



Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund

2025 Request for Proposal

General Information

Proposal ID: 2025-284

Proposal Title: Norway House FriLife Project

Project Manager Information

Name: Joseph Grodahl

Organization: Norway House

Office Telephone: (612) 871-2211

Email: jgrodahl@norwayhouse.org

Project Basic Information

Project Summary: Norway House is launching an educational series focused on equipping people with skills to enjoy the outdoors. FriLife program will be modelled after Norwegian cultural value of "open air living".

ENRTF Funds Requested: \$260,000

Proposed Project Completion: July 31, 2027

LCCMR Funding Category: Environmental Education (C)

Project Location

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

Region(s): Metro

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

Region(s): Metro

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.

We believe there is considerable deficit of open air living today in the US, and more specifically in the metro area. Research shows that more than 95% of our lives is spent indoors, and there are many reasons people don't go outdoors more. Common sense tells us that we're meant to be outdoors more and 85% of women see the outdoors as key to better physical and mental health and overall well-being. Barriers to outdoor experiences can vary from concerns about safety, to lack of access and skills needed to engage in the outdoors. Our focus will be on building outdoor knowledge, skills, and confidence. We will connect participants who want to build their skills to our partner organizations. Norway House is launching an educational series focused on equipping people with skills to enjoy the outdoors. The programming will be open to all residents on Minnesota, and especially for residents of the urban centers of Minneapolis and St. Paul who have the least access and the most barriers. The educational series will be under the banner of FriLife" as an appropriate way to connect with the idea of friluftsliv to describe a lifestyle focused on the joy of outdoors.

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

The mission of FriLife is to engage with populations disconnected from outdoor experiences due to socioeconomic barriers, mental and physical health challenges, and lack of awareness of opportunities. Our goal is to introduce metro residents to the FriLife lifestyle by lowering barriers and improving access in order to enrich daily life with connection to nature.

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?

We will create educational programming at three levels: Introductory e.g. group walks; Intermediate e.g. canoeing the Mississippi; Advanced e.g. orienteering and camping in local parks. We will track participation and engagement as well as gather feedback on all events. Metrics will include registration, attendance, active participation, completion of tasks, satisfaction with the course, and participant demographic data (when possible.) The curriculum will enable other organizations to replicate our programs.

Activities and Milestones

Activity 1: Introduction to Group Walks

Activity Budget: \$80,000

Activity Description:

We will determine locations appropriate for beginner walkers. We will promote walking in the community based on feedback from focus groups. Focus groups will inform us as to potential sites, length of walking appropriate for different age groups, and desire for social connection. Leaders will need to promote the walking event, chart a route, meet participants at the start of event, and lead the initial walks including sharing natural history information, appropriate attire and local history. Sites for walks could include the Pioneer Soldiers Memorial Cemetery, trails along the Mississippi River, the Eloise Butler Wildflower Garden and Bird Sanctuary in Theodore Wirth Park, and the Mill City Museum Ruins and Stone Arch Bridge along West River Road.

Classes will convene at Norway House and charter buses will transport participants to walking locations. The leisurely pace will allow participants to learn along the way, enjoy and savor the outdoor environment, as well as allow all abilities to participate in a cooperative activity.

Leaders will also be identifying future volunteer leaders to broaden the audience and interest within their communities. Future walks could include a focus on tree identification, bird identification and foraging.

Activity Milestones:

Description	Approximate Completion Date
Advanced Programming: deliver ten year-round activities utilizing partner groups for training and equipment rental	June 30, 2027
Introductory Programming delivered to ten neighborhood groups; identifying five key volunteer leaders	June 30, 2027

Activity 2: Intermediate Classes: Canoeing the Mississippi and Fishing Metro Lakes

Activity Budget: \$100,000

Activity Description:

These classes teach water safety and offer access to waterfront equipment. Water sport activities are readily available in the metro area but are underutilized. FriLife offers a portal to outdoor activities that people may be interested in but do not know how to access. FriLife will engage with partners to provide varied opportunities for participants who do not know where or how to get started. Our focus will be on building outdoor knowledge and skills. FriLife will focus on culturally sensitive or ability specific groupings.

Activity Milestones:

Description	Approximate Completion Date
Advanced Programming: Camping in local parks, orienteering, and ice climbing	June 30, 2024
Intermediate Programming: Expand outdoor activities utilizing equipment rental and expert trainers for ten groups	June 30, 2024
Intermediate Programming: summer canoeing and year-round fishing programs for ten groups by 2027	June 30, 2027

Activity 3: Advanced Programming: Camping in local parks, orienteering, and ice climbing

Activity Budget: \$80,000

Activity Description:

Utilizing experts to teach advanced outdoor skills, our goal is to offer advanced programming in camping, orienteering, and ice climbing to engage and expand participants awareness and confidence in high-adventure activities available in the metro area of Minneapolis and St. Paul. We understand that lack of previous participation in these activities is likely due to insufficient access to equipment and classes. Programs will be delivered in partnership with other community organizations, especially those working with youth and disabled.

Activity Milestones:

Description	Approximate Completion Date
Year-round advanced programming delivered to fifteen community groups	June 30, 2024

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 work be funded?

Program leaders will study the evaluations and adjust the programming accordingly. Participant feedback will be the primary basis for future implementation. Community focus groups will alert us to the greatest need in the community. Ongoing funding will be secured through foundations, collaborating organizations, and individual donors.

Project Manager and Organization Qualifications

Project Manager Name: Joseph Grodahl

Job Title: Director of Operations & Programs

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

Joseph Grodahl is highly qualified to be the project leader for implementing this initiative using ENRTF funds. Joseph leads Norway House efforts to connect with the diverse Ventura Village neighborhood as well as developing programming to engage Norway House constituents in our organization's mission to connect the United State to contemporary Norway through culture. A bilingual dual citizen of the US and Norway, Joseph has extensive background and understanding of Norwegian cultural concepts like "friluftsliv" and a demonstrated passion for intercultural exchange through co-programming efforts with diverse communities. Time spent working at the United Nations in Geneva, service on the board of the Minnesota Institute for Horn of Africa Studies, and membership in and engagement with internationally-minded local organizations such as the Committee on Foreign Relations - Minnesota, the Minnesota Peace Initiative, and Global Minnesota equip Joseph to understand and communicate the universal appeal of the "friluftsliv" concept to promote a free and unstructured relationship to engaging with our natural surroundings. His educational and professional background including a JD/MBA from the University of St. Thomas and experience managing teams both in small business and large corporate food service, equips Joseph to lead the proposed expanded team in implementing the vision for the FriLife initiative to promote the "friluftsliv" lifestyle.

Organization: Norway House

Organization Description:

Norway House is the Norwegian arts, business and culture center in America. Located in the Phillips neighborhood of Minneapolis for over twenty years, Norway House has served as the convener, connector, and facilitator of Norwegian organizations as well as community groups and ad hoc organizations. Norway House presents programs, classes, and events. These cover a wide spectrum of interests and appeal to all ages. Examples include the Minnesota Peace Initiative, music and language programming, and contemporary cultural expressions of craft, cuisine, and culture. Norway House serves as the convener of the Southside Peacekeeping Coalition, a partnership of several neighborhood organizations.

Our upcoming children's Democracy Center exhibit is a partnership with the Ventura Village neighborhood association for the purpose of building awareness and understanding democratic principles.

Budget Summary

Category / Name	Subcategory or Type	Description	Purpose	Gen. Ineligible	% Benefits	# FTE	Classified Staff?	\$ Amount
Personnel								
Outdoor experience leaders/Ad-hoc outing guides		Based on 48 outdoor events and outings in 2025. guiding hikes and other accessible outdoor experiences, average stipend of \$250			25%	0.5		\$12,000
Programming Interns/Paid Internships		Quarterly internships recruited from geographically broad range of Minnesota colleges, prioritizing candidates with demonstrated ability to connect to diverse underserved communities, \$1,000 monthly stipend.			25%	0.5		\$12,000
Event Staffing		Staff support for single events, including physical setup, captaining event volunteer teams, and transportation coordination. Part-time ad-hoc shift work, necessary to the successful execution of 48 community events			25%	0.5		\$12,000
Event Security		Based on 50% of the 48 outdoor events and outings in 2025 specifically aimed at engaging local neighbors in our vicinity of Chicago and Franklin Avenues in Minneapolis, and based on feedback in community listening sessions at Norway House from diverse neighbors and ofent via interpreters, that fear and self-isolation are primary barriers to outdoor experiences due to persistent and unaddressed organized and violent crime patterns in our immediate vicinity. Provide deescalation-focused private security for events and outings to maximize participation in ad strengthen community ties among our Ventura Village neighborhood, one of the nation's most diverse			25%	0.5		\$48,000
							Sub Total	\$84,000
Contracts and Services								
Headline Speakers	Professional or Technical	National and international speakers to come to Minnesota such as Linda Aakesen McGurk, Will				0.1		\$20,000

	Service Contract	Steger, Jessie Diggins. Fund travel stipends and honoraria.						
Curriculum Development	Professional or Technical Service Contract	Develop universally -appealing curricula around FriLife concepts, recruit and train instructors, build digital and print content, generate implementation plans for events and outings for internal programming and for training partnering organizations to implement.				1		\$50,000
Professional Development	Professional or Technical Service Contract	Online and in-person training for developing staff understanding for outdoors programming				0.04		\$2,000
Volunteer Training	Professional or Technical Service Contract	Organizing and supplying volunteer training sessions				0.04		\$2,000
Background checks and training	Professional or Technical Service Contract	Perform background checks on all staff or volunteer leaders, and train staff and volunteers on safe environments				0.04		\$3,000
							Sub Total	\$77,000
Equipment, Tools, and Supplies								
	Equipment	Rental of equipment such as snowshoes, fishing kits, outdoor cooking gear, disability access support equipment	make activities affordable and adaptable					\$35,000
	Tools and Supplies	Personal Care Items	first-aid kits, sunscreen, hand ware items for program participants. Help eliminate psychological and physical barriers to outdoor activity.					\$5,000
	Tools and Supplies	Software and digital platform subscriptions	software and subscriptions necessary for generating, editing, and maintaining digital content and social media presence to promote programming and convey the message of FriLife concepts					\$10,000
							Sub Total	\$50,000
Capital Expenditures								

							Sub Total	-
Acquisitions and Stewardship								
							Sub Total	-
Travel In Minnesota								
	Miles/ Meals/ Lodging	Program participant transportation. Transportation for underserved populations to access out events and outings	preventing financial barriers for participants					\$15,000
	Miles/ Meals/ Lodging	Travel expenses for staff and volunteers to conduct training events with program volunteers and partnering organizations	make training events affordable for volunteers, remove financial barriers					\$10,000
							Sub Total	\$25,000
Travel Outside Minnesota								
							Sub Total	-
Printing and Publication								
	Publication	Digital outreach marketing	Digital content creation, paid advertising, and targeted email and social media campaigns to generate awareness for FriLife concepts and build engagement with programing.					\$24,000
							Sub Total	\$24,000
Other Expenses								
							Sub Total	-
							Grand Total	\$260,000

Classified Staff or Generally Ineligible Expenses

Category/Name	Subcategory or Type	Description	Justification Ineligible Expense or Classified Staff Request
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Non ENRTF Funds

Category	Specific Source	Use	Status	Amount
State				
			State Sub Total	-
Non-State				
			Non State Sub Total	-
			Funds Total	-

Total Project Cost: \$260,000

This amount accurately reflects total project cost?

Yes

Attachments

Required Attachments

Visual Component

File: [73f184e1-72e.pdf](#)

Alternate Text for Visual Component

map of neighborhood and city...

Financial Capacity

Title	File
IRS 990	972cbbd7-064.pdf

Board Resolution or Letter

Title	File
Board Authorization	d93e950f-708.pdf

Administrative Use

Does your project include restoration or acquisition of land rights?

No

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

Yes

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

No

Do you wish to request reinvestment of any revenues into your project instead of returning revenue to the ENRTF? If so, describe here (1) the source and estimated amounts of any revenue and (2) how you propose to use those revenues:

Yes, When curriculum is submitted for copyright, it will be made available to schools, community groups, and senior centers for purchase for minimal cost.

Does your project include original, hypothesis-driven research?

No

Does the organization have a fiscal agent for this project?

Yes, Norway House

Does your project include the pre-design, design, construction, or renovation of a building, trail, campground, or other fixed capital asset costing \$10,000 or more or large-scale stream or wetland restoration?

No

Do you propose using an appropriation from the Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund to conduct a project that provides children's services (as defined in Minnesota Statutes section 299C.61 Subd.7 as "the provision of care, treatment, education, training, instruction, or recreation to children")?

Yes

Do you certify that background checks are performed for background check crimes, as defined in Minnesota Statutes, section 299C.61, Subd. 2, on all employees, contractors, and volunteers who have or may have access to a child to whom children's services are provided by your organization?

Yes

Provide the name(s) and organization(s) of additional individuals assisting in the completion of this proposal:

Rebecca Jorgenson Sundquist, Chief Development Officer at Norway House