



## 2009 Watershed Institute Grant Program Request for Proposals

### Introduction

The Watershed Institute, a program of the Stony Brook - Millstone Watershed Association, works to enhance the network of citizen-based watershed organizations throughout New Jersey that are engaged in protecting natural resources. The Watershed Institute (Institute) accomplishes this through hosting educational forums, providing tailored advice, distributing relevant information to groups, facilitating peer-to-peer learning, and administering a small grant program.

The Institute invites applications for the 2009 funding cycle of the Watershed Institute Grant Program. This grant program was established to encourage watershed protection efforts throughout New Jersey. It aims to help small, citizen-based watershed groups establish themselves as independent and self-sustaining organizations with robust programs that protect and restore New Jersey's natural resources. Awards target projects that will strengthen organizational capacity and protect the environment.

Funding for this grant program is provided to the Institute by the Geraldine R. Dodge Foundation and the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection.

### New for 2009

Significant changes have been made to projects eligible for funding. Please review the Eligible Projects section for details.

In light of the current economic situation, the Institute has also established additional guidelines for the 2009 funding cycle.

- Funding will be open to the continuation of existing programs, in addition to the development and expansion of programs.
- Priority will be given to organizations not receiving funds directly from the Geraldine R. Dodge Foundation for 2010.

### Objectives

The Institute is looking for proposals that:

- Build the capacity of the applicant organization;
- Increase the applicant's presence in the community;
- Provide the potential for the applicant to become financially stable;
- Develop programs designed to improve the health of the environment;
- Provide opportunities for partnerships with various stakeholders; and/or
- Conduct research and further understanding of local issues.

## Deadlines

Letter of Inquiry Due	June 9, 2009
Proposal Due	August 25, 2009
Signed Grant Agreement Due	November 9, 2009
Mid-term Meeting	April/May 2010
Final Narrative and Interim Financial Reports Due	July 30, 2010
Project Completion	October 31, 2010
Final Financial Report Due	November 18, 2010

## Eligible Entities

Nonprofit environmental groups that meet at least quarterly, have 501(c)(3) status, and conduct work in New Jersey are eligible to apply for funds. If your organization is not classified as tax-exempt, you may not use a conduit organization. Priority will be given to watershed groups and New Jersey based groups. Applicants who are not watershed groups or do not reside in New Jersey must detail how the proposed project will further this grant program's goal of protecting watersheds throughout New Jersey. Priority will be given to organizations not receiving funds directly from the Geraldine R. Dodge Foundation for 2010.

## Grant Size

Grant awards may range from \$1,000 to \$20,000, with the majority ranging from \$3,000 - \$15,000. Visit the Institute's website at [www.thewatershedinstitute.org](http://www.thewatershedinstitute.org) for summaries of previous grants. In-kind matching is strongly encouraged, but not required. Multiple applications will be accepted.

## Eligible Projects

Projects must be completed by October 31, 2010. They must enhance the viability of the organization and be relevant to its mission. Projects should fall under one or more of the following five categories:

### 1. Science

Examples include, but are not limited to:

- a. Monitoring, such as chemical, biological, and visual water quality monitoring\*; habitat assessment; or other comparable data gathering activities.
- b. Planning, such as watershed management planning, characterization and assessment work, or similar planning and analysis work.

\*Water quality monitoring funds are available for developing new, or enhancing existing, monitoring programs at all four tiers identified by the NJDEP Volunteer Monitoring Program. All water quality monitoring projects must include the development of either a study design and/or Quality Assurance Project Plan (QAPP), depending on the tier. Guidance on tiers, study designs, and QAPPs is available at <http://www.state.nj.us/dep/wms/bfbm/vm/>. The study design and/or QAPP must be submitted to, and approved by, the NJDEP Volunteer Monitoring Program prior to beginning monitoring activities. Water quality monitoring grantees must also submit data to the NJDEP E2 data management system and make that data available to the public for viewing.

## 2. Conservation

Examples include, but are not limited to:

- a. Restoration, such as streambank, lake, shore or other similar restorations.
- b. Stormwater mitigation, such as detention basin retrofit, rain garden installation, or other comparable projects.

## 3. Policy

Examples include, but are not limited to:

- a. Local policy work
- b. Regional policy work
- c. Statewide policy work, including participation in the New Jersey Council of Watershed Associations

## 4. Education

Examples include, but are not limited to:

- a. Public programming
- b. School programming

## 5. Organizational Health

The development and/or implementation of the plans listed below:

- a. Strategic plans
- b. Fundraising plans
- c. Communications/marketing plans
- d. Board development plans
- e. Program/project evaluation plans
- f. Other plans recognized by both the applicant and the Institute as a need specific to the applicant

### **Grants May Not Be Used For**

Capital projects (rent, site improvement, utilities, etc.); endowments; general operating support; land acquisition; entertainment; lobbying and political activities; and litigation.

### **How To Apply**

Letters of Inquiry (LOI) must be submitted to the Institute by mail, postmarked by June 9, 2009, or by email by 5 p.m. June 9, 2009. LOI forms are available on the Institute's website at <http://www.thewatershedinstitute.org/resources/twig>, or may be obtained by contacting the Institute directly. Institute staff will provide feedback on the LOI and full proposals will be requested for eligible projects. Applicants will be notified by June 30, 2009 if they are invited to submit a full proposal. Full proposals will be due postmarked by August 25, 2009. Overnight delivery is highly discouraged.

## Proposal Evaluation

A review committee will evaluate all applications. Proposals will be evaluated on the following criteria:

- Size of the organization: groups with smaller operating budgets will be given favorable consideration;
- Extent to which the application incorporates one or more of the objectives of this grant program;
- Feasibility of the project, including the budget, timeline, and outcomes;
- Clear identification of project deliverables/outputs;
- Level of innovation, creativity, and originality;
- Previous accomplishments and qualifications of the organization to carry out the proposed activities;
- Potential of the project to serve as a model;
- Past performance on grants from the Institute; and
- Type of organization: watershed groups and New Jersey based groups will be given favorable consideration.

## Notification and Award Allocation

Applicants will be notified of funding decisions in early October 2009. Grant awards of \$5,000 or less will be disbursed in full upon receipt of the signed grant agreement. In the case of larger awards, half of the award will be disbursed initially, with the balance released after the mid-term meeting.

## Mid-Term Meeting and Reporting

Watershed Institute staff will contact award recipients approximately halfway through the project's implementation to determine project status and provide feedback. Award recipients will be required to submit a 2-3 page final report and interim financial report by July 30, 2010, including an evaluation of the project and its effectiveness in meeting the objectives. Recipients of the grants may be asked to share their experiences at informal discussions with other watershed associations.

## Contact Information

The Watershed Institute  
Alyse Greenberg, Program Coordinator  
c/o Stony Brook-Millstone Watershed Association  
31 Titus Mill Road  
Pennington, New Jersey 08534  
(609) 737-3735 x27  
Institute@thewatershed.org  
www.thewatershedinstitute.org



“Man shapes himself through decisions that shape his environment.” -Rene Dubos