NEW YORK STATE DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL CONSERVATION

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APPLICATION INSTRUCTION SUPPLEMENT – ROUND 14

In an effort to assist all applicants, the following guidance may clarify questions recently identified:

Question 8a and 8b. Tree Planting and Tree Maintenance projects only
Problem: This is a pass/fail question with a required upload, but the upload ability is missing from this form for this question.
Solution: A tree list may be pasted into the dialogue box in Question 8.
Please upload tree inventory in Question 13.

Question 7 (UCF3) – Work Plan
Problem: The work plan upload ability is missing from for this question.
Solution : If you are unable to upload a copy of the Work Plan, answer Yes in the dropdown box and then upload file in Pre-Submission Uploads under Forms Menu. Choose Work Plan Worksheet, upload and then SAVE. Reviewers will know to look for it here. Work Plan must also be uploaded in Cost Effectiveness Expenditure Base Budget. DO NOT UPLOAD PASSWORD PROTECTED OR SECURED DOCUMENTS. ENSURE ALL PASSWORDS ARE REMOVED PRIOR TO UPLOADING IN THE GRANTS GATEWAY.

Question 14 (UCF1) and 17 (UCF2) and 13 (UCF3) – Local Needs – Identification
Problem: The dialogue box is missing for this question.
Solution: We will not be scoring this question for UCF1 and UCF2 grant opportunities.
UCF3 should answer the question.

URBAN FORESTRY GRANT – ROUND 14
Questions and Answers

(Newer questions have been added to the bottom of this list)

Q - Is the link to the EJ areas correct? It is not working for me.
A – An incorrect link has been published in the RFA. The correct link to identify the EJ areas is: https://www.dec.ny.gov/public/911.html

Q – Does an applicant need to indicate that a certified arborist will be used or can that occur later on when they are awarded a grant?
A – To get more points, make every effort to express your intent to use a professional such as a certified arborist to score higher points.

Q – Can an applicant apply for a tree planting grant even if they do not have an inventory?
A – Yes, an inventory isn't required for the tree planting category.

Q – Are estimates necessary when contractors will be used or is it necessary to include if inside staff will be used?
A – Yes, 2 quotes are required regardless who you choose to use. The budget amounts representing staff hours and salary would be one quote. A quote from an outside consultant would be the second.

Q – Do DEC have a list of banned trees?
A – There is a link to direct applicants to the invasive species list within the RFA. Call your local DEC forester if you have questions about invasive species or tree diversity.

Q – How is question #14 to be answered? There is no box to input a narrative answer.
A – A technical problem with this question has occurred. Please answer yes or no in the drop down and move on to question #15. #14 will not be scored.

Q - on page 23 it says: **15. Education Programming Questions – only answer Question 16 if applying for DEC01-UCF3-2018.** *Is this a typo and we should only answer Question* **15** *if applying for Education?*
A – Only answer question 15 for Education Programming. All applicants need to answer question 16, Past Performance.

Q – Are colleges and universities eligible to apply?
A – Yes if a non-profit status entity within the college or university applies and if the campus is publicly accessible. Projects may NOT be on State land. State Universities are not eligible.

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Q – In a tree planting grant, can we plant in a park as well as along streets?
A – Yes, be sure to identify prospective tree planting locations in your application.

Q – Can we apply for a Round 14 grant if we have not yet finished our Round 13 grant?
A – Yes, you will be asked to give the contract number of your prior grant but all applicants are welcome.

Questions as of 5/31/18

Q - How many applications were there for grants in the maintenance category in Round 13? How many grants were awarded in Round 13? Our concern is that if we submit for two grants we will be competing against ourselves.

A – Grants are not awarded by category. In total under Round 13, 159 grants were received, 13 were designated as ineligible and 146 were evaluated. From the 146, we were able to fund 51.

Q – Can planting and maintenance grants be combined in one application?
A – Yes, however, these two categories have different eligibility requirements and evaluation standards. Be sure to include all the required documentation for the distinct sections of the project. Evaluation may be easier if applied for separately.

Q – Who could we use to be unpaid partners when completing an inventory or management plan project?
A – There are many ways. One suggestions would be to use your volunteers or community groups to fulfill the outreach and education component of your grant. Civic groups or shade tree committees may update the community website, blog or newsletter to educate the public that they have been a recipient of the grant and that tree work will be done on neighborhood streets. Some groups may create a "tree map" of a park using the information created by the inventory to better tell the story of the benefits of their local tree canopy.

Q – If we have a lot of tree planting to do in our city that costs more than the maximum award, can we apply for two grants in the same category?
A – Yes.

Q – What is the link to the webinar that was given on May 10, 2018?
A - https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=itEMnCdHv_8

Q - When are funds released, if the grant is awarded?
A – The funds should be released by late fall of 2018.

Q - Do you offer this grant annually or biannually?
A – This grant is typically offered annually but is dependent upon the approved budget allocation by the State Legislature.

Questions as of 6/7/18

Q - We should request both a Tree Inventory and Tree Management Plan in our application this year because our town does not have a tree management plan and this plan is necessary to have a successful tree inventory.   Is my understanding correct? Can you please elaborate either way?
A - These two documents "rely" on each other. The inventory supplies the pertinent empirical data to be incorporated into a management plan. For example, the inventory will supply the needed data to those responsible for tree work. The available tree planting spaces; the trees in poor condition and those that need pruning will be identified in the inventory. That data then goes into the management plan to guide the tree crews to complete the work identified as priorities.

Q – We would like to apply for a tree planting grant but we don't have an inventory.
A – Tree planting grant applications do not require that a current inventory is in place.

Q – Would a group dedicated to veterans be eligible to apply for a project on the private property of their organization?
A – Yes if the organization has non-profit status; if the grounds are open to the public daily, and if the project costs would be at or above the minimum of $11,000.

Q – I can't log in and start an application. How do I start an application?
A – This is typically a grants gateway help desk question. However, the first place to start would be to check what "role" you are logged in as. A "grantee" and a "grantee contract signatory" can start an application. Ask the Grantee Delegated Administrator to create a user role of "grantee" to begin the application. The help desk information is found on page 2 of the RFA Guidelines and Application Instructions.

Questions as of 6/21

Q - To what extent are contracted soft costs (professional landscape architect/certified arborist fees for planning, construction documentation, tree installation oversight and follow-up inspections considered allowable expenses under the grant or the local match? Are there any specific limits or guidelines for how much planting vs. how much design and planning can be covered?
A - Generally, we prefer that the majority of the costs be plant materials in a tree planting grant, offset by the planting costs. Administration should be kept to a minimum. I don't think we list a percentage but around or not more than 20% would be acceptable and gain points for cost effectiveness

Q - Are identification and removal of invasive species to improve overall forest health allowable expenses under the Tree Planting and/or Tree Maintenance grants? (e.g. vines and invasive understory plants)
A - Yes removal of invasives for site assessment and planting are approved in tree planting grants but we prefer that the majority of the costs be plant materials. For maintenance, our funds are for pruning, improving sites and general care of the trees. Removing large areas of invasives in a tree maintenance grant would be a better fit for an invasive species grant.

Q - Are the Tree Maintenance and Tree Planting grants totally separate tracks or can they be combined for a project that might be part maintenance and part replanting?
A - The Planting and Maintenance projects should be applied for separately, although it's the same "opportunity #" in the grants gateway.

Q – Are there example of management plans available for large and small communities?
A – Successful projects of management plans are posted here http://nysufc.org/urban-forest-master-plans-around-new-york/

Q – In an education grant, are two quotes needed to the trees that will be planted for demonstration purposes?
A – No, the trees would be "supplies" for workshop purposes.

Q – Would this grant cover professional development funding to send staff to a conference in 2019 and 2020?
A. Technical training would be an appropriate cost, i.e. for software use, in order to maintain an inventory for example. You would lose points if someone not qualified would need training to complete the project.

Q – Are fruit trees an eligible cost for tree planting grants?
A – Yes, we would allow the planting of fruit trees.

Q - As a municipality we have a requirements contract in place (which already underwent a bidding process) for the work involved. Are we still required to provide two informal estimates, or will proof of the requirements contract suffice?
A – Yes, two quotes are required