

Green Partners environmental education grants

SAMPLE Youth environmental stewardship application

1. Project summary (5 points)

Organization name:	Youth Forward
Project title:	Youth water and pollinator leadership initiative
Number of youth you will directly engage in project activities:	200 youth
Number of people you will reach through communications like newsletters and social media:	1,000
Demographics of your audience:	Youth from Brooklyn Park, ages 9-15, primarily immigrant, refugee, African American, and Hmong youth
Geographic location (provide address or list of cities where your project work will take place):	Brooklyn Park
Type of grantee:	<input type="checkbox"/> Returning grantee <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> New applicant
Length of project:	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1-year project <input type="checkbox"/> 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

- Conserving energy
- Preventing waste
- Recycling
- Composting and organics recycling



Reducing household hazardous waste

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

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 project important to do now?

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.

- **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 plant and tend to pollinator plants in the planters 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 water and pollinators had a role in producing. Youth will also create and present water and pollinator art to share with their families and community members. Photos of the summer activities will be on display for families and community members to enjoy. Recycling and organics recycling bins will be provided at the event. We will seek guidance from Hennepin County to plan a low-waste event.

3. Participant information (25 points)

- **Project participants:** Describe your project participants – those you will directly engage in the project. Who will you engage and why is this audience important to reach with this project? Where do your participants live? Tell us how you will recruit and retain project participants. (Schools only: Report percent of students receiving free/reduced lunch.)

The audience for this project includes youth from Brooklyn Park who are primarily immigrants, refugees, 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.

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.

- **Experience working with audience:** Describe your past experience working with this audience.

Youth Forward staff members have worked extensively during the past 10 years with youth in this community and as a result are experienced in engaging youth from the community and very aware of the youth's interests and learning styles.

- **Participant empowerment:** Will youth play a role in deciding or 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.

- **Current participant knowledge:** Describe what you know about your audience's current interest in and awareness of the environmental topics you plan to work on through 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.

4. Organization information (25 points)

- **Organization website:** www.youthforwardmn.org
- **Interest and knowledge:** Describe why your organization is interested in participating in this grant program and engaging youth in becoming environmental stewards.

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 much exposure to outdoor environmental education, and this grant will provide us with an opportunity to engage youth in becoming environmental stewards grounded in a strong foundation.

- **Youth education and environmental experience:** Has your organization implemented youth education or environmental projects in the past? If so, please describe.

Yes, Youth Forward has been active in engaging Brooklyn Park youth since 2008. 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 additional examples.

- **Communication channels:** What communication channels do you currently use and how often do you communicate with your audience and the broader community?

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

5. Project staff and partners (10 points)

- **Project staff:** List all staff 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 community 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
 - List additional project staff:

Richard Grimes, youth engagement manager, participant outreach, outdoor education
 Rosita Espinosa, Communications manager, project support and communications
 Daryl Dixon, Administrative assistant, field trip coordinator, financial reporting
 Sasha Williams, Program assistant, plan pollinator gardens, assist with workshops
- **Project partners:** 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 require background checks and training for staff and volunteers working with youth.
- **Staff training:** Your organization commits to sending at least two representatives to orientation and training on January 9, 2018. 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.

6. Budget (10 points)

Find the Budget Form at hennepin.us/greenpartners and submit it with your application.

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):