

Cover Sheet

2022 TANF Youth Innovation Project

Applicant Agency:			
<i>Please use the legal name and provide the full address. This is the fiscal agent with whom the grant agreement will be executed.</i>			
1. Agency Name:	Tree Trust		
2. Director Name:	Jared Smith	8. Contact Name:	Jared Smith
3. Telephone:	952-767-3891	9. Telephone:	952-767-3891
4. Fax:	952-767-3650	10. Fax:	952-767-3650
5. Email:	jareds@treetrust.org	11. Email:	jareds@treetrust.org
6. Agency Website:	https://treetrust.org		
7. Address:	1419 Energy Park Drive Saint Paul, MN 55108		12. Address:
			1419 Energy Park Drive Saint Paul, MN 55108
13. Federal Tax ID: (required)	41-1291626	14. Minnesota Tax ID: (required)	5123500
15. DUNS Number: (required)	070738315	16. SWIFT Vendor ID: (if known)	0000227410 001
Required Information:			
17. Project Name:	Tree Trust Career Pathways		
18. Geographic Area Served:	Seven county metro area		
19. Number of Participants Served:	4		
20. Project Start Date:	January 1, 2022		
21. Project End Date:	December 31, 2022		
22. Total Amount of Funding Requested:	\$15,000		

I certify that the information contained herein is true and accurate to the best of my knowledge and that I am authorized to submit this application on behalf of the applicant.

Authorized Signature	Title	Date
	Executive Director CEO	December 9, 2021

2022 TANF INNOVATION PROJECT

Narrative Questions:

- 1. Describe the youth service provider's plans to assure collaboration with participants' MFIP Employment Service Providers regarding their Employment Service Plans, as applicable.**

Tree Trust regularly maintains timesheets, Individual Service Strategy/Individual Development Plans, and Work Readiness Indicators for each participant. As applicable, Tree Trust staff will communicate and collaborate with referring case managers.

- 2. Describe how the youth service provider will identify and recruit eligible youth for the project. What percentage of participants do you expect to be from communities of color? Describe the youth service provider's plans to incorporate culturally responsive programming approaches when applicable.**

Tree Trust partners with metro area MFIP providers to recruit participants and plan services. Our Outreach Coordinator stays connected with MFIP program managers and staff to provide information about work experience opportunities and locations and meets with candidates for career exploration, work experience selection, and enrollment. MFIP Employment Service Providers across the metro refer to us.

Tree Trust has historically welcomed and served participants with diverse needs and backgrounds. In 2020, 57 percent of Tree Trust participants identified as Black, Indigenous, and People of Color. We anticipate serving participants with similar demographics to previous program years.

Tree Trust's vision is a thriving workforce living on a healthy planet, but disparities currently exist between BIPOC community members and their White counterparts. We acknowledge these inequities need thoughtful and intentional intervention to reduce disparities. Part of promoting racial equity involves engaging stakeholders for guidance on shaping how Tree Trust designs programming, as well as improving goals, delivery, and outcomes. We seek input and feedback from participants through various means, including surveys, program evaluations, and youth and young adult Leadership Committees.

In addition, Tree Trust invests in staff professional development to best serve program participants with diverse needs and with cultural competence. All seasonal and year-round staff will complete Equity and Diversity Training, Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) and Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder (FASD) Training, Motivational Interviewing Training, and De-escalation Training.

- 3. Describe the youth service provider's plans to introduce career pathways, prepare targeted youth for post-secondary education, provide information on high-growth, in-**

demand occupations in the region, and deliver financial literacy activities.

Tree Trust’s mission is to transform lives and landscapes by engaging people to build skills for meaningful careers, inspiring people to plant trees, and making our community a greener, healthier place to live. Through our Career Pathways programming, we equip people to achieve family-supporting, skilled trade, green careers to create economic opportunity and equity. Young people make our community a greener, healthier place to live while developing valuable career skills. Participants earn wages while learning about tree care, landscaping, property maintenance, or construction. Our Career Pathways programs range from entry-level experiences to pre-apprenticeship training with industry-recognized credentials.

Tree Trust offers pre-apprenticeship as a unique way for young people to avoid education debt and enter the workforce quickly, opening pathways to well-paying, in-demand careers with competitive benefits. Pre-apprenticeship participants build meaningful skills through hands-on projects, earn credentials, learn about apprenticeship opportunities, and connect with potential future employers.

Across tree care, landscaping, and construction industries, employers report a critical shortfall of skilled employees impacting their ability to successfully operate a business. Ninety-two percent of Minnesota employers in the construction industry reported “difficulty filling some or all salaried and hourly craft positions.”¹ The tree care industry faces similar skilled labor shortages while our community suffers from a tree loss epidemic due to emerald ash borer (EAB), which will cause nearly a billion ash trees to die in Minnesota in the coming years.² This concern is only magnified by the fact that thousands of Baby-Boomers are retiring in record numbers from skilled industries, leaving open jobs with not enough workers to fill.³

Tree Trust also gathered labor market information from the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) and the Minnesota Department of Employment and Economic Development (DEED), which track growing and declining occupations, to assist in developing relevant program offerings and informing participants about high-growth and in-demand occupations. The BLS projects decreases in low-skilled jobs such as retail and clerical in the years 2019-2029. For trade careers, BLS anticipates a growth in occupational needs, projecting a 10.1% increase in landscaping workers and 10.7% increase in tree trimmers.⁴ DEED predicts arborist/tree care jobs will see a 9.5% increase

¹ Star Tribune, Skilled Labor remains big issue for Minnesota employers, 2019.

<https://www.startribune.com/skilled-labor-remains-big-issue-for-minnesota-employers/559881062/>

² Minnesota Department of Natural Resources, Emerald Ash Borer,

<https://www.dnr.state.mn.us/invasives/terrestrialanimals/eab/index.html>

³ SHRM, Employers Face Hiring Challenges as Boomers Retire in Record Numbers,

<https://www.shrm.org/resourcesandtools/hr-topics/talent-acquisition/pages/employers-face-hiring-challenge-as-boomers-retire-in-record-numbers.aspx>

⁴ U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2020. <https://data.bls.gov/projections/occupationProj>

over the next eight years, with median wages sitting at \$55,974 annually.⁵ Tree care, landscape construction, and property maintenance offer opportunities for on-the-job advancement, including increases in salary with the development of further technical expertise, movement into leadership positions by supervising crews, or even assuming business ownership.

Tree Trust staff prioritize budgeting and financial literacy at the beginning of each cohort so participants can thoughtfully plan for the wages they will earn while in Career Pathways programming. Typical financial literacy lessons include: short-term and long-term budgeting; understanding credit, debt, saving, and investing; and financial responsibility and decision making around goals and needs. Either industry professionals, such as staff from Royal Credit Union, or Tree Trust staff lead the trainings.

4. Describe how individual youth will be matched with employment opportunities.

Tree Trust Career Pathways offers opportunities to youth and young adults at different life stages and with varied employment objectives. Participants select between several options, which best meet their goals:

- i. Summer Youth Employment Program (SYEP)—An entry-level, green career experience where young people, ages 14-21, learn outdoor construction and landscaping and can obtain Tree Trust certificates in Employability, Tool Identification, and Workplace Safety. SYEP serves youth and young adults seeking a job experience with a willingness to explore trade careers.
- ii. Tree Trust YouthBuild—A pre-apprenticeship carpentry and arboriculture program for high school students, ages 16-21, with hands-on learning and the opportunity to earn industry-recognized credentials. YouthBuild serves youth and young adults seeking to learn about trade careers.
- iii. Branches—A pre-apprenticeship program for young adults 18-24 offering tree care, landscaping, and property maintenance. Participants develop green industry skills through community-enhancing projects and obtain industry-recognized credentials. Branches serves adults seeking to enter a trade full-time with a family-supporting wage.

In addition, Youth and Young Adult Services offers promising young people a customized approach to build the skills for meaningful careers. Participants connect with a Case Manager that listens to each participant's education and employment goals, and tailors services to fit the individual. Program elements include a customized case management approach, career preparation with employment readiness curriculum, education navigation support, and internships with Tree Trust employment partners.

⁵ Minnesota Department of Employment and Economic Development, Nov 18.
https://apps.deed.state.mn.us/lmi/oid/Results_9Columns.aspx?s=OccupationTitle

5. Describe any work readiness or occupational training (in person or virtual) that will be part of your project.

Career Pathways participants gain experience and build foundational career skills through a comprehensive scope of work based on their selected program. Guided and mentored by qualified Tree Trust Crew Leaders knowledgeable about landscaping, carpentry or tree care, participants learn hands-on by completing quality projects in the community. Work scopes in Career Pathways include:

- Tree care: Planting, pruning, mulching, watering, conducting tree inventories, and removing invasive species and diseased trees.
- Landscaping and property maintenance: Planting, irrigation, lawn and turf management, and snow removal.
- Landscape construction: Boardwalks, retaining walls, benches, and staircases.
- Carpentry: Framing walls, floors and roof structures; installing shingles, siding, exterior trim, interior trim, insulation, drywall, interior doors, exterior doors and windows; building and stripping concrete forms; and performing minor repairs.

Participants in SYEP can earn Tree Trust Certificates, which recognizes the progress on entry-level foundational career skills. SYEP participants obtain Tree Trust Certificates through demonstrated competencies in employability, worksite safety, and tool identification. We modeled Tree Trust Certificates after industry-recognized credentials that track professional development through skills achievement lists and tests.

In Tree Trust pre-apprenticeship Career Pathways programs, participants obtain industry-recognized credentials. YouthBuild participants can earn Home Builders Institute (HBI) Pre-Apprenticeship Certificate Training (PACT), Tree Care Industry Association (TCIA) Introduction to Arboriculture Safety, and First Aid/CPR Certificates. Branches participants can earn Tree Care Industry Association (TCIA) Introduction to Arboriculture Safety Certificate, OSHA-10 Construction, and First Aid/CPR.

Career Pathways participants develop transferrable skills through Employment Readiness Training (ERT) which includes occupation exploration, job hunting skills, and strategies to succeed in the workplace. Either Tree Trust staff or industry leaders teach the curriculum. Tree Trust ERT topics include resumes, interviewing, career exploration and advancement, communication, conflict resolution, decision-making, leadership, budgeting and financial literacy. We use several types of interactive experiences for career exploration across Career Pathways. This includes online platforms including Traitify, O*Net, or Elevate Futures to learn about careers including experience or education required, labor market outlook, and compensation.

6. If you plan to use stipends as part of your project design, please describe the stipend structure (i.e. for what activities they will be awarded, amount, etc.) and include a copy of your local stipend policy with the plan.

Participants will be paid an hourly wage.

7. Describe the youth service provider's plans to measure Work Readiness Indicators for targeted youth. Also identify any other LOCAL benchmarks/performance indicators for youth served under the 2022 TANF Innovation Project.

Tree Trust Crew Leaders, and partner supervisors as applicable, complete work readiness forms for participants. Supervisors provide helpful mentoring in developing essential skills and work readiness indicators. Young people increase core competencies to succeed in the workplace including good attendance, taking initiative, producing quality work, working well with others, and enhancing problem-solving skills.

Case Managers or Job Coaches staff work collaboratively with participants to develop Individual Service Strategy/Individual Development Plans to tailor career coaching for each participant. Participants identify strengths and areas for growth. Each participant creates their own customized, individual S.M.A.R.T goals.

We regularly track the following key performance indicators across all Career Pathways programming including number of youth and young adults serviced, Tree Trust certificates or industry-recognized credentials earned, and post-program employment or education placements.

8. Describe any plans to co-enroll TANF Youth participants in other DEED-funded youth programs. Include the programs in which participants are likely to be co-enrolled and the services to be provided through this co-enrollment.

Tree Trust will co-enroll TANF Youth participant in other DEED-funded youth programs, as applicable. We currently have funding through DEED for YouthBuild and a Youth Support Services Competitive Grant for Branches and SYEP.

ATTACHMENT 1: WORK PLAN 2022 TANF INNOVATION PROJECT

Provide a brief summary of planned services/activities provided in the project. Make additional copies of this form as needed.

Agency: Tree Trust		Contact: Jared Smith 952-767-3891 jareds@treetrust.org		
Project Goal: To transform lives and landscapes by engaging people to build skills for meaningful careers, inspiring people to plant trees, and making our community a greener, healthier place to live. Tree Trust will provide skilled employment training and career exploration services to four youth and young adults, ages 14-24, receiving Minnesota Family Investment Program benefits.				
Strategies (activities, steps, and tasks to achieve the goal):	Expected Outcomes	Number Served	Start Date	End Date
Recruitment <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Maintain and build new relationships with MFIP providers, partner organizations, county partners, and schools to recruit eligible participants Training <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Teach in-demand marketable skills in tree care, landscape construction, property maintenance, or carpentry with the guidance of a qualified Tree Trust Crew Leader Support participants in obtaining either Tree Trust Certificates or industry-recognized credentials Offer employment readiness curriculum which includes career exploration using labor market information, job hunting skills, financial literacy, and strategies to succeed in the workplace 	<p>Four enrolled participants</p> <p>Participants will either obtain a Tree Trust Certificate or industry-recognized credential:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> SYEP-Tree Trust Certificates including employability, tool identification, and worksite safety YouthBuild-Home Builders Institute (HBI) Pre-Apprenticeship Certificate Training (PACT), Tree Care Industry Association (TCIA) Introduction to Arboriculture Safety, and First Aid/CPR Certificates Branches-Tree Care Industry Association (TCIA) Introduction to Arboriculture Safety Certificate, OSHA-10 Construction, and First Aid/CPR <p>4 participants will develop an Individual Service Strategy/Individual Development Plans</p>	4	January 1, 2022	December 31, 2022

Agency: Tree Trust		Contact: Jared Smith 952-767-3891 jareds@treetrust.org		
Project Goal: To transform lives and landscapes by engaging people to build skills for meaningful careers, inspiring people to plant trees, and making our community a greener, healthier place to live. Tree Trust will provide skilled employment training and career exploration services to four youth and young adults, ages 14-24, receiving Minnesota Family Investment Program benefits.				
Strategies (activities, steps, and tasks to achieve the goal):	Expected Outcomes	Number Served	Start Date	End Date
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop written Individual Service Strategy/Individual Development Plans with S.M.A.R.T goals tailored to the career and educational goals of individual participants Provide constructive feedback to participants through work readiness indicators and evaluations Request participants to provide Career Pathways program feedback through surveys and Leadership Committees, to identify strengths and areas to improve in programming <p>Post-Training Placement</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Offer job placement assistance, and follow-up case management support, for pre-apprenticeship participants that completed YouthBuild and Branches programming. For SYEP, the program acts as a building block for starting on a career pathway, and for most participants, completing high school will be essential next steps. 	Participants will either continue/or enter secondary or post-secondary education, or enter the workforce.			

**ATTACHMENT 2: BUDGET
2022 TANF INNOVATION PROJECT**

BUDGET PERIOD: January 1, 2022 to December 31, 2022

Agency	Contact Person Phone/ E-mail
Tree Trust 1419 Energy Park Dr St Paul, MN 55108	Anders Hawes 952-767-3893 andersh@treetrust.org

Budget Category	TANF Innovation Funds
833 - Administration (5% maximum)	750
881 - Youth Wages and Fringe Benefits	5,000
885 - Direct Services to Youth	8,575
891 - Support Services	675
TOTAL	15,000

Budget Category	Provide a detailed breakdown of the items and amounts budgeted:
833 – Administration (5% maximum)	Administration costs include those expenses related to human resources, finance, and other company-wide functions necessary to operate the program.
881 – Youth Wages and Fringe Benefits	Wages and fringe benefits for youth and young adults that are placed into paid work experience positions. Wages are paid directly to participants and fringe benefits include FICA taxes and Work Comp premiums.
885 – Direct Services to Youth	Wages and fringe benefits for staff working directly with participants during recruitment, intake, work experience, career pathways exploration, and employment readiness training. Mileage/travel, training, and office expenses related to those staff working directly with the participants in the program.
891 – Support Services	Support Service expense including but not limited to transportation, uniforms, and participant training/credentialing.