



## **New York Pollinator Conservation Fund**

**Request for Letters of Interest – October 2024**

### **Overview**

U.S. pollinator populations have declined significantly over the past 50 years. For example, the eastern monarch butterfly population has fallen by more than 90 percent since the 1990s. In 2022, the [Empire State Native Pollinator Survey](#) found that at least 40 percent of pollinator species native to New York are at risk of disappearing from the State, threatening the future growth of crops and wildflowers. In 2023, the Office of the New York State Attorney General obtained \$6.9 million in a [settlement with Bayer CropScience LP and Monsanto](#) over alleged false and misleading claims about the safety of certain Roundup® brand consumer herbicides.

The Office of the New York State Attorney General selected The New York Community Trust (The Trust) to administer the New York Pollinator Conservation Fund (the Fund), a \$2.5 million program to support projects that benefit pollinator species negatively affected by pesticides across the state through activities including habitat management, restoration, and enhancement, as well as pollinator research, monitoring, education, and outreach. The Fund will make grants that:

- benefit pollinator species affected by pesticides in New York
- reflect a spectrum of organizational sizes and capacities
- ensure an appropriate geographic distribution of the available funding
- conform to the terms of the settlement agreement

Over the next two years, the Fund will make grants to nonprofits, localities, and Indigenous Nations for projects that will protect pollinators consistent with the recommendations of the [2016 New York State Pollinator Protection Plan](#) and [subsequent updates](#), which is a framework for the state to conserve and grow its pollinator population. Projects must focus on one or more of the following:

- Preventing, abating, mitigating, or controlling prior or ongoing water, land, or air pollution affecting pollinators and their habitat
- Creating, managing, restoring, or enhancing pollinator habitat, including working with property owners or managers
- Undertaking pollinator-related research, monitoring, education, and outreach
- Working with tribal authorities and local governments to support the development and implementation of pollinator-friendly policies, programs, and activities

The New York Pollinator Conservation Fund will make three types of grants until the funding is exhausted (note: grants cannot exceed 40 percent of an organization's operating budget).

❖ **Type 1: One-Year Project Grants:** Nonprofits with annual operating budgets of up to \$150,000 may apply for one-year grants ranging from \$10,000 to \$50,000 for smaller-scale projects. Projects could include:

- habitat creation, restoration, or enhancement on a combined 3 acres or less;
- site assessment, planning, and securing relevant professional services such as a landscape architect or horticulturalist;
- procurement of native plants, seeds, and other materials to support pollinator conservation efforts;
- community-based research such as place-based pollinator surveys;
- adoption of sustainable horticultural practices, including obtaining relevant certifications such as Pollinator Partnership's Pollinator Steward Certification or the National Garden Clubs' Pollinator Garden Certification; and
- activities to raise public awareness and promote community stewardship of pollinators.

❖ **Type 2: Two-Year Project Grants:** Nonprofits with annual operating budgets of up to \$4 million may apply for two-year grants from \$150,000 to \$300,000 total (up to \$150,000 per year) for grants to, among other things:

- create, restore, or enhance pollinator habitat on a combined 3 or more acres;
- support sustainable land management practices on larger parcels or properties;
- promote pollinator-friendly policies, practices, and programs in local jurisdictions;
- develop innovative financing strategies to support pollinator conservation;
- conduct practical research on the effects of agrochemicals, genetically modified plants, and other technologies on pollinator health; and
- establish or advance multijurisdictional pollinator conservation initiatives.

❖ **Type 3: Two-Year Government and Large Organization Partnership Grants:** Nonprofits, localities, and Indigenous Nations with annual operating budgets greater than \$4 million may apply for matching grants of up to \$100,000 for the creation, restoration, or enhancement of large-scale pollinator habitat. Grants in this category require the applicant to have secured additional funding for the project at least equivalent to the requested grant amount at the point of application.

**Grants will not be made for general operating support, contributions to capital campaigns, or funding for political advocacy, lobbying, legal actions, or electioneering.**

Nonprofits seeking grants or organizations that wish to act as the fiscal sponsor for an applicant must be incorporated under 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code or have a 501(c)(3) funds administrator, with an active New York State Charities registration number and be in good standing. Grants will be contingent on a review to confirm independent board governance (at least four independent board members) and good financial practices. Localities must be incorporated in and Indigenous Nations must be recognized by New York State.

Submissions for Type 1 grants will be reviewed by Trust staff. An Independent Review Committee will evaluate the submissions for Type 2 and Type 3 grants. This is a competitive opportunity; many worthy proposals will not be selected for funding. Projects will be evaluated using the following criteria:

- Extent of benefits to pollinator species negatively affected by pesticides
- Likelihood of successful project completion during the grant period, including the capacity of the grantseeker to achieve the proposed project goals
- The scale and nature of the project's benefits

### **Letter of Interest Requirements & Application Deadline**

Nonprofits, localities, and Indigenous Nations interested in receiving a grant must electronically submit a Letter of Interest (LOI) no later than 5:00 p.m. ET on November 15, 2024, on [The New York Community Trust's Grantseeker Portal](#).

### **Submission Materials**

Organizations should submit only ONE LOI that *includes*:

1. Up to a 3-page narrative (in 12 pt. font) including:
  - a. a brief description(s) of the organization(s) engaged in the proposed project;
  - b. an overview of the organization's previous pollinator-focused activities;
  - c. a brief discussion of the need, challenge, or opportunity the project will address;
  - d. a description of the proposed project, including specific goals, expected outcomes, and the activities planned to achieve the goals;
  - e. an explanation of how the project conforms to the priorities of the [2016 New York State Pollinator Protection Plan](#) and [subsequent updates](#).
2. A project budget, including:
  - a. projected personnel, programmatic, and administrative costs;
  - b. any other sources of confirmed and/or expected sources of revenue, including grants, individual donations, and in-kind support (not included in 3-page limit).
3. Current organizational operating budget and list of board members (not included in 3-page limit).

### **Submission Instructions**

1. Combine items 1, 2, and 3 (listed above) into a single PDF file no larger than 25 MB in size using the file name and format "Applicant Organization Name.pdf".
2. Go to The Trust's [Grantseeker Portal](#) and click on the "Apply" button next to The New York Pollinator Conservation Fund Request for Letters of Interest.
3. Create a profile for your LOI submission and upload your single PDF.

## **Information Session**

The Trust will hold a virtual information session to answer questions regarding this Request for Letters of Interest (RFOI) on **Thursday, October 10, 2024, from 3:30–4:30 p.m. ET.**

During the session, Arturo Garcia-Costas, Senior Program Officer at The New York Community Trust, and Peter Washburn, Policy Advisor for the Environmental Protection Bureau at the Office of the New York State Attorney General, will discuss the eligibility requirements, submission process, and answer questions for this RFOI. The session is optional and attendance will not factor into funding decisions. The session will be recorded and made available upon request. If interested in attending the session, please [register here](#).

Applicants are not guaranteed an award and not all qualifying or meritorious projects will receive grants. Applicants will be notified by email if the submission is of interest to The Trust and may be asked to provide additional information. Grant decisions will be announced in early spring 2025.

*Please direct all questions about this solicitation to Arturo Garcia-Costas, Senior Program Officer, at [agarciacostas@thenytrust.org](mailto:agarciacostas@thenytrust.org).*