

**Freshwater Future Request for Proposals
Technology and Insight Grant Opportunities
Deadline: December 8th, 2009**

Purpose of the Grants Program: The goal of Freshwater Future grants program is to provide financial support activities and technical assistance that actively promote aquatic habitat protection by influencing community and/or individual behavior or opinion, corporate conduct, and/or public policy and that strengthen the role of individuals and community groups working locally to protect and restore shorelines, inland lakes, rivers, wetlands, and other aquatic habitats in the Great Lakes Basin.

Mission: Freshwater Future builds effective community-based citizen action to protect and restore the water quality of the Great Lakes Basin. We work toward this goal by providing financial assistance, communications and networking assistance, and technical assistance to citizens and grassroots watershed groups throughout the Great Lakes Basin. Through these efforts we work with over 1,800 grassroots watershed groups and citizens to protect and restore the rivers, lakes and wetlands in their communities.

An important link in protecting our water resources is the active involvement of individuals and community groups working at the local level to protect rivers, lakes and wetlands.

The passion shown by Great Lakes Basin residents for their local resources is inspiring, and represents an important part of the environmental movement in the Great Lakes Basin. Citizens participate in local decisions affecting aquatic habitats, watch-dog the enforcement of environmental laws, and create change through civic engagement. Through these important local activities, the grassroots provide an important voice for aquatic habitat protection where the majority of land use decisions are made—at the local level. Realizing the importance of grassroots involvement, Freshwater Future works to build the capacity of local citizen-based aquatic habitat protection efforts by providing financial, technical, and communication support.

Communications and Networking Support: An important strength of Freshwater Future is the linkage between the funding component and the networking component. Freshwater Future's new Advocate Mentor Program provides additional networking support. For additional assistance please see www.freshwaterfuture.org or call Freshwater Future staff at (231) 348-8200.

Insight Services Grants: Growing Success:

The grants will provide funding for scholarships toward Freshwater Future's professional services in organizational development and strategy assistance. Grant awards will range from \$500 to \$2,500 U.S. dollars (USD). No monetary award will be made to your organization. A 25% match by your organization is required for this program. Projects to build organizational capacity in the following strategic program areas will be considered:

- Financial management, such as trainings on developing budgets, state and federal reporting, and accounting systems with proper checks and balances

- Board development, such as trainings for board members on fundraise, utilizing board committees
- Fundraising planning, such as development of fundraising plans, building membership programs, and major donor programs
- Membership tracking, including database support, developing a membership strategy, establishing a calendar for renewals and appeals, assistance with letter development
- Grant writing training
- Strategy assistance for your organization's key program issues, helping to identify next steps to keep your organization progressing towards success
- Strategic planning
- Communications assistance, improving publications and positive messaging

Please call to discuss the potential cost of an Insight Services project and grant request amount.

Technology Grants:

The grant projects will provide funding to purchase technology consulting, equipment and/or software. Grant awards will range from \$2,000 to \$5,500 depending on organizational need. Technology requests include, but are not limited to:

- Reliable e-mail service and mass e-mail capability
- Database for tracking donors and members
- An effective website with the ability of the organization to make updates easily
- Computers that can handle the organization's software needs
- Reliable backup systems.

Eligibility:

- Any organization working to protect aquatic habitats in the Great Lakes
- United States applicants that do not have 501(c)(3) tax status or Ontario applicants that are not registered charities governed by the Income Tax Act must have a sponsoring 501(c)(3) organization or registered charity (see Sponsors section below under Application Process and Timeline.)
- Applicants must be a current member of Freshwater Future (you may join at time of application). If the membership fee is a hardship for your organization, please contact Freshwater Future for assistance.
- Groups or individuals who have received funding through Freshwater Future grants program may apply for these programs, as long as previous projects have been successfully completed or are in good standing (please call to determine open grant status).

Types of Activities We Do Not Fund:

- Education projects that do not include an action component to create permanent change

- On-the-ground restoration projects without an action component
- Governmental functions (including governmental entities such as units of government, governmental agencies and conservation districts)
- Lobbying activities (activities that attempt to influence specific pieces of legislation)
- Projects that have already been completed

Application Process and Timeline for Technology and Insight Grants Opportunities

Please send your application in the form of a brief letter via e-mail in a Word attachment to grants@freshwaterfuture.org. The request letter should be no longer than two pages (front and back) and must include the following information:

- Organization name, address and Lake Basin of applicant, phone, fax, and e-mail address;
- Organizational annual budget;
- Project coordinator or contact person;
- Documentation of status as a 501(c)(3) nonprofit group or a registered charity;
- Amount of funding requested;
- Statement of need for the project;
- The goal of the project;
- Work plan for the project;
- Why the project is not compatible with the standard grant application process (Spring and Fall grant cycles);
- Specific activities or costs to be covered;
- Timeline for activities and expenditures; and
- How the activities are consistent with the Freshwater Future purpose, methods, program areas, and criteria.

For applicants that require a sponsor, please provide the following additional information:

- Name, address, phone number, and e-mail address of sponsor, including contact person, in the body of request letter;
- Documentation that sponsor is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit entity or a registered charity; and
- Letter from sponsor on sponsor's letterhead expressing support for applicant's proposed project and willingness to act as fiscal agent.

The Freshwater Future staff will review applications, seek input if necessary, and render a decision within two weeks of receipt of complete request. Payment will be made within four weeks of approval. Within one month of completion of the funded activity, the grant recipient must submit a one-page written report that briefly documents the actual expenses incurred, activities performed, and the outcomes.

For more information, please contact Cheryl Mendoza, Associate Director, at Cheryl@freshwaterfuture.org or 231-571-5001.

Freshwater Future Staff

Jill Ryan, Executive Director
jill@freshwaterfuture.org

Cheryl Mendoza, Associate Director
cheryl@freshwaterfuture.org

Ann Baughman, Associate Director
ann@freshwaterfuture.org

Office:

P.O. Box 2479

Petoskey, MI 49770-2749

(231) 348-8200

www.freshwaterfuture.org