columbia green

Call for Proposals

Our Columbia Green Grant Program supports our mission, which is to optimize the environment to enhance the quality of life in the greater Columbia area. Our vision is to support community projects, promote a healthy environment, foster partnerships, and inspire through education. We seek grant proposals from nonprofit organizations aligned to this mission and vision.

Columbia Green Grants reimburse local nonprofit groups for up to $5,000 for projects related to nature preservation, green spaces, educational gardens, and enhancing the beauty and function of public spaces. Grants can be used to reimburse organizations for the cost of plants, trees, soil amendments and mulch. Grant funds cannot be used for items such as labor, delivery costs, irrigation, hardscaping, or plants on the invasive species list linked in this document.

Eligible groups in the Greater Columbia area include nonprofits with a 501(c)(3) designation, such as neighborhood organizations, foundations, schools, places of worship, public gardens, and garden clubs.

Columbia Green Grant recipients will be notified by mail in late October 2024. Award recipients will be invited to attend Columbia Green's annual meeting in November where they will be recognized and congratulated.

GRANT CYCLE TIMELINE	
Application Deadline	August 31, 2024
Recipients Notified	Late October 2024
Recognition at Annual Meeting	November, 2024
Project completion	December 31, 2025

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Apply → Selection Notification → Implement → Report → Site Visit → Reimbursement Check

Project Areas: All projects must be planted in common areas, entry ways or recreational areas freely open and accessible to the general public in the Greater Columbia area.

Eligible Groups: Nonprofits in the Greater Columbia area with a 501(c)(3) designation, such as neighborhood organizations, foundations, schools, places of worship, public gardens, and garden clubs.

Eligible Costs: Grant funds may be used only to reimburse the purchase of plants, trees, soil amendments, and mulch.

Ineligible Costs: Costs of labor, delivery, hardscaping and/or irrigation are not reimbursable.

**Matching Funds:** Matching funds are encouraged, but not required.

Sustainability: All projects must demonstrate a sustainable irrigation and maintenance plan to ensure longevity of the project after initial installation.

Invasive Plants: Columbia Green will NOT fund the purchase of invasive plants for any project. We do, however, encourage and support use of native plants. Lists of both native plants suitable for our climate as well as disallowed invasive species are also linked at the end of this document for your reference.

Proposal Specifications: Proposal may not exceed 8 pages in total, including pictures, diagrams, or other attachments.

Proposal Submission: Submit proposal via email to hello@columbiagreen.org

The application can be downloaded from the Columbia Green website.
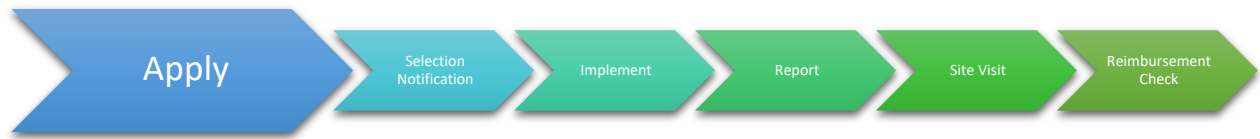
The application packet consists of two documents. This document (Columbia Green Grant Guidance 2024) contains instructions to guide you through writing your proposal. The second document, Columbia Green Grant Proposal Application 2024, is to be filled out and submitted to Columbia Green for consideration.

The Columbia Green Grant Proposal Application 2024 contains three sections:

1. Cover Page & Photos

2. Project Narrative

3. Budget

Also included is a fourth section that will <u>not</u> be submitted with your application:

4. Final Report Documentation for Project Completion, used to keep track of the information that must be submitted in the Final Report should your project be funded.

PART 1: COVER PAGE & PHOTOS

Part one should contain:

- Applicant organization, contact person, and contact information including telephone number and e-mail address.

- Affirmation of 501(c)(3) status.

- Name of the project, a description of the physical location, and ownership if different from the applicant.

- A brief overview of the existing site

- On page 2, replace the stock photos with your own photos of the present site that help to describe the goals of this project.

Columbia Green Grant Guidance 2024

The narrative should explain the proposed project and must include:

- A description of project goals and plans, including the expected benefit to the community and possible benefits to wildlife.

- The names of the person(s) overseeing the installation.

- A description of the resources you already have in place or that you plan to acquire.

- The irrigation plan.

- The maintenance schedule.

- Sustainability plan for longevity of the project.

- Replace the sample landscape diagram with a diagram of the project area, including approximate dimensions, and locations and names of the trees and/or plants to be installed.

- A list of plants, trees and materials to be installed for which you will seek reimbursement from Columbia Green.

- A list of other materials used in the project (including plants and trees) for which you will not seek reimbursement.

- The project timeline.

PART 3: BUDGET

A budget narrative (1-2 paragraphs) is recommended but not required. A budget sheet is included in the application and must be filled out to show:

- The estimated total budget for the project, including matching funds if any.

- Estimated sizes, costs and sources of plants and trees to be reimbursed by Columbia Green.

PART 4: DOCUMENTATION GUIDE FOR THE FINAL REPORT

Note that this section is <u>not</u> to be included in the submission of your proposal.

Funded projects must be completed by December of 2025. Upon completion, the grantee must submit a final written report to Columbia Green. The report will summarize the project's goals and accomplishments, as well as any modifications to the original plan.

The Documentation Guide for the Final Report is included in the application as part of the grant application so that during project implementation, grantees can keep track of the information required for the final report.

The Final Report must include:

- copies of the original receipts to support the purchase of items to be reimbursed by Columbia Green,

- a list of installed plants and materials for committee review,

- project completion timeline,

- photographs of the project at various stages during implementation, and

- the name to appear on the reimbursement check and the mailing address for the check.

After the grantee has submitted its final report, representatives from the Grants Committee of Columbia Green will schedule a site visit to verify successful completion of the project. Once verified, we will place a small sign to identify the site as a project funded by Columbia Green. Our check to reimburse the grantee will be mailed after the site visit.

Note that the project may be featured on the Columbia Green website or other social media intended to promote our grants program.

POST-AWARD GRANT ADMINISTRATION

- The grantee is responsible for all approvals, permits, and easements that may apply, particularly those related to a municipal or county right-of-way.

- Expenditures for plants, soil amendments, and mulch are cost reimbursable. Grant recipients must purchase materials and supplies with their own funds and will be reimbursed upon completion of the project. Copies of original receipts for all purchases must be submitted with the request for reimbursement. A copy of the final budget for the project must be submitted with receipts.

- NO substitutions may be made during installation without the approval of the Grants Committee. These will be approved only if they are horticulturally as appropriate as the original choices.

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PROPOSAL EVALUATION

Proposals will be evaluated and ranked by the Grants Committee of Columbia Green using the following criteria:

- Expected benefit to the general public and project area.

- Appropriateness and attractiveness of the proposed planting to the location.

- Public accessibility to the site.

- Possible benefits to wildlife.

- Realistic maintenance plan to support longevity of the project.

- Sustainability of the plantings given the proposed maintenance and irrigation plan.

RESOURCES: INVASIVE PLANTS AND NATIVE PLANTS

Exotic Invasive Species List

Native SC Plants List

GRANT APPLICATION CHECKLIST

Grantees must be able to answer YES to the following criteria to qualify for a CG grant:

☐ Is the applicant group a qualified 501(c)(3) organization?

☐ Is the project in the Greater Columbia area?

☐ Does the project include a sustainable irrigation plan?

☐ Does the plant list contain no invasive species?

☐ Is the project area publicly accessible?

☐ Does the proposal list specific plants, sizes, and quantities with estimated costs?

☐ Does the proposal include <u>photos</u> of the site and a <u>diagram of the planting area</u> indicating site <u>dimensions</u> and <u>plant placement</u>?

☐ Does the proposal include a <u>maintenance plan</u>?

☐ Is the project overseer identified?

☐ Is the landowner identified?

☐ Does the project budget break out costs to be covered by the grant (ONLY plants, trees, soil amendment and mulch) and does that portion not exceed $5,000?)

☐ Is there a schedule for project completion?

WE ARE HERE TO HELP!

If you require additional information or need assistance during the application process, please contact us at Hello@columbiagreen.org and provide your name and a telephone number. We will get in touch with you. We want to help you succeed!