

**Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund
2011-2012 Request for Proposals (RFP)**

LCCMR ID: 192-G

Project Title: Expanding the Energy Resource Advisor Program in Minnesota

Category: G. Environmental Education

Total Project Budget: \$ 563,748

Proposed Project Time Period for the Funding Requested: 3 yrs, July 2011 - June 2014

Other Non-State Funds: \$ 0

Summary:

We propose to expand the existing Energy Resource Advisor Certificate program to statewide scale. This will train 900 Minnesota citizens to affect positive change in their neighborhoods, organizations, and communities.

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Sponsoring Organization: Winona - State University

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Location

Region: Statewide

Ecological Section: Statewide

County Name: Statewide

City / Township:

<input type="checkbox"/> Funding Priorities	<input type="checkbox"/> Multiple Benefits	<input type="checkbox"/> Outcomes	<input type="checkbox"/> Knowledge Base
<input type="checkbox"/> Extent of Impact	<input type="checkbox"/> Innovation	<input type="checkbox"/> Scientific/Tech Basis	<input type="checkbox"/> Urgency
<input type="checkbox"/> Capacity Readiness	<input type="checkbox"/> Leverage	<input type="checkbox"/> Employment	<input type="checkbox"/> TOTAL _____%

2011-2012 MAIN PROPOSAL

PROJECT TITLE: Expanding the Energy Resource Advisor program in Minnesota

I. PROJECT STATEMENT

This project addresses the need for accessible, state-wide environmental education opportunities by expanding delivery of an existing curriculum called, "Energy Resource Advisor Certificate" (ERA). The ERA Certificate program is currently being piloted in Southeastern Minnesota by Winona State University and Eagle Bluff Environmental Learning Center with support from US Fish and Wildlife Service, Clean Energy Resource Teams (CERTs) and Winona County Environmental Services.

The overall goal is to motivate and empower community volunteers and leaders, workplace sustainability teams, educators, and interested citizens through Environmental Education (funding priority "G") while leveraging the existing resources developed in our ERA pilot project. The outcome will be a statewide network of citizens serving as community leaders for environmental sustainability practices.

II. DESCRIPTION OF PROJECT ACTIVITIES

Activity 1: Train Minnesota citizens to become Energy Resource Advisors to affect positive change in their neighborhoods, organizations, and communities.

Budget: \$324,000

The Energy Resource Advisor (ERA) Certificate is designed to disseminate information and accelerate public understanding of energy efficiency, clean energy, resource conservation, green technologies, and green jobs. This curriculum is the *first of its kind in Minnesota*. It is a non-credit, continuing education course for adults 18 years of age and older, using online instructional technology combined with applied, hands-on experience. Dr. Jeanne Franz, Professor of Chemistry at Winona State University, served as lead curriculum designer, working in collaboration with Teaching & Learning Technology staff at WSU and with an extensive number of local, state, and national organizations. The initial pilot was launched in March 2010 with a cohort group of 30 participants. The curriculum will be modified as needed and prepared for delivery in each of the state's geographic regions.

This class will be taught online (40 hours) as well as having a hands-on field component (16 hours). This is a MnSCU approved curriculum. Successful completion results in the awarding of an ERA certificate.

Course topics include; a "welcome" to online learning, residential energy use, taking the next steps to conserve energy, renewable energy (solar, thermal, photovoltaic, wind, geothermal), system sizing and financial incentives, building alternatives, greening up the home and business, composting and recycling, disposal of pharmaceuticals, green products, sustainable foods, ecological landscaping and lawn care, transportation, and "Green" job opportunities. Every participant measures their own energy consumption at the beginning of the course and again at the end. This data will be compiled to provide tangible evidence of reduced impact.

Outcome	Completion Date
<i>900 Minnesota citizens will complete 40 hours of online instruction and 16 hours of hands-on field experience at an ELC</i>	<i>End of 3-year period</i>
<i>Quantifiable improvements in energy consumption and savings for the ERA certification graduates</i>	<i>End of 3-year period</i>
<i>Participant, Advisory and Instructor feedback will be collected and used for continuous improvement of course</i>	<i>Conclusion of each semester - continuous</i>

Activity 2: Create a state-wide collaborative network of partners that includes CERTs Teams, MnSCU campuses and Residential Environmental Learning Centers.

Budget: \$239,748

Six MnSCU institutions, six Residential Environmental Learning Centers, and MN Clean Energy Resource Teams will form a network with an advisory council that meets regularly via distance technology with at least

one in-person meeting per year during the CERTs conference. Winona State University and Eagle Bluff Environmental Learning Center will serve as the lead organizations within the network.

This state-wide, multi-year project will require staffing to achieve its goals. A full-time coordinator with half-time administrative support will work to identify and convene the network partners, market the certification opportunity, compile all evaluation data from participants and partners, create and execute inter-agency agreements, assist in enrollment, provide basic trouble-shooting and support for participants and instructors, and provide all grant compliance documentation.

Outcome	Completion Date
<i>Citizens in each of the six geographic regions in Minnesota have access to the Energy Resource Advisor Certification through a local MnSCU campus with the experiential portion provided at Environmental Learning Centers throughout the state.</i>	<i>Dec 31, 2011</i>
<i>Coordinator and administrative support staff identified and hired</i>	<i>July 1, 2011</i>
<i>Qualified instructors for all regional cohorts are identified and hired</i>	<i>Dec 31, 2011</i>
<i>Regular communication and meetings of network partners occur for sharing of information, advisory functions and collaboration</i>	<i>Quarterly and ongoing</i>

III. PROJECT STRATEGY

A. Project Team/Partners

This project will maintain, and expand upon the collaborative spirit that made the pilot successful. Partners will include:

- Minnesota State Colleges and Universities (MnSCU) will provide the technology platform for the online learning, and the local campus connections in each region to
 - Winona State University – lead MnSCU institution and fiscal agent
 - Five additional MnSCU institutions located in each region of the state – these institutions would receive funding from this project to provide for instructional expenses

- Six Residential Environmental Learning Centers that will host the hands-on, experiential portion of the certification and play a key advisory role in the creation of a state wide network. Since RELCs are residential facilities, participants can stay overnight to minimize travel and expense. By the conclusion of the project, the group will have identified potential partners with even greater geographic reach in the state for increased accessibility of the hands-on portion of the training. These centers would receive funding from this project to provide for instructional expenses.
 - Eagle Bluff Environmental Learning Center – lead RELC
 - Deep Portage Environmental Learning Center
 - Audubon Environmental Learning Center
 - Laurentian Environmental Learning Center
 - Long Lake Environmental Learning Center
 - Wolf Ridge Environmental Learning Center

- Clean Energy Resource Teams (CERTs) will provide community connections and dissemination of information about the ERA Certification, advisory input, and a venue for the annual in-person meeting of the network advisors.

B. Timeline Requirements

There are no special timeline requirements – search for project staff can begin upon notification of grant award.

C. Long-Term Strategy and Future Funding Needs

The LCCMR investment will continue reaping rewards after the grant cycle because an established statewide network of informed citizens will contribute to the long-term environmental sustainability of Minnesota. Future funding will be generated through tuition dollars.

2011-2012 Detailed Project Budget

IV. TOTAL TRUST FUND REQUEST BUDGET 3 years

<u>BUDGET ITEM</u> (See list of Eligible & Non-Eligible Costs, p. 13)	<u>AMOUNT</u>	
Personnel:		
1 FTE Project Coordinator - Salary	\$45,000/year	\$135,000
1 FTE Project Coordinator - Benefits	\$14,400/year (.32 of salary)	\$43,200
.5 FTE Administrative Support	\$14,560/year	\$43,680
.5 FTE Administrative Support - Benefits	\$4659/year (.32 of salary)	\$13,977
Instructional Delivery - (online instructor for cohorts in each region, in-person instruction at ELC, printed materials, marketing and communications)	\$9,000 per cohort of 25 - 36 cohorts total (6 in year 1, 15 in years 2-3)	\$324,000
Travel: Project Coordinator travel from Winona, MN to network partners. Three trips to each region over 3-year period of grant. Per UofM travel plan mileage rate)	round trip mileage to MnSCU or ELC sites in each region - 2,594 mi./year @ .50	\$3,891
TOTAL ENVIRONMENT & NATURAL RESOURCES TRUST FUND \$ REQUEST		\$563,748

V. OTHER FUNDS

<u>SOURCE OF FUNDS</u>	<u>AMOUNT</u>	<u>Status</u>
In-kind Services During Project Period: Marketing expenses (brochures, design, emarketing) @\$2,500/year provided by WSU	\$7,500	awarded
Technology hosting at WSU for webinar/ITV meetings	\$2,500	
Funding History: Indicate funding secured prior to July 1, 2011 for activities directly relevant to this specific funding request. State specific source(s) of funds.	\$30,000 provided by Minnesota State Colleges and Universities (Innovation Funding)	

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Summary of Qualifications

- Ten years of director-level experience in developing and implementing grant-funded programs
- Adept at facilitating groups in learning activities and coordinating complex major events
- Exceptional communication skills and computer savvy
- Strong desire to serve the community through collaboration and partnerships

Experience

Winona State University – Outreach and Continuing Education Department

Business Solutions Coordinator – December 2007 to Present

- Coordinate two HealthForce Minnesota grants to innovate regional leadership training for long term care
- Partner with three MnSCU institutions to co-create Lean curriculum (CCIH) – HealthForce MN grant
- Develop and execute regional two-day Lean Healthcare conference in summer 2008
- Assist in marketing several HealthForce Minnesota projects – SCRUBS Camps, Quality Webinars
- Create contract training solutions for local business and industry

Big Brothers Big Sisters of Greater Winona

Program Director – August 2004 to December 2007

- Develop and oversee programs with budget of \$166,500 to help children in need
- Recruit and work with volunteers, primarily WSU students via departments and clubs
- Coordinate staff and volunteer efforts for major events (i.e. Arts Auction, Bowl for Kids' Sake)
- Created several new programs and partnerships with public, private and educational partners
- Raise funds through special events, grant writing, and individual or corporate asks

AmeriCorps – Southern Minnesota (with Southern Minnesota Initiative Foundation)

Program Director, Consultant, Assistant Director – August 1998 to June 2004

- Recruit, train and guide nearly 150 members through year-long service learning experience
- Encourage development of leadership skills and social awareness through service
- Create partnerships with non-profits to host AmeriCorps members services each year
- Develop outcome and assessment measures for improvement and reporting to federal funders
- Public relations and marketing of program
- Author narrative for 1999-2003 federal and state grant funding (100% grants awarded)

Education and Certificates

- Winona State University Bachelor of Arts – Communication Studies, Rhetorical Studies
- Development Dimensions International (DDI) Certified Facilitator (2008)
- Certified Lean Healthcare Facilitator – University of Michigan College of Engineering (2008)
- Blandin Community Leadership Program Graduate (2001)
- National Service Leadership Institute Program Graduate (San Francisco, 1999)

Organization Description:

Founded in 1858, Winona State University is a comprehensive, regional public university in Winona, MN with more than 8,000 students. The oldest member of the Minnesota State Colleges and Universities System, WSU offers more than 80 undergraduate, pre-professional, licensure, graduate and doctorate programs on its three campuses: the original Main Campus in Winona, the West Campus in Winona, and Winona State University-Rochester. Winona State has been featured as one of America's 100 Best College Buys for quality and value for 14 years in a row, has been named among the "Best in the Midwest" by The Princeton Review for the sixth consecutive year, and ranks among the top 50 public and private institutions in the Midwest Region Master's Category in the 2010 edition of U.S. News & World Report's "America's Best Colleges." The university's mission is to educate and enlighten our citizenry at a distinctive institution: a community of learners improving our world.

