



Unity Gardens Grant Guidelines

About Unity Gardens: Unity Gardens supports the building of community partnerships through its grassroots grants program. We fund volunteer-led native gardening projects in Anne Arundel County such as rain gardens, erosion control projects, and pollinator gardens, which use the power of plants to address issues like stormwater runoff and pollution. Unity Gardens envisions a world where common citizens are the first step toward environmental change.

Small Grants of up to \$500 or **Large Grants** up to \$1000 are available. \$500 grants are ideal for small projects or projects that have matching funds (which we look highly upon). \$1000 grants are better for groups that need all funds to come from their Unity Gardens grant. Unfortunately, due to limited funds, not all projects will receive funding.

Our Spring Grant deadline is March 1 (applications available January 15) and our Fall Grant Cycle deadline is August 1 (applications available June 15). Funds may be used for native trees, shrubs, and plants and limited materials that support the life of these plants, such as mulch, soil amendments, tree protection, etc).

Eligibility

- Projects must be located in Anne Arundel County, Maryland.
- Projects must be organized by a community-based association, HOA, PTA, faith-based congregation, scout or other volunteer or non-profit organization and have a strong volunteer component.
- Projects must be located on organization-owned property, public property (i.e school or library grounds, stormwater management areas, parks) with documented permission from the public owner of the property, or on property owned by the nonprofit.
- *80% of the funding must be used for plant material.* Up to 20% may be used for plant survivorship materials such as mulch, soil amendments, tree protection, etc. or educational signage, considered on a case by case basis. Delivery/Freight fees will not be paid.
- Projects with 100% of funding going toward native plants are preferred.
- Unity Gardens will only provide funding for native plants. No annuals or non-native species will be funded. Visit <http://unitygardens.org/grant-information/native-plants/> for more information on native plants.

- Grantees should have a bank account in the name of the grantee or grantee organization.

Requirements Following Approval

- Each grantee will be required to:
 - Confirm a start date of the project
 - Notify Unity Gardens of any changes to the original proposal (i.e. plants, dates, remaining funds, etc)
 - Inform Unity Gardens of any press releases, events, or publicity around the planting.
 - Acknowledge Unity Gardens in all promotional material, on social media, and post Unity Gardens sign (to be provided to grantee).
 - If permits are required, the permit must be obtained before the project begins. The applicant is responsible for checking with the appropriate local jurisdiction to determine if any permits are required.
 - Projects are to be completed within the grant cycle for which the grant is awarded (Spring or Fall) unless an extension has been granted.
- A final report will be due by December 1 for Fall grants and August 1 for Spring grants. It must include:
 - A summary of the project.
 - All invoices/receipts and a spreadsheet of the funds received and expenses incurred
 - Remaining funds, ineligible expenses, or money that cannot be accounted for with receipts must be returned to Unity Gardens.
 - Photos of the new gardens.
 - The project lead is responsible for informing participants that photos may be utilized by Unity Gardens on our website and in promotional materials, and ensuring verbal or written permission from individuals depicted in submitted photos as described in the grant agreement.
- Upon approval of the Final Report, Grantee will provide recognition to Unity Gardens installing a Unity Gardens sign (provided to grantee at no cost) or including the Unity Gardens logo on educational signage at the project site.

Signage

Each grantee will be given a 12 x 16 aluminum sign to post at their grant project. There are two signs available, and both include some plant descriptions. It is recommended, but not required, that you include some or all of the plants depicted on the sign you wish to receive.

Welcome to a Native Garden includes information about the following plants: Echinacea, Goldenrod, Viburnum, Aster, and Milkweed.

Welcome to a Native Garden

Our Maryland wildlife can't survive on just any plants. Our birds, bats, moths, and butterflies evolved to rely on natives. Native plants are trees, shrubs, flowers, grasses, and plants that are originally from this area. Local insects and birds eat what these plants produce, and what's more, many must have specific native plants to raise their young.

Keeping natives in the landscape is vital to keeping the species we love. This landscape was designed to be buzzing with life. And you can do the same at home-- just pick the right plants!

The Life of the Garden
Providing food and shelter to insects and birds is job number one for a native garden. In this landscape, plants aren't sprayed to keep the "pests" away. No, here plants are chosen for their healthy leaves, abundant berries and seeds, and nectar-bearing flowers! Can you spot any of these today?

Project funded by:



Unity Gardens
Cultivating Communities, One Native Garden at a Time

Unity Gardens funds volunteer-led native gardening projects in Anne Arundel County that use the power of plants to address stormwater runoff, pollution, and habitat loss.

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Echinacea
This white coneflower is the plant nectar vector for butterflies and bees. Later in the season, the flower dies into hundreds of seeds that birds just love!

Goldenrod
Even when other insects ignore the yellow flowers that bloom in fall, when other flowers have stopped, this one is still here. And over 100 species of butterflies and moths.

Viburnum
There are many varieties of this shrub. In the spring, their leaves attract pollinators, while in autumn their berries feed birds. And people love them, too!

Aster
In late summer, asters are great nectar sources. You'll see many very colorful insect larvae and eggs from this popular plant!

Milkweed
Milkweed is the only plant that monarchs eat. When the eggs hatch, the tiny caterpillars eat the leaves. There are several varieties, but this one has worked best in this home garden.







**Managing Water
With the Power of Plants**

A big rain can cause big problems. Rushing water, or run-off, can wash away soil, causing erosion. It can push pesticides, fuel or motor oil, and other chemicals into drains, rivers and streams. Luckily, plants have the power to fight back.

Plants break the cycle. In nature, forests and wetlands trap water and pollutants. In an urban area, placing gardens in trouble spots allows plants to do the work of slowing down, soaking up, and spreading out polluted water.

Rain gardens capture water from rain storms into shallow pools. There it can slowly soak into the ground, where it is filtered by plants' roots.

Planting on slopes slows down fast moving rain water and prevents run off. The dense roots of plants absorb rainwater and trap it underground.



The Life of the Garden
Providing food and shelter to insects and birds is job number one for a native garden. In this landscape, plants aren't sprayed to keep the "pests" away. No, here plants are chosen for their healthy leaves, abundant berries and seeds, and nectar-bearing flowers! Can you spot any of these today?

Black-eyed Susan
One neat flower, *Rudbeckia*, is a diverse resource source for bees, flies and bees, and the seeds are rich with oil.

Native Ferns
Native ferns, like sensitive fern, ferns fern, absorb rainwater and provide habitat for ground-dwelling critters.

Cardinal Flower
Cardinal flower or *Lobelia*, is an important nectar source for hummingbirds and residential butterflies.

Blazing Star
Blazing star, a multi-pronged flower, also known as Blazing Star, *Thalictrum*, and others, make it a favorite of people, too!

Blue Flag Iris
This excellent water-loving garden plant, also known as Blue Flag Iris, attracts birds and hummingbirds.

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Managing Water with Plants includes Black-eyed Susan, native ferns, Cardinal flower, Blazing Star, and Blue Flag Iris.

Maryland Pollinator Pathway

We would like for each of our grantees to register their garden on the Maryland Pollinator Pathway. In addition to planting with natives, the only additional requirement is to avoid the use of lawn chemicals and pesticides. Being part of the pathway helps track the corridor of beneficial habitat for pollinators and helps build support for native plants. There is no charge to register. Please visit <https://www.pollinator-pathway.org/towns/anne-arundel-county> for additional information about this local effort.

Selection Criteria

Selection will be based on the following criteria:

- Level of volunteer participation and development of community leadership.
- Potential benefit to the community and the environment. Projects that address environmental issues such as erosion, stormwater management, or habitat protection.
- Feasibility of project plan, including goals, timeline, budget, and breakdown of plant and other materials.
- Detailed budget, proof of fiscal responsibility, and financial need.
- Soundness of long term plan for maintenance and sustainability.
- Projects with a financial match by the requesting organization will be looked upon favorably.
- First priority is given to first-time grantees meeting or exceeding all eligibility requirements.
- Second priority is given to repeat grantees in good standing, as funds allow.
- An organization may not receive a Unity Gardens grant more than once in a 12 month period.
- Projects with 100% of funding going toward native plants are preferred.

Funding Restrictions

- Only native trees, shrubs, and perennials will be funded. No annuals or invasive species will receive funding.
- Unity Gardens grant funds may not be used for hardscape, equipment, snacks, or delivery or freight fees.
- Grant funds may not be used on private property (other than private property owned by a nonprofit or community association).
- Unity Gardens will require a refund for the cost of materials not funded in our guidelines or for items without an invoice/receipts.

Award Notification

All applicants will receive an email notice of Unity Gardens' decision. An application may be declined, partially awarded, or fully awarded. If approved, Unity Gardens will email a grant agreement with grant conditions. Have it signed by the head of the organization, then scan, and return the signed agreement. Unity Gardens will mail the check to the Grantee following Unity Gardens' receipt of the signed agreement.

Applications are accepted in good faith. Unity Gardens Inc shall be held harmless in the event of changes in leadership or structure of organizations receiving grant funds.

Unity Gardens, Inc is a 501(c)(3) not for profit organization.

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