

Program Application: 81706170

Linked Pre-Application Form - DO NOT DELETE

Growing Resilience: Native Plant Education and Incubation Project

Grant Amount Requested

\$49,250.00

Organization Name

Grassroots Ecology

Urban Grant Program Application Questions

Overview

Type of project (check all that apply)

Grant category (check all that apply)

Environmental Stewardship and Restoration, Environmental Education, Urban Agriculture / Food Systems

Project Location: Address / Neighborhood

What is the physical location of the project? If there is no physical location, please enter "N/A." If the project will be in multiple locations, please list all. Note: project location(s) must be within the Authority's jurisdiction.

Services will be delivered at multiple partner sites:

-Alviso in Action: Serves Alviso, San Jose; mailing address is P.O. Box 713, Alviso, CA 95002

-Bill Wilson Center: 3490 The Alameda, Santa Clara, CA 95050

-LGBTQ Wellness: 2635 Zanker Road, San Jose, CA 95134

-San Jose Conservation Corps + Charter School: 1560 Berger Dr, San Jose, CA 95112

-Veggielution: 647 S King Road, San Jose, CA 95116

Project Location

Open Space Authority District of Project Location(s)(check all that apply)

Authority District 2, Authority District 3, Authority District 6

Who does the project serve? Please indicate which Open Space Authority Districts are served (where do the people served by the program live) (check all that apply)

Authority District 2, Authority District 3, Authority District 4, Authority District 5, Authority District 6

Project Abstract

The Growing Resilience Project will support multiple organizations providing critical services to communities within the OSA service area—Alviso in Action, Bill Wilson Center, LGBTQ Wellness, San Jose Conservation Corps+Charter School, and Veggielution—to augment the resilience of their organizations, sites, and communities through native plants. Through the project, Grassroots Ecology will provide each partnering organization's staff and/or participants with education, training, and tailored guidance that empowers them to create and sustain climate-resilient landscapes while deepening their connections to nature from right where they are. Key activities include educational talks and workshops, consultation on how to add and maintain native plants to their site/facility, locally-tailored native plant resource materials, plant giveaways, and take-home activities/supplies such as plant cuttings, seeds, and pots.

Project Planning

Describe the proposed project.

The Growing Resilience Project will support multiple community organizations operating within the OSA service area—Alviso in Action, Bill Wilson Center, LGBTQ Wellness, San Jose Conservation Corps+Charter School, and Veggielution—to augment the resilience of their organizations, sites, and communities through native plants. These organizations provide a range of critical services, from environmental and social justice work to

housing, workforce development, and food production. Through the project, Grassroots Ecology will provide each partnering organization with education, training, and tailored guidance that empowers them to create and sustain climate-resilient native plant landscapes while deepening their connections to nature from right where they are.

ACTIVITIES

Community partners will select any combination of the following services based on their needs, capacity, and interests:

- Educational talks, presentations, and/or workshops on native plants tailored to their specific interests and members.
- Consultation on how their organization can add native plants to their site/facility in a way that maximizes benefits to their programs—for example, by creating their own nursery, pollinator garden, or hedgerow
- Locally-relevant native plant resources, including our book San Francisco Bay Area Native Plants for the Garden, Native Plant Gardening Tips, Lawn Conversion Guide, and how-to manual for creating a fire-resistant habitat at home
- Plant giveaways (incorporated as part of workshops or consultations) as well as propagation take-home activities/supplies such as plant cuttings, seeds, and pots

INTENDED AUDIENCES/LOCATIONS

The project will engage community partners serving residents across five Authority Districts, who will select from the above menu of services and work with us to customize those services to their needs, capacities, and members (staff and/or program participants, as determined by each partner). Collectively, these partners have expansive facilities and programs for residents including community gardens, a farm, shelter and transitional housing, and educational centers—and are rife with potential for native plants to enhance the resilience of their landscapes and programs. Below is a description of each partner organization, including locations and communities served.

-Alviso in Action (AiA) is a nonprofit with a mission to improve environmental conditions in Alviso by protecting and preserving the community from environmental impacts. Grassroots Ecology recently kicked off a new collaboration with AiA to engage their members in habitat restoration at our Alviso restoration site along the bay near the San Jose Regional Wastewater facility. The proposed project would build on this nascent partnership by supporting AiA members to augment their community projects and sites—including the Alviso community garden—through native plants.

-Bill Wilson Center is a nonprofit that provides housing and comprehensive support services to Santa Clara County youth and families. Last summer we partnered with Bill Wilson Center to provide interpretive events to their youth, and the proposed grant would enable us to continue working with them to deepen their members' knowledge, interests, and skills in native plants, landscaping, and nature-based solutions to climate adaptation.

-LGBTQ Wellness, a fiscally sponsored program of Caminar created in 2015, is a community outreach and support program that uplifts the mental health and holistic wellness of LGBTQIA+ (lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, questioning, intersex, asexual, +) adults in Santa Clara County. Grassroots Ecology staff have partnered with LGBTQ Wellness and other Caminar programs for queer affinity programs. The proposed project would enhance that collaboration by providing native plant education and resources to their community.

-San Jose Conservation Corps + Charter School (SJCC+CS) is an organization that develops young adults to create transformational change for our community and planet. Grassroots Ecology has partnered with SJCC+CS for many years to provide hands-on education and training to their young adult crew members. The proposed project would build on that collaboration by enabling us to offer tailored native plant education and consultation on how to create a Native Plant Nursery at their site, an expressed long-term aspiration.

-Veggielution is a nonprofit organization and community farm that connects residents through food and farming to build a stronger community. They achieve this by providing access to healthy, locally-grown produce, offering educational and entrepreneurship programs, and using their six-acre farm as a gathering space. The proposed project would expand their native hedgerows, "train the trainer" on the importance of native plants and the benefits they provide within an urban agriculture setting, and/or support the organization in growing their own native plants.

STANDARDS ALIGNMENT

Educational activities will take place outside traditional classrooms and will be tailored to adults and/or youth who are part of informal education or other community programs. While education will be rooted in natural sciences—including botany, entomology, ecology, and climate science—content will be practical, actionable, and responsive to each community partner and their participants' needs, rather than designed to align with

Common Core, Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS), or other K–12 academic standards.

Describe key project deliverables and estimated completion dates.

Following is a list of key project deliverables and their estimated completion dates. Note that some deliverables appear as ranges to allow for partner-driven flexibility. Completion dates are based on a two-year project timeline, estimated January 1, 2026 - December 31, 2027.

- 5 community partner organizations engaged, including an estimated 15-20 staff, 150–200 program participants directly engaged, and an additional 250 beneficiaries of improved landscapes—for a total of 400 people reached (Dec 2027)
- 12 educational sessions delivered including talks, workshops, presentations, and/or field-based learning experiences (Dec 2027).
- Up to 5 tailored consultations provided, offering site-specific recommendations and strategies for incorporating native plants (Jul 2027).
- 4 core educational resources/guides shared with each partner organization (Dec 2026).
- At least 2 landscape enhancement projects launched, such as pollinator gardens, hedgerows, or small-scale native plant nurseries (Dec 2027).
- Native plants and/or propagation materials (cuttings, seeds, pots) distributed to partners, valued at approximately \$7,310 (timed with consultations/workshops across Years 1 and 2, fully completed/expended by Dec 2027).
- Results of partner surveys assessing project’s impact on their organization and satisfaction with services received (Dec 2027).

Does this project require permission, permits, or other approvals? If so, please describe the status of these.

Project activities will take place at partner sites with their permission and approval, documented in their uploaded letters of support. If required by the funder, we will also formalize these arrangements through subcontracts pending a grant award. In any cases where a partner wishes to host an educational session but lacks adequate space, Grassroots Ecology will secure alternative venues—such as a local library or school—within the OSA service area and obtain any necessary permissions from the host entity.

What is the lifetime of this project? If applicable, describe plans for operating and maintaining the project in the future.

The timeframe for the proposed project is two years, estimated January 1, 2026 through December 31, 2027. Landscape installations will be designed to have minimal maintenance requirements—for example, they will incorporate a plant palette of hardy, self-propagating, and drought-resistant native species and utilize automated drip irrigation whenever possible—to ensure project benefits can be sustained and maintained over the long-term. Moreover, we will provide resources and training to partners on native plant maintenance, and will also develop and demonstrate customized maintenance plans so that partners will be equipped to maintain their native plant landscapes by the close of the project. Should issues or questions arise beyond the grant period Grassroots Ecology will continue to be available to partners to provide guidance and resources. Much like we do with our restoration sites, we sustain and grow our commitment to our partners over time.

Describe the project's readiness for implementation.

Project staffing, partners, permissions, core educational presentations, and resource materials are already in place and easily adaptable to partners. Potted plants and propagules are readily available through our Native Plant Nursery for distribution to partners, and we have an abundance of demonstration gardens and sample landscape designs to help guide partner projects. With strong staff capacity and partner enthusiasm, the project is prepared for swift implementation upon receipt of a grant award.

Project Budget

Budget Summary - Grant Request & Budget Summary - Matching Funds

Grant request: Personnel

\$32,940.00

Grant request: Contracted Services

\$0.00

Grant request: Supplies / Materials

\$11,310.00

Grant request: Other Direct Costs

\$0.00

Grant request: Indirect Costs

\$5,000.00

Total Matching Funds

\$0.00

Total Budget

\$49,250.00

Please upload a detailed version of your budget by accessing the link below:

Grassroots Ecology UGP Project Budget 2025.xlsx

Materials and Budget Template (item #9) found here: <https://www.openspaceauthority.org/programs/grant.html#Materials>

Provide a brief budget narrative to explain the expenses listed in each of the budget categories (e.g. Personnel).

Personnel includes the cost of staff to provide programmatic and fiscal oversight of the project, coordinate with project partners, organize and deliver workshop and educational talks, provide consultations, maintain financial records, and conduct project evaluation and reporting.

Supplies and materials include printing and distribution of native plant resources, plants grown at our Native Plant Nursery, and supplementary propagation materials including but not limited to: native seed, plant cuttings, soil, and pots.

Matching funds (which are itemized in our budget, though not required) include Americorps member time and portions of the staff time required to coordinate and facilitate educational events and costs of developing/printing interpretive materials. Additional match funds will reimburse mileage costs for staff facilitating workshops and transporting materials.

Award Amount: The Board reserves the right to award partial funding on projects. If your project were to receive partial funding, what would this mean for your project?

If the project were to receive partial funding, we would adjust the scope strategically to ensure that core goals and outcomes remain achievable. Depending on the level of funding, we would pursue one or both of the following options:

- 1) Scale back the level of support provided to each partner, such as decreasing the number of native plant giveaways, consultation hours, or community engagement events, while maintaining the overall project framework and intent.
- 2) Reduce the number of partners served in proportion to available funds, prioritizing those with the greatest need or most readiness to implement project activities.

In either case, Grassroots Ecology would work closely with partners and Open Space Authority staff to revise timelines and deliverables as needed, ensuring the most effective use of awarded funds and continued benefit to under-resourced communities.

Project Goals

Describe the specific problems, issues, or unserved needs the project will address.

As urban development continues and climate impacts intensify, urban landscapes and the communities that depend on them are becoming increasingly vulnerable. For the communities this project will serve—communities with less local access to parks and open spaces as well as sources of fresh food—every square foot of green space matters for community health and resilience.

Native plants can offer powerful nature-based solutions to these problems: they enhance ecological health and biodiversity, support pollinators and food webs, provide natural pest control, filter pollutants, and reduce urban heat. Not only that, vibrant native plant landscapes provide community members with restorative spaces where they can access nature from within the urban environment. While our partners see the potential of native plants to enhance their sites and programs, they lack the funding, technical expertise, and tailored support needed to incorporate native plant landscapes on their own. Budget limitations, uncertainty about plant selection and maintenance, and the absence of long-term guidance all hinder their ability to act. Meanwhile, reductions in federal support for environmental conservation and local climate adaptation make community-scale initiatives like this more essential than ever.

Grassroots Ecology fills this gap by providing both material resources (locally sourced native plants, propagation materials, and educational guides) and expertise (consultation, training, and on-the-ground support) that will help partners transform their sites into ecologically vibrant landscapes. By incorporating native plants into their sites and programs, partners will increase their resilience to climate impacts while enhancing ecosystem services delivered such as habitat, pollination, natural pest control, and pollution filtration. At the same time, they will create enduring outdoor spaces where community members can access nature and participate in its care—no buses or transportation required.

Measurable goals over the lifetime of the grant include 5 partner organizations engaged, 15-20 staff and 150–200 program participants directly engaged, 12 educational sessions delivered, up to 5 tailored consultations provided, 4 core educational resources/guides shared, 2 or more landscape enhancement projects supported, and \$7,310 of native plants and propagation materials distributed.

By accomplishing these goals, the project addresses the unmet need for accessible, actionable pathways and resources that empower local organizations—and the under-resourced communities they serve—to strengthen their resilience while deepening their connections to nature and place.

How does this project serve the community?

Number of people served

400

Number of youth served

50

Number of programs provided

12

Other Grantee Goal #1 (optional)

Another distinct goal of this project is to help underserved youth and young adults (a total of 60 minors and young adults 18+ combined, approximately) develop practical green skills for advancing nature-based solutions and climate adaptation—empowering them to apply these skills to strengthen their communities and future careers.

As climate change intensifies, communities need a growing, adaptive environmental workforce. High-quality, hands-on training is essential—not only for young people entering the workforce, but also for those exploring new career pathways in the environmental field. However, demand for green skills currently outpaces supply, with green job postings growing nearly twice as fast as the pool of qualified workers (Global Green Skills Report 2023, LinkedIn).

Through our partnership with the San José Conservation Corps + Charter School, this project will provide paid, experiential learning opportunities for underserved youth and young adults who are economically disadvantaged and/or face barriers to stable employment. Corps members will gain practical experience in native plant care and climate-resilient landscape design, building both confidence and employable skills. Additionally, as part of the project Grassroots Ecology’s AmeriCorps members will assist our Restoration Specialist with coordinating and facilitating educational events—gaining valuable experience with leadership and community engagement while building on their skills and knowledge in native plant conservation and restoration techniques.

By making these investments in our emerging workforce, the project contributes to long-term community resilience and expands equitable access to environmental careers.

Other Grantee Goal #2 (optional)

Impact

Describe the lasting impact of the project. Please include whether the program is open to the public and whether any materials developed will be available to the public.

This is an education and incubation project that will build the resilience of each partner organization and the communities they serve by demonstrating how and why to harness the benefits of native plants—with tangible local impacts that literally grow over time. By equipping their staff and participants with resources, training, and tailored guidance, the project empowers these organizations to design and sustain climate-resilient landscapes that provide enduring ecological and community benefits: increased pockets of biodiversity; reduced vulnerability to drought, heat, and other climate impacts; ecosystem services such as pollination, natural pest control, and pollution filtration that enhance their sites and gardens; and learning and skill-building opportunities that enrich their lives and communities. Further, by creating opportunities for partner staff and participants to appreciate and enhance California's biodiversity, it will increase their connection to nature from within the urban environment—even if hiking in open spaces is inaccessible to them due to barriers from transportation or mobility.

The project's reach will also extend beyond the designated sites, deliverables, and time frame of this grant—as Grassroots Ecology will continue to use and adapt the education and resources developed for project partners to share with other organizations in the community.

Programs and services will be delivered directly to the community members served by partner organizations during their program hours, with some locations (such as the SJCC+CS Campus, Alviso Community Garden, and Bill Wilson Center Campus) accessible to the broader community. In addition, educational resources shared with partners are freely available to the public through Grassroots Ecology's website, ensuring long-term access and wider impact.

Climate Resilience

How does this project enhance and/or raise awareness about climate resilience? Please include any metrics that can be used to help quantify or understand the climate benefits of the project.

The project will both enhance and raise awareness about climate resilience by inspiring and supporting partners and their communities to create and sustain climate-resilient landscapes. Native plant landscapes not only deliver vital ecosystem services such as habitat, pollination, natural pest control, stormwater filtration, and carbon sequestration, they also help buffer urban communities against drought, flooding, fire, and other climate impacts. Through hands-on education, training, and resources (including our tested Fire-wise Gardening Resource, Lawn Conversion Guide, and Native Plant Book with pollinator associations) staff and constituents of our partner organizations will develop a deeper understanding of the value and potential of native plants for climate adaptation, and carry out nature-based solutions within their own organizations and communities.

While the full climate benefits of this education and incubation project may be challenging to quantify within the two-year project timeframe, the following metrics can help us gauge its long-term climate impacts :

- Species list of plants/trees distributed/installed through project and estimated carbon sequestration value
 - Number and area of landscape enhancements initiated
 - Number of educational sessions delivered that integrate climate content
 - Copies of climate-related presentations, resources, and materials shared
 - Partner-reported increases in knowledge, confidence, and capacity to sustain climate-resilient landscapes
-

Community Engagement / Stakeholder Support / Community Building

Describe the community support and/or community engagement process. Please upload any community support letters in the Documents Upload section below.

Our project partners are organizations embedded in the community who have participated in Grassroots Ecology programs and events in the past and/or have close ties and a vested interest in collaborating with us. All recognize the exciting potential of native plants to enrich their landscapes, programs, and the people they serve, but need support and information in order to unlock that potential.

Our partnership with Alviso in Action began in 2024 when we began engaging their members in our Burrowing Owl Forage Restoration Project at the San Jose-Santa Clara Regional Wastewater Facility. Its members see this project as a welcome opportunity to augment their community projects and sites, including the Alviso community garden.

San Jose Conservation Corps + Charter School (SJCC+CS) is a long-standing partner who has brought its young adult crew members out to our habitat restoration sites for many years for hands-on education and training in conservation and sustainable land management. Their staff has indicated a desire for their corpsmembers to better understand plant identification and propagation as a part of their job training program. This grant will allow us to work with them to provide specific skills that could advance their workforce development efforts.

Bill Wilson Center began collaborating with Grassroots Ecology in 2024, bringing youth in its summer camp program to our outdoor sites for hands-on learning and stewardship tailored to their youths' needs. The proposed grant would enable us to expand on that success, offering even more intentional and engaging education focused on how native plants can strengthen the resilience of their youths' local landscapes and communities.

LGBTQ Wellness is a fiscally sponsored program of Caminar, which first became involved with Grassroots Ecology through queer affinity events in 2023. Since then, they have collaborated with Grassroots Ecology staff to integrate nature connection into their own programming, including a "sit spot series" at various open spaces near San Jose. Their staff and participants are eager to bring ecology deeper into their programming, understanding the importance of accessing nature to fostering mental and physical health.

Veggielution is a nonprofit that connects people from diverse backgrounds through food and farming to build community in East San José. Their 6-acre community farm and gathering space mobilizes volunteers to cultivate and grow healthy crops, which are then made available to its program participants and other local residents. Grassroots Ecology's partnership with Veggielution is a new one that this grant will directly catalyze. Our organizations share a value of centering community in caring for the natural world—whether by stewarding local ecosystems or fostering healthy local food systems. Although both organizations have sought after opportunities to collaborate in the past, we have not yet secured funds to bring these efforts to fruition. This grant would overcome that barrier, enabling Grassroots Ecology to support Veggielution in bolstering their native hedgerows and providing "train the trainer" opportunities on California native plants and ecology.

Please see uploaded letters of support from partners for further details about each partner and its stake in the project.

Underserved Communities

Describe how the project addresses open space needs for sensitive populations such as residents of park-poor neighborhoods, under-served, or disadvantaged communities, youth, seniors, persons with disabilities, or is located within an under-resourced community.

The project will engage and benefit multiple sensitive populations within the Open Space Authority's Service Area—bringing them tailored education, resources, and support that empowers them to enhance and restore healthy habitat and natural resources within their communities. Our target populations include:

-Economically disadvantaged and climate-vulnerable residents of Alviso (East San Jose): Through our partnership with Alviso in Action, the project will engage residents of this historically under-resourced community, which is majority BIPOC (60% Hispanic/Latino, 14% Asian, 1.7% Native American as of the 2020 Census). Alviso is an economically disadvantaged community (EDC) per the San Francisco Bay Restoration Authority Interactive Projects mapping tool, which identifies communities with an income less than 80% of Area Median Income at the Census Tract and Block Group levels. Alviso community members are disproportionately affected by flooding, groundwater contamination, and sea level rise, and face some of the highest climate vulnerability scores in Santa Clara County according to CalEnviroScreen and the Healthy Places Index.

-Disadvantaged youth and young adults: The project will engage participants from Bill Wilson Center and the San Jose Conservation Corps and Charter School (SJCC+CS)—organizations that serve primarily BIPOC youth and young adults who are overcoming barriers such as housing instability, disconnection from school or work, and/or limited access to green space and outdoor experiences. Bill Wilson Center serves DEC 2 and 5 per the Authority's Understanding Our Community resource, and CalEnviroScreen lists SJCC+CS's site location in the 80th percentile for overall environmental risk. Through hands-on learning and stewardship activities, participants will gain exposure to environmental experiences and careers, and develop transferable skills in environmental restoration and native plant landscaping.

-LGBTQIA+ adults: In partnership with LGBTQ Wellness, the project will reach LGBTQIA+ community members who often experience social isolation and health disparities linked to environmental stressors. The program will create inclusive opportunities for these participants to connect with nature, learn about native plants and local ecology, and contribute to visible, community-led greening projects.

These are all populations that have been historically excluded from environmental decision-making, and access to healthy open spaces. The project responds to their expressed needs for safer, healthier, and more resilient local environments. By equipping participants with the knowledge and tools to transform community and home spaces using native plants as a nature-based solution, the project will strengthen both individual and collective capacity to adapt to climate change while advancing environmental justice and local stewardship.

Organizational Capacity

Briefly describe the organization and its ability to successfully implement this project. This might include successful past projects, key staff qualifications, financial resources, etc.

Grassroots Ecology empowers communities to steward their local outdoor spaces and create healthier, more resilient ecosystems for all. Our history serving the diverse people and habitats of Santa Clara County dates back well before our incorporation as an independent nonprofit in 2018.

We have provided nature-based education, training, and stewardship experiences to diverse members of the public for over 20 years—going back to our roots in Acterra/Bay Area Action. While our roots run deep, our programs are dynamic and responsive, reflecting the latest science and best practices as well as current community priorities.

SUCCESSFUL PAST PROJECTS

We have worked in the Alviso baylands since 2021, involving hundreds of volunteers to enhance habitat for the burrowing owl and monarch. Earlier this year, we launched an exciting new partnership with Alviso in Action which will connect more Alviso community members with paid opportunities to access and steward these lands—a nascent partnership that the proposed project will build upon.

We have partnered with the San Jose Conservation Corps + Charter School since 2016 to provide sustainable land management training to its Corpmembers, who are youth and young adults from communities historically underrepresented in the environmental fields. Our relationship with the Corps is constantly evolving and deepening. For example, just last summer they asked us to develop and deliver a shoreline restoration focused program for high schoolers in their Youth Climate Corps program—a big success that we would like to replicate again next summer.

Over the past year, we have significantly expanded our educational talks and offerings to include new formats and languages. For example, we recently hosted presentations on "Propagating Native Plants at Home" and "California Native Plants and the Wildlife That Use Them," as well as a hands-on native plant propagation workshop for Redwood High School students in coordination with restoration of their school creek. These events have been a huge success, and we are eager to extend them to organizations and urban communities within the Santa Clara Valley OSA's service

area through this project.

We have a strong track record of partnering deeply with community partners to co-design and co-deliver programs tailored to their constituents. For example, in East Palo Alto our restoration team works closely with numerous community-based organizations—including Climate Resilient Communities, 'Anamatangi Polynesian Voices, St. Mark AME Zion Church, and El Comité de Vecinos—to steward Cooley Landing and Ravenswood Preserve through group workdays, community king tide walks, and an annual stewardship event in honor of Día de los Muertos. These groups are increasingly taking the lead in organizing these events while we are playing a support role by sharing our expertise in habitat restoration. According to their pastor, our partnership inspired St. Mark AME Church to create an Earth Care Ministry at the church—mobilizing youth, unhoused neighbors, and seniors in climate resilience initiatives and educational projects throughout East Palo Alto—which will continue beyond our current partnership work. We hope to extend these kinds of synergies and partnerships further south into the OSA service area through this grant.

KEY STAFF QUALIFICATIONS

-Co-Executive Director Tyler Feld will be overseeing project staff, partnerships, reporting, and evaluation. Tyler joined Grassroots Ecology in 2021 as a Project Lead, managing habitat restoration projects and community engagement programs across multiple Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District sites and Foothills Nature Preserve. He became a key leader in advancing the organization's strategic plan, workforce development programs, and diversity, equity, and inclusion initiatives—ultimately stepping into the role of Co-Executive Director alongside Alex Von Feldt in 2025. Prior to joining Grassroots Ecology, Tyler spent seven years leading outdoor education programs with nonprofit organizations and park agencies in the Santa Cruz Mountains, focusing on making outdoor spaces more inclusive and accessible. During this time, he co-founded the LGBTQ+ Watershed Educators Alliance, enhanced environmental education curricula, and implemented inclusive practices in science education. Tyler is also the founding director of Branching Out Adventures, a nonprofit dedicated to celebrating queerness through connection to the outdoors.

-Nursery Director / Botanical Consultant Deanna Giuliano will be responsible for conducting partner site visits and native plant consultations to provide plant lists and recommendations in line with site conditions and partner goals, preferences, and capacity. Deanna has managed and grown our Native Plant Nursery since 2006, starting long before Grassroots Ecology's incorporation as a nonprofit. An increasing part of her role is supporting other groups and organizations to launch or expand their own native plant nurseries, such as the Amah Mutsun Tribal Band, Stanford Indigenous Garden, and Redwood High School. She has served as president of the Santa Cruz Chapter of the California Native Plant Society, and remains active in CNPS initiatives such as Rare Plant Treasure Hunts. Deanna previously worked for Central Coast Wilds and the UC Santa Cruz Arboretum. She has an A.S. in Horticulture from Cabrillo College and a B.A. in Environmental Studies/Biology with an emphasis in Plant Ecology from UC Santa Cruz.

-Director of Community Engagement Valerie Lee will be responsible for coordinating with partner organizations to tailor education and consultation services uniquely for each partner organization. Valerie is an advocate for prioritizing diversity in both wildlife and human communities. After working at the Cheadle Center for Biodiversity and Ecological Restoration and the UC Natural Reserve while earning her B.S. in Environmental Studies from UC Santa Barbara, she joined Grassroots Ecology in 2016 to manage habitat restoration projects and lead educational events. Now, her focus is to bolster Grassroots Ecology's community engagement strategies to be more inclusive through staff development, programs, partnerships, and outreach. Her goal is to invite community members facing systemic barriers to engage with nearby nature, to support their relationship with land, self, and one another.

-Restoration Specialist II Serena Myjer will liaison with partner sites to provide tailored native plant education and support. Serena was born and raised in the South Bay, and first worked with Grassroots Ecology in 2020 as a summer intern. After college, she served at Grassroots Ecology as an AmeriCorps member through the Watershed Stewards Program and California Climate Action Corps. Her other work experience includes summer camp counselor, leading bike tours, conducting rare plant surveys, and most recently planting and caring for native plant hedgerows with Point Blue Conservation Science in the STRAW program (Students and Teachers Restoring a Watershed). She is motivated to do habitat restoration work by the joy of being in and with nature, but also the desire to create a livable future for all. She currently is a restoration specialist at Grassroots Ecology's Alviso bufferlands restoration site, which partners regularly with Alviso in Action.

FINANCIAL RESOURCES

Grassroots Ecology manages an annual budget of approximately \$2.5M, supported by a mix of foundation, government, corporate, and individual funding. Our financial systems meet rigorous nonprofit accounting standards and enable us to responsibly manage grant funds, with proven capacity for timely reporting, detailed financial tracking, and successful audits. This strong fiscal foundation ensures we can deliver projects on time, on budget, and with accountability to funders and partners alike.

Leadership & Innovation

Describe how this project employs innovative approaches or encourages collaboration and partnerships.

This project takes an innovative, collaborative approach by bringing together community organizations from across diverse sectors—urban agriculture, housing, education, workforce development, environmental justice, and wellness—around a shared goal of strengthening community resilience. By pairing tangible resources (plants, materials, and educational guides) with expert coaching and training, the project empowers partners to become leaders in designing and sustaining climate-resilient landscapes within their own spaces and programs.

Grassroots Ecology's deeply community-centered model emphasizes co-creation. We work closely with each partner to design education sessions, consultations, and landscape enhancements that align with their specific missions and operational contexts—meeting them where they are and helping them overcome previous barriers to implementing nature-based solutions. This hands-on, partnership-driven approach not only builds the long-term capacity of each organization but also sparks broader collaboration and replication, inspiring other community groups to integrate native plants and climate adaptation practices into their own work.

Additionally, this project is unique in that it leverages Grassroots Ecology's Native Plant Nursery to connect community partners with locally appropriate, watershed-specific native plants and direct consultation from our Nursery team. Historically our nursery has supplied plants primarily for our own habitat restoration projects and those of major land managers in our region like Santa Clara County and the Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District—but we are increasingly hearing from tribes and community groups seeking technical advice to help them grow their own plants and nurseries. This project will help our Native Plant Nursery forge more connections with community organizations to help them access and utilize the many benefits of native plants.

Documents Section

Document Uploads (please combine into one file if possible)

Combined Letters of Support_Grassroots Ecology.pdf

Additional files (if needed)

Additional files (if needed)

Submitted Date - Internal

Summary Field:

Name: Average Score (no bonus)

Form: Staff Review

Summary Type: average

Field: Base Score Total

Decimal: 2

Currency: No

Description/Help Text: NONE

Short Name: NONE

Field Purpose: NONE

Filter:

- ALL:
 - isComplete | is | true

Summary Field:

Name: Total Count of Submitted Reviews

Form: Staff Review

Summary Type: count

Field: NONE

Decimal: NONE

Currency: No

Description/Help Text: NONE

Short Name: NONE

Field Purpose: NONE

Filter:

- ALL:
 - isComplete | is | true
 - Folder | is | Submitted

Program Application: File Attachments

Please upload a detailed version of your budget by accessing the link below:

Grassroots Ecology UGP Project Budget 2025.xlsx

Document Uploads (please combine into one file if possible)

Combined Letters of Support_Grassroots Ecology.pdf

Instructions

Santa Clara Valley Open Space Authority | 2025 Urban Grant Program

INSTRUCTIONS

Please provide a detailed project budget. More information, including a detailed list of direct and indirect costs, is available in the Urban Grant Program Guidelines (<http://www.openspaceauthority.org/urban>). A sample budget is included in a separate tab.

The Budget Form in a separate tab in this document. The budget categories are listed below with a description of each field.

PROJECT

Project Name: Growing Resilience: Native Plant Education and Incubation Project

Organization: Grassroots Ecology

PERSONNEL

Estimate employee and volunteer time directly related to the project. Hourly rates for employees can include salary plus fringe benefits, payroll tax, etc, but can not include indirect costs. Note: please list position titles only.

Position title: Title of each employee working directly on this project. Note: please list position title only.

Description of Budget Item: The amount of time (e.g. hours) and the hourly rate for each employee. Hourly rates can include salary plus fringe benefits, payroll taxes, etc, but can NOT include indirect costs. Please provide adequate detail to show how totals were calculated.

Grant Request: The amount requested from this Grant (if applicable).

Matching Funds: The amount funded through matching funds (if applicable).

Total: This column will be automatically calculated.

CONTRACTED SERVICES

Labor, supplies, and materials to be provided by consultants/contractors for project implementation.

Item: The item listed

Description of Budget Item: Please provide a description of the item with adequate detail to show how totals were calculated.

Instructions

Grant Request:	The amount requested from this Grant (if applicable).
Matching Funds:	The amount funded through matching funds (if applicable).
Total:	This column will be automatically calculated.
SUPPLIES AND MATERIALS	
Supplies and materials that are <u>directly related</u> to the project.	
Item:	The item listed
Description of Budget Item:	Please provide a description of the item with adequate detail to show how totals were calculated.
Grant Request:	The amount requested from this Grant (if applicable).
Matching Funds:	The amount funded through matching funds (if applicable).
Total:	This column will be automatically calculated.
OTHER DIRECT COSTS	
Other direct costs that are <u>directly related</u> to the project. This might include travel, service fees for fiscal sponsorship, or newly-acquired equipment.	
Item:	The item listed
Description of Budget Item:	Please provide a description of the item with adequate detail to show how totals were calculated.
Grant Request:	The amount requested from this Grant (if applicable).
Matching Funds:	The amount funded through matching funds (if applicable).
Total:	This column will be automatically calculated.
INDIRECT COSTS	
Indirect costs are eligible for grant funding only for 501(c)(3) Nonprofits and are <u>limited to 20%</u> of grant funding. Indirect costs cannot be counted as matching funds.	
Item:	20% Administrative overhead for Nonprofits
Description of Budget Item:	Any additional description
Grant Request:	The amount requested from this Grant (if applicable).
	The percent of grant funding
Total:	This column will be automatically calculated.

Instructions

GRAND TOTAL	
Grant Request:	This column will be automatically calculated.
Matching Funds:	This column will be automatically calculated.
Total:	This column will be automatically calculated.
COST SHARE	
A minimum of 25% of grant request in matching funds is required. A project budget with less than 25% of the grant request in matching funds does NOT meet the grant requirements and will not be considered for funding.	
Matching Funds:	This column will be automatically calculated.
MATCHING FUNDS	
Please describe the source of matching funds listed above. This might include cash match (e.g. grantee's own funds, donations, grants, etc) or in-kind match (non-cash contribution such as volunteer time).	
Source:	The source of funding (e.g. In-kind contributions, Organization's contributions, Donations, Grant, etc.).
Description:	Any additional description.
kind)	Indicate whether the funding is cash or in-kind match.
Pending)	Indicate whether the matching funds are secured or pending.
Matching Funds:	The amount funded through matching funds.

Sample Budget

				\$ -
				\$ -
				\$ -
				\$ -
				\$ -
TOTAL SUPPLIES AND MATERIALS		\$ 1,600.00	\$ -	\$ 1,600.00

OTHER DIRECT COSTS

Other direct costs that are directly related to the project. This might include travel, service fees for fiscal sponsorship, or newly-acquired equipment.

Item	Description of Budget Item	Grant Request (\$)	(\$)	Total
				\$ -
				\$ -
				\$ -
				\$ -
				\$ -
				\$ -
				\$ -
				\$ -
				\$ -
				\$ -
				\$ -
				\$ -
				\$ -
				\$ -
				\$ -
				\$ -
TOTAL OTHER DIRECT COSTS		\$ -	\$ -	\$ -

INDIRECT COSTS

Indirect costs are eligible for grant funding only for 501(c)(3) Nonprofits and are limited to 20% of grant funding. Indirect costs cannot be counted as matching funds.

Item	Description of Budget Item	Grant Request (\$)	(\$)	Total
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Sample Budget

TOTAL MATCHING FUNDS				\$ 6,692.00

Alviso In Action 501(c)3

P.O. BOX 713 Alviso CA, 95002
(669) 377-5657

October 2, 2025

Santa Clara Valley Open Space Authority
33 Las Colinas Lane
San Jose, CA, 94612



Dear Grants Review Panel:

On behalf of Alviso in Action, I am pleased to voice our strong support for Grassroots Ecology's application to the Santa Clara Valley Open Space Authority's Urban Grant Program. Through the proposed Growing Resilience Project, Grassroots Ecology will help Alviso in Action and other participating partners to strengthen the resilience of our organizations, sites, and communities by providing native plant education, resources, and consultation. The project will expand the hands-on environmental training and resources available to Alviso in Action members, building our capacity to integrate native plants into our various environmental projects throughout Alviso.

Alviso in Action is a community-based 501(c)(3) nonprofit created in 2022. The project aligns well with our mission to improve environmental conditions in Alviso by protecting and preserving the community from environmental impacts. It also supports the work of Alviso's emerging Climate Change Community Team, founded by Climate Resilient Communities, of which we are the lead community organization.

This year we began a collaborative project with Grassroots Ecology that is restoring habitat for burrowing owls, monarch butterflies, and other threatened wildlife in the Alviso Bufferlands, funded by a grant from the San Francisco Bay Restoration Authority grant. Now, we are excited about this opportunity to expand this partnership to build our members' knowledge and skills in using native plants for climate adaptation projects in Alviso.

We look forward to partnering with Grassroots Ecology on this project should it be funded. It would add to our toolbox of nature-based solutions that improve our local environmental conditions and boost community resilience to climate change. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Marcos Espinoza

President, Alviso in Action

SAN JOSE CONSERVATION CORPS + CHARTER SCHOOL

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Deryk Clark
Youth Development &
Strategy Champion

Vice President
Hamid Saadat
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Michelle Retana
Social Worker II -
Santa Clara County Department of
Family and Child Services

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Senior Community Impact Specialist
Wells Fargo

Bedriye Usta
Director –
PWC

Alex Webb
CPA and Finance Professional

Dorsey Moore
CEO

October 2, 2025

Santa Clara Valley Open Space Authority
33 Las Colinas Lane
San Jose, CA, 94612

Dear Grants Review Panel:

On behalf of the San Jose Conservation Corps and Charter School (SJCC+CS), I am pleased to voice strong support for Grassroots Ecology's application to the Santa Clara Valley Open Space Authority's Urban Grant Program. Through the proposed Growing Resilience Project, Grassroots Ecology will support SJCC+CS and other participating community partners to strengthen the resilience of our organizations, sites, and the communities we serve by providing native plant education, resources, and tailored guidance. This initiative will both expand the hands-on learning and green skills training available to our corpsmembers and build broader organizational capacity to integrate native plants into climate adaptation strategies.

The SJCC+CS is a non-profit organization that provides youth from the ages of 17 ½ - 27 with a quality high school education and teaches valuable work and life skills that empower them to become responsible, productive, and caring citizens. Over the past eight years, Grassroots Ecology has partnered with the SJCC+CS by providing our young corpsmembers with education, training, and work opportunities as we support their habitat restoration projects. This collaboration has helped provide not only vocational skill building opportunities but life-changing experiences to many of our corpsmembers.

We look forward to continuing our partnership with Grassroots Ecology on this important project should it receive funding. It embodies a collaborative, community-driven approach to strengthening resilience through nature-based solutions, and we would be proud to contribute to its success. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Dorsey Moore
CEO, San Jose Conservation Corps
dmoore@sjcccs.org
Cell: 408-439-6653



CHANGING LIVES
EDUCATING THE WORKFORCE FOR THE FUTURE

San Jose Conservation Corps + Charter School
1560 Berger Drive, San Jose, CA 95112 Main Phone: 408-283-7171
www.sjcccs.org 501(c)(3) Federal Tax ID: 77-0155997





October 13, 2025

Santa Clara Valley Open Space Authority
33 Las Colinas Lane
San Jose, CA, 94612

Dear Grants Review Panel:

On behalf of LGBTQ Wellness, I am happy to communicate our support for Grassroots Ecology's application to the Santa Clara Valley Open Space Authority's Urban Grant Program. Through the proposed Growing Resilience Project, Grassroots Ecology will support LGBTQ Wellness and other participating community partners to strengthen the resilience of our organizations, sites, and the communities we serve by providing native plant education, resources, and tailored guidance. This initiative will both expand the hands-on learning and green skills training available to our corpsmembers and build broader organizational capacity to integrate native plants into climate adaptation strategies.

LGBTQ Wellness is a fiscally sponsored program of Caminar, that provides resources to LGBTQIA+ adults in Santa Clara County. Grassroots Ecology has demonstrated strong allyship with our community by providing affinity events serving our program participants, and supporting queer centered organizations in the region. Additionally, staff from Grassroots Ecology have volunteered their time to provide environmental education programming in partnership with our organization. This collaboration provided space for queer community members to receive the mental and physical benefits, while learning ways to deepen their own connection to nature.

We are eager to expand our partnership with Grassroots Ecology through this project should it receive funding. It embodies a collaborative, community-driven approach to strengthening community resilience, and we would be proud to contribute to its success. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,
Sun Sukumar
Peer Support Coordinator for LGBTQ Wellness, a program of Caminar