

RE:LEAF Community Grant Scheme 2012-2015

Guidance notes for round one: 2012-2013

Introduction

The RE:LEAF Community Grant Scheme (CGS) is part of RE:LEAF, a partnership campaign working with boroughs, environmental bodies and community groups, to increase tree cover in London by five per cent by 2025.

The RE:LEAF CGS is available to community groups and organisations representing the wider community and will provide grant funding to support tree and woodland projects which engage and benefit communities in London. Grants of between **£2,000** and **£10,000** are available through this scheme.

There will be three opportunities to apply for grants through the RE:LEAF CGS. Round one is currently open until **16 November 2012**. Round two will open in summer 2013 and round three will open in summer 2014.

This guidance note is for community groups who want to apply for a grant to support a project in London through **round one** of the RE:LEAF CGS. It contains details on:

1. The aims and objectives of the initiative
2. Eligibility to apply
3. Timeline
4. Details of the grant
5. How to apply
6. How the application will be assessed
7. Payment of the grant
8. Maintenance and inspection
9. Contact details for further information.

In order to apply for a grant you must read this guidance carefully, complete the application form and return it with any relevant supporting information to:

Programmes Officer (Contracts Team)
Groundwork London
12 Baron Street
London, N1 9LL.

E-mail: londonprogrammes@groundwork.org.uk

Telephone: 020 7239 1292

by **12.00 midday on 16 November 2012**

1. Aims and objectives of the RE:LEAF CGS

The RE:LEAF CGS aims to:

- Contribute towards increasing the tree canopy cover within London's built environment by five per cent by 2025
- Engage communities in the management of green space, tree and woodland management
- Ensure trees and woodlands contribute to a high quality environment
- Help foster community and individual well-being and social inclusion through contact with trees and woodlands
- Make sure the right tree is in the right place

2. Eligibility to apply

The RE:LEAF CGS is open to any organisation/group able to represent the wider community. Applications will need to demonstrate support from all relevant stakeholders and demonstrate long-term community benefits. Organisations that can apply include, but are not limited to:

- Local authorities
- Woodland owners and managers
- Community groups / Resident's Associations / Friends of groups
- Charities and Trusts
- Local business partnerships including Business Improvement Districts and Employer Groups
- Registered Social Landlords
- Primary Care Trusts, hospitals and GP surgeries.

All applicants must satisfy the following eligibility criteria (further detail in section 4 below) in order for their application to be considered:

- The project should involve either tree planting or improved management of trees/woodland
- The project should have clear, tangible community benefits and engage local communities (see section 4A)
- All grant recipients should be legally constituted, i.e. be an established group with a governing document and a separate bank account
- The grant requested should be between £2,000 and £10,000 (see sections 4B to 4C)
- Applicants have identified at least a 50 per cent contribution towards the cost of the project (for further information on match funding see section 4C)

- If the applicant is not the landowner, landowner permission has already been secured (see section 4D)
- Applicants can demonstrate that appropriate maintenance plan for the project is in place (see section 8)
- For round one (the current round) of the grant, the delivery phase of the project must be completed and the grant claimed by 28 February 2013.

3. Timeline

The first round of the RE:LEAF CGS will follow the timeline set out below.

Stage of application process	Deadline/Date
Launch of round one of RE:LEAF CGS – applications open	22 October 2012
Close of application round one	16 November 2012
Assessment of applications including site visit and assessment panel	7 December 2012
Year one grants offered (by letter)	mid December 2012
Contracts with applicants in place	Christmas 2012
Delivery of year one projects and claims submitted to Groundwork	28 February 2013
Grants paid to applicants	31 March 2013

4. Details of the grant

A. Type of projects supported

A wide variety of projects may be supported through the RE:LEAF Community Grant Scheme. Such projects could include, but are not limited to:

- Creation of community tree nurseries
- Biodiversity or access improvements to woodlands
- Communal planting, such as in orchards (but not individual street trees within the highway)
- Improved management of woodlands
- Improving local environmental quality through tree related projects, especially linked to air quality improvements.

If you wish to discuss the suitability of a particular project, please contact The Groundwork London Programme Officer.

B. Funding from the Mayor

Grants of between £2,000 and £10,000 per project are available under the RE:LEAF CGS. Applicants will need to clearly set out what the requested grant will cover in the application form.

Applicants should estimate the cost of the proposed project when completing the application form and will need to complete a claim form after the project has been completed to receive the grant. Proof of spend will need to be provided with claim forms in order to receive the grant.

C. Match funding

The RE:LEAF CGS aims to balance cost effectiveness with environmental and community benefits. All applicants are required to provide a minimum contribution of 50 per cent towards the cost of the programme; financial matching is encouraged and any in-kind contributions must be clearly costed

D. Permission

Applicants that are not the landowner will need to provide a letter from the landowner confirming the landowner's approval / permission for the project.

Applicants will need to provide written evidence with their application that they have discussed the proposal with the relevant borough and/or the relevant landowner and secured in-principle approval. A condition of any grant award will require applicants to submit all appropriate consents from the borough/landowner required to undertake the project.

E. Publicity

Applicants will need to be willing to participate in publicity events organised with the Forestry Commission and the Mayor of London. They must also be willing to acknowledge the Forestry Commission and the Mayor of London in any publicity regarding their projects.

All applicants must obtain prior approval from the Forestry Commission and Mayor of London for any press release, articles or interviews relating to the project.

5. How to apply

Applicants should read these guidance notes carefully before completing the application form to ensure all criteria are met.

In order to apply for the grant, applicants must complete, sign the application form and send it to Groundwork London so they receive it by **12.00 midday on 16 November 2012** along with the supporting documents detailed below and in section **4D** of the application form. Electronic/scanned copies of the application form are preferred so we suggest completing the form electronically, signing a printed copy of the declaration page and scanning it, then emailing the word application and scanned page plus other supporting information to Groundwork London.

A. Supporting information

If you are not the landowner you must include a letter/email from the landowner which confirms agreement to the project.

In addition, we prefer applications to include:

- Three “before” photographs of the proposed project location
- Maps to identify location of project (please note you will be required to provide these during the course of the project).
- Any letters of support from key stakeholders or permissions already obtained
- Evidence of accessibility to match funding

B. Address to send applications to

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Groundwork London
12 Baron Street
London, N1 9LL.

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6. How applications will be assessed

An assessment panel will convene to discuss and assess each application. The assessment panel consists of representatives from the Forestry Commission, the Greater London Authority, and Natural England. Some applications may require a site visit before confirmation of grant funding.

A copy of the assessment form used to help assess the applications can be found at **Appendix 1**.

Once the Assessment Panel has met you should expect to hear within three weeks if your application has been successful. A conditional offer will be made if any information or permissions are outstanding.

7. Payment of the grant

For Round one, all RE:LEAF CGS projects must be completed and claimed by 28 February 2013.

Applicants should estimate the cost of the proposed project when completing the application form and will need to complete a claim form after project completion in order to receive the grant. All applicants should include evidence of proof of spend for the whole project (i.e. the proportion funded by the Mayor and the applicant's contribution) with their claim form. Invoices or a letter signed by an appropriately authorised officer will be accepted.

If for any reason the proof of spend is not available at the time of submission of the claim this must be submitted to Groundwork London within 28 days of the claim. If the applicant fails to submit this information, the Forestry Commission may reclaim the grant.

Groundwork London will aim to pay applicants, via BACS, within 28 days of when the claim form is received. If this cannot be done for any reason applicants will be contacted.

8. Maintenance and inspection

To encourage and ensure long-term maintenance, we reserve the right to monitor and inspect all applications for a three year period and may reclaim grants if it is felt that the levels of maintenance are not adequate or that the project has failed.

The Forestry Commission, in association with Groundwork London, has recently produced a [Tree Care Guide](#) which provides guidance on the maintenance of young and recently planted trees. This guidance should be followed by all applicants if the proposed project involves tree planting

9. Contact details for further information

We hope that all the information you need is included in this guidance note. However, if you have any further queries we will endeavour to assist you. Enquires should be directed to:

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RE:LEAF Community Grant Scheme – 2012-2015 (round one)
Appendix 1 Project assessment form

Emboldened – essential; Plain text - desirable

Section	Criteria	Does not meet requirements	Meets requirements	Exceeds requirements
1	Organisation is eligible to apply for grant			
	Organisation has appropriate level of experience of engaging communities with the natural environment			
	Organisation has landowner permission			
2	Project aligns with and will deliver some or all of the objectives of the RE:LEAF CGS			
	Project will be completed before 28 February 2013			
3	Project will have wide reaching benefits and the benefits of the project will be felt by a diverse range of local people			
	Project will engage communities throughout planning, delivery and maintenance stages			
	Project is part of a wider programme of environmental/community projects			
	Project will result in additional trees being planted			
	Project will result in improved management of trees and/or woodlands			
	Milestones are relevant and appropriate to project			
4	Grant requested is between £2,000 and £10,000			
	Grant requested from GLA does not exceed 50 per cent of total project cost			
	Match funding is secured			
	Application form is signed			
	All appropriate documentation has been received			
TOTAL				
Notes				