


Cover Sheet

2023 TANF Youth Innovation Project

Applicant Agency: <i>Please use the legal name and provide the full address. This is the fiscal agent with whom the grant agreement will be executed.</i>			
1. Agency Name:	Tree Trust		
2. Director Name:	Jared Smith	8. Contact Name:	Jared Smith
3. Telephone:	952-767-3891	9. Telephone:	952-767-3891
4. Fax:	952-767-3650	10. Fax:	952-767-3650
5. Email:	jareds@treetrust.org	11. Email:	jareds@treetrust.org
6. Agency Website:	www.treetrust.org		
7. Address: 1419 Energy Park Drive Saint Paul, MN 55108		12. Address: 1419 Energy Park Drive Saint Paul, MN 55108	
13. Federal Tax ID: (required)	41-1291626	14. Minnesota Tax ID: (required)	5123500
15. Unique Entity ID (UEI) Number: (required)	CNA4VMJXENN5	16. SWIFT Vendor ID: (if known)	0000227410 001
Required Information:			
17. Project Name:	Tree Trust Career Pathways		
18. Geographic Area Served:	Seven county Twin Cities metro area		
19. Number of Participants Served:	3		
20. Project Start Date:	January 1, 2023		
21. Project End Date:	December 31, 2023		
22. Total Amount of Funding Requested:	\$15,000		

I certify that the information contained herein is true and accurate to the best of my knowledge and that I am authorized to submit this application on behalf of the applicant.

Authorized Signature 	Title Executive Director CEO	Date 12/9/2022
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2023 TANF INNOVATION PROJECT

Narrative Questions:

- 1. Describe the youth service provider's plans to assure collaboration with participants' MFIP Employment Service Providers regarding their Employment Service Plans, as applicable.**

Tree Trust staff consistently maintain individual participant files, including timesheets, Individual Development Plans or Individual Service Strategies, work readiness evaluations, progress towards program objectives and goals, and certificates obtained during employment training. We will communicate and collaborate with participants' MFIP Employment Service Providers as applicable.

- 2. Describe how the youth service provider will identify and recruit eligible youth for the project. What percentage of participants do you expect to be from communities of color? Describe the youth service provider's plans to incorporate culturally responsive programming approaches when applicable.**

Tree Trust partners with MFIP providers in the metro area to identify and recruit eligible participants. Tree Trust staff coordinates with MFIP program managers to provide information about work experience opportunities and locations, and meets with candidates for career exploration, work experience selection, and enrollment. MFIP providers in the metro area also refer eligible participants to Tree Trust.

Tree Trust's vision is a thriving workforce living on a healthy planet, but disparities exist between BIPOC community members and their white counterparts. We acknowledge these inequities need thoughtful and intentional intervention to reduce disparities and advance economic equity. Tree Trust is committed to providing equal opportunities to participants of all ethnicities and racial backgrounds to gain work experience, receive mentoring and employment readiness training, and have an open pathway to achieve their full potential. In 2021, Tree Trust served 323 young people. Of those who provided information, 51% identified as BIPOC. We anticipate serving participants with similar demographics in 2023.

To best serve a diverse population of program participants, all seasonal and year-round staff complete Equity and Diversity Training, Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) Training, Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder (FASD) Training, Motivational Interviewing Training, and De-escalation Training. Our staff work to diversify recruitment efforts by enhancing relationships with public schools, alternative and charter schools, county libraries, social service organizations, youth outreach centers, and local businesses in our target communities.

- 3. Describe the youth service provider's plans to introduce career pathways, prepare targeted youth for post-secondary education, provide information on high-growth, in-demand occupations in the region, and deliver financial literacy activities.**

Tree Trust Career Pathways includes three programs: Summer Youth Employment Program (SYEP), Tree Trust YouthBuild, and Branches. Each program offers budgeting and financial literacy training, which includes topics such as short-term and long-term budgeting; understanding credit, debt, saving, and investing; and financial responsibility and decision making around goals and needs. Either industry professionals, such as staff from Royal Credit Union, or Tree Trust staff lead the trainings.

Each program provides information and necessary skills for the in-demand green industry and skilled trade careers in Minnesota or for ongoing education related to these careers, relevant to participants' age and readiness to enter the workforce.

SYEP is our entry-level program for participants ages 14-21, and runs for nine weeks from June – August each year. Participants gain a valuable introduction to work experience through paid, hands-on projects on outdoor construction and landscaping.

Tree Trust YouthBuild is a pre-apprenticeship program that offers young people, ages 16-21, the opportunity to gain paid, hands-on training in carpentry or tree care, all while working towards a high school diploma. Tree Trust YouthBuild operates during the school year from October to June, and partners with charter and alternative high schools throughout the metro to work with youth with interrupted educations. Participants alternate between an employment training week at Tree Trust and a week attending high school.

Branches is our advanced training program, providing a direct on-ramp for young adults, ages 18-28, to enter green collar or skilled trade careers without taking on additional schooling or educational debt. Participants earn a wage while learning tree care, landscaping, construction, and property maintenance. Branches has five, 10-week cohorts each year. Each Branches cohort offers 28-30 hours per week of combined outdoor worksite and classroom training.

Work readiness training and occupational training included in our Career Pathways programming are described in detail under Question 5.

4. Describe how individual youth will be matched with employment opportunities.

A key aspect of Tree Trust's programming is connecting participants to future employers who will provide family-supporting wages, benefits, and career advancement. We hold memberships with Minnesota Nursery and Landscape Association (MNLA), National Association of Landscape Professionals (NALP), Tree Care Industry Association (TCIA), Minnesota Safety Council, and Minnesota Turf and Grounds Foundation (MTGF). These organizations are valuable partners for referral and training resources, industry updates, and labor market information as we help our participants transition into the workforce.

Our strong ties with local organizations in the green industry and skilled trades allow us to provide connections and referrals to potential employers. During programming, Tree Trust introduces participants to potential employers through career fairs, practice interviews, and on-site speakers. Our current arboriculture partners include SavATree Tree Service and Lawn Care, Bartlett Tree Experts, Birch Tree Care, Windsor Tree Services, Great River Greening, Metro Blooms, Davey Tree Expert Company, Bachman's Floral, Gift and Garden, and Rainbow Treecare. For participants who decide to pursue employment outside of the green industry and skilled trades, we have a wide network of local employer partners in different industries.

After participants complete programming, we provide referrals to potential employers, including the opportunity to pursue employment with Tree Trust's professional social enterprise, Landscape Services. If participants want to pursue additional training opportunities, we are also poised to provide these referrals. Among other opportunities, our Landscape Services department is a founding member of the Arborist Joint Apprenticeship Committee and offers a Minnesota Department of Labor registered arborist apprenticeship program.

5. Describe any work readiness or occupational training (in person or virtual) that will be part of the project.

Our Career Pathways programming offers in-person work readiness and occupational training for participants. Summer Youth Employment Program participants learn transferrable workplace skills such as good communication and teamwork, as well as valuable trade skills that include the proper use of hand tools, job site safety, using personal protective equipment, construction math, and following directions to complete a plan. Participants can earn a Tree Trust SYEP Certificate which includes modules in Employability, Worksite Safety, Tool Identification, and Environmental Stewardship. These certificates track professional development and serve as building blocks for further career advancement. Tree Trust also has a relationship with Northeast Metro Area Learning Center to award high school academic credit to participants for their work experience.

Tree Trust YouthBuild participants learn construction and tree care skills through hands-on training. Youth construct affordable housing in partnership with Twin Cities Habitat for Humanity to learn employment skills and transform the community, and train for jobs in the high demand green industry through completing tree care projects with Tree Trust staff. Participants learn workplace safety, proper use of personal protective equipment, reading blueprints, proper use of tools, construction and tree care techniques, and using math to calculate measurements and material costs.

Branches program participants earn industry-recognized certifications needed to move into long term employment, including First Aid/CPR through HeartCert and the Tree Care Industry Association's Introduction to Arboriculture Safety Certification. Participants spend extensive time in the field, gaining workforce experience through completing landscape construction and tree care projects in community green spaces. One day per week, participants work in-office, completing employment readiness training and engaging in classroom activities with Tree Trust staff. Employment readiness training covers topics such as financial literacy, workplace norms, conflict resolution, giving and receiving criticism, resume and cover letter writing, and practice interviews.

6. If the project design includes payment of stipends to participants, please describe the stipend structure (i.e. for what activities they will be awarded, amount, etc.) and include a copy of the local stipend policy with the plan.

Participants will be paid an hourly wage.

7. If the project design includes payment of incentives to participants, please describe the incentive structure (i.e. for what achievements they will be awarded, amount, etc.) and include a copy of the local incentive policy with the plan.

The project does not include incentives for participants.

8. Describe the youth service provider's plans to measure Work Readiness Indicators for targeted youth. Also identify any other LOCAL benchmarks/performance indicators for youth served under the 2023 TANF Innovation Project.

Tree Trust staff and partner supervisors, as applicable, complete work readiness forms for participants. Participants hone transferrable workforce skills for career success, including

good attendance, giving and receiving feedback, teamwork, taking initiative, problem-solving, and producing high quality work.

Tree Trust staff also work collaboratively with participants to develop Individual Service Strategies or Individual Development Plans for each participant. These plans provide the framework for participants to identify strengths and S.M.A.R.T. (specific, measurable, achievable, realistic, and time-bound) goals, and to develop a strategy to pursue those goals during programming.

Tree Trust tracks key performance indicators across Career Pathways programming including the number of youth and young adults served, the percentage of participants who earn Tree Trust certificates or industry-recognized credentials, and the percentage of participants who achieve post-program employment or education placements.

9. Describe any plans to co-enroll TANF Youth participants in other DEED-funded youth programs. Include the programs in which participants are likely to be co-enrolled and the services to be provided through this co-enrollment.

Tree Trust will co-enroll TANF youth participants in other DEED-funded programs as applicable. We currently have funding through DEED for YouthBuild and a Youth Support Services Competitive Grant for Branches and our Summer Youth Employment Program.

10. Describe the planned wage structure for work experience. If a wage higher than the minimum wage will be offered, explain how the wage rate will be determined.

Tree Trust plans to start participants at a wage of least \$12.00/hour. If the participants work in Minneapolis or St Paul, they will be paid at the applicable minimum wage for that city. Participants are given the opportunity to earn up to a \$0.25/hour raise mid-way through the program, based on an evaluation.

ATTACHMENT 1: WORK PLAN 2023 TANF INNOVATION PROJECT

Provide a brief summary of planned services/activities provided in the project. Make additional copies of this form as needed.

Agency: Tree Trust		Contact: Jared Smith, 952-767-3891, jareds@treetrust.org		
Project Goal: To transform lives and landscapes by engaging people to build skills for meaningful careers, inspiring people to plant trees, and making our community a greener, healthier place to live. Tree Trust will provide workforce training and career exploration services to 3 young adults, ages 14-28, receiving Minnesota Family Investment Program benefits.				
Strategies (activities, steps, and tasks to achieve the goal):	Expected Outcomes	Number Served	Start Date	End Date
<p>Recruitment</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Maintain and build new relationships with MFIP providers, partner organizations, county partners, and schools to recruit eligible participants <p>Training</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Teach in-demand marketable skills in tree care, landscape construction, property maintenance, and/or carpentry with the guidance of qualified Tree Trust staff Support participants in obtaining either Tree Trust Certificates or industry-recognized credentials Offer employment readiness curriculum which includes career exploration using labor market information, job hunting skills, financial literacy, and strategies to succeed in the workplace Develop written Individual Service Strategy/Individual Development Plans with S.M.A.R.T goals tailored to 	<p>3 enrolled participants</p> <p>Participants will either obtain a Tree Trust Certificate or industry-recognized credential:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Summer Youth Employment Program – Tree Trust Certificates with modules including employability, tool identification, worksite safety, and environmental stewardship Tree Trust YouthBuild – Home Builders Institute (HBI) Pre-Apprenticeship Certificate Training (PACT), Tree Care Industry Association (TCIA) Introduction to Arboriculture Safety, and First Aid/CPR Branches – Tree Care Industry Association (TCIA) Introduction to Arboriculture Safety Certificate and First Aid/CPR <p>Participants will develop an Individual Service Strategy or Individual Development Plan</p>	3	January 1, 2023	December 31, 2023

Agency: Tree Trust		Contact: Jared Smith, 952-767-3891, jareds@treetrust.org		
Project Goal: To transform lives and landscapes by engaging people to build skills for meaningful careers, inspiring people to plant trees, and making our community a greener, healthier place to live. Tree Trust will provide workforce training and career exploration services to 3 young adults, ages 14-28, receiving Minnesota Family Investment Program benefits.				
Strategies (activities, steps, and tasks to achieve the goal):	Expected Outcomes	Number Served	Start Date	End Date
<p>the career and educational goals of individual participants</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide constructive feedback to participants through work readiness indicators and evaluations • Ask participants to provide Career Pathways program feedback through surveys and Leadership Committees, to identify strengths and areas for growth in programming <p>Post-Training Placement</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Offer job placement assistance and follow-up case management support for participants that completed Tree Trust YouthBuild and Branches programming. For SYEP participants, the program acts as a building block for starting on a career pathway and completing high school will be the essential next step for most participants. 	Participants will either continue or enter secondary or post-secondary education, or enter the workforce.			

**ATTACHMENT 2: BUDGET
2023 TANF INNOVATION PROJECT**

BUDGET PERIOD: January 1, 2023 to December 31, 2023

Agency	Contact Person Phone/ E-mail
Tree Trust 1419 Energy Park Dr St Paul, MN 55108	Anders Hawes 952-767-3893 andersh@treetrust.org

Budget Category	TANF Innovation Funds
833 - Administration (5% maximum)	\$750.00
881 - Youth Wages and Fringe Benefits	\$5,000.00
885 - Direct Services to Youth	\$8,725.00
891 - Support Services	\$525.00
TOTAL	\$15,000.00

Budget Category	Provide a detailed breakdown of the items and amounts budgeted:
833 – Administration (5% maximum)	Administration costs include those expenses related to human resources, finance, and other company-wide functions necessary to operate the program.
881 – Youth Wages and Fringe Benefits	Wages and fringe benefits for youth and young adults that are placed into paid work experience positions. Wages are paid directly to participants and fringe benefits include FICA taxes and Work Comp premiums.
885 – Direct Services to Youth	Wages and fringe benefits for staff working directly with participants during recruitment, intake, work experience, career pathways exploration, and employment readiness training. Mileage/travel, training, and office expenses related to those staff working directly with the participants in the program.

891 – Support Services	Support Service expense including but not limited to transportation, uniforms, and participant training/credentialing
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BUDGET CATEGORIES

Administration: Costs are defined by Federal Rules at 2 CFR 200 and are generally associated with the expenditures related to the overall operation of the employment and training system. Administrative costs are associated with functions not related to the direct provision of services to program participants. These costs can be both personnel and non-personnel and both direct and indirect.

Specifically, the project defines the following costs as administration:

- Accounting, budgeting, financial and cash management functions;
- Procurement and purchasing functions;
- Property management functions;
- Personnel management functions;
- Payroll functions;
- Audit functions;
- Incident reports response functions;
- General legal service functions;
- Costs of goods and services required for the administrative functions of the program including such items as rental/purchase of equipment, utilities, office supplies, postage, and rental and maintenance of office space;
- Systems and procedures required to carry out the above administrative functions including necessary monitoring and oversight; and,
- Travel costs incurred for official business related to the above administrative functions.

Youth Wages and Fringe Benefits – Wages and benefits paid directly to youth participants while engaged in program activities. Stipends provided for educational activities should be included in this cost category.

Direct Services to Youth – Costs associated with providing direct service to youth, **EXCLUDING** costs of youth participant wages and fringe benefits and support services. Wages and fringe benefits for staff providing direct services to youth participants should be included in this cost category. Tuition payments for training programs should also be included in this category.

Support Services – Items that are necessary for a youth to participate in the project, such as transportation, clothing, tools, child care, housing/rental assistance, school-related expenses (other than tuition), etc. These expenses may be paid directly to the youth or to a third-party vendor