



National Trails Fund Guidelines

What is the National Trails Fund?

American Hiking Society's National Trails Fund is the only privately funded, national grants program dedicated solely to building and protecting hiking trails. Now in its ninth year, the fund has awarded more than a half million dollars to 165 grassroots organizations all over the nation working to establish, protect and maintain foot trails in America. Awards range from \$500 to \$5,000 per project.

What types of projects will be considered for the 2012 grants?

- Those that have hikers as the primary constituency, though multi-purpose human-powered trail uses are eligible.
- Those that secure trail lands, including acquisition of trails and trail corridors and the costs associated with acquiring conservation easements.
- Projects that will result in visible and substantial ease of access, improved hiker safety and/or avoidance of environmental damage. Higher preference is often given to projects with volunteer labor.
- Projects that promote constituency building surrounding specific trail projects - including volunteer recruitment and support.

Funding details and grant accountability

- Award amounts range from \$500 to \$5,000.
- Applicants must be a **501(c)(3) nonprofit** organization and must submit their IRS designation letters.
- Except for land acquisition programs, acceptable projects should be completed in one year. Multi-year projects will be considered only in exceptional cases.
- Grants will not be awarded to (a) religious organizations for religious purposes, (b) private foundations or (c) political causes, candidates or legislative lobbying efforts.
- The grantee **must complete a final report** on the project's progress, successes and failures, funds dispersal and what role the grant played in the project, **due April 30, 2013**.

A declined request does not imply that the applicant's program is not needed or valued, but simply that it does not fall within our giving guidelines or priorities, or that funds are not available.

Application Procedures

- Go to www.AmericanHiking.org to download the application materials. The application is scheduled to go live on **November 1st 2011**. All applications must be submitted electronically.
- Submit your complete application by 11:59 p.m. on **December 15, 2011**.

Timeline

November 1, 2011	Application is available at www.AmericanHiking.org
December 15, 2011	Applications submitted to HSable@americanhiking.org by 11:59 p.m.
Early May, 2012	Board of Directors approves American Hiking Society Trail Grant recipients and applicants are notified
April 30, 2012	Final Report due to American Hiking Society.

All applicants are REQUIRED to be a member of American Hiking's Alliance of Hiking Organizations. To find out more about the Alliance and to join, go to www.AmericanHiking.org or contact POlsen@AmericanHiking.org

Thank you for your interest in the National Trails Fund. If you have any questions, please contact American Hiking Society at 301-565-6704 or info@AmericanHiking.org.