



CAROLINA THREAD TRAIL

2021 REGIONAL TRAIL IMPLEMENTATION GRANT PROGRAM

Grant Guidelines

Application Deadline: September 24th, 2021

Introduction

The Carolina Thread Trail is a regional network of trails that connect 2.9 million people in 15 counties in North and South Carolina. The Thread Trail is an example of unprecedented regional collaboration that works to connect people and communities to nature and each other by providing over 1,600 miles of trails, greenways, and blueways. Unlike many endeavors of this type, private funds are serving as a catalyst for creating the Carolina Thread Trail. Local communities and partners in the 15-county area are invited to participate in planning and building the Thread Trail. Communities and partner organizations are empowered through financial and technical support from the project to create and implement their own community-based trails. The communities, working together, may apply for grants from the private pool of capital that can serve as catalytic funding and help attract public funding sources.

Grant Program Objectives

- Help local communities plan and implement trail projects, with a focus on constructing trail in key corridors.
- Build the capacity of local communities to develop future trail, greenway, and blueway projects.
- Promote collaboration among community partners and neighboring communities.
- Increase public support and awareness of the benefits of trails and land conservation.
- Reach all members of the population across the 15-county region, including those of differing socio-economic status, age, ability, and ethnicity.

Eligibility

The Carolina Thread Trail Implementation Grant Program is intended to assist local governments (municipal or county) and non-profit organizations partnering with local governments in the following counties: Anson, Cabarrus, Catawba, Cleveland, Gaston, Iredell, Lincoln, Mecklenburg, Rowan, Stanly, Union (North Carolina) and Chester, Cherokee, Lancaster, York (South Carolina).

Funding Availability

The Carolina Thread Trail Implementation Grant Program is made possible by the generosity of various foundations, organizations, businesses, and individual donors. In some cases, these supporters have asked that their gift remain in a specific county within the region. Because of these requests additional funding beyond the maximum grant request limits may be available. Carolina Thread Trail staff will assist applicants in determining what is an acceptable maximum grant request.

Project Types

- **Trail Construction**
 - **Objective:** Complete construction of segments of the Carolina Thread Trail that may include varying trail types, such as natural surface, unpaved aggregate or stone material, and asphalt or concrete pavement. All parcels where trail will be constructed must have been previously secured through acquisition, donation, or easement.
 - **Maximum Grant Request:** \$50,000
- **Trail Project Design**
 - **Objective:** Conduct site due diligence, permitting, construction budgeting, and drawing for segments of the Carolina Thread Trail. Project design costs include engineering and soil analysis.
 - **Maximum Grant Request:** \$30,000

- **Land Acquisition**
 - **Objective:** Acquire land or purchase easements or development rights for segments of trail that align with the Carolina Thread Trail Master Plan. Land acquired may include open space for viewsheds, riparian buffers, wildlife habitat, or recreation along the trail.
 - **Requirement for consideration:** The applicant must include in the application a letter of intent from the prospective land owner(s).
 - **Maximum Grant Request:** \$30,000
- **Detailed Corridor Planning**
 - **Objective:** Identify trail alignment on parcel by parcel basis by working with landowners on a specific segment of the Carolina Thread Trail Master Plan and develop the scope of work necessary to successfully implement the plan and construct the trail. Important elements include identification of routes of entry and physical obstacles.
 - **Maximum Grant Request:** \$15,000
- **Canoe/Kayak Launch Construction**
 - **Objective:** Complete construction of canoe or kayak launches into designated Carolina Thread Trail Blueways (Rocky River, South Fork River, Catawba River, Pee Dee River).
 - **Maximum Grant Request:** \$5,000

Selection of Grant Recipients

- **Grant Application Process**
 1. All applicants are required to inform Bret Baronak at bret@carolinathreadtrail.org of their intent to apply no later than **Tuesday, August 31, 2021**. Additionally, applicants **MUST** schedule a project site visit with a Carolina Thread Trail staff person prior to the application deadline.
 2. Download and complete Grant Application Form.
 3. Gather all supplemental materials (budget sheet, project location map, and any letters of endorsement or support).
 4. Submit complete application with supplemental materials by **Friday, September 24, 2021**.
 - For electronic submissions, email to Bret Baronak at bret@carolinathreadtrail.org
 - For hard copy submissions, mail to Carolina Thread Trail, Attn: Bret Baronak, Director
4530 Park Road, Suite 420, Charlotte, NC 28209
 5. Please be prepared to attend applicant interview the week of October 4-October 8, 2021.
- **Grant Decisions**
 - Grants are awarded by the Carolina Thread Trail Governing Board. Recommendations for grants will be made by the Governing Board's Grants Review Committee.
 - The degree to which the proposed project meets the "Grant Program Objectives" (see page 1) will be the most important selection factor considered by the Governing Board.
 - Applicants may submit more than one application per grant cycle. However, no applicant shall be awarded more than one grant per grant cycle.
- **Grant Awards**
 - Grant awardees will be expected to sign a grant agreement and grants funds must be spent within two years of the executed agreement.
 - Throughout the duration of the project, applicants will be required to provide interim and final progress reports to the Carolina Thread Trail.
 - For acquisition projects, grants can only be considered if the application includes a letter of intent from the land owner(s) and funds may only be disbursed once an awardee produces a fully-executed easement or acquisition agreement.

For more information, please call Bret Baronak at 704-376-2556 ext. 2216 or bret@carolinathreadtrail.org.