

Boston Tree Alliance: Tree Planting and Care Grants

Table of Contents

Boston Tree Alliance Tree Planting and Care Grants: Notice of Funding Opportunity 2
Application Questions 7

Boston Tree Alliance: Funding for Tree Planting and Care

Notice of Funding Opportunity

The [Boston Tree Alliance](#), the City of Boston, and Mass Audubon are pleased to announce that **\$150,000** of grant funding is available for organizations to plant and care for trees on privately-owned land in the City of Boston in 2025.

Summary Information

Application Due Dates:

Spring 2025 Planting: November 11th, 2024

Fall 2025 Planting: April 30th, 2025

Applicants may apply with an application for both spring and fall planting in the same year.

Total Amount Available:

\$150,000

Award Maximum:

\$25,000 per year per applicant organization

Contact Information:

Please contact Amara Chittenden (Program Coordinator) at bostontreealliance@massaudubon.org with any questions.

Program Description

The [Boston Tree Alliance Program](#) is a grant program for tree planting, care, and associated education. The program focuses on expanding access to trees and their benefits in under-canopied, environmental justice communities in Boston. This program is funded by the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) through the City of Boston. Mass Audubon is contracted with the City to facilitate the distribution of grant funds and administer the program. **The program provides funding support for nonprofit and community-based organizations to pursue tree planting, care, and associated educational activities in partnership with land owners on non-publicly owned lands.**

The Boston Tree Alliance (“Alliance”) is a coalition of nonprofit organizations, community-based organizations, urban forestry professionals, and stakeholders working collectively to equitably grow and care for new trees on private property in Boston. As the program’s fiscal agent, Mass Audubon convenes Alliance meetings that inform the program’s development. The Alliance works alongside the City of Boston to support and advance the goals of the [Urban Forest Plan](#) and the [Heat Plan](#).

Organizations interested in tree planting and care are encouraged to apply for grant funding **regardless of previous experience**. Applications will be reviewed by Mass Audubon alongside the City of Boston. **Technical assistance is available for organizations to develop strong project proposals and implementation plans.**

Please note: 2024 was the first year of this grant program and there will be subsequent opportunities to apply for funding. If your organization would like assistance in building an

application for this or future funding rounds, please contact us at bostontreealliance@massaudubon.org

Program Goals:

The [Urban Forest Plan](#) (UFP), which guides the efforts of the program, found that 60% of Boston's existing tree canopy is located on private land, and that the overall tree canopy is not equitably distributed across neighborhoods. Boston Tree Alliance Tree Planting and Care grant projects collectively aim to:

- Equitably increase access to trees and their benefits with a focus on low-canopy areas, urban heat islands, and environmental justice communities in the City of Boston.
- Fund care and maintenance for trees to increase survival rates and promote long-term growth of the urban canopy.
- Invest in long-term resilience including urban heat island mitigation and improvements to public health outcomes.
- Build awareness and competency of tree planting and care best practices through public engagement and education.
- Advance climate resilience and urban forestry strategies identified in the Heat Plan and UFP.

Dates/ Timetable

Applications open	September 30th, 2024
Application close for Spring 2025 planting	Rolling application deadline until October 28th, 2024 Note: Applicants will be notified about project proposal acceptance before December.
Application close for Fall 2025 planting	April 30th, 2025 Applications will remain open for fall plantings until this date.
Drop-In Hours	Request to book time here
Orientation for Spring 2025 grantees	TBD March, 2025

Eligible Applicants

Community-based organizations and non-profit organizations that work with or serve Boston residents and Boston-based organizations are eligible to apply for funding through this grant program. Organizations may partner on joint applications. The project narrative section of the application should include a description of the nature of any partnership involved.

For-profit corporations, public agencies, and individuals not representing a community-based or non-profit organization are not eligible to apply for funding through

this grant program. These stakeholders are encouraged to identify and collaborate with a local non-profit or community-based organization.

Boston residents and property owners may request a tree planting on their property using [this form](#). Every effort will be made to fulfill new tree requests by matching requests with project proposals as appropriate.

Required documents: Applicant organizations shall provide:

- A Taxpayer Identification Number (TIN)
- Organizations performing tree planting and maintenance activities shall provide proof of commercial general liability insurance issued in the applicant organization's name with the amount of not less than \$1,000,000 each occurrence and \$2,000,000 in the aggregate and workers compensation insurance in statutory amounts.
- Following project approval, funding recipients will be required to sign a Contractor Agreement with Mass Audubon.

Eligible Projects and Expenses

The Boston Tree Alliance grant program provides funds for tree planting and care with a focus on projects located in under-canopied, environmental justice neighborhoods that experience the worst impacts of urban heat islands, outlined in the [Urban Forest Plan Neighborhood Strategies](#).

Organizations may apply for a maximum of \$25,000 per grant year (this may be for multiple planting seasons).

Eligible Lands

Eligible applicants may apply for funding for a project to be conducted on private land within the city of Boston. Lands owned by federal, state, or municipal government are not eligible for this funding opportunity.

Eligible Uses of Funding

Examples of eligible activities may include:

- Planting single trees on one or more properties
- Planting multiple trees on one or more properties
- Planting trees in microforests or groves (groups of trees)
- Site preparation for tree planting projects (depaving, decompaction, etc. as directly related to tree planting)
- **Required:** 2-year maintenance activities associated with tree planting projects (watering, weeding, inspection, pruning, mulching, staking)

Ineligible Projects and Expenses

- Tree planting and maintenance on publicly-owned land
- Tree care costs for trees **not** planted with Boston Tree Alliance funds
- Projects that do not meet the program goals of the Boston Tree Alliance

Applicants will be required to provide the following information prior to project implementation:

- Proposed location(s) for tree planting.
 - Provide the address(es) of expected tree planting location
 - Indicate that you would like assistance in finding tree planting locations from the Alliance or that planting locations are still in process
- Project narrative that includes:
 - Project goal and expected impact (e.g, relationship to Alliance goals of addressing tree equity, urban heat, and historic disinvestment)
 - Organizational capacity and level of urban forestry/arboriculture knowledge
 - If jointly applying, the nature of the partnership between organizations
- Landowner agreement(s) and a tree planting and 2-year maintenance plan must be submitted and approved before funds can be expended (Details found in the application form)

Applicants should provide an anticipated budget as a cost estimate that **may** include these eligible expenses:

- Planning: staff or subcontracted time to identify sites, secure landowner agreements, and plan implementation (labor only, no material costs expected)
- Planting: costs of trees, mulch, staking, gator bags, items for time-of-planting (materials), and staff or subcontracted planting time (labor)
- Maintenance: 2 years from time-of-planting costs of watering, resetting mulch (materials), and staff or subcontracted inspection time (labor)
- Engagement: 2 years from time-of-planting costs of landowner education for tree planting and care of grant-funded trees

Please see the provided [budget template](#).

Application Submittal

Applications can be submitted through the [online application form](#). All applicant materials can be found on the grant application portal at boston.gov/tree-grants.

Application Support

Technical assistance will be available for applicants to develop their projects in both sessions. Office hours with the project coordinator can be booked here, or email bostontreealliance@massaudubon.org for more information.

Financial Information and Reporting Requirements

Applicants selected to receive funding will be required to attend an orientation session to review project requirements before implementation. No match is required to receive funding.

Once all requested materials are received, grantees will be required to submit a project invoice to Mass Audubon. Funds will be distributed to grantees approximately 2 weeks after invoices are received, prior to project implementation.

Resources

- Email bostontreealliance@massaudubon.org to join and collaborate with the Boston Tree Alliance or ask any questions regarding project assistance and implementation.
- Look to the [Boston Urban Forest Plan](#) for a species list, neighborhood strategies, and other resources.
- See DCR's compiled [MA Urban and Community Forestry Resources](#) and [Alliance Best Management Practices Fact Sheet](#)

Boston Tree Alliance Tree Planting and Care Grants

Application Questions

All applications must be submitted via an [online application form](#) in Microsoft Forms.

Please be sure you have reviewed the [project checklist](#) and Notice of Funding Opportunity prior to beginning this application. All application documents can be found at boston.gov/tree-grants.

For spring planting(s) in 2025, you must submit your application by October 28, 2024. The deadline for submitting applications for fall planting(s) in 2025 is April 30, 2025.

Contact Information

Applicant Organization(s):

Are you applying in partnership with another organization? Please list the organization(s), full name of contact person, and their contact information.

Full Name of Contact Person:

Role/Title:

Email:

Phone Number:

Street Address:

Alternate Contact Name and Email (for communications):

Requested Grant Amount:

Organization Information

Please review the Notice of Funding Opportunity for applicant eligibility.

Organizations that receive funding must sign a Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) with Mass Audubon. To sign the MOA, a Taxpayer ID and the following insurance is required:

Taxpayer ID: Does your organization have a Taxpayer Identification Number?

- Yes
- No
- Unsure

Insurance Requirement: Does your organization, or whomever will be performing tree planting and maintenance, have issued in its name “commercial general liability insurance in the amount of not less than \$1,000,000 each occurrence and \$2,000,000 in the aggregate and workers compensation insurance in statutory amounts”?

- Yes
- No
- Unsure

Project Description

Note: Complete this section with the information that you have available. We understand that projects will develop over time, and some information may not be known at the time of filling out this application.

Project Summary

Please provide a brief narrative description of your project in 200 words or less. Include the project goal(s), number of trees you expect to plant, and expected project impact (please refer to the Alliance goals listed in the Notice of Funding Opportunity).

Indicate if your project includes the following:

- Planting single trees on one or more properties
- Planting multiple trees on one or more properties
- Planting microforests or groves (establishing forested natural areas, groups of trees)
- Site preparation for tree planting projects (depaving, decompaction, etc. as directly related to tree planting)
- Required: Maintenance activities associated with tree planting projects (watering, weeding, inspection, pruning, mulching, staking)
- Other

Tree Planting and Care Project Plan

Please describe your plan for the following steps of the project: planning, planting, maintenance, and engagement.

Note: This is a **preliminary** planting and care plan. Please provide as much detail as possible. Additional information will be requested to finalize your planting and care plan as part of the review process.

Would you like assistance from the Boston Tree Alliance in developing a tree planting and care plan?

- Yes
- No
- Other

Tree planting and care plans will need to align as much as possible with the recommendations of the Tree Subcommittee and its Best Management Practices to ensure tree survival. A [summary fact sheet of the BMPs](#) is attached to the Notice of Funding Opportunity.

Do you agree to read and follow the recommendations of the Boston Tree Alliance Tree Subcommittee and its Best Management Practices (BMPs)?

- Yes
- No
- Other

Planning

Please describe your general approach for planning your project. Responses could include staff and/or subcontractor roles and responsibilities, a timeline, approach to securing landowner agreements, and strategies for using organizational capacity.

Organizational Capacity

Has your organization planned, implemented, or participated in tree planting and care projects, or conducted or contracted for tree planting and care in the past?

- Yes
- No
- Other

If yes, please describe your organization's previous experience here. If no, please describe why you would like to implement a tree planting and care project, and if you require assistance from the Boston Tree Alliance.

Does your organization have a trained certified arborist on staff?

- Yes
- No
- Other

If yes, please list their name and describe their involvement in the project. If no, please describe if you expect to contract a certified arborist or if you would like assistance in identifying a certified arborist.

Planting Season

During what time frames do you plan to plant trees (may check both planting seasons):

- Spring 2025 (approximately April - May)
- Fall 2025 (approximately October - November)
- Unsure

Locations

What neighborhood(s) do you expect your tree planting(s) will be located?

Note: projects located in neighborhoods identified as environmental justice, low-canopied, areas that experience extreme heat, and/or historically redlined will be prioritized. See Urban Forest Plan [Neighborhood Strategies](#), page 5.

If you have a planned planting property address(es), please list here and confirm that the project is in the City of Boston on privately-owned land.

Address(es)

If you do not have a planting address(es), please indicate here:

- I would like assistance from the Alliance in identifying planting addresses. (This may be through a list of landowner requests for trees that the Alliance has received)
- I do not have planting address(es) yet, but will soon know where the plantings will occur and will work with the Alliance to confirm these. Please explain below.
- Other (Explain)

All grantees must provide a landowner agreement that allows access to each property for planting and maintenance activities or post-planting inspections to receive funding. Please indicate that you acknowledge this requirement below.

- I acknowledge that I must provide a signed landowner agreement to access and work on private property prior to project implementation.
- Other

Tree Siting, Selection, and Procurement

Please describe your general approach for siting trees within planting addresses. Responses could include who will engage DigSafe, site assessment to select “right tree, right place,” nursery evaluation, tree species selection, individual tree stock selection, purchasing, transportation, storage, and how and when the designee will perform these tasks.

Planting

Please describe your general approach for planting trees. Responses could include who will plant the trees, what tools will be used, how will trees be planted, source of recommendations (i.e. BMPs or arborists), and who will collect data and report on the day-of-planting.

Maintenance

Please describe your general approach for tree maintenance for 2 years after time of planting. Responses could include strategies for coordinating tree watering, staking, pruning, re-mulching, photographing trees, and responsibilities for maintenance activities and documentation.

Who will perform follow-up inspections and maintenance activities for the tree(s)? (Inspection of each tree or group of trees include 6 months, 1 year, and 2 years after time-of-planting, with data and photo documentation reported back to the Alliance)

- Project oversight partners (community-based organization grantee)
- Landowner
- Combination of the landowner and project oversight partners (CBO grantee)
- Subcontractor
- Volunteer stewardship group
- Other

Engagement

Please describe your general approach for community engagement and landowner education connected to tree planting and care. Responses could include strategies to support landowners through trainings or events, answering questions, and follow up post-planting.

Project Budget

Please refer to the Notice of Funding Opportunity for a list of eligible and ineligible expenses.

Organizations may apply for a maximum of \$25,000 per grant year. All expenses must be connected to the planting and care of grant-funded trees.

Applicants should provide an anticipated total budget and cost estimate breakdown of eligible expenses using the list of eligible expenses and the [budget template](#) provided in the Notice of Funding Opportunity.

Would you like assistance from the Alliance in developing a project budget?

- Yes
- No

**Upload your budget file to the secure link provided using the file naming convention:
BUDGET_ORGANIZATION_PLANTING SEASON_2025**

- I have uploaded my budget to the secure file request link.
- I have not uploaded my budget to the secure file request link.

Next Steps

Thank you for your application! Reach out to bostontreealliance@massaudubon.org if you have any questions.