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## **SKI CONSERVATION FUND – LINCOLN NATIONAL FOREST**

### 2019 Request for Proposals

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- Geographic Restrictions:** Benefit the Lincoln National Forest
- Application Deadline:** April 17, 2019 at 11:59 pm MDT
- Application Type:** Online
- Funding Type:** Nonfederal funds from guests of Ski Apache, and federal funds via the U.S. Forest Service (CFDA: 10.682)
- Matching Requirements:** 50% nonfederal match required. Match may be cash and/or in-kind contributions. Match must be expended contemporaneously with NFF grant funds and towards completion of the same project. Federal contributions are ineligible for use as match.
- Other Considerations:** This Request for Proposals (RFP) contains important information about Ski Conservation Fund program requirements and the application process. It contains an Application Guidance Appendix, which lists instructions, guidance on completion, and evaluation criteria. The 2019 grant rounds will be especially competitive, and this appendix is critical to effectively completing applications in a competitive grant environment. The NFF only funds projects that align exceptionally with programmatic criteria. Be sure you have reviewed and fully understand this RFP in its entirety before continuing with the application process. We encourage you to save it and refer to it as your organization completes the online application.
- Special Emphasis:** Funding preference will be given to projects that directly engage disadvantaged or underserved populations within local communities proximate to the Lincoln National Forest.
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### **ABOUT THE NATIONAL FOREST FOUNDATION**

The National Forest Foundation (NFF), a private, nonprofit 501(c)(3) organization chartered by Congress, engages Americans in community-based and national programs that promote the health and public enjoyment of the 193-million-acre National Forest System, and administers private gifts of funds and land for the benefit of the National Forests. The NFF believes that communities should play a significant role in determining the future of National Forests and Grasslands.

### **SKI CONSERVATION FUND PROGRAM OVERVIEW**

In partnership with Ski Apache, the NFF is currently soliciting proposals for its Ski Conservation Fund™ (SCF) grant program on the Lincoln National Forest. SCF combines Federal funds provided through a cooperative agreement with the U.S. Forest Service with individual donations voluntarily made by guests of partner resorts. This leveraged funding measurably multiplies the resources available for nonprofit partners to implement projects that directly benefit the Lincoln National Forest.

A common thread connecting NFF program areas is an interest in results-oriented projects that enhance the viability of natural resources while benefitting and directly engaging surrounding communities. The NFF accepts applications from non-governmental, nonprofit 501(c)(3) organizations, nonfederal government entities, and Native American tribes working on or adjacent to National Forests and Grasslands throughout the United States<sup>1</sup>.

Through SCF, organizations completing on-the-ground conservation work can apply for funds through a single-stage proposal process. The NFF evaluates submitted proposals, and provides funding to a subset. The process from proposal submission to notification of funding generally takes two to three months. SCF funding is available to support specific conservation and restoration *projects* and does not provide programmatic support. *Please note this distinction.*

SCF funds are typically a mix of nonfederal and federal funds. The NFF will provide the nonfederal/federal proportions upon award. The federal portion of SCF awards is provided under CFDA 10.682.

All SCF awards require a 50% nonfederal cash or in-kind match. Federal funds are not eligible to serve as match, but should be noted to show project leverage. Award recipients cannot provide SCF funds to the U.S. Forest Service or any other federal entity. Project completion must occur within one year of the project award date, which typically begins within about 1 month of award notification.

## **PROGRAM AREAS**

The current NFF strategic plan focuses on the program areas of Outdoor Experiences and Forest Health. Organizations may self-select into one of the program areas defined below, or choose to submit a proposal that cohesively integrates the two program areas. The NFF does not have funding targets for the program areas, and strongly encourages applicants to integrate programs areas cohesively in their proposals.

### **Outdoor Experiences Program Area**

The NFF supports results-oriented, on-the-ground, projects that improve the quality, condition, and care of Outdoor Experiences on National Forests by:

- Improving or maintaining recreation resource connectivity including, and similar to: trail maintenance, bridge and crossing construction or repair, and installation of trail drainage structures; and/or
- Engaging youth, volunteers, or diverse, underserved or under-engaged populations in hands-on stewardship activities; and/or
- Employing youth and/or veterans crews to implement on-the-ground conservation, stewardship and/or restoration work.

Projects should generate tangible conservation outcomes or enhance high quality recreational experiences for the users of the National Forest System. Funds cannot support improvements of hardened facilities including, and similar to: campgrounds, parking lots, restrooms, visitor centers, and major signage.

### **Forest Health Program Area**

The NFF supports results-oriented, on-the-ground, citizen-involved projects that maintain and/or restore ecosystem resiliency on National Forests by:

- Promoting ecosystem structure, function and diversity; and/or

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<sup>1</sup> Although they are technically eligible for funding, the NFF currently funds very few projects that do not physically take place on National Forest System lands.

- Promoting forest health through the removal or control of non-native invasive species, and/or reintroduction of native plants and trees.

Projects should be consistent with or supportive of identified large-scale conservation initiatives. The NFF will only consider monitoring projects focused on determining the long-term effectiveness of previous NFF-funded on-the-ground work.

### **Integrated Projects**

The NFF encourages projects that cohesively integrate Outdoor Experiences and Forest Health program areas. Ideal projects will have a strong connection to each of the individual program areas, and effectively integrate both in a clear, direct manner.

Examples of integrated projects include, but are not limited to the following:

- Engaging community volunteers to complete riparian plantings as part of a watershed-scale restoration project;
- Utilizing youth crews from underserved communities to complete habitat stewardship work and forest stand treatments.

The most compelling projects will strongly integrate the Outdoor Experiences and Forest Health program areas, and will receive a weighted advantage in evaluation. A project will not be eligible for full weighted advantage if it does not cohesively integrate the two program areas, or only does so nominally.

### **Underserved and Disadvantaged Populations**

In addition to the program criteria described above, funding preference will be given to projects that directly engage disadvantaged or underserved populations within local communities proximate to the Lincoln National Forest.

## **CIVIC ENGAGEMENT**

In addition to focusing on the program areas above, SCF requires projects show a strong commitment to civic engagement and community involvement through direct public participation. In order to be eligible for SCF funding, projects must contain significant, legitimate community involvement or civic engagement in the pre-implementation, implementation, or post-implementation phase. Typically, this involves the use of volunteers in project implementation, or the implementation of projects selected as an outcome of a formal collaborative-planning process. Note that the community engagement portion of the project does not necessarily have to occur in the portion of the project receiving SCF funding, although the project narrative must clearly describe the community engagement component. The standard public involvement component of the NEPA process is insufficient to meet this requirement.

## **EDUCATION, INTERPRETATION, INVENTORY, AND MONITORING PROJECTS**

Education, interpretation, inventory, and monitoring are not priorities for the use of SCF funds.

- Education and interpretation may only receive consideration as minor components of otherwise well-aligned larger projects.
- Projects with inventory or monitoring components may only receive consideration if those components focus on determining the long-term effectiveness of previous NFF funded on-the-ground work.

The NFF encourages applicants to use funding from other sources (including project match) for any portion of a project focused on education, interpretation, inventory, or monitoring.

### **NATIONAL FOREST PERMITEES**

Award Recipients cannot use NFF funds to support work that is a requirement of National Forest Special Use Permit Operating Plans.

### **ENVIRONMENTAL COMPLIANCE**

The NFF will not consider proposals unless all environmental compliance work is complete at time of application. This includes but is not limited to: NEPA decisions and categorical exclusions, archaeological clearances, and any other mandatory federal, state, or local clearances. No Exceptions.

### **PROJECT TIMING**

The proposed project period should be no more than 12 months long and start at least 6 weeks after the application deadline for the round.

The award period for projects funded in the 2019 Lincoln SCF Round will likely begin in June 2019 and run for 12 months. All activities funded by the NFF grant and its associated matching funds must occur within the award period.

Applicants must consider foreseeable delays before submitting a proposal. If project completion cannot confidently occur within the period specified above, please contact the NFF well in advance of the application deadline to discuss the merits of applying.

### **ELIGIBILITY**

501(c)(3) nonprofits, universities, state and local governments, and Native American tribes are eligible to receive SCF grants. If an organization does not meet this eligibility requirement, it must utilize an eligible fiscal sponsor consistent with the [NFF Policy on Fiscal Sponsorship](#).

The NFF does not consider SCF applications from the following:

- Federal agencies;
- For-profit organizations;
- Consultants;
- Educational and research organizations proposing projects that do not show tangible, on-the-ground benefit;
- Organizations seeking general operating or programmatic support;
- Organizations seeking funding for litigation or advocacy;
- Organizations that cannot produce a 50% match of non-federal, project-directed funds or in-kind contributions.
- Organizations submitting a proposal for a work over a timeline longer than one year.

Funds are intended to support stewardship and improve the visitor experience on the Lincoln National Forest. If a project is proposed within Ski Apache's special use permit area, the proposed project must have either clear ecological benefits or benefit the general public. As the owner of Ski Apache, neither the Mescalero Apache Tribe nor any of its direct legally

owned and/or operated affiliates may be the principal beneficiaries of funded projects, or receive any award funds either directly or indirectly. Individual Mescalero Apache Tribal members may be hired directly by other organizations.

### **MATCH AND FUNDING REQUIREMENTS**

All SCF awards require a 50% nonfederal cash or in-kind match. Federal funds are not eligible to serve as match, but should be noted to show project leverage. Matching funds must be expended within the dates of the NFF grant (see project timing section above), and toward completion of the same project activities proposed for NFF funding.

Both NFF and matching funds:

- Must be received by the same organization;
- Must support the same project activities and be expended within the same one-year project period;
- Cannot support general administrative purposes beyond recovered indirect costs;
- Cannot support litigation or advocacy;
- Cannot be directed to the U.S. Forest Service or any other federal entity;
- Cannot meet the matching requirements of any other federal funding program.

### **FOREST SERVICE LETTERS OF SUPPORT**

All applications must include a letter of support from the District Ranger of each Ranger District included in a proposal. Support letters should be no more than a few months old, and addressed either to the National Forest Foundation Ski Conservation Fund Program or to a representative of your organization. Do not submit any additional letters of support.

If not uploaded with the proposal, email letters of support to [grants@nationalforests.org](mailto:grants@nationalforests.org) within three business days of the proposal deadline. *Please do not submit letters of support via more than one method.*

### **PERTINENT POLICIES AND DOCUMENTS**

Prior to submission of a SCF application, applicants should review and understand the following documents:

- [NFF Indirect Cost Rate Policy](#)
- [NFF Definitions of Funding Sources and Expense Categories](#)
- [NFF Policy on Fiscal Sponsorship](#) (as applicable)

### **PROGRAM RESOURCES**

The NFF has developed [Conservation Connect](#) to provide tools needed for engaging in collaborative, community-based stewardship on our National Forests and Grasslands. Conservation Connect follows the NFF's peer learning philosophy of creating opportunities for practitioners on the ground to share their successes and challenges and to learn from the experiences of others. Conservation Connect hosts peer-learning teleconferences and offers mentoring, access to coaches, a resource library with best practices and tools, and a variety of information on emerging topics of interest.

The NFF publishes the quarterly [Taproot eNewsletter](#), which shares resources for organizations working towards conservation on National Forest lands including upcoming webinars, new tools developed by other organizations, and profiles of successful projects.

The Forest Service and the NFF have also jointly developed the online [Partnership Resource Center](#), an excellent resource for community groups that focus on natural resource management issues.

Resources for grant seekers offering tips and best practices for writing successful proposals are widely available on the internet. The NFF has compiled a list of [some good starting places](#).

NFF staff is available to respond to questions about the application process; receiving help will not affect an organization's competitiveness for the program.

## **AWARD PROCESS AND GRANT ADMINISTRATION**

A committee including National Forest Foundation staff and Board, participating resort staff, and Forest Service staff reviews proposals within approximately eight weeks of the application deadline. If a project is selected for funding, the following tasks take place to complete the grant award and administer the project during the grant period:

- NFF notifies the listed project contact about the pending award.
- The grantee may choose the most appropriate grant start date and interim report due date for their project. Several pre-selected options are provided within a six-week window.
- NFF staff complete a risk assessment of the potential grantee organization including audit findings, staff experience, past performance on NFF grants, and other factors relevant to award administration. Organizations considered moderate or high risk may have additional administrative requirements added to their grant award.
- NFF processes the grant agreement with the selected start dates and report deadlines.
- Grantee must sign and return a fully executed copy of the grant agreement.
- Grantee may incur costs on the project beginning on the first day of the formal award period. Activities and associated costs incurred prior to the start date are not eligible to be funded by the grant.
- In most cases, the NFF provides grant funds as a full advance at the beginning of the grant period.
- Interim narrative and financial reports are due approximately halfway through the one-year grant period.
- The grant end date is 12 months after the grant start date. All project activities must be complete and all funds must be requested by the grant end date.
- Final narrative and financial reports are due one month after the grant end date.

## **TO APPLY**

1. Visit the NFF [Online Grant System](#) and either:
  - a. Log on with an existing account; or
  - b. Click [Create New Account](#) and follow the steps to create a new account.  
*Tip: You are required to create a new account if you have not previously applied for an NFF grant through [this](#) online system. [\[View Registration Tutorial\]](#)*
2. Once logged in, click [Apply](#) and enter the access code below.  
Access code: **juniper**
3. Click on [2019 Ski Conservation Fund – Lincoln NF](#)
4. Follow the instructions provided on the online form.

### *Online Application Tips:*

- **SAVE THIS RFP AND APPENDIX.** The online form does not list all program requirements described herein. Be sure you review this RFP occasionally while completing your organization's application.

- *The NFF regularly updates its standard forms and applicants must download and use the current forms each grant round. Do not re-use NFF forms saved on your computer from previous rounds.*

## **APPLICATION GUIDANCE**

The appendix following this Request for Proposals contains application components, instructions, and evaluation criteria for the Ski Conservation Fund program. Review this section thoroughly. Understanding it is key to submitting a successful proposal.

## **ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS**

Please contact the NFF with additional questions regarding SCF or the grant application process.

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## APPENDIX:

# SKI CONSERVATION FUND APPLICATION GUIDANCE

This appendix details application components, instructions, guidance, and evaluation criteria for the Ski Conservation Fund Program. **Please review it thoroughly.**

Components and instructions are in black text and **guidance on each follows in red text**. Items marked with an asterisk are required. Evaluation criteria used by the review committee are included in the section that is most closely aligned with each criterion, although grant reviewers may use content in other sections to respond to each criterion.

### Project Information

#### Project Name\*

**Guidance:** Provide a concise, descriptive name for the proposed project.

#### Amount Requested\*

**Guidance:** Indicate the amount you are requesting from the NFF for this project. Make sure this is consistent with the financial plan you upload (see below).

#### Congressional District of Organization

**Guidance:** List the Congressional District where the primary applicant organization's main office is located using the information provided at <http://www.census.gov/mycd/>. If your organization uses a fiscal sponsor, list the Congressional District of the fiscal sponsor. Use the format AZ-01 or MT-At Large.

#### Congressional District(s) of Project

**Guidance:** List the Congressional District(s) that the project will occur in using the information provided at <http://www.census.gov/mycd/>. Use the format AZ-01 or MT-At Large, and separate multiple Congressional Districts with commas.

#### Fiscal Sponsor Status\*

**Guidance:** Indicate whether your organization will utilize a fiscal sponsor for this grant. If your organization does not have IRS 501(c)(3) status, you must utilize a fiscal sponsor. Be sure you understand the [NFF Policy on Fiscal Sponsorship](#).

#### Organization Type\*

**Guidance:** Select your organization's type, or if you are using a fiscal sponsor indicate your fiscal sponsor's organization type. All organizations that do not have IRS 501(c)(3) status will need to upload documentation of their tax status as part of the application.

### Project Overview

#### Forest Service Region\*

**Guidance:** Indicate the [National Forest System region](#) of your project. If the project is in multiple regions, select "Multiple Regions"



## National Forests or Grasslands Impacted\*

Guidance: List the units of the National Forest System the project benefits. Please include full National Forest name and do not include Ranger Districts. (For Example: "Wallowa-Whitman National Forest," or "Green Mountain and White Mountain National Forests.")

## Project Description\* (250 Characters)

Guidance: Provide a 1-2 sentence summary of the project. We encourage you to start this section with the word "To", followed by a descriptive verb.

## Anticipated Start Date\*

Guidance: Indicate the approximate date that the NFF-funded portion of the project will commence. This date should be at least two months after the proposal deadline.

## Anticipated Completion Date\*

Guidance: Indicate the approximate date the NFF-funded portion of the project will finish. This date should be no more than 12 months after your proposed start date.

## Project Narrative

### Executive Summary\* (1,500 Characters)

Instruction: In about a paragraph, provide an abridged version of narrative below.

Guidance: This is a brief summary of overall proposal, including the need, goals, methods, and outcomes. Nothing should be included in the executive summary that is not in the rest of the proposal. For best results, you may wish to complete this section LAST.

### Project Need\* (2,000 Characters)

Instruction: In brief narrative form, succinctly and persuasively describe the need for the project, including the broader ecological, social, and/or economic issues the project will address. Indicate the National Forest System management issues involved and alignment with broader-scale conservation initiatives, if any.

Guidance: This section asks you to respond to the *WHY* of the project. Make a compelling case for what is wrong, before you describe later in this proposal the specific steps that you will take to fix it.

### Goals and Objectives\* (2,000 Characters)

Instruction: In brief, bulleted sentences, list the specific goals and objectives the project will accomplish and detail where it is located within the National Forest System.

Guidance: This section asks you to describe *WHAT* you plan to accomplish in the project and *WHERE* you plan to accomplish it. Succinctly describe the work you plan to complete under the grant. Describe specific location(s) of the work, and do not generalize. We encourage you to use [SMART](#) criteria in your goals and objectives.

Evaluation Criterion: *The extent to which project goals and objectives are specific, consistent with the identified need, and clearly articulated.*

### **Methods\*** (5,000 Characters)

Instruction: In a succinct narrative or bulleted-paragraph format, describe the specific steps you will take to achieve each individual goal or objective. Include an implementation timeline that details discrete tasks and the individuals responsible for conducting each. Describe how the project engages other partner organizations.

Guidance: This section asks you to respond to the *HOW* of the project. Clearly describe the individual actions that your organization will complete to advance each goal or objective. The timeline should be monthly or quarterly and indicate staff involved. Include detail on the role that other organizations will play in the project.

Evaluation Criterion: *The extent to which the NFF-funded portion of the project can reasonably be accomplished within one year.*

### **Specific Outcomes\*** (3,000 Characters)

Instruction: Indicate the projected outcomes of the project. In bulleted format, quantify tangible outcomes in units such as the number of miles maintained, acres treated, trees planted, or volunteers engaged. Include a narrative portion to describe specific qualitative environmental or social impacts.

Guidance: This section asks you to detail the anticipated quantitative and qualitative outcomes of the project. Be specific, and describe the accomplishments you expect. If you are tracking something easily countable, like the number of miles of trail maintained or the number of hours a youth crew will work on a project, put it in a bulleted list or in brief bulleted sentences. If you are also tracking something harder to quantify like the change in user behavior, or increased social license because of a completed project, describe that in a brief narrative format. Be as specific as you can, and do not generalize.

Evaluation Criterion: *The extent to which the project improves conditions of National Forest System resources in a measurable, on-the-ground manner.*

### **Program Area Alignment\*** (2,000 Characters)

Instruction: In a brief narrative format, describe how the project aligns with the NFF Outdoor Experiences or Forest Health program areas. If the project will cohesively integrate the Outdoor Experiences and Forest Health program areas, describe how it clearly ties the two program areas together.

Guidance: This section asks you to explain explicitly how the project is consistent with the NFF Outdoor Experiences or Forest Health program areas described in the RFP. Describe which components of your project fit with the components of at least of one of the program areas. Be honest. Don't make it a stretch.

If your project truly integrates Outdoor Experiences and Forest Health, describe the extent to which the project does so. The most successful projects will seamlessly integrate the two program areas and receive weighted advantage. Projects that only nominally integrate the focus areas will not receive the weighted advantage.

Evaluation Criterion: *The extent to which the project is highly aligned with the either the Outdoor Experiences or Forest Health program areas.*

Evaluation Criterion: *The extent to which the project cohesively integrates the Outdoor Experiences and Forest Health program areas.*

### **Underserved and Disadvantaged Populations (if applicable) (1,000 Characters)**

In addition to the program criteria described above, funding preference will be given to projects that directly engage disadvantaged or underserved populations within local communities proximate to the Lincoln National Forest.

Instruction: If applicable, use a brief narrative format to describe how the project directly engages underserved or disadvantaged populations within local communities proximate to the Lincoln National Forest.

Guidance: This section asks you to explain explicitly how the project works with recognized underserved and disadvantaged populations. If applicable, describe how your project will reach these groups and how they will be involved in the project or benefit from its implementation.

Evaluation Criterion: *The extent to which the project directly engages disadvantaged or underserved populations within local communities proximate to the Lincoln National Forest.*

### **Evaluation, Monitoring, and Dissemination\* (2,000 Characters)**

Instruction: In brief narrative format, describe the following:

- The metrics used to determine whether the project achieved the goals and objectives set out, and who will determine it;
- The type of monitoring, if any, that will occur to know that the project was demonstrably effective over the short, medium, and long term, as well as how monitoring results will be incorporated in future work;
- How the organization will broadly communicate the project successes and challenges once work is completed.

Guidance: This section asks you to identify how you will know that you had an impact and accomplished your goals, as well as how you will share your successes and lessons learned.

- For evaluation, how will you determine whether the goals and objectives were completed, and how will you assess the quality of the work?
- For monitoring, the NFF is interested in three primary types of monitoring in this context: baseline, implementation, and effectiveness. Describe how your project utilizes any or all of these.
- For dissemination, describe how you will communicate the project outcomes internally and externally. Are you only posting a photo on Facebook, or are you presenting at a workshop or preparing an instructional handbook?

Evaluation Criterion: *The extent to which the means of evaluating and monitoring project outcomes are well defined and appropriate for the stated project goals.*

Evaluation Criterion: *The extent to which the project readily and effectively transfers best practices or shares lessons learned.*

### **Civic Engagement\* (1,500 Characters)**

Instruction: In brief narrative format, describe the extent to which the community is directly engaged in the planning, implementation, and/or monitoring phases of the project. Identify the role, if any, that volunteers play in the project, and interest groups involved, with the role each plays.

Guidance: This section asks you to explain the role that the community plays in the implementation of your project. If your project uses volunteers, identify the roles they play. If your project uses youth crews, identify your organization's approach to working with youth crews. If your project involves the implementation of a project developed by a collaborative group, describe the role that the collaborative played. If your project directly engages underserved communities, describe the communities and the roles they play.

Evaluation Criterion: The extent to which the project clearly enhances understanding of natural resource issues, and increases capacity for participation and engagement.

Evaluation Criterion: The extent to which the project directly engages diverse or new stakeholders in the pre-implementation, implementation, or post-implementation phase.

### **Impediments to Implementation\*** (1,000 characters)

Instruction: Describe any issues you foresee that could delay your project during your grant period, and planning or contingency measures you would put in place to deal with them.

Guidance: Use this space to explain external or internal issues that could affect your project such as weather, permitting, or staffing. It's better to directly address potential issues and describe your contingencies, than appear to have overlooked them.

## **Environmental Compliance**

### **Environmental Compliance\***

Instruction: Indicate whether the project requires any environmental permitting or compliance work, including under the National Environmental Policy Act.

### **Compliance Verification\***

Instruction: If required, indicate whether the compliance is complete.

Guidance: The NFF does not consider projects where environmental compliance work is incomplete at the time of application.

## **Project Documents**

### **Budget Narrative\*** (5,000 characters)

Guidance: Provide a Budget Narrative that briefly summarizes your project's costs in bulleted narrative form. For each expense category, specifically describe how the project will spend NFF funds if awarded. Provide enough detail to show how the amount you are requesting is related to the project activities you describe in your narrative. Typically, two or three sentences for each expense category are sufficient.

### **Financial Plan Form\*** (Upload)

Guidance: Upload a completed [NFF Financial Plan form](#) showing the budget for the project on the top half of the form (Part 1), and what funds you plan to use as match on the bottom half of the form (Part 2). **Do not re-use NFF forms saved on your computer from previous rounds** as the NFF regularly updates its standard forms and your proposal may be disqualified if it does not include all the requested information on the current version of this form.

Be sure you understand and follow the [Definitions of Expense Categories and Funding Sources](#) and the [NFF Indirect Cost Rate Policy](#).

Double Check:

- Total NFF funds requested (cell B14) matches what is entered in the Amount Requested field of the online application form (noted above).
- Total matching partner Non-Federal Funds and In-Kind Contributions (sum of cells C14 and D14) is equal to or greater than half of the total NFF funds requested (cell B14).
- The indirect rate is no more than 10% of the total direct charges. If you have a NICRA, it shouldn't be any greater than your approved NICRA rate.
- Individual donors or categories of donors are listed in Part 2 of the form with the amount of their contributions and how much is committed.

*Evaluation Criterion: The extent to which the amount requested is appropriate, cost-effective, and commensurate with project needs.*

*Evaluation Criterion: The extent to which project matching funds are fully committed.*

**Expanded Budget Form\*** (Upload)

Guidance: Upload the [NFF Expanded Budget form](#) to provide detail on the budget categories from the financial plan form. Double check that category totals match your financial plan form.

**Do not re-use NFF forms saved on your computer from previous rounds** as the NFF regularly updates its standard forms and your proposal may be disqualified if it does not include all the requested information on the current version of this form. Do not use expanded budget forms from other sources.

Double Check:

- Make sure the grand totals of each column in your Expanded Budget match the totals in your Financial Plan Form (cells B14, C14, D14, E14 and F14).
- Make sure the costs included in this spreadsheet are described in your budget narrative.

**Project Area Map\*** (Upload)

Guidance: Upload a map of the project area to help reviewers locate it within the National Forest System and identify its proximity to other relevant locations. If the map consists of several documents, combine them into a PDF and upload a single file.

**Forest Service Letter of Support** (Upload)

Guidance: Upload a letter of support from the [District Ranger](#) of each Ranger District included in a proposal. Do not submit any additional letters of support.

If not uploaded with the proposal, email letters of support to [grants@nationalforests.org](mailto:grants@nationalforests.org) within 3 days of the proposal deadline. Do not submit letters of support via more than one method.

## Organization Background

**Organizational Background\*** (1,500 Characters)

Guidance: In brief narrative format, provide an overview of the history, mission, and goals of your organization. What are your organization's program priorities and the constituency and geographic area that you serve?

**Biographical Sketch of Professional Staff Involved in the Project\*** (2,000 Characters)

Guidance: In narrative format, provide a description of the professional staff engaged in project implementation. Mention how long they have been at your organization and how long in their current position, and their skills that are relevant to the proposed project. Only list those who work for your organization or as contractors. You do not need to complete this section for Forest Service staff involved in the project.

**List of Board Members\*** (Upload or 5,000 Characters)

Guidance: Include a list of your organization's board of directors and their relevant affiliations.

**Organizational Financials\*** (Upload)

Guidance: Provide financial statements for the most recently completed fiscal year of your organization or your organization's fiscal sponsor. Do not send a copy of your organization's IRS form 990 unless specifically requested to do so. If the financials consist of several documents, combine them into a single PDF for upload.

- If professionally prepared, this includes an audited, reviewed, or compiled financial report.
- If self-prepared, this includes a recent profit/loss statement and recent budget-to-actual statement at minimum. If your organization has a current audited financial statement, include the audited report *instead* of the self-prepared reports.

**AD-1048\*** (Upload)

Guidance: Complete the first page of [USDA Form AD-1048, Certification Regarding Debarment, Suspension, Ineligibility and Voluntary Exclusion](#), manually sign it, and upload it here.

**NICRA** (Upload)

Guidance: If your organization has a federally negotiated indirect cost rate agreement (NICRA), upload a copy. Note that the uploaded NICRA must be current through the start of the NFF grant, or your organization can only recover indirects at a *de Minimis rate*. Be sure you understand and follow the [NFF Indirect Cost Rate Policy](#).

**Anti-Lobbying Certification** (Upload only if your grant request is over \$100,000)

Guidance: If your grant request is over \$100,000 you must download, print and sign the Anti-Lobbying certification form and upload it as part of your application.

**Tax Status Verification** (Upload only if your organization or fiscal sponsor is not a 501(c)(3) nonprofit)

Guidance: If your organization is not a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization, you are required to upload a signed document indicating your organization's tax status.

## Supplemental Organization Information

**Note:** The NFF is collecting information to improve how we understand and work with our partners. We encourage you to provide candid responses to the best of your ability. **When making funding decisions, evaluators will not have access to your responses to these questions, and the NFF does not consider them in proposal evaluation.**

**Level of Effort\***

Instruction: Please estimate the length of time your organization spent to complete this entire proposal. Consider the time of all staff and board members who were involved in content development, review and submission.

**Race/Ethnicity and Gender Table\*** (Upload)

Instruction: Please download the [Demographic Information Table](#), and complete the requested numbers for your organization's board and staff, and the populations served by your organization. For populations served, you may

approximate based on demographic information provided by the US Census in the American FactFinder:  
<https://factfinder.census.gov/faces/nav/jsf/pages/index.xhtml>

**Description of Diversity\*** (5,000 Characters)

Instruction: The NFF recognizes that diversity can mean much more than the gender and race/ethnicity metrics captured above—it includes age, disability, sexual orientation, economic status, rural and urban differences, and many other factors.

1. Please describe what you see as the most important diversity factors in the population(s) your organization serves.
2. How are you currently incorporating these factors into your organization's staff and board, and program work?
3. What are one or more populations that your organization has not historically reached, but which you wish to incorporate into your work in the future? How will you do so?