

SAMPLE 2015 APPLICATION FORM

(For reference only – do not use.)



SFI-00001

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

The Sustainable Forestry Initiative® Inc. (SFI) improves quality of life by ensuring the health and future of forests – because forests affect us all.

Central to our work in North America is our connection and commitment to the communities we serve. This is a distinction we hold proudly and demonstrate through **SFI's Community Partners Grant Program**. SFI has awarded community-based grants to support youth initiatives and engage underserved communities, honor and protect Tribal and Aboriginal values, advance professional development in the forestry sector, and promote the use of products certified to the SFI Standards, among others.

The purpose of SFI's Community Partners Grant Program is to *elevate and enrich the link between people and forests*. We award grants to collaborative community-based programs, to include projects, activities or events, of non-profit and/or charitable organizations, SFI program participants and other stakeholders who support SFI's core mission to connect communities to forests and to educate the next generation of future forest leaders.

For the SFI Community Partners Grant cycle, SFI seeks requests in the following six areas, with further information on each provided below.

1. [Connect youth to forests.](#)
2. [Train and educate current and future practitioners and professionals](#) including, but not limited to:
 - Loggers
 - Resource Managers
 - Estate Planners
 - Architects
3. [Support and promote Aboriginal, Tribal and Heritage values.](#)
4. [Support underserved communities through forestry](#), with a focus on urban forestry, rural communities and/or minority landowners.
5. [Promote best practices for using forest products certified to SFI standards](#), including programs such as "It Starts at Home" and partnerships with Habitat for Humanity.
6. [Demonstrate the conservation values of SFI-certified forests](#) through community-related projects.

SFI is seeking creative approaches to the following topical categories. The below example are intended to provide Grant applicants with potential ideas, but creative interpretations are highly encouraged. Proposals that show high degrees of creativity and leverage are preferred.

1. Connect Youth to Forests

We all know that too many of today's children are disconnected from the natural world. At SFI we want to partner with organizations that will join with us in getting children to appreciate the natural world and get outside and in the woods, or as we like to say, to help them go "from screen time to tree time."

One grantee in this category, Project Learning Tree (PLT), a program of the American Forest Foundation, received a grant to partner with the Michigan PLT and the Grand Traverse Conservation District to sponsor a conference for PLT Coordinators and education to provide hands-on environmental education to Michigan students, which served as a model for other PLT state programs.

2. Train and Educate Current and Future Practitioners and Professionals

Sustainable forestry and the future of our forests depend on the commitment and expertise of a wide range of future practitioners and professionals. For example, SFI Implementation Committee-recognized logger training programs train thousands of loggers a year. Close to 10,000 individuals participated in training in 2014, to promote the understanding of water quality, biodiversity and other sustainable forestry practice requirements.

Our community grant program seeks to support these efforts as well as trainings for current and future practitioners and other professional groups including university students, estate planners, resource managers and architects – all of whom have a role to play in advancing sustainable forestry and promoting wood products from certified forests. We encourage grant proposals that broaden the opportunity to elevate the importance of sustainable forestry and the use of SFI- certified wood products to other professional groups impacting the future of forests. Examples of this could be presentations to architectural societies, taking professional builders to certified facilities to encourage them to use new products, or funding a scholarship at an architecture school for green building innovation.

3. Support and promote Aboriginal, Tribal and Heritage Values

Across North America, native peoples were the first stewards of our forests. SFI is committed to ensuring that the traditional knowledge that resides in these communities continues to be shared and appreciated. One such project is a collaboration with the Centre for Native Peoples and the Environment, at the State University of New York's College of Environmental Science and Forestry, and the Haudenosaunee Environmental Task Force. SFI awarded a grant to implement an educational program at the Native Earth Environmental Camp (NEEYC). The program focused on the sustainability of ecologically and culturally significant tree species and aligns with the commitment of NEEYC to "draw on the wisdom of both indigenous and scientific knowledge in support of our shared goals of environmental sustainability."

4. Support Underserved Communities

One example of a grant supporting underserved communities is the Greening of Detroit program. Urban forests improve the quality of life for city dwellers and for many, urban forests are their only "green" experience. SFI recognizes the importance of improving urban forestry as a way to elevate the importance of trees for millions of people living in cities.

A second example is an SFI grant (to the U.S. Endowment for Forestry and Communities) that is helping African-American landowners in the U.S. South keep their land productive and retain ownership across multiple generations through better understanding and management.

5. Promote Best Practices for Using Forest Products Certified to the SFI Standard.

Grants in this area should help tell the story of the impact of SFI's forest certification program from landowner to brand owner to consumer. For example, in partnership with landowners, industry, state agencies, foresters, loggers and others, the Georgia SFI Implementation Committee received a grant toward a Habitat for Humanity home build in Macon, Georgia. The home build, using SFI certified wood products, is part of a video story educating others about the forestry cycle from seedling to forest to mill to products to replanting.

6. Demonstrate the Conservation Values of SFI-certified Forests through Community-Related Projects.

Forests and the forest sector provide a wide range of values from clean air and water to wildlife habitat to wood products that improve our quality of life. They also provide equally important recreational and educational opportunities. The Manitoba Forestry Association, a 2014 grantee, implemented a project to repair and improve three interpretive educational trails in the Sandilands Forest Discovery Centre. The new trail system will also be used in the Manitoba Envirothon, an annual hands-on environmental education competition for high school students. Other examples of this might include a project that helps a school system, hospital or municipal government, adopt wholesale strategies to improve their environmental footprint by expanding the procurement of SFI products (e.g. promoting the Starts at Home program).

Grant Criteria

SFI desires to support grants that will elevate and enrich the link between people and forests through measurable results. We recognize these grant projects can have substantial impact in a small community, and/or be a critical factor in bringing a community project to the next level of impact. We seek proposals for up to \$10,000 that will be completed in the 2016 calendar year. For exceptional proposals that may require a longer timeframe, up to \$10,000 per year for a maximum of three years will be considered. Winning programs will meet one or more of the following desirable elements:

- Provide tangible, interactive, hands-on opportunities for participants to be part of solution-focused programs.
- Are scalable and replicable.
- Combine conservation and community-related objectives.
- Offer opportunities for matching funds. 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.
- Offer high-value and broad communications potential.

SFI will also give preference to grant requests that demonstrate a strong collaborative approach between community partners, SFI Program Participants and those supporting the principles inherent in the [*SFI 2015-2019 Standards and Rules*](#).

Grantees will be required to provide quantitative and measurable impacts and outputs. Examples of such metrics might include (but are in no way limited to) the number of youth reached, the number of education materials produced and distributed, the number of building professionals incorporating products certified to SFI, the number of organizations committed to the SFI program as a result of a particular project, the amount in tons of lumber contributed to Habitat house builds, the number of miles of nature trails cut, etc.

Guidance for Completing the Grant Application:

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.
- The “Grant Agreement” will be developed collaboratively by SFI Inc. and the Lead Organization once the proposal is accepted. The Grant Agreement will stipulate reporting deadlines, payment schedules and milestones consistent with the project proposal.

- “Lead Organization” is a community organization, conservation group, college or university, aboriginal or tribal group or other non-profit that submits this application, oversees the project funding and is responsible for reporting to SFI Inc. on the project progress.
- “Program Participant” is an organization certified by an accredited certification body to be in conformance with the SFI 2015-2019 Forest Management Standard or SFI 2015-2019 Fiber Sourcing Standard (or SFI 2010-2014 Standard if appropriate).
- “Project 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.

Process

The proposal must be submitted via email in either MS Word or plain text format (please, no hard copies) to grants@sfiprogram.org by Midnight Eastern Time on October 2, 2015. Email subject line should state “SFI Community Partnerships Grant Application.” Applicants will be notified via email upon receipt of the application. **Proposals submitted after the deadline will not be considered.**

Proposals are limited to 5 pages total, must address all components of the Request for Proposals, and must be in the format outlined in the application section of the RFP below. Applications not following this format will not be considered. Any text beyond 5 pages or any supplemental materials not within the 5 pages will not be considered. Applicants should use a True Type font in 10 pt. or larger. All applications must be submitted in English.

Timeline

Event	Date
Request for Proposals issued	August 11, 2015
Proposals due	October 2, 2015
Lead Organizations advised of results	December 18, 2015

Mandatory Requirements for All Proposals

All proposals must meet the below core requirements. Projects not containing these core requirements will not be considered.

- The Lead Organization in the Project must be a registered, tax-exempt (for example, a 501(c) (3) in the US or registered with the Charities Directorate of the Canada Revenue Agency in Canada), non-profit and/or charitable organization. Applicants must submit proof of tax-exempt status with this application.

Please note: SFI Implementation Committees, colleges and universities qualify as tax-exempt organizations. However additional non-profit conservation or community partners will increase

the strength of the application.

- 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 Partners listed in the application will be required to sign an agreement to this effect and submit it with the application. If additional Partners join the Project after an application is accepted by SFI Inc., they will also be required to sign the agreement. A copy of this agreement is located at the end of this application. To the extent possible, SFI Inc. will work cooperatively with Project Partners on any publicity associated with the project.

Requirements for Selected Successful Applications:

- Successful applicants will be required to sign an agreement (the “Grant Agreement”) with SFI Inc. specifying reporting timelines, project deliverables, payment schedules and other specifics surrounding the project. Successful applicants will be expected to work closely with SFI Inc. to complete such agreement as expeditiously as possible following notification of acceptance.
- The Lead Organization will be required to submit progress reports to SFI Inc. at least twice annually, or as stipulated in the Grant Agreement.
- Depending on the project timeline, Lead Organizations may receive up to 50% of the project’s first year funding upon contract execution, or upon completion of an identified project milestone. Remaining funds will be distributed upon receipt of the final report demonstrating Project deliverables are met and timeline kept. All Project invoices and reports should be submitted to SFI Inc. by the Lead Organization.
- SFI Inc. anticipates that the results of grant projects will aid in the advancement of the community outreach goals of the SFI Program. Some projects may additionally lend themselves to more public reporting and publicity. SFI staff 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

Please read this RFP and application in its entirety before contacting SFI Inc. with questions. All inquiries related to this Request for Proposals are to be directed, in writing, to the person identified below. Information obtained from any other source is not official and should not be relied upon.

Sustainable Forestry Initiative, Inc.
2121 K St. NW, Suite 750
Washington, DC 20037
Attention: Amy Doty
Manager, Community Outreach
Phone: **202.596.3458**
E-mail: grants@sfiprogram.org

Grant Application

Application Requirements

- *Proposals must follow this application format.*
- *Applications cannot be longer than 5 pages (Project Partner signed agreements and Lead Organization proof of non-profit status do not count towards the 5 page maximum).*
- *Prior to submission, applicant may delete all text preceding this section and any text in italics throughout the application.*

All applications must address the following items:

Organization Information

The Lead Organization in the Project must be a non-profit organization (e.g. registered, 501(c)(3), non-profit in the US or registered with the Charities Directorate of the Canada Revenue Agency in Canada). Please note: SFI Implementation Committees, colleges and universities qualify as non-profit organizations. Applicants must submit 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 of the Project and the capability of the organization to carry out the stated objectives (please include one project partner and/or existing organization funder as a reference):	

Project Overview

Project Title	Total Length of time for completion of project (<i>in months, from start to final reporting</i>)	Amount Requested from SFI Inc.	Total Project Budget (including matching funds and in-kind contributions)*	Brief Project Summary (50 words or less)	If applicable, what element(s) of the SFI 2015-2019 Standard does your Project address? (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

Confirmed Project Partner(s)* – List organization name only.	Primary Contact – Name & Title	Contact Information – Email and Phone Number	Brief Summary of Individual and/or Organization Qualifications and Experience (150 words or less per partner)
1.			
2.			

Project Details

Please provide your answers to the following questions to describe your project. You may provide an introductory narrative to your project, but the following questions must be addressed in the requested format.

1. Please explain how this Project will strengthen and involve communities in forest management or inform or provide benefit to the SFI Program.
2. What activities will you and your Project partners perform to promote the outcomes of your Project and SFI involvement in the Project?
3. In the table below, please list the goals for your project. For each goal, please describe the corresponding tangible outcomes (e.g. implementation guidance on a component of the SFI Standard, outreach and education to landowners, education and outreach to underserved communities, acres positively affected by the Project, individuals reached through education programs) for each goal, how you will measure your success in achieving each goal, and the portion of the requested grant funds utilized to achieve the goal. Add rows as-needed to address all project goals.

Project Goals	Actions	Tangible Outputs (i.e. increase in number of people trained; # of partners engaged)	Tangible Outcomes (i.e. employment/retention rates improved)	Measure Success

Project Timeline

Please provide a timeline for completion of the project. Projects must be completed by end of year 2016, unless a multi-year project is proposed. As indicated above, the timeline should indicate approximately 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. The specific timeline for each project will be finalized in the Grant Agreement, and 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. SFI funding should be used for direct project costs only.

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

1. Total Operating costs divided up by relevant topics such as travel, meetings, communications, education & outreach etc.
2. Identify any in-kind support allocated to this Project by each project partner
3. 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
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. If the project is funded through the SFI Community Partners Grant Program, all identified 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 Partners listed in the application will be required to sign an agreement to this effect and submit it with the Grant Agreement. If additional Partners join the Project after an agreement 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 the Lead Organization 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