California Tribal Fund
Access to Ancestral Lands Grant Opportunity
Application Deadline: January 31, 2022, 5 PM PT

General Information
About First Nations Development Institute

For more than 41 years, First Nations Development Institute (First Nations), a Native-led 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization, has worked to strengthen American Indian economies to support healthy Native communities by investing in and creating innovative institutions and models that strengthen asset control and support economic development for American Indian people and their communities. First Nations began its national grantmaking program in 1993. Through mid-year 2021, First Nations has successfully managed 2,276 grants totaling more than $46 million to tribal and community institutions across Indian Country. For more information, visit **www.firstnations.org**.

The California Tribal Fund was created to support California-based, California-Native-led nonprofits and tribal programs in controlling and protecting their food systems, water, languages, traditional ecological knowledge, and land. Currently, the fund is operated as a project of First Nations Development Institute.

For more information visit https://www.firstnations.org/california-tribal-fund/

Grant Overview

First Nations is now accepting applications under the Access to Ancestral Lands grant opportunity within the California Tribal Fund.

First Nations expects to award **12 to 15 grants averaging $35,000** to California-based tribes or tribally-controlled non-profit organizations as they work toward strengthening California-based Indigenous stewardship and protection of ancestral lands. The purpose of the grant is to increase California Tribal people's access to ancestral homelands.

This grant is made possible through the generous support of the Elizabeth R. & William J. Patterson Foundation, the Clarence E. Heller Charitable Foundation, and the Walter and Elise Haas Fund.

Grant Period

The grant period for this funding opportunity will be 18 months, commencing March 1, 2022, and ending August 31, 2023.

Grant Award Ceilings

Total requests for project budgets within this funding opportunity should not exceed $35,000.

Grant Submission Deadline

All applicants must complete the First Nations **online grant application**, including submission of necessary attachments.

- Proposals will be due Monday, January 31, 2022, no later than 5 pm PT.

First Nations recognizes that rural and remote applicants may have limited access to high-speed internet. Any exceptions to use of the online system must be requested at least two weeks in advance of the application deadline by submitting an email request to grantmaking@firstnations.org. Please include your name, organization, contact information and the name of the funding opportunity for which you are applying. If you do not have access to email you can call our office at (303) 774-7836 and ask to speak with a member of the Grantmaking Department.

Download instructions for First Nations' Online Application System **here**. Access First Nations' Online Application system **here**.

Unfortunately, First Nations cannot make any emergency exceptions to application deadlines. Partial applications, incomplete applications due to user error, or faxed/emailed/mailed applications will not be considered unless they have received prior approval.

Please allow yourself enough time to submit a complete application before the deadline, as the system will shut down automatically at 5 pm Pacific Time on January 31, 2022, and no data may be entered thereafter. We do not accept partial, faxed, emailed or mailed applications. Applications that are not received on time due to user error will not be considered.

Eligibility

Organizations eligible to apply include California located, Native American-controlled, nonprofit 501(c)(3), tribal organizations, and Native §7871 organizations. First Nations considers "Native-controlled" to mean that the majority (more than 50%) of the organization's Board of Directors is tribally affiliated.

Priority will be given to organizations that currently work to support Indigenous control over land, water, and traditional ecological knowledge within their respective tribal communities and ancestral tribal lands.

Types of eligible applicants include, but are not limited to:
- California-based federal and state recognized Tribal governments
- Native-controlled 501(c)(3) nonprofits
- Native-controlled community organizations with fiscal sponsorship
- Native §7871 organizations
- Native-controlled community organizations with fiscal sponsorship

Please refer to the **FAQ** section for further insight regarding applicant eligibility.

Application & Required Attachments

Proposal Requirements:

- A brief **history of the organization**, its mission and current and primary programmatic focus related to land access.
- A concise description of the organizations **current land-related programs**.
- At least **three specific goals/objectives** to be accomplished with the funding.
- A **summary of project activities** describing how they will be implemented.
- A **project budget narrative** that describes how funding will be utilized by category.

The following required attachments must be uploaded during the online submission process:
- Tax-Status Documentation. A copy of the organization or fiscal sponsor's IRS Determination Letter if the applicant is a 501(c)(3) organization or a community organization using a fiscal sponsor. Tribal programs and governments may submit proof that they are a federal- or state-recognized tribe. This document should be uploaded as a PDF file.

- Description of Board of Directors. Native-controlled nonprofits should submit a list of their Board of Directors, with tribal affiliation clearly listed next to each director name where applicable. Community organizations with fiscal sponsors should submit a list of their leadership team, with tribal affiliation of each team member where applicable. Tribal programs and governments should submit a list of their Tribal Council in lieu of a Board of Directors. This document should be uploaded as a PDF file.

  Description of Key Leadership Staff. Native-controlled nonprofits and community organizations with fiscal sponsors should submit a list of key staff who will be responsible for overseeing and implementing the proposed project. Tribal programs and governments should submit a list of key staff responsible for overseeing and implementing the proposed project. This document should be uploaded as a PDF file.

- Budget. (*Download Required Budget Form*) An estimated budget for the proposed project with a detailed cost breakdown of how general operating support will be spent. This form must be uploaded as an Excel file.

All applicants must complete a proposal in the First Nations online grant application, including submission of necessary attachments, no later than Monday, **January 31, 2022, at 5 pm Pacific Time**.

Selection Criteria

First Nations seeks projects that increase Native access to and Native stewardship of lands. Selected grantees under this opportunity must use funding to support projects related to land reparations, reclamation of lands formerly under tribal control, and/or initiating culturally-responsive models for current and future land management based on traditional ecological knowledge.

Examples of **allowable activities** under this funding opportunity include, but are not limited to:

- Support for employee and Board training related to the formation and governance of a land trust
- Research related to ancestral land mapping and cultural site surveys
- Support for acquisition related "due diligence" activities including but not limited to, land appraisals, environmental assessments, researching easements and access, and land use and zoning

- Support for technical assistance and training related to existing land holdings including development land management and operational funding and development plans
- Support for capacity building including creation or revision of policies and procedures, strategic plans, etc.
- Support related to applications for a Fee to Trust Land Acquisition

Examples of **unallowable activities** under this funding opportunity include:
- Capital construction projects (which includes the construction, purchase, renovation, and/or furnishing of facilities)
- Scholarships or tuition assistance
- Films, television and/or radio programs
- Endowments
- Development campaigns
- Funding for individuals
- Purchase of Real Estate
- Support of lobbying activities or drafting legislation
- Support of litigation

Grant Expectations and Requirements

Grantee Orientation: Selected grantees must participate in a mandatory Grantee Orientation Webinar, which will be held in late March 2022. First Nations will email selected grantees with registration information for this webinar on or after March 4, 2022. During this webinar, First Nations will provide grantees with an overview of grant requirements and deadlines.

Reporting: Program staff will schedule a check in call in lieu of a mid-grant progress report. A final report, including a financial expenditure report, will be required at the end of the grant period. This call and report will enable First Nations to (1) gain further understanding on your program (2) tell grantee stories, including accomplishments, challenges, impact, and programming practices; and (3) measure the impact of funding support on grantee programs.

Help

First Nations Development Institute will hold two informational webinars to discuss the RFP process and address any questions on the following dates:

- **Friday, January 14, 2022, 10 am Pacific Time**

    Register at: https://attendee.gotowebinar.com/register/7590377786684861710

- **Monday, January 24, 2022, 10 am Pacific Time**

    Register at: https://attendee.gotowebinar.com/register/1435873544836680206

These Q&A sessions will provide an opportunity for applicants to ask questions about the application, selection criteria, guidelines, or other related questions. Participation is NOT mandatory; however, applicants are strongly encouraged to participate in one or both of the calls.

First Nations has compiled a number of free resources related to the grant writing process. Whether you are a small organization new to grants or an organization with extensive experience, these resources will help with development of your application to First Nations.

Please click **here** to access First Nations' free grant-writing resources.

Additional Questions

Should you have any additional questions about the call for applications or this specific funding opportunity, please contact Rebecca Tortes by email at rtortes@firstnations.org or by phone at 303-774-7836.

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