

The Oregon Community Foundation's Gray Family Fund *Invites Proposals for the* 2012 Environmental Education Program

Statement of Purpose

The Environmental Education Program seeks to encourage a strong local land ethic, sustainable communities and stewardship of the natural environment by citizens throughout Oregon.

The Fund is committed long term to institutionalizing a series of age appropriate experiences that build a sense of place and responsibility toward Oregon and the region.

Funding Goals for the Environmental Education Program

- Strengthening and developing programs that provide outdoor experiences for youth from early childhood through grade 12.
- Creating, expanding and improving programs that connect schools with their communities and provide students with practical hands-on experience in addressing environmental issues both locally and globally.
- Supporting programs committed to creating comprehensive, significant lasting change in educational systems, fostering improved understanding of and interaction with our natural systems.
- Encouraging programs that explore and integrate boundaries between art and science and connect creativity with the natural environment.

Two Grant Deadlines

Wednesday, February 1, 2012 — Grants awarded by June

- **Outdoor Exploration and Community Field Trips for fifth through eighth grades**
- **Environmental Professional Development for teachers and volunteer mentors**

Wednesday, August 1, 2012 — Grants awarded by December

- **Overnight, Residential Outdoor School Programs for fifth and sixth grade students**

Three Project Category Descriptions

Outdoor Exploration and Community Field Trips For fifth through eighth grades

Goals: By eighth grade, all students should visit a wastewater treatment plant, a water source, and a landfill.

The fund will give preference to:

- Organizations and schools that provide field trips to learn about community infrastructure designed to protect our communities and ecosystems.
- Organizations that create and maintain community natural places located within public transportation districts or that are within biking or walking range of schools.
- Projects that help students, families and their communities understand, interact with and support school and community gardens and local farms and food systems.
- Projects that allow students to engage with the environment through local stewardship experiences and encourage youth involvement in stewardship projects.
- Initiatives to improve curricula about land use planning, Oregon history and Oregon geography.

Environmental Professional Development

For teachers and volunteer mentors

Goals: Teachers and volunteer mentors should have access to education about sustainability in ways that strengthen their communities and encourage them to experience the natural world.

The fund will give preference to:

- Projects that introduce teachers and volunteer mentors to and further educate them about the field of sustainability.
- Programs that train teachers and volunteer mentors so that they can effectively employ experiential, outdoor focused, place-based and inquiry-based learning.
- Programs that encourage teachers and volunteer mentors to lead and mentor projects promoting sustainability in their schools and communities.
- Programs that strengthen civic responsibility in communities, especially around issues of environmental sustainability and restoration.

Overnight, Residential Outdoor School Programs

For fifth and/or sixth grade students

Goals: Every fifth and/or sixth grader in Oregon will experience an outdoor-oriented educational, residential, experiential, interdisciplinary experience that engages the senses and employs recognized best practices.

The fund will give preference to:

- Programs 5 days in length.
- Programs that give scholarships to students in need (every student able to participate) and programs of schools exhibiting high need (i.e., Free and Reduced Lunch).
- Programs that engage college or high school students as mentors.
- Programs that have extensive community support and well-developed partnerships.
- Programs that incorporate pre- and post-trip curriculum work.
- Programs that assess both short- and long-term changes in participants' understanding of required standards, natural systems and environmental literacy.

Application Information

OCF makes grants to schools, government agencies, and nonprofit 501(c)(3) organizations. Over \$700,000 will be available for grants in the 2012 calendar year. Please refer to our website at www.oregoncf.org for examples of recent successful projects and amounts granted.

As the applications for the spring and fall deadlines are different, please make sure you use the correct form. In order to receive a grant, you must submit an Evaluation Plan with the grant application, and an Evaluation Report Form eight months into the project. Evaluation materials are available on the website.

Please apply for the grant electronically, if possible. Electronic materials are available on the sidebar of the Environmental Education Program page at: www.oregoncf.org. Please contact enviroed@oregoncf.org or Lara Christensen at The Oregon Community Foundation, 503-227-6846, with questions.

Discrimination Policy

OCF does not discriminate on the basis of race, religion, sexual orientation, physical circumstances or national origin. Grant applicants must hold similar standards. OCF does not consider grant applications from organizations known to have discriminatory policies.