



Grantee Guide – 2025 California Arbor Week Grant Program

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 –to ensure the trees' survival.

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 or media outlets, working with schools or elected officials, and online engagement. Here are some parameters and recommendations to make your event a success.

TREES!

Though 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 provide shade while also thriving in your climate. We ask that you submit photos of your trees post planting, to verify the staking and mulch were completed. **Have a plan for watering and caring for your trees.**

Please use the materials provided and our Grantee [resources on our website](#) to ensure successful tree planting. Resources include:

- [Tree Planting Event Toolkit](#)
- [Tree Selection and Planning](#)
- [Tree Planting and Care / Watering Guidance](#)
- Customizable [Benefit of Trees Flyer using Canva](#)
- Webinars and Guidance Videos about how to properly plant trees as well as tree care and maintenance.

EVENT PHOTOGRAPHS

Great photographs will help tell your story and drive support for future events. You will be required to submit 5-12 quality event photos within your final report. 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.](#)

GRANT SPONSOR ENGAGEMENT AND RECOGNITION

You will be expected to engage and recognize California ReLeaf and Edison International as your sponsors. You will be expected to recognize Edison International by:

- Posting their logo on your website as a sponsor for your California Arbor Week Grant Project. (Logo files are available on our [Grantee Resources Page](#))
- Recognizing and tagging Edison International/Southern California Edison as a sponsor for your California Arbor Week project on social media.
- Engage Edison International in coordinating publicity and Press Releases about your project/event.
- Thanking them during your tree event.
- Offering them time to speak briefly at your event.
- Offering volunteer opportunities for Southern California Edison personnel – give them advance notice (4-6 weeks is recommended.)

2025 Southern California Edison Contact

Erika Potter, Volunteer Program Lead

Email: erika.potter@sce.com

Phone: 626-302-1930

SAMPLE Email Text in blue:

Subject: Invite to a California Arbor Week Grantee Project Event | LOCATION, DATE/TIME

Dear Erika,

My name is INSERT NAME, and I am with INSERT ORGANIZATION NAME, a California ReLeaf Arbor Week grant recipient. We appreciate Edison International's sponsorship of this grant program and want to invite Southern California Edison staff to our upcoming tree-planting event. Please see the information below. If you have any questions, please contact me at INSERT EMAIL and INSERT PHONE NUMBER.

Thank you,
INSERT NAME

- **Organization Name:**
- **Event Name:**
- **Event Date:**
- **Event Location:**
- **Event Hours:**
- **Description of the Event:**

The number of Southern California Edison Volunteers Needed (if applicable):

Volunteer Instructions / How to Dress / What to Bring / Expectations / Waiver Forms:

- (e.g.) Wear closed-toed shoes and clothing you don't mind getting dirty, bring a water bottle and snacks and complete the volunteer liability waiver form.

Project Main Contact:

- NAME
- TITLE
- EMAIL
- PHONE NUMBER

SOCIAL MEDIA

When you share your events on social media, please tag and recognize your primary utility sponsor, **Edison International/Southern California Edison**, as well as **California ReLeaf** and our supporting sponsors, the **US Forest Service** and **CAL FIRE**, who support California ReLeaf and Urban and Community Forestry efforts all over the state.

Social Media Handles

To tag your sponsors in a social media post, start typing their handle name (see chart below by social media platform) and then select their profile from the dropdown menu that will appear. Be sure to include the “@” symbol. Still, need help? Please contact us, and we can provide you with a tutorial.

Sponsors	Facebook	Instagram	X/Twitter
Edison	@sce	@sce	@sce
California ReLeaf	@CalReleaf	@CalReleaf	@CalReleaf
US Forest Service	@USForestService	@u.s.forestservice	@forestservice
CAL FIRE	@CALFIRE	@calfire	@CAL_FIRE

Sample Social Media Text

Here is an example of social media text you could use to recognize and tag your sponsors after your event. Include photos you took during the event. (Blue would be the tag for the organization, depending on the social media channel) Feel free to edit or put it into your own words.

[Your organization name] recognizes and thanks [Southern California Edison](#) for its generous sponsorship of [California ReLeaf](#)'s California Arbor Week Grant Program, which made our **[Insert Tree Planting Project Name]** project possible. **[Insert information about your project/event/outcomes etc.] [Insert thanks to other community partners involved in your project and tag them too.]**

We also want to thank and recognize [CAL FIRE](#) and the [USDA Forest Service](#), who support urban and community tree-planting efforts all over California through funding, education, and other resources.

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

ELECTED OFFICIALS

Community tree planting events are a great time to get local elected officials 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 elected officials 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 elected 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 elected officials 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.

CUSTOMIZABLE TEMPLATES

Benefits of Trees Flyer

Customize our “Power of Trees” Flyer using our Canva template ([English / Spanish](#)), which outlines the benefits of trees and why they are important to help our families, community, and world. All you need to do is add your logo, website, social media handle(s), and organization tagline or contact information. A free account with [Canva](#) is required to access, edit, and download the template.

If you are a nonprofit, you can get a FREE [Canva Pro for Nonprofits](#) account by applying on their website. Canva also has some great [tutorials](#) to help you get started. Need some graphic design help? Watch our [Graphics Design Webinar!](#)

FINAL REPORT QUESTIONS AND PHOTO REQUIREMENTS

Prior to your event, consider the information you will want to gather for your final report narrative, a.k.a your “Grant Story,” we will share with Edison International. We highly recommend you read the [final report questions](#) before your event and think about how you want to bring your grant story to life by gathering photos and quotes from your participants.

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; grantadmin@californiareleaf.org

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