

Woods and Prairie Foundation

Guidelines for Grants and Fellowships

Goal of the Foundation

The Woods & Prairie Foundation supports the community of dedicated volunteers and staff who conserve the prairies, woodlands, and wetlands of the central tallgrass region (especially the area wryly named Chicago Wilderness). The fulfilling and important stewardship work tackled by these great people includes:

- Ecological restoration
- Biodiversity outreach, recruiting, and education
- Citizen science, monitoring, and applied research
- Conservation advocacy

Examples of Suggested Initiatives

In time we hope to convey what kinds of initiatives will be funded by this foundation by listing key details of what we have funded in the past. But we are new. Examples of initiatives that have been suggested to us and seem good are listed below. One of the key considerations will be leverage – for example the acceptance of an important new technique, the building of a new and large constituency, or dramatically more seeds gathered or species established. Suggested examples:

- ***Hold one or more recruiting events.*** Assemble a group of stewards (on the basis of a county or a region) and hold a meeting (or launch a web initiative) that will successfully connect new volunteers to existing projects or a new one.
- ***Develop and implement a model on-the-ground project.*** Examples: a) restore an animal or plant of concern in a way that opens doors to others, b) compare three approaches to control of a difficult species, c) establish an improved program of plant rescues.
- ***Organize a valuable class.*** Examples might include classes that would a) teach volunteers to monitor some critical group of animals or plants, b) teach neighbors and preserve users about aquatic invertebrates, trees, birds, pollinators, or some other group, c) engage experts in a process that would build interest in biodiversity and conservation.
- ***Engage students in community conservation.*** A strong connection with dedicated volunteer stewards would likely be a plus.

- **Compose a book, article, website, blog, or other outreach tool.** The foundation would not likely be able to pay for your time but could provide support for expenses (and thus demonstrate need to others).
- **Something we haven't thought of.** The Foundation would like to hear new ideas from people who could make them work.

Who should apply

Anyone can. But we're especially looking for two types of people.

Existing volunteers who want to do something special. Leadership volunteers are crucial to the heart and soul of conservation. There are many sources of grants and other support for agencies. This foundation would like to support entrepreneurial volunteers who need modest resources and a bit of outside affirmation for something important that probably couldn't be funded another way.

Potential professionals. Some people who may want careers in conservation wisely volunteer for a time to learn the field, make contacts, and get known for success. This foundation will consider proposals and try to support such people with mentoring and modest resources if they will be contributing something important in the process.

How to apply

Write what you are proposing in your own form and words. Be clear. Include at least brief comments about your background and goals. Concentrate mostly on a summary of purpose, steps you will take, how you will identify or recruit participants, how you will evaluate progress and ultimate success.

The foundation appreciates standard resume material but is even more interested in learning about your real-world community-based ideas and accomplishments.

We encourage applicants to start with a very brief pre-proposal. The foundation will ask for more details as needed.

The Woods & Prairie Foundation accepts proposals and queries at:
woodsandprairie@comcast.net