



## Arbor Week Grant Program 2023

Arbor Week celebrations are wonderful community engagement and education events about the importance of trees in promoting community health and combating climate change. Historically, they have provided a great opportunity to engage a wide range of volunteers. Planting trees in your town is a wonderful way to engage your community and share info on the importance of trees for the health and well-being of your families and neighbors. As this is an “incubator” grant, some of you may be new to tree planting – what is most important is to be safe, learn about tree planting, and be sure to water the trees for the first several years – especially because of California’s ongoing drought.

Depending on the local impact COVID may have in your area, both in-person and virtual events may be planned. This can include tree plantings, online engagement, or other COVID-safe activities.

Grantees are expected to develop safe events that engage the public. In your application, you also indicated other areas of focus, including talking with the local press, working with schools or elected officials, and online engagement. Here are some parameters and recommendations to make your event a success.

## PHOTOGRAPHS

Great photographs will help tell your story and drive support for future events. Here are some tips for getting some great shots:

- If using your phone camera, wipe the lens before taking photos. This is a simple step we often forget, but that can help make much clearer photographs
- Capture all steps of the process: planning meetings, caring for trees, kids learning from experts, watering, digging, etc.
- Focus on getting faces in shots and not just capturing folks from behind
- **Delegate!** You will be busy putting on your event. Asking a volunteer or two to be in charge of capturing photos will help make sure you get some great ones.
- For more tips about photographing tree planting events, watch this webinar from our archives: [How to Make Good Photos GREAT!](#)
- Please have your participants sign photo release forms at check-in. [Here is an example template.](#)

## SOCIAL MEDIA

When you share your events on social media, please tag and recognize your sponsors:

1. Southern California Edison, @sce
2. US Forest Service, @USForestService
3. CAL FIRE, @CALFIRE
4. California ReLeaf, @CalReLeaf

## PRESS

Tree planting events are great for getting press coverage, which helps spread awareness about your organization and about the importance of trees. Many outlets are looking for uplifting and/or meaningful stories! We recommend the community or neighborhood newspapers as being most likely to attend.

Give them details about your event, and let them know if volunteers, kids, and/or elected officials will be there. Local press also likes connecting local events to national news, so you can share how your event relates to a bigger current event or story.

## ELECTED OFFICIALS

Community tree planting events are a great time to get local electeds out for a community event. This brings attention to your event, helps draw the press, and is an opportunity to engage decision-makers about the importance of planting and caring for trees. Local electeds can include your city council members, mayor, county supervisors, state and federal senators/representatives/assembly members, and more.

Your event will be appealing to the electeds if they know that there will be press, kids, photos, and the opportunity for them to speak. Trees undoubtedly connect to one of their priority areas — such as human health, climate change, education, air quality, and more — so emphasize how attending and speaking at your event gives them a chance to shine the spotlight on one of their key issues.

If your electeds cannot make it, invite their staff! These are powerful people to build relationships with and are often more available for events. They may post it to social media on behalf of the elected, and getting to know them is a good step to getting on your representatives' radar.

## SPONSOR ENGAGEMENT & RECOGNITION

You will be expected to engage with Edison International in order to coordinate California Arbor Week publicity as well as to offer volunteer opportunities for Southern California Edison personnel. You will be expected to recognize Edison International by:

- Posting their logo on your website and promotional materials as a sponsor for your Arbor Week grant event.
- Tagging and recognizing them as a sponsor for your Arbor Week project on social media.
- Offering them time to speak briefly at your celebration event.
- Thanking them during your celebration event.

## TREES!

While the above are all important aspects of tree planting events, the reason for the season is of course, all about trees! Your biggest priority should be getting the **right trees** in the **right place**, planted the right way. Please focus on trees that will grow big and to provide shade, while also thriving in your climate. Have a plan for watering and caring for your trees.

Please use the materials provided and [resources on our website](#) to ensure a successful tree planting. We can connect you to local experts if you have any other questions. California ReLeaf also hosted a webinar about tree planting and tree care during COVID. [You can access that recording here](#).

## CONTACT US!

California ReLeaf is here to support you and help make sure your event is a success. If you have any questions, concerns, or unforeseen complications, let us know. We'd rather know now and help you troubleshoot rather than find out later when your reports are due.

**Questions?** Contact **Victoria Vasquez** at 916.497.0035 or [grantsadmin@californiareleaf.org](mailto:grantsadmin@californiareleaf.org)

**Good luck with your event, and thank you for creating greener, cooler, and healthier neighborhoods for your community!**