

URBAN TREES

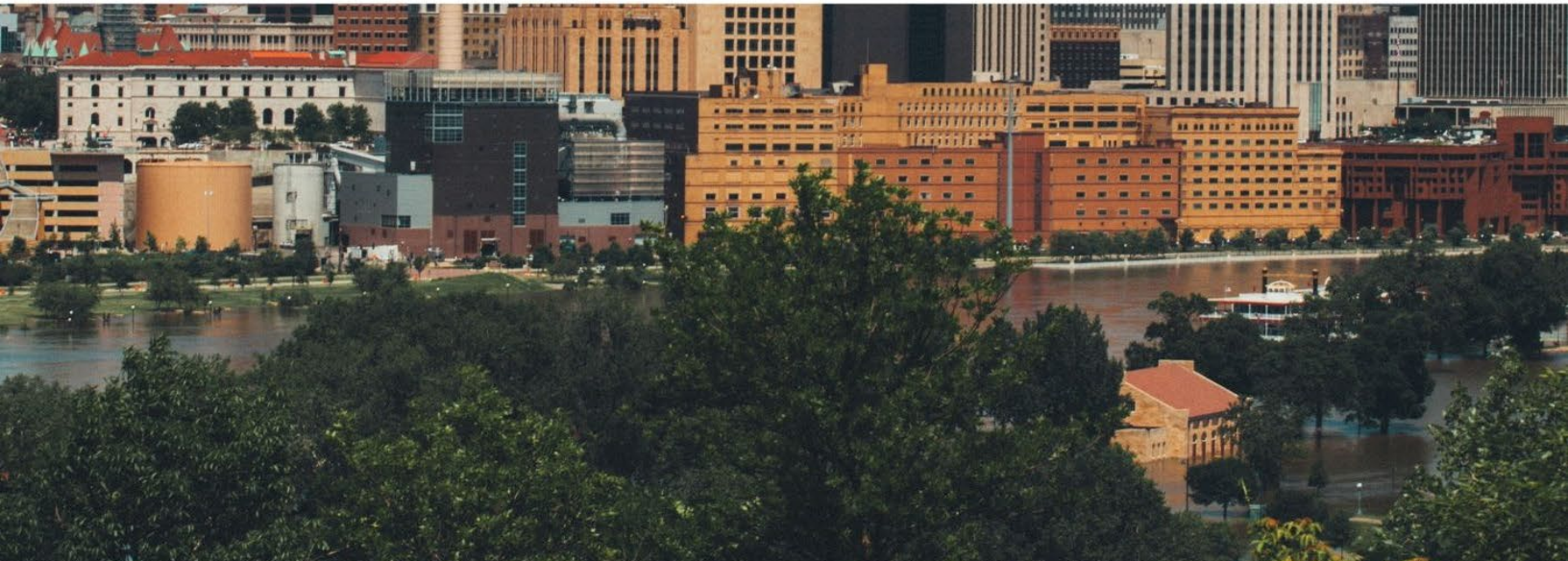
MINI-GRANT PROGRAM

CHESAPEAKE BAY TRUST
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**Chesapeake
Bay Trust**

Empowering people. Restoring nature.



URBAN TREES MINI-GRANT PROGRAM

At A Glance

The Urban Trees Mini Grant Program supports small tree planting projects that enhance livability in underserved communities.

Eligible Applicants:

Nonprofit organizations such as faith-based institutions, community, and homeowners associations; service, youth, and civic groups

Eligible Project Locations:

This program will fund projects in underserved communities across Maryland that meet key criteria outlined below:

<https://legiscan.com/MD/text/HB991/id/24163>
[76/Maryland-2021-HB991-Chaptered.pdf](https://legiscan.com/MD/text/HB991/id/24163)

Deadline:

Applications are accepted on a rolling basis until funds for this fiscal year are exhausted. The Trust cannot provide reimbursement funding for already completed projects.

Request Amounts: Up to \$5,000

Submitting Your Application:

Follow the instructions online at:
https://www.grantrequest.com/SID_1520?SA=SNA&FID=35721

Contact:

Bridget Robey, Program Associate
(410)-974-2941 ext. 117
brobey@cbtrust.org

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Introduction and Program Goals

Many communities benefit from having green spaces and trees to promote outdoor recreation, access to shaded areas, improved air quality, improved mental and physical health, and livability. Communities that would like to implement small tree planting projects are encouraged to seek support and funding through this opportunity. Ultimately, this initiative will empower disenfranchised communities to take ownership with the tools needed to improve access to natural resources that connect their neighborhoods to a healthy, greener environment for current and future generations.

Applicants for this opportunity will be asked to submit general information about their communities and desire for trees. Trust staff will then assist applicants to put together project plans and budgets. Applicants interested in larger projects that cost more than \$5,000 should apply to the larger Urban Trees Grant Program.

About the Trust

The Chesapeake Bay Trust is a nonprofit, grant making organization dedicated to improving the bay's streams, rivers, forests, parks, and other natural resources of our local systems, from the Chesapeake to the Coastal Bays to the Youghioghney River. The Trust, supported in large part by Maryland's Chesapeake Bay License Plate and partnerships with other regional funders, engages and empowers diverse groups to take action that enrich natural resources and local communities of the Chesapeake Bay region. Since 1985, the Trust has awarded over \$160 million in grants to municipalities, nonprofit organizations, schools, and public agencies throughout the Chesapeake Watershed.

The Trust is committed to the advancement of diversity and inclusion in its award-making and environmental work. As a result, the Trust strongly encourages applications directly from underrepresented groups, and for projects that increase awareness and participation of communities that have been historically underrepresented, such as communities of color. For a full description of the Trust's efforts to engage under-engaged groups, see our strategic plan at www.cbtrust.org/strategic-plan and our Diversity and Inclusion statement at <https://cbtrust.org/diversityinclusion/>.

Eligible Project Location

Tree planting projects proposed as part of this program **must** occur in urban, underserved areas. Applicants can determine if their communities are eligible by viewing the online map [here](https://maryland.maps.arcgis.com/apps/webappviewer/index.html?id=4258d3e39f6a47fca146b854c0f01e31): <https://maryland.maps.arcgis.com/apps/webappviewer/index.html?id=4258d3e39f6a47fca146b854c0f01e31>

Eligible Projects

This program funds all tree planting projects following the guidelines below.

- All planting projects must include a native plant list, planting plan, project design, photo (s) of the planting/restoration site, and a detailed maintenance plan for at least 2 years.
- Projects can be completed on public property, property owned by non-profit organizations, community-owned property and other property with conservation easements or signed long-term protection agreements.

- For projects planned on properties other than that of the applicant, attach a letter stating that permission has been granted by the entity owning the land on which the project will be completed.
 - If permits are required, describe the status of those permits (e.g., permits pending review of application, permits secured).
 - Requests for invasive vegetation removal as a part of site preparation for native plants are permitted
 - Removal of dead or dying trees are not applicable under this grant program
 - Signage for requests in highly visible areas is strongly recommended. The funding partners will fund signage if the 5 Million Trees and the Trust's logos are included <http://www.cbtrust.org/logo>.
-

Eligible Applicants

Requests are encouraged from non-profit organizations such as schools; community associations, service, youth, and civic groups; faith-based groups; neighborhood/community associations and more.

Contacts

Contact the Trust for assistance at any point in your application! Applicants to the Urban Tree Grant Program are **strongly encouraged** to contact the Program Assistant early in proposal development.

Program Assistant: Bridget Robey, at (410) 974-2941 x 117 or brobey@cbtrust.org.

Application and Project Process

You will be asked to provide information about your project site, project goals, project cost, and community background. If you know details such as the types (species) of trees you would like to plant, and where you would like to plant them, and the costs, you may provide that information in your application. If you do not know those details, provide as much information as you can, and Trust staff will help you create a planting plan, select tree species, craft a maintenance plan (you will have to commit to maintaining the trees for at least two years), and create a project budget. Final approval of projects will occur after those elements are finalized.

In addition, applicants interested in this program must register their planted trees utilizing the 5 Million Trees for Maryland tracking survey tool at the time of project completion found here: <https://five-million-tree-tracking-tool-maryland.hub.arcgis.com/pages/register-trees-survey>. If assistance is needed, please contact Bridget Robey, at (410) 974-2941 x 117 or brobey@cbtrust.org.

Funding Availability and Deadline

Funding Availability: Applicants will be accepted on a rolling basis. The program will close when funds are exhausted.

Evaluation Criteria

The following criteria will be used by internal expert reviewers to evaluate applications under the Urban Trees Mini Grant Program:

Most Important Criteria:

- **Consistency with program goals:**
 - Is the project proposed consistent with the intent and goals of the grant program?
- **Cost Effective/Budget:**
 - Is the budget appropriate (at or below \$5,000) and cost effective?
 - Are the budget line items justified in the project narrative?
- **Likelihood of Immediate Project Success:**
 - Are site plans, site photos, a native tree list (if applicable at this stage), and maintenance plan included?

Important Criteria

- **Likelihood of Long-term Project Success**
 - Is there a realistic maintenance plan in place that will ensure the tree's survival for a minimum of two years following planting?
 - Will additional resources be needed to maintain the trees, and if so, has that issue been addressed in this proposal?
- **Demonstration Value:**
 - How visible and impactful will the installed trees be to the receiving community?
 - Are the people and groups needed to do this work included in and supportive of the project (e.g., landowner, neighbors, etc.)?

Award Notifications and Requirements for Successful Grantees

All applicants will receive a letter stating the decision on the grant request. An application may be conditionally awarded pending completion of the elements above (planting plan, tree list, maintenance plan, budget, etc.) or fully awarded if all those elements are submitted at the time of application, partially awarded, or declined.

If and when a project is fully awarded, the Trust will send an award agreement with award conditions and due dates of status, progress, and final reports. Most awardees will receive 90% of their funds up front, mailed to the requesting organization and 10% of the total award after the final report is submitted and approved. In cases where the awardee fails to submit a status report, progress report, final report, or other requirements by the due date, the Trust reserves the right to terminate the award agreement and require a refund of funds already transferred to the awardee.

When the project is complete, awardees are required to complete final reports that may include but are not limited to submission of all receipts for supplies, invoices for subcontractors/contractors, and copies of timesheets for personnel time used (timesheets must include date, name, time worked per day, and coding to tie the time worked to the award). All financial back-up documentation will be grouped and numbered to correspond to budget line items. Organizations with outstanding final, progress, or status reports will not be

awarded additional grants.

Narrative Questions

You will upload a MS Word or PDF file addressing the following questions:

1) *Project Description (required)*

Provide a description of your project, including the goals, general planting location, who owns the property(ies), and how the community feels about trees. In addition, if you know any of the following information, feel free to provide it now. If you do not know the information now, and your project is selected to move to the next step, the Trust will help identify this information:

- Address/project map
- When you plan to plant (spring 2024, fall 2024, or spring 2025)
- How you plan to plant (volunteers to plant the trees vs. contractors vs. staff of your organization)
- The species of trees that you would like to plant, the number of trees of each species, and where the trees will be planted.

Communities and organizations who receive grants to plant trees will have to take care of them for at least two years. Please describe how you will care for/maintain the trees. The Trust has a minimum set of activities that grantees will have to take on in terms of tree care. A guide that can help you as you consider how to care for the trees can be found at <https://extension.umd.edu/resources/yard-garden/trees/planting-and-care-trees>. You can request and be awarded funds for the maintenance activities.

2) *Community Context and Demographic Information (required)*

- Please describe the communities (neighbors, residents, businesses, etc.) who will benefit from this project.
- In light of the Trust's commitment to the advancement of diversity in its award making, provide demographic information about the community or population involved in or served by the project. Provide your organization's experience working within the specific communities that you will be prioritizing. If you have not had significant experience within your prioritized demographic, explain how you intend to address this issue; the Trust encourages applicants to establish partnerships with local organizations that may have greater cultural competencies within the targeted demographic(s).

- 3) Landowner Letter of Permission (optional at this stage; will be required before an award is made): If you are interested in planting trees on a property that you do not own, you will ultimately need to submit a letter stating that the landowner allows the trees. For example, if you are a community organization wanting to plant trees on a local faith-based neighbor's grounds, you would need a letter from that faith entity. If you are planting trees in the right-of-way or public park, you would need permission from the jurisdiction. You are not required to submit the letter(s) at this stage, but will be required to obtain them before funds are dispersed.

For additional guidance, please refer to Appendix A.

Budget

A budget is optional at this stage but required before funds are dispersed.

Financial Management Spreadsheet – Application Budget Upload

You are welcome, at this stage, to complete a budget if you know enough about the project to estimate costs. However, you are not required to do so at this stage, but rather may simply provide an estimate. Requests cannot exceed \$5,000.

If you choose to submit a budget, we encourage you to use the “Application Budget” worksheet of the Chesapeake Bay Trust’s **Financial Management Spreadsheet** (FMS), an excel file template. The template can be found by visiting <https://cbtrust.org/forms-policies/> where you can also watch a video with instructions on how to complete the FMS. This online application component will ask you to enter budget category and request totals. These totals will be automatically calculated in the FMS Application Budget, so you will only need to copy and paste the values from the FMS to the Online Application.

Financial Management Spreadsheet – Application Budget Information

This online application component will ask you to enter budget category and request totals. These totals will be automatically calculated in the FMS Application Budget, so you will only need to copy and paste the values from the FMS to the online application.

Additional Budget Justification (optional)

This online application component will ask you to provide a descriptive budget narrative to justify and explain costs.

Online Application Submission Instructions

The Trust uses an online system for the application process, and if awarded, project management. If you need help using this system, please contact the Trust.

To apply for an award, go to: https://www.grantrequest.com/SID_1520?SA=SNA&FID=35721 and click on “Get Started” to begin a new application. A new window will open asking you to log in or create an account on our online system. If you have applied in the past, use your existing username and password (if you have forgotten either of these use the “forgot password” feature). If you have not used our online system before, click on “New Applicant” and follow the instructions.

By submitting an application to this program, applicants acknowledge that: 1) they are compliant with federal employment and non-discrimination laws and 2) they have not been debarred, convicted, charged or had a civil judgment rendered against them for fraud or related offense by any government agency (federal, state or local) or been terminated for cause or default by any government agency (federal, state, or local).

Watch our video on how to apply for and submit an application using our online system at: <https://cbtrust.org/grants/>.

You will be asked to provide the following minimum information on the online application form.

A. Eligibility Quiz (required)

This three-question quiz is meant to assist you in determining if your project meets the requirements of

this award program and that your staff/organizational structure best supports a successful application.

B. Applicant Information Tab (required)

- Provide the organization's name, mailing address, phone number, organization type, mission, Employer Identification Number (EIN), and System for Award Management (SAM) Unique Entity Identifier (UEI) number.
- Provide the Executive Officer and Project Leader's name, title, address, phone, and email address.
 - o Both an Executive Officer and a Project Leader, two separate individuals, must be identified for all applications.
 - o The Executive Officer and Project Leader must both be able to make decisions on behalf of the organization either as a board member, an employee, or other approved position recognized by the organization but not a contractor of the application.
 - o The Executive Officer is the individual that oversees the organization (e.g., Executive Director, Chief Executive Officer, Mayor, President or Vice President, Principal (for schools), etc.) and has the authority to sign/execute award agreements on behalf of the organization. The Executive Officer information is tied directly to all the organization's applications and should not vary from application to application. If the Executive Officer could be listed as the Project Leader in a future proposal, we recommend listing a Board Member or other higher-ranking position of the organization as the Executive Officer in order to reduce the variation in the Executive Officer across applications.
 - o The Project Leader will be responsible for all project coordination and correspondence with the Trust for the duration of the project. The email address entered here **MUST** be the same as the email address you used to log in to the online system. The Project Leader is the primary point of contact for the application, and the email address used to submit the application via the online system must be that of the Project Leader. Applications in which the email address associated with the Project Leader in the applicant information tab of the online opportunity does not match the email address used to submit the application will not be considered for funding. The Trust cannot conduct any official correspondence with contractors or other project partners. If at any time the Project Leader cannot continue in the position, the organization must contact the Trust and assign a new qualified Project Leader.
 - o To avoid conflict of interest issues, individuals associated with for-profit entities to be engaged in the project cannot serve in either role.

C. Project Information Tab (required)

On this tab you will be asked to provide:

- A project title
- Project summary (one paragraph), in which you identify the main purpose of your tree planting project, the community(ies) and locations in which you intend to plant trees, and who will benefit from the tree planting project. Include the number of trees to be planted.
- The county in which the project is located

D. Timeline Tab (required)

- Add you proposed project start and end date (required).
- Optional: If you know the details of when you aim to accomplish key project steps (e.g., community meetings to get buy-in, buying trees, planting the trees, community events, maintenance, etc.), add those into the timeline section.

E. Deliverables Tab (required – at a minimum, input the number of trees to be planted)

Provide estimated metrics for your proposed project such as number of trees and project participants. Leave those not relevant to your project blank.

F. Volunteers Tab (optional)

Provide a description of volunteer activities, the number of volunteers, and total number of volunteer hours.

G. Project Partnerships (optional)

List any project partner organizations or contractors, individuals, their areas of expertise, and their role(s) in your project.

Applicants are encouraged to upload a Letter of Commitment for the project from each partner describing in detail the partner’s role or contribution to the project. Applications including strong Letter(s) of Commitment often receive higher scores. If not submitted with the application, Letter(s) of Commitment may be required prior to the release of any awarded funding. To better understand the Trust’s definition of and policy on Letter(s) of Commitment, visit our Forms and Policies webpage: www.cbtrust.org/forms.

H. Narrative and Supporting Documents Tab

- Upload a Microsoft Word or PDF file that contains your answers to the narrative questions found in the Narrative Questions section of the RFP (see page 4-5). Upload additional supporting documents, if needed/required.
- Refer to Appendix A for a checklist of elements for your application.

I. Budget Tab (optional at this stage; will be required before funds are dispersed)

- Upload you application budget and provide additional budget justification. Use the Trust’s Financial Management Spreadsheet and fill out the “Application budget” worksheet. Refer to the “Budget Instructions” of this RFP (see page 5) for additional guidance.
- Provide a total amount of funding requested and amount of funding requested for each budget category (if applicable at this stage). These values should match your “Application Budget” of the Financial Management Spreadsheet.

K. Terms and Conditions Tab

Agree to the specified terms and conditions

L. Demographics (optional):

Provide voluntary demographic information. Provide information about your organization’s current diversity, equity, inclusion, and justice (DEIJ) efforts and future goals.

APPLICATION NARRATIVE CHECKLIST

REQUIRED COMPONENTS

Project Goals & Objectives:

Provide a brief summary of your project, general planting location, who owns the property(ies), the expected positive contributions this project will have on the community, and any other information you find to be privy to understanding your project.

Project Location:

Provide the address of the project location, justification for why this location is a good fit for the project, and any additional images or maps of the project site.

Planting Plan:

Provide when you plan to plant (year and season), how you plan to plant (contractors, volunteers, or staff of your organization), and any necessary construction that needs to be done to the project site (ie. removing dead trees or widening of sidewalks).

Tree Species & Cost:

Provide a list of the native tree species you plan to use in your project, the number of each tree species, and the cost per tree. Please also provide the name of the nursery where you received this cost and/or plan to source your trees from.

Maintenance Plan:

Provide a detailed plan mapping out how you plan to care for the trees (prune & invasive species management) and water the trees every 2 weeks for 2 years following planting.

HELPFUL COMPONENTS

Landowner Letter of Permission:

Provide a letter from the project landowner providing permission for the tree plantings. This is optional at this stage, however, will be required before the award is made.

Community Context:

Provide information about the surrounding community and how they will be involved in the proposed project (ie. receiving trees on their property, helping plant/maintain trees).

Project Context:

Provide answers to the following guiding questions: Why here? Why now? What is expected to improve?

Organization Experience:

Provide your organizations experience and qualifications for successfully completing this project. This does not need to be specific to tree plantings but should express to us that you have all the necessary tools to complete this project.

Evaluation:

Provide a description of what a successful project would look like to you.

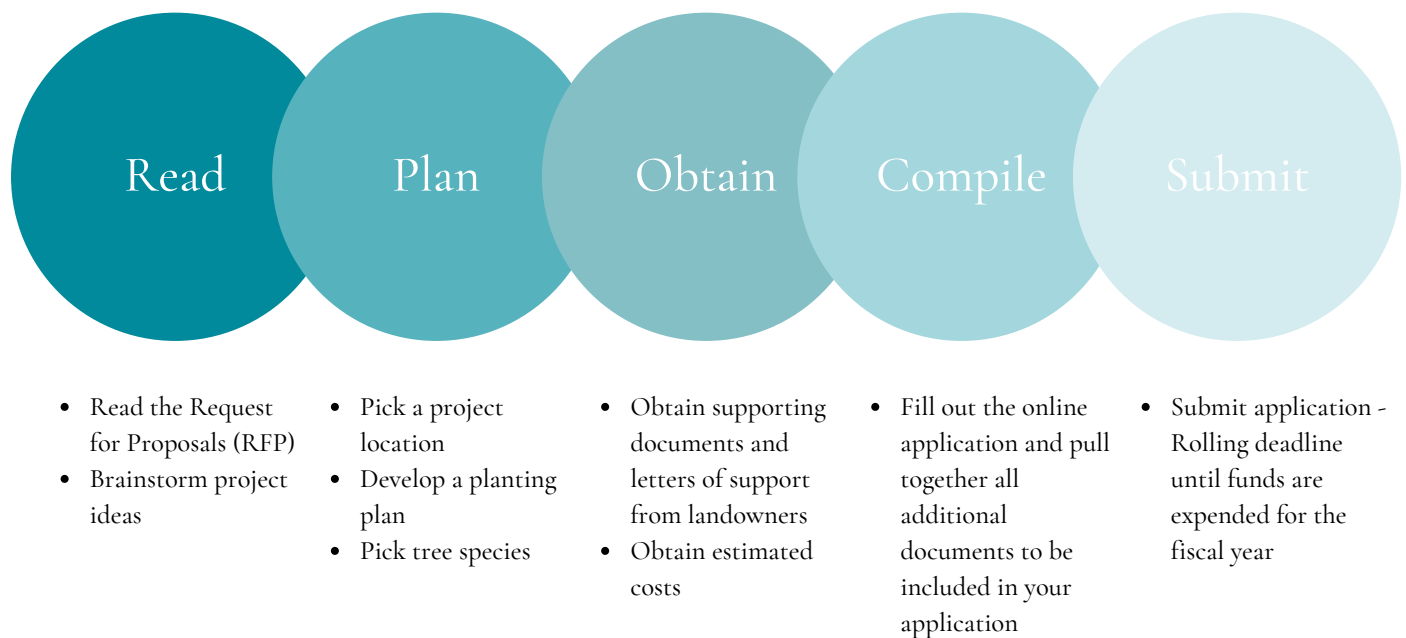
Please compile a MS Word or PDF file answering these prompts to the best of your ability. If you have yet to determine an answer at the time of application, please note that in your application. If you require assistance answering these prompts, please email Bridget Robey at brobey@cbt.org.



GUIDANCE FOR NEW APPLICANTS

This guidance outlines the steps needed to develop project ideas and grant applications for those who are new to the urban tree program. Many steps are involved in developing a project. Some involve obtaining expert technical advice and community support. For example, experts can help the applicant select the proposed project location, native tree species, and estimated cost to enable an applicant to develop an appropriate budget.

The following steps are a general framework for project development; please note that applicants are welcome to contact the Trust during any of these steps.



Step 1: Read

- The first step is to thoroughly read through the Request for Proposals (RFP). If you have any questions after reading through the Request for Proposals, contact Bridget Robey at brobey@cbtrust.org.
- Brainstorm on general project ideas. Observe the environmental issues in your community and develop a tree planting proposal designed to target those issues.

Step 2: Plan

- Find a location in your community that needs new trees. These locations can include streets and right of ways, vacant lots, institutional grounds, or other types of public or private spaces (open spaces).
- Develop a planting plan including who will be completing the project, when the project will take place, and determine any construction that may need to take place on the site prior to the tree plantings.
- Pick tree species that will thrive in the location chosen. Please refer to this guide by UMD extension when picking tree species: <https://view.officeapps.live.com/op/view.aspx?src=https%3A%2F%2Fcbtrust.org%2Fwp-content%2Fuploads%2FUMDExtension-MDUrbanTreeSuitabilityList-forplanters-forwebsite-v3-7.xlsx&wdOrigin=BROWSELINK>.

Step 3: Obtain

- Determine the work necessary in order to complete the project and determine the associated costs for this work including timelines. Be as specific and detailed as possible; look up costs or get quotes if needed. Please cite where you find these costs in your budget justification.
 - The Trust strongly recommends that applicants get at least three cost estimates or quotes from three service providers.
 - Conduct a site visit with potential contractors. Based on the site visit, request the scope of work and estimated cost.
- Obtain Letters of Permission from the landowners that the projects will be taking place on.

Step 4: Compile

- Provide detailed and thorough answers to all required fields on the online application. Answer the optional fields if applicable at this stage. Avoid one sentence answers.
- Organize all additional documents for your application (narrative, budget, and additional documents).

Step 5: Submit

- Before submitting your application, review your entire application and supporting documentation once more to ensure you have all necessary components.
 - Read through your narrative response. Are all questions fully addressed and answered in detail (if applicable at this stage)? Avoid one sentence responses.
 - Review your supporting documentation. Are all required support documents included in your application package? Are all Letters of Permission uploaded (if applicable at this stage)?
 - Review your application budget. Are all line items justified in the narrative and budget justification section of the application (if applicable at this stage)?
- Once you have ensured all necessary components have been included in your application package, make sure everything is uploaded to your online application and that all required information is entered in the online system.
- Submit! You will know your submission was successful when you receive an automated email confirmation.

