



HAND 2021 Small & Simple Grant to Control Invasive Plant Species

Application Guidelines

Through an agreement with the City of Bloomington, Department of Housing and Neighborhood Development (HAND) and Monroe County Identify and Reduce Invasive Species (MC-IRIS), neighborhood associations may apply for a HAND Small & Simple Grant to Control Invasive Plant Species (SSCIPS).

This is a pilot program that will allow for HAND grant monies to be used to fund improvements on private property with the explicit purpose of supporting neighborhood-wide initiatives to remove invasive species and replace them with native plants. This includes, but is not limited to, the purchase of tools and supplies or rental of equipment to help remove invasive species, as well as the purchase of native plants to plant in areas where invasive species have been removed.

*****BEFORE YOU BEGIN to fill out the application form, please read through it in its entirety.***

I. PROGRAM OVERVIEW

1. The maximum annual grant per neighborhood is \$500.00.
2. The SSCIPS Grant does not require a match component.
3. Applications may be submitted anytime between January 4 and August 31, 2021, or until all funds have been granted. If the application process must be closed prior to August 31, 2021, an announcement will be posted in 'The HAND Update' and on HAND Facebook and web pages.
4. All funds must be expended and receipts and a final report submitted to HAND no later than November 15, 2021.
5. Applicants will be notified of award decisions within ten business days after submission of a completed application. If any specific conditions apply, these must be met before a contract may be executed.
6. After your application is approved by HAND, if applicable, you will need to secure appropriate approvals from other City Departments.
7. A Funding Agreement will be executed between the HAND Department and the neighborhood. Once all signatures are in place the neighborhood may start their project. The City is under no obligation to reimburse the organization for expenses incurred prior to a finalization of the Funding Agreement.

8. Vendors paid directly by the City (i.e., through an invoice) must have prior approval through the Controller's Office. Alternatively, neighborhoods may purchase items or services and submit receipts for reimbursement. HAND staff will provide purchasing guidance to each neighborhood.
9. Grants may not be used to pay for out-of-city travel expenses or for food, beverages, and/or catering services.

II. ELIGIBILITY

Eligible Applicants

Applications are accepted from neighborhood-based organizations. A neighborhood-based organization is a group with a majority of its members residing or doing business in a commonly recognized neighborhood, whose purpose is, at least in part, to improve the quality of life in that area. The group may include representatives from churches, schools, businesses, and other institutions operating in that neighborhood, in addition to residents. Groups may be formed for the sole purpose of completing a grant-funded project, and need not be formally recognized neighborhood associations.

Who is NOT eligible to apply?

Single businesses, single institutions, single government agencies, single religious organizations, political groups, individuals.

Eligible Projects

To be eligible to receive a Small & Simple Grant to Control Invasive Plant Species, neighborhood associations must complete the following steps:

1. Hold an educational workshop for your neighborhood, led by an MC-IRIS volunteer. Contact MC-IRIS at mciris2010@gmail.com. Workshops may be held virtually or in person. A workshop may be held anytime from one year prior to submitting the grant application up until the commencement of the project.
2. Demonstrate that yours is a neighborhood-wide initiative, by gathering participation pledges from at least 15% of the total households in your neighborhood. A link to the pledge form is included at the end of the grant application.
 - a. In order to allow all interested neighbors to participate, regardless of ability, a participant is defined as a neighbor who agrees to:
 - i. Remove invasive plants from their property and replace them with native plants (or allow invasive plants to be removed and replaced by volunteers); and/or

- ii. Volunteer in the effort to remove and replace invasive plants from the neighborhood, including on private properties and in communal areas.

III. APPLICATION EVALUATION CRITERIA

SSCIPS Grant applications will be evaluated based upon the following competitive rating criteria:

1. Project Quality. The project is well planned and ready to proceed. The budget is realistic and well thought out.
2. Neighborhood Participation. The application demonstrates significant neighborhood involvement in selecting, planning, and carrying out the proposed project.
3. Community Benefit. The project activities are a good approach to a recognized neighborhood issue.

IV. BUDGET

Your budget should include the total amount of funds needed to complete your project, the total amount of funds requested from HAND (\$500 or less), and a list all the purchases to be made for the project. Please identify the source of funding for each item, either the City of Bloomington, the neighborhood, or partnering organization(s).

V. REQUIREMENTS

1. The neighborhood will enter into a Funding Agreement stating the amount of the award, along with specification of activities to be performed. No expenditures will be allowed before finalization of the Funding Agreement.
2. The Neighborhood Project Coordinator must record volunteer hours on the 'Volunteer Hours Computation Sheet'. There must be a Release, Hold-Harmless and Indemnification Agreement signed and dated for each volunteer listed. If the volunteer is under the age of 18, a parent/guardian must sign the Agreement.
3. All participating property owners must sign an 'Individual Property Owner(s) Permission' form, which will be forwarded to HAND as part of the neighborhood's final report
4. The neighborhood is responsible for a final report that includes the following: a list of all expenses; a one page summary of the project; photos of the project; a completed Volunteer Hours Computation Sheet; copies all Release, Hold-Harmless and Indemnification Agreements, signed and dated by each volunteer; and copies of all Individual Property Owner(s) Permission forms, signed and

dated by each participating property owner. Final reports may be submitted electronically, and must be received by HAND no later than November 15, 2021.

5. If the neighborhood encounters a problem, and is unable to with complete the project by the date stated in the Funding Agreement, the neighborhood must contact the HAND office for an extension of time.
6. All promotional pieces which receive any funding through this grant program must include the following mandatory grant identification statement: "Funding provided in part through the City of Bloomington's Housing and Neighborhood Development Department Small & Simple Grant Program."

VI. APPLICATION

Please complete all portions of the application. In order to submit the application you will need a Google account. This will allow you to upload files, receive a copy of your completed application, and edit your application after submission. Upon submission of the application form, you will receive an email containing a copy of your application. At the top of this email there will be an "edit submission" button. If you need to make changes, you may do so by following that link.

BEFORE YOU BEGIN to fill out this form, please read the application in its entirety and have the following documents available to upload:

1. Budget,
2. Project narrative of no more than 250 words, and
3. [Completed Neighborhood Participation Pledges](#) form.

For application assistance, please contact Angela Van Rooy, Neighborhood Services Program Manager, at angela.vanrooy@bloomington.in.gov or 812-349-3505.

The Small & Simple Grant to Control Invasive Plant Species (SSCIPS) application form is available here: <https://forms.gle/uAxGRahmF1UiMXnV9>.