

SFI Inc. Conservation & Community Partnerships Grant Program Request for Proposals Directions and Grant Application for 2014 Grant Projects

The SFI Conservation and Community Partnerships Grant Program supports collaborative projects that involve non-profit organizations, SFI program participants and other stakeholders, and that support SFI Program objectives. Since 2010, SFI has awarded 40 grants for a total of over \$1.65 million. Together with project partner contributions, these projects represent leveraged investments of over \$5 million.

In 2014, SFI will award up to \$300,000 in new Conservation Grants, depending on the proposals received. This application is for Conservation-related proposals. For proposal requests below \$5,000, please use the Application for Community Grants which may be downloaded at the SFI, Inc. website:

<http://www.sfiprogram.org/community-conservation/conservation-community-partnerships-grant-program/>

Conservation-related projects generally illustrate, inform, or improve the role of the SFI standard. It is expected that the majority of these funds will support projects in the following five categories: Carbon and Bioenergy; Forest Health; Water; Capacity Building; and Wildlife, Fish and Biodiversity. SFI may consider particularly compelling proposals outside these categories, provided they follow the other mandatory requirements.

- Carbon and Bioenergy: Proposals are encouraged that (1) examine how bioenergy markets have impacted utilization and intensity of management on forestlands, or (2) develop tools to help landowners better understand the impacts of forest management on carbon in the atmosphere.
- Forest Health: Proposals are encouraged that (1) provide guidance, technical assistance, or the business case to forest landowners about working forest conservation easements (note that this grant program will not fund acquisition of conservation easements); (2) examine the intersection between healthy, managed forests and public benefits, including clean air and water, wildlife habitat, and other ecosystem functions, or (3) examine the role of fire, pest, disease and climate change.
- Water: Proposals are encouraged that (1) illustrate the role of SFI Standard requirements in protecting water quality and quantity in rivers, streams, lakes, wetlands and other water bodies; (2) address government decision-making on the topic of forestry roads and water quality; (3) contribute to current knowledge on the effectiveness of best management practices for water quality (BMPs); or (4) apply expert knowledge and research results in the development of best management practices that protect water quality in forestry.
- Capacity Building: Proposals are encouraged that (1) assist with or support the growth of SFI certification within the Aboriginal/Tribal community in Canada or the U.S., or (2) enhance capacity of Aboriginal/Tribal community to assess and manage natural and cultural resources, or (3) develop and implement forest landowner outreach programs surrounding forest conservation practices.
- Wildlife, Fish and Biodiversity: Proposals are encouraged that (1) protect, promote, illustrate, improve or restore key wildlife habitat in managed forests impacted by natural disturbances such as fire or flood, or (2) protect, promote, illustrate, improve or restore key biodiversity, aquatic species, or wildlife habitat practices to meet SFI Standard requirements, or (3) demonstrate and/or establish the

role of one or more successional habitats as they may benefit wildlife or biodiversity in managed forests.

Information on the Grant Application Process:

Process

The proposal must be submitted via email in MS Word format (please, no hard copies) to Paul.Trianosky@sfiprogram.org by 5:00 pm Eastern Time on Friday, February 21, 2014. Applicants will be notified via email that their application was received. Late proposals will not be considered.

Proposals are limited to 8 pages total, must address all components of the Request for Proposals, and must follow the template provided in the application section of the RFP below. Applications that do not follow this template, or which exceed 8 pages in length will not be considered. Applicants should use a True Type font in 12 point or larger. Applications are preferred in English, but applications for projects in Canada may be submitted in French.

Timeline

Event	Date
Request for Proposals issued	January 7, 2014
Proposals due to SFI, Inc.	February 21, 2014 by 5:00 pm Eastern Time (no exceptions)
Lead Organizations advised of results	By April 3, 2014

Terminology

The following terminology applies to this Request for Proposal:

- “Must” or “Mandatory” means a requirement that shall to be met in order for a proposal to receive consideration.
- “Lead Organization” is a conservation group, school, college or university, or other non-profit that submits this application, oversees the project funding and is responsible for reporting to SFI Inc. quarterly on the project progress.
- “Partner” means an individual, partnership, government agency, corporation, non-profit, or other entity that is named in the Proposal as one of the entities in addition to the Lead Organization that has agreed to be involved in the implementation of the Project.
- “Project” means the work described in the proposal.
- “Proposal” means a response prepared and submitted in response to this Request for Proposal.
- “Should” or “Desirable” means a requirement having significant degree of importance to the objectives of this Request for Proposal, and will be taken into account in the evaluation of the Project.

Mandatory Requirements for All Proposals

All proposals must contain the following elements. Projects that do not contain these core requirements will not be considered:

- Projects must be collaborative and involve at least one Project Partner, in addition to the Lead Organization.
- Projects must include a SFI Program Participant or a SFI Implementation Committee (SIC) as a Project Partner, and where applicable must take place in part or in whole on lands/sources certified to the SFI 2010-2014 Standard. To search for SFI Program Participants, click here: <http://sfiprogram.org/find-sfi-certified-forests-companies-products/>
A map of SFI Implementation Committees can be found here: <http://www.sfiprogram.org/community-conservation/sfi-implementation-committees/sic-maps1/>
- The project results must have implications or benefits that are applicable to other sites, or which may be adaptable to a larger scale.
- The Project Lead Organization (i.e. the Applicant) must be a tax exempt, non-profit organization (eg. a 501(c)(3) in the US or registered with the Charities Directorate of the Canada Revenue Agency in Canada) whose scope encompasses expertise in improved forest management, forest conservation, wildlife habitat, water resources, or other areas that would support a project related to the one or more of the topics outlined in the RFP and the SFI Program.
 - Note: Colleges, universities and schools qualify as non-profit organizations; however additional non-profit conservation partners will increase the strength of the application.
 - Applicants must submit current proof of non-profit status with this application.
- The Project must relate to or support one or more elements of the SFI 2010-2014 Program. You can download a copy of the SFI Standard and supporting documents from the SFI website here: <http://www.sfiprogram.org/sfi-standard/sfi-standards/>
- All Project Partners involved in the Project must agree to authorize SFI Inc. to publicize the Project and to use their names, images, logos and information about the Project in such publicity. All Organizations listed in the application will be required to sign an agreement to this effect and submit it with this application – a copy of this agreement is included at the end of the application template below. If additional Project Partners join the Project after an application is accepted by SFI Inc., they will also be required to sign the agreement. To the extent possible, SFI will work cooperatively with Project Partners on any publicity associated with the project.

Additional Desirable Considerations:

These elements are not mandatory, but SFI Inc. will give preference to Proposals that contain one or more of the following desirable elements:

- The Project demonstrates how SFI certification complements existing cooperative or government initiatives that advance conservation objectives in managed forests, and includes involvement from decision-makers associated with relevant initiatives.
- Project Lead Organization and Project Partners are strongly encouraged to secure matching or in-kind funds for the Project from other organizations and/or other outside funding sources. Applications without matching or in-kind funds will still be considered, however those demonstrating matching or in-kind funds will be given stronger consideration.
- Organizations are strongly encouraged to speak about the Project in public venues, including the SFI Annual Conference, or other venues identified by SFI Inc. and the Project partners.

Successful Applications

- Successful applicants will be required to sign an agreement with SFI specifying reporting timelines, project deliverables, payment schedules and other specifics surrounding the project. Successful applicants will be expected to work closely with SFI to complete such agreement as expeditiously as possible following notification of acceptance.
- The Lead Organization will be expected to work with SFI to schedule a “kickoff” meeting to discuss details of the project, deliverables, plans for engagement of SFI program participants (or SIC’s), plans for external communications, and other relevant aspects of the project as soon as practical after notification of acceptance.
- Lead Organizations will be required to submit progress reports to SFI Inc. twice annually, and hold quarterly briefing calls with SFI staff.
- Projects payments will be tied to attainment of project milestones and will be generally be made on a six-month payment schedule, subject to the specific circumstances of the project. SFI will receive and process invoices during a brief window each quarter (eg. in March, June, September and December). The specific timeline for each project will dictate the schedule of reports and payments.
- Funding will be disbursed based upon receipt of scheduled progress reports that demonstrate that deliverables and timelines have been met. If the project meets any unexpected difficulty which could disrupt the scheduled deliverables, it is essential to communicate this swiftly to SFI Inc. SFI will work closely with project partners to get the project back on track or redefine project expectations.
- SFI anticipates that the results of grant projects will aid in the advancement of the conservation and community outreach goals of the SFI Program Standard, and thus be useful to program participants or the conservation objectives of SFI. Some projects may additionally lend themselves to more public reporting and publicity. SFI, Inc. will work closely with project partners to identify such opportunities and work cooperatively to craft messages and outreach strategies appropriate to each specific project.

Inquiries

The RFP and supporting documentation below should provide most of the information potential applicants may need. Any additional inquiries related to this Request for Proposals are to be directed to the person identified below. Information obtained from any other source is not official and should not be relied upon.

For Conservation Projects in the United States:

Sustainable Forestry Initiative, Inc.
 900 17th St. NW, Suite 700
 Washington, DC 20006
Attention: Paul Trianosky
 Senior Director of Conservation Partnerships

For Conservation Projects in Canada:

Sustainable Forestry Initiative, Inc.
 900 17th St. NW, Suite 700
 Washington, DC 20006
Attention: Andrew de Vries
 Vice President, Conservation and Indigenous Relations

Grant Application Template

Application Requirements:

- *Proposals must follow this application format.*
- *Applications cannot be longer than 8 pages (Note that the required agreements to Public Communications, and the Lead Organization's current proof of non-profit status do not count towards the 8 page maximum).*
- **You may delete all text that precedes this section and any text in italics throughout the application.**

All applications must include the following items:

Organization Information

The Lead Organization in the Project must be a non-profit organization (eg. A registered, tax-exempt 501(c)(3) in the US or registered with the Charities Directorate of the Canada Revenue Agency in Canada). Colleges, universities and schools qualify as non-profit organizations. Applicants must submit current proof of tax-exempt status with this application.

Lead Organization Name and Address	
Name, phone and email for Project Director	
Lead Organizational Mission Statement (25 words or less)	
Lead Organization Annual Operating Budget	
Two references (Name, Organization, email and phone) who can speak to the relevance and potential impact of the Project (these should not be the same as your Project partners):	

Project Overview

The Project must relate to or support one or more elements of the SFI 2010-2014 Program. You can download a copy of the Standard and supporting documents from the SFI website here: <http://www.sfiprogram.org/sfi-standard/sfi-standards/>

Project Title	Total Length of time for completion of project (in months, from commencement to final reporting)	Amount Requested from SFI	Total Project Budget (including matching funds and in-kind contributions)*	Brief Project Summary (50 words or less)	What element(s) of the SFI 2010-2014 Program are addressed by your Project? (Please cite the Standard Component(s))

** Matching funds and in-kind contributions should be reflected again in the budget outline below, indicating the source for each amount and Project Partner*

Project Partners

**For each Project Partner, please complete the following table. This application must include a signed copy of the Agreement to Public Communications for each listed partner, as well as the Lead Organization. A copy of this agreement may be found at the end of this document.*

Confirmed Project Partners (list organization name only)	Primary Contact Name & Title	Complete Contact Information (Email, Phone Number, Mailing Address)	Brief Summary of Individual's and Organizations Qualifications and Experience (150 words or less per partner)

Project Details

Please provide answers to the following questions to describe your project.

1. Please provide an introductory narrative describing (a) the basic methodology, and (b) the intended impact of your project.
2. Please explain how your project will illustrate or inform the role of SFI in one or more of the five conservation categories listed on the first page (Note that SFI may consider compelling projects that may fall outside these categories)
3. What activities will you and your Project partners perform to promote the outcomes of your Project and SFI Involvement in the Project?
4. In the table below, please list the goals for your project. For each goal, please describe: the actions you will take to achieve your goal; the corresponding tangible outcomes (e.g. provide implementation guidance on a component of the SFI Standard, landowners reached through education programs, acres positively affected by the Project); the means by which you will measure success in achieving each goal, and; the portion of the requested grant funds that would be used to achieve the goal. Add rows as needed to address all project goals.

Project Goals	Actions	Tangible Outcomes	Measure Success	Grant Funds	In-Kind or Matching Funds

Project Timeline

Please provide a timeline for completion of the project. Projects may range to a maximum of three years. Projects will commence at the time the Grant Agreement is signed, soon after notification of acceptance of your proposal. The timeline should indicate when you will deliver upon the goals and outcomes – project payments will be tied to attainment of project milestones and will be generally be made on a six-month payment schedule. SFI will receive and process invoices during a brief window each quarter (eg. in March, June, September and December). The specific timeline for each project will dictate the schedule of reports and payments.

Project Budget

Please fill out the table below to illustrate the entire Project budget. SFI Inc. will not award any funds for organization overhead costs, which include but are not limited to, office rent or maintenance, utilities, temporary hires, etc. While some portion of the grant may be used to offset staff salary and benefits, the focus should be on-the-ground activities.

You may modify this table to fit your needs, however please ensure your budget addresses the following components:

1. Portion of the budget to be allocated to each staff person working on the Project
2. Total Operating costs by line item, eg. travel, meetings, communications, education & outreach (please add categories as needed)
3. Identify any in-kind support allocated to this Project by each project partner
4. Identify any matching funds allocated to this Project by each project partner

Expenditure	SFI Grant Funds	Total Matching Funds	Source of Matching Funds*	In-Kind Contributions*	Source of In-kind Contributions	Total per expenditure category
Staff Salary and Benefits (please list budget amount individually per staff person)						
Operating Costs						
Research Activities						
Meetings						
Travel						
Education & Outreach						
Communications						
Total						

*list sources and amounts of any matching funds or in-kind contributions for each project partner

Agreement to Public Communications

As part of the Grant Application, the Lead Organization must complete and sign this page.

All identified organizations and partners involved in the Project must also agree to authorize SFI Inc. to publicize the Project and to use their names, images, logos and information about the Project in such publicity. All Organizations listed in the application will be required to sign an agreement to this effect and submit it with the application. If additional Organizations join the Project after an application is accepted by SFI Inc., they will also be required to sign the agreement. You can access an additional copy of this agreement for your Project Partners here:



Agreement to Public Communications.doc

I, _____ (Name, Title), as a representative of _____ (Organization Name) and a Partner in _____ (Name of Project), hereby give the Sustainable Forestry Initiative® (SFI), Inc. permission to use my name, the organization name as written above, and any other information about the Project in public communications regarding the Project.

I understand that public communications include, but are not limited to:

- Press releases and announcements regarding the SFI® Inc. Conservation and Community Partnerships Grant Program.
- Public presentations, fact sheets, briefing notes and other communication materials that highlight successful Projects and the SFI Inc. Conservation and Community Partnerships Grant Program.
- Use of the Organization logo on the SFI Inc. website, on news releases or other materials.
- Other materials as appropriate.

SFI Inc. will not attribute quotes or opinions to my organization without permission.

With my signature below, I attest that, to the best of my knowledge, the information provided in this application is true and accurate, and I am authorized by _____ (Organization Name) to sign this agreement.

Signed:

Name

Title

Organization

Date