

**California ReLeaf 2019
Social Equity Forest Improvement
Grant Program**

CYCLE 3 GUIDELINES



Empowering grassroots efforts and building strategic partnerships that preserve, protect, and enhance California's urban and community forests.

In cooperation with the
California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection



Application must be postmarked by October 13, 2019

Table of Contents

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR’S MESSAGE	1
GRANT PROGRAM OVERVIEW	1
ELIGIBILITY	2
Eligible Applicants	2
Eligible Projects	2
Eligible Geography	2
Eligible Costs	3
Ineligible Projects	4
Ineligible Costs	4
Ineligible Trees	4
MATCHING FUND REQUIREMENT	5
PLANTING AT CALIFORNIA STATE FACILITIES	5
SUPPORTING INFORMATION	6
Eligible Trees/Ineligible Trees	6
Tree Planting Standards and Specifications	6
Technical Assistance for GHG Tracking	6
PROPOSAL APPLICATION PROCEDURE	6
PROPOSAL APPLICATION REVIEW PROCEDURE	6
Eligibility Review	6
Full Proposal Review and Scoring	7
Proposal Preferences	7
PROPOSAL CHECKLIST	7
APPENDICES	
A: Planting Geography Requirements	8
B: Sample Budget Preparation Form	9
C: Glossary of Terms	10
D: Frequently Asked Questions	11



Executive Director's Message

California ReLeaf's guidelines and application for the 2019 Social Equity Forest Improvement Grant Program reflect numerous changes to CAL FIRE's Urban Forestry Grant Program, which is the funding source for this grant cycle. This includes **statewide project eligibility** and the integration of low-income communities into distribution of funds.

The primary focal point is still ensuring significant GHG reductions will result from the projects funded under this program. Therefore, **each proposal should strive to reduce at least 100 metric tons of greenhouse gasses per \$10,000 in funding request.** Additionally, this year's Program is intended to capitalize on the extended timeline for this grant cycle by maximizing opportunity to properly water and maintain newly planted trees for up to three years. **Shovel-ready projects will be prioritized, with the tree-planting component of all projects to be completed by May 3, 2020.**

Please take time to carefully review the Guidelines before submitting an application. We especially urge you to review the Appendices that provide important information how to achieve significant GHG reductions through a mix of tree plantings and potential planting sites at California State Facilities.

Grant Program – A Quick Overview

Purpose: Provide greenhouse gas reduction benefits to underserved areas by supporting nonprofit and community-based organizations with funding for tree-planting projects and related green infrastructure that meet the critical need of reducing Greenhouse Gasses (GHGs) while simultaneously addressing other statutory and regulatory requirements developed by CAL FIRE, the California Air Resources Board, the State Legislature, and other state agencies.

Eligible Applicants: Incorporated nonprofit organizations and unincorporated community-based groups (with a fiscal sponsor) located in California.

Eligible Costs: Purchases for the planting of trees and related vegetation, the maintenance of these project plantings during the grant period, community education and engagement costs, personnel, contractors and consultants, direct and indirect administrative costs.

Award Range: \$10,000 - \$75,000.

Matching Fund Requirement: 25% (including volunteer assistance).

Application Deadline: Sunday, October 13, 2019.

Grant Notification Deadline: Friday, December 13, 2019.

Grant Period End Date: Friday, December 31st, 2021.

Grant Payments: Payments are made on a reimbursement basis quarterly and will be for actual expenses incurred based on receipts. Grant recipients will be required to use their own operating funds to cover expenses until invoices are reimbursed by California ReLeaf, which may take up to 45 days.

Reporting: Quarterly reports highlighting project status, trees planted, and a qualitative summary of benefits are required. Report formats will be provided.

Final Report Deadline: Sunday, January 30, 2022.

Inquiries: Please direct questions to Chuck Mills at California ReLeaf (916) 497-0035 or email cmills@californiareleaf.org. Applications are available at www.californiareleaf.org/programs/grants.

Grant Program Detail: ELIGIBILITY

Eligible Applicants: Nonprofit organizations, incorporated and qualified under Internal Revenue Code 501(c)(3), and unincorporated groups (e.g., neighborhood associations, tree advisory boards, etc.) are eligible to apply for funding under this program. Applicants that are not incorporated as nonprofit organizations must have an incorporated nonprofit organization or a public agency to act as the fiscal sponsor for the project. Public entities may serve as a fiscal sponsor for a project, but may not apply for funds directly.

Eligible Projects: Projects that contain a significant shade-tree planting component that also augment, expand, or better manage healthy urban forests. **All of the following conditions must be met for a proposed project to be eligible for a grant:**

- The project must significantly reduce GHGs, and accurately quantify projected reductions over a 40-year period. California ReLeaf will provide technical assistance for this part of the grant.
- The tree-planting component of the project must be completed by Sunday, May 3, 2020.**
- All trees must be maintained through the full duration of the grant cycle (December 31, 2021).
- There must be a commitment for active participation from community members and volunteers in the neighborhood where work is being completed. Community members must be involved in both the planning and implementation of projects.
- The project must demonstrate a nexus between important community needs and the benefits the project will provide.
- The project must provide *multiple* co-benefits (i.e. improved air or water quality, workforce development) for the communities being served.
- All plantings and their location must be accurately recorded.
- The project shall include an educational component. **California ReLeaf shall make available educational materials to grantees to help fulfill this requirement.**
- The applicant has complied in all respects with all applicable local and county ordinances.
- The applicant must comply with all applicable state and federal laws and regulations, including the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA).
- The applicant must have entered into an agreement with the land owners to **allow for access to the land for a minimum of three (3) years after project completion for the designated entity(ies) providing maintenance on all plantings.** Maintenance includes, but is not limited to: watering, structural pruning, mulching, fertilizing, or controlling plant pests and diseases.
- The project must display a sign with the logos and names of all organizations participating in the project, including CAL FIRE and California ReLeaf. The sign must also cite the California Climate Investments Program as the funding source. **California ReLeaf will provide a template to all successful grantees for signage and appropriate logos.**

Eligible Geography:

The total funds available in this grant cycle (not less than \$300,000) shall be distributed as follows:

- 35% of the funds will be awarded to proposals in which the majority of the project (51%) is located in a publicly accessible area within a disadvantaged community (DAC).
- 65% of the funds will be available statewide and may include proposals in which the majority of the project (51%) is located in a publicly accessible area within a Low-Income Community.

See the Appendix for more information on these terms and the regulating statutes.

Eligible Costs (for both application and match requirement):

- **Trees and planting materials (supplies):**
 - Trees in the #15 (gallon) container size are eligible. Other sizes may be considered.
 - Stakes, ties, and root collar protectors proportional to the number of trees planted.
 - Wood chip surface mulch, soil amendments in areas of hard clay soil or sandy soil.
 - Soil where needed to complete backfill.
 - Structural pruning, stake adjustment and removal for newly-planted trees.
 - Water-wise or hydro-zone irrigation and supplies.
 - Replacement costs for trees planted in the first two years of the project.

Fruit trees, bamboo and edible plants are eligible (in limited quantity) with justification that they are appropriate for the site, provide significant benefits to the community, and complement shade tree plantings.
- **Administrative costs directly related to the implementation of the project:**
 - Mileage to and from project site.
 - Liability insurance for project implementation.
 - Worker's comp insurance for field employees working explicitly on the project.
 - Materials for personnel hired solely for this project (i.e. cell phones).
- **Indirect costs (not to exceed 10% of the total grant agreement)**
 - Payroll administration.
 - Human resources.
 - Rent and telecommunications (i.e. phones, internet).
 - Computer support and office support.
 - Fiscal sponsor fees (if applicable) not to exceed 10% of the total grant agreement (provided the primary applicant claims no indirect costs for itself).
- **Equipment**
 - Purchased or rented materials and tools required for project purposes.
 - Pruning and gardening supplies (i.e., pull saws, hand clippers, and loppers).
 - Hand tools, augers and watering supplies.
 - Other related expenses (i.e. work gloves, garbage bags).
- **Acknowledgement Signage** construction and material costs (not to exceed \$500).
- **Personnel:**
 - Salary and benefits for staff working explicitly on the project.
 - Contractors and consultants working explicitly on the projects.
 - Fringe-benefits (staff only) including medical insurance and Social Security contributions. Costs must be computed according to employee's current wages.
- **Construction and Site Preparation (subset of Personnel – see above)**
 - Asphalt removal, concrete paving, or other hardscape for projects where plantings involve establishment of a new permanent planting site.
 - Hardscape cuts (at least 24 square feet for trees). Larger is preferred.
 - Expansion of existing planting sites is allowed and encouraged.
 - Up to 50% of soils testing costs to determine the needs for the site.
 - Other construction costs are eligible with justification.
- **Educational Component (not to exceed 20% of the total grant agreement)**
 - Development of educational materials.
 - Educational outreach, relevant to the scope of the proposed project.

Partnerships between local community groups and urban forestry groups are strongly encouraged for this component of the project.

All costs for Personnel in all categories (including Education and Construction and Site Preparation) combined must not exceed 70% of the total direct costs.

Grant Program Detail: INELIGIBILITY

Ineligible Projects:

- Any project designed to take the place of a regular or ongoing fiscal commitment to a program or project by a local government.
- Planting trees or other vegetation that require excessive maintenance such as: excessive long-term watering, fertilizing, mulching, exterminating, or controlling plant pests and diseases in order to survive.
- Planting projects in which no public, nonprofit or private entity has agreed in writing to provide maintenance for at least three (3) years after project completion. Maintenance includes, but is not limited to: watering, fertilizing, exterminating, or controlling plant pests and diseases in order to survive.
- Projects that cannot provide sufficient quantitative data to calculate GHG reductions.
- Projects that include invasive species. A list of invasive species can be found at California Invasive Plant Council website (<http://www.cal-ipc.org/>)
- Planting projects that conflict with overhead utilities or ground located infrastructure.
- Planting on federal or residential land. Private, non-residential land may be eligible with restrictions.
- The following are ineligible, unless proof of prior clearance under CEQA or a Negative Declaration is submitted with the proposal:
 - projects in natural, wildland, or previously undeveloped urban settings.
 - projects on railway rights-of-way (public land located directly adjacent to rail tracks).
 - projects in riparian zones (within 100 feet of a stream, lake, or wetland).

Ineligible Costs (and Ineligible for Match Requirement):

- Root barriers – chemical or solid.
- Tree grates and decorative tree guards.
- Disposal costs of woody debris.
- Inefficient irrigation valves, pumps, sprinkler control timers or elaborate irrigation systems.
- Food and beverages.
- Promotional items (t-shirts, stickers, etc.).
- Purchase and storage of replacement trees and plants for those that don't survive.
- Tree removal (note: eligible as match if the tree is dead or dying and will be replaced).

Ineligible Trees:

- Species that are ill-adapted to the local climate.
- Species that are short-lived, pest-prone, a nuisance or otherwise undesirable.
- Invasive species; see California Invasive Plant Council at www.caleppc.org.
- Trees that rely upon excessive amounts of water to survive.
- Trees that are inappropriate for the chosen site or require excessive maintenance.
- Trees that will be less than 25 feet in height, with equal crown width, at maturity (fruit trees excluded).
- Palms.

Matching Fund Requirement

The portion of the project funded by California ReLeaf shall not exceed 75% of total project cost.

EXAMPLE:

**Total Project Cost = \$60,000
California ReLeaf Grant= \$45,000
Minimum Match Required = \$15,000**

Matching requirements (25%) for this grant may be met with in-kind activities or materials related to the project. Any State funding source applied to match the project that is not the same as the state source of funding used for this Program (Climate Investment Program funds) may be used. In addition, USDA Forest Service funds granted by the Urban and Community Forestry Program can be used as match (as can other Federal funds). **We encourage applicants to utilize volunteer assistance as a primary component of their overall match** (currently valued at \$29.95/hour in California). Supporting documentation (i.e. sign-in sheets) is required.

Planting at California State Facilities

Historically, CAL FIRE grant programs only allowed planting on public land, which meant that many previous grantee planting projects were located at city parks or public school campuses. While this particular grant program allows trees to be planted on private property *so long as the trees are publically accessible*, you may find it easier to still plant on public land.

One option that has not often been explored is planting at California State Facilities. Currently, there are several hundred California State Facilities located in disadvantaged and low income communities. These sites include courthouses, office buildings, and California State Universities.

California ReLeaf has been working with the California Government Operations Agency to develop a resource for applicants that would like to do potential public plantings at California State Facilities, but are uncertain on how to proceed. Not all of the sites will be suitable for your planting, but we hope the lists compiled and provided at our website will give you ideas for new public planting projects.

Please visit California ReLeaf's Grant page to access two Excel Spreadsheets with lists of these sites, which can be sorted by city, county, acreage, etc. at <http://californiareleaf.org/programs/grants/>

After reviewing the list and evaluating the site(s) in which you may want to pursue a tree-planting project, you may contact the California Government Operations Agency directly for more information on how to proceed. Contact information:

Matt Henigan
Deputy Secretary, Sustainability
California Government Operations Agency
Direct: 916-651-9063
Cell: 916-584-0454
Email: Matt.Henigan@GovOps.ca.gov

Matt will introduce you to the appropriate contact person within the specific California State Agency. Matt is a fan of urban trees on state properties, and he'll help guide you through the process as you prepare your grant application.

Additional Supporting Information and Technical Assistance

California ReLeaf and our project partners are providing a wealth of additional information and resources essential to building a competitive proposal. This includes:

- The Guidelines Appendix, which provides more information on planting geography, a Sample Budget Form, Glossary of Terms, and list of Frequently Asked Questions
- *Planting for the 21st Century* – An educational overview of how we should be using urban forestry funds to support strategic tree planting that meets multiple goals and objectives. The document includes a list of web-based resources that will help applicants identify eligible trees for planting, along with required tree planting standards and specifications.
- Technical Assistance for GHG Tracking and Reporting. California ReLeaf has hired an expert consultant who will use the information applicants provide in their proposal to calculate estimated GHG reductions and emissions for each project. Applicants will be required to provide explicit details about the species selected for planting, their exact location, and proximity to homes, schools, businesses and other built structures. **Only GHG reductions from trees will be calculated, so carefully plan the project to include a significant large-tree planting component. Each proposal should strive to reduce at least 100 metric tons of greenhouse gasses per \$10,000 in funding request** (see *Planting for the 21st Century* for sample species and their GHG reductions) Since projects awarded funds under the Social Equity Grant Program must “lead to sequestration of significant amounts of GHG and/or avoid emissions of significant amounts of GHG over a 40 year period,” **we encourage applicants to submit their proposed tree planting list and location indicator at least three weeks prior to sending a full application so we can estimate GHG reductions and provide feedback.**

Proposal Application Procedure

All proposals should be completed using the official California ReLeaf application and budget form. Keep your responses limited to the space provided for each question and do not attach unsolicited materials. ***Project location maps and site photos are required.***

Once completed, each applicant must submit two (2) signed original proposals along with proof of the applicant’s or, if applicable, the fiscal sponsor’s nonprofit status by October 13, 2019 to:

California ReLeaf
2115 J Street, Suite 213
Sacramento, CA 95816
Attn: Chuck Mills

An electronic copy must also be e-mailed to cmills@californiareleaf.org by the due date; or submitted on flash drive only if e-mail is unavailable. **If you are unable to upload project maps and photos as electronic attachments to your proposal, you must include four hard copies of all maps and photos with the original signed proposal mailed to California ReLeaf.**

E-mailed applications will not be accepted in lieu of the mailed, original proposal. **No faxes.**

Proposal Application Review Procedure

Eligibility Review

California ReLeaf will review each proposal upon receipt to determine if the minimum eligibility requirements have been met. If the proposal is found to be incomplete in a material way or the proposed project is not eligible for a grant, the applicant will be informed that the proposal is ineligible, and it will be disqualified from further consideration.

Full Proposal Review and Scoring

All eligible proposals will be scored on a 100-point system and will be evaluated by a California ReLeaf grant review committee that includes at least one arborist and one member of the environmental justice community. All selected proposals will be reviewed *for appropriate species selection* by CAL FIRE, who must approve all species before a grant agreement can be finalized.

The evaluation process will focus on the following questions:

- How does the project meet Program intent (i.e. reduce GHGs, other benefits)? **(20 points)**
- How can quality results be expected from the proposed methods and processes? **(15 points)**
- How are the objectives of the project realistic? **(10 points)**
- Does the applicant have experience to carry out the scope of work proposed? If not, how is the applicant proposing to successfully complete the project? **(10 points)**
- How are community members/volunteers significantly involved in the project? **(10 points)**
- How does the project provide multiple co-benefits that address community needs? **(10 points)**
- How does the maintenance plan maximize survivability for newly-planted trees? **(10 points)**
- How is workforce development and/or introduction to tree care jobs integrated as a component of the project? **(5 points)**
- Are the costs for materials and services reasonable? **(5 points)**
- How does the project contribute to building long-term support for urban forests within the community? **(5 points)**

Preferences

All applicants have an opportunity to have bonus points awarded to their proposal by including one or more the following attributes in the application:

- Project is located in a DAC or low-income community. **(2 points)**
- The project includes a contracted partnership between an urban forestry group and a local community group for the education component of the proposal. **(2 points)**
- The project utilizes the largest canopy tree possible for the selected planting sites and shows a preference for planting sites that can support large canopied trees. **(2 points)**
- Projects at California State Facility properties receive co-support funding from partnering state agency. **(2 points)**

PROPOSAL CHECKLIST

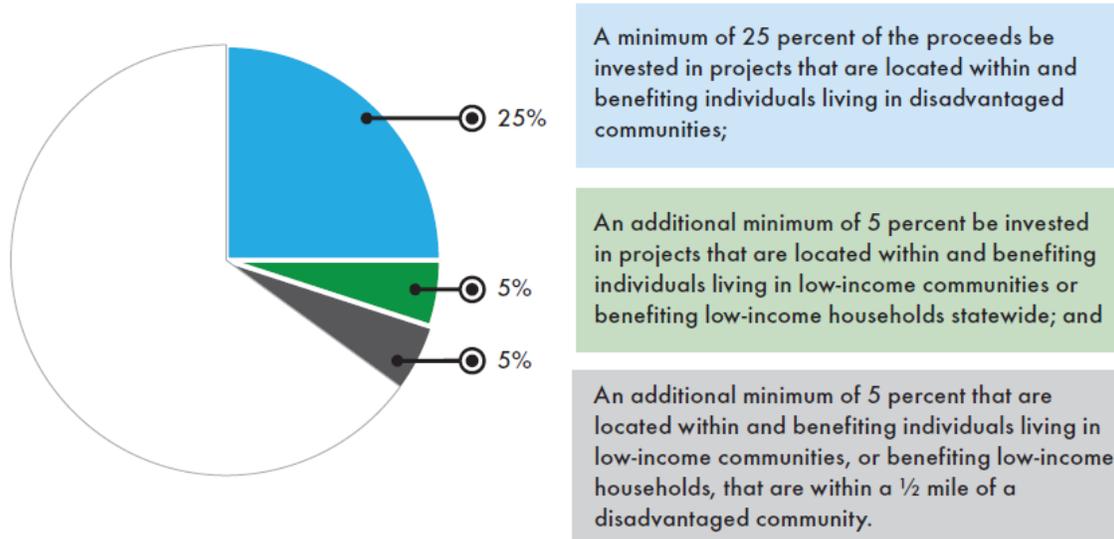
All funding proposals must include the following to be eligible for consideration:

- California ReLeaf 2019 Social Equity Grant Program Application
- Permission to Plant Form
- Arborist Certification Form
- Proposal Budget Preparation Form
- IRS 501(c)(3) Determination Letter (non-profits only)
- GHG Tree Tracking spreadsheet in Excel form (not PDF)
- Proof of Project location (within a pre-designated Air Resources Board map)
- Fiscal Sponsor Acknowledgement Letter (if working with a fiscal sponsor)
- Project location maps and site photos

APPENDIX A: Eligible Planting Geography

Since 2012, the State Legislature has passed multiple bills designed to ensure some dollars allocated from the Greenhouse Gas Reduction Fund (GGRF) go to projects that are located in disadvantaged communities (DACs), and provide benefit to DACs and/or low-income communities.

The legislation governing this cycle of funding for the Social Equity Forest Improvement Grant Program is Assembly Bill 1550 (Gomez, Chapter 369, Statutes of 2016). This statute increases the percent of funds for projects located in disadvantaged communities and added a focus on investments in low-income communities and households as follows:



Subsequently, the California Air Resources Board (CARB) approved *The Funding Guidelines for Agencies that Administer California Climate Investments* which included a large section guiding *Investments to Benefit Disadvantaged Communities*. To access the most recent version of the Funding Guidelines, go to:

https://www.arb.ca.gov/cc/capandtrade/auctionproceeds/proposed_2018_funding_guidelines.pdf?_ga=2.210417045.1057716576.1531936795-1637692552.1452889218

CAL FIRE and California ReLeaf have committed to exceeding minimum statutory requirements in their respective grant programs. Consequently, no less than 35% of the award dollars from this cycle of the 2019 Social Equity Forest Improvement Grant Program will be for projects meeting the statutory requirements of AB 1550. The remaining 65% is available for statewide competition, and may include, but is not limited to, projects that provide direct benefit to DACs and low-income communities. Furthermore, California ReLeaf will strongly encourage applicants to plant most, if not all of their trees and related vegetation in a DAC if the project is to be considered located within those boundaries. The two major exceptions will be for projects in which the non-DAC trees are planted at Title I schools within a two-mile radius of a DAC; or public parks and green spaces heavily utilized by DAC residents. Supporting documentation will be required.

The California Air Resources Board has developed a map which captures all of the above information in a color-coded schematic which will be utilized by California ReLeaf to determine if a project is located within a DAC, low-income community, low-income community within 1/2 mile of a DAC, or elsewhere. Go to <https://www.arb.ca.gov/cc/capandtrade/auctionproceeds/communityinvestments.htm> to access the map and get more information on disadvantaged and low-income communities investments.

APPENDIX B: Sample Budget Form

California ReLeaf 2019 Social Equity Forest Improvement Grant Program

Budget Preparation Form

Your itemized budget should include the best estimate of costs and matching funds to carry out the proposed project and should include only eligible expenses as set forth in the guidelines. For tree planting costs, contact nurseries to get estimates of tree stock costs as they vary from region to region. A 25% match is required. Matching funds from in-kind donations, volunteer assistance, or monetary contributions from sources other than the California Climate Investments Program are required. Volunteer assistance in California is currently valued at \$29.95/hour.	Grant Amount Request	Matching Funds Proposed			
EDUCATION (not to exceed 20% of total direct costs) <i>(Includes costs of educational materials, education outreach activities, etc.)</i>					
300 Proper Tree care brochures at \$1.00/each	\$ 300.00				
1000 Tree Fair Event Flyers at \$.35/each	\$ 350.00				
PERSONNEL: (Includes staff, consultants, contactors, etc.) NOTE: A maximum of 70% of the total direct costs may be applied to all personnel costs in this category and Education combined					
Project Manager (160 hours at \$26.00/hr)	\$ 3,600.00	\$ 560.00			
Concrete Cuts contracting (20 cuts at \$200/cut)	\$ 4,000.00				
Local Conservation Corps (5 members for 8 hours each at \$10/hr)	\$ 400.00				
TREES (includes tree stock)					
20 Cedrus deodara at \$60/each	\$ 1,200.00				
22 Ginkgo biloba at \$55/each	\$ 1,210.00				
21 Platanus hybrida at \$50/each	\$ 1,050.00				
23 Platanus hybrida at \$62/each	\$ 1,426.00				
SUPPLIES AND MATERIALS (Includes stakes, soil, materials and tools for care and planting, maintenance supplies)					
110 tree stakes at \$5.00/each	\$ 900.00				
90 tree ties at \$.70/each	-	\$ 63.00			
300 yards mulch at \$11.00/yard	\$ 3,300.00				
EQUIPMENT (Includes leased, rented and purchased equipment) Note: purchase price of any single piece of equipment cannot exceed \$500.00					
Skid Steer with auger attachment for 60 hours at \$35.00/hr	\$ 1,300.00	\$ 800.00			
Trencher for 19 hours at \$18.00/hour	\$ 342.00				
10 pruners at \$12.00/each	\$ 120.00				
35 shovels at \$18.00 each	\$ 630.00				
SIGNAGE (Not to exceed \$500 total for signage; required at each planting site)					
(2) 2' x 3' Partner Recognition Sign with posts at \$240/each	\$ 480.00				
PROJECT ADMINISTRATION COSTS <i>(includes mileage to and from project site, project facility rental, project staff insurance, etc.)</i>					
Project Liability Insurance	\$ 1,100.00				
300 miles at \$.575/mile	\$ 172.50				
INDIRECT COSTS -- 10% MAXIMUM OF TOTAL DIRECT COSTS (for either applicant or fiscal sponsor, if applicable) <i>(includes telecommunications, copying, postage, rent, office supplies, etc.)</i>	\$ 2,188.05				
VOLUNTEERS (match at \$29.09/hour)					
93 volunteers at 3 hours each		\$ 8,116.11			
TOTAL	\$ 24,068.55	\$ 9,539.11			

APPENDIX C: Glossary of Terms

Note: All definitions provided are solely for this grant program, its guidelines, application, and other written materials.

California Climate Investments Program is the state program that supports GHG reduction projects and programs through the allocation and expenditure of cap-and-trade proceeds. The program is administered by the California Air Resources Board, and received its primary statutory authority through AB 32 (Nuñez), which was signed into law by Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger in 2006, thereby creating the Global Warming Solutions Act.

California State Facilities are publicly accessible properties owned and operated by California State Agencies, such as Courthouses, Department of Motor Vehicles branch offices, and other government office buildings. A list of plantable state facility properties located in DACs and elsewhere is available at <http://californiareleaf.org/programs/grants/>.

Carbon Sequestration is the process of capture and long-term storage of atmospheric carbon dioxide. It is one way to slow the atmospheric accumulation of greenhouse gases.

Co-benefits are meaningful attributes a project provides above and beyond the reduction of greenhouse gasses. The most common co-benefits for urban forest projects are improved air quality, stormwater management, energy conservation, urban heat island mitigation, and workforce development.

DACs refer to the disadvantaged communities that will be served as defined by the Disadvantaged and Low-income Community Maps provided by the California Air Resources Board.

Drought-appropriate species are trees that have lower water requirements and are better adapted to the Mediterranean climate. These retain water more efficiently than other species and can tolerate drier conditions due to multiple characteristics such as smaller leaves and reduced growth in summer.

Education refers to the process of utilizing urban forestry as a mechanism to inform Californians about the benefits of trees. The depth of education can range from generating awareness in the target audience regarding the benefits of trees to creating new and long-term stewards of the urban forest.

GHGs refers to greenhouse gasses, which are emitted into the atmosphere by burning fossil fuels, but can be pulled out of the atmosphere and contained through the carbon sequestration attributes of trees and other natural resources.

Low-income communities are census tracts with median household incomes at or below 80% of the statewide median income; or with median household incomes at or below the threshold designated as low income by the Department of Housing and Community Development's list of state income limits.

Match requirement is the portion of project cost responsibility placed upon the project applicant. California ReLeaf requires project applicants to contribute one dollar towards the overall project for every four dollars granted under this program. Match can take the form of money, in-kind contributions (i.e. materials and equipment) or services provided by volunteers.

Qualitative results are the benefits and outcomes from a project than can't be statistically summarized. Qualitative results stemming from urban forest projects in this program could include, but not be limited to, the social equity benefits conveyed to DACs as a result of a tree-planting on a trail that encourages active transportation, or the availability of local produce from a community garden.

Quantitative results are those benefits and outcomes which can be captured through data and analysis. All projects funded under this grant will be required to provide quantitative results on the GHG reduction benefits of each project. Other quantitative results may include data on air quality impacts or groundwater capture, depending on each project type.

APPENDIX D: Frequently Asked Questions

Q: Do all awarded projects need to continue through 2021?

A: Yes. California ReLeaf has designed this program with the goal of funding planting projects early in the grant cycle, followed by no less than 18 months of care and maintenance for those projects through the grant. Consequently, all projects have an end date of December 31st, 2021.

Q: Will grantees be able to replant trees and other related vegetation that are not establishing or have been compromised?

A: Yes. Re-planting of trees and related vegetation planted earlier in the grant cycle that have not established is permissible as needed. However, the emphasis in this grant cycle is to plant all trees early to maximize maintenance time and minimize replanting. Still, applicants are strongly encouraged to take some replanting into consideration when preparing project budgets and timelines.

Q: Will CalEnviroScreen 3.0 be utilized to determine project eligibility?

A: Not directly. CalEnviroScreen – the tool developed by the California Environmental Protection Agency for identifying disadvantaged communities -- has been incorporated into maps developed by the California Air Resources Board (CARB) that identify all disadvantaged and low-income communities in California (often referred to as the AB 1550 maps). These are the maps California ReLeaf will use to verify the type of community where a proposed project is located.

Q: Why does every project have to include tree planting?

A: Statutory requirements for the funding source used for this program require that all projects supported with these dollars must reduce GHGs. The scientific community agrees that trees sequester carbon, and that this can be quantified. The science supporting carbon sequestration in plants and other related vegetation is not as sophisticated, nor is it yet recognized by CARB. Therefore, the focal point for these projects is tree planting to ensure GHG reductions. **This is critical to the viability of your proposed project.** While California ReLeaf encourages applicants to evaluate opportunities for other green infrastructure in your proposal, all funded projects must significantly reduce GHGs through tree plantings.

Q: What are the reporting requirements for projects awarded a grant under this Program?

A: All grantees will need to submit a mandatory progress report quarterly, along with a voluntary reimbursement request. The progress report consists of several questions regarding the current status of the project, and includes additional forms that must be completed in order for California ReLeaf to accurately track your project emissions and GHG reductions on a quarterly basis.

Q: Are the GHG reduction targets identified in the Guidelines a requirement for all projects?

A: No. This year represents the fourth cycle of this grant program, and we have learned over the years that providing a rough target for prospective grantees gives everyone a sense of what is expected of California ReLeaf by CAL FIRE. Some projects will exceed this target while others will have less. Our goal is to fund a suite of projects that, combined, hit the GHG reduction goal for this grant cycle while also providing myriad co-benefits for communities across California that may or may not be measured.

Q: Are there opportunities for advance payments on projects under this Program?

A: The statute authorizing CAL FIRE to make advance payments on some projects will allow us to expedite reimbursement requests, but does not allow for California ReLeaf to make advance payments.