**Mass Green Network**

**Community Resources for Greening Massachusetts**

**NEW ENGLAND GRASSROOTS**

**ENVIRONMENT FUND**

***Seed Application Template***

*The New England Grassroots Environment Fund (“the Grassroots Fund” for short) offers Seed Grants of $250 to $1,000 to community groups with newly evolving projects. Seed applications have a rolling deadline, so submit an application when you are ready. Expect a decision within 3 weeks of submission.*

*The grants are designed for groups that are doing community-based environmental work in Massachusetts and other New England states. The groups must be volunteer-driven or have no ­more than 2 full-time paid staff, and have an annual budget of no more than $100,000. Funds cannot be used for retroactive expenses, lobbying purposes, micro-grant programs or large capital acquisitions.*

*Below is a template to facilitate your application under the common goals of the Mass Green Network. Please note that the answers below (in green) are only suggestions – you should tailor everything to your specific plans and your specific needs.*

*The grant template includes $100 for organizational membership in the Mass Green Network. If the grant is awarded, you can send a check made out to “The Product Stewardship Institute” (our financial sponsor) with “Mass Green Network” in the subject line.*

*For more information on Grassroots Fund seed grants (including a webinar), go to:*

[*https://grassrootsfund.org/dollars/seed-grants*](https://grassrootsfund.org/dollars/seed-grants)

*Use this document to prepare your answers, but submit the final version online at:*

[http://grassrootsfund.org](http://grassrootsfund.org/)

*Any questions, contact Ally Philip at the Grassroots Fund:*

*ally@grassrootsfund.org*

*(603) 905-9915*

**The Grassroots Fund Seed Grant:**

**Template for Members of the Mass Green Network**

* **Some key questions in bold.**
* Suggested answers in green (remember to tailor to your specific project)
* Important instructions in red.

**PERSONAL INFORMATION:**

1. Email
2. First Name:
3. Last Name:
4. Mailing address:
5. State:
6. Zip Code
7. Primary phone number:
8. Alternative phone number:
9. **How did you hear about the Grassroots Fund?**
* *Member of the Mass Green Network*

**GROUP INFORMATION**

1. Name of group:
2. **Working on (issue areas):** *local land & water; local living*

[NOTE: for polystyrene add: *local health*]

1. Where is the group located? (town):
2. State:
3. Is there a core group of individuals leading the project(s)? Yes/No
	1. If Yes, list the first name, last name & email address of each core volunteer

*[NOTE: To be eligible for a Grassroots Fund grant, there must be at least 3 core volunteers.]*

1. When did the group first start working together?
2. **What is the purpose of the group?**
* [*Max 1,000 characters including spaces*]
* The mission of the [YOUR GROUP NAME HERE] is to improve quality of life in YOUR CITY/TOWN/NEIGHBORHOOD by protecting the health of its residents, safeguarding its pets, and preserving its natural surroundings. We seek to reduce the plastic waste that blights our communities, clogs our waste streams, chokes our wildlife, squanders our resources, and poisons our earth.
* [*NOTE: Grassroots Fund grants may be used for educational activities but not for expressedly political campaigns. You can use funds for passing a bag bans or polystyrene regulation, as long as the funds are not used for directly for advocacy purposes.]*
1. Does the group have a website/Facebook page/Twitter account? Yes/No
	1. Website URL
	2. Facebook URL:
		1. # of Facebook Page likes/Group members
	3. Twitter URL:
		1. # of Twitter followers
2. Does the group have a contact list with emails and/or mailing addresses? Yes/No
	1. If Yes, number of addresses on the contact list:
3. Does the group have paid staff?
4. If Yes, How many staff people?
5. **What is the tax status of the group?** -­ *Ad Hoc*
6. Please share a few photos that highlight the group’s work and the people involved.
7. Please share the embed code of any Group videos you have posted online.

**PROJECT INFORMATION**

1. Where is the project located? [*i.e., your town*]
2. State
3. Amount requested:
	* [*NOTE: Range* is $250 -­‐ $1,000 for Seed Grants]
4. **Primary Project Issue Area:** *local land & water; local living*

[NOTE: for polystyrene add: *local health*]

1. **What do you propose to do?**
	* [*Max 2,000 characters including spaces*]
	* We propose to reduce plastic waste in our community by educating residents about the economic, environmental, and health harms of plastic, helping consumers make more conscious choices, and assisting businesses to transition away from plastic bags and polystyrene. In their place, we propose to promote materials that may be reused, recycled, or composted. We hope the outcome of our local educational campaign will be action by town/city officials to limit [single-use plastic bags / polystyrene food service ware / bottled water] and to promote environmentally responsible alternatives.
* [*NOTE: Grassroots Fund grants may be used for educational activities but not for expressedly political campaigns.]*
1. **How are you going to do it?**
	* [*max. 1,500 characters, including spaces*]
	* *[Present a timeline or workplan here. Consider such elements as: building a coalition, holding meetings, educating the public, working with businesses, informing the press, getting out the vote.]*
	* *SEE APPENDIX A FOR A SAMPLE TIMELINE*
2. **How will your community benefit from this project?**
	* [*max. 1,000 characters, including spaces*]
	* Our project should result in policy changes and behavior changes that result in a significant reduction in plastic waste. Our community will benefit from clean streets and unspoiled parks. The dangers that plastic bags/polystyrene poses to our animals will be reduced. [For polystyrene: The National Toxicology Program has identified styrene as a probable human carcinogen; eliminating polystyrene foodware will protect the health of our residents, especially our children.] Reducing plastic waste will also result in less plastic burned in incinerators and buried in landfills reducing air and water pollution and protecting community health.
	* More generally, our community will benefit from a greater awareness of and demand for sustainability. Committing to ban plastic bags, Styrofoam, or disposable water bottles requires a conscious behavioral choice, akin to conserving electricity or water. When a community bans plastic bags, its citizens consciously forego a cheap, convenient, and familiar habit in favor of a higher good. When a community goes even further and imposes a charge on paper bags to encourage reusable, it is making a commitment to sustainability that affects each member of that community every day.
3. **Whom do you need to make this project happen?**
	* We need a core group of engaged neighbors and a larger network of supportive local residents in our community taking action to convince town/city officials to ban plastics. We need assistance with developing educational materials, drafting legislation, presenting expert testimony from environmental scientists, and handling communications and media relations. For much of this, we will be drawing on the resources and expertise offered through the Mass Green Network.
4. **How much money is needed in total to complete the proposed project?**
	* *[Give the total here. Budget breakdown is the next question.]*

***SEE APPENDIX B FOR SAMPLE BUDGET***

1. **Please break‐down/categorize the total project costs:**
	* *[This is the key question. Foundations look at the budget first. See attached for an example.]*
	* *[When figuring your budget, please include $100 for organizational membership in the Mass Green Network]*
2. **How would you spend a Grassroots Fund Seed Grant?**
	* *[Identify which of the elements in your budget you would use the grant for. Remember, maximum grant = $1,000.]*
	* Funds from the New England Grassroots Environment Fund would be used to pay for developing and printing educational materials, sending mailings, and buying food for meetings. $100 will go towards organizational membership in the Mass Green Network.
3. **If your group receives a Grassroots Fund Seed grant, how do you plan to pay for remaining expenses?**
	* *[List amount and source of income]*
	* *[For examples, see sample budget in Appendix B]*
4. **Are any materials being donated or are you receiving any services at a reduced rate?**
	* *[If Yes, please list amount and materials/services donated]*
	* *[For examples, see sample budget in Appendix B]*

**APPENDIX A:**

**SAMPLE TIMELINE**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | **Oct** | **Nov** | **Dec/Jan** | **Feb** | **March** | **April** | **May** | **Goals** |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| **Major Events** |  |  |  |  | Warrant Article due3/20 | Select board meeting on warrant articles4/5 | Town Meeting5/18 | Plastic bag regulation by popular vote  |
| **Municipal Government** |  | Select board meeting11/15 | Board of Health meeting 1/15 | Select board meeting2/15 |  |  |  | Solicit support of BOH, select board |
| **Core Group Meeting** | Monthly | Monthly | Biweekly | Biweekly | Weekly | Weekly | Weekly | Keep momentum |
| **Public Events** | Public meeting at library: Raise |  | Screening of “Bag It”  |  | Scout/4H/Youth Group plastic awareness day | Public meeting at library: Q&A on article | Door-to-door canvass | Raise awareness, address concerns |
| **Business outreach** |  |  | Meet with Chamber of Commerce | Meet with Main Streets | Canvass local businesses | Canvass local businesses |  | Partner with local businesses |
| **Tabling at Events** |  | Turkey Chase | Holiday Walk | Library Booksale 2/18 | Farmer’s Market3/3, 3/17 | Farmer’s Market4/5, 4/19 | Farmer’s Market5/12, 4/19 | Spread awareness, get out votes |
| **Media** | Announce public meeting in local paperInvite local press | Start Facebook group, or join Mass Green Network FB page |  |  | Editorial/ letter in local news outlet? | Announce public meeting in local paperInvite local press | Editorial/ letter in local news outlet? |  |
| **Resources from Mass Green Network** | Power point on plastic bagsFact sheetPress release |  | Business resources for bag alternatives“Bag It” discussion guide | “Ban the bag” buttonsExpert help on legislation | Youth activities kit | Get out the vote flyers.Expert testimony for public meetingPress release | Letters of support from major nonprofits mailed to council members &/or voters | Ensure the public is fully informed & energized |
| **Fundraising** |  | Bake sale |  | House party |  |  |  | Cover expenses for public outreach |

**APPENDIX B:**

**SAMPLE BUDGET**

**The Yourtown Committee to Ban the Bag**

**[or the Yourtown Committee to Regulate Polystyrene, etc.]**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  **EXPENSES** |   | **INCOME** |   |
| Coffee from Rick’s Café Americain |  $ 50.00  | Grassroots Fund Grant |  $ 1,000.00  |
| Photocopying – 200 color flyers from Staples |  $ 100.00  | Button giveaways (100 @ $0) |  $ 0.00  |
| Printing – 100 “Ban the Bag” buttons from unionbuttons.com [or placards, posters, bumper stickers, lawn signs, etc.] |  $ 100.00  | Bag sales (300 @ $1) |  $ 300.00  |
| 300 cotton tote bags with “Shop Yourtown” logo from DiscountMugs.com  |  $ 800.00  |  Bake Sale |  $ 100.00 |
| Organizational membership in the Mass Green Network |  $ 100.00  |  Fundraising Party | $ 300.00 |
|  Table at Yourtown Farmer’s Market, 6 weeks @ $75/week |  $ 450.00 |   |   |
| ***Total*** |  $ 1,600.00  | ***Total*** |  $ 1,600.00  |
|   |   |   |   |
|  **In Kind Contributions** |  |  |   |
| Volunteer Labor (5 people working a total of 40 hours each over 6 months x $23.56/hr\*) |  |  |  $ 4,712.00  |
| Phone & Internet  |  |  |  $ 200.00 |
| Refreshments for volunteers |  |  |  $ 50.00 |
|  |  |  |   |
|   |   |   |   |
| ***Total*** |  |   |  $ 4,962.00  |

\*Value of volunteer labor from <https://www.independentsector.org/volunteer_time>