



Request for Proposals (RFP): Fall 2021

Edwards Mother Earth Foundation – Agroforestry Program

Proposals due August 27, 2021

1. About the Foundation

The mission of Edwards Mother Earth Foundation (EMEF) is: *“to enhance a sustainable and diverse quality of life by addressing global climate disruption.”*

2. About EMEF’s Agroforestry Program

EMEF’s Agroforestry Program aims to catalyze the adoption of agroforestry practices in the U.S., thereby contributing to mitigating or reversing climate change.

3. About this funding round

This is the first funding round for EMEF’s Agroforestry Program. EMEF and its advisors have assessed the current state and future potential of agroforestry in the U.S. and uncovered barriers to adoption and potential opportunities to overcome them. However, we are fully aware that our perspectives on these topics are incomplete. As such, our intention with this round of funding is to enable practitioners to articulate and then pursue the theories of change that are the most compelling and viable, as opposed to advancing any particular theories of our own.

The goal of our program is to scale the adoption of agroforestry in the U.S. The goals of this 2021 funding round in particular are to:

- 1) Cultivate and support viable multi-year strategies and partners for scaling the adoption of agroforestry in the U.S. over the next 5-6 years.
- 2) Encourage and support coalitions among partners within and across regions, as suits the strategy.

We hope this RFP provides applicants with sufficient flexibility to define and articulate the strategies, partners, and programmatic activities they see as the most viable and compelling to advance the adoption of agroforestry in the U.S.

4. Eligible uses of funding

We seek proposals that articulate strategies for accelerating adoption of agroforestry in the U.S. over the next 5-6 years and present plans for implementing those strategies. We expect applicants to use funds from EMEF and, where possible and appropriate, other sources, for implementation.



Strategies should be explicitly regional or inter-regional/national (applicants should select one of these options and provide a rationale).

Strategies should advance the adoption of agroforestry through a well-considered, well-informed, ambitious, and plausible theory of change, which targets levers for impact at the regional or national scale. Levers might include those below, or others:

- Capacity and coalition building (for example among organizations with deep ties to landowners and communities, but limited familiarity or focus on agroforestry).
- Changes to governmental laws, policies, programs, or regulations.
- Education, demonstration, and training.
- Environmental services market development.
- Financial innovation.
- Market, product, and supply chain development.
- Production system development and implementation.
- R&D on crops, equipment, processes, products, or software.

Funds may be used for:

- Deployment of agroforestry practices on-the-ground.
- Implementation of programs and work that potentiate deployment of agroforestry practices on-the-ground.
- Program planning and development (in year one only).

Funds may not be used for:

- Funding of indirect overhead costs, if the applicant is a university or government entity.
- Litigation.
- 501c4 activities.

Funds may take the form of grants. Funds may not take the forms of PRIs or catalytic capital, unless the applicant presents a compelling case for why these forms of capital are required in their case. Traditional (non-recoverable) grant applications from for-profit companies will not be considered.

Eligible applicants

Proposals can be from one organization or from multiple collaborators.

Proposals from multiple collaborators should select a Prime Contractor to receive and distribute funds, orchestrate the efforts of other collaborators, and ensure effectiveness and accountability. Such proposals should articulate how the project will be organized and structured, to ensure said effectiveness and accountability.

Proposals to support the work of one organization will be considered. However, we encourage potential applicants in each region to collaborate and put forward multi-organization proposals that are appropriate for their region(s) or inter-regional/national strategies, rather than just their individual organizations.



Organizations can participate in up to two applications.

Matching funds from other sources and in-kind contributions are not required. But EMEF's funds are limited and may not be sufficient to fully support the multi-year strategies proposed. We expect applicants to put forward credible plans for fully resourcing the strategies they propose, and will score proposals higher if they put EMEF funding to its highest and best use, for example by leveraging and integrating other sources of funding and capitalization.

Proposals involving multiple organizations and coordination across states in a region are encouraged.

Funding levels

For the 2021 RFP, funding will be in the form of 2-year grants that are \$200-800K in size, as a basis for potential 3-4 year extensions.

In the 2021 RFP applicants should articulate:

- 4-6 year strategies.
- Objectives and milestones for the end of year 2.
- Firm budgets and funding requests for years 1 and 2.
- Pro-forma budgets for years 3-6.

Grants and grantees selected by EMEF in 2023—including extensions to 2021 RFP grants—will in part be determined by success demonstrated by 2021 RFP grants in their first two years against their proposed objectives and milestones.

Review, reporting, and adaptation expectations

All grants will be subject to annual review.

EMEF will require quarterly check-ins, used constructively to assess new learnings, the current project status, and future opportunities—including the need to modify tactics or pivot in strategy.

EMEF will require (and support) grantees to collectively assemble every six months to:

- Share learnings;
- Share strategies and tactics; and
- Explore strategic pivots (if needed).

EMEF ideally would like to host a few in-person gatherings, in a location where agroforestry operations are underway—potentially at a site managed by grantees.

Proposal structure and requirements

The Foundation believes the proposal process should not put an undue burden on applicants and should be sufficiently flexible to accommodate a variety of narrative and strategy structures. However, every proposal must include the following elements:



- A **5- to 20-page proposal** that articulates:
 - What success looks like in 5-6 years: The impact you would have in 5-6 years, if successful, on:
 1. EMEF's twin primary objectives:
 - Catalyzing increased agroforestry adoption.
 - Reducing greenhouse gases.
 2. Secondary objectives that EMEF also values:
 - Advancing justice, equity, diversity, and inclusion.
 - Advancing other economic, social, or environmental co-benefits, such as biodiversity.
 - Your strategy for achieving success: Your theory of change and proposed strategy over 5-6 years.
 - 2-year programmatic plan: Your planned activities over the next 2 years.
 - 2-year milestones: Your objectives over the next 2 years, and the metrics you will use to measure progress and performance at the end of 2 years.
 - Geographic scope (regional or inter-regional/national) and rationale.
 - Project leadership team, partners, and participants.
 - Project organizational and operational structure.
 - Barriers and risks: what they are and how they will be mitigated.
 - Pro-forma budget and resource plan (over 5-6 years).
 - Proposed budget for years 1 and 2.
 - Why philanthropic funding is required to support this proposed work.
 - How EMEF's funding will be put to the highest and best use, by leveraging other available resources.
- **Profiles and references** for applicant organizations and key individuals, which speak to their capabilities, expertise, and track record.
- **If the proposal is for a recoverable grant or PRI**, EMEF requests that the applicant organization submit the following additional information:
 - **The case for why a recoverable grant or PRI is needed.**
 - **Financial statements for recipient organizations.**
 - **Business and financing plans associated with the recoverable grant or PRI** including desired PRI amount, duration, terms; planned use of funds, charitable purpose, and eligibility; and the planned source of payback.



- **A brainstorm of possible negative consequences to your program** and what steps you will take to mitigate those.

Selection criteria and weighting

Proposals will be evaluated on a 100-point scale, using the following criteria and weightings:

- Potential impact and scale (if successful): Up to 50 points.
- Likelihood of success: Up to 40 points.
- Putting EMEF resources to their highest and best use: 10 points.

The more specific set of sub-criteria, questions, and weights that we will use to evaluate your proposal are detailed below:

Criteria and sub-criteria	Question	Weight
Potential impact and scale (if successful)	What impact and scale will the proposed program achieve, if successful?	50%
Agroforestry adoption	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What type of agroforestry adoption would program achieve? • At what scale? 	15%
Reducing greenhouse gases	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What impact would the program have on greenhouse gas reduction? • At what scale? 	15%
Advancing justice, equity, diversity, and inclusion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Would the program advance JEDI outcomes? • At what scale? 	10%
Other economic, social, or environmental impacts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Would the program have other positive impacts? • Does the program present trade-offs or possible negative consequences? At what scale? 	10%
Likelihood of success	How likely is the program to be successful?	40%
Team and partners	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do applicants have the right team and partners in place for this program? • Do applicants have expertise, capabilities, and track records that indicate they will implement the program well? 	10%
Organizational and operational design	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is the program of work well-designed and well-configured? 	10%



	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is the proposed team and set of partners well organized to support the work? 	
Barriers and risks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How significant are the barriers and risks to the success of this strategy? • Have the applicants anticipated risks well and proposed credible methods to overcome and mitigate them? 	10%
Financial resourcing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Will the program of work be appropriately capitalized and viable? 	5%
Performance management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Does the applicant propose a credible and appropriate plan for measuring and managing performance and impact? 	5%
Putting EMEF resources to their highest and best use	Are EMEF resources being put to their highest and best use?	10%
Need for philanthropic funding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Does the proposed program of work require philanthropic grant funding or philanthropic forms of investment? 	5%
Leverage of EMEF funds with other resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are the applicants putting EMEF’s funds to the highest and best use, by using them to leverage other available resources? 	5%

Key dates and deadlines

Action/Deliverable	Date
RFP Released	June 21, 2021
Proposals Submitted	August 27, 2021
Grants/PRIs Issued	Oct – Dec, 2021

Contact Information

Please submit final proposals to Gordian Knot Strategies via EMEFagroforestry@gordianknotstrategies.com by 5 PM PT on August 27, 2021.