



## No Child Left Inside – 2023 Grants *Request for Proposals*



### **Application Deadline:**

Completed grant applications must be received by  
**2:00 p.m. CST, Wednesday, December 7, 2022**

- Late submissions will not be accepted.
- Multiple submissions will not be accepted. Applicants must choose one grant type: Mini Grant (\$500-\$5,000) or Larger Grant (\$5,001-\$25,000).

**Submit your application to:** [outreachgrants.dnr@state.mn.us](mailto:outreachgrants.dnr@state.mn.us)

Include subject line *“NCLI 2023 Grant Application”*

Minnesota Department of Natural Resources  
Division of Fish and Wildlife  
500 Lafayette Road, Box 20, St. Paul, MN 55155  
888-MINNDNR (888-646-6367)

<https://www.dnr.state.mn.us/no-child-grants/index.html>

# Minnesota DNR

## No Child Left Inside – 2023 Grants

### *Introduction*

The Minnesota Department of Natural Resources (DNR) is excited to announce the continuation of the No Child Left Inside (NCLI) Grant Program. With additional funding by the 2021 Minnesota Legislature, these grants are provided for “outdoor environmental, ecological, and other natural-resource-based education and recreation programs serving youth” (Minnesota Statutes, Section 84.976).

Through these grants, the DNR is addressing growing concerns over declines in youth participation in outdoor recreation, natural resource education, hunting, and angling. A minimum outcome of these grants is that the person leaves holding a positive experience and opinion toward outdoor education and recreation. Ideally, youth involved in awarded projects will maintain involvement in outdoor education and recreation through continued participation in and/or support of these activities.

The DNR provides grant funds annually as authorized by the Minnesota Legislature. Allocation of funds for recent phases of the No Child Left Inside Grant Program were a one-time appropriation by the 2021 Minnesota Legislature. The DNR expects to have \$450,000 available for the current 2023 grants.

The 2023 grants will consist of two types of grant awards. Applicants must choose only one.

Mini Grants, with awards between \$500-\$5,000, will include a simple application and projects with smaller scope. Match of any amount is required. Demand for Mini Grants is expected to be high. Eligible projects will be entered into a lottery, and awards granted randomly on a regionally-balanced, statewide basis. Those awarded Mini Grants will be notified by email in January 2023.

Larger Grants, with awards between \$5,001-\$25,000, will include a more extensive application process, competitive review, and greater project scope. Match is required, but there is no minimum amount of match needed. The total match amount provided by applicants and partners will be considered in the evaluation of proposals. Eligible projects will be competitively-reviewed and scored after the application deadline. The highest scoring applicants will receive awards on a regionally-balanced statewide basis. Those awarded Larger Grants will be notified by email in February 2023.

All grant agreements must comply with the laws and regulations governing the DNR. Applicants who are awarded grants are expected to provide proof of insurance, resolve any conflicts of interest, and register as a State of Minnesota vendor. **Please note this a reimbursable grant process. No funding is provided up front.** Applicants should not plan to start any reimbursable project work prior to April 1, 2023.

### *How to apply*

You must use the appropriate application form found on the DNR website under [No Child Left Inside Grants](#). Do not submit any additional information beyond what is requested in the application.

**Applications must be received in the DNR Outreach Grants email account by 2:00 p.m. Central Standard Time on Wednesday, December 7, 2022.** Incomplete or late applications **will not** be accepted. No exceptions. All applicants will receive notification if successful or not. If you are awarded a grant, you will be notified regarding next steps in the process.

**Submit your application electronically to:**

[outreachgrants.dnr@state.mn.us](mailto:outreachgrants.dnr@state.mn.us) with the subject line “NCLI 2023 Grant Application”

## Questions

If you have a question about these grants or any of the application materials, please email [outreachgrants.dnr@state.mn.us](mailto:outreachgrants.dnr@state.mn.us) with the subject line "Grant Questions" or call 888-MINNDNR (888-646-6367).

## Grant Program Deadlines

<b>October 2022</b>	No Child Left Inside 2023 Grant Program announced to the public. Grant application materials available.
<b>December 7, 2022</b>	<b>2:00 p.m. Central Standard Time - Applications due.</b> DNR review begins.
<b>January 2023</b>	Mini Grant applicants notified by email of award status.
<b>February 2023</b>	Larger Grant applicants notified by email of award status.
<b>Feb./March 2023</b>	Awardees complete necessary forms, sign and return grant agreements. Project work cannot begin until awardee receives executed agreement from the DNR. <b>Applicants should not plan to start any reimbursable project work prior to April 1, 2023.</b> Project work, including match activities, cannot begin until awardee receives an executed agreement from the DNR.
<b>June 30, 2023</b>	Grant Agreement Contracts must be signed and fully executed.
<b>June 30, 2024</b>	All reimbursable grant project work must be completed.
<b>July 30, 2024</b>	Deadline to submit all expense reimbursements and final project report. Projects ending earlier must submit final reports within 30 days of project completion.

## Grant requirements and limitations

### Who can apply?

1. Applicants must have a mission or educational purpose that supports natural resource education and/or outdoor recreation.
2. Public entities (including cities, counties, other local governments, public & charter schools, public colleges & higher education institutions)
3. Tribal Nations and schools
4. Non-profit organizations (including informal, after school, early childhood, and community-based youth programs)

### Who can NOT apply?

1. Private businesses, state and federal agencies **are not eligible** for this grant program.
2. Past recipients of a No Child Left Inside grant **are not eligible**.
3. Groups that have defaulted on previous grants **are not eligible**; unless the default was by agreement between the DNR and the applicant. In addition, a group may be found ineligible if it had past performance issues (e.g., violated the terms of a DNR grant agreement within the past two years.)

### Location of projects

Grant funds must be used only for the delivery of programs within the State of Minnesota.

## Grant process

1. Applicant Contact – the person listed on the application should be the primary contact for the grant and responsible for submitting grant reimbursement requests and reports.
2. **This is a reimbursable grant process. No funding is provided up front.** Grant project funding will be reimbursed to the grantee either upon approval of an interim report and expenses (for expenditures to that point) and/or at the completion of the project and upon approval of the final report and expenses. Before applying for a grant, applicants should have a plan to cover expenses and costs until you are allowed to submit related invoices and receipts for reimbursement.
3. Match is required. At the end of the project, grant recipients will be required to report a match of dollars or in-kind labor, materials, and services. Examples of match could include teacher time, parent volunteer hours, program costs not covered by the grant, time spent on reports and other administrative tasks associated with the grant project.
4. The State of Minnesota requires proof of insurance coverage, including liability and worker's compensation, for the duration of the project. Documentation of current coverage must be submitted to the Department prior to full execution of grant agreement.
5. Grant recipients shall be required to sign a Grant Agreement Contract with the DNR, which must be fully executed before June 30, 2023 or the award will be rescinded. When the grant agreement is fully executed (signed by all parties), it becomes public data.
6. No costs/expenses can or will be reimbursed for items or count as match prior to the date of the signed written Grant Agreement Contract (MN Stat. 16B.98).
7. Grant project activities must be completed before June 30, 2024.
8. Final grant report and invoices for allowable expenses must be received by July 30, 2024 or within 30 days after completion of the grant. Copies of itemized receipts must be kept on file and submitted.

## Program rules

1. The DNR will determine how much money is available for each phase of the grant program and what activities, based on funding from the 2021 Minnesota Legislature.
2. Applicants must meet all state and federal laws and rules.
3. All participants must be properly licensed for the activity.
4. Before applying, applicants planning projects that require DNR staff involvement must work closely with DNR staff on project scope and schedule, ensure the project complements existing activities, fits with available services and capacity, and complies with DNR rules.

## Additional grant program information

1. The DNR may partially fund projects at its discretion. The DNR reserves the right to restrict awards to a maximum of one per organization, program, project, site, or facility.
2. Staff costs associated with the activities of the grant are eligible.
3. All angling, hunting, and other outdoor recreation equipment (bows, rods, tackle, skis, snowshoes, etc.) and other related items with a purchase value of \$4,999 or less per item are eligible and shall remain the property of the Grantee.
4. The Director of the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources, Division of Fish & Wildlife determines final grant awards.

## **Ineligible activities**

Grant dollars **cannot be used** for activities such as, but not limited to:

- Purchase of hunting or fishing licenses, tags, or stamps
- Group banquets, raffle prizes or other fundraising activities
- Hunting and fishing competitions with cash awards or prizes larger than nominal value
- Purchase of firearms and ammunition (bows and arrows ARE eligible)
- Gardening for food projects, unless combined with significant agricultural or environmental education programming, including the benefits of local, healthy food programs
- For-profit projects
- Shooting range fees and clay targets
- Annual field days or festivals and other one-day events
- Capital equipment and fixed assets, such as vehicles, motorized boats, ATVs, snowmobiles, large ice fishing houses, trailers, sheds, shelters, platforms, greenhouses, computer equipment, and other larger capital equipment or items (small canoes, kayaks, portable ice shelters, and bicycles ARE eligible)
- Trail or nature area purchase, development, equipment, or maintenance (related planning or trainings ARE eligible)
- Administrative costs, such as overhead, insurance or indirect costs

## ***2023 Grant Priorities***

The 2021 Legislature established some specific requirements and priorities for the No Child Left Inside Grant Program. The DNR has established additional funding priorities in consultation with stakeholders. Priorities and requirements are as follows:

### **Overarching priorities**

- **Programs that maximize the number of participants, especially from new and diverse audiences with limited opportunities**
- **Audience must be youth (under 18) – Activities that include participant families are also eligible**
- **Applicants commit matching funds or in-kind resources**
- **Projects that are community-focused with an ongoing impact rather than one-time events**
- **New or innovative programming - If an existing program or project, applicant must demonstrate a significant expansion in scope or inclusion of new audiences**
- **Projects must provide students direct experiences and understanding of nature**
- **Provide opportunities for outdoor recreation or to learn new outdoor skills**
- **Use public parks and other natural resource venues and personnel as resources**
- **Education classes that are held outside and use established environmental, ecological, agricultural, or natural resource educational curriculum**
- **Other projects that support natural resource education and outdoor recreation, as determined by the DNR**

## Eligible projects

Outdoor environmental, ecological, and other natural resource-based education and recreation projects serving youth (under age 18). A list of eligible project types and activities are listed below, but not limited to:

- **Education classes** that are held outside and use established environmental or natural-resource educational curriculum
- **Training** of teachers, facilitators or volunteers to deliver environmental or outdoor education (EOE) including, but not limited to, Project WET/WILD/Learning Tree, Tread Lightly!, E-STEM, etc.
- **Safety training** for firearms, boat and water, ATV or snowmobile
- **Programs at state parks or trails** that cover topics, such as water quality, raptors/bird watching, plants and animals, maple syruping, weather and seasons, watersheds, prairie restoration, pollinators, forests, etc. (Must work closely with park staff to ensure the project scope and schedule complements existing activities, fits with available capacity, and follows park rules.)
- **Similar programs at other parks, trails, nature, or environmental learning center facilities**
- **Minnesota School Forest Program activities**
- **Outdoor recreation activities with an educational, health or wellness component:** paddling or camping tied to water quality, hiking with plant or tree identification, snowshoeing to find animal tracks, wild rice harvesting, night sky viewing, fishing with aquatic habitat studies, tree planting, prairie seed collection, nature photography, etc.
- **Investigations on water issues or water education:** water quality, water conservation, watershed research, citizen science, aquatic wildlife and plants, weather, storm drains, Mississippi River, habitat restoration, macro invertebrates, service-learning projects, winter snow and ice, etc.
- **Shooting** including trap, skeet, and archery (Archery projects will be partnered with the [National Archery in the Schools Program](#). Contact Kraig Kiger, DNR Shooting Sports Coordinator, [kraig.kiger@state.mn.us](mailto:kraig.kiger@state.mn.us), regarding NASP program requirements before applying.)
- **Hunting or trapping**
- **Angling**
- **Paddle sports**
- **Cross-country (Nordic) skiing**
- **Biking or hiking at state and local parks or trails**
- **Snowmobiling or ATV riding**
- **School Courses and Clubs:** Development and adaptation of school courses that integrate youth fishing, hunting, and shooting sports programs delivered in formal school programs. Support for development and operation of high school angling, hunting and outdoor clubs.
- **Mentoring Programs:** Volunteer mentor recruitment and training to support youth “Learn to Hunt” and “Learn to Fish” programs. Projects that establish mentoring programs that recruit new and diverse anglers through multiple experiences with on-going support. Reverse mentoring service programs in which youth anglers and hunters would be encouraged to re-engage or reactivate anglers and hunters age 45 and older.



**Eligible costs (examples)**

- Staff time directly related to development and delivery of project
- Transportation costs to parks, natural lands, or outdoor recreation programs and facilities
- Program fees, such as admission, tours, facility fees, hired educators/speakers, or equipment rental
- Teacher prep time or substitute teacher stipends for work on EOE curriculum integration or to attend professional development
- EOE curricula and tools needed to do investigations
- Classroom set of EOE equipment, such as binoculars, cameras, GPS units, compasses, or other outdoor instructional tools
- Outdoor recreation equipment, such as snowshoes, cross-country skis, or fishing, archery, and hunting equipment (Guns and ammunition are not eligible.)

***How grant applications are reviewed and scored***

Applicants must first determine if their projects are better suited for Mini Grant or Larger Grant submission. You may only apply for one grant type. Multiple submissions will not be accepted. **Be sure to submit the appropriate application form.**

Mini Grant	Larger Grant
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Awards of \$500-\$5,000</li><li>• \$200,000 available, up to \$80,000 is held for fishing and hunting related projects</li><li>• Simplified application</li><li>• Match of any amount is required</li><li>• Once project eligibility is determined, applications will be entered into a lottery. Awards will be randomly drawn on a regionally-balanced, statewide basis.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Awards of \$5,001-\$25,000</li><li>• \$250,000 available, up to \$100,000 is held for fishing and hunting related projects</li><li>• Expanded application for projects with greater scope</li><li>• Match is required and considered during proposal evaluation</li><li>• Eligible applications are chosen through a competitive review process. Awards are granted to the highest scoring applicants on a regionally-balanced, statewide basis.</li></ul>

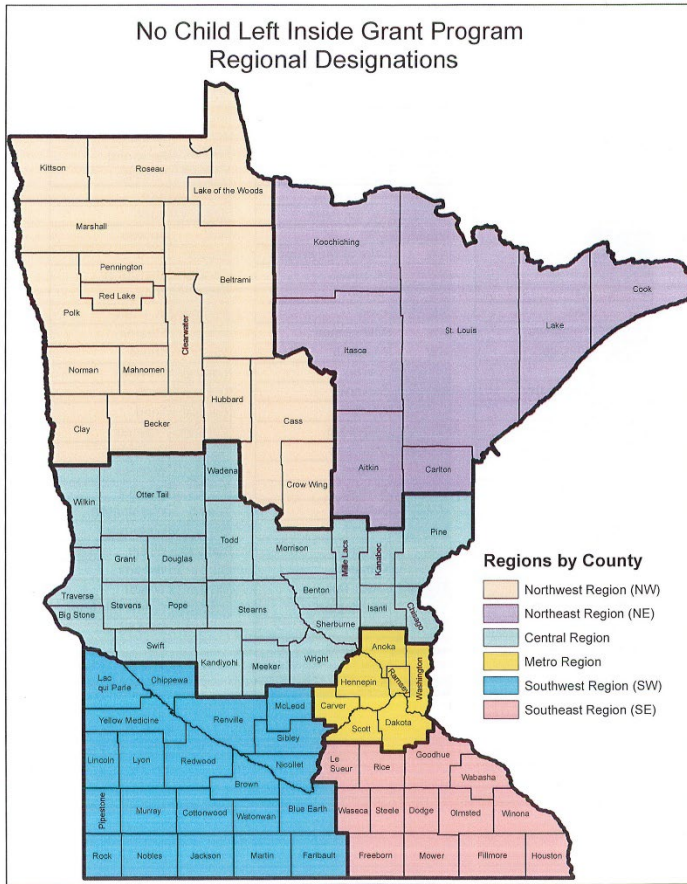
***Mini Grants***

In addition to meeting the overarching grant priorities, reviewers will consider the following project criteria in determining eligibility for awards. Eligible projects will be entered into a lottery, and awards granted randomly on a regionally-balanced statewide basis.

- Meet at least one category of eligible projects or activities in the application
- Use research-based, effective environmental, ecological, agricultural, or other natural-resource-based educational curriculum or techniques



- Serve children with limited opportunities to outdoor activities. **Project participant population must have a reportable free and reduced-price lunch (FRPL) percentage of at least 40%. Do not apply if you cannot document this number.** A [searchable database of Minnesota student enrollment data](#), including FRPL numbers by school, district and county, with data down to the grade level, is available on the MN Department of Education website. Under the “Category” drop-down, click on “Enrollment” and then the “List Files” button to access the database that includes FRPL. Recent historical data (enrollment year 2020 and earlier) is acceptable to use in schools where the data has been skewed or unavailable during the COVID-19 pandemic.



### Larger Grants

All grant applications will be initially reviewed to determine if they meet the stated eligibility requirements and overarching grant priorities. If more than 50 eligible applications are received, applications in regions of the state where the amount requested exceeds the available funds may be put through an initial screening review to determine if they meet these priorities in order of importance:

1. Projects that are community-focused with an ongoing impact, rather than one-time events – **Pass/Fail**
2. New or innovative programming (If an existing program or project, applicant must demonstrate a significant expansion in scope or inclusion of new audiences.) – **Pass/Fail**
3. Targeted audience – Project participant population must have a **reportable free and reduced-price lunch (FRPL) percentage of at least 40%**. A [searchable database of Minnesota student enrollment data](#), including FRPL numbers by school, district and county, with data down to the grade level, is available on the MN Department of Education website. Under the “Category” drop-down, click on “Enrollment” and then the “List Files” button to access the database that includes FRPL. Recent historical data (enrollment year 2020 and earlier) is acceptable to use in schools where the data has been skewed or unavailable due to the COVID-19 pandemic.
4. Demonstrate commitment of matching funds or in-kind resources – **At least 1:1 match (one dollar match value for every dollar of grant funds requested)**
5. If a large number of applications (over 100) still meet these requirements, the DNR may apply additional screening requirements based on program overarching criteria.



After the initial screening is completed, remaining eligible applications will be reviewed and scored by a panel of individuals with an in-depth and comprehensive understanding of natural resource education and outdoor recreation. Each reviewer submits a separate score sheet with points awarded according to how well the proposed project meets the following scoring criteria.

**Program focus, design, approach, and evaluation = 50 points**

- Project maximizes the number of participants, especially from new and diverse audiences with limited opportunities (up to 30 points)
- Project uses new and innovative approaches to educate or engage youth in natural resources education and outdoor recreation in their community that are founded on research-based curricula and best practices (up to 10 points)
- Project clearly identifies target audience, program goals, learning objectives, and evaluation tools (up to 10 points)

**Feasibility of project = 35 points**

- Timeline (5 points) - Projects with a realistic timeline will be scored higher.
- Project Goals and Scope of Work (10 points) - Project meets all requirements and at least one category of eligible programs or activities. Those where the scope of the work matches multiple goals and priorities of the grant program will be scored higher.
- Sustainability (10 points) - Projects that have plans to ensure the ability of the organization to effectively carry out project-related activities beyond the grant period will be scored higher.
- Clarity of project work plan and correlation with budget (5 points) - Projects where work to be performed matches project budget and is clear with sufficient detail will be scored higher.
- Staff and Equipment (5 points) - Projects that demonstrate adequate and reasonable involvement of staff and equipment to complete the work will be scored higher.

**Financial need and match = 15 points**

- Documentation of need (10 points) – Projects that demonstrate need for state support will be scored higher.
- Amount of State funding requested compared to total project budget and involvement (match) of multiple partners (5 points) - Projects with a higher percentage of match compared to State funding will be scored higher.

If you have a question about these grants or any of the application materials, please email [outreachgrants.dnr@state.mn.us](mailto:outreachgrants.dnr@state.mn.us) with the subject line “Grant Questions” or call 888-MINNDNR (888-646-6367).



*MN DNR extends its thanks to the Connecticut Department of Environmental Protection for the use of "No Child Left Inside."*