



NEEF Health and the Natural Environment Grant FAQ
*Connecting Diverse Communities to US Forest Service Resources for
Education, Conservation, and Health Promotion*

TIMELINE QUESTIONS

- **The deadline for submission is March 1, 2019. However, I do not see a date for notification of winners for the grants. How much time will we have to plan and implement events during EE week?**
 - If your organization plans to host an event during April 22-26, and you are selected as a grantee, the turnaround will be quick. Our goal is to have finalists selected by the end of March which means *there is a chance* checks will not be distributed until the week of the event or shortly afterwards. Please plan accordingly. Either know you will be reimbursed, plan for a later date, or have a backup date in case you need the funding to move forward.
- **The turnaround time for the grant is short. If I am unable to host an event on April 22-26, will my application be considered?**
 - Yes. The listed dates are preferences not requirements.

PARTNERSHIP QUESTIONS

- **If I do not have a USFS partner, can I partner with a state or local forest service partner?**
 - Yes. We recognize not all states have a USFS agency.
- **Can any public land related federal agency serve as the forest service partner? For example, BLM?**
 - No. Only USFS can serve as the federal partner.
- **Who qualifies as a state or local forest service partner? Can NEEF provide us with a list?**
 - While a majority of our past grantees have received support from a USFS site, your organization can identify a state or local forest service site partner. For example, last year NEEF funded a group who partnered with PA Department of Conservation and Natural Resources, Bureau of Forestry. Please note that the primary focus of the local or state partner must be forests.
 - Unfortunately NEEF will not be able to provide applicants with a list of approved state and local forest service sites. The expectation is for applicants to conduct that research.
- **Can I use an MOU or Letter of Agreement to demonstrate support from my forest service partner?**
 - No. A letter of support, on letterhead, addressed to NEEF, must be submitted. The letter should include the nature, structure, history, and/or current activities of your partnership. A strong partnership letter will demonstrate knowledge of, and investment in, the proposed grant project, especially in terms of how its success would positively affect the land and the surrounding community.

- **What constitutes as forest service interests?**

- While activities do not have to occur on USFS property, they should be tied to USFS interests. This might apply to areas where USFS has invested money, perhaps through a [NUCFAC](#) grant. It could also be by meeting one or more of the goals listed in USFS [strategic plan](#).

EVENT QUESTIONS

- **Does my event have to take place on a forest service site?**

- No. However, it must take place on a public land, have the support of the forest service partner, and tie to forest service interests.

- **Am I eligible if I am hosting a public event on private land?**

- No. All activities must take place on a public land.

HEALTH QUESTIONS

- **We are a very rural organization and all of our local health is done through the local volunteer rescue squads (paramedics and EMT). These rescue squad members also do education at the local schools and community groups. My question is, can we partner with our local folks who are paramedics and EMT's in regards to this grant?**

- Health professionals considered for this opportunity include physicians, nurse practitioners, physician's assistants, nurses, or community health workers. Certified Fitness Instructors are also included in this criteria. Health educators by design teach and educate people about behaviors that promote wellness. Most states require trainings related to a specific health topic of focus, or complete a certification program.
- Paramedics are first responder health care professionals with distinct training in emergency care. Applicants who can provide documentation of additional health promotion/education training of paramedics will be considered.

- **What are some examples of health education and health promotion activities that I can incorporate in my event?**

- When introducing the planned activities, discuss the health benefits that individuals can experience as a result of participation.
 - Invite a local physician or health professional to provide opening or closing remarks on the importance of spending time in nature.
 - Discuss a health issue that is prevalent in your community (i.e., mental health, obesity, hypertension, stress, etc.). Educate the audience on how connecting to nature lowers stress and anxiety, boosts the immune system, and increases energy. Nature is rejuvenating for body, mind, and spirit. See our [Children](#) and [Adult](#) Health in Nature Fact Sheets for more guidance.
- At the start of the event, incorporate a full range of low-impact warm-up exercises including breathing and stretching techniques. Share with participants that being physically active in nature can result in:
 - calories burned (15 min, ½ hour, 1-hour intervals);
 - improved balance;
 - lowered stress levels; and/or
 - positive feelings and many other benefits.
- At the close of the event engage participants in breathing exercises, stretching and range of cool-down techniques. Remind them of accomplishments and positive sense of

being after participating. Suggest that they can continue these actions by making nature a part of their daily lives.

- Educate participants on the importance of sun safety and protecting themselves from overexposure to UV radiation. Remind them to routinely apply sunscreen with broad spectrum SPF 30 or higher, wear protective clothing and appropriate sunglasses. See our [Sunwise materials](#).
- Invite a physician to lead a hike or “walk with a doc” activity.
- Incorporate activities for kids, health screenings, and/or music. Engage local schools, hospitals, medical schools, and/or community-based organizations.
- Invite a fitness instructor to lead exercise activities:
 - Identify certified aerobics instructors to lead outdoor group exercises (i.e., yoga, cycling, martial arts, Tai Chi, Zumba, or dance).
 - Lead a meditation exercise that incorporates relaxation therapy to relieve stress and restore mental health.
 - Guide a group through a Shinrin-yoku or forest bathing exercise.

Useful Resources:

- **Health Resources:**

- <https://www.neefusa.org/sunwise>
- <https://www.neefusa.org/resource/rx-outdoor-activity>
- <https://www.neefusa.org/resource/childrens-health-and-nature-fact-sheet>
- <https://www.neefusa.org/resource/adult%E2%80%99s-health-and-nature-fact-sheet>

- **Engaging Latino and Hispanic Communities:**

- <https://www.rivernetwork.org/best-practices-latino-hispanic-engagement-english/>