Northwest Connecticut Land Conservancy

PROTECTING LAND AND WATER FOR PEOPLE, FOR WILDLIFE, FOREVER.

ACQUISITION GRANT PROGRAM FOR PARTNERS
GRANT GUIDANCE

Overview

Northwest Connecticut Land Conservancy (NCLC) is pleased to offer the ***Acquisition Grant Program for Partners*** support initiative. By formalizing this program, NCLC will help to ensure that partner land trusts can quickly complete acquisition projects and contribute to regional conservation goals.

Program Objectives

1. To triple the pace of acquisitions in NCLC's service area.
2. To accelerate the pace of acquisitions by NCLC partners by providing direct funding support.
3. To support, celebrate, and amplify the conservation work of partners.
4. To have a simple application process that documents the applicant's capacity to deliver (i.e. close the project and steward the property in the future) and the conservation value of the property.

Eligibility

- Eligible applicants must be a 501(c)3 land trust.
- Eligible projects must close within 12 months of the grant award.

Award Information

The maximum award for this grant is $20,000. NCLC will award a total of up to $40,000 in a calendar year.

Eligible Use of Funding

Grant awards will fund land purchases in NCLC's service area, not including transaction costs. Applicants will submit a budget describing anticipated costs incurred throughout the course of the project.

Eligible expenses include the following:

- Purchase of land in NCLC's service area (Litchfield County, Sherman, Brookfield, Newtown) for permanent conservation

Ineligible expenses include but are not limited to the following:

- Purchase of trade land or land that will not be permanently conserved
- Transaction costs (appraisal, survey, legal)
- Salaries and wages
- Cost of borrowing (points and other fees)

- Expenses related to establishing a new organization/business
- Legal expenses related to litigation

Grant Payment

Grant funds will be provided within 30 days of closing. This can be in advance of closing if cash is needed or can be on a reimbursement basis. Awardees will be required to request disbursement with no less than 2 weeks' notice.

How to Apply

Application available here.

Application materials are available at ctland.org/partner-resources. Send a completed application package, including all required documentation, to amanda@ctland.org. Many applicants will be able to complete the application with content previously drafted and documents they already have as part of project coordination and due diligence. NCLC will not accept incomplete applications.

Technology should not be a barrier to participation in this program. If the applicant needs any technological assistance or clarification on application questions, please contact Amanda Branson, Director of Operations, at amanda@ctland.org, or call 860-927-1927 ext. 1501.

Evaluation Criteria

Grant applications will be evaluated and awarded on a first-come, first-served basis. Three NCLC staff will review applications and complete scoresheets for each project. Staff will establish a scoring rubric that results in *Approval* or *Needs Discussion*. Award decisions will be made by NCLC staff. If an application scores in a *Needs Discussion* determination, NCLC will discuss the project with the applicant and determine an appropriate next step.

Applicants must show proof of eligibility, request an award within the maximum funding range, and submit all required documentation to be considered for a grant. Strong applications will also demonstrate the following:

- Projects that demonstrate significant conservation values
- The organization's capacity to complete the project within 12 months
- Eligible and justified expenses

Grant Agreement

NCLC will require selected awardees to sign and return a letter of agreement. The agreement will require that awardees comply with the following:

- Close on the property as described in the proposal
- Submit a final report detailing project information, as detailed below
- Publicly acknowledge funds

Acknowledgment of Funding

All media produced by or on behalf of the organization, in association with, or as a result of this funding, must contain funding credit. Public acknowledgment, along with the NCLC logo, when possible, must include the following:

> This project was funded, in part, by Northwest Connecticut Land Conservancy's *Acquisition Grant Program for Partners.*

Additionally, "Northwest Connecticut Land Conservancy," along with the NCLC logo when possible, should be included in any funding acknowledgment sign or plaque at the property.

Final Reporting

Awardees will notify NCLC of closing in a timely manner. A short final report will be required within 3 months of closing including the final project budget, a list of funding sources, demonstration of public acknowledgement, and a copy of the filed deed.