



Catalyst Grant Fund Request for Proposals

CATALYST FUND: NURTURING SMALL GRASSROOTS ORGANIZATIONS

The Catalyst Fund supports grassroots organizations that connect underserved youth with outdoor experiences within or near their community. A qualified grassroots organization is defined as one that is all or largely volunteer driven; has few full-time staff persons or equivalent; has an annual budget, including projects, of less than \$150,000; and has not received significant foundation support. Grassroots organizations must identify a significant need related to access to outdoor experiences, describe why that need is a priority for the community, develop a clear plan for translating that need into action, and demonstrate an ability to account for the expenditure of funds.

The Catalyst Fund is part of the Stewardship Council's overall grantmaking program. Please review the [2008 Youth Investment Grantmaking Plan](#) for more information, particularly about criteria by which proposals will be reviewed by external advisors and the Stewardship Council board and staff.

The Stewardship Council recognizes the need for general or core support among smaller organizations. To this aim, the Catalyst Fund awards are not directly tied to a specific project. The questions in this RFP are designed to help us determine the merit of your proposal. Please keep in mind that our funds must be used to help connect 13 to 18 year olds to the outdoors. So, in your responses it is helpful to understand how these funds are connected to the youth we are trying to serve.

The Stewardship Council uses the Independent Sector's definition of core operating support: "Core support, or general operating support, is funding directed to an organization's operations as a whole rather than to particular projects (project support)...Core support may be used not only for the delivery of services or other activities directly in pursuit of the organization's mission, but also for administrative and fundraising expense (overhead)."

Core operating grants of up to \$15,000 will be awarded during two funding cycles in 2008.

Catalyst Grant Timeline

Round I:

December 19: Request for Proposals Released

Mid-January- February 15: Application Available Online



February 15: Applications Due

April: Awards Announced

Round II:

December 19: Request for Proposals Released

July 7: Application Available Online

August 8: Applications Due

October: Awards Announced

2007 Statistics

In 2007, 55 applications were submitted requesting a cumulative total of \$533,300. Applications were received from these geographic regions:

Region	Counties	#	%
Bay Area	Alameda, Contra Costa, Marin, Napa, San Mateo, Santa Clara, Solano, Sonoma	11	21%
San Francisco	San Francisco	6	11%
Sacramento	Sacramento	3	5%
Central Valley: North	Butte, Colusa, Glen, Placer, Shasta, Sutter, Tehama, Yuba, Yolo	5	9%
Central Valley: Central	Fresno, Madera, Merced, San Joaquin, Stanislaus, Yuba	4	7%
Central Valley: South	Kern, Kings, Tulare	3	5%
Mountain	Alpine, Almanor, Calaveras, El Dorado, Lassen, Mariposa, Nevada, Plumas, Sierra, Siskiyou, Tuolumne	2	4%
North Coast	Humboldt, Lake, Mendocino, Trinity,	7	13%
South Coast	Monterey, San Benito, San Luis Obispo, Santa Barbara, Santa Cruz	10	18%
Multi-region	Projects that affect participants in multiple counties	4	7%
Total		55	

Ten grants were made; the average grant size was \$8,500.

ELIGIBILITY QUIZ

Prior to starting the application process, please make sure that organization meets the minimum qualifications required to have your proposal considered by the Stewardship Council.

The Stewardship Council has a targeted scope of giving. In order to be considered for a grant, your organization must be able to answer “yes” to the questions below.



1. Is your organization: 1. a federally and California exempt organization under IRC Sec 501(C)(3)? 2. a public agency, school district, or a federally recognized tribe? or 3. a fiscally sponsored project of an exempt organization?
2. Do your programs serve youth within the geographic scope of the Stewardship Council in Northern and Central California?

Please review the [Population Density Map](#) on our research and materials page of our website. Our geographic area is highlighted on this map.

3. Does your proposal serve youth between the ages of 13 to 18, or if you are a school-based program, between grades 7 to 12?

If you answered “Yes” to all of the above you meet the minimum criteria for applying for a grant.

Please read through the rest of the application. We recommend filling out your answers in our Word template, which can be found on our website or a text document and then cutting and pasting your responses into our online application.

2008 GRANT APPLICATIONS

Applications for grants with the Stewardship Council must be filed online. We will not accept hard copy applications or documentation. You will be able to file an application by clicking on the appropriate link on our [website](#) during the application period for each grant round.

All RFPs for all 2008 grant rounds will be posted on the Stewardship Council website. Online applications will be open for a minimum of a 4 week period prior to the due date. Further information and dates are available on our [website](#).

Any organization that meets the minimum requirements as outlined in the above Eligibility Quiz may apply, including those that have applied in prior grant rounds. Organizations cannot, however apply in the same grant round more than once in the same year. For example, if you have applied to the Catalyst round 1, you cannot reapply in the second round of giving. In addition, applicants in this round will not be required to have been in operation for at least one year.

Online applications work a bit differently than other systems. Before you begin filling out our online application, we recommend that you familiarize yourself with the process outlined below.



Review the Request for Proposals (RFP)

We recommend that you review the entire RFP prior to starting the online application. This will allow you to think through your application and to gather the documents you will need.

The Stewardship Council also has created a Word template that you may use to assist you in completing this process. We recommend filling out your answers in our word template, which will be available when our applications go live, or a text document and then cutting and pasting your responses into our online application. The template has the size limitations built into its answer fields (Please note: our computerized application system actually counts characters, not words. Word counts are provided as an approximation of the size limitations). Once you have filled it out, you may cut and paste the answers into our online system.

If you do not wish to use our template, we suggest that you first draft your answers to the questions in a text document. This will allow you to double check your spelling, grammar, syntax and word count. Once it meets your approval, you can cut and paste your answer into the appropriate section of the online application.

Electronic Documents and Files

Your entire application must be submitted electronically and uploaded to our website. We will NOT accept any hard copy documents; where requested, electronic files will need to be uploaded. If you do not submit your application and attachments online, your proposal will not be considered. Please contact us if you have questions about this requirement.

Financials (990s and GuideStar)

We will review your 990 tax form online through the Guidestar website. Guidestar is a free website that stores and tracks exempt 501(c)3's financial data. Guidestar does not automatically update your organization's information, so please double check that your most recent 990s are posted. To learn more about Guidestar, please go to <http://www.guidestar.org>.

If you are an organization that does not file a 990 (such as a school district or government agency), you should submit a note stating such. If your organization does not file a 990, please upload appropriate financials to demonstrate your organization's fiscal health.

Note on required financial information: We will not require documentation of your organization's financials unless your proposal is advanced. If your proposal does move forward, we will require two years of financial review (or audit) and current operating budgets. If you wish to upload these documents during the initial application process, you may.



APPLICATION COMPONENTS AND QUESTIONS

Each Stewardship Council grant application consists of nine sections, each of which must be completed for your proposal to be considered. We highly recommend that you have your documents and text ready prior to filling out the online application.

The sections are:

- I. Contact Information
- II. Organization Information
- III. Proposal Information
- IV. Project Description
- V. Population Served
- VI. Program Intensity
- VII. Program Capacity
- VIII. Outcomes and Evaluation
- IX. Financial Information

Please note that in the online application there will be drop down menus and radio buttons to make filling in the information more intuitive and simple.

I. CONTACT INFORMATION

If we have any questions during the review process, we may need to contact you to get additional information in a timely manner. Please provide the contact information for three people in your organization: 1. the primary grant contact. 2. the secondary grant contact. 3. the executive director. If any of your contact information should change during the course of the grant round, please contact us so that we may keep your information updated.

Primary Grant Contact

First Name

Last Name

Title



Address

City

State

Zip

Primary Telephone Preferred Format: (XXX) XXX-XXXX ext. XXX

Secondary Telephone Preferred Format: (XXX) XXX-XXXX

E-mail Address

Secondary Grant Contact

First Name

Last Name

Title

Address

City

State

Zip

Primary Telephone Preferred Format: (XXX) XXX-XXXX ext. XXX

Secondary Telephone Preferred Format: (XXX) XXX-XXXX

E-mail Address

Executive Director

First Name

Last Name

Title

Address

City



State

Zip

Primary Telephone Preferred Format: (XXX) XXX-XXXX ext. XXX

Secondary Telephone Preferred Format: (XXX) XXX-XXXX

E-mail Address

II. ORGANIZATION INFORMATION

Legal Name

Common Name, if applicable. As an example, our official IRS name is the Pacific Forest and Watershed Lands Stewardship Council, but we call ourselves the Stewardship Council.

Address

City

State

Zip

Primary Telephone Preferred Format: (XXX) XXX-XXXX

Secondary Telephone Preferred Format: (XXX) XXX-XXXX

Fax Preferred Format: (XXX) XXX-XXXX

Website Address

Year Founded

Organization Tax ID or School ID number

- ◆ List of Board of Directors with affiliations. This will be an uploaded file.

Organizational Description

- ◆ Mission Statement. Please limit your response to 75 words/600 characters.

- ◆ Please describe your organization and the primary programs/services your organization provides. (250 words/2000 characters)



III. PROPOSAL INFORMATION AND GRANT REQUEST

- ◆ Project Title:
- ◆ Total Grant Request:
- ◆ Have you applied for a grant from the Stewardship Council before? If so, were you awarded a grant?
- ◆ Does your project meet the following Stewardship Council objectives?

Stewardship Council Objectives:

- a. Increase the participation of underserved youth in successful outdoor urban and wilderness programs.
- b. Improve the cultural relevance of outdoor and park programs to better serve and reflect the diverse youth of California.
- c. Make the outdoors a more integral part of youth's lives to improve their general health and well-being.
- d. Improve the infrastructure of community parks and urban open spaces to make them more accessible and welcoming.
- e. Support coordinated approaches to helping youth get outdoors and to increase their well-being through partnerships among diverse sectors involved in youth development (e.g., health, environmental justice, mental health, education, and juvenile justice).

IV. PROJECT DESCRIPTION

- ◆ Project Description - Please provide a one to two sentence description of your project (an "elevator pitch"). (75 words/600 characters)

Project Overview

- ◆ Describe your project's purpose. In other words, why is your project important? (150 words/1200 characters)



- ♦ Describe your project's major activities. In other words, what will you be doing? (250 words/2000 characters)

- ♦ How will your activities achieve the purpose of your project? Explain how you incorporate best practices or other research-based approaches. (150 words/1200 characters)

- ♦ Please explain how the project meets the priorities of the Stewardship Council. (Stewardship Council priorities are available on our [website](#). (150 words/1200 characters)

V. POPULATION SERVED

- ♦ Population Served - The Stewardship Council gives priority to organizations that work with underserved youth within the organization's service area. Please describe the community of youth you work with and how they fit within this priority. (This might include demographic characteristics, economic conditions, changes or trends in the community, challenges and strengths of your target population, gaps in outdoor experiences for youth, etc.) Describe the pressing need of this community and how your proposed project addresses it. (200 words)
- ♦ Please indicate the total number of youth ages 13-18 (or 7th – 12th grade) who you anticipate will be served by this project.
- ♦ What is/are the primary city/ies your youth come from?
- ♦ What are the primary counties your youth come from?
- ♦ Ethnic Origin. Please estimate the number of youth participants for this project, by ethnicity.

Ethnicity	Number
Alaska Native or American Indian	
Asian	
Black/African-American	
Hispanic/Latino	
Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander	
White	
Multi-racial	



Other – describe:	
Unknown	
Total (this should be the same as the answer in Q5)	

- ♦ Gender. Please estimate the number of youth participants for this project, by gender.

Gender	Number
Male	
Female	

- ♦ Free or Reduced Price Meals. Please indicate percentage of youth eligible.

VI. PROGRAM INTENSITY AND LENGTH

Program Intensity and Length – The Stewardship Council gives priority to organizations that provide ongoing opportunities for connecting youth to the outdoors that go beyond the one-time outdoor experience. For each type of activity that will be supported by the Stewardship Council, please fill out the information requested in the following. This will be an uploaded file. Examples are provided in italics.

- *Group similar activities together, into major categories, rather than listing every single activity.* For example, enter “hiking trips” rather than listing “hike at Santa Cruz Mountains, hike at Arastradero Preserve, hike at Mt. Tam.”
- *If students will participate in more than one type of activity, include those students in the anticipated count for each activity.* For example, a planned activity will serve a total of 40 students. All 40 students will participate in monthly hikes and 16 of the 40 students will also participate in overnight camping trips. In this case, list 40 students under “hikes” and 16 students under “camping trips.”



Activity Description	Total Number of Students to be Served by Activity	Average Duration of Activity	Check if this activity will include one or more overnights	Number of Times Activity will be Provided <i>(provide as much detail as possible)</i>
<i>Wetlands restoration service project</i>	100	6 hours		1 <i>(one-time only project)</i>
<i>Monthly hikes</i>	40	4 hours		12 <i>(one hike per month)</i>
<i>After school program</i>	20	2 hours per day		50 times <i>(5 times per week, for 10 weeks)</i>
<i>Camping trip</i>	16	2 ½ days <i>(54 hours)</i>	X	2 <i>camping trips</i>



VII. PROGRAM CAPACITY

Collaboration and Partnerships

- ♦ The Stewardship Council gives priority to organizations that collaborate with appropriate partners to achieve their goals. Please describe **who you will work with and how you will work together** to address your project's purpose. (250 words/2000 characters)

Cultural Relevance

- ♦ The Stewardship Council gives priority to organizations that demonstrate understanding and commitment to addressing cultural differences across its service area. Please describe what steps your organization has taken to be more responsive to the various cultural groups your organization serves. Your comments might address (but are not limited to): staff and board composition, curricular content, professional development and outreach efforts. (250 words/2000 characters)

Organization Staff

Please indicate the number of staff:

- Full-Time staff:
- Part-Time staff:
- Volunteers:

Project Staff

- ♦ What is the total number of full-time equivalent (FTE) staff employed for this project? For example, two half-time staff would equal 1 FTE. Do not include volunteers.
- ♦ Please provide the total number of salaried staff, employed for this project, by ethnicity

Ethnicity	Number
Alaska Native or American Indian	
Asian	
Black/African-American	
Hispanic/Latino	

Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander	
White	
Multi-racial	
Other – describe:	
Unknown	

- ◆ Please provide the total number of salaried staff, employed for this project, by gender

Gender	Number
Male	
Female	

- ◆ List key project staff, consultants, volunteers, and other vendors and their roles in this project.

Program Niche

- ◆ Please describe how your organization is uniquely suited to successfully implement this project (150 words/1200 characters)

VIII. OUTCOMES AND EVALUATION

- ◆ What are the main *participant* outcomes you expect from your project? In other words, how will the youth participants change as a result of your project? Please be as specific as possible in describing tangible results. (200 words/1600 characters)

- ◆ What are the main *community* outcomes you expect from your project? In other words, how will the project benefit others who did not directly participate? Please be as specific as possible in describing tangible results. (200 words/1600 characters)

- ◆ Do you evaluate your current projects to measure their outcomes? If yes, please describe how you evaluate them and how you apply information learned through the evaluation. If not, please describe what barriers prevent you from evaluating



your efforts, and any specific plans you might have for future evaluation. (200 words/1600 characters)

IX. FINANCIAL INFORMATION

Proposed Project Financial Information

- ♦ Total Requested Grant Amount. Please note that the Catalyst Fund grant request cannot be for more than \$15,000 per year.
- ♦ Upload Project Budget and Budget Narrative. Please upload a project budget and a budget narrative which explains how the requested funds will be used. **For each major line item in the budget for which Stewardship Council funds will be allocated, please provide a brief description of how the requested funds will be used.**

For example:

- o Gear and Equipment: \$2,500 to purchase 15 backpacks, replace camping equipment and purchase new tents.
- o Program Costs: \$1,000 –For registration fees and food for 2 trips to state parks for 30 youth.
- o Transportation: \$2,500.00 – Will allow bus transportation for three trips to the wilderness for 35 students to attend a 7-day outdoor program.
- o Salaried Staff: \$20,000 – Will pay for 50% of the program manager’s time for the management of this project
- o Contract Staff: \$3,750 – Will pay for an Ecological Restoration Technician at \$25/hr for 150 hours. The Technician will assist youth with planning and coordination of the restoration projects.
- o Benefits: \$4,000 – Our benefits are calculated at 20% of total salary costs

A note on Administrative/Overhead expenses

Please note that the Stewardship Council asks that you limit your indirect/overhead expenses to no more than 15% of the total project budget.



Indirect/Overhead expenses are costs not directly related to the program, but necessary to run your organization. These are the costs related to “keeping the lights on” and may include rent, salaries of administrative, fundraising, and executive staff, utilities, etc.

For more [financial information and budget templates](#) please visit our website.

- ◆ Other major funding sources for this project (e.g., grants and contracts from foundations, corporations, government agencies, individual donors, etc.). Please include the name of the funding source, the \$ amount requested and the status of your request (Committed, Pending or Received). For example: Company ABC - \$5,000 - Pending

Organization Financial Information

- ◆ Total Annual Operating Budget Amount. If you are part of a larger organization, please use the operating budget for your department or division
- ◆ Other major funding sources for your organization (e.g., grants and contracts from foundations, corporations, government agencies, individual donors, etc.). Please include the name of the funding source, the \$ amount requested and the status of your request (Committed, Pending or Received). For example: Company ABC - \$5,000 - Pending