



**OPEN SPACE
INSTITUTE**

Fall 2025 Appalachian Landscapes Project Catalyst Grant Package

The Open Space Institute (OSI) is pleased to offer a Fall 2025 grant opportunity to advance climate-informed planning across the Appalachians. The Appalachian Landscapes Project and the Mapping Resource Center are made possible with support from The Great Island Foundation, Jane's Trust Foundation, J.M. Kaplan Fund, Lookout Foundation, Anonymous Foundations, as well as other foundations and individuals.

Grant Summary

Purpose

OSI's Appalachian Landscapes Project (ALP) **Catalyst Grants** support climate-informed planning to accelerate the protection and stewardship of lands across the Appalachians for people and wildlife. Investments in planning can strengthen local capacity for strategic land conservation, raise funds, advance policy, and direct resources to lands with critical climate and community values.

Project Types

Projects should achieve one or more of the following deliverables:

- **Climate-informed conservation plan or vision** that identifies priorities for land protection.
- **Climate-informed stewardship plan** that develops strategies for "climate-smart" land management to enhance resilience and/or carbon storage/sequestration.
- **Community Resilience plan** that advances nature-based strategies to enhance climate resilience and/or address the impacts of climate change being experienced by a specific community. Nature-based strategies may include a variety of conservation or policy approaches to protect, restore, or manage land to retain or repair ecosystem functions.

All projects should address priorities on a **broad scale** (such as a corridor, focus area, county, or watershed). Planning projects focused on a single property are not eligible for Catalyst funding.

OSI seeks to support climate planning projects that incorporate **meaningful community input and engagement** and that will result in **specific and documented community benefits**.

Eligible Entities

The ALP invites Catalyst applications from land trusts, nonprofit organizations, Tribal governments, and municipalities committed to advancing permanent land conservation in the Appalachian region.

OSI encourages proposals from collaborative groups containing multiple partners, with one of the above entities as the lead applicant.

Geography

Projects should advance conservation within the ALP service area as defined by OSI.

To check whether your project falls within the ALP boundary, use this [Screening Tool](#). If your project lies partially within the boundary, we encourage you to reach out to OSI program staff before applying to confirm eligibility.

Use of Funds

ALP Catalyst grants support **planning**, rather than implementation. Grants may support a broad range of activities that **contribute to the development of conservation strategy or decision making**, including, but not limited to priority-setting, mapping, needs assessment, convening partners, community engagement, and development of policies or processes to guide implementation.

Eligible costs include, but are not limited to staff time, project consultants, travel, stipends for project partners or community members who contribute to the plan, and indirect costs (up to 15 percent of the total amount requested).

Ineligible Uses of Catalyst Grant Funds

- General operating support
- Plan implementation (i.e. carrying out the activities outlined in a plan or strategy)
- Research that is not directly related to the conservation planning project described in the application
- Organizational strategic plans that do not identify specific climate-informed strategies
- Land acquisition and restoration capital costs
- Political lobbying
- Development of carbon offset projects

Timing Considerations

Applications will be accepted through December 5, 2025. Applicants will be notified about grant decisions in February 2026. Projects should be designed to be completed within 12-18 months of grant award receipt.

Grant Awards and Fund Availability

Applicants may request up to \$20,000 in grant support for the development of climate-informed plans. Up to \$150,000 is available in the fall 2025 round for projects throughout the Appalachians Region.

Match

There is no match requirement. Applicants will be asked to report the full project budget, and any sources of funding in addition to the grant request as part of the financial summary form. Documentation of in-kind or cash match is appreciated where possible.

Methods and Data Resources

All applicants will be asked to describe the methods, data, and other knowledge that will be used to inform the project. OSI does not require the use of specific datasets or approaches but has compiled a robust set of climate and data resources for applicants to consider as they are designing and implementing their planning projects.

See the [*Appalachian Landscapes Mapping Resource Center*](#) for more information.

Criteria

Proposals will be evaluated on the following criteria:

- **Catalytic Impact** - The project has the potential to inform conservation decisions (such as land protection; land stewardship; or related activities), in the near-term. Applicants should demonstrate how investments in planning will be **catalytic**, such as how the project may leverage additional funding sources, grow the skills and relationships needed to work effectively, build a project pipeline or lay the groundwork for implementation of conservation projects, influence the conditions needed to achieve desired conservation impacts, pilot approaches that can serve as a demonstration, or develop replicable models.
- **Audience** - The plan seeks to inform the actions of an identified audience (such as a land trust or organization, Tribe, landowners, municipalities, county, public agency partners, etc.) that has the resources and commitment to achieve the goals of the project.
- **Methods and Use of Science** - The proposal identifies information sources that will be used in the project and articulates clear steps or methods to achieve outcomes.
- **Feasibility** - The project team has the capacity, expertise, and commitment to complete the project. The project is likely to succeed within the proposed timeframe.
- **Community Involvement and Benefit** - The applicant demonstrates how members of the community have been or will be involved in planning, decision-making,

and/or implementation of the project and how the project will benefit communities facing climate threats and/or address the inequitable burdens of climate impacts.

Staff Contacts

Catalyst Program Inquiries

Hallie Schwab

Conservation Planning Manager

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[\(929\) 405-3294](tel:(929)405-3294)

General Inquiries

Yasemin Unal-Rodriguez

Conservation Capital Program Associate

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[\(646\) 578-0268](tel:(646)578-0268)

Application Form

The following is provided for reference only. All applications must be filled out and submitted through Open Space Institute's grant management system Foundant.

Organizational Information

Applicant Name*

The individual from the applying organization that will communicate with Open Space Institute staff, fulfill contract requirements per the grant agreement, and receive the grant.

Suggested Character Limit: 100

Type of Organization*

Choices

Land Trust
Other Non-Profit
Tribal Government
Municipality/State Gov't

Mission Statement*

Please enter the organization's mission statement.

Suggested Character Limit: 750

Date Founded*

Date organization was founded.

Suggested Character Limit: 10

Project Overview

Project Name*

Name of Project.

Suggested Character Limit: 100

Project Summary*

Briefly summarize your project. Include

- 1) intended outcomes,
- 2) geography,
- 3) partners, and
- 4) the importance of the project in addressing climate change.

Note: If funding is awarded, this summary may be used to describe the project publicly.

Suggested Character Limit: 1200

Geographic Area(s)*

Please choose all states that apply.

Estimated Project Start Date*

Suggested Character Limit: 10

Estimated Project End Date*

Suggested Character Limit: 10

Narrative

Project Goals and Catalytic Impact*

Provide a brief explanation of what climate change impacts you are seeking to address with the project, and what conservation decisions you seek to inform.

Describe how the proposed planning effort will be **catalytic**, such as how the project may influence the priorities of established conservation funding sources or leverage additional resources, grow the skills and relationships needed to work effectively, build a project pipeline or lay the groundwork for implementation of conservation projects, or pilot approaches that can serve as a demonstration or develop replicable models.

Suggested Character Limit: 2000

Capital Grant Connection

OSI's Appalachian Landscapes Project makes Capital grants for direct land acquisition activities, such as purchasing land or conservation easements. If relevant, explain how this project relates to a land protection Capital grant previously made by OSI, or how it could inform future proposals to OSI's Appalachian Landscapes Project Capital grant.

Suggested Character Limit: 500

Geographic Area*

Please describe the following:

1. The project's geographic area (service area, watershed, counties, eco-region, or other planning boundaries as appropriate); and
2. The importance of focusing on climate change mitigation or adaptation in this place and/or at this scale.

Suggested Character Limit: 1000

Project Strategies and Methods*

Please describe each of the following:

1. The proposed strategies to achieve the goals; and
2. Methods that will be used to complete the project, including the science, data, or knowledge that will be used to help ensure climate impacts are addressed.

Suggested Character Limit: 2000

Products and Audiences*

Please describe each of the following:

1. Products (e.g., reports, maps, conservation plan, communications materials, etc.) that will result from the proposed project; and
2. The audience(s) for the proposed products.

Suggested Character Limit: 2000

Tasks and Timeline*

Provide a list of tasks and a timeline for completing the outcomes.

Suggested Character Limit: 2000

Qualifications and Roles*

Describe the project team's knowledge and capacity to complete the project, including specific roles and qualifications of partners to achieve the intended goals. If relevant, describe the GIS (mapping) qualifications of the project team.

Suggested Character Limit: 2000

Climate Change Commitment*

Describe the role that climate change adaptation and/or mitigation plays in the work of the applicant and project partners. Briefly list any prior planning projects or work that demonstrates the organizations' commitment to addressing climate change.

Suggested Character Limit: 1000

Community Involvement and Benefit

Community Involvement*

If applicable, please describe:

1. How "community" is defined in the context of this project
2. How community members have been (or are intended to be) involved in the planning, decision making and/or implementation of the project, including a description of the specific community-level collaborators (e.g. individuals, groups, or organizations), and
3. If relevant, describe any steps taken or planned to reduce barriers to participation for people who historically have been underrepresented in land conservation or are disproportionately impacted by climate change.

Suggested Character Limit: 1,500

Community Benefit*

If applicable, please describe:

1. The intended beneficiaries of the proposed work (please be as specific as possible)
2. The climate-related and other benefits of your project to human communities, for example heat island mitigation, drinking water protection, flood hazard mitigation, access to recreational areas, or preservation of culturally significant lands.

Suggested Character Limit: 1,500

Grant Budget and Financial Information

Amount Requested*

Please enter the amount of grant funds requested.

Suggested Character Limit: 20

Estimated Project Budget*

Please note that this field should match the “total project costs” line on your uploaded Project Financial Summary form.

Suggested Character Limit: 20

Financial Summary*

Using the template provided here, upload a completed Project Financial Summary showing total project costs and anticipated funding sources.

File Size Limit: 2 MB

Budget Narrative*

Describe the uses of funds and how your organization(s) plan to raise any outstanding project funds. While a match is not required, in-kind or cash match is appreciated as an indication of the organization’s commitment to the project.

Suggested Character Limit: 1500

Additional Information

Maps

Please upload 1 or 2 maps of the project’s geographic area. If a map is not available, please feel free to upload another relevant visual. If your file exceeds upload limits or you need additional assistance, please contact Yasemin Unal-Rodriguez, Conservation Capital Program Associate, (646) 578-0268 or yunal-rodriguez@osiny.org

File Size Limit: 4 MB

Additional Maps

Additional optional upload.

File Size Limit: 4 MB

Additional Information

Is there additional information and/or supporting documentation pertinent to the proposed project that you would like us to consider in reviewing this application? You may describe this information in this section, or upload attachments below.

Suggested Character Limit: 1000 | File Size Limit: 4 MB

Budget Summary Form

The following form is provided for reference only. The Budget Summary Form is downloaded and uploaded for submission on Foundant.

Project Name_____ Applicant Name_____

Directions

- Detail all estimated **Project Costs** and **Funding Sources** including those that will not be covered by this grant request.
- Overhead or indirect costs of up to 15% of the project total may be included in the grant request or in the overall project budget.
- Expenses for staff salaries may be included in the grant request and/or included through in-kind contributions from your organization or other funding sources.
- **Project Costs** and **Funding Sources** should be equal. If full funding has not been secured, please indicate how you expect to secure the funding needed to complete the project.
- Add additional lines to tables as needed.

Estimated Project Costs

Staff	\$
Other than staff (please list)	\$
	\$
	\$
Total Project Costs	\$

Estimated Sources of Funds

Source	In hand/Pledged	Anticipated
OSI Catalyst Request	N/A	\$
In kind	\$	\$
Other contributions (please list)	\$	\$
	\$	\$
Total Sources of Funds	\$	\$