



Arboriculture Education Grant Application

If you have any questions, please email dhettinger@treefund.org or call 630-369-8300 x204.

Applicant

Organization

Organization name	Forest ReLeaf of Missouri
Mailing address	4207 Lindell Blvd.
Mailing address line 2	Suite 301
City	St. Louis
State/province	MO
Zip/post code	63108
Country	US
Has this organization received previous funding from the TREE Fund?	No
If yes, was the funding for this project?	
Previous TREE Fund awards	

Contact Person

Prefix	Ms.
First name	Wendy
Last name	Schlesinger
Title	Development and Marketing Manager
Email address	wendy@moreleaf.org
Phone number	314-533-5323

Person Responsible for the Project

Prefix	Dr.
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First name	Donna
Last name	Hart
Title	retired professor of Anthropology
Email address	hartd@msx.umsi.edu
Phone number	573-470-6463
Degrees and related experience	PhD Biological Anthropology. 12 years teaching at the undergraduate level. 25 years experience in international wildlife conservation. The other team members are elementary and secondary teachers ranging from Kindergarten through senior high school all with a minimum of 25 years in the classroom.
Project	
Project title	Forest ReLeaf in the Classroom
Type of request	Start-up costs
Description of the project for which funds are requested	Forest ReLeaf in the Classroom is a hands-on interactive program teaching students about the many benefits trees provide and developing tree stewards in the process. Four levels of lesson plans: K-2, 3-6, middle and high school have been developed and will be taught by a trained docent/educator to present the 45-60 minute program. In addition to basic biology and environmental impact lessons, emphasis will be placed on the social and community benefits. Special "forest trunks" will be brought into the classroom with level-specific items for hands-on activities teaching students about the integral role trees play in our daily lives. Examples of some of the materials include a rain gauge, blood pressure cuff, clinometer, tree cookies, binoculars, bag of acorns, Frisbee, dollar bill, mood surveys, and tree journals. A special tree benefits board game has been created to reinforce the knowledge. Docents will leave behind suggestions for extended lessons and a "coupon" for a free tree from Forest ReLeaf for spring or fall planting.
What makes this project unique?	Lessons include a coupon for a 4-5 foot tall, 3-gallon native Missouri species tree from our nursery for planting. Providing an actual tree encourages continual learning throughout the students' tenure at that school. The hands-on interactive component addresses learning through all the senses including scent and touch. The more students integrate the information the more likely they are to retain it. Lesson plans teach the concept of biophilia theory and help to explain the effect trees and nature have on positive and negative behaviors. Because Forest ReLeaf has its own nursery, we can also provide additional follow up learning experiences like tours of the arboretum, greenhouse and rain garden, and participation in planting projects or nursery volunteer work. The nursery is managed by an ISA Certified Arborist who leads the tours and oversees the nursery volunteer work and operations.
Why is it needed?	This program helps every child know that nature is a necessary part of our environment. It emphasizes easily relatable and documented tree benefits like reduced ADHD and asthma symptoms, increased property values, lower blood pressure rates, reduced cooling costs and lower crime rates. Providing each classroom with a hands-on

program including a tree they can watch grow over the coming years reinforces the lessons learned and will create more tree stewards for the future.

We are unaware of an environmental organization that conducts educational outreach through the school systems on a regular basis. Many do one-time presentations but not on a consistent basis. Additionally, current programs tend to focus on the scientific environmental impacts of trees and nature and not the social and community aspects. This program is aligned with the Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education Core Curriculum requirements for science education.

Description of what outcomes are expected as a result of this project

Overall the program opens students to new ideas about nature and trees. They learn nature is an integral part of our lives and there is a vital connection. Student outcomes vary by grade level. K-2: students learn trees are living things, they benefit people and animals and people can also help trees. Grades 3-5: learn benefits and many uses of trees and gain an understanding of what life would be like without trees. Grades 6-8: learn benefits and uses of trees and understand variations across trees species; parts of leaves and basis of identification. Grades 9-12: students focus on the contributions trees make to our lives, understand how trees affect our health, environment, economy and community. From a teacher's perspective the program will excite the teacher with learning opportunities involved with the concept of the necessity of trees and will provide them with the ability to continue integrating that idea on their own throughout their lesson plans going forward.

At least 3 measurable goals to determine the success of this project

- 1- Gain a statistically significant increase in students' program matter knowledge before and after the presentation.
- 2- Gain feedback to fine-tune program for best delivery and material retention.
- 3- Present the program to at least 4 different schools in the fall semester
- 4- Teachers will incorporate the program knowledge into their regular curriculum going forward.
- 5- Program will result in an increase in the number of free trees planted through these schools, teachers and students.

Method for assessing achievement of project goals

Lesson plans were developed to include pre- and post-tests to determine the efficacy of the program. Tests will be administered at each presentation and evaluated to determine if there is a statistically significant increase in knowledge base. The evaluation will also provide valuable information to alter the program where necessary.

School visits are tracked and teachers will be followed up with routinely to check on their planted trees, provide additional support and identify if and how they are incorporating this subject matter into their regular curriculum. Should a school have the ability to visit the nursery, all visitors and nursery volunteer hours are also carefully tracked.

Tree requests are routinely tracked and identified as to their requesting source.

Plans for sustaining the project after the grant

The program will be promoted through a variety of media outlets connected with Missouri Department of Conservation, Missouri

Community Forestry Council and Missouri Forestkeepers Network. Program information and availability will be mentioned as well as a call for qualified educator volunteers. The program will also be offered as an internship or independent course of study at the Honors College of Education at the University of Missouri, St. Louis. Other potential granting entities such as Ameriprise, Stupp Foundation and others have been identified to provide additional funding. Grant evaluation periods for these groups however will not occur for another six or more months.

Project start date	03/01/2015
Project completion date	12/31/2015
Timeline	<p>Week of 3/30 introduce program into Little Creek Nature Area, part of Ferguson-Florissant School District High School</p> <p>April 10, introduce program into Grade 3 of City Academy</p> <p>First Week of May, introduce program in three separate classrooms; Kindergarten, first and second grades all at City Academy</p> <p>Mid-May – introduce program in to North Kirkwood Middle School</p> <p>May-June – evaluate results and tweak program</p> <p>July-August – Standardize materials, recruit and train educators, August - promote program to schools</p> <p>September – December –continue to test program in four additional schools districts; continue to recruit educators and promote program; continue to evaluate programs and adjust where needed. Prepare for a full launch in 2016.</p>
Is this a new project for your organization?	Yes
Project Budget	
Total project budget	8950
Amount requested	5000

Other Sources of Funding

Source 1

Name
 Amount requested
 Amount received or committed

Source 2

Name
 Amount requested
 Amount received or committed

Source 3

Name

Amount requested

Amount received or
committed**Source 4**

Name

Amount requested

Amount received or
committed

Organization

Date of organization's
incorporation

04/27/1993

Summary of
organization's history,
mission and goals

In 1993 Forest ReLeaf of Missouri was incorporated with a mission to bring volunteers together to plant trees in Missouri's urban communities. 3-gallon trees grown on site in their CommuniTree Gardens Nursery are distributed free of charge through Project CommuniTree to groups like schools, parks, community and youth organizations with the provision they must be planted on public or nonprofit land. Through their Priority ReLeaf program, Forest ReLeaf selects high-need projects, typically in financially-underserved neighborhoods or those recovering from severe storms, and provides them with large, 10-15' tall, 15-gallon trees. Through the combined programs, they give away about 15,000 trees each year. More than twenty years later, Forest ReLeaf has distributed over 160,000 trees throughout Missouri and into Southern Illinois. We operate the only community-assisted nursery in the Midwest. In addition to distributing free trees, they lead a variety of educational activities. These include the annual, free, 7-week TreeKeepers course; a variety of lectures throughout the region; outreach activities at festivals and symposiums; organizing community planting events; and regular monthly nursery tours which feature the arboretum, and demonstration rain garden. Last year they were chosen to receive the Excellence in Urban Forest Leadership Award in the Arbor Day Foundation's 2014 National Awards Competition. Their goal is to continue to reforest the region and build tree stewards of all ages. Mission statement: Forest ReLeaf of Missouri is a catalyst for restoring and sustaining our urban forests. With the help of thousands of volunteers, we are planting trees and enriching communities.

List of other organizations
in your area with a
purpose similar to your
organization and
description of
collaboration, if

Brightside St. Louis focuses on city clean up and does some planting projects (often with our help). As the program expands they may be a resource for us. Gateway Greening focuses on city gardens, primarily as a food source. They too, while similar, could be approached as a partner if the program were to expand outside the proposed curriculum. The Green Center offers classes on a number

appropriate	of topics. Classes however are conducted on site at their location and charge \$7/student. This could be a complementary program to our own for interested schools and groups who could afford it.
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Organization Budget

Fiscal year start date	01/01/2015
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Current Year's Budget

Total organization budget	450000
Organization fundraising costs	40500
Organization administrative costs	31500

Next Year's Projected Budget

Total organization budget	485000
Organization fundraising costs	43650
Organization administrative costs	33950

Principle Source of Support

Please provide figures as a percentage of the organization's total budget. The total support should equal 100.

United Way	0
Government contract	38
Foundation or corporate	40
Earned income	2
Individual contributions	20
Total support	100

Applications will be scored on the following scale:

- Relevant staff are qualified (0-10)
- Project increases knowledge in arboriculture or urban forestry (0-25)
- Project is hands-on (0-15)
- Need is defined (0-15)
- Objectives are clearly stated and adequately assessed (0-15)
- Timeline is feasible (0-10)
- Budget is clear and reasonable for the project (0-10)

**Your application will not be available for editing after it has been submitted.
Please review your application for completion before submission.**

