1. Project summary

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Organization name</th>
<th>Youth Forward</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Project title</td>
<td>Youth water and pollinator leadership initiative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of youth you will directly engage in project activities</td>
<td>200 youth</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of people you will reach through communications like newsletters and social media</td>
<td>1,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Demographics of your audience</td>
<td>Youth from Brooklyn Park, ages 9-15, primarily immigrant, African American, and Hmong youth</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Geographic location</td>
<td>Brooklyn Park</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Type of grantee       | ☑ Returning Green Partners environmental education grantee  
                        | ☑ New applicant                                 |
| Length of project     | ☑ 1-year project                              |
|                       | ☐ 2-year project (returning grantees only)     |

- **Topics:** What topics will you address during this project? (Please indicate all that apply.)

  Protecting land, water, and habitat
    
    ☑ Understanding ecosystems  
    ☑ Protecting water  
    ☑ Protecting pollinators  
    ☐ Improving air quality  
    ☐ Caring for trees

  Using resources wisely
    
    ☐ Reducing household hazardous waste  
    ☐ Backyard or garden composting  
    ☐ Organics recycling  
    ☐ Conserving energy  
    ☑ Preventing waste  
    ☐ Recycling

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Hennepin County Environment and Energy  
701 Fourth Avenue South, Suite 700, Minneapolis, MN 55415  
hennepin.us/greenpartners
2. Project goals and activities (25 points)

- **Project goals:** What are your goals for this project, and what changes are you hoping to affect in your community? Why is this topic timely for the audience you want to engage?

  Engage youth in learning about, connecting with, and caring about water and pollinators so they grow up to be stewards of the earth by considering and making environmentally friendly choices. Youth Forward works to develop youth leaders and would like to pair our leadership development program with outdoor and environmental education, particularly with an age group and audience that has little exposure to nature.

- **Best practices:** Indicate the best practices for youth environmental education that will be used in your project:
  - Encourage youth leadership
  - Promote community partnerships
  - Develop awareness and increase knowledge of environmental issues
  - Engage critical thinking skills by being inquiry-driven and interdisciplinary
  - Incorporate outdoor, experiential, service learning, or place-based education
  - Promote environmental stewardship through hands-on, skill-building activities
  - Provide a physically and emotionally safe and inclusive environment for learning

- **Project activities:** Describe the activities you will use to engage participants to reach your goals. Explain how you will incorporate the best practices for youth environmental education into project activities. Include a general timeline of activities. Be sure to mention and submit curriculum you plan to use with your application.

  We will engage 30 youth to participate in a pilot “water and pollinators” program as youth leaders during the summer. Our organization has run summer programs for youth every year, but this is the first time we will focus on water and pollinators. In May and early June, youth will gather for three outdoor adventures – canoeing, hiking, and camping at Elm Creek Park Reserve in Maple Grove – and explore their own family history with water and pollinators to build a foundation for their work over the summer. When they return from their final trip, youth will interview elders in their community about their relationship with water and pollinators. Youth will share these stories with each other and discuss and reflect how the world has changed.

  Throughout the summer from June to the end of August, youth will participate in weekly leadership development and training workshops on topics such as working in teams, planning meetings, public speaking, networking, green jobs, low-waste events, lakes and streams, pollinators, sustainable food, and green transportation.

  In June, youth will learn about pollinator plants, look for pollinator plants around Youth Forward’s office, and learn about pollinators and their role in providing food. Curriculum on pollinators is from a variety of sources including:
  - The Xerces Society
  - North American Pollinator Protection Campaign and Pollinator Partnership
  - The University of Minnesota Bee Lab
  - Project Wild: pollinator curriculum

  At the end of the summer, youth will plan and organize a potluck meal with food that pollinators had a role in producing for their families and community members. Youth will make a presentation about a pollinator or a pollinator plant from Minnesota and each youth will get to take a pollinator plant home to plant in their yard or neighborhood.
Youth will also create water and pollinator themed art to share with their families and community members. Photos of the summer activities youth participated in will be on display for all to enjoy. Recycling and organics recycling bins will be provided at the event. We will seek guidance from the county to plan a low-waste event.

- **Project sustainability:** Describe the aspects of this project that will continue after the project is complete and how you will share your experience and project outcomes with others.

The art that youth create will go home with their families as a reminder to protect water and pollinators. We will post a project summary on our website. We plan to meet with youth educators from the organization Project Youth to share activity ideas with them for use in their youth programs.

3. **Participant information (25 points)**

- **Project participants:** Describe your project participants (those you will directly engage in the project). Where do your participants live? (Schools only: Report percent of students receiving free/reduced lunch.)

The audience for this project includes youth from Brooklyn Park who are primarily immigrants, African American, Hmong and youth who live in the immediate vicinity of Youth Forward’s office. Participants are likely to be low-income and have little exposure to environmental issues and outdoor recreation.

- **Experience working with audience:** Describe your past experience working with this audience. Tell us how you will recruit and retain project participants. *If you do not have an established relationship with your desired audience, you must find a project partner who can provide a strong connection to your audience for the duration of the project.*

Youth Forward staff members have worked with youth in this community over the past 10 years and as a result are experienced in engaging this audience. Through their years of experience, staff are aware of the youth’s interests and learning styles.

We will recruit youth leaders through word of mouth and announcements in existing monthly community meetings. We will retain youth leaders by paying them a stipend for their successful participation and feeding them at events and workshops.

- **Current participant knowledge:** Why is this audience important to reach with this project? Describe what you know about their awareness, interest, and involvement in the issue(s) you plan to work on during this project.

Youth do not have much experience with outdoor recreation or pollinators. This project will enable us to raise their awareness and exposure to nature and the environment so they become environmental stewards.

- **Participant empowerment:** Will participants play a role in planning project activities? If so, please describe how they will influence the project plans.

Youth leaders will plan and organize the water and pollinator potluck, design communications strategies, and implement a low-waste event.

4. **Organization information (25 points)**

- **Organization website:** [www.youthforwardmn.org](http://www.youthforwardmn.org)

- **Interest and background:** Describe why your organization is interested in participating in this grant program and motivating your audience to take action on environmental issues. If you have worked with the county before on similar projects, briefly explain.

Youth Forward was established by community members in 2008 to engage youth and develop youth leaders in Brooklyn Park. Youth Forward plays an important role in serving residents with a culturally appropriate approach.
that builds upon relationships and trust. Many youth in the community do not have exposure to outdoor environmental education, and this grant will provide us with an opportunity to engage youth in becoming environmental stewards.

Our organization received a Hennepin County Business Recycling grant in 2018.

- **Youth education and environmental experience:** Have the staff involved in this project implemented youth education or environmental projects in the past? If so, please describe.

Yes, the project coordinator working on this project has been active in engaging Brooklyn Park youth since 2015 through Youth Forward. The youth engagement manager has been working with youth for more than 10 years. Communication and administrative staff have limited youth engagement experience but are not as involved in day to day operations. The program assistant has one year of experience working with youth at Youth Forward.

During the school year, we facilitate monthly events for youth including movies, painting classes, and sports. Each summer, we host a youth program. In past years the summer program has focused on computers, health, and reading. See our blog for examples of the work with do with youth.

- **Communication channels:** What communication channels do you currently use and how often do you communicate with the audience you propose to work with on this project?

We have an email list of 1,000 people that we email to at least once per month, we estimate that 25% of our list are youth. Our staff also attends community events to directly recruit and engage community youth in program initiatives. We use email, flyers, community paper ads, and word of mouth to advertise events. We host a youth blog and we post information on our youth programs Facebook site, which has 800 followers.

- **Project staff:** List all staff, partners, and volunteers who will implement the project and provide a brief description of their title and responsibilities related to this project. Indicate if staff are part of an existing team such as a student group, green team, or collaborative.

  - List the overall project manager: Maggie Rhee, Program manager, oversee all aspects of the project including reporting, data collection and staff supervision. She has been in this role with Youth Forward for the past 5 years.

  - List a back-up project manager: Richard Grimes, youth engagement manager, outdoor education

  - List additional project staff and project partners:

    Sasha Williams, Program assistant, plan pollinator gardens, assist with workshops
    Rosita Espinosa, Communications manager, project support and communications
    Daryl Dixon, Administrative assistant, field trip coordinator, financial reporting

  - Please list and submit letters of support from all significant organizations and/or experts you will partner with to implement this project.

    None

- **Background checks:** Do you conduct background checks for staff and volunteers working with youth? Do you provide training to staff and volunteers working with youth?

Yes, we conduct background checks and training for all staff and volunteers working with youth.
• **Staff training:** Your organization commits to sending at least two representatives to orientation and training on September 10, 2019. Please provide their names and titles:

Maggie Rhee, Program manager,  
Richard Grimes, youth engagement manager

• **Project support:** Some projects benefit from direct county staff support in project planning or implementation, while others simply need funding or troubleshooting support. How can Hennepin County staff support your project if it is funded?

Youth Forward staff will seek advice from Hennepin County staff regarding the appropriate field trip sites, flyers, brochures, magnets, and other resources that can be used during the project. County staff will be asked to attend one of the youth training workshops to present and answer questions.

5. **Budget (25 points)**

• **Budget narrative:** What will you use the funds for and why do you need this grant?

Funds will be used to pay staff time to plan, create, and implement the project and to advertise the events. We will purchase education supplies to learn about reducing waste and pollinators, a field trip, and food for workshops as an incentive to participants.

Find the Budget Form included as Attachment 2 to this Request for Proposals announcement and submit it with your application.

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**Optional:** How did you hear about the Green Partners grant program?

- Coworker/colleague
- Hennepin County commissioner
- Hennepin County e-newsletter
- Hennepin County staff
- Social media
- Newspaper
- Other (please list):