result 3: 75 Community Partners Engaged

Budget: \$10,577

Program coordinator helps to identify, contact, and facilitate the involvement of community partners from all levels at each school and classroom. Individuals or community groups interact with classes to help set up and/or serve as consultants to student projects.

Deliverable

1. Eco Education will seek out and engage 75 community partners as content experts and community resources for the students.

Result 4: Dissemination

Budget: \$13,427

Students participate in public speaking events meeting all or part of speaking and writing graduation standards. Audiences from around the state are aware of and introduced to the environmental problem-solving model and learn about several urban issues concerning the natural, built or social environment.

Deliverable

1. 5 presentations by students and teachers at environmental education related conferences in Minnesota

III. PROJECT STRATEGY

A. Project Team/Partners: Eco Education program staff, Ramsey/Washington Metro Watershed District, Friends of the Mississippi River, Environmental Justice Advocates of MN, Minnesotans for an Energy Efficiency Economy, Clean Water Action Alliance, Institute for Trade, Advocacy and Policy, MN Department of Commerce-State Energy Office, Great River Greening to name a few. Partners are identified based on issues chosen by students and are not predetermined.

B. Timeline Requirements: The Urban Environmental Initiative is designed to be implemented for a full academic year or a semester depending on school schedules.

C. Longterm Strategy: Eco Education founded in 1991 actively is engaged in extensive fundraising efforts from private foundations, individuals, and corporations. We are continually seeking new funding streams for programming.

Project Budget

IV. TOTAL PROJECT REQUEST BUDGET (2 years)

BUDGET ITEM (See list of Eligible & Non-Eligible Costs, p. 13)	AMOUNT	
Personnel: 75% of 2.5 Program Coordinators time \$72,750/ year Benefits \$12,675/year	\$170,850	
Contracts: NA		
Stipends for Teachers 75% of \$250/per teacher \$6,562/year Community Partners \$50 for 50% of community partners \$1,875/year	\$16,874	
Equipment/Tools/Supplies: NA		
Acquisition (Fee Title or Permanent Easements): NA		
Travel: Program Coordinator Transportation costs between schools \$2,463/year Transportation cost for student field experiences 75% of \$150 per trip for 35 classes \$3,675/year	\$	12,276
Additional Budget Items: NA		
TOTAL PROJECT BUDGET REQUEST TO LCCMR	\$	200,000

V. OTHER FUNDS

SOURCE OF FUNDS	AMOUNT	Status
Other Non-State \$ Being Applied to Project During Project Period: This list represents current funders in 08-09. We anticipate the 2010-2011 fundraising efforts will include the same sources. E.L. & E.J. Andersen Fdn, Hugh J. Andersen Fdn, Athwin Fdn, Butler Family Fdn, Eco Lab Fdn, General Mills Fdn, Marbrook Fdn, The Alida Messenger Charitable Lead Trust, Niholson Family Fdn, State Farm Co. Fdn, The Schott Fdn, Xcel Energy Fdn, WalMart State Funds \$123,000 Funding from Individual Donors \$45,000	168,000	Pending
In-kind Services During Project Period: Indicate any in-kind services to be provided during the funding period. List type of service(s) and estimated value. In-kind services listed must be specific to the project.	\$ -	
Remaining \$ from Current Trust Fund Appropriation (if applicable): NA		
Funding History: Please refer to the listing of foundations in the above row. This is the current funder list for fiscal year 08-09. The majority of funders included on the	\$168,000	committed

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Program Manager and Staff Qualifications:

Molly Johnston, *Interim Executive Director*, works closely Board of Directors to develop and implement a comprehensive fundraising strategy for Eco Education and to oversee office operations, including personnel management, marketing, and technology. Before coming to Eco Education, Molly worked as the Community Engagement Coordinator at the Youth Work Institute of the University of Minnesota. Previous to that she worked as a Program Manager for Minneapolis Redesign/Youth Coordinating Board, Executive Director of Longfellow United for Youth and Families, and event coordinator for Wilderness Inquiry. Molly holds a B.S. in Recreation and Leisure Studies from the University of Wisconsin La-Crosse.

Christopher Feider, *Program Coordinator*, is responsible for mentoring teachers and classrooms in facilitating service-learning projects. Prior to Eco Education, Christopher has worked for eight years as a naturalists and environmental educator at Springbrook Nature Center, Camp Elk River, Wargo Nature Center and Tamarack Nature Center. He has also been a graduate instructor, teacher and professor at University of Missouri and Morningside College. Christopher holds a BA in Philosophy from Gustavus Adolphus College, and an MA in Philosophy from University of Missouri.

Faith Krogstad, *Program Coordinator*, is responsible for mentoring teachers and classrooms in facilitating service-learning projects. Prior to Eco Education, Faith worked at an affordable housing community in St. Paul, where she developed environmental service learning and civic engagement projects with youth. Faith has worked as an environmental educator at IslandWood, an outdoor learning center in the Puget Sound region, where she earned a Certificate in Community and Environmental Education through the University of Washington - Seattle. She has also designed and implemented curriculum for an urban environmental day camp for the City of Olympia Stream Team program. She holds a B.A. in Biology from Macalester College and is currently an M.A. Candidate in Art Education at the University of Minnesota.

Tiffany Enriquez, *Program Coordinator*, is responsible for mentoring teachers and classrooms in facilitating service-learning projects. Prior to Eco Education, Tiffany worked as a Teaching Assistant for Metro Urban Studies Term at the Higher Education Consortium for Urban Affairs (HECUA) and as an elementary art teacher, arts integration director, and after-school facilitator for a girls' leadership group serving at-risk sixth graders in Arizona. She was a McNair Scholar at the Roy Wilkins Center for Human Relations and Social Justice, has a B.A. in Arts and Social Justice from the University of MN, and is a certified teacher.

Eco Education is a nonprofit 501(c)(3) organization based in St. Paul, Minnesota. We were founded in 1991. Our mission is to foster within young people the appreciation, knowledge, values and skills necessary to inspire ecologically sound decisions and actions. We have reached over 145,000 young people and their teachers to date.

