

Grants for Natural Play, Discovery and Learning landscapes

Compiled by LandCurrent Landscape Architects. LandCurrent Landscape Architects are international experts at the design and planning of natural play, discovery and learning landscapes. For more information visit:

www.landcurrent.com
www.naturalplaygrounds.info

A variety of grant opportunities specifically targeting traditional playgrounds are available to help fund your project, but their number is limited. Fortunately, the unique qualities of natural playgrounds broaden the range of grant opportunities. For example, natural playgrounds that improve habitat may be eligible for cross-over funding from organizations funding environmental efforts. Construction of your natural play environment could also make an attractive project for a high school class. Several granting agencies support student groups involved in community projects and habitat restoration. Funding opportunities can be strengthened through several certification programs, such as “Green School” environments, certification by the National Arbor Day Foundation as a “Nature Explorer Classroom,” or habitat certification through the National Wildlife Federation. LandCurrent can not only help you identify the best fit for your project, but also shape the design to build a strong case for specific certifications and potential funding opportunities.

National Grants for Environmental education & Outdoor classrooms

*Lowe’s Outdoor Classroom: Lowe’s charitable education foundation, International Paper and National Geographic Explorer! Classroom magazine have partnered to create an outdoor classroom grant program to provide schools with additional resources to improve their science curriculum by engaging students in hands-on experiences outside the traditional classroom. All K-12 public schools in the United States are welcome to apply.

*Lorrie Otto Seeds for Education Grant Program: gives small monetary grants to schools, nature centers, or other non-profit educational organizations whose efforts in establishing outdoor learning centers best reflect the Wild Ones educational efforts to promote environmentally sound landscaping practices to preserve biodiversity through the preservation, restoration and establishment of native plant communities

*Captain Planet: In 2007, captain planet grantees established 12 outdoor classrooms and planted 41 organic gardens including pollinator gardens, native habitats and edible schoolyards

*FDR Foundation: The monies of the FRD Foundation are to be used to provide “seed money” for intellectual stimulation of young children. Think about setting up a new environmental education class in your Natural Play landscape.

*Do Something and Tutor.com: are offering \$500 grants for your ideas or projects that make a difference around education issues.

*EPA Environmental Education: The purpose of the Grants Program is to provide seed money to support environmental education projects

Oregon Grants for Environmental education and Natural Playgrounds

*[Gray Family Fund of the Oregon Community Foundation](#): Funding goals include: Strengthening and developing programs that provide outdoor experiences for youth from early childhood through grade 12; Creating, expanding and improving programs that connect schools with their communities and provide students with practical hands-on experience in addressing environmental issues both locally and globally; Programs committed to comprehensive, significant, lasting change in educational systems and fostering improved understanding of and interaction with our natural systems.; Encouraging programs that explore and integrate boundaries between art and science, and connect creativity with the natural environment. Mentions development of Natural Playgrounds on their information sheet:

Alaska, Idaho, Montana, Oregon and Washington. Grants for protecting wildlife and habitat and developing youth skill

*[Charlotte Martin Foundation](#). Funding goals include: foster community engagement in protecting wildlife and habitat and developing youth skills, thereby building on community strengths and actions. Gives special consideration in grantmaking to benefit and expand opportunity for underserved populations in the region. Pre-schools and playground equipment are mentioned as categories that may receive funding.

National Grants for Early Childhood Education

*Rosies for all Kids Foundation: awards Early Childhood Care and Education grants to 501(c)(3) nonprofit organizations. To qualify, organizations must provide full-day, full-year, quality care in licensed centers to children from birth through 6 years of age. At least 65% of the children enrolled must be from low-income families, as defined by eligibility for federal or state childcare subsidies. Although not required, NAEYC (or other) accreditation is highly regarded

National Grants for School and Youth Gardens

Natural Playgrounds can often seamlessly be integrated with a school or youth vegetable garden. See kidsgardening.org for several grants.

*Greenworks!: Grants engage PLT (projects Project Learning Tree®) educators and their students with their local community in “learning-by-doing” environmental grants for programs.

Nature in Neighborhood restoration and enhancement grants: Many local governments offer these type of grants for their local communities. An example of an agency offering this type of grant Metro in Portland, Oregon. LandCurrent landscape architects has first hand knowledge of this Portland Grant.

www.oregonmetro.gov/capitalgrants

*Together Green: Innovation Grant Program funds projects that restore habitat and protect species, improve water quality or quantity, and reduce the threat of global warming.

*Raingarden Grants: Raingardens are areas that collect stormwater run-off. LandCurrent has experience creating raingardens and water-wise landscapes. We can often integrate raingardens into a natural playscape. There are many local grants available for raingarden installations.

National Playground Grants

*CA Together: grants for programs that improve the quality of education and life for children and young people.

*Active Living: a national program of the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, contributes to the prevention of childhood obesity in low-income and high-risk racial/ethnic communities.

*Braitmayer Foundation: is interested in K-12 education throughout the United States. Of particular interest are curricular and school reform initiatives.

*Bruner Foundation:

*Lowe’s Toolbox for Education: Grants upto \$5000 for public schools and public school parent-teacher groups, grants can be awarded to playgrounds, outdoor classroom, school gardens and school landscaping.

*Meyer Memorial Trust: The Trust seeks to invest in organizations and projects that utilize resources efficiently and effectively to enhance the quality of life for the people of Oregon and Clark County, Washington. Following Fred Meyer’s values and suggestions for the Trust, it looks for organizations and proposals that model stewardship, services, and entrepreneurship.

Maryland Playground Grants

*Maryland's Community Parks and Playgrounds Program: Provides a dedicated fund source for local governments.

Boston Playground Grants

*Children's Investment Fund: For outdoor play areas for early child care and education programs. Particularly interested that incorporate nature and natural elements! <http://www.cccif.org/docs/RFP-FI-final.doc>

Atlanta Playground Grants

*Fakcons Fit & Green Initiative: The Atlanta Falcons Youth Foundation and The Arthur M. Blank Family Foundation et.al will support development of up to 10 green playgrounds in Metro Atlanta in 2009.
https://www.sportsphilanthropyproject.com/assets/library/545_falconsfitgreenrfp.pdf

Playgrounds for all abilities

*CVS All Kids Can: a five year \$25 million commitment to making life easier for children with disabilities. Through this signature program, CVS Caremark and the Trust will support nonprofit organizations that provide innovative programs and services in local communities focused on helping children with disabilities learn, play and succeed in life. It is not difficult to imagine a natural playground that is all inclusive. A Natural playground can be a highly sensory experience and can easily be made barrier-free.

National General Grants

*Ford Foundation: Many types of grants available. Example the Ford Foundation funded a school to replace their existing playground fall surface with recycled rubber chips.

Resources for Grants

* Chamber of Commerce: check out your local Chamber of Commerce, they often have education grants that might apply.

*<http://foundationcenter.org/>: This website has a search option to find local foundations.

*<http://www.capitalcampaigns.com/>: This website gives useful tips on how to set up a funding campaign.

*<http://ctb.ku.edu/en/>: Another website that helps you set up an effective fundraising program.

FUNDRAISING

Besides applying for grants there are numerous ways to raise funds, from the familiar cookie-dough sales to selling on-line books from your website. Below are some website that provide resources for fundraising campaigns.

*LandCurrent can make a large 2000 piece jigsaw puzzle of the natural playground design drawings with each piece representing \$25 dollars donators can add one or more pieces to the puzzle.

*The Arbor Day Foundation: sell beautiful arbor day trees as a way to raise funds.

*http://www.insiderpages.com/fundraising/how_it_works: earn funds by writing a online review of a local company.