USDA Forest Service
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Forest Landowner Support: Tribal Access to Emerging Private Markets for Climate Mitigation or Forest Resilience

Applicant Support Webinar

State, Private, and Tribal Forestry
Cooperative Forestry

Inflation Reduction Act (IRA): Forest Landowner Support

IRA provides the U.S. Forest Service $450 million for Forest Landowner Support.

Funding intended to benefit rural non-Federal lands and landowners, including Tribes and Tribal lands held in trust.

Programs implemented by the U.S. Forest Service's State, Private, and Tribal Forestry deputy area.

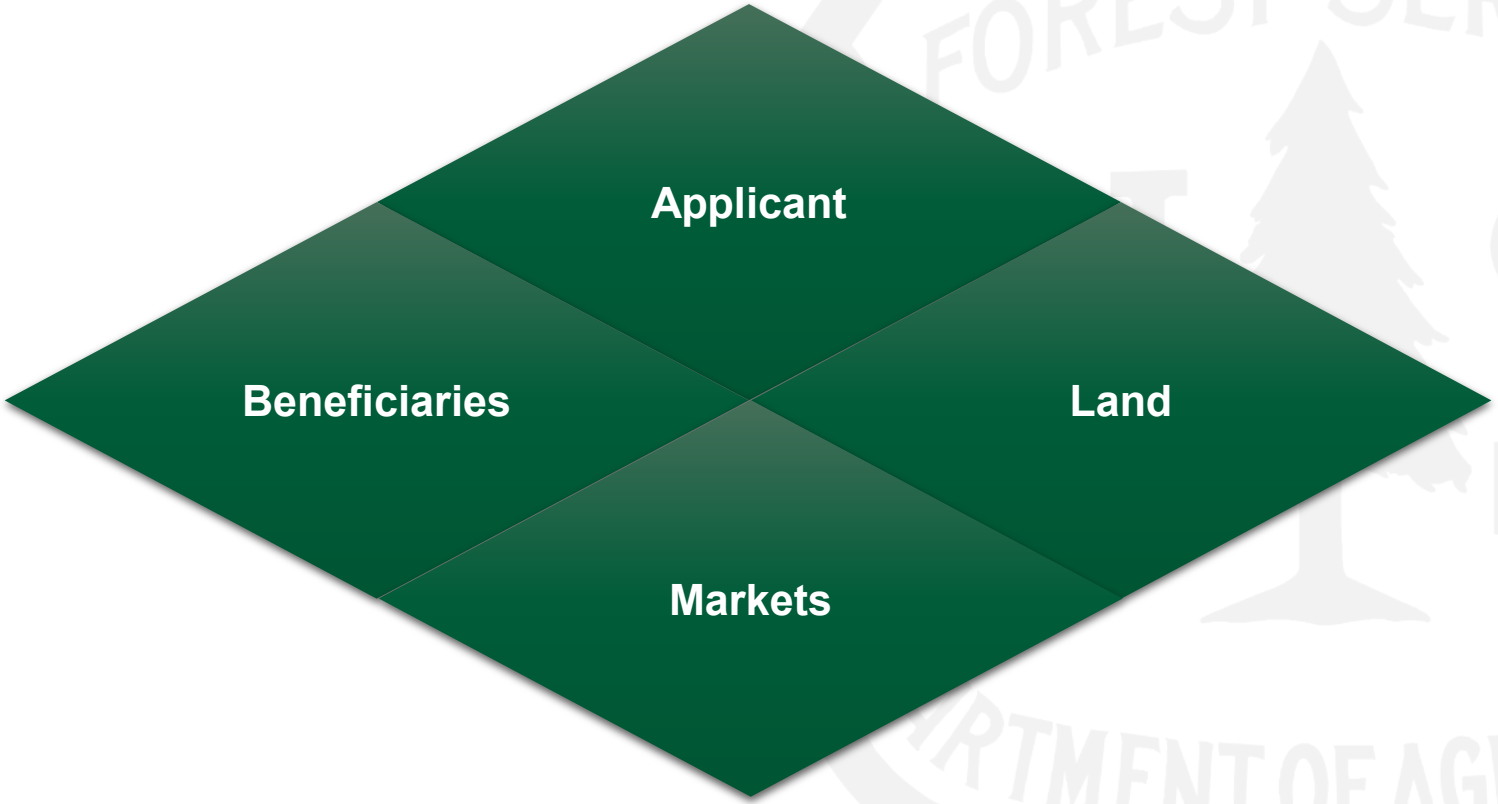


(USDA Forest Service photo by Nate Lowe)

Quick Facts

- Proposals are **due August 21, 2024**.
- Eligible entities may submit **one proposal for up to $2 million**.
- All proposed activities should **support participation in emerging private markets for climate mitigation or forest resilience**.
- **No match** requirement.
- Proposals must be **submitted via grants.gov**.

Definitions and Eligibility



Definitions and Eligibility: Applicants

Who Can Apply:

- **Federally Recognized Tribes**
- **Alaska Native Corporations and Villages**
- **Tribal Organizations**
  (as defined in the Indian Self-Determination and Education Assistance Act (25 U.S. Code § 5304))
  - *"the recognized governing body of any Indian Tribe; any legally established organization of Indians which is controlled, sanctioned, or chartered by such governing body or which is democratically elected by the adult members of the Indian community to be served by such organization and which includes the maximum participation of Indians in all phases of its activities: Provided, that in any case where a contract is let or grant made to an organization to perform services benefiting more than one Indian tribe, the approval of each such Indian tribe shall be a prerequisite to the letting or making of such contract or grant."*

Individuals are not eligible to apply.



(USDA Forest Service photo by Preston Keres)

Definitions and Eligibility: Land

Program activities must target ***nonindustrial private forest land,*** *which is defined as meeting all of the following criteria:*

- Is **rural** (all areas outside US Census areas with 50,000 or more people)
- Has **existing tree cover or is suitable for growing trees**
- Is owned by any **private** individual, group, association, corporation, Indian Tribe, or other private legal entity or is **Tribal land held in trust** by the Federal government



(Forest Service photo by Scott Ray)

Definitions and Eligibility: Beneficiaries

Focus Area 1: Underserved landowners

Forest landowner(s) belonging to one or more of the following groups:

- Federally recognized Tribes
- Beginning forest landowners
- Forest landowners living in high poverty areas
- Limited resource producers
- Veterans

Focus Area 2: Small-acreage landowners (2,500 acres or less)



(USDA Forest Service photo by Preston Keres)

Definitions and Eligibility: Markets

Markets currently exist around greenhouse gases (including carbon), water quality, biodiversity/habitat, and wetland restoration. Additional emerging market innovations include certification for products and supply chains that address conservation objectives.

Market drivers related to cost savings and risk reduction, such as source water protection or restoration, may also be addressed.



(Forest Service photo by Gary Garner)

The USDA Forest Service will not endorse any specific market or activity (e.g. carbon markets).

The agency supports Tribes in self-determining which, if any, emerging markets align with traditional practices and your community's vision.

All proposed activities should
support participation
in emerging private markets for
climate mitigation or forest resilience.

What We Are Looking for: Guiding Principles

- Forest management practices must **emphasize ecosystem resilience** rather than maximization of any single benefit to the detriment of ecosystem function.
- Forest management practices should **measurably demonstrate "net positive" outcomes** (additionality) over time for multiple public and ecosystem benefits including, but not limited to, carbon sequestration, biodiversity/habitat restoration, sustainably managed forest products and/or improved water quantity or quality.
- Activities and practices should **incorporate consideration of risk**, including disturbance and future climate conditions, and **contribute to forest resilience**.
- Activities and practices must be **designed for site-specific conditions** (e.g., forest type; climate change impacts and vulnerability; and relevant laws, regulations, and policies).
- Emerging private markets that support these practices should **optimize direct benefits to landowners while limiting their financial risk**.

Indigenous Knowledge

- The Forest Service encourages proposals that support and integrate Indigenous Knowledge, including into market participation efforts.
- The agency recognizes Indigenous Knowledge as one of the many important bodies of knowledge that contributes to the scientific, technical, social, and economic advancements of the United States and our collective understanding of the natural world.

Evaluation Criteria

- **Alignment with program and Focus Area priorities, e.g.:**
  - Targeted markets address climate mitigation and/or forest resilience
  - Targeted markets enhance ecosystem health
  - Barriers to market participation are addressed
  - Potential for significant and lasting impact
  - Benefits are optimized while risks limited
- **Technical merit, e.g.:**
  - Approach is sound and well-designed
  - Targeted markets are adequately understood and addressed
  - Measurable outcomes are clearly defined
  - Monitoring is well-designed
- **Organizational capability and capacity, e.g.:**
  - Key personnel (current and planned) have appropriate skills and experiences
  - Proposed partnerships are strong

Ineligible Activities

- **Basic research**, which includes applied research
  - Technical transfer, education, and outreach activities associated with applying research *can be included* in the application.
- **Construction and capital improvements** including facilities, infrastructure, roads, new buildings, culverts, and boardwalks.
- **Land acquisition** (conservation easement and fee simple) projects.
- Small business start-up funding.
- **Lobbying**, litigation, or political advocacy.
- Initial resources for **capitalizing a revolving fund**, defined as a pool of capital that can be loaned and replenished as a borrower pays back a lender.
- Cost-share, reimbursement, and other types of **direct payment to individuals as landowners**.
  - Funding may be used to perform work on private lands; for example, a Tribe or Tribal organization could pay for consulting services or treatment activities to be performed on private lands with permission of the landowner.
- **Profit**

*Note on **EQUIPMENT:*** Equipment purchases are rarely approved and will be reviewed prior to grant award. Equipment rental should be considered as an alternative. Equipment is defined as an article of nonexpendable, tangible personal property having a useful life of more than one year and an acquisition cost of $5,000 or more per unit.

Portfolio Balance

When making funding decisions, the USDA Forest Service will also account for program **portfolio balance,** which may include the following considerations, among others:

- Geographic location
- Scope of activities
- Type of market(s)

How to Apply

Prepare to Apply

Register your organization with www.Sam.gov and make sure your registration is “active.” Take note of the assigned Unique Entity Identifier (UEI)

- Note that sam.gov registration can be tricky and it takes time to resolve any issues that arise

Create a Grants.gov account and add an organizational profile to the account using the UEI

- EBiz point of contact (POC) must log into Grants.gov and authorize the appropriate roles. The EBiz POC must also authorize people with the “AOR role”, which allows specific people to submit and sign applications.

Submit Application via Grants.gov

1) Create a workspace
2) Submit a workspace
3) Track a workspace submission
4) Check for acknowledgment of application receipt and take note of tracking number (GRANTXXXXXXXX)

Grants.gov Resources

- How to register with SAM
  - Contact a PTAC center for help with SAM registration
- Grants.gov applicant resources page
- Additional Grants.gov references and training resources
  - Creating forms in a Grants.gov Workspace
  - Grants.gov applicant training resources
  - Grants.gov official YouTube channel

Required Proposal Documents

- Cover page
- Project narrative
- Detailed budget and budget narrative
- SF-424A (standard form, filled in via Grants.gov)
- SF-424 (standard form, filled in via Grants.gov)
- Letter(s) of collaboration (if applicable)
- Negotiated Indirect Cost Rate Assessment (if applicable)

Required Proposal Documents: Cover Page

- **Cover page**
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Cover Page Contents:

- Project title
- Project applicant entity name (list subsidiaries/affiliates and/or parent company)
- Contact information
- Entity type: federally recognized Tribe, Alaska Native corporation or village, or Tribal organization
- Abstract (200 words or less)

Required Proposal Documents: Proposal Narrative

- Cover page
- **Project narrative**
- Detailed budget and budget narrative
- SF-424A (standard form, filled in via Grants.gov)
- SF-424 (standard form, filled in via Grants.gov)
- Letter(s) of collaboration (if applicable)
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Project Narrative Contents:

- Standard typeface
- 12-pt font
- <10 pages

- Problem statement
- Strategies for addressing barriers/challenges to market participation
- Proposed activities and implementation timeline
- Alignment with program goals and guiding principles
- Proposed partnerships
- Measurable outcomes and impact
- Monitoring and evaluation
- Capability and capacity

Required Proposal Documents: Budget

- Cover page
- Project narrative
- **Detailed budget and budget narrative**
- **SF-424A (standard form, filled in via Grants.gov)**
- SF-424 (standard form, filled in via Grants.gov)
- Letter(s) of support (if applicable)
- Negotiated Indirect Cost Rate Assessment (if applicable)

Budget Categories

Use these categories for both detailed budget and SF-424A form

- Personnel
- Fringe benefits
- Travel
- Equipment (>$5000/unit acquisition cost)
- Supplies
- Contractual
- Other (includes sub-awards)
- Indirect costs

Budget Notes and Tips (1 of 2)

- There is **no match requirement,** no requirement that applicants contribute a percentage of matching funds.
- **Anticipated project income** should be noted in budget documents and will be discussed after a project is selected. The recommended path is to utilize project income to augment project activities.

Budget Notes and Tips (2 of 2)

- The **budget categories and amounts** in the Detailed Budget and 424-A should match. There should be clear linkages between the proposed budget and proposed project activities.
- If you do not have a Negotiated Indirect Cost Rate Agreement with the US Government, you are eligible to include a 10% de minimis indirect cost rate in your budget
- “Personnel” should include salary only and cannot be a loaded rate or billable rate. Benefits should be included in “Fringe benefits.” Pooled administrative/overhead costs are included in indirect costs.

Key Dates and Resources

What Happens Next

Deadline:

August 21, 2024

Award Announcements:

Late 2024/Early 2025

How to Access Application Assistance

1) Visit our website for links to a Frequently Asked Questions document, to download the detailed Notice of Funding Opportunity, and more.
2) Contact the Forest Service IRA Forest Landowner Support Team (sm.fs.landownerira@usda.gov)
3) Contact a Community Navigators organization
4) Explore www.Grants.gov resources.