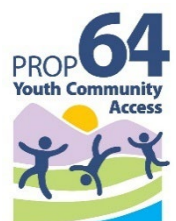


Youth Community Access Grant Program Guidelines

Round 4: September 2026



YCA GRANT PROGRAM AT-A-GLANCE

General Grant Information	Available Funding: - Approximately \$15,000,000 Grant Amounts: - Minimum Award: \$30,000 - Maximum Award: \$300,000 Program Purpose: - Projects must provide youth (kindergarten to age 26) from low-income and disadvantaged communities with direct access to natural or cultural resources. Eligible Proposal Types: - Field trips to locations and/or events - Educational programming (with field component) - Workforce development or career pathway training (with field component) Eligible Applicants: - Local or state public agencies - Nonprofit organizations - California Native American tribes
2026 Grant Cycle	<i>All dates are tentative and subject to change.</i> Technical Assistance Workshops - September 29, 1:30PM – 3:00PM - October 12, 10:00AM – 11:30AM Concept Proposal Solicitation Period - September 21 – November 4, 2026



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I. INTRODUCTION

Background

California voters passed the [Control, Regulate and Tax Adult Use of Marijuana Act](#) (Proposition 64) on November 8, 2016, which legalized the recreational sale and use of cannabis to people over the age of 21 and levied new excise taxes on the cultivation and retail sale of all state-regulated cannabis. Proposition 64 created the Youth Education, Prevention, Early Intervention and Treatment Account (YEPEITA) into which the State Controller deposits 60% of the tax revenue from marijuana sales for youth programs to support youth substance use prevention, which is overseen by the Department of Healthcare Services (DHCS). A portion of these funds are appropriated to the California Natural Resources Agency (CNRA) for grants to support youth access to natural or cultural resources, with a focus on low-income and disadvantaged communities. Funding is distributed by CNRA as grants awarded through the Youth Community Access (YCA) grant program.

In November 2023, CNRA released the [Outdoors for All Strategy](#), an approach to achieving equitable access to outdoor spaces developed with input from thousands of community advocates across the State. The Outdoors for All Strategy supports the State's [Outdoors for All Initiative](#) which seeks to expand park and nature access in communities with little outdoor space, support programs to connect people who lack access, and foster a sense of belonging for all Californians in the outdoors. The YCA Grant Program advances the priorities of the Outdoors for All Strategy by funding projects that connect youth with the outdoors and prioritize underserved communities.

Funding Purpose

YCA Grants will fund **projects**¹ that serve youth from **low-income and disadvantaged communities** and provide immersive and meaningful experiences with natural or cultural resources within California that participants otherwise would not have.

Low income and disadvantaged communities disproportionately lack access to natural and cultural resources due to economic, social, or physical barriers such as lack of transportation; the cost of entrance fees and permits to use outdoor spaces; limited facilities for people with disabilities; language barriers; racial, social, or political discrimination; and historic disinvestment in parks and outdoor spaces in certain communities.

Funding priority will be given to proposals that do at least one of the following:

- Serve **underserved youth population(s)**
- Incorporate **substance use prevention and early intervention practices**
- Provide **youth leadership opportunities**

¹ Words in bold font are defined in the Glossary ([Appendix F](#)). Clicking on bolded words will open the relevant glossary page.

II. PROGRAM INFORMATION

Key Definitions

For the purposes of this program, the following definitions apply:

Cultural resources are defined as objects, places, traditions, and practices that have direct cultural, historical, or community heritage significance.

Natural resources are defined as the ocean and coastal land, rivers, lakes, forests, mountains, deserts, wildlife, tribal land, open space preserves, and regional, state and national parks within California.

Low-income and disadvantaged community is defined as a community with a median household income (MHHI) of less than 80 percent of the California MHHI, confirmed using the [Statewide Parks Program Community FactFinder](#) tool.

Please refer to the [Glossary in Appendix F](#) for a list of specific terms used throughout these guidelines.

Funding Information and Eligibility

Available Funding

Approximately \$15,000,000

Grant Amounts

Minimum award: \$30,000

Maximum award: \$300,000

Eligible Applicants

- State and local public agencies
- **Nonprofit organizations**
- **California Native American tribes**

A **fiscal sponsor** may apply on behalf of an organization that is either not a qualified nonprofit organization or does not have the capacity to administer the grant. In such an event, the fiscal sponsor shall be the grantee of record. Subgranting is prohibited.

Eligible Youth Population

California youth from kindergarten to age 26 from low-income and disadvantaged communities. Applicants must use the [Statewide Parks Program Community FactFinder tool](#) to demonstrate their proposed program primarily serves youth from low-income and disadvantaged communities.

In using the DAC Community FactFinder Tool, applicants should identify the address or addresses that best represent the communities in which youth participants reside and/or a location common to the majority of youth to be served. This may or may not be the applicant's organizational address. For example, an applicant with a program that serves unhoused youth might use the address where services are provided. Conversely, an applicant whose program serves youth at a school located within a Disadvantaged Community might use the school address. Multiple addresses may be provided if the proposed project serves multiple locations or regions.

Technical Assistance will be provided on how to utilize the FactFinder tool for the Concept Proposal.

General Project Eligibility

To be eligible for funding, YCA projects must provide immersive and meaningful experiences with natural or cultural resources within California. Projects should propose experiences and opportunities youth otherwise would not have due to barriers preventing access. Proposals must include transportation to natural and cultural resources.

Proposals may continue/expand an existing program that provides youth access to natural or cultural resources or establish a new access program.

Eligible Proposal Types

A Concept Proposal must include at least one of the following eligible types:

- Field trips to locations, spaces, and events in California that meet the **natural resource** or **cultural resource** definitions. Field trips may be day trips or multi-day/camp experiences. Field trips must provide youth opportunities to participate in recreational and/or educational activities that promote environmental or cultural knowledge and awareness.
- Educational programming that teaches youth scientific topics related to natural or cultural resources, including but not limited to environmental conservation, habitat restoration, land stewardship and working-land practices, agroecology, biodiversity and natural ecosystems, wildlife, marine biology, archeology and historical preservation. The educational program must integrate both classroom and field work that provides meaningful knowledge of and direct experience with a natural or cultural resource.
- Workforce development or career pathway training that includes the implementation of a natural or cultural resource project and provides youth with direct, hands-on training in a natural or cultural resource field. Project examples include but are not limited to trail construction, habitat restoration, wildland fire prevention, urban greening, and projects that incorporate Traditional Ecological Knowledge, including cultural burning.

The acquisition of a vehicle to transport youth to natural or cultural resources is an eligible cost as a component of one of the above proposal types but cannot be

submitted as a standalone proposal. The vehicle must be able to transport a minimum of eight passengers. A maximum of two vehicles may be included in a proposal.

An application may incorporate more than one eligible proposal type as described above, but an organization may only submit one application per YCA solicitation.

See [Eligible Costs](#) section for more information on vehicle acquisitions.

See [Appendix C](#) for specific guidance on eligible field trips and activities.

Tribal Outreach and Collaboration

For any project that may affect tribal communities, applicants must show meaningful outreach and attempts to collaborate with all applicable California Native American tribes prior to receiving a grant award. Outreach must be conducted with official tribal representatives and continue throughout the planning, design, and implementation phases of the project.

Outreach efforts must be meaningful – notification of the proposal to a tribal community is not sufficient. Meaningful outreach includes, but is not limited to, writing letters and emails and following up with phone calls updating the tribe throughout the life of the project, inviting tribal leadership to attend planning meetings, and meeting with local tribal government lead consortiums or other inter-tribal governmental organizations. Collaborating with local California Native American tribes can include developing the project with tribal leadership, ensuring the project provides benefits to the local tribe and its membership, and providing contracting opportunities to local tribes and their members where appropriate.

Tribal outreach efforts are not required prior to the submission of the Concept Proposal. Applicants invited to submit a Full Proposal must document tribal outreach at the time of submission of the Full Proposal.

Funding Priorities

Proposals that serve Underserved Youth Populations, integrate Substance Use Prevention and Early Intervention Practices, and/or include Youth Leadership Opportunities will be prioritized for funding. For the purposes of the YCA program, these priorities are defined as follows:

Underserved Youth Populations:

- Youth with disabilities
- LGBTQIA+ youth
- Youth currently or formerly in foster care
- Youth from families involved in the criminal justice system
- Youth from communities struggling with widespread substance use and addiction
- Youth from tribal communities

- Youth from **Park-Poor Communities**
- Youth experiencing housing insecurity or homelessness

Substance Use Prevention and Early Intervention Practices

Evidence-based, widely accepted program models that educate, prevent, and treat substance use disorders in youth. More information can be found [here](#).

For tribal organizations, additional methodologies associated with culturally based, traditional Indigenous healing practices may be used.

Youth Leadership Opportunities

Roles specifically designed for select youth participants in which the youth serve for a minimum of three months. Youth Leadership Opportunities should provide selected youth with ongoing and frequent training, mentorship, and development needed to achieve educational, professional and/or personal goals.

Other Funding Considerations

In evaluating projects, the State may consider additional factors to determine awards. These may include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Geographic distribution of funds
- **Organizational Capacity** of applicant
- Current standing/previous grant performance with the State
- Availability of funding

III. COMPETITIVE GRANT PROCESS

Applicant Assistance Workshops

CNRA Grants Unit staff will conduct virtual workshops to discuss the YCA grant program, explain the competitive process, and address applicant questions. The dates and times of the workshops will be announced via the CNRA Grants Unit [GovDelivery listserv](#) and on the [YCA Grant Program webpage](#).

Thereafter, CNRA Grants Unit staff will be available during specified “office hours” to provide general assistance to applicants preparing Concept Proposals. Scheduled “office hour” sessions will be posted on the YCA Grant Program webpage and communicated through the listserv and during workshops.

Concept Proposals

All applicants must submit a Concept Proposal via the [California Natural Resource Agency's Project Tracking and Reporting \(RAPTR\)](#) system. The Concept Proposal form is

available on the YCA Program webpage. See [Appendix A](#) for a preview of the Concept Proposal form.

Applicants who submit complete and eligible Concept Proposals that will be competitive in meeting the program's objectives will be invited to submit a Full Proposal.

Full Proposals

Full Proposals must be submitted via the [RAPTR](#) system. The Full Proposal consists of a more in-depth application and supporting documentation. The Full Proposal form and list of required documents will be released to applicants invited to submit a Full Proposal. See [Appendix B](#) for a preview of the Full Proposal form and the list of required documents.

Full Proposal Evaluation

Full Proposals will be scored by CNRA Grants Unit staff using a 0-to-70-point scoring rubric as described below. Up to 30 additional points can be earned for meeting YCA Funding Priorities for a total of 100 possible points.

Alignment with Program Objectives (0-30 points)

The most competitive proposals will have a clear and established link between the proposed youth activities and the objectives of the YCA program, which are to reduce barriers in accessing natural and cultural resources for youth from low-income and disadvantaged communities and provide meaningful and immersive experiences participants otherwise would not have. Proposals should clearly demonstrate how the project achieves the objectives of the program as described in the [Introduction](#) section.

Proposal Design & Project Readiness (0-25 points)

The most competitive proposals will have a thoughtfully designed scope of work that is logistically feasible and effectively incorporates eligible **deliverables**; will demonstrate the applicant's operational and programmatic expertise to implement the project; has identified project partners as needed; and is ready to implement shortly after award.

Competitive proposals will also identify and clearly define all grant-funded activities and costs required to successfully implement the project.

Project Impact (0-15 points)

The most competitive proposals will provide significant benefits to the youth participants through immersive and meaningful experiences and thoroughly explain what the benefits are and how they will be measured.

CNRA Funding Priorities (Maximum 30 points possible)

Additional points can be added to the final score for each YCA funding priority incorporated into the proposed project. There is a total of 30 additional points possible.

Youth Population Identified as Underserved: The project will serve youth from a historically **underserved population**, as defined in these Guidelines. (+10)

Substance Use Prevention and Early Intervention: The project incorporates specific and intentional programmatic elements related to substance use prevention and early intervention practices, as defined in these Guidelines, for youth in conjunction with providing access to natural or cultural resources. (+10)

Youth Leadership Opportunities: The project will provide ongoing, frequent, and long-term (minimum three months) leadership opportunities, as defined in these guidelines, for select youth participants in conjunction with providing access to natural or cultural resources. (+10)

IV. GRANT ADMINISTRATION

This section is a guide for Grant Administration should your project be awarded funding. Applicants should be familiar with the grant administration requirements before deciding to submit a Proposal and/or entering into a Grant Agreement.

General Grant Information

Funding Availability

YCA funding is available for a limited time as determined by the State budget, DHCS, and these Guidelines. For YCA projects awarded in the 2026 funding round, projects must be completed no later than March 1, 2030, unless otherwise specified by CNRA.

CNRA Grant Administrator

The CNRA Grant Administrator assigned to your grant project will help you throughout the life of the grant. Your Grant Administrator is your official State contact for all grant information and should be the primary resource for questions and assistance.

Grant Agreement

CNRA cannot allocate awarded funds to the Grantee until a Grant Agreement is executed. The Grant Agreement defines a project's scope, budget, and timeframe. You cannot start your grant-funded project until you receive an executed Grant Agreement.

Grant agreements with federally recognized Native American tribes will include a limited waiver of sovereign immunity (refer to [Appendix E](#)).

Agreements with University of California grantees will include the [State of California Standard Agreement \(Std 213\)](#) and [University Terms & Conditions \(UTC-220\)](#).

Project Performance Period

The Grant Agreement defines the start and end date of the grant-funded project (the "Project Performance Period"). The grant can only pay for eligible project costs incurred within the Project Performance Period.

Required Project Reporting

You are required to report on your project's progress quarterly and whenever your Grant Administrator requests an update. Reporting is mandatory. Failing to report on time may delay reimbursement of project costs and/or result in project termination. A reporting template will be provided by your Grant Administrator.

Required Insurance

YCA-funded grants require specific liability insurance coverage. To be awarded a grant, non-public agencies must maintain or procure liability insurance that at minimum includes coverage for: Insurance Services Office (ISO) Commercial General Liability, Automobile Liability, Abuse & Sexual Molestation Liability, Workers' Compensation and Employer's Liability. Additionally, when applicable, coverage must also include Watercraft Liability and Vessel Damage or Destruction Insurance. Costs to procure insurance are eligible for reimbursement by the grant.

Public Agency organizations, with the written approval of the State, may satisfy the coverage required in whole or in part through: a) its contractors' procurement and maintenance of insurance for work under this agreement, if the coverage otherwise fully satisfies the requirements of this section; or (b) the organization's participation in a "risk management" plan, self-insurance program or insurance pooling arrangement, or any combination of these, if consistent with the coverage required by this section.

Payment Requests

After the Grant Agreement is executed, you may request grant funds by submitting a payment request. A payment request can be either a request for reimbursement of project costs you have paid (a "Reimbursement Request") or a request for an advance of grant funds to pay future project costs (an "Advance Request").

Reimbursement Requests

Whenever possible, you should pay project costs and then seek reimbursement from the grant. It is recommended that you request reimbursement at least quarterly but no more than monthly. Submitting one reimbursement request for all project costs at the end of the project is strongly discouraged and may result in delay of payment. Your Grant Administrator will provide forms and a Reimbursement Request Guide which explains how to request reimbursement.

Advance Requests

Pursuant to [Government Code §11019.3](#), the State allows advance payments of grant funds in certain circumstances, not to exceed 25 percent of the grant amount. At CNRA's discretion and if need is demonstrated, additional advances may be allowed.

There are many restrictions and requirements related to advanced funds. These are detailed in the Advanced Funds & Reconciliation Guide which your Grant Administrator can provide, along with required forms. Carefully review the Guide and make sure you understand and can comply with all the advance policies before you request an advance.

State Audit and Accounting Requirements

Audit Requirements

The State may audit your grant annually and for three years after the final payment of grant funds. You will be contacted in advance if your grant is selected for audit. The audit will look at all books, papers, accounts, documents, or other records related to the project from all funding sources.

You must provide all project records requested by the auditor, including source documents and evidence of payment and make an employee with knowledge of the project available to the auditor.

Accounting Requirements

Your accounting system must:

- Accurately reflect fiscal transactions, with necessary controls and safeguards.
- Provide a good audit trail, including original source documents such as purchase orders, receipts, progress payments, invoices, employee paystubs and timecards, evidence of payment, etc.
- Provide accounting data so the total cost of each individual project can be readily determined.

Records Retention

Project records must be retained for three years after final payment of grant funds and for at least one year following an audit.

Changes to Approved Project

The executed Grant Agreement will contain the approved project scope and budget. If you need to make changes to your project after the Grant Agreement is executed, you must request the changes in writing to your Grant Administrator prior to implementation. Requested changes may not substantially alter the project described in your Full Proposal.

Time Extensions

The executed Grant Agreement will define the start and end date of the project (the "Project Performance Period"). If you later need to extend the Project Performance Period, you must submit a written request for a time extension to your Grant Administrator and explain the reason why it is needed. Project Performance Periods cannot extend beyond March 1, 2030.

YCA Funding Acknowledgment

Acknowledgment of YCA funding in advertising, public communications, and organizational reporting is encouraged and should include the [YCA logo](#). When sharing about the program and grant, recipients are encouraged to highlight how the funding supported the project and its impact on the communities served. Expenses related to funding acknowledgement are eligible for reimbursement.

Eligible Project Costs

Types of Eligible Costs

Direct Costs

Direct costs are costs necessary to carry out the grant project and are eligible for reimbursement. They may include materials, supplies, equipment, technical consultants, subcontractors, grantee's staff labor, and other implementation costs. Direct costs do not include general administrative costs and overhead (see definition of indirect costs below). They also do not include funding set aside for future programming or maintenance.

Indirect Costs

Indirect costs (also known as administrative costs, incidental costs, or overhead) are the costs of doing business not directly related to the grant-funded project, but necessary for the general operation of the grantee organization. Examples of indirect costs include rent, computers, telephones, office supplies, internet access, copy machines, electricity as well as functions such as janitorial, human resources, business services, information technology, etc. Certain types of indirect costs are not allowed including food and beverage, fundraising, lobbying, and entertainment. Any eligible cost that is billed as a direct cost may NOT be included in indirect costs.

The indirect rate budgeted for the grant is applied as a percentage of the direct costs of the grant and must be entered as a single line item in the project cost estimate. When submitting payment requests, you may bill an appropriate amount of indirect costs for the period covered by the payment request until the indirect budget is exhausted. For the YCA program, indirect costs are capped at 20 percent of the grant.

Grantees that wish to include indirect costs in their grant budgets must be able to document how the indirect rate was calculated. One typical method for documentation is to have a **Cost Allocation Plan**. Other methods may also be adequate, but it is the grantee's responsibility to determine this based on Generally Accepted Accounting Principles. It is recommended that grantees work with a Certified Public Accountant (CPA) to develop an appropriate method for calculating their indirect rate and determining what indirect costs may be allocated to a grant. At audit, you must be able to prove the actual indirect costs for the project are equal to or greater than the total indirect amount charged to the grant. It is the responsibility of the grantee to maintain appropriate records for all indirect costs and to be able to provide those records in the event of an audit.

Eligible Direct Costs

Labor

The costs of staff salaries, wages, and employer-paid benefits that are directly related to executing the project are eligible, subject to the following:

- Staff costs for hourly employees must be computed on actual time spent on the grant-funded project and must be supported by timesheets retained by the grantee in the event of an audit.
- Staff costs charged to the grant-funded project for salaried employees may be computed as a percentage of the employee's annual salary if that percentage is a good faith attempt to quantify the employee's actual work on the grant-funded project.
- Overtime rates may be charged for hours worked over an employee's regular hours (according to your established policy) only if all the regular hours were also devoted to the grant-funded project. For example, if your established policy is that overtime is earned for hours worked over eight hours a day, overtime rates can only be billed to the grant if the employee's regular eight hours on the day overtime was earned were also devoted exclusively to the grant-funded project.
- You may add the actual costs of employer-paid benefits such as vacation, sick leave, Social Security contributions, etc. to employee rates. You must provide documentation to support the amounts charged at the request of a Grant Administrator or auditor.
- All staff costs billed to the grant must reflect actual rates paid to employees plus benefits. No indirect or overhead costs may be added to staff rates. Employees' annual salaries and hourly compensation rates must be supported by pay stubs or a payroll service printout to be produced at the request of a Grant Administrator or auditor.
- Salaries and wages claimed for employees working on State grant-funded projects must not exceed your established rates for similar positions.
- You are responsible for determining if your project is subject to the prevailing wage requirements of California Labor Code § 1720, et seq. For questions about prevailing wages, contact the [Department of Industrial Relations](#).
- Interns that are assigned and/or hired to assist in the implementation of the project and are paid through the grantee's official payroll system should be budgeted and documented in the Labor category, not Youth Stipends/Incentives.

Staff Training

Staff training that is necessary to facilitate the project is eligible. All training must occur within the Project Performance Period indicated in the Grant Agreement. If travel within California is required to attend a necessary training, prior approval must be obtained.

Costs associated with the training and travel² must be a relatively small percentage of the grant's budget. Staff training outside of California is ineligible.

Project Delivery

Costs associated with the implementation of the project, including employee-incurred travel expenses (see footnote ² below), consultants, contracted vendors and services, premiums for hazard and liability insurance, and/or miscellaneous costs necessary for execution of the project are eligible.

Supplies

Supplies and personal gear necessary to outfit, equip, and/or support youth participants of the grant-funded project are eligible. This may include outdoor gear and equipment, first aid and safety kits, books, curriculum tools, apparel, technological resources, and/or miscellaneous sundry items. Equipment that is reusable (e.g. tents) should be retained by the Grantee for cost efficiency. Youth participants may keep items the grantee determines are not reusable.

Supplies and equipment intended for long-term use beyond the YCA-funded project may be eligible if the costs are a small proportion of the overall project budget. Grantees should choose the most economical options whenever possible. Equipment should be maintained and used by grantees in future youth-serving programs. Grantees should consult their Grant Administrator before purchase to determine if the costs are eligible.

Non-monetary prizes, awards and "swag" of nominal value for grant-funded activities may be eligible if the costs are a small proportion of the overall project budget.

Transportation

Costs associated with the transportation of youth participants, chaperones, and staff to approved locations and activities are eligible.

Eligible transportation costs for youth and chaperones include mileage reimbursement for grantee-owned vehicles, vehicle rentals and charters, vehicles acquired with YCA grant funds, and bus passes or travel stipends for youth participants.

- Grantee-owned vehicles: Mileage incurred in grantee-owned vehicles and/or vehicles purchased with YCA grant funds, for eligible activities directly related to the grant, is reimbursable at the current state mileage rate.

The state mileage reimbursement rate captures:

- Fuel or charging
- Standard maintenance (oil, preventative tune-up, etc.)

² Staff transportation and meals incurred as an employee travel expense necessary to carry out the grant project will be reimbursed consistent with the grantee's written travel policy but shall not exceed the State travel reimbursement rates found [here](#).

- Insurance (liability, damage, comprehensive, and collision coverage)
- Licensing and registration
- Depreciation and all other costs associated with operation of the vehicle

Grantee must maintain and submit a mileage log with the date, trip purpose, destination, and miles driven. Additional supporting documentation may be required upon request by the Grant Administrator.

- Vehicle rentals: Rental expenses associated with transporting youth, including passenger van and bus charters, are eligible for reimbursement with supporting receipts. Associated costs such as fuel or charging for rented vehicles are also eligible with supporting receipts.
- Vehicle acquired with YCA grant funds: Costs associated with the procurement and acquisition of a vehicle that is primarily dedicated to transporting youth and supporting youth access to natural or cultural resources in California are eligible, including the purchase cost, licensing and registration, and insurance coverage.

The following requirements apply:

- The vehicle must be able to transport a minimum of eight passengers.
- Grantee must prioritize the acquisition of an eco-friendly or clean vehicle. If grantee is unable to locate options and/or inventory of clean vehicles designed to transport eight or more passengers, grantees may seek approval from their Grant Administrator to purchase a conventional gas-powered vehicle of similar capacity. The selected vehicle must be approved by the State prior to procurement.
- Purchase of the vehicle cannot be leased or financed in whole or in part.
- Title to the vehicle must be held in the name of the grantee, not a private individual. Grantees must submit a copy of the vehicle purchase agreement and the vehicle title issued by the Department of Motor Vehicles at the time of purchase.
- A maximum of two vehicles may be included in the grant.
- Participant travel costs: Travel costs such as bikeshare and bus passes or travel stipends, for YCA program participants to attend YCA program events are eligible.

Food

Food expenses for YCA program participants and chaperones for grant-funded field trips and youth activities are eligible. Food expenses for activities where youth are not present or organizational events not related to providing youth access to natural or cultural resources are not eligible. Receipts and documentation of food expenditures are required.

Youth Incentives/Stipends

Costs associated with supporting youth participation in the grant-funded program through monetary incentives or **stipend** payments are eligible.

- Monetary incentives may be provided to encourage program participation, recognize the achievements of the youth, and motivate youth to successfully complete the program.
- Stipends may be provided to selected youth leaders or other youth participants to cover costs incurred in the program, such as transportation, training, personal items, etc.

Whenever feasible, monetary incentives and stipends should be in the form of checks issued by the grantee or physical gift cards paid directly to the youth participant that can be tracked and documented. If checks or gift cards are not feasible, the grantee may request approval to pay youth in the form of cash or use a cash app. Guidance will be provided upon grant award on what documentation is required for youth incentives and stipends.

General Principles for Determining Cost Eligibility

The following are general principles to consider in determining whether a project cost is eligible for grant funding:

- Costs must be incurred within the Project Performance Period outlined in the Grant Agreement.
- Costs should be planned for and included in the project cost estimate in the Grant Agreement.
- Grantees should use good judgment in purchasing items and services to be paid with grant funds. Project expenses should be cost-effective and economical.
- Costs paid with grant funds must serve a public purpose.

APPENDIX A. CONCEPT PROPOSAL FORM

(This is a sample form. Concept proposals must be submitted via RAPTR. [See page 6.](#))

Contact Information

Applicant Organization:

Applicant Address:

Day-to-Day Contact:

Title:

Email:

Phone:

Authorized Representative:

Title:

Email:

Phone:

Proposed Project Information

Project Title:

Primary Project Address:

County: **Senate District:** **Assembly District:**

Project Start Date: **Project End Date:**

Grant Amount Requested:

Matching Funds: **Source of Matching Funds:**

Total Project Cost:

Eligibility

1. Applicant Organization Type – Choose one:
 - ☐ Public agency
 - ☐ Local agency
 - ☐ State agency
 - ☐ Nonprofit organization
 - ☐ California Native American tribe
2. If a nonprofit, is the applicant qualified under IRS Code §501(c)(3) and has been incorporated for a minimum of two years?
 - ☐ Yes
 - ☐ No

3. If a nonprofit, is the applicant in good standing with the [Secretary of State](#)?
 - ☐ Yes, status is active
 - ☐ No, status other than active

4. If a nonprofit, is the applicant's status current with the [Attorney General's Registry of Charities and Fundraisers](#)?
 - ☐ Yes, status is Current
 - ☐ Yes, status is Current-awaiting reporting or in progress
 - ☐ Yes, status is Exempt
 - ☐ No, status is Delinquent
 - ☐ No, status is Other than Current or Delinquent
 - ☐ Not applicable, not a nonprofit.

5. Does the proposed project primarily serve youth located in a Disadvantaged Community, confirmed using the [Statewide Parks Program Community FactFinder](#)? (For guidance, refer to Page 4 – Eligible Youth Population.)
 - ☐ Yes
 - ☐ No

5.a Please list the address(es) and/or geographic location(s) used in the Statewide Parks Program Community FactFinder tool.

5.b Please explain how the address(es) used best represents the youth population to be served.

6. Proposal Type – Mark all that apply:
 - ☐ Field trips to natural or cultural resources in California
 - ☐ Educational programming in natural or cultural resources (with field component)
 - ☐ Workforce development or career pathway training (with field component)

Project Description

NOTE: If more space is needed to answer questions 7, 8, and/or 11a, **one** additional page may be uploaded with the form in RAPTR. Any further pages or documentation attached will **not be** reviewed or considered.

7. Based on the proposal type(s) selected above, please describe the project to be implemented. Include all programmatic elements known at the time of submission, including anticipated deliverables (e.g. number, frequency, and location(s) of field trips; structure, content and frequency of educational programming; etc.), and any other grant-funded activities proposed. Also include the estimated length of time it will take to complete the project.

8. Please explain how the proposed project aligns with the objectives of the YCA program. Include the youth population being served, what barriers the project will

help overcome and what specific outcomes will be achieved that benefit the youth participants.

9. How many estimated youth will be served by the project?

10. What are the ages of the youth who will be served?

11. Which of the following YCA Priorities will your project include? Mark all that apply.

- ☐ Serve underserved youth population(s)
- ☐ Substance use prevention and early intervention practices
- ☐ Youth leadership opportunities
- ☐ None of the above

11a. Please describe each planned priority marked above and explain how the project will incorporate it. Include any associated resources or data to support the priorities selected.

Certification

☐ *By checking this box, I certify that I am authorized to submit this grant proposal on behalf of the organization and further certify that the information provided is true and accurate.*

Printed Name:

Title:

Date:

APPENDIX B. FULL PROPOSAL FORM AND LIST OF REQUIRED DOCUMENTS

Project Questions

Applicants must answer the following questions, as applicable.

Alignment with Program Objectives

1. Proposal Type – Mark all that apply:
 - ☐ Field trips to natural or cultural resources in California
 - ☐ Educational programming in natural or cultural resource fields (with field component)
 - ☐ Workforce development or career pathway training (with field component)
2. Is your proposal for a new program or an existing program?
 - ☐ New
 - ☐ Existing

2a. If you are requesting grant funds for an existing program, please describe how the program is currently funded and why additional funds are needed. Also describe when the program started and whether it is cyclical (quarterly, annual, etc.) or year-round.
3. Provide a detailed description of the project to be implemented. Include the objective/purpose of the project and all activities that will be funded by the grant. Be as thorough and detailed as possible.
4. What are the ages of the youth that will be served?
5. How many youth will be served by the project? If known, please separate estimated **unduplicated youth** and total youth.
6. Does the project affect **tribal communities**?
 - ☐ Yes
 - ☐ No

6a. Describe what outreach has been conducted, as well as future outreach or collaboration planned. Provide as much detail as possible.
7. Does your proposal include the acquisition of a vehicle?
 - ☐ Yes

☐ No

7a. If yes, provide the need for the vehicle and how the vehicle will be used for the project to transport youth. Where will the acquired vehicle be stored?

Proposal Design & Project Readiness

Based on the Proposal Type(s) selected, please answer the following questions as applicable.

8. If the proposal is for field trips, list the places, locations, and/or experiences proposed for the project. If final locations have not yet been determined, provide potential activities and/or examples of the natural resources and/or cultural resources the youth will experience. Also describe how youth will be transported to and from grant-funded activities.
9. If the proposal is for educational programming in natural and/or cultural resource fields, please describe in detail the structure and content of the curriculum, how and when it will be delivered, and the incorporation of the required field component.
10. If the proposal is for workforce development and career pathway training, please describe specifically what job training, education, and/or life skills youth will gain from the project, how it relates to an eligible natural or cultural resource field, and what the structure and content of the program will be. Also describe the required field component.
11. Describe any additional grant activities, milestones, and/or deliverables that are not already captured above, or any additional information about the proposal's scope of work that you would like to share.
12. Provide a brief description of your organization, including its overall mission and its role and objective in implementing the proposed project.
13. Describe your organization's prior experience in completing this type of project.
14. What is the organization's annual operating budget? Explain how the organization will fill any funding gaps to complete the project.
15. Describe the status of the proposed project's planning and design phase. Include any necessary permits or agreements required for implementation, if applicable.
16. If applicable, list all known project partners who will be involved in the facilitation, coordination, or implementation of the program. Describe each partner's relationship to the applicant and the role they will serve in the grant.
17. What is the anticipated schedule for project implementation? Provide high level milestones and a narrative of how your organization will carry out the project based on the proposed timeline.

18. Describe the status of identifying and recruiting youth participants. If outreach and/or recruitment is needed, please describe what outreach will be conducted and how youth will be recruited to participate in the project.

Project Impact

19. Describe how the project addresses a critical need and how the proposed efforts will reduce barriers to access.
20. Describe the anticipated benefits and outcomes to the youth based on the immersive and meaningful experiences in the proposed project. Include relevant data and supporting evidence to explain the design and proposed plan for implementation, including but not limited to evidence-based research, community input, quantitative and/or qualitative evaluation metrics, and previous successful implementation of similar programs.

CNRA Funding Priorities

21. Which, if any, of the following YCA Priorities will your project include? Mark all that apply.
- ☐ Youth population(s) identified as underserved
 - ☐ Substance use prevention and early intervention practices
 - ☐ Youth leadership opportunities
 - ☐ None of the above

Please answer the following questions based on the CNRA Funding Priorities marked above, if applicable.

22. **Youth population(s) identified as underserved:** Please describe the specific youth population that will be served as defined in the YCA Guidelines. Include any tool(s) used to determine that the youth population meets the definition and any relevant data/evidence to support the proposal. Please provide as much information as possible as to how this population has been historically underserved and/or disenfranchised.
23. **Substance use prevention and early intervention practices:** Please describe the substance use prevention and early intervention programming that will be included and how it will be incorporated into the proposed project. Provide any references and links that will provide information and source material for the model(s) being used.
24. **Youth leadership opportunities:** Please describe what leadership roles are available, the specific activities the youth leaders will participate in, the frequency of structured time provided to the youth leaders, and the duration of the opportunity (must be a minimum of three months to qualify as a funding priority). What specific leadership and development skills will these opportunities provide to youth participants? How will

youth apply and/or be selected for leadership roles? If applicable, include any incentives or compensation planned for youth leaders.

List of Required Documents

- ☐ Authorizing Resolution
- ☐ Detailed Workplan
- ☐ Cost Estimate
- ☐ [Payee Data Record Form](#) (for nonprofits) or [Governmental Agency Taxpayer ID Form](#) (for public agencies)

Templates and instructions for required documents will be provided during the Full Proposal Solicitation Period.

Certification

☐ *By checking this box, I certify that I am authorized to submit this grant proposal on behalf of the organization and further certify that the information provided is true and accurate.*

Printed Name:

Title:

Date:

APPENDIX C. ELIGIBLE FIELD TRIPS & ACTIVITIES

Eligible natural and cultural resource field trips include trips to locations, spaces, and events that provide youth with meaningful exposure to, and interaction with, nature or with cultural objects or practices that are valued by or significantly representative of a culture.

Funded fields trips should provide meaningful and immersive experiences that the youth would otherwise not have.

Eligible Natural Resource Trips

Eligible trips must be located within California and provide youth with educational experiences and/or recreational opportunities directly related to natural resources as defined in these guidelines.

Eligible trip locations include but are not limited to:

- California State Parks and State Recreation Areas;
- Designated national parks, wildernesses, and forests;
- Regional parks and open space preserves;
- Ocean, rivers, lakes, and mountains;
- Tribal land; and
- Working farms and other stewarded lands that provide educational opportunities related to regenerative agriculture, sustainable farming, and responsible land stewardship.

Ineligible Natural Resource Trips and Activities

The following locations/activities are not considered natural resource experiences and are not eligible:

- Outdoor sporting and fitness activities with no direct link to natural resources, including but not limited to yoga, tennis, basketball, volleyball, and soccer.
- General gardening activities that are not part of a field trip to a working farm or other stewarded land as described above, or do not include a meaningful educational component, such as standards-aligned environmental science curriculum, training in agriculture or horticulture-related topics, or use of traditional ecological knowledge (TEK).

Eligible Cultural Resource Trips & Activities

Eligible cultural resource field trips and activities include but are not limited to:

- Museums (science, art, history, etc.)
- Tribal ceremonies, rituals, and practices, including land stewardship practices such as tribal foodways, cultural burning and Traditional Ecological Knowledge
- Cultural heritage festivals, historical sites, and other experiences that provide an understanding of and/or connection to a particular culture or heritage.
- Performing arts such as music and storytelling that are part of a cultural festival or other cultural event in which the purpose is to provide educational experiences related to cultural and historical practices.

Ineligible Cultural Resource Trips and Activities

The following locations/activities are not eligible, even if the activities also include an educational or scientific component or the location is designated as a historical site:

- Any location or event that includes commercial entertainment, recreational rides, and/or is classified as a theme or amusement park. This includes but is not limited to SeaWorld, Disneyland, Knotts Berry Farm, Legoland, Six Flags, Santa Monica Pier, Santa Cruz Beach Boardwalk, paid admission to commercial music and theatre venues, and state and county fairs.

CNRA reserves the right to disallow any field trip or grant activity it determines does not align with the objectives of the YCA program and/or is considered an inappropriate use of public funds.

APPENDIX D. AVAILABLE RESOURCES

General

- [CNRA Youth Community Access Grant Program](#)
- [Outdoors for All](#)
- [RAPTR User Guide for Grant Applicants](#)
- [RAPTR Portal](#)
- [Proposition 64 Full Text \(beginning on page 178\)](#)

Disadvantaged and Underserved Communities

- [Statewide Parks Program Community FactFinder – DAC & Park-Poor Tool](#)
 - [California Protected Areas Database](#) (Data source for Park-Poor Community Tool)
- [Introduction to the Americans with Disabilities Act | ADA.gov](#)

Tribal Consultation

- [CNRA Tribal Consultation Best Practices](#)
- [Native American Heritage Commission \(NAHC\)](#)
- [NAHC Tribal Consultation List Request](#)

APPENDIX E. LIMITED WAIVER OF SOVEREIGN IMMUNITY AND HOLD HARMLESS LANGUAGE

All tribal entities who are awarded a grant must accept a limited waiver of sovereign immunity. The following is the standard limited waiver language in the grant agreement:

1. The Parties acknowledge that Grantee is a federally recognized Indian tribe and, as such, possesses sovereign immunity from suit. Nothing in this Grant Agreement is or shall be deemed to be a waiver of Grantee's sovereign immunity from suit, which immunity is expressly asserted, except for the limited waiver set forth in this section.
2. Limited waiver of sovereign immunity and hold harmless. Notwithstanding any other provision in this Agreement (including, without limitation, any provision of any Exhibit incorporated in this Agreement by reference) to the contrary, nothing in this Agreement shall be deemed to be a general waiver of Grantee's sovereign immunity from suit, which immunity is expressly asserted. Provided, however, that Grantee hereby expressly, unequivocally, and irrevocably provides a limited waiver of sovereign immunity from suit to allow the Natural Resources Agency to exercise all of its rights under the terms of this Agreement, and Grantee consents to suit in any court of the State of California for any claim to interpret or to enforce this Agreement. This shall include the right to contribution for loss of damage to persons or property arising from, growing out of, or in any way connected with or incident to this Agreement, except claims arising from the gross negligence of the State, its officers, agents, and employees.
3. Grantee shall indemnify and hold harmless the State, its officers, agents, and employees in perpetuity against any and all claims, demands, damages, costs, expenses, or liability costs arising out of the Project, which claims, demands, or causes of action arise under Government Code Section 895.2 or otherwise, including but not limited to items to which the Grantee has certified, except for liability arising out of the gross negligence of the State, its officers, agents, or employees. Grantee acknowledges that it is solely responsible for compliance with items to which it has certified. Under this indemnification provision, Grantee shall not be responsible for defending the State in court but shall reimburse for actual invoiced costs associated with the defense. Grantee and the State agree that in the event of judgment entered against the State and Grantee because of the gross negligence of the State and Grantee, their officers, agents, or employees, an apportionment of liability to pay such judgment shall be made by a court of competent jurisdiction. Neither party shall request a jury apportionment.

APPENDIX F. GLOSSARY OF TERMS

California Native American tribe - a federally recognized Native American tribe or a non-federally recognized Native American tribe listed on the California Tribal Consultation List maintained by the Native American Heritage Commission.

Cost Allocation Plan - a formal organizational document that identifies and explains how an organization's overhead costs - such as rent, utilities, technology, insurance, and administrative salaries – are divided and allocated across multiple programs, departments, or funding sources.

Cultural Resources - objects, places, traditions, and practices that have direct cultural, historical or community heritage significance.

Deliverables – measurable grant-funded activities that accomplish the purpose and objective of the program and directly benefit youth participants, including but not limited to number of unduplicated youth served, total number of youth served, number of field trips and/or youth program activities, number of vehicles acquired (if applicable), number of outreach and recruitment activities conducted (if applicable).

Fiscal Sponsor - an organization that applies for and receives a grant on behalf of another organization that will implement the awarded project. The fiscal sponsor is the grantee of record and cannot act solely as a passthrough or subgrant the award. The fiscal sponsor is responsible for all grant management activities, including financial oversight, reporting, and compliance.

Low-income and Disadvantaged Community - a community with a median household income of less than 80 percent of the Statewide median household income.

Natural Resources – the ocean and coastal land, rivers, lakes, forests, mountains, deserts, wildlife, tribal land, open space preserves, and regional, state and national parks within California.

Nonprofit Organization - a nonprofit public benefit corporation formed pursuant to the Nonprofit Corporation Law (commencing with Section 5000 of the Corporations code), incorporated for a minimum of two years, qualified to do business in California and qualified under Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code.

Organizational Capacity - an entity's ability to effectively implement the proposed project through the efficient and appropriate use of human, financial, and operational resources.

Park-Poor Communities - neighborhoods that have less than 3 acres of usable parkland per 1,000 residents, or median household incomes less than 80% of the Statewide average AND inadequate access to recreation facilities and activities, as determined by the [Statewide Parks Program Community FactFinder tool](#). For the purposes of defining "parkland" the Community FactFinder tool uses parks and open space data from the [California Protected Areas Database](#), with minor adjustments.

Project - the tasks, activities, and deliverables that collectively make up the scope of work funded by YCA grant funds.

Stipend – a fixed amount of money paid to youth participant(s) to offset incurred expenses as a result of their participation in the program.

Substance Use Prevention and Early Intervention Practices - evidence-based, widely accepted program models that educate, prevent, and treat substance use disorders in youth, and/or tribal methodologies associated with culturally based, traditional Indigenous healing practices.

Traditional Ecological Knowledge - a cumulative body of knowledge and beliefs, handed down through generations by cultural transmission, about the relationship of living beings (including humans) with one another and with their environment.

Underserved Youth Population - a population that disproportionately lacks access to natural and cultural resources due to economic, social, or physical barriers such as historical disenfranchisement and inequitable resource allocation. Underserved populations are defined as youth with disabilities, LGBTQIA+ individuals, youth in and transitioning out of foster care, families involved in the criminal justice system, communities struggling with widespread substance use and addiction, tribal communities, Park-Poor Communities, and youth experiencing housing insecurity or homelessness.

Unduplicated Youth - a specific individual who is counted only once as a program participant for reporting purposes, even if they participate in multiple programs, activities, or sessions.

Youth - an individual from kindergarten up to the age of 26 years old.

Youth Leadership Opportunities – leadership roles specifically designed for select youth participants in the proposed project that are a minimum of three months and provide selected youth with ongoing and frequent training, mentorship, and development needed to achieve educational, professional and/or personal goals.