

JOIN THE GRANTS REVIEW TEAM!

Nature in Neighborhoods nature education and outdoor experiences grants review committee

Metro is recruiting people to review Nature in Neighborhoods nature education and outdoor experiences grants and to help re-envision and design the Nature in Neighborhoods community grants program. This is a stipended volunteer opportunity.

Members of the committee will help to recommend up to \$750,000 in grants to community organizations and groups seeking to support and create partnerships in local communities. These grants advance resiliency to climate change and racial equity, diversity and inclusion goals through nature education or outdoor experience programs serving school-aged children to elders, job training and life skills for youth, and outreach and engagement programs for residents from around the region.

It's important to have a broad diversity of experience and backgrounds represented on the review committee. Grant applicants are eligible to serve on the review committee; reviewers must disclose any conflicts of interest. The Metro Council makes all final funding decisions.

To apply, send a simple email and attach a resume or experience summary describing your relevant professional and/or lived background and experience.

Metro staff will begin reviewing committee applications in September 2024 and review committee applications are due by October 15, 2024.

Nature in Neighborhoods community grants program re-envisioning committee

Review committee members will have the option of also participating in a program re-envisioning process slated to begin in spring 2025 and extend through the 2025 funding opportunity. The goal of the re-envisioning process is to create a revised program structure that is responsive, supportive, and grounded in the needs and priorities of the communities served by this grant program. Like the review committee, this is a stipended volunteer opportunity.

The re-envisioning process is still taking shape, but will include elements of:

- **Community engagement** - participants will be channels for the voices of our wider communities. This will involve having conversations with people in our communities about their own relationships to nature and sharing these insights with the broader committee in the program redesign process.
- **Government system analysis** - participants will look at current government structures and systems in place and make recommendations for how to improve the community grants program, while also working within legal and administrative constraints.
- **This process will be highly relational and experiential.** It's important that committee members have a willingness to try new things, be vulnerable, empathize, work through conflict, listen well, feel, and receive feedback.

Committee recommendations for the re-envisioning will be generated from the collective interaction of individual ideas and experiences. It's important for committee members to have experience passionately holding and sharing their own ideas, while also being open to other ideas and feedback from others. This capacity to hold both/and will support the committee in creating a recommendation that is emergent from the group process and can create the best outcome for our communities. There will be limitations to what this program can do and we want to create the best outcome within those constraints.

For more information about the Nature Neighborhoods nature education grants, please see oregonmetro.gov/grants.

INTERESTED IN REVIEWING GRANTS?

Metro is looking for people with backgrounds in nature education, outdoor experiences, climate resiliency, cultural programs, mentorship and job skill development, racial equity, diversity and inclusion, community partnership development, philanthropy, grant management or related fields. Stipends available upon request.

In selecting members for this committee, Metro seeks a mix of members who bring experience or interest in:

- Reviewing or writing grant proposals and offering suggestions on ways to strengthen programs
- Projects that involve a wide range of partners and funding
- Projects that engage diverse community groups

GRANT REVIEW COMMITTEE DUTIES

- Serve a one-year term with an opportunity to be reappointed.
- Review up to approximately 30 pre-applications in **October/November**, and 20 full applications in **December/January**.
- Evaluate applications based on the information submitted; the purpose, goals and evaluation criteria; and the review committee's professional and collective judgment.
- Attend one virtual review committee orientation meeting (1 ½ hours)
 - **Virtual review committee orientation meeting: Thursday, October 24th, 10 to 11:30**
- Attend two virtual review committee meetings (4 hours each).
 - **Pre-application virtual review committee meeting: Tuesday, November 13th, 1 to 5**
 - **Full application virtual review committee meeting: Tuesday, January 23rd, 1 to 5**
 - The orientation and application review meetings will be fully remote.
- Develop funding recommendations together with other review committee members.
- Provide feedback to staff about ways to strengthen the grant program administration and outcomes.

EMAIL STATEMENT OF INTEREST AND A SUMMARY OF RELEVANT LIVED AND/OR PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

To apply for the nature education grant review committee, please briefly explain why you are interested in participating in the review committee and attach a resume or experience summary which details your individual background in an email to the Grants Program Manager, Karissa Lowe, karissa.lowe@oregonmetro.gov.

Metro staff will begin reviewing committee applications in September 2024 and review committee applications are due by October 15, 2024.

Why are you interested in serving on the nature education and outdoor experiences grant review committee?

- **Experience:** What lived and/or professional experience, knowledge and skills will help you to evaluate whether community organizations and groups meet the grant purpose to improve water quality, restore fish and wildlife habitat, or connect people to nature and the goals of building greater resiliency to climate change and cultural, environmental and economic equity? What is your connection to and involvement with the community and racial equity, diversity, and inclusion work?
- **Conflict of interest:** Are you or your immediate family a staff member or board member of an organization that plans to submit a grant application? Grant applicants are eligible to serve on the review committee, but will excuse themselves from the scoring and the committee discussion of that grant (pre) application.
- **Availability:** It is important that grant review committee members attend the 1½ hour virtual orientation meeting and the 2 virtual application review meetings for 4 hours. Are you available to attend:

Date	Time	Purpose
Thursday, October 24, 2024	10 to 11:30	Review committee orientation meeting
Thursday, November 13, 2024	1 to 5	Review committee pre-application review meeting
Thursday, January 23, 2025	1 to 5	Review committee full application review meeting

WHAT’S THE TIMELINE?

September 2024	Availability of grant funds announced
September and October 2024	One-on-one meeting opportunities for applicants with program staff
October 3, 2024	Morning Nature education virtual grant workshop 10 -11:30 Evening Nature education virtual grant workshop 5:30 - 7
October 22, 2024, 4 p.m.	Nature education pre-applications due to Metro
Thursday October 24, 2024	Review committee orientation meeting 10-11:30
November 13, 2024	Review committee pre-application review meeting 1 - 5
November 14, 2024	Pre-application decisions announced to applications
November and December 2024	Nature education full proposal one-on-one meeting opportunities with program staff
December 10, 2024, 4 p.m.	Nature education full proposals due to Metro
Thursday, January 23, 2025	Review committee full proposal review meeting 1 - 5
Friday, January 24, 2025	Review committee award recommendations announced to applicants
February 2025	Metro Council grant awards
February and March 2025	One on one orientation meetings with grantees; contracts finalized; grant funds available