



2024 REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

CITGO CARING FOR OUR COAST PROGRAM

APPLY ONLINE AT OUR ONLINE GRANTS MANAGEMENT PORTAL [Versaic-Client](#)

In 2014, the CITGO Caring For Our Coast initiative started as a yearlong series of projects focused on coastal conservation and restoration in remembrance of Hurricanes Katrina and Rita. Today, it has grown into a program to protect vulnerable coastal and inland habitats through educational and volunteer efforts.

CITGO invites qualified organizations to apply for funds for charitable grants to support the Caring For Our Coast Program using the CITGO online application.

Program Priorities

The goals of the Caring For Our Coast Program are to support healthy habitats that are critical for birds, fish, plants and wildlife; increase resilience of communities to mitigate impact of natural or manmade disasters; and increase awareness and action to conserve resources and engage the community on environmental issues. CITGO will prioritize funding for projects working towards achieving the following outcomes:

- **Environmental Restoration and Protection:**
 - Natural habitats are restored, maintained and protected
- **Environmental Awareness and Education:**
 - Increased skills and knowledge regarding conservation and the environment and/or increased personal responsibility to take action and/or support conservation and the environment
- **Environmental Sustainability:**
 - Increased adoption of environmental practices to conserve resources and/or protect ecosystems

Priority will be given to projects that support habitats located in or near CITGO operations in Corpus Christi, Texas; Houston, Texas; Lake Charles, Louisiana; Lemont, Illinois; or the U.S. Gulf Coast.

Applicant Criteria

To be eligible to apply, the Applicant organization ("Applicant") must meet the following criteria:

1. The Applicant must be a public school or a tax-exempt organization under Section 501(c)(3), Title 26 of the Internal Revenue Code, classified as a public charity under Section 509(a)(1) and operate exclusively for charitable, scientific, or educational purposes;
2. The Applicant must provide charitable, scientific, or educational services located in or near CITGO operations in Corpus Christi, Texas; Houston, Texas; Lake Charles, Louisiana; Lemont, Illinois; or the U.S. Gulf Coast;
3. The Applicant must not be organized primarily for political, sectarian, fraternal, professional, veteran, or religious purposes, except for religious organizations that are educational in nature and offer their educational benefits to the entire community, without any form of discrimination; and
4. The Applicant must not employ any individual employed by: (i) CITGO, Petróleos de Venezuela S.A. ("PDVSA"), or any affiliate or subsidiary of CITGO or PDVSA, or the spouse or equivalent, ancestor, child or child's spouse/equivalent, grandchild or grandchild's spouse/equivalent, or great-grandchild or great-grandchild's spouse/equivalent of anyone employed by same; and/or (ii) any governmental agency with responsibility for decisions affecting the business

interests of CITGO, PDVSA, or any affiliate or subsidiary of CITGO or PDVSA.

Award Information

1. Funding Availability—This Request for Proposal includes the potential for funding designated for the Caring For Our Coast Program. However, sufficient funds are not guaranteed to make awards for proposals.
2. Award Size - The maximum award for funding is \$100,000. The average award for funding may range between \$35,000-\$50,000. CITGO anticipates awarding several grants per priority location and one larger award to benefit the U.S. Gulf Coast.
3. Project Period - Applicants should plan on implementing CITGO grant project activities no later than October 1, 2024. Project activities should be completed within twelve (12) months of execution of a grant agreement between the Applicant and CITGO. Application should plan to end CITGO grant project activities no later than September 30, 2025.
4. Budget Guidelines - If funding is available and awarded to an Applicant, the funding will be available for:
 - a. Project Implementation: day-to-day management of the approved activities.
 - b. Operation and Administrative Costs: administrative staff salaries, utilities, rent, supply expenses, and other expenses, as described in the approved project proposals. Operation and administrative costs are not to exceed 20% of the total funding request.

Application and Grant Process Requirements

1. Any organization seeking funding must first submit a proposal using the CITGO-designated online system. Any incomplete application may delay or cause denial of the application. Proposals will not be considered after July 21, 2024. All applications must be completed in English.
2. All documentation submitted to CITGO will be maintained by CITGO for its sole use and benefit

according to its records retention policies and practices. Submitting organizations acknowledge that no information submitted will be returned to them, and Applicant should maintain a copy of all records as the Applicant deems appropriate. Applicants may be asked for additional information. Completion of the project description form does not guarantee funding or other support from CITGO.

3. CITGO reserves the right to amend or terminate the Caring For Our Coast Program at any time and without notice.
4. If an Applicant is selected by CITGO to receive a grant, Applicant's receipt of the grant will be conditioned on the Applicant's satisfactory completion of the CITGO due diligence process and submission of such other documentation requested by CITGO.
5. Applicants can track the status of their proposals through the online application portal. Applicants will be notified of funding decisions after receipt of the application and all required documentation is evaluated.
6. Funding decisions are made at the sole discretion of CITGO in accordance with the policies and procedures of CITGO as well as other factors. Funding decisions are not subject to review or appeal. If approved for funding, any awarded amounts will be sent directly to the recipient Applicant after receipt of an executed grant agreement and all other required documentation.

Evaluation Criteria for Proposals

CITGO will evaluate proposals with the following criteria:

- Summary/description of project
- Description of targeted beneficiary or habitat
- Need/Justification
- Measures of Success
- Activities
- Budget
- Other factors deemed appropriate by CITGO

Proposal Details and Questions

In this section, Applicants may review the information and proposal questions in the online application. There is additional guidance in the Outcomes and Activities Section with an example for your reference. Generally, there are no word counts or character limitations; however, it is recommended to be a concise as reasonably possible.

Organization Contact Information

- Organization Name
- Organization Address (line 1)
- Organization Address (line 2)
- Organization City
- Organization State
- Organization Zip Code
- Organization Phone

Organization Mailing Information

- Organization Mailing Address (line 1)
- Organization Mailing Address (line 2)
- Organization Mailing City
- Organization Mailing State
- Organization Mailing Zip Code

Contact/Fiscal Sponsor Information

- Contact First Name
- Contact Last Name
- Contact Job Title
- Contact Phone Number
- Extension # (if applicable)
- Contact Email Address
- If your organization is awarded a grant, please provide information on the individual who is authorized to sign a CITGO Agreement.
- Signee First and Last Name
- Signee Job Title
- Signee Email Address
- Is your organization applying as a fiscal sponsor? If yes, please answer the following questions.
- Note: Fiscal Sponsor Information only required if a fiscal sponsor is used. A fiscal sponsorship is when a nonprofit organization extends its tax-exempt status to a select group engaged in activities related to the organization's mission.
- Sponsored Organization Name
- Sponsored Organization Address (line1)
- Sponsored organization Address (line 2)
- Sponsored Organization City
- Sponsored organization State
- Sponsored Organization Zip Code
- Sponsored Organization Contact First Name
- Sponsored Organization Contact Last Name

Organization Information

- Organization Identification Number (EIN)

- Organization Mission

Request Information

- Project Name
- Where is the location of the project?
- Does your project require permits? If yes, describe.
- Is this an existing project? If yes, for how long?
- Full Project Budget (total \$ amount needed to fully complete project)
- Grant Amount Requested from CITGO (\$)
- Project Start – Be prepared to begin CITGO grant on October 1 of this year
- Project End – Be prepared to end CITGO grant on September 30 next year
- Target Number of Direct Beneficiaries
- Project Summary
 - Provide information about the project by answering the questions below
- Description of beneficiaries: Who are the target beneficiaries?
- Description of need/justification: Why is your project needed?
- Please list partners (if applicable) that will participate or work on this project.

Outcomes and Activities

The goals of the Caring For Our Coast Program are to support healthy habitats that are critical for birds, fish, plants and wildlife; increase resilience of communities to mitigate impact of natural or manmade disasters; and increase awareness and action to conserve resources and engage the community on environmental issues.

CITGO prioritizes funding for programming that focuses on achieving one 1 (one) or more of the following outcomes:

- **Environmental Restoration and Protection:** Natural habitats are restored, maintained and protected
- **Environmental Awareness and Education:** Increased skills and knowledge regarding conservation and the environment and/or
- increased personal responsibility to take action and/or support conservation and the environment
- **Environmental Sustainability:** Increased adoption of environmental practices to conserve resources and/or protect ecosystems

List and identify the Activity, Outcome, Measure of Success, and Metric

Please list the activity or activities with the outcome, measure of success, and the metric for that activity. Only list those that will be directly supported by the CITGO grant. A maximum of 10 activities may be listed and a minimum of 1 activity may be listed.

Note: In this section, there is a separate line to list activities per outcome listed above. Applicants may add activities to one or multiple outcome areas. If there is an activity that applies to more than one outcome area, applicants may list it in each relevant outcome.

EXAMPLE

Activity	Outcome	Measure of Success	Metric
Planting native grass along coastal shoreline	Environmental Restoration and Protection	Shoreline is protected against land loss	# of grass stems planted (simple metric) and/or % survival rate and coverage of grass on shoreline after 6 months (complex metric)
Planting native grass along coastal shoreline	Environmental Restoration and Protection	Critical habitat restored	# acres restored (simple metric) and/or % increase of biological diversity after 1 year (complex metric)
5 "Green Team" volunteer events with Education Briefing	Environmental Awareness and Education	Participants learn about coastal habitat	# of volunteers that participate in Green Team Events (simple metric) and/or % of volunteers that report they learned about coastal habitat in a post-event survey (complex metric)
Install rain barrels	Environmental Sustainability	Reduction of metered water use to water garden	# rain barrels installed (simple metric) and/or # gallons water saved/month

- Does your project aim to support a different or additional outcome? If yes, please describe
- Target metrics
 - Target number of volunteers
 - Target number of volunteer hours
 - Target number of volunteer events
 - Target number of acres to be restored/preserved/conserved
 - Target number of trees, grass plugs, etc. to be planted
 - Target number of pounds of litter and/or debris collected
 - Target number of miles of rivers/lakes/shorelines cleaned
 - Target number of miles of trails restored

Budget Information

- List and identify the Project Implementation Costs
 - These can also include direct costs.
- List and identify the Operation and Administrative Costs
 - Operation and administrative costs are not to exceed 20% of the total funding request.
 - These can also include indirect costs.

Proposal Review and Evaluation:

All proposals will be reviewed and scored in accordance with the Evaluation Rubric attached in the Annex.

ANNEX: EVALUATION RUBRIC

Criterion	4 Exceptional	3 Very Good	1 Needs Improvement	0 Insufficient Information or poorly communicated
Summary/ Description of Project <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Aligns with CITGO goal(s) • Clear, logical, and easy to understand 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The project is strongly aligned with CITGO goals • The summary description of the project is clear and concise • Project description is detailed and clear with strong evidence of careful planning, thought and research 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The project is aligned with CITGO goals • The summary description completed is clearly stated • Project description is general, but it is still a good project that can be understood 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The project is weakly or not aligned with CITGO goals • The summary description of the work to be completed is addressed but vague at times • Project description needs clarity and further planning. Still, it is possible to understand what the project is 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The project does not address CITGO goals • The summary description of the work to be completed is hard to understand • Unclear project description or lacks planning and research
Description of Targeted Beneficiary <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In the CITGO geographic area • Priority to poorly resourced communities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Project Activities / Beneficiaries are in HQ and/or refinery areas (and/or Gulf Coast for CFOC proposals) • Project Activities / Beneficiaries are in poorly resourced communities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Project Activities / Beneficiaries are in HQ and/or refinery areas (and/or Gulf Coast for CFOC proposals) • Project Activities / Beneficiaries are in a mix of poorly resourced communities and those with more resources 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Project Activities / Beneficiaries are in operational or market area • Project Activities / Beneficiaries are targeted in highly resourced communities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Project Activities / Beneficiaries are outside operational or market area • No information on who will benefit or socio-economic status of benefit of beneficiaries

ANNEX: EVALUATION RUBRIC

Criterion	4 Exceptional	3 Very Good	1 Needs Improvement	0 Insufficient Information or poorly communicated
Need/Justification <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Statement with evidence that project is significant/needed in organization 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strong rationale and significance of proposed work. Explicitly addresses specific needs that are backed by data and/or experience 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Description depicts the need for the project and/or the language clearly describes current status 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No explicit need or justification is written, but you can infer from the description that there is a need being addressed 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unconvincing or no evidence of need presented, or grant proposal does not address need stated
Measure of Success <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Target Metrics • Verification • Description 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Target Metrics measure success of the proposed outcome • Description of what success looks like linked to the outcome and/or goals 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Target Metrics included, but they may not have the strongest correlation to the proposed outcome • Somewhat of a description of what success looks like 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No Target Metrics are included, but there is a description of what success looks like in the Project Summary and/or Outcomes & Activities sections 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No definition of success • No measurement plan in place

ANNEX: EVALUATION RUBRIC

Criterion	4 Exceptional	3 Very Good	1 Needs Improvement	0 Insufficient Information or poorly communicated
Activities <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Correlate to outcomes • Clear 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clear and strong correlation between the proposed activities and the outcome • Activity plan is clear and aligns with the project summary 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Correlation between proposed activities and the outcome • Activity plan relates to the project summary 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Activities are not fully described and assumptions are needed to find correlation to the outcomes • Activity plan is different than some or all of the project summary 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unclear on how activities correlate to the outcomes • Activities don't relate to the project summary
Budget <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Detailed • Good use of resources 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Budget outlines in detail how funds will be spent linked to planned activities • Budget is realistic. It can cover the necessary costs to implement the project while not being wasteful of resources 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Budget outlines how funds will be spent linked to planned activities • Budget is fairly realistic. There may be some questions whether it can cover the necessary costs to implement the project while not being wasteful of resources 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Budget is defined only in general terms and is missing specific information • Budget is not realistic. It may over or underestimate resources needed to implement the project 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Budget is missing or does not align with the proposed project