

New England Grassroots Environmental Fund

(for an application go to www.grassrootsfund.org)

Mission & Goals

The mission of the New England Grassroots Environment Fund is to energize and nurture long-term civic engagement in local initiatives that create and maintain healthy, just, safe and environmentally sustainable communities.

NEGEF's Goals:

- Increase civic engagement, volunteerism, emerging leaders and community initiatives that create healthy, just, safe and environmentally sustainable communities at the neighborhood and town level in New England.
- Help community leaders move single issue, backyard debates to positive, inclusive, systemic, constructive, and lasting community solutions.
- Link community-based advocacy with the work of statewide and national organizations without losing local identity.
- Establish and maintain informed networks of activists across the region that are committed to building a just and equitable society.

Who are the Grassroots?

Applicants must be working at the grassroots level, and must demonstrate a major element of volunteer involvement in their programs. The Fund defines a grassroots group as one that is all or largely volunteer driven, having no more than two paid, full time staff persons or their equivalents, and an annual budget, including projects, of less than \$100,000. From time to time, the Fund may consider proposals from larger community-based groups for projects at the grassroots level.

What issues are the Grassroots tackling?

NEGEF tracks the diversity of applicants' interests by nine major environmental categories. Our grantmaking includes, but is not limited to, the following:

- AIR-Climate change and indoor and outdoor quality.
- BIOTECHNOLOGY
- ENERGY-Conservation, gas, nuclear, renewables, and transportation.
- LAND USE-Community resources, historic preservation, land trusts, planning, regulatory issues, sprawl, and trails.
- NATURAL RESOURCES-Agriculture, biodiversity, education, forestry, marine environment, and wildlife.
- POPULATION/CONSUMPTION-Changing behaviors, ecoteams, population education, and sustainable communities.
- TOXICS/HAZARDOUS WASTE-Brownfields, incinerators, industrial sites, landfills, pesticides, public health, recycling/resource recovery, and sludge/biosolids.
- URBAN ENVIRONMENT-Air quality, community gardens, land use, multi-issues, public health, and youth activities.
- WATER-Aquifer protection, streambank restoration, water conservation, water quality monitoring, watershed management, and wetlands

What types of projects will be funded?

A broad range of activities will be funded. They include, but are not limited to: communication needs, computer networking, capacity building, advocacy campaigns, institutional support, conferences, meeting travel, and enhancing partnerships in the region.

What types of projects will not be funded?

NEGEF does not fund the following proposals: Educational curriculum and/or in-school projects, publication of books or reports, lobbying or partisan political activities, studies with no follow-up action, acquisition of land and/or buildings.

What size grants will be awarded?

The Fund will make grants ranging in size from \$500 to \$2,500.

How will grant applications be judged?

Successful applicants will have:

- Earned credibility as a grassroots organization through community work which strengthens the role of local citizens in solving environmental problems or developing sound environmental policies;
- Identified a significant community need and developed a clear plan for translating that need into action;
- Developed a vision of the long-range impacts of their work; and
- Demonstrated an ability to account for the expenditure of funds.

When can organizations apply?

The Fund has three funding cycles per year. Proposals should be **postmarked** by January 15th for a March decision, May 1st for a June decision or September 15th for a November decision. If those dates fall on a Sunday or post office holiday, they can be postmarked the following day. In unusual circumstances, applications may receive immediate review if time is a critical element in effectively completing the project.

Application Form

The Fund uses an Application Form that is available upon request. The Application Form can be downloaded from the Fund's website at www.grassrootsfund.org. Applicants should follow the application format and type the information into the appropriate sections. The completed application (Cover Sheet, Narrative, and Applicant Profile) should be no more than five (5) pages long.

Please attach a list of your board of directors, advisors, other key volunteers and current staff, if any, with affiliations and/or short bio sketches. If applicable, also send a copy of your letter of determination of tax-exempt status under Section (501)(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code, which identifies your EIN (Employee Identification Number). You may also include the group's general brochure and other background information you feel would help the Fund better understand your request.

Mail **one copy** of the completed application and all attachments to the Fund's office by **REGULAR MAIL. Do not send FedEx or Express Mail packages.** As copies of your application will be sent to each of the Fund's Advisors, please print single-sided on recycled paper if possible. Do not send the application in plastic covers or binders.

What will happen after an application is submitted?

All applications will be acknowledged upon arrival with a postcard to the applicant. Each grant will be reviewed by a staff member who will call the applicant for project updates. Proposals will be presented at the regular meetings of the Grant-making Committee where the final decisions will be made. Telephone calls, email and fax inquiries are welcome at any time during the application process. Applicant organizations will be advised of the Fund's decision, in writing, as soon as possible after each meeting. Grant checks will be mailed after the Grant Agreement letter has been signed and returned.

Questions or additional information about proposals should be directed to the staff member reviewing applications from the designated states:

Linn Perkins Syz - Connecticut, Maine and Rhode Island
Ginny Callan - Massachusetts, New Hampshire and Vermont

How will the project be evaluated?

The Fund is interested in knowing the results of its small grants program through grantee feedback. A Final Report is required within one year of an organization's receiving a grant to assist with this evaluation. Groups may reapply for a grant one year after the previous grant funds have been spent and a Final Report completed.