



The N.C. Forest Service (NCFS) Urban and Community Forestry (U&CF) program seeks to award two, two-year grants to an organization(s) (grantee) to manage and complete select urban forestry services (Climb to Tree City USA package) for municipalities awarded assistance (subrecipient) through our Financial Assistance Program (FAP) request for applications (RFAs) process. To that end, we are requesting proposals from eligible organizations to provide these services utilizing the following guidance.

- Eligible organizations
 - 501 c3 not-for-profit organization
 - The organization must have the technical expertise to complete the urban forestry work or subcontract with service providers that have the technical expertise to complete the work. Guidance for identifying and securing urban forestry professionals can be found on our [Urban Forestry Professionals webpage](#), and minimum qualifications for professionals can be found on our [Financial Assistance Program webpage](#).
- Request for proposals period
 - Closes March 1, 2026
- Services to be provided by the grantee
 - Engage and lead the subrecipients and complete the following practices and activities. Specifications and guidance documents can be found on our [U&CF Resources and Specifications webpage](#) under the urban forestry section.
 - Inventories and assessments
 - Sample tree inventory – Complete a statistical sample inventory of public trees utilizing iTree protocols and the NCFS U&CF sample tree inventory specification.
 - Ordinances, policy, standards and specifications
 - Public tree ordinance – review and update if necessary or develop.
 - Urban forestry standards & specifications – review and update if necessary or develop utilizing NCFS standards and specifications.
 - Plans
 - Management plan – Develop a basic management plan that includes analysis and outcomes as detailed in the NCFS U&CF management plan template focusing on public tree management.
 - Trees & Storms readiness plan – Using the NCFS U&CF readiness BMP, lead the municipality in the completion of the readiness checklist.
 - Outreach -- Develop a simple outreach program that includes product(s) and/or event(s) to engage, educate and inform the public about the project.
 - Tree planting -- Design and complete a “small” (up to 10, 2-3-inch caliper trees) tree planting project to celebrate the project.



- Practice plan – A tree planting and post-care plan is required.
- Utilization of NCFS U&CF tree supply and planting specifications or approved equivalent is required.
- Tree supply inspection, planting inspection and report by a qualified urban forestry professional are required.
- Outreach event – Lead the development of and hold an Arbor Day celebration.
- Final report – Design and publish a two-to-eight-page infographic-style report summarizing and illustrating the community's U&CF needs for this project and accomplishments.
- Proposed subrecipient award and completion of services process
 - Request for applications – NCFS U&CF offers two RFAs per year, one in January and one in July. Municipalities will be eligible to apply for a grant to receive these services (Climb to Tree City USA package) at the January offering. A July offering is open for consideration.
 - A number of subrecipients, to be agreed with the grantee, will be awarded by NCFS U&CF based on our FAP award criteria provided on our FAP webpage.
 - A notice to proceed with the work for the subrecipients will be issued to the grantee.
 - The grantee will complete the Climb to Tree City USA package of services for the subrecipients over an agreed project duration per subrecipient.
- Grant structure and funding programs
 - Grant structure
 - Unit price structure
 - The grantee will be paid a flat fee (to be proposed and agreed) for each of the services listed in the Climb to Tree City USA package plus the cost of purchased goods and paid quarterly upon completion of each service.
 - Match/Cost share – There are no match or cost share requirements for the grantee or subrecipients.
 - Indirect administration – the grantee will be paid a flat percent rate on the services and goods billed based on the funding program.
 - Funding programs
 - There are two federal funding programs that will fund this work. Each program designates municipalities that are eligible for these services and the indirect rate. Details of the programs are as follows and include the amount of funding we currently have available to fund this work.
 - Hurricane Helene Recovery (HHR)



- Tribal government or a municipality located in Alleghany, Ashe, Avery, Buncombe, Caldwell, Henderson, Madison, Mithcell, Polk, Rutherford, Transylvania, or Yancey counties.
- Indirect administration – 15% of services billed.
- \$2.2 million in assistance is available for award of all HHR funded work.
- Inflation Reduction Act (IRA)
 - 100% of the Tribal government or municipality's incorporated lands fall within the boundaries of [NCFS U&CF Financial Assistance Program Inflation Reduction Act project areas](#).
 - Indirect administration – 20% of services billed
 - \$5.6 million in assistance is available for award of all IRA funded work.
- Award, grant contracts and schedules
 - Award decisions will be based on the following criteria.
 - Project team expertise, qualifications and experience
 - Cost of services
 - Capacity to deliver services
 - Conditional award notices will be issued by March 31, 2026. Grantees will enter a grant contract with the N.C. Forest Service.
 - Grant contract duration – Two years
 - Working with the N.C. Forest Service, conditional grantees must complete the work necessary to complete and execute a grant contract with a start date of July 1, 2026.
 - We anticipate a notice to proceed for the first set of subrecipient work will be issued July 1, 2026.
 - The awardee will complete the work and submit quarterly requests for payment to the N.C. Forest Service for approval and payment.
- Proposal
 - Please register your intent to submit a proposal by completing the following registration by Jan. 31, 2026.

Intent to submit a Proposal Registration

- Please provide the following in a single document, and email your proposal to ncfsucf@ncagr.gov by 11:59 p.m. March 1, 2026.
 - Project team, roles, expertise and experience
 - Project duration for a single subrecipient
 - Number of subrecipient projects that can be completed in one year
 - A schedule of deliverables by project quarter for a single subrecipient



- A narrative of how the services will be provided to a subrecipient by project quarter
- A narrative of the management of the receipt of subrecipient projects, project reporting and assumptions
- A unit price budget to provide each of the services