

Rationale:

San Diegans take pride in protecting and restoring the region's water, natural lands and air quality. In a Foundation-facilitated survey, [Our Greater San Diego Vision](#), 30,000 San Diegans from all areas of the region stated that a healthy, beautiful and accessible environment was a high priority. However, our 2010 [Parks for Everyone](#) report found that while 45% of San Diego County's total land area is green space, many low-income, ethnically diverse communities have limited access to parks and open spaces. There was also a strong correlation between communities with high rates of childhood obesity and low park access.

Purpose:

It is with these findings in mind, that we launched our *Opening the Outdoors* program in 2013 to connect and protect nature, build trails, create outdoor spaces, and to get more kids outside. For the spring 2016 grants program, our goal is to advance community-driven efforts to develop and/or improve access to an interconnected network of natural areas, gathering places, and trails across the county so that the outdoors is easily accessible from any San Diegan's doorstep. Thanks to our generous supporters, we anticipate having three years of funding through our Opening the Outdoors Initiative. This year, we require that proposed projects represent a partnership or collaboration of two or more organizations (though one organization will need to serve as lead for the purposes of submitting and managing the grant). Partnerships may request between \$5,000 to \$60,000 for the project, clearly demonstrating in the application how roles will be complementary and identifying in the budget how each of the (two or more) primary partners will be funded. We encourage any additional partners to be listed as collaborators even if they will not receive funding in the proposed project. We anticipate funding 5-8 partnerships.

Eligibility information for all applicants:

- Applicants must have 501(c)(3) status and be located in and serve San Diego County.
- A 501(c)(3) organization may serve as a fiscal sponsor for another applicant to administer the grant and provide regular financial reporting to The Foundation.
- Collaborations must include letters of confirmation from all partners receiving funding, and letters of support from additional partners that will help to make your project possible.
- NEW: Projects must represent a collaboration of two or more groups (all of 501(c)(3) status) that will all receive funding through this grant opportunity.

The Foundation will consider supporting projects/programs that contribute to two or more of the goals listed below:

- Increase access/connectivity to trails, parks, and natural amenities in neighborhoods where resources are deficient (access can include transportation and/or activities that make the outdoors more culturally relevant to typically park-poor neighborhoods).
- Encourage kids from park-poor communities to safely engage with the natural environment through physical or educational activities.
- Connect and protect nature through conservation/restoration/acquisition of key lands
- Build community support for relevant public policies or funding.
- Support momentum of an already existing community-driven initiative where funding would strengthen collaboration and integration between entities.

IMPORTANT: This year, the Opening the Outdoors Initiative will prioritize projects that serve high-need, low-income, and park-poor populations as specifically mapped out in the [Parks for Everyone](#) report.

Each project's ability to meet the goals highlighted above will be measured by:

- Number of youth from park-poor or low-income communities engaged in nature-based enhancement, education or programs through this project,
- Number of organizational partners involved in implementing the project,
- Number of short-term (~volunteering less than 20 hours per year) and long-term (~volunteering more than 20 hours per year) volunteers engaged during this project,
- Number of residents from the community you are working in that are engaged in nature-based enhancement, education or advocacy activities,
- Number and name of public policy or public funding measures which this project aims to impact, and/or
- Additional public or private funding leveraged for this project.

Please note: we do not require each project to have measurable goals around all of these, but will take all of these into account when selecting final group of projects.

Application Process:

To review application questions and instructions, [click here](#). All proposals must be submitted online using the following application: <https://app.smarterselect.com/programs/30947-The-San-Diego-Foundation-Community-Impact>

Applications are due by 12:00 p.m. (noon) on Friday, May 13, 2016. Applications submitted late or by other methods will not be accepted. It is the responsibility of all applicants to ensure that their organization meets all of the eligibility requirements.

An estimated timeline is outlined below, and The San Diego Foundation reserves the right to modify these dates or any other terms or conditions set forth in this Request for Proposals.

April 21, 2016	1:30 - 3:00 pm webinar*
April 14 & 21, 2016	10am - 12 pm office hours*
April 26, 2016	8:30 - 10:30 am office hours*
May 13, 2016	Application due by 12:00pm (noon)
Week of June 6**	Potential site visits and/or interviews with finalists
Early July	Awards announced

*Email Kim Fields at kimf@sdfoundation.org to register for the webinar and/or office hours.

**In working with our review committee, we will base site visits on their availability and ask that applicants provide as much flexibility as possible and reserve these dates for site visits at the time of submitting an application.

If you have any questions regards (a) the online application process, please contact Kerri Favela at kerri@sdfoundation.org or (b) the Opening the Outdoors grants program more generally, please contact Emily Guevara at emilyg@sdfoundation.org. Both can be reached at (619) 235-2300.

About the review process:

Proposals will be reviewed by Foundation staff and a volunteer review committee, a diverse group of community volunteers with expertise in philanthropy and the environment. The committee will evaluate proposals based on relevance to the Opening the Outdoors criteria. Reviewers adhere to a strict conflict of interest policy and other internal controls to ensure that grant funding is distributed in a methodical and objective manner based on the merits of each proposal. The committee will submit final recommendations to The San Diego Foundation's leadership for final review and approval.