

The NYCEF Newtown Creek Fund

Environmental Benefits Program



Behind the Restaurant Depot, Newtown Creek, 2009
Artist: Valeri Larko <http://www.valerilarko.com>

The Newtown Creek Environmental Benefits Program (NCEBP) was created as part of an agreement between New York State and New York City to upgrade the Newtown Creek Water Pollution Control Plant and provide environmental benefits to the community. Funding is being administered through three organizations: The City Parks Foundation (CPF), The New York State Energy Research and Development Authority (NYSERDA) and the Hudson River Foundation (HRF), through its New York City Environmental Fund (NYCEF).

The New York City Environmental Fund (NYCEF) was formed to encourage active community stewardship of the waterways, shorelines, parklands and open spaces of the City of New York. NYCEF was created as part of an agreement between the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation and Con Edison to support projects that (a) protect, preserve, improve or restore the environment; (b) facilitate the public's enjoyment of natural resources; or (c) enhance the public's awareness, knowledge, and understanding of ecological principles, natural resources and other environmental issues. The New York City Environmental Fund is a grantmaking program administered by the Hudson River Foundation.

The NYCEF Newtown Creek Fund requests proposals for environmental education, public access and stewardship projects that will benefit communities along Newtown Creek, one of New York City's six designated Maritime and Industrial Zones. In accordance with the settlement agreement between the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation and New York City establishing the Fund, priority will be given to projects in and around Greenpoint, Brooklyn, and along Newtown Creek and the East River (both Brooklyn and Queens). NYCEF will provide financial support for qualifying projects that promote the environmental health and revitalization of natural resources and that increase public understanding of, access to and enjoyment of the environment within the target area.

See map of target area: http://www.hudsonriver.org/nycef/forms/newtown_communities.pdf

Who May Apply? Any nonprofit group or organization that qualifies as tax-exempt under Section 501(c)3 of the Internal Revenue Code is eligible to apply for support from the NYCEF Newtown Creek Environmental Benefits Program. Additionally, schools and government agencies with qualifying projects may apply. Groups without 501(c)3 certification may, for the purposes of administration of a grant, associate with an organization that does qualify.

What is the size of the grants? The range of grant awards is expected to be generally between \$5,000 and \$25,000. Requests for larger grants will be considered for projects that provide a significant benefit to a very large number of people.

What kinds of projects are eligible? The NYCEF Newtown Creek Environmental Benefits Program seeks proposals for projects that:

- Protect and improve the environmental health of natural areas and the environment.
- Educate people about the value of natural resources, biodiversity, conservation, and environmental protection.
- Enhance access to natural areas and encourage stewardship activities to protect them.
- Promote community involvement and encourage stewardship (personal and community responsibility and guardianship) for natural areas within the NCEBP target area.
- Provide a framework for community stewardship and programming related to broader capital projects and improvements undertaken as part of the NCEBP.

In addition, the NYCEF Newtown Creek Environmental Benefits Program seeks:

- Projects that provide matching funds or can leverage funds from other sources.
- Projects that can become self-sustaining programs.
- Projects that directly involve communities that live and work in the target area.

Projects must obtain required permits (local, state and federal) prior to implementation.

Examples of Eligible Projects Include:

- Stormwater Management Models
- Community Clean-ups
- Environmental Education
- Enhanced access to waterfront via shoreline improvements, including docks
- Trails, walkways and related interpretive signage
- Cultivation of native plants and removal of invasive species
- Curriculum development, mapping, exhibitions, websites and other media
- Community-based planning for qualifying projects

Examples of such projects recently funded by NYCEF include:

- The S.W.I.M Coalition (Stormwater Infrastructure Matters) for educating the public about green infrastructure, developing a clearinghouse for stormwater information and encouraging community groups to develop projects for capturing stormwater.
- I.O.B.Y. (In Our Backyards), for launching a project that combines tools of online microphilanthropy and social networking to enable groups to describe their environmental projects on an online marketplace where New Yorkers can discover them, make a donation or volunteer.
- American Museum of Natural History Center for Biodiversity and Conservation for The *Great Pollinator Project – Bee Watchers*, to enhance understanding and management of NYC’s native bees while engaging citizen scientists to gather data about them.
- The Hutchinson River Restoration Project’s *Thomas Pell Wildlife Sanctuary Clean-up*, involving volunteers in a well-publicized clean-up of debris in the river to improve wetland habitat and focus public attention on community stewardship and appreciation of the Sanctuary.
- Alley Pond Environmental Center’s *Scientific Research and Inquiry Program*, engaging teenagers in field biology internships to evaluate the habitat value of fresh and salt water bodies at Alley Pond Park, create a field guide of flora and fauna, and write papers based on their research.
- The Old Stone House *Outdoor Classroom and Environmental Education Program*, a collaboration with students from Middle School 51 in Brooklyn to transform a former dog run in Washington Park into native and medicinal plant gardens and increased wildlife habitat as a resource for neighborhood schools.

How to Apply and Deadlines: To apply for a grant, an organization should first contact the New York City Environmental Fund of the Hudson River Foundation at 212-483-7667 to discuss the feasibility of a potential project. The proposal form can be accessed on the Hudson River Foundation website (<http://www.hudsonriver.org>). The current round of grantmaking for the NYCEF Newtown Creek Fund is now closed. Information about submitting proposals for projects for consideration in the second round of funding will be announced later this year.

NYCEF Newtown Creek Fund Contact Information:

Hudson River Foundation
Attn: NYCEF
17 Battery Place, Suite 915
New York, NY 10004
212-483-7667 [HUDSONR]

Lisa Garrison, NYCEF Program Director, Lisa@hudsonriver.org
Clay Hiles, HRF Executive Director, Clay@hudsonriver.org