



PLANET STEWARDS



Application Walkthrough

This document is set up to walk you through each question in the Planet Stewards online project proposal funding application. Beneath each application question, guidance text, additional instructions, and insights are provided in text boxes.

The funding application requires users to upload documents to a Google Drive using a Google Form. All applicants **MUST** have a Google account to successfully apply. You may sign up for a free Google account at <https://mail.google.com/mail/signup>.

Educators with Google accounts set up through their schools may encounter application issues due to their IT department's security settings. We recommend you speak with your IT department about this potential issue in advance of submitting your proposal. If you will have issues submitting your proposal via your school's Google account, we advise creating a personal Google account to apply to NOAA Planet Stewards.

Before you begin your stewardship project proposal, we **STRONGLY RECOMMEND** reading through all instructions, and downloading this document as a template to write your application. When you are ready to submit, copy and paste your completed proposal into the online Google application form. The Google application form used to apply is not conducive to editing. It will not save your progress, nor allow you to edit once you have submitted your application. Using this guide as a template will also provide you with a copy of your proposal if there is any error uploading it to the system.

Many sections of the Google application form will only accept a certain number of words/characters. **We STRONGLY RECOMMEND you write your application in, or check the word/character count of each application section using a Google Doc prior to submitting it.** Different word processing programs e.g., MS Word, count words and characters differently than Google Docs. We would not want any part of your proposal to be cut off in submission.

The majority of questions in the first section of the application - Basic Information should not require additional guidance. If you have questions, contact:

Bruce.Moravchik@noaa.gov.

Section 1: Basic Information

1. First Name
2. Last Name
3. Primary Email Address
4. Secondary Email Address

WE RECOMMEND PROVIDING ANOTHER EMAIL ADDRESS. MESSAGES FROM NOAA PLANET STEWARDS MAY SOMETIMES BE BLOCKED FROM SCHOOL/DISTRICT/ORGANIZATIONAL EMAIL ADDRESSES WITH STRONG SPAM FILTERS.

5. Primary Phone Number
6. Secondary Phone Number

PROVIDE ANOTHER NUMBER IN THE EVENT WE ARE UNABLE TO REACH YOU VIA EMAIL OR AT YOUR PREFERRED PHONE NUMBER.

7. Position

AS WITH MANY EDUCATORS, YOU MAY HOLD MULTIPLE POSITION AFFILIATIONS. ONLY NOTE THE PRIMARY GROUP YOU CONSIDER YOURSELF AFFILIATED WITH AS REPRESENTED IN YOUR PROPOSAL.

- Formal Education, Grades K-5
- Formal Education, Grades 6-8
- Formal Education, Grades 9-12
- Formal Education, College/University
- Informal Education
- Professional Development Provider
- Other

8. Position Title
9. Key Responsibilities
(*Optional Question, 35 Words Maximum*)

CONSIDER FILLING OUT THIS SECTION IF YOU HAVE A LEADERSHIP ROLE IN YOUR SCHOOL OR ORGANIZATION THAT MAY NOT BE EVIDENT FROM YOUR POSITION OR POSITION TITLE, BUT THAT SHOWS AN AREA(S) OF EXPERTISE OR RESPONSIBILITY PROVIDING YOU AN ADVANTAGE IN SUCCESSFULLY IMPLEMENTING A STEWARDSHIP PROJECT (E.G., GRADE-LEVEL TEAM LEAD, SCHOOL SCIENCE CLUB COORDINATOR).

10. School/Place of Employment
11. School/Place of Employment - Phone Number
12. School/Place of Employment - Street Address
13. School/Place of Employment - City

- 14. School/Place of Employment - State
- 15. School/Place of Employment - Zip Code
- 16. Personal Mailing Address

Provide an address at which you are sure you will be able to receive books, educational materials, reimbursement checks, etc. regardless of the time of year.

- 17. Personal Mailing Address - City
- 18. Personal Mailing Address - State
- 19. Personal Mailing Address - Zip Code
- 20. Describe any previous experience you've had with NOAA programs.
(35 words maximum)

Section 2: Project Information

- 21. Select the **primary** focus area of your project
 - Marine Debris
 - Habitat Restoration
 - Carbon Footprint Reduction
 - Carbon Sequestration

PROJECTS MAY HAVE COMPONENTS THAT COVER MORE THAN ONE FOCUS AREA. A HABITAT RESTORATION PROJECT MAY INCORPORATE MARINE DEBRIS CLEANUP OR PREVENT MARINE DEBRIS FROM ENTERING A NATURAL AREA. A CARBON FOOTPRINT REDUCTION PROJECT MAY INCORPORATE CARBON SEQUESTRATION. CHOOSE THE FOCUS AREA THAT BEST PRESENTS THE OVERALL EFFORT AND IMPACT OF YOUR PROJECT.

- 22. Project title:
(10 words maximum)

THE TITLE SHOULD BE DESCRIPTIVE, SUCCINCT, AND CREATIVE.

- 23. Project abstract:

Provide a short summary of your project, including the issue you will address, your action plan, and the desired results. Include the number and type of individuals who will be involved (e.g., 100 students, 4 teachers, 3 oceanographers) and the specific data you will use to measure your success (e.g., tons of carbon sequestered, pounds of debris collected). (125 words maximum)

WE RECOMMEND YOU WRITE THIS SECTION AFTER YOU HAVE COMPLETED THE OTHER PARTS OF THE PROPOSAL. THIS WILL PROVIDE YOU WITH THE DETAILED INFORMATION TO OFFER A COMPREHENSIVE SUMMATION OF YOUR PROJECT IDEA(S), ACTION(S), INTENDED OUTCOME(S), PARTICIPANTS, ETC.

24. What environmental issue will your project address?

Describe the environmental issue/impact and its relationship to your school/local community. Connect this issue to a larger context (e.g., regional, national, global). Describe why it is an important issue to address. (500 Words Maximum)

HERE YOU SHOULD DESCRIBE HOW THE ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUE/IMPACT YOU WILL ADDRESS RELATES TO YOUR SCHOOL AND/OR LOCAL COMMUNITY. MAKE SURE YOU DISCUSS WHY THIS IS AN IMPORTANT ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUE TO ADDRESS IN A LARGER CONTEXT (E.G., REGIONAL, NATIONAL, GLOBAL). IN THIS SECTION, YOU SHOULD ANSWER THE QUESTIONS “SO WHAT?” AND “WHY SHOULD I CARE?”

MAKE SURE YOU INCORPORATE AND REFERENCE NOAA AND OTHER REPUTABLE SCIENCE RESOURCES TO SUPPORT YOUR STATEMENTS. YOU SHOULD PROVIDE LINKS BACK TO THE ORIGINAL SOURCE MATERIAL. YOU MAY WISH TO DRAW ON THE [FOCUS AREA RESOURCES PAGE](#) FOR IDEAS. TO REDUCE THE NUMBER OF CHARACTERS IN THE LINKS TO RESOURCE MATERIALS, WE RECOMMEND USING A URL SHORTENER e.g., BITLY.COM OR TINYURL.COM.

25. How will your project address the environmental issue/impact you have identified?

*Describe your project’s overall goals and the general strategy you will use to address the environmental issue/impact you have identified. Indicate how your project will continue to benefit your community and address the environmental issue/impact after the project funding period has ended. **Funding preference will be given to projects designed to persist beyond the funding period.** (375 Words Maximum)*

HERE YOU SHOULD PROVIDE AN OVERVIEW OF THE GOAL(S) AND GENERAL STRATEGY YOUR PROJECT WILL USE TO ADDRESS THE ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUE/IMPACT YOU WILL BE WORKING ON, AND EXPLAIN WHY YOU SELECTED THEM.

YOU SHOULD INCLUDE REFERENCES AS APPROPRIATE (E.G., TO SUPPORT YOUR DECISION TO RESTORE MANGROVE HABITATS IN YOUR COMMUNITY, YOU MIGHT CITE AN ARTICLE ON CARBON SEQUESTRATION OF MANGROVE TREES OR THE IMPORTANCE OF MANGROVE TREES AS ESSENTIAL NURSERY HABITATS FOR ECOLOGICALLY OR COMMERCIALY IMPORTANT SPECIES) — AGAIN, PROVIDING LINKS BACK TO THE ORIGINAL SOURCE MATERIAL.

FUNDING PREFERENCE WILL BE GIVEN TO PROJECTS DESIGNED TO PERSIST. IN THIS QUESTION YOU SHOULD THINK ABOUT HOW YOU MIGHT EXTEND THE SCOPE OF THE PROJECT SO IT CONTINUES TO BENEFIT YOUR COMMUNITY AND ADDRESS THE ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUE/IMPACT ONCE THE FORMAL FUNDING AND REPORTING PERIOD ENDS.

26. What are the desired outcomes of your project?

List **SPECIFIC** outcomes you intend to achieve with your project using **quantifiable metrics** (e.g., lbs. of marine debris collected, acres of habitat restored, tons of carbon sequestered, etc.). Explain how these quantifiable outcomes will demonstrate your project's success. The desired outcomes of your project **should NOT** be student learning or engagement goals. (125 Words Maximum)

THE DESIRED OUTCOMES SHOULD BE **SPECIFIC, QUANTIFIABLE, AND RELATE DIRECTLY BACK TO YOUR STRATEGY** TO ADDRESS THE ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUE/IMPACT **NOTED IN QUESTION 25**. THE OUTCOMES SHOULD BE DIRECTLY ATTAINABLE THROUGH HANDS-ON STEWARDSHIP ACTIONS — TO BE DESCRIBED IN QUESTION 29.

GOOD EXAMPLES OF DESIRED OUTCOMES WOULD INCLUDE STATEMENTS LIKE “STUDENTS WILL SEQUESTER 13 TONS OF CARBON BY TREES ALONG OUR SCHOOL BORDER.” STUDENTS WILL RESTORE A LAKESHORE HABITAT BY CLEARING 4 ACRES OF INVASIVE SPECIES (REMOVING 200 LBS OF VEGETATION), CONDUCTING LITTER CLEANUPS (REMOVING 300 LBS OF TRASH), AND PLANTING AND MAINTAINING 100 NATIVE SPECIES OF PLANTS.”

INADEQUATE EXAMPLES WOULD INCLUDE: “THE CLASS WILL LEARN ABOUT CARBON SEQUESTRATION. STUDENTS WILL CONDUCT AN OCEAN ACIDIFICATION EXPERIMENT. Etc.”

27. Who will be involved in this project and how?

Include a list of all the people who will be actively involved in the project. For students, include the number and grade levels. For adults, include names, titles (if known), and their institutional affiliation. List how each group or individual will participate. (e.g. 100 eighth grade students will collect marine debris; two ecologists will provide scientific support and a STEM career presentation for the students.)

Funding selection preference will be provided to: educators actively working in pairs or groups; projects that engage multiple classrooms, grade bands, entire schools, or multiple schools; projects engaging external partners, especially those that provide tangible in-kind support. Make sure to mention any and all that are applicable **IN DETAIL**. (375 Words Maximum)

HERE YOU SHOULD INCLUDE ALL INDIVIDUALS WHOSE ACTIONS WILL CONTRIBUTE IN MAJOR WAYS, E.G., STUDENTS, EDUCATOR COLLEAGUES, EXTERNAL PARTNERS, MEMBERS OF THE COMMUNITY, VOLUNTEERS, SCIENTISTS, AND ANYONE WHO WILL WORK DIRECTLY WITH STUDENTS OR PROJECT PARTICIPANTS. LETTERS OF SUPPORT FROM ADULTS CONTRIBUTING IN MAJOR CAPACITIES ARE **STRONGLY RECOMMENDED** AS PART OF THIS PROPOSAL. YOU WILL BE ASKED TO UPLOAD ALL LETTERS OF SUPPORT IN QUESTION 37.

WE **STRONGLY RECOMMEND** YOU CONTACT THESE INDIVIDUALS AS EARLY AS POSSIBLE IN YOUR PLANNING PROCESS TO SECURE THEIR PARTICIPATION AND RECEIVE LETTERS OF SUPPORT FROM THEM. TO FACILITATE SUBMISSION OF SUPPORT LETTERS, WE RECOMMEND YOU DRAFT SUPPORT LETTER LANGUAGE AND REQUEST THAT INDIVIDUALS PERSONALIZE IT FOR YOU DEPENDING ON THEIR ROLE IN THE PROJECT.

28. Is/Are the school(s) you will be working with Title 1?

THIS QUESTION IS MEANT TO DETERMINE WHETHER THE STUDENTS OR AUDIENCES YOU PLAN TO WORK WITH TO IMPLEMENT YOUR STEWARDSHIP PROJECT FALL UNDER THE NOAA OFFICE OF EDUCATION'S DEFINITION OF UNDERSERVED AUDIENCES: POPULATIONS WHO RECEIVE INADEQUATE OR INEQUITABLE SERVICES, WHO EXPERIENCE QUALITY-OF-LIFE DISPARITIES, AND WHO BY DESIGN HAVE LITTLE POWER OR INFLUENCE OVER OUTSIDE DECISIONS THAT IMPACT THEIR DAILY QUALITY OF LIFE.

NOAA PLANET STEWARDS WILL PROVIDE FUNDING PREFERENCE TO EDUCATORS ENGAGING UNDERSERVED AND UNDERREPRESENTED AUDIENCES AS DEFINED BY THE NOAA OFFICE OF EDUCATION. DEFINITIONS OF THESE AUDIENCES MAY BE FOUND ON THE SUPPORTING STEWARDSHIP WEBPAGE:

<https://oceanservice.noaa.gov/education/planet-stewards/psep-supporting.html>

29. If the school(s) you will be working with are Title 1, approximately what percent of the students at the school(s) receive free/reduced breakfast/lunch?

APPLICANTS SHOULD INQUIRE DIRECTLY TO THE ADMINISTRATION OF THE SCHOOL(S) THEY WILL BE WORKING WITH TO OBTAIN THIS INFORMATION

30. Approximately how many of the individuals expected to participate in this project (students, educators, members of the community, etc.) may be considered to belong to Underrepresented STEM Audiences. Please provide a single number.

HERE YOU SHOULD INCLUDE ALL INDIVIDUALS WHO MEET THE DEFINITION OF UNDERREPRESENTED AUDIENCES THAT WILL BE ENGAGED IN THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THIS PROJECT. INCLUDE THE APPROXIMATE NUMBER OF STUDENTS, EDUCATORS, MEMBERS OF THE COMMUNITY I.E. FAMILY MEMBERS, PROJECT PARTNERS, ETC.

NOAA PLANET STEWARDS WILL PROVIDE FUNDING PREFERENCE TO EDUCATORS ENGAGING UNDERSERVED AND UNDERREPRESENTED AUDIENCES AS DEFINED BY THE NOAA OFFICE OF EDUCATION. DEFINITIONS OF THESE AUDIENCES MAY BE FOUND ON THE SUPPORTING STEWARDSHIP WEBPAGE:

<https://oceanservice.noaa.gov/education/planet-stewards/psep-supporting.html>

31. Whose permission do you need to carry out your project?

Include individuals' names, roles, institutional affiliation, and why you need their permission (e.g., school administration, organizational managers, colleague educators, local government, STEM career professionals). (125 Words Maximum)

HERE YOU SHOULD INCLUDE ALL INDIVIDUALS WHOSE APPROVAL IS ESSENTIAL TO INITIATE AND IMPLEMENT THE PROJECT.

YOUR APPLICATION WILL NOT BE CONSIDERED FOR FUNDING IF YOU DO NOT SUBMIT LETTERS OF SUPPORT FROM THESE INDIVIDUALS.

YOU WILL BE ASKED TO UPLOAD ALL LETTERS OF SUPPORT IN QUESTION 37. WE **STRONGLY RECOMMEND** YOU CONTACT THESE INDIVIDUALS AS EARLY IN YOUR PLANNING PROCESS AS POSSIBLE TO DETERMINE IF THE PROJECT YOU ARE PROPOSING IS FEASIBLE, AND IF SO, RECEIVE LETTERS OF SUPPORT FROM THEM.

TO FACILITATE SUBMISSION OF SUPPORT LETTERS, WE RECOMMEND YOU DRAFT SUPPORT LETTER LANGUAGE AND REQUEST THAT INDIVIDUALS PERSONALIZE IT FOR YOU DEPENDING ON THEIR AFFILIATION TO THE PROJECT.

32. What activities will the project involve?

List and describe the stewardship activities that will be conducted during the project. Indicate who will be involved in each activity, strategies and plans for implementation, as well as when and where each activity will occur. In addition to hands-on stewardship activities, this section should include planning meetings, preparatory lessons or activities, pre- and post-project surveys, lectures by STEM career professionals, communication activities, etc.

*We **STRONGLY RECOMMEND** that you break this section out by month and activity type. If an activity repeats itself in subsequent months, you should list it within the appropriate month, but only need to describe it the first time. Include data collection, STEM career, and communication/outreach activities which you will describe in more detail in questions 33-35. (1,000 Words Maximum)*

33. Which activities will involve data collection? Describe your data collection process.

*Describe the data collection efforts involved in your project. List the specific data you will collect, and how you will track and organize the data to record your project's outcomes. This section **MUST** include pre- and post-project surveys measuring the changes in participants' knowledge and attitudes toward the environmental issue/impact being addressed. (500 Words Maximum)*

THIS SECTION SHOULD PROVIDE SPECIFIC DETAILS OF DATA COLLECTION ACTIVITIES YOU NOTED IN QUESTION 32. IT SHOULD CLEARLY PRESENT WHEN, HOW, AND HOW OFTEN YOU WILL COLLECT THE DATA THAT YOU WILL REPORT TOWARD ACHIEVING YOUR PROJECT'S DESIRED OUTCOME(S) PRESENTED IN QUESTION 26. WHEN DESCRIBING YOUR DATA COLLECTION EFFORTS, KEEP IN MIND THE ACTIVITY TIMELINE YOU PRESENTED IN QUESTION 32.

IF YOU ARE USING ANY SOFTWARE OR EQUIPMENT TO MEASURE, TRACK, OR ANALYZE DATA THAT YOU WILL BE REQUESTING FUNDING FOR IN YOUR BUDGET, YOU SHOULD SPECIFY IT HERE.

34. Which STEM careers will students learn about during the project?

List STEM careers and explain what and how students will actively learn about each of them (e.g., project supervision, class presentation, Q&A session). Your answer should focus on the careers themselves, potential career paths to realize these careers, and skills/skill sets students will have to acquire to realize these careers. List the names and titles of individuals who will be engaging with students, if known. (250 Words Maximum)

NOAA PLANET STEWARDS IS COMMITTED TO SUPPORTING STUDENT AND COMMUNITY MEMBERS' AWARENESS OF OPPORTUNITIES AND ENGAGEMENT IN STEM-FOCUSED CAREERS — ESPECIALLY THOSE RELATED TO NOAA SCIENCE TOPIC AREAS.

FOR THIS REASON, WE ASK ALL APPLICANTS TO INCLUDE STEM **CAREERS** DIRECTLY RELATED TO THEIR PROJECT, EXPLAIN HOW PROJECT PARTICIPANTS WILL **ACTIVELY ENGAGE** IN LEARNING ABOUT THESE CAREERS, AND FURTHER EXPLORE THEM IN A MEANINGFUL WAY. THIS SECTION SHOULD EXPAND ON STEM-FOCUSED CAREER ACTIVITIES YOU NOTED IN QUESTION 32.

35. How will you conduct outreach within your community? Describe your specific communication and outreach plans.

Provide a communication and outreach plan for your project, including a rough timeline. How will you publicize the project to your local community, the media, and other interested parties? How will you publicize your results to your school, the local community, and beyond? We strongly recommend you to organize this answer into three parts: 1. Before starting the project, 2. During the project, and 3. After the project. In writing this answer, keep in mind the activity timeline you presented in question 32. (500 words maximum)

AN ESSENTIAL PART OF ANY PROJECT IS COMMUNICATION. THINK ABOUT WHO YOU WANT TO SHARE YOUR PROJECT IDEA(S) WITH AND HOW TO:

- CREATE INTEREST AMONG STUDENTS, PARENTS, OR MEMBERS OF THE COMMUNITY
- ENCOURAGE VOLUNTEERS TO PARTICIPATE IN THE PROJECT
- PUBLICIZE YOUR PROJECT WHILE IT'S GOING ON, AND SHARE THE RESULTS WHEN YOU'RE DONE (E.G., WITH LOCAL MEDIA, PTA, SCHOOL BOARD).

YOU MAY EVEN WANT TO CONSIDER PRESENTING YOUR RESULTS AT A CONFERENCE OR WRITING IT UP AS A JOURNAL ARTICLE.

THIS SECTION SHOULD EXPAND ON AND PROVIDE DETAILS OF COMMUNICATION AND OUTREACH ACTIVITIES YOU NOTED IN QUESTION 32. WE RECOMMEND YOU ORGANIZE IT INTO THREE PARTS:

- BEFORE STARTING THE PROJECT
- 2. DURING THE PROJECT
- 3. AFTER THE PROJECT.
- IN ORGANIZING THIS SECTION OF THE PROPOSAL, KEEP IN MIND THE ACTIVITY TIMELINE YOU PRESENTED IN QUESTION 32.

36. Project budget

Upload a detailed budget, including specific costs and quantities for materials and resources. Include links to items online if available. If in-kind donations are providing additional funds or resources, clearly indicate this as separate from your NOAA Planet Stewards budget. See application instructions for information on which costs are eligible.

All uploaded files MUST be named with the proposal submitter's name (aka YOUR name), using the following format: Last Name_First Name_Budget

Applications lacking a project budget will not be reviewed.

37. Letters of Support

Upload letters of support from all individuals playing a key role and associated in a major way with your project as noted in question 27 and 28 — individuals who must be engaged in order for the project to be carried out as proposed (e.g., school administrators, directors of informal education organizations, partnering educators, etc.)

School administrators and organizational directors MUST verify that they plan to have the educator applicants back for the following academic year pending budget approval.

Letters of support MUST be written on the individual's school or organization letterhead, and be dated and signed by the individual.

All uploaded files MUST be named and numbered sequentially with the proposal submitter's name (aka YOUR name) using the following format:

Last Name_First_Name_Letter of Support_01 (first letter) , _02 (second letter), etc.

Applications lacking the required minimum letters of support will not be reviewed.