



The Onondaga Lake Partnership Public Education Mini Grants Program

On behalf of the Onondaga Lake Partnership (OLP), the Onondaga Environmental Institute (OEI) is soliciting proposals for public education, involvement, and/or outreach pertaining to Onondaga Lake and its watershed.

Onondaga Lake Partnership

The OLP is comprised of representatives from federal, state, and local governments, and other involved parties. It promotes cooperation among the parties in the management of environmental issues for Onondaga Lake and its watershed (its tributaries and land drainage area). The OLP facilitates and coordinates development and implementation of improvement projects for Onondaga Lake and its watershed to restore and conserve water quality, natural resources, and enhance recreational uses for public benefit.

The Mini Grants Program

The OLP has dedicated funding for eligible recipients to help fund public outreach and education projects involving Onondaga Lake and its watershed. The funding will be allocated across four categories: Environmental Stewardship, Environment Education, Organizational Assistance, and Public Information and Involvement.

Please note: The Mini Grants Program has a shorter timeline this year, than in prior years. Project applications are due February 24, 2012, awards will be made in early April, 2012 and projects must be completed no later than August 31, 2012. Unfortunately, there will be no exceptions to this date and extensions can not be granted. The OLP grant will be ending in September 2012 and it is imperative that all OLP Mini Grants are completed and final reports are received by August 31, 2012.

The Mini Grants Program Goals

- promote community-based stewardship activities for water quality and habitat of Onondaga Lake and throughout its watershed
- sustain projects and/or promote participation of Indian Nations or their designated organization (i.e. inter-tribal consortia, consultants, etc.), local governments, environmental organizations, citizen and youth groups, and other organizations in environmental activities and sustainable projects
- strengthen environmental links between the OLP and the public, Indian Nations, local governments, environmental organizations, citizen and youth groups, and educational institutions (teachers and students).

Award Amounts

Individual grants will be awarded in various amounts up to \$5,000. Projects may be funded in whole or in part. Matching funds are not required.

Application Process

Funds used for this Mini Grants program are provided from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA) to the OLP and are administered through the OEI. Applications must be addressed as follows:

Onondaga Environmental Institute
Attn: OLP Mini Grants Program
102 West Division Street, 3rd Floor
Syracuse, New York 13204

The OLP Outreach Committee will select Mini Grant recipients. Award funds will be remitted by the OEI and required reports are to be submitted to OEI.

Eligible Projects

Eligible projects should have a high probability of reaching a target interest group (students, lake park users, Indian Nations or their designated organization, consultants, minority, or under-represented population), and assist those interests in understanding the challenges facing the Onondaga Lake watershed. Habitat restoration and water quality improvement projects should have educational or public involvement aspects. Examples of past successful Mini Grants proposals can be found on the OLP website, www.onlakepartners.org

Mini Grant Project Categories

Potential Mini Grants projects must fit into the categories listed below; proposals can overlap among categories:

1. Environmental Stewardship:

This category supports projects that are designed to be hands-on and result in direct improvements to the environment. For example: area clean-ups; habitat restoration projects; invasive species eradication or prevention projects; native plant reintroductions; recreational improvements, events, or activities to increase public use and/or access to the lake, its tributaries, and/or overall watershed.

2. Environmental Education:

(Please note: This category is not intended to fund new curriculum development)

This category supports projects that provide educational experiences, particularly those that encourage students (under the guidance of teachers or coordinators of education and/or outreach based organizations) to interact directly with Onondaga Lake and/or surrounding aquatic and wetland habitats throughout the watershed. For example: science experiments, studies, outdoor activities, field trips, OLP project site visits, actions to enhance lesson development, environmental journalism, and nature photography. The use of OLP outreach products as supporting materials or informational background for the project is highly recommended.

3. Organizational Assistance:

This category provides additional financial support to organizations that work directly on environmental or outreach projects related to Onondaga Lake and its watershed. For example: Increase an organization's work capacity and project scope, resulting in additional products; increase outreach to target interest groups; or other tangible outcomes that can be demonstrated by the organization.

4. Public Information and Involvement:

This category supports disseminating information and interacting with diverse audiences about Onondaga Lake and its watershed using OLP outreach materials and/or appropriate environmental products. For example: development of outreach products such as kiosks or promotional boards with informational displays; recreational trail guides; wildlife and habitat maps; children's books, puzzles, and games and street stenciling.

Recent Areas of Interest for the OLP

- Fish consumption advisories
- Mudboils
- Public and youth education and outreach about Onondaga Lake issues
- Green Infrastructure

Eligible Recipients

- Indian Nations or their designated organization
- Local government or public agencies, such as municipalities and environmental commissions
- Educational institutions, public and private schools or school districts
- Non-profit organizations and associations of specific interests, including citizen and youth groups, professional, civic, environmental, educational, and business associations

Reporting Requirements

Grant recipients will be required to submit a written final report and expenditure documentation to the OEI via email or mail. A more detailed description of reporting requirements will be provided to those receiving a Mini Grant award.

Ineligible Recipients

- Previous Mini Grants recipients with outstanding final reports and/or lack of expenditure documentation will be ineligible for current or future Mini Grant funding. Applicants with poor reporting histories or incomplete projects will also be exempt from Mini Grant funding.
- The Mini Grants Program cannot fund projects designed to implement regulatory requirements or conduct surveys with collection of information from 10 or more people.
- Full-time staff salaries, recurring costs such as rent or utilities, non-expendable equipment purchases (e.g., computers), or expenses not directly related to the project will not be eligible.

- Part-time staff wages unless the work represents additional staff hours for which the employee has not been contracted for previously or prior to application for the grant. The grant cannot cover a part time staff person who shifts his/her work load into Onondaga Lake activities.

Eligible Costs

- Consultant fees
- Expendable or “one-time” equipment rental or material costs
- Printing, copying and mailing expenses related to the project

Project Proposal Evaluation

Eligible project proposals will be evaluated based on the following:

- Applicability of project to the goals and project categories of the Mini Grants Program
- Clear description of project, goals, and distribution plan for final product
- Experience in performing the project or similar projects
- Partnerships with others (Indian Nations, non profits, businesses, environmental organization, schools)
- Ability to complete the project on schedule and within **5 months**
- Size/scope and diversity of targeted audience
- Detailed budget
- Successful past performance of OLP Mini Grants including submittal of final report, expenditure documentation, and other required information

Grant Timelines

Application Deadline: February 24, 2012

Award Notification: Early April, 2012

Projects must be completed no later than August 31, 2012. No extensions. No exceptions.

The OLP grant will be ending in September 2012 and it is imperative that all OLP Mini Grants are completed by August 31, 2012.

For More Information

For more information, please contact the Onondaga Environmental Institute at (315) 472-2150 or OLPoutreach@oei2.org. Please note that examples of successful grant applications and proposals are available for review on the OLP website at www.onlakepartners.org.

Respondents may also download an application from the OLP website. **Complete applications must be received or postmarked by the February 24 deadline to be considered eligible for funding.**

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The Onondaga Lake Partnership
Public Education and Mini Grants Program

GRANT APPLICATION FORM

Project Title: _____

Funds Requested: _____

PART 1: APPLICANT INFORMATION

Name of Group: _____

Address: _____

Group Website Address: _____

Name of Contact Person: _____

Contact Person's Title or relationship to group: _____

Telephone: _____

Fax: _____

E-mail: _____

Purpose or mission of your group:



Does your group have a board of directors or similar executive decision-making body?
Yes ____ No ____ If Yes, how many? ____

Does your group have liability insurance? Yes ____ No ____

Is your group tax-exempt under Section 501(c)3/501(c)4 of the Internal Revenue Code?
Yes ____ No ____

If no, provide full information of sponsoring organization which qualifies for tax-exemption and which will be the contractual recipient of funds.

If yes, fill in the information of your own organization.

Tax-exempt Organization or Sponsoring Tax-exempt Organization Information

Name of organization: _____

Department/Branch of organization: _____

Exempt Organization Number (from NYS Dept. of Taxation and Finance): _____

Organization website address: _____

Mailing address: _____

Phone number: _____

Email: _____

Contact person: _____

PART 2: PROJECT PROPOSAL

Name of proposed Mini Grants project:

Cite which specific category or categories your project falls under (see pages 2-3).

Is this proposal to:

() establish a new program () expand a program () implement a separate, stand alone component of an existing program; the component should not have received funding by the OLP Mini Grants Program in the past.

Please attach additional pages to address the following points. Please make sure you identify the specific point you are addressing.

I. Project Description **Total _____ (50 points max)**

1. ___ (0-7) State the objectives of your project, including what you intend to accomplish.
2. ___ (0-5) Describe the project's eligibility under the Mini Grants Program's goals.
3. ___ (0-7) Describe your experience managing and completing similar projects.
4. ___ (0-5) Provide a project schedule and completion date (**in 5 months or less**).
 - a. If conducting field trips or training sessions, how many will be conducted and how many hours will be spent on these activities?
 - b. If cleaning up/improving an environment or habitat, how many hours and how many people will be involved?
5. ___ (0-7) Provide a summary on your partnerships with other agencies/non-profits. How will they assist you? Will they provide funding for the project? In-kind assistance?
6. ___ (0-7) Provide a summary about your targeted audience. Why is this project important for your audience? What will they learn or take from it? Discuss size and scope of audience.
7. ___ (0-7) Provide a description on how you will evaluate the success of the project. Provide a distribution plan for your final product, if applicable.
8. ___ (0-5) Describe your ability and resources to carry out the overall project.

II. Broad Goals of the Mini Grants Program **Total _____ (21 points max)**

Applicant's response will be rated in each category using a 0-7 points scale, (0 is a poor response and 7 is the best).

1. ___ (0-7) How will the project encourage locally-based watershed enhancement programs and/or educational activities that help restore, protect, or enhance the habitat and/or water quality associated with Onondaga Lake and watershed?

2. ___ (0-7) How will the project develop capacity of local governments, citizen groups, youth groups, and other organizations to provide environmental education and/or promote community-based stewardship activities that prevent nonpoint source pollution from entering the lake and tributaries that enhance the Onondaga Lake watershed?

3. ___ (0-7) How will the project strengthen communication and/or links between Onondaga Lake community and the Onondaga Lake Partnership?

III. Budget **Total _____ (29 points max)**

1. ___ (0-25) Provide a detailed budget as set forth below. Use the attached budget format, including the categories provided.

PROPOSED BUDGET FOR PROJECT

	Requested Funds through Mini Grants	Other Sources of Funds	Total Cost of Project/Program
Salaries (1)			
Materials and Supplies			
Mailings			
Printing			
Travel			
Design/Art Work/Set Up			
Other (2) (Explain) a. b. c.			

- (1) Hours and rate for personnel must be broken down. If more than one staff person, detail each separately. State if benefits are included in hourly rate.
 (2) The "Other" line should only be used if expenses for your project do not fit into the other categories provided. You must detail, breakdown and explain.

2. (0-4 Points) If your proposal is for greater than \$2,500, will your group be able to complete the project with partial funding? Yes ___ No ___

- a. If yes, describe how and/or from what other sources you intend to raise additional funds.
