

Neighbourhood Planting Program

2025 Fall Program Guidelines

Environment, Climate and Forestry
Urban Forestry

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Purpose

This program supports community-led tree giveaway and planting events that will increase canopy cover in Toronto through resident engagement and leadership in tree planting and stewardship on private land.

Types of Support Available

Through this program, eligible community groups can receive one or more of the following supports:

- Financial assistance of up to \$500 (depending on the size of the event and number of trees and shrubs to be given away/planted)
- Free native trees and shrubs (while supplies last)
- Education, training, and technical support for planting and caring for new trees/shrubs.

Duration

Events should take place from either September – November (dependent on the weather).

Eligibility

Applicants must be a grassroots, community-based not-for-profit group or organization (incorporated or unincorporated) based in Toronto with annual operating budgets of less than \$500,000.

Applicants must have at least one year of experience as a group/organization.

Groups must be accountable to, and representative of the community they serve.

Groups must be in good standing with the City of Toronto. Previously funded groups who have failed to meet the terms and conditions of a past grant or who have any outstanding requirements may be ineligible.

Unincorporated groups that are requesting funding must work with a trustee organization (incorporated not-for-profit organization with audited financial statements and the financial systems in place to administer grant funding). A trustee is an incorporated not-for-profit organization and/or registered charity with audited financial statements that becomes a "legal

home" of the project. A trustee will hold funds and disburse monies to the group, assume liability for project activities, and provide insurance, administrative supports and mentorship. Applicants will be required to work with one of six trustee organizations connected to the Local Leadership Grant.

A trustee organization is not required if the applicant is only requesting free trees and shrubs or technical assistance. The following costs and/or activities are not eligible for funding:

Ineligible Activities

- **General**
 - Activities that duplicate, conflict with, or falls within the scope of another program or service being delivered or developed by the City of Toronto or another organization (e.g. Ravine Strategy)
 - Activities that are contrary to the policies of the City of Toronto and/or applicable federal, provincial and municipal legislation, regulations and policies
 - Activities that are not consistent with good arboricultural practice
 - Activities that meet any tree planting requirement or obligation under the City of Toronto's tree bylaws, as a condition for planning and development approval, or any other laws or regulations
 - Research projects, summer camps, political or religious activities/services
 - Purchase, care or maintenance of invasive species
- **Location**
 - Activities taking place outside the City of Toronto
 - Tree planting on lands managed by the City of Toronto
 - Activities taking place on lands without the prior written approval of the property owner
 - Activities taking place on or adjacent to an Environmentally Significant Areas (ESA), Areas of Natural and Scientific Interest (ANSI), Provincially Significant Wetlands, protected areas under the Ravine and Natural Feature Protection By-law, or any other protected or sensitive natural area without the prior written approval of Urban Forestry
 - Activities taking place on lands owned or controlled by the Toronto District School Board, Toronto Catholic District School Board, or Toronto Community Housing Corporation without their prior written approval.

Ineligible Costs

- Core operating funding or costs related to ongoing programs/services
- Internal or external salaries or other people-costs where they make up more than 50% of the amount requested (including web design, graphics design, writers, translation, labour, etc.)
- Overhead and administrative costs where they make up more than 15% of the amount requested (does not include internal/external salaries or other people-costs)
- Taxes such as GST and HST for which the recipient is eligible for a tax rebate, and all other costs eligible for rebates

- Contingency costs
- Capital costs or infrastructure not directly related to tree planting building repairs or renovations, construction of sheds or garden beds, purchase of computers or audio/visual equipment etc.)
- Summer camps
- Land purchase
- Political activities
- Religious activities/services
- Advocacy expenses
- Research projects
- Fundraising activities
- Endowments or endowment building
- Scholarships, grants or bursaries
- Awards and prizes
- Alcohol purchase

Event Requirements

All trees and shrubs must be planted on private land within the City of Toronto and cannot be planted on City-owned or managed land, including parks, ravines, natural areas, and the road right of way.

The event must take place within the City of Toronto in a location accessible by public transit and must adhere to the City of Toronto's Human Rights and Anti-Harassment/Discrimination Policy.

Groups must have the staff or volunteer capacity to plan, promote, and deliver an event.

Groups must have participants pre-register for trees/shrubs for giveaway events and produce an attendee list for planting events. Participants may also be invited to participate in a voluntary City-directed post-planting success survey.

Application Process

Applications must be submitted online through the [Toronto Grants, Rebate, and Incentives Portal \(TGRIP\)](#) by **4 pm on July 11, 2025**. Link to TGRIP portal can be found at www.toronto.ca/treegrants. Please allow time to create an account and organizational profile within TGRIP.

Each application represents one community-led tree giveaway or planting event. If applying to host both a fall and spring event, please submit separate applications for each event.

Applications will be reviewed and assessed by City staff and those selected will be invited to meet with a dedicated urban forestry representative to discuss next steps. All applicants will be notified of decision.

Assessment Criteria

Applications will be evaluated based on four areas: Concept, Feasibility, Budget, and Impact.

- The project must closely align with the stated purpose of the program
- The application should clearly demonstrate the applicant's experience and capacity to successfully deliver the event, and describe a feasible process to delivering the event and has clearly defined deliverables
- Event costs should be reasonable to achieve the proposed deliverables
- The application should demonstrate the impact of the event as it relates to the purpose of the program, increasing canopy cover, and increasing resident engagement and leadership.

Additional assessment considerations include:

- Geographic representation across the City of Toronto
- Locations with low canopy cover or a high need for tree planting and/or stewardship
- Community impact and equity impacts of proposed activities

Accommodation

Accommodation (e.g. documents in alternate formats, off-hour meetings) is available as required to ensure that groups can fully participate in the funding process. For accommodation, please email forestrygrants@toronto.ca.

Information Sessions

Interested in learning more about this grant program and the application process? Join an online virtual information session. The details and registration are available below:

- May 29, 2025, 12 pm – 1 pm, [Registration Link](#)
- June 4, 2025, 5 pm – 6 pm, [Registration Link](#)

Application Support

Prospective applicants can contact Urban Forestry for support in determining if the project and organization are eligible to apply for funding. Applicants can also contact Urban Forestry with any questions, comments, or complaints regarding the grant program.

Please email: forestrygrants@toronto.ca