



Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund

2027 Request for Proposal

General Information

Proposal ID: 2027-548

Proposal Title: Green Careers Exploration and Exposure Expansion

Project Manager Information

Name: Justo Garcia

Organization: City of Minneapolis

Office Telephone: (612) 240-9888

Email: justo.garcia@minneapolismn.gov

Project Basic Information

Project Summary: This project will provide funding for partner organizations to continue delivering training and pathways into green careers for Minneapolis youth and young adults.

ENRTF Funds Requested: \$245,000

Proposed Project Completion: December 31, 2028

LCCMR Funding Category: Small Projects (G)

Secondary Category: Education and Outdoor Recreation (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

Narrative

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

Current climate science reveals the dangerous impacts climate change has on human populations and the environment. The National Climate and Health Assessment of the United States Global Change Research Program identified climate change as a significant threat to the health of the people of the United States, leading to increased temperature related deaths and illnesses, and other wellbeing concerns. The impact of climate change is most immediately felt by low-income individuals, in many cases due to a lack of resources exacerbating preexisting challenges. The city of Minneapolis has embarked on an ambitious plan to become carbon neutral by 2050, by increased investment to the City's Climate Equity Plan. This investment targets the implementation of renewable energy in Minneapolis homes and businesses, energy efficiency, increasing the City's tree canopy, supporting circular economics, and economic development in marginalized communities. With the need for thousands of new high paying jobs in the green industry, the Green Careers Exploration Program aims to address the low diversity or representation of people of color in this growing field. With the funding from the LCCMR the GCEP will continue to fund community-based organizations and educational institutions to provide green careers exposure, education, and credentials.

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 Green Careers Exploration Program facilitates the development and execution of three types of opportunities: exposure programs, education programs, and credentialed programs. Exposure programs allow youth and young adults to experience and connect with their environment, community and careers as well as peer learning through networking and mentorship with professionals in the green career sector; education programs such as renewable energy, urban agriculture, sustainable land care and others teach individuals about sustainability and emerging green career opportunities; credentials such as NABCEP certification enhance opportunities for individuals to enter the field with an acceptable wage. In order to improve completion of the program, all GCEP offers are paid training or earn and learn opportunities.

Some examples are GCEP support of Smart North's GIS and Sustainability Foundational Skills Discovery Camp for youth 14 and older, which provided project-based training workshops introducing Geographic Information Systems (GIS) and core sustainability principles. Participants completed both independent and team projects and were introduced to exploratory resources for both career and higher education pathways. Similarly, Metro Blooms' sustainable land care and career exploration program and Go Solar's certification program where participants obtain certifications such as OSHA 10, IronRidge, unlicensed electrical registration and others.

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?

The funds from this grant will be used to support programs that will support the enrollment of about 100 or more youth over the course of one year in educational and career-oriented programs surrounding the preservation of our state's natural resources via home energy efficiency, expansion of our green career offerings such as renewable energy, waste management, and reduction of food waste. For example, GCEP will support our program partners in providing trainings on solar PV installation, green construction, and working with electricity, and supporting partners such as NACDI, Project Sweetie Pie, Spark-Y with internship funding for Minneapolis youth.

Activities and Milestones

Activity 1: Provide Solar PV installation training or education

Activity Budget: \$60,000

Activity Description:

We plan to contract with some of our current partners such as Minneapolis Climate Action, Metro Bloom, Project Sweetie Pie, Minneapolis Public School and other to provide Solar PV Installation training, Sustainable Landcare training, urban agriculture and other environmental or green careers.

To train, expose, or certify 30 to 40 students in Solar PV Installation. Youth receive three weeks of paid, expert-led instruction in solar installation, maintenance, and troubleshooting, during which they prepare for and complete industry-recognized certification exams (OSHA10, NABCEP PV Associate, first aid, UniRAC, IronRidge, and Enphase).

Activity Milestones:

Description	Approximate Completion Date
Solar PV Installation Training Instructor contract completion	December 31, 2027
Participant recruitment	June 30, 2028
Program execution and evaluation	December 31, 2028

Activity 2: Provide Sustainable Land Care training and education

Activity Budget: \$50,000

Activity Description:

We plan to contract with some of our current partners such as Minneapolis Climate Action, Metro Bloom, Project Sweetie Pie, Minneapolis Public School and other to provide Solar PV Installation training, Sustainable Landcare training, urban agriculture and other environmental or green careers.

To train, expose, or certify 30 to 40 students in Sustainable Landcare training. Youth complete a paid 30-hour course in stormwater best management practices, learning about rain gardens, native plant and insect identification, stormwater management inspection, and career skills. The course is split into four full-day in-person segments every two weeks, with online learning in between.

Activity Milestones:

Description	Approximate Completion Date
Instructor contract completion	June 30, 2028
Participant recruitment	July 31, 2028
Program execution	October 31, 2028
Post-program participant outcome tracking	December 31, 2028

Activity 3: Green Careers Youth Summer Cohort

Activity Budget: \$50,000

Activity Description:

We plan to contract with some of our current partners such as Minneapolis Climate Action, Metro Bloom, Project Sweetie Pie, Minneapolis Public School and other to provide Solar PV Installation training, Sustainable Landcare training,

urban agriculture and other environmental or green careers.

We aim to provide Green Careers exploration to 10 to 20 youth through a 5-week paid internship offered to youth 18-24. Each week, students are given introductory lessons from industry experts on solar, HVAC, electrical work, and drone piloting. These lessons feature hands-on labs and are designed to provide young adults with exposure and experience in nontraditional careers.

Activity Milestones:

Description	Approximate Completion Date
Instructor contract and scheduling completion	June 30, 2028
Participant recruitment	June 30, 2028
Program execution /post-program participant outcome tracking	December 31, 2028

Activity 4: FTE 0.3 for 1.5 Year support Green Careers

Activity Budget: \$39,408

Activity Description:

Green Careers Exploration Program Staff will coordinate training activities related to this grant.

Activity Milestones:

Description	Approximate Completion Date
Support Training and partner communication	December 31, 2028
Collect data as required in contract with partners	December 31, 2028

Activity 5: Provide Youth Summer Urban Agriculture program

Activity Budget: \$15,500

Activity Description:

We plan to contract with some of our current partners such as Minneapolis Climate Action, Metro Bloom, Project Sweetie Pie, Minneapolis Public School and other to provide Solar PV Installation training, Sustainable Landcare training, urban agriculture and other environmental or green careers.

Project Sweetie Pie will provide instruction and field learning experience on urban agriculture for Minneapolis youth.

Part of the learning objectives are related to planting, building of raised bed/gravel beds, soil preparation, organic waste management and food preservation techniques such as pickling, acidification, and vegetable fermentation.

Activity Milestones:

Description	Approximate Completion Date
Plant and maintain Oak Park Garden in North Minneapolis	December 31, 2028
Provide youth with Food safety, food preservation training	December 31, 2028
Program Execution and evaluation	December 31, 2028

Activity 6: Program administration fee

Activity Budget: \$30,092

Activity Description:

City will charge 15% program administration fee to cover logistics related to contract, materials, vehicle use and others

Activity Milestones:

Description	Approximate Completion Date
Program conclusion	December 31, 2028

Project Partners and Collaborators

Name	Organization	Role	Receiving Funds
Akisha Everett	Minneapolis Climate Action	Executive director	Yes
Micheal Chaney	Project Sweetie Pie	Executive director	Yes

Dissemination

Describe your plans for dissemination, presentation, documentation, or sharing of data, results, samples, physical collections, and other products and how they will follow ENRTF Acknowledgement Requirements and Guidelines.

The Minneapolis Green Careers Exploration Program, as part of our contract with third parties, deliverables and outcomes are required. Information collected is analyzed and processed by GCEP staff and results are stored on our SharePoint for easy access when data is requested. Documents are maintained and retained in accordance with City's guidelines. A Power Point presentation for the green careers progress is updated as data become available. As part of the City of Minneapolis Equity Plan / Climate Legacy Initiative, a web-based platform (The Climate Equity Tracker) was created to communicate to residents and any interested party progress related to the plan and initiative. Updates and progress can be found at: Climate Equity Tracker

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?

Since its implementation in 2013, the Green Careers program has produced satisfactory results which have contributed to its establishment as a Health Department program. The GCEP is currently funded via the City's general fund until 2030. Once the expansion of programs with the LCCMR funding is depleted, the GCEP will continue targeting similar grants and working with elected officials and City leadership to continue program funding to complete the City's objectives strengthening disenfranchised communities. Because of the GCEP's tremendous success throughout the past few years, we are confident that our elected officials and City leadership will continue supporting the program.

Project Manager and Organization Qualifications

Project Manager Name: Justo Garcia

Job Title: Health Manager

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

Justo Garcia is the Green Careers Exploration Program Manager for the City of Minneapolis Health Department. He leads the development and implementation of training and career exposure initiatives designed to connect youth and adults from historically underserved communities to career pathways in the green economy. These programs include hands-on training, certifications, and career exploration opportunities in renewable energy, sustainable construction, sustainable land care, urban agriculture, energy efficiency sectors, and others. Justo studied Marine Biology at Jorge Tadeo Lozano in Bogota University and later Food Science at the University of Minnesota. Some of Justo's work experience includes teaching science for high school students, environmental consultant for Geo-Ambiental, Hennepin County Human Services and Public Health Department, and Minneapolis Health Department. Justo is a Registered Environmental Health Specialist in the state of Minnesota, Certified HACCP trainer listed with the International HACCP Alliance and Lead Instructor Preventive Control Qualified Individual. For more than 20 years Justo has trained youth and adults in several areas such as Nutrition, Food Safety, Career Planning, and others.

Since joining the City of Minneapolis, Justo has managed programs that provide environmental education, exposure, credentialing opportunities, and paid training experiences for youth and young adults. His work focuses on expanding access to emerging green industries such as renewable energy, environmental technology, and climate resilience.

Justo has extensive experience coordinating partnerships between City departments, community-based organizations, educational institutions, and industry partners. Through the Green Careers Exploration Program, he works to ensure that residents from Minneapolis Green Zones and other communities disproportionately impacted by environmental injustices have equitable access to environmental career pathways.

For this project, Justo will oversee project coordination, partnership development, program implementation, and reporting to LCCMR. He will ensure that all project activities align with grant requirements and that the program successfully expands green workforce training opportunities for Minneapolis

Organization: City of Minneapolis

Organization Description:

The Green Careers Exploration Program is a unit of the City of Minneapolis Health Department (MHD) which its mission is to work in partnership with communities to protect and promote equitable health outcomes and eliminate health disparities through education, prevention, regulation, and advocacy. Their core purpose is to create a healthy city to live, work, and play by focusing on social, environmental, and physical conditions

The Green Careers Exploration Program (GCEP) was a unit created within the MHD in 2013 to expand access to emerging green career pathways for Minneapolis residents, especially those located within the designated Green Zones.

The program provides free and paid training opportunities that connect youth and young adults to education, career exposure, and credentialing in environmental and sustainability-related fields. GCEP focuses on building a workforce pipeline for the growing green economy while addressing environmental justice and economic disparities.

The program offers hands-on workforce training, industry-recognized certifications, internships, and career navigation support in fields such as renewable energy, energy efficiency, sustainable landscaping, urban agriculture and other related areas.

The program prioritizes residents from Minneapolis Green Zones and communities disproportionately impacted by environmental injustice. Through partnerships with community organizations, educational institutions, and industry leaders, GCEP support participants

Budget Summary

Category / Name	Subcategory or Type	Description	Purpose	Gen. Ineligible	% Benefits	# FTE	Classified Staff?	\$ Amount
Personnel								
Public Health Specialist I		1. Make presentations to community groups to recruit participation in the GCEP programs. Table in community events, provide engagement tools and initiatives, recruitment, and outreach strategies to increase training opportunities and participation of the under-represented community in energy efficiency, renewable energy, and other. Support community partners by providing information related to their collaboration with the GECP, communicating relevant information such as RFPs, new legislation and others. 2. Research employment opportunities and network with employers to assist GCEP clients, partners with information about employment and employment outlook. 3. Research and develop program in green construction, battery storage, EV charging station, solid waste, recycling and composting, GIS. 4. Assist Green Careers Exploration program manager with project planning and development of training and other relevant project procedures. 5. Write, analyzed, and develop GCEP program outcome and reportable data. 6. Perform administrative tasks such as note taking and storing, document management and storing, flyer creation and distribution, procedures guidelines, preparing agendas, assisting with preparation of project reports and budget reports for the GCEP.			25%	0.45		\$39,408
							Sub Total	\$39,408
Contracts and Services								
Minneapolis Climate Action	Service Contract	Solar PV training and Summer Youth Education Cohort				0		\$110,000

Metro Bloom	Service Contract	Sustainable Land Care Training				0		\$50,000
Project Sweetie Pie	Service Contract	Urban Agriculture Youth Sumer Program				0		\$15,500
City of Minneapolis	Service Contract	15% Program administrative				0		\$30,092
							Sub Total	\$205,592
Equipment, Tools, and Supplies								
							Sub Total	-
Capital Equipment								
							Sub Total	-
Acquisitions and Stewardship								
							Sub Total	-
Travel In Minnesota								
							Sub Total	-
Travel Outside Minnesota								
							Sub Total	-
Printing and Publication								
							Sub Total	-
Other Expenses								
							Sub Total	-
							Grand Total	\$245,000

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				
In-Kind	City of Minneapolis General Fund/Climate Legacy Initiative	Year Allocation to Support Green Careers Programs and Staff through 2030	Secured	\$650,000
			Non State Sub Total	\$650,000
			Funds Total	\$650,000

Total Project Cost: \$895,000

This amount accurately reflects total project cost?

Yes

Attachments

Required Attachments

Visual Component

File: [c9b25e70-1a7.pdf](#)

Alternate Text for Visual Component

Green Careers Exploration Exposure, Education, and Training Activities...

Financial Capacity

Title	File
Most recent audit report	dc33e91f-c94.pdf

Board Resolution or Letter

Title	File
Approval form	be8ef416-fad.docx

Supplemental Attachments

Capital Project Questionnaire, Budget Supplements, Support Letter, Photos, Media, Other

Title	File
MCA commitment letter	feda10e8-6be.pdf

Administrative Use

Does your project include restoration or acquisition of land rights?

No

Do you understand that travel expenses are only approved if they follow the "Commissioner's Plan" promulgated by the Commissioner of Management of Budget or, for University of Minnesota projects, the University of Minnesota plan?

N/A

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

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?

Yes, City of Minneapolis

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:

Carl Droessler, City of Minneapolis. Markeeta Keyes, City of Minneapolis. Agostina Figueroa, City of Minneapolis.

Do you understand that a named service contract does not constitute a funder-designated subrecipient or approval of a sole-source contract? In other words, a service contract entity is only approved if it has been selected according to the contracting rules identified in state law and policy for organizations that receive ENRTF funds through direct appropriations, or in the DNR's reimbursement manual for non-state organizations. These rules may include competitive bidding and prevailing wage requirements

Yes, I understand