

## 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](#), San Diegans throughout the region stated that a healthy, beautiful and accessible environment was a high priority. However, our [Parks for Everyone](#) report found that while more than 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 help get more kids outside. For the spring 2017 grants program, we will build on previous years of investments 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.

## IMPORTANT ELIGIBILITY INFORMATION FOR ALL APPLICANTS

Approximately \$400,000 is available in funding to award. As last year, to maximize the impact of this funding throughout the region and support collaboration where it exists we require that proposed projects represent a partnership or collaboration of two or more 501(c)(3) organizations. One organization will need to serve as lead for the purposes of submitting and managing the grant. Partnerships may request between \$25,000 to \$50,000 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. Projects must be completed within a 12-month timeline.

## OVERALL ELIGIBILITY

- Projects must represent a collaboration of two or more groups (with 501(c)(3) status) that will all receive funding through this grant opportunity.
- Each proposal must be led by a nonprofit with 501(c)(3) status and located in and serve San Diego County.
- The lead applicant will receive and manage grant funds on behalf of the partnership, and will be responsible for submitting a brief progress and final report for the project.
- 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.
- Proposals must include letters of confirmation from all partners receiving funding. Letters of support from additional partners that will help to make your project possible are optional but do help to strengthen your proposal.
- Any organization may be part of more than one proposal, as long as they only lead one proposal.
- In order to ensure proposals reflect a balance among partners, the lead applicant cannot apply for more than 80% of the total requested budget.

**The Foundation will support projects/programs that clearly contribute to two or more of the goals below:**

- Connect and protect nature through conservation/restoration/acquisition of key lands.
- 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).
- Build community support for relevant public policies or funding to connect, protect or increase accessibility of the outdoors.
- Encourage kids from park-poor communities to safely engage with the natural environment through physical or educational activities.

**IMPORTANT: 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.**

The San Diego Foundation is interested in projects that will measure progress towards the above goals through metrics such as the following. Please note we do not require each project to have measurable goals around all of these, but will take these metrics into account when selecting final projects.

- Acres of restored or conserved lands,
- New natural amenities available in communities where resources are deficient (i.e. number of plants installed, number of parks improved/expanded, miles of trail improved, etc.),
- 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,
- Additional public or private funding leveraged for this project.

## APPLICATION PROCESS

To review application questions and instructions, [click here](#). All proposals must be submitted online using the following application here: <http://app.smarterselect.com/programs/36898-The-San-Diego-Foundation-Community-Impact>.

Applications are due by **12:00 p.m. (noon) on Wednesday, March 1, 2017**. 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.

## IMPORTANT DATES

A timeline of the grant cycle with important dates is outlined below. The San Diego Foundation reserves the right to modify these dates or any other terms or conditions set forth in these grant guidelines.

<b>January 4, 2017</b>	Grant opportunity announced and grant guidelines released
<b>January 26</b>	Webinar for interested applicants from 9:30 to 10:30 a.m.*
<b>January 18, February 1 and 14</b>	Foundation staff available during “office hours” from 10am to noon to answer questions*
<b>March 1</b>	Applications due online by 12:00 p.m. (noon)
<b>March 20 - April 3</b>	Potential site visits and/or interviews with finalists**
<b>Early May</b>	Grants announced
<b>May 15, 2017 – May 15, 2018</b>	Grant start and end date

\*Please email Bridget Altman at [bridgeta@sdfoundation.org](mailto:bridgeta@sdfoundation.org) to register for the webinar and/or office hours.

\*\*In working with our volunteer review committee, we will base site visits dates and times on their availability and ask that applicants provide as much flexibility as possible during the period March 20-April 3. Please work with your proposal partners to ensure availability generally during these two weeks for site visits at the time of submitting an application.

## QUESTIONS?

If you have any questions regarding the application or grants program generally, please contact Mallory Morgan at [mallory@sdfoundation.org](mailto:mallory@sdfoundation.org). If you'd like to sign up for the webinar and/or office hours, please email Bridget Altman at [bridgeta@sdfoundation.org](mailto:bridgeta@sdfoundation.org). Both can be reached at 619-235-2300.

## **ABOUT THE REVIEW PROCESS**

Proposals will be reviewed by Foundation staff and a review committee comprised of 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 an objective manner based on the merits of each proposal. The committee will submit final recommendations to The San Diego Foundation's Board of Governors for final review and approval. Once funded, reporting requirements include one progress report and one final report to The San Diego Foundation at 6 months and 12 months respectively.