



Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund

2022 Request for Proposal

General Information

Proposal ID: 2022-060

Proposal Title: Enhancing Outdoor Education and Conservation Awareness

Project Manager Information

Name: Candice Zimmermann

Organization: Paul Bunyan Arboretum

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Email: arbdirector@northlandarb.org

Project Basic Information

Project Summary: This project will enhance and expand the nature-based educational opportunities for all ages, including at-risk youth, in partnership with the school district, local nonprofit organizations, daycare centers, and homeschool families.

Funds Requested: \$154,000

Proposed Project Completion: June 30 2024

LCCMR Funding Category: Small Projects (H)

Secondary Category: Environmental Education (C)

Project Location

What is the best scale for describing where your work will take place?

Region(s): Central

What is the best scale to describe the area impacted by your work?

Region(s): Central

When will the work impact occur?

During the Project and In the Future

Narrative

Describe the opportunity or problem your proposal seeks to address. Include any relevant background information.

Young families are not spending as much time outdoors because of the increases in technology, screen-time, and streaming services provided to them in their own homes. The pandemic has accelerated a false need to be indoors by forcing children to participate in more screen-time, reduce social interactions with their peers, and isolate themselves. This decrease in connections with nature is of particular concern because we understand that across all ages, being outdoors is a tool to fight stress, anxiety, and other mental health concerns in our community. Not to mention the decreased awareness of the damage to our natural resources and appropriate changes families can make at household levels which can result in a greater impact on our environment. Our organization wishes to dive deeper into the environmental issues affecting our community by launching Arb University. Expanding our overall community reach is a top priority, but educating the low-income population on environmental impact is of great importance because these topics are not reaching these at-risk populations. Low-income areas of Brainerd (22% poverty rate) are often consumed by trash, have fewer green spaces, and have less understanding of the impact between human behavior and the effect on our natural environment.

What is your proposed solution to the problem or opportunity discussed above? i.e. What are you seeking funding to do? You will be asked to expand on this in Activities and Milestones.

The Northland Arboretum hopes to combat the identified problem by improving our nature-based educational programming and connecting all ages to the outdoors. As humans, we have a primal connection to nature which we have ignored as our technology advances and our lives become overwhelmed. Through hands-on education, we can engage the community with nature once again which will help increase knowledge of plants, help sustain household food sources, and improve the physical and mental health of all families. In addition, our curriculum provides hands-on experiences which provide tips on making small household changes that protect our natural environment, resulting in more green spaces and a healthier community overall. The first step of the project will be to conduct a community survey with our partners to retrieve data on the true educational needs of our community. We would also hire an Outdoor Advocate that would be focused on coordinating the educational programming, recruiting volunteers, and conducting community outreach. The Outdoor Advocate would also lead our internship program in partnership with the local community college's Natural Resources department. With this additional capacity we hope to increase our class registration, volunteerism, and green practices throughout the community as measured through an end-of-year survey.

What are the specific project outcomes as they relate to the public purpose of protection, conservation, preservation, and enhancement of the state's natural resources?

With the added capacity of additional staff and volunteers, the Northland Arboretum hopes to increase the amount of nature-based classes and workshops provided to the community from 14 per year to 50 per year. Each class will have approximately 15 participants, impacting over 750 people with information concerning natural resources and conservation efforts. In addition, the increased capacity provided by this grant will allow the organization to increase outreach efforts. By participating in activities such as the county fair, city events, and community education events, the Arboretum could reach thousands of people with strategic marketing and educational resources.

Activities and Milestones

Activity 1: Implement survey to assess community needs

Activity Budget: \$14,000

Activity Description:

Although we have anecdotal information on the needs of our community surrounding conservation and nature-based education, we would like to understand the specific needs of the population that does not utilize the Arb, including the low-income population of Brainerd-Baxter. Through this survey we would like to identify the barriers of receiving access to this kind of education, the topics that will be most impactful, and the best platform for delivery of outdoor education.

Activity Milestones:

Description	Completion Date
Develop Survey and sent to participants	August 31 2022
Data Analysis	September 30 2022
Report findings to the Board and the community.	October 31 2022
Follow up survey to gauge improvements	April 30 2024
Data Analysis	June 30 2024

Activity 2: Increase volunteer base and volunteer hours

Activity Budget: \$50,000

Activity Description:

Recruitment and retention strategies for our volunteer base will begin immediately as implemented by the Outdoor Advocate and Volunteer Coordinator. Increasing volunteer hours will be a direct reflection on the reach we have in the community concerning our outdoor education and conservation efforts.

Activity Milestones:

Description	Completion Date
Attend County Fair for Outreach and recruitment	August 31 2022
Join MAVA for recruitment and training of Volunteer Coordinator	August 31 2022
Update all volunteer onboarding paperwork	August 31 2022
Volunteer Orientation	September 30 2022
Make connections with local community college for volunteer instructors	December 31 2022
Increase volunteer base to 50 volunteers	September 30 2023
Implement Volunteer Tracking software	December 31 2023
Increase volunteer base to 75 volunteers	June 30 2024

Activity 3: Build Pavilion for added Outdoor Education Space

Activity Budget: \$30,000

Activity Description:

A covered outdoor space for educational programming is desperately needed at the Arboretum. Once built, the organization will be able to hold double the amount of participants each class, resulting in a wider reach in the community and more education about the conservation and preservation of our natural environment.

Activity Milestones:

Description	Completion Date
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City Permit	July 31 2022
Fundraising Campaign for remaining funds	December 31 2022
Completion of Pavilion	May 31 2023
Ribbon Cutting	June 30 2023

Activity 4: Expand participation of education classes and workshops

Activity Budget: \$60,000

Activity Description:

The Northland Arboretum will hire an Outdoor Advocate responsible for expanding education and outreach. The advocate will partner with the school districts, local nonprofits, and other organizations for marketing and instructor recruitment.

Activity Milestones:

Description	Completion Date
Hire Outdoor Advocate	July 31 2022
Complete Education Schedule for 2023	November 30 2022
Connections to school district partners	December 31 2022
Connections to local nonprofits	December 31 2022
Open enrollment for Arb University	April 30 2023
Connections to homeschool groups	July 31 2023
Increase utilization of Nature Knapsacks to 2 rentals/month per backpack	August 31 2023
Complete Education Schedule for 2024 - meeting goal of 50 classes/workshops scheduled	November 30 2023
Enrollment goal of 15 participants per workshop/class is met	June 30 2024

Project Partners and Collaborators

Name	Organization	Role	Receiving Funds
Outdoor Education Instructors	University of Minnesota Master Naturalists	Master Naturalists would instruct workshops, classes and activities for children and adults based on their preferred topics. Master Naturalists are required to complete 40 hours of service to remain certified through the University of Minnesota.	No
Outdoor Education Instructors	University of Minnesota Master Gardeners	Master Gardeners would help instruct workshops, classes and activities based on topics of their choice. Master Gardeners are required to complete 40 hours of service to keep their certification through the University of Minnesota.	No
Outdoor Education Participants	Brainerd Lakes YMCA	The Brainerd Lakes YMCA provides child care and summer camps for children ages Kindergarten through Middle School. This partnership would provide nature-based education for those enrolled children from the YMCA from the Northland Arboretum. The YMCA would be able to provide transportation to the Arb if needed.	No
Outdoor Education Instructors	Central Lakes College	The partnership would be between the Arb and the Natural Resources department. As a requirement of their program, CLC students would be required to instruct a class at the Arboretum. The CLC partnership will also help us with finding a qualified candidate for the new Advocate role.	No
Program Development Partner	Crow Wing Energized	The Crow Wing Energized collaborative is through a local health organization and focuses on the health and wellbeing of the community. They would be able to help build additional partnerships, develop program curriculum, provide instructors and provide additional funding.	No

Long-Term Implementation and Funding

Describe how the results will be implemented and how any ongoing effort will be funded. If not already addressed as part of the project, how will findings, results, and products developed be implemented after project completion? If additional work is needed, how will this be funded?

First, the organization will hire the Outdoor Advocate who will be responsible for expanding our educational pillar, implementing a community survey, and recruiting volunteers for the ongoing educational components. The Advocate and volunteers will utilize existing curriculums to teach class participants about our natural world. Some of the resources that will be included include Project WET and Project WILD, in addition to curriculums created by our volunteer instructors within the Master Naturalist and Master Gardener groups. The Advocate will also be a part of restoring and protecting our existing habitats on the grounds for demonstration and educational purposes.

Project Manager and Organization Qualifications

Project Manager Name: Candice Zimmermann

Job Title: Outdoor Education Advocate

Provide description of the project manager's qualifications to manage the proposed project.

Because of the Northland Arboretum's limited staff capacity, this grant would support the salary of a new role for two years, afterward, becoming self-sustaining. If fully funded, the Arboretum would be able to create a position that will focus on the development and implementation of an enhanced outdoor education program. This role will be responsible for partnering with the community (i.e. other nonprofits, schools, YMCA, homeschool population) to provide both adult and youth-focused activities that will result in a better understanding of our natural resources and learned principles on how to protect them. The project manager will have a 2 or 4-year degree in natural resources, education, horticulture, or related field. An ideal candidate will also have experience in community outreach, fundraising, volunteer coordination, and project management. If this project is partially funded, the Project Manager would be the Executive

Director of the organization until the program grows to the point where an additional staff person is feasible. The qualifications of the Executive Director include but are not limited to, 7 years project management, 4 years grant management, 4 years volunteer coordination, 6 years budget experience, and a Master's degree in Nonprofit Management.

Organization: Paul Bunyan Arboretum

Organization Description:

The Northland Arboretum has been a staple in the Brainerd-Baxter community since it was established in 1974 as an innovative solution to the closure of the city landfill. Since then, the Arb has been a place for the community to celebrate nature and learn about how to enjoy its beauty while also respecting and protecting it. The Arb currently operates under three main pillars including Education, Recreation, and Conservation, and is guided by its mission to "be a valued community asset providing outdoor recreation and educational activities for all while protecting the natural environment". As the organization wraps up its most current strategic planning process, it is evident that both the community and the Arb will benefit from an expansion of the current educational programming in order to further its mission and bounce back from a year of challenges.

Budget Summary

Category / Name	Subcategory or Type	Description	Purpose	Gen. Ineligible	% Benefits	# FTE	Classified Staff?	\$ Amount
Personnel								
Outdoor Education Advocate		To coordinate the education programs, recruit instructors, develop curriculum, provide outreach to the community.			10%	1.5		\$63,492
Volunteer Coordinator		To recruit volunteers for the programs, maintain volunteers, coordinate volunteer events, etc.			10%	1		\$16,016
							Sub Total	\$79,508
Contracts and Services								
							Sub Total	-
Equipment, Tools, and Supplies								
	Tools and Supplies	Animal Track Replicas	Classroom Supplies					\$175
	Tools and Supplies	See-Through Composting Container	Classroom Supplies					\$75
	Tools and Supplies	Garden Mulch (100 yds)	Gardening 101 Supplies					\$3,500
	Tools and Supplies	Gardening pots (250 pots)	Gardening 101 Supplies					\$250
	Tools and Supplies	Soil for gardening beds (25 yds)	Gardening 101 Supplies					\$750
	Tools and Supplies	Garden Seeds (75 packets/year)	Gardening 101 Supplies					\$300
	Tools and Supplies	Cross Country Skis (15 sets)	Outdoor Education for Winter months					\$3,750
	Tools and Supplies	Interpretive Trail Signs (12 professionally printed signs)	Outdoor Education - placement of signs will be throughout the Arboretum grounds					\$6,000
	Tools and Supplies	Instructor Shirts	Instructors should have apparel for classes and workshops.					\$1,750
	Tools and Supplies	Composting Bins (2 bins)	Gardening 101 Supplies					\$375

	Tools and Supplies	Office Supplies	For new Outdoor Advocate position	X				\$5,000
	Tools and Supplies	Volunteer Tracking Software	To appropriately track volunteer time with the ability to log hours remotely					\$4,000
							Sub Total	\$25,925
Capital Expenditures								
		Outdoor Educational Pavilion	To have a safe, covered, outdoor space to conduct classes on the grounds	X				\$30,000
							Sub Total	\$30,000
Acquisitions and Stewardship								
							Sub Total	-
Travel In Minnesota								
	Miles/ Meals/ Lodging	Mileage for Outdoor Advocate (estimated 900 miles per year)	Outreach, meetings, community presentations					\$1,000
							Sub Total	\$1,000
Travel Outside Minnesota								
							Sub Total	-
Printing and Publication								
	Printing	500 surveys	To collected data on the needs of the community surrounding outdoor education					\$500
	Printing	Educational Pamphlets	Trifold brochures about the plants and wildlife found in our area and how to protect them.					\$1,500
	Printing	In house printing of classroom supplies	Nature-based educational classes and workshops					\$825
							Sub Total	\$2,825

Other Expenses								
		Postage - 1500 stamps	Sending out surveys, return postage, kits for virtual participants					\$825
		Training - Master Naturalist Certification	Training for Outdoor Advocate. Master Naturalist certification comes from the University of Minnesota Extension					\$300
		Environmental Speakers/Instructors (2 visits per month/2 hours each visit for 2 years)	For educational topics beyond the scope of our volunteer instructors					\$2,880
		Project WET/WILD/GROWING UP WILD Workshops and Materials	Training for the Outdoor Advocate					\$5,000
		Administrative Fees (4%)	For grant administration, grant reporting, and data tracking					\$5,737
							Sub Total	\$14,742
							Grand Total	\$154,000

Classified Staff or Generally Ineligible Expenses

Category/Name	Subcategory or Type	Description	Justification Ineligible Expense or Classified Staff Request
<p>Capital Expenditures</p>		<p>Outdoor Educational Pavilion</p>	<p>As our ability to reach a larger sector of the community and the demand on our educational programming grows, our nonprofit organization will need outdoor space to conduct nature-based classes. Being outdoors is not only impactful for the type of classes and workshops that we are holding, but in the midst of a pandemic it is the safest way for us to implement our programming. This pavilion will have enough covered space to hold 40 people, even in unpredictable Minnesota weather. The pavilion will be paid for by a combination of community funds, private donations, and LCCMR. All sponsors can be recognized through an intentional plaque.</p> <p>Additional Explanation : One of the core pillars of the Northland Arboretum is educating the public about our natural world and protecting it. This component of our mission will not be going away. We wish to expand our educational capacity so more space, especially outdoor space, is needed in order to be successful with this goal.</p>
<p>Equipment, Tools, and Supplies</p>		<p>Office Supplies</p>	<p>Taking on a new position can take a lot of funding up front. The need for a new office chair, desk, computer, desktop phone, file cabinet, etc. will all be needed to start this new position on the right foot. As a nonprofit, we don't always have additional revenue for these one-time costs. Ongoing costs such as phone line, internet, additional cyber security, are all things we are able to absorb but we are hoping the one-time costs will be justified.</p>

Non ENRTF Funds

Category	Specific Source	Use	Status	Amount
State				
			State Sub Total	-
Non-State				
Cash	Brainerd Community Foundation	The use of these funds will be for the structure of the outdoor education pavilion.	Secured	\$5,000
Cash	Donation from Master Gardener	Interpretive/Educational signage on the trail system and within gardens.	Secured	\$300
Cash	Brainerd Noon Sertoma	To launch the Nature Knapsack program.	Secured	\$500
Cash	Brainerd Area Rotary Club	To launch the Nature Knapsack program	Secured	\$1,500
Cash	Sourcewell	Matching funds to help launch the Nature Knapsack program and expand the nature-focused library for children as well as fund 4 sets of snowshoes so the program can be functional in the winter season months.	Secured	\$2,500
Cash	Donation from Anonymous for nature-based education	Nature based education supplies	Secured	\$530
Cash	Lakes Area United Way	To support the expansion of our nature-based education program including Nature Knapsacks, the outdoor education pavilion and classroom supplies.	Pending	\$17,864
In-Kind	Northland Arboretum	Northland Arboretum Executive Director	Secured	\$5,000
In-Kind	Northland Arboretum	Volunteer Coordinator (.10 FTE)	Secured	\$2,400
			Non State Sub Total	\$35,594
			Funds Total	\$35,594

Attachments

Required Attachments

Visual Component

File: [c9bb9f70-f55.pdf](#)

Alternate Text for Visual Component

This is the picture of our modest plans for an outdoor education pavilion....

Financial Capacity

File: [b10a3000-ecc.pdf](#)

Board Resolution or Letter

Title	File
Board Meeting Minutes of 3-23-2021	5c539e45-ee9.docx

Administrative Use

Does your project include restoration or acquisition of land rights?

No

Does your project have potential for royalties, copyrights, patents, or sale of products and assets?

No

Do you understand and acknowledge IP and revenue-return and sharing requirements in 116P.10?

N/A

Do you wish to request reinvestment of any revenues into your project instead of returning revenue to the ENRTF?

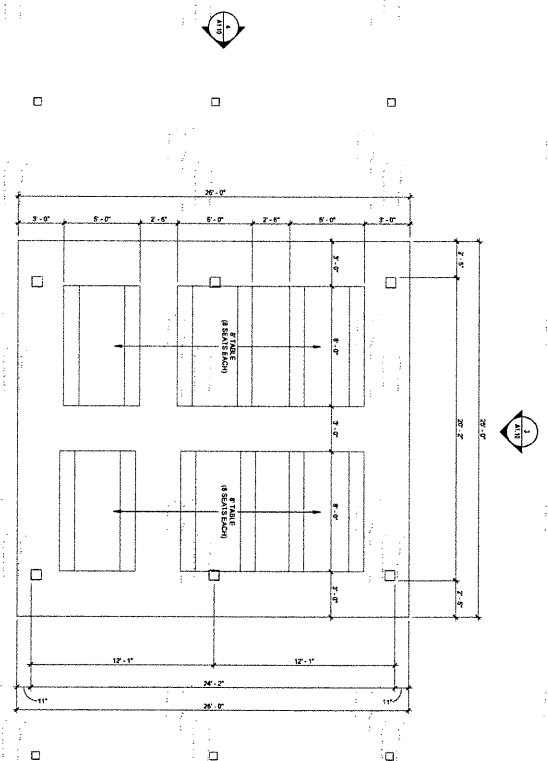
N/A

Does your project include original, hypothesis-driven research?

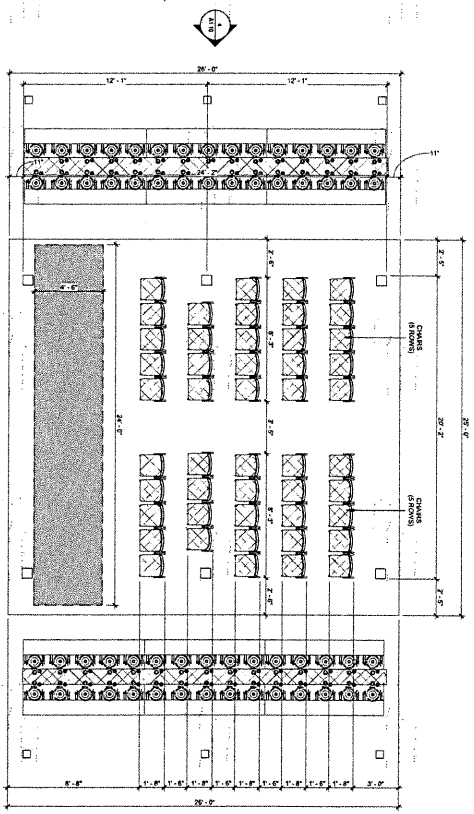
No

Does the organization have a fiscal agent for this project?

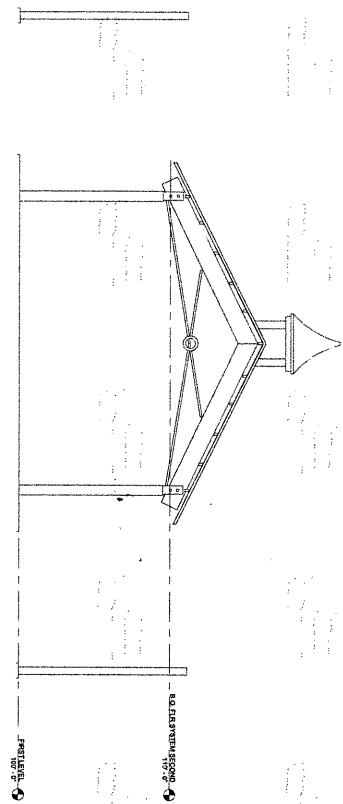
No



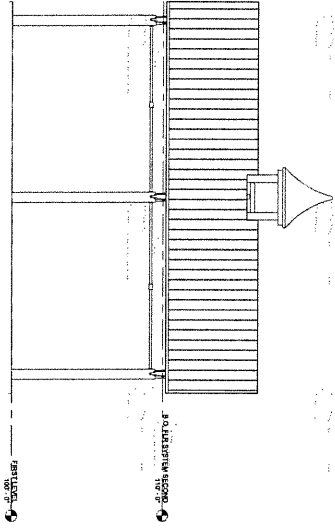
1 FIRST LEVEL FLOOR PLAN (TABLES)
1/8" = 1'-0"



2 FIRST LEVEL FLOOR PLAN (CHAIRS)
1/8" = 1'-0"



3 FRONT ELEVATION
1/8" = 1'-0"



4 SIDE ELEVATION
1/8" = 1'-0"



5 OVERALL CONCEPT PLAN
1/8" = 1'-0"

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NOT FOR CONSTRUCTION

GAZEBO CONCEPT DESIGN
NORTHLAND ARBORETUM
BRAINERD REMODEL
CONCEPT DESIGN

DATE: 2/18/2020
SCALE: AS NOTED
DRAWN BY: AGM
CHECKED BY: <NAME>
JOB NUMBER:

DATE	REV	REVISIONS DESCRIPTION	BY

HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THIS PLAN, SPECIFICATION, OR REPORT WAS PREPARED BY ME OR UNDER MY DIRECT SUPERVISION AND THAT I AM A DULY LICENSED ARCHITECT UNDER THE LAWS OF THE STATE OF MINNESOTA

ARCHITECT SIGN DATE LIC# #8888

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