

Program Application: 81746179

Linked Pre-Application Form - DO NOT DELETE

Healed By Nature

Grant Amount Requested

\$70,000.00

Organization Name

Ujima Adult & Family Services

Urban Grant Program Application Questions

Overview

Type of project (check all that apply)

Grant category (check all that apply)

Parks, Trails, and Public Access, Environmental Education

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.

Our project will activate multiple locations to introduce the African community to all Open Space Preserve locations in Santa Clara Valley. We will conduct healing circles and educational nature walks at Coyote Valley, Coyote Ridge, Rancho Canada Del Oro, and Sierra Vista. In addition to these sessions at Open Space Preserve locations, we will also be holding interactive classes at the SOFA Pocket Park in downtown San Jose.

Project Location

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

Authority District 1, Authority District 2, 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 1, Authority District 2, Authority District 3, Authority District 4, Authority District 5, Authority District 6, Authority District 7

Project Abstract

For the past three years, we at Ubuntu Wellness have been activating and introducing our African community to outdoor activities through foraging hikes and interactive workshops to educate and connect them with the underused resources of our area. These foraging hikes brought the community out to a multitude of hiking locations in the County and taught them the native plants in the area and how to utilize them to our benefit. Our interactive workshops taught the community the importance of gardening, composting, and identifying systems. Our collaborative community hikes increased folks' network and taught them how to interact with the protected spaces right in our backyard. Throughout the years, we have seen a positive response to our efforts and an increase in community engagement. We are passionate about removing barriers for the African community that have historically kept them out of enjoying outdoor spaces in their own communities. With this Open Space Preserve grant, we would like to increase these activities and introduce the community to new locations and teach land stewardess.

Project Planning

Describe the proposed project.

Our two-year project will educate the African community on the biodiversity within Santa Clara County by holding healing spaces at each of the Open Space Preserves. We will hold accessible walks, healing circles, and educational discussions centered around African people's historic connection with the outdoors, learning how to reclaim our harmony with nature, and ways to engage in land stewardship. One pillar of the project is applied knowledge. We have tangible goals and key performance indicators to meet and lessons for the community to apply. Additionally, community members will learn to understand the impact we have on plants and wildlife by engaging in our classroom-based activities that will take place at the SOFA pocket park in downtown San Jose. The program is designed for all ages of people within the African community and will be culturally congruent.

Describe key project deliverables and estimated completion dates.

The project will have three deliverables. 1) The development of an educational curriculum, teaching participants how to create a small ecosystem, utilizing the garden beds of the SOFA Pocket Park. Folks will learn about native plants and animals of the area, methods of gardening, and how to utilize the natural vegetation around our neighborhoods. These will be conducted in 8 sessions over the two-year grant period. 2) We will hold 16 nature walks visiting each preserve twice to identify small systems and document the growth or lack thereof, as well as what are the driving forces behind it. This will teach folks about climate change, our individual impact, problems these preserves face, and solutions we can support. 3) We will reach a minimum of 200 unduplicated African peoples and will conduct mental health focused healing circles during each of the 16 walks. The first phase of the project will be launched in March 2026 and will include monthly nature walks through October 2026. The second phase will take place between March 2027 and October 2027, with variations in programming influenced by lessons learned from the previous year.

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

This project will require approval and space rental of the SOFA Pocket Park. We have developed a strong working relationship with the SOFA Pocket Park and will lean on that to continue to use the space. We will also be requesting permits from the Open Space Authority because these events will be advertised with flyers electronically shared and may have upwards of 25 participants. We also plan on filming and photographing some of these events and will request permits when appropriate.

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

This pilot project will span over two years and operate in phases. To ensure suitable weather conditions, the project deliverables will take place between spring and fall, but the planning and coordination of the full cycle project will take place year-round. We hope and anticipate that this grant will kickstart a wider community supported project that can be replicated and implemented by fellow community-based organizations. We also hope this project will be used as a precedent for future grants and programming opportunities designed for and by our community.

Describe the project's readiness for implementation.

This project is ready to be implemented as soon as possible. The actual events will begin as soon as the weather permits. The Curriculum is ready to be developed and will be an extension of curriculum already being implemented by the SOFA Pocket Park. We are ready to begin scheduling dates and receiving permits as soon as possible.

Project Budget

Budget Summary - Grant Request & Budget Summary - Matching Funds

Grant request: Personnel

\$27,000.00

Grant request: Contracted Services

\$21,000.00

Grant request: Supplies / Materials

\$5,000.00

Grant request: Other Direct Costs

\$8,000.00

Grant request: Indirect Costs

\$9,000.00

Total Matching Funds

\$0.00

Total Budget

\$70,000.00

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

UGP_Project_Budget_Template 2025 (1).pdf

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: Two staff will be assigned to this project and will be responsible for the coordination, implementation, and evaluation of it. They will work on this alongside other Ubuntu Wellness Center duties.

Contracted Services: We will contract two individuals for our hikes at the Open Space Preserves and our workshops at the SOFA Pocket Park in downtown San Jose, which also include the rental of that space. We also have included transportation. We will be providing travel vouchers for people who need assistance getting to Open Space Preserve locations as a way to remove barriers.

Supplies and Materials: We are covering all supplies for the workshops, including snacks at these events.

Other direct costs: We plan on documenting parts of this project and efforts to further advertise and share our work with the community and create materials that can be used in the future.

Indirect costs: We have set aside 12.86% of requested funds for indirect costs. This will cover the administrative costs of carrying out the grant.

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 our project were to receive partial funding, we would happily accept it. We would adjust our budget to meet the funds granted. We would initially scale back the number of events and limit the personnel hours associated with this project. Carrying out this project is very important to us, and we work to ensure that it can still be executed.

Project Goals

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

With Africans making up less than 3% of the population of Santa Clara County, it is imperative that resources and culturally congruent programming is designed with them in mind. African people have also been historically and systemically excluded from public lands and natural spaces through racist policies and governing bodies. Our aim with connecting Africans to the outdoors is to address the nature equity gap and target the disconnect/trauma associated with the outdoors. This intentional programming and project will meet the unserved needs of the community through evidence-based methods. Through the healing circles, we will create a space for Africans to regain ancestral knowledge. Activating Open Space Preserves will not only highlight the work of the Open Space Authority but it will also create the community we as African people so desperately need in this county. Lastly, it will allow us to reclaim our connection with both the land and nature.

How does this project serve the community?

Number of people served

502

Number of youth served

120

Number of programs provided

100

Other Grantee Goal #1 (optional)

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.

Our project will have 3 main impacts and will be open to anybody who can benefit from African centered programs. Materials developed will be available at the end of the two-year grant upon request to the public.

1) This will positively impact the Open Space Authority by increasing African member engagement while also educating our community on how to be active participants in maintaining these preserves.

2) Secondly, this will impact the African community by connecting us to one another while reconnecting us with nature. Nature is known to have a grounding effect and will aid in the relationship building of the African community.

3) Lastly, this will have a lasting positive impact on the climate. After completing the educational portion of our program, community members will be left with a deeper connection between our actions and climate resilience. This transformative takeaway will last far beyond the scope of our project.

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.

In learning about our local eco-system one of the key topics is sustainability. We will explore both micro and macro effects of our climate on Santa Clara Counties' agriculture and landscapes. This project will teach folks about our impact on the climate both on an individual scale and on the communal scale. We will quantify this with entrance and exit surveys and interviews on our overall impact at the end of this grant. One of our questions will focus on people's understanding of climate and tangible tasks they will carry to practice lessons learned.

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.

Over the past four years, Ujima's Ubuntu Wellness Center has become a staple in the African community. We have been offering consistent workshops and series that have expanded our community's knowledge, connections, and experiences. We have been a consistent place where Africans come to for communal healing and wellness. We are also well connected with other African organizations and often collaborate to create programming and better support the African community.

Underserved Communities

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

Our organization is centered around the African population. The African population has historically been underserved and being such a small percentage of the population of the county, culturally congruent resources are limited. As African advocates and experts, we believe we have the right mix of experience, knowledge, and people to execute this project. This funding will allow us to carry out evidence-based practices that work for this sensitive population. We also have experience working with all groups within the African community, including immigrant groups, youth, families, elders, lower income, behavioral health clients, etc.

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.

Since our inception in 1991, Ujima Adult & Family Services is the African advocate of Santa Clara County that is dedicated to healing and strengthening our community through a cultural lens. We advocate on multiple levels to improve and challenge the policies and services in the community. We offer a range of services, including individual and family counseling, case management, access to medical clinics, and therapy. Our organization is designed to address mental health issues prevalent in our communities and offer African centered solutions. Our wellness center is another outlet we use to share mental health resources and focus on community health. Additionally, we have Community Programs, which is an intervention/prevention community and school-based program designed to reinforce cultural strength and values into African youth. Through our many programs, we have helped hundreds of African residents increase their knowledge of African history and improve community involvement. Our strong organizational foundation and proven track record puts us in a well-position to continue our work addressing the systemic barriers that impact our community.

Ubuntu Wellness Center has a track record of successfully implementing grants and programs. Our most recent successful program implementation was a three-year grant targeting the African community to reduce mental health stigma. Over the three years, we reached 650+ unduplicated African individuals of all ages and backgrounds and created campaigns to educate and raise awareness on the stigma of mental health within the community. Our Ubuntu Wellness staff includes a program coordinator and outreach specialist. Together, they execute grants, implement programs, and create an environment where the community can come to work on their communal healing and wellness. Between them they share over 15 years of community experience.

Leadership & Innovation

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

Engaging a community that is spread out throughout the county requires innovative means of outreach and programing. Some examples of the methods we've used include, maintaining a free and open-door policy our events. We remove barriers by encouraging members to come as they are and by not requiring prior registration. We also ensure our program is eclectic and engages diverse groups within our community. One way this project will do that is by tailoring marketing and workshops to families, youth, elders, and adults. To increase engagement and diversity, we have been and will collaborate with fellow community-based organizations with diverse expertise to continuously elevate the project experience. With experience in executing programs, we know that plans often change based of community needs and various factors. We will be open to change and attempt different methods to meeting our goals when need be.

Documents Section

Document Uploads (please combine into one file if possible)

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:

UGP_Project_Budget_Template 2025 (1).pdf

