

RESERVOIR & COMMUNITY STEWARDSHIP SUPPORT GUIDELINES

Funding provided under the Reservoir & Community Stewardship Support (RCSS) program may only be used for the following: cleanups, environmental education events and activities across the TVA Service Area.

Funds will NOT be approved for and may not be used for the following activities:

- recreation (forest bathing, hiking, boating)
- repairs (trail maintenance, bridge/railing/step repair, etc.)
- planting plants (sowing seed is permitted)
- safety measures
- building new structures or trails
- USPS mailings or purchase/creation of items that create waste
- cash prizes
- construction activities, including but not limited to construction of any buildings or facilities, roads, highways, bridges, water systems, or utilities
- ground disturbing activities, including but not limited to excavating, vegetation management, or landscaping
- operation of any heavy machinery or equipment.

Some examples of permitted uses of funds:

- We would consider funding replacing benches in an outdoor amphitheater used for environmental education programs. We would not consider funding to build new benches for resting while hiking or bird watching.
- We would consider the purchase of kayaks for litter pickups as long as more than one event is planned. We may consider purchase of kayaks for interpretive paddles with a specialist. Once again, more than one event should be planned.
- If this is the first year for your cleanup you are more likely to receive more funding (food, tee shirts, etc.) – once volunteers are used to coming to your annual event then we may start pulling back on funding and focus on the essentials like bags, gloves, and waste disposal.

Some ideas to cut costs:

- Instead of tee shirts, give away bandanas/sunscreen/bug spray/hand sanitizer; change the thank you gift each year but be sure to make it something that relates to the event, is useful, and does not create waste.
- Check with local restaurants/grocery stores about donating food; or accept donations for food; have a local youth organization sell snacks/drinks/biscuits/donuts/coffee as a fundraiser.

- As your event grows, identify and bring onboard more partners.
- Use social media to get the word out – no longer mail announcements.
- Encourage people to turn their gloves in; wash and re-use the following year.
- Litter grabbers cost a lot – loan them out and collect them after the event to use next time.

TVA looks for cost savings when reviewing requests. We like to see several partners. We look for strong programs with solid budgets. We look for reusable: don't give away the litter grabbers but keep them for the next event; purchase a water cooler and use paper cups or have volunteers bring their own water bottle – don't buy/distribute bottled water.

Additional Guidelines and Requirements:

- Organizations must be recognized by the IRS as a nonprofit and in good standing or a public institution (e.g., public school) and have a current Employee Identification Number registered with the IRS. Federal, state, and local governments are eligible to apply, but must have a valid TIN or a "Friends" group.
- Requests will be accepted throughout the year.
- By submitting the application, you are agreeing to TVA terms and conditions for use of funds.
- Operational expenses, such as salaries, rent, and utilities are not eligible and should not be included in the budget for requested funds. Fees/stipends for speakers, photographers or others are considered labor and are therefore part of salaries.
- It is important that you retain your receipts according to IRS [guidelines](#) for nonprofits.
- Limit request to \$5,000.00 or less.

Please Note:

1. TVA does not providing funding for programs/events after the fact – requests for funding must be made at least 1 month prior to event or program.
2. An organization may only receive funding once a year
3. Requests for funding must be submitted through the online application. Additional documentation should be emailed to: communitysupport@tva.gov (please include organization name in the subject line). A complete request must include the online application and budget on letterhead. Not including all necessary items will disqualify your request. Click [here](#) for link to application.
4. TVA, in its sole discretion, may fund only a portion of the requested amount. Reasons for not funding in full may be:

- a. A portion of the request does not appear to relate to the program's purpose (i.e., requesting funds to purchase tools to repair a bridge as part of a litter cleanup or cash prizes).
 - b. Request arrived late after deadline.
 - c. An effort is made to support as many organizations as possible so we may only fund what we perceive to be the essentials.
 - d. If you have received funding for several years, funding may be reduced a little each year to encourage you to look for other partners or to revamp your program.
5. We will most likely not sponsor statewide meetings/conferences as many of the attendees may be outside the TVA program area.
 6. Funds must be spent by **December 31** of the same year.
 7. Must identify all funding received from TVA, whether for this event/project or for others.
 8. Must submit a report following your project **within 2 weeks following your event** to be considered for funding the following year. The report must contain all the items on the provided report form. Please use the current form.

TVA welcomes appreciation remarks through social media and in local news articles, but the acknowledgement should not give implied or explicit TVA endorsement.

TVA does not guarantee any funding in connection with the RCSS program. All funding is subject to availability. TVA disclaims all liability in connection with any funding provided under RCSS program and any activities or programs funded by the RCSS program.

Please use the following tags on social media: Facebook: @TVA; Instagram: @tva; LinkedIn: @Tennessee Valley Authority; Twitter: @TVAnews

TVA is an agency of the U.S. Government. Intentional, false statements are subject to criminal prosecution under 18 U.S. Code 1001.