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Friends of the Parks SEED GRANT APPLICATION

Nature-based Solutions for Chicago's Lakefront

2022 Winter / 2023 Spring / Summer 2023

***“A seed, dropped into the ground, springs into activity,
and in the act of living produces a hundred more seeds, life, by living, multiplies itself.
It is forever Becoming More, it must do so, if it continues to be at all.” — Wallace D. Wattles***

Overview of the program

Since 2000, Friends of the Parks has provided Seed Grants to park advisory councils and other park partner organizations committed to improving Chicago's parks.

In this round of grants, we are focusing on projects that raise awareness of and generate enthusiasm for the power of nature-based solutions for tackling lakefront erosion, specifically on the far Northeast and Southeast Sides.

Across the world, nature-based solutions are harnessing the power of nature to address social and environmental challenges such as rising sea levels, inequitable access to clean water, and forest fires.

Here in Chicago, we have seen the limits of concrete barriers to protect property and infrastructure from powerful, more frequent storms driven by climate change. We cannot build our way out of this crisis! We have seen the revetment at Northerly Island fail shortly after the Army Corps built it. We have seen beaches in Rogers Park swallowed up, and water at the steps of the Calumet Park Beach House. These are just a few examples.

Instead of fighting the lake, we can work with it with nature-based solutions such as using marshes as buffers and dune grass to fortify our beaches when the winds rise.

That's where you come in! We are seeking proposals that will help spread the word about how nature-based solutions can help mitigate lakeshore erosion. We are especially focused on proposals that would engage residents in the far north and south sides of the lakefront.



Dune Grass at Rainbow Beach

Here are some ideas:

- Host an activity at a Nature Sanctuary or Naturalized Area to promote the benefits of native plants for helping mitigate erosion and equip participants to spread the word to neighbors and elected officials who might see them as weeds.
- Organize a tour of a beach area that is impacted by lake levels to learn about how they appear or disappear periodically. Then talk about how the nature there responds to the fluctuations vs. areas that are concrete or have other man-made park amenities.

We invite you to contact us if you are interested in submitting a proposal but are not sure where to start.

What can be funded? Many different kinds of projects can be funded through this program. All projects must be related to the Chicago Park system, and funds must be used for events, programming, beautification or supplies. All projects are also expected to follow COVID safety guidelines. *Examples of previously funded projects include: gardens, tree plantings, sports equipment, community concerts, art projects, programming, etc.* Requests for funds to be used for capital improvement projects will not be considered. Capital improvements are expenditures related to the acquisition, expansion or renovation of some segment of a park's infrastructure (e.g. tennis courts, playgrounds).

Seed Grant funds are usually awarded in amounts that range from \$200 to \$2000. Grant funds will be distributed to 2022 Winter Seed Grant recipients on a rolling basis as early as December and projects must be completed before April 30th, 2023 when we expect to distribute the Spring Seed Grants. Although we will be accepting applications on a rolling basis, any group that wishes to complete their project for winter (Dec.- March) must turn in their proposal by December 16. Any proposals submitted after that will be part of the spring session of funding (April – June). Additionally, proposals submitted after March 31st will be considered for the summer session of funding. Proposals will be accepted throughout 2023 until all funds are distributed. Friends of the Parks will be distributing \$15,000 in support as part of the Seed Grant Program.

APPLICATION CRITERIA

In addition to the above eligibility requirements:

1. Projects should engage and/or be designed to benefit the Chicago Park District along or near the far north and far south portions of the lakefront;
2. Applicants must demonstrate that their project has the support of the Chicago Park District via at least one letter of support from the Park Supervisor, unless otherwise exempt (see Appendix A);
3. Previous award recipients (maximum 5 years prior) may apply, but priority will be given to new grant recipients. Past award recipients must be in good standing with FOTP, e.g., completed all grant reporting;
4. Applications must be completed in their entirety, containing ALL of the required information;
5. Applications must be completed and submitted by 5:00 p.m. on the following dates Dec. 16, 2022 for winter, March 31, 2023 for spring and June 30, 2023 for summer.

2022 Winter Seed Grant

A 2022 Winter Seed Grant applicant must be either a park advisory council or a park partner organization (PPO) that stewards a local park in Chicago. PPOs must have annual budgets no larger than \$500,000 to be considered. This funding is for projects to encourage COVID safe winter activities that happen anytime between December and March. A funding total of \$5,000 is available for 2022 Winter Seed Grants.

2023 Spring Seed Grant

A 2023 Spring Seed Grant applicant must be either a park advisory council or a park partner organization (PPO) that stewards a local park in Chicago. PPOs must have annual budgets no larger than \$500,000 to be considered. This funding is for projects to encourage COVID safe spring activities that happen anytime between April and June. A funding total of \$5,000 is available for 2023 Spring Seed Grants.

2023 Summer Seed Grant

A 2023 Summer Seed Grant applicant must be either a park advisory council or a park partner organization (PPO) that stewards a local park in Chicago. PPOs must have annual budgets no larger than \$500,000 to be considered. This funding is for projects to encourage COVID safe summer activities that happen anytime between July and September. A funding total of \$5,000 is available for 2023 Summer Seed Grants.

Questions? Contact Elvia Rodriguez Ochoa by email at rodriguezchoae@fotp.org.



Friends of the Parks
SEED GRANT APPLICATION FORM

Applications should be sent by email: rodriguezchoae@fotp.org

APPLICATION DEADLINE IS 5:00 P.M. FRIDAY, DECEMBER 16, 2022 FOR WINTER
MARCH 31, 2023 FOR SPRING
JUNE 30, 2023 FOR SUMMER

If you have any questions regarding this form or require assistance,
please call Elvia Rodriguez Ochoa at 312-897-5918 or e-mail rodriguezchoae@fotp.org

APPLICANT INFORMATION

Please type your answers, hand filled applications will be rejected.

Applicant Name: _____ **Daytime Telephone:** _____

E-mail _____ **Applicant's Organization:** _____

Address w/ zip code: _____

Has your organization applied for a Seed Grant in the past 5 years? Yes No

Has your organization received a Seed Grant in the past 5 years? Yes No

Chicago Park Name: _____ **Park Address:** _____

Park Region: South Central North **Park Region Area #:** 1 2 3 4 5 6

Which Seed Grant are you applying for? 2022 Winter 2023 Spring 2023 Summer

Amount of money requested: \$ _____

NOTE: For accounting purposes all grant checks must be made out to the corresponding organization. For example, a check made out to a park advisory council will read: *Jones Park Advisory Council*. If an advisory council or group does not have a checking account, please contact Elvia at (312) 897-5918 and ask about your options, including Fiscal Sponsorship.

Name of organization to be written on check: _____

Address for check to be mailed to: _____

PROJECT SUPPORT

9) Please list the contacts at the Chicago Park District assisting with this project and approving any physical park changes or improvements, e.g. who are the Chicago Park District staff/departments who will need to approve your project, have they been contacted about this project, what has been their response? If you are unsure on the answer to this question, please reach out to us.

10) List the names of the individuals from your organization who will be working on the project and explain their contribution to the project.

11) Do you plan on seeking additional support on this project from others, like community groups, park users, elected officials, etc.? Please describe the support that will be provided.

PROJECT COSTS

12) Identify any in-kind donations (supplies, personnel, space) that will be made to this project, including volunteer hours. (This is an expansion to Appendix B.)

This is to declare that: 1) I have filled out this application truthfully; 2) I understand the commitment I have made to Friends of the Parks to accept funds for their stated use; and 3) if my group is awarded a Seed Grant, I will report on their expenditure in an honest and complete manner by the report deadline as listed in the Seed Grant award letter.

Signature

Date

Application check list:

- Completed and signed application
- 1-3 Letters of Support, unless exempt
- Completed budget

APPENDIX A: Letter of Support

At least 1-3 Letter(s) of Support must be submitted with the Seed Grant Application. Community organizations that wish to implement programs or make improvements to their local parks must acquire permission from the Chicago Park District, as the governing body of our parks in the city of Chicago. The following approvals must be obtained for applications to be considered:

- Applications must have the support of the Chicago Park District supervisor of the park in which the project will be executed. ***If the application demonstrates that the project does not need approval from the Park District, a Letter of Support is not required. Confirm with Friends of the Parks that the requirement does not apply to your application.***
- Additional Letters of Support from non-Park District staff (e.g. community partners, elected officials) can also be included with the application, though they are not mandatory.
- Garden project ideas must be approved by the District's Community Gardens team members, Kristin Brock and Breanne Heath (at Kristin.Brock@ChicagoParkDistrict.com and Breanne.Heath@ChicagoParkDistrict.com). New and existing gardens applying for a Seed Grant must have a Letter of Support from one of these Chicago Park District team members unless they confirm that the proposed project does not require support from the Community Garden team. Planting projects (even in existing planter boxes) need to be done by a *registered garden group*.
- Sometimes temporary or permanent park projects, like art or beautification, might need permission from the Chicago Park District's Park Enhancement Committee (PEC). It can take months for the PEC to approve projects and they do not approve every project. If you are unsure if your project idea needs PEC approval, contact Friends of the Parks for guidance.
- Letters of Support provided by Chicago Park District staff or by elected officials can be written on their letterhead, on the blank template provided on the next page, and/or sent directly from their email to Elvia Rodriguez Ochoa at rodriguezchoae@fotp.org – Letters of Support are due by the Seed Grant Application deadline.
- If you have any questions about the Letter of Support requirement, contact Elvia Rodriguez Ochoa at rodriguezchoae@fotp.org or (312) 897-5918.

Letter of Support Template

2023 Seed Grant Application

_____ (date)

Dear Friends of the Parks,

I, _____ (name), as _____ (role at Park District) am writing in support of the grant application submitted by _____ (organization name). The group has relayed to me the details of the project and I am supportive of their efforts to _____ (briefly describe project) for the benefit _____ (park name).

I have the following additional comments about this group, proposed project and/or application:

If you have questions, please reach out to me via email at _____ or by phone at _____.

Sincerely,

APPENDIX B: Budget

Please fill out this sheet or supply a comparable document to describe the budget for this project.

- ***This should be the complete budget*** for your entire project or program in which this Seed Grant will contribute to.
- ***Each relative row must be completed for your budget.*** For example, if you are listing a supply, the cost, quantity, vendor and funding source must all be listed.
- ***Funding Sources should be identified for each item.*** It should be clear which items are being funded by the Seed Grant, other grants, PAC funds, in-kind donations, etc.

BUDGET					
Project Materials/Supplies					
Item	Cost	Quantity	Vendor	Funding Source	Total
<i>Materials/Supplies Total</i>					
Contractual Services (e.g. personnel, performers, etc.)					
Contractor	Hourly Fee	# of Hours	Funding Source	Total	
<i>Contractual Total</i>					
<u>TOTAL PROJECT COST</u>					

**2020 Seed Grant
Funding Request Total: \$ _____**

Contractual Total

TOTAL PROJECT COST