**NORTHWEST LOUISIANA MASTER GARDENER ASSOCIATION, INC.**

**COMMUNITY DONATION AND GRANT PROGRAM GUIDELINES**

The Northwest Louisiana Master Gardener Association, Inc. (NWLAMG) is a service organization created to expand the capacity of the Louisiana Cooperative Extension Service (LCES) of the Louisiana State University Agricultural Center (LSUAgCenter) horticultural outreach programs to meet the education needs of home gardeners in Bossier, Caddo, DeSoto, and Red River Parishes. Volunteers are recruited, trained, and certified by the LCES/LSUAgCenter and are dedicated to supporting LCES and to developing and enhancing horticultural programs in the four parish region.

**What is the purpose of this program**

* To promote good horticultural practices and horticultural education.
* To promote and involve the community in gardening.
* To enhance the quality and quantity of publicly accessible green spaces and gardens.
* To support the establishment of community and school garden programs, environmental improvement activities, and public horticultural events.
* To support the LSU AgCenter programs and missions.

**Who is eligible**

* Any municipality or government entity or subdivision thereof; any non-profit organization or entity such as a community garden, civic or garden club, school, neighborhood association, or tax-exempt 501(c)(3) charitable organization; faith-based organizations or projects that serve the general public on a non-denominational basis. The municipality, organization, or other entity must be located in Bossier, Caddo, DeSoto, or Red River Parish.

**Who is not eligible**

* Individuals, private foundations, political organizations, non-profit organizations without a current 501(c)(3) tax-exempt status, and for-profit organizations and entities.

**What can be funded**

* Clearly defined projects or programs that can be implemented within 12 months, are sustainable, and can be maintained over the long term without additional support or contributions from the NWLAMG.
* Materials necessary to establish a new garden/green space or enhance/expand existing gardens/green spaces and other horticultural related projects.
* Educational programs or materials that are directly related to gardening or horticulture.

**What cannot be funded**

* Endowment funds, capital campaigns, or operating expenses.
* Salaries, property purchase or rental, power equipment, grading/drainage projects, maintenance projects or materials, and expenses not directly related to a garden/horticulture project.

**What are the selection criteria**

* The organization making the application must demonstrate the expertise and experience necessary to accomplish the project, operate under sound financial principles, and have a plan for ongoing financial and community support to ensure the future of the organization and the long-term sustainability of the program/project to be funded.
* The project should make a difference, even in a small way, to the community it serves.
* The project should utilize sustainable gardening practices.
* Once completed, the project should have a regular maintenance schedule/component to ensure its continued operation.
* Projects that demonstrate leadership development at the grassroots level, community support, collaboration between organizations, matching contributions (either direct or indirect), public visibility, service/benefit to large numbers of people, and involvement and planning for long-term sustainability will be considered more favorably.
* Projects without evidence of participation from the community are not likely to be funded.

**How much money will be available**

* The number of donation and grants funded will depend upon the amount of money available each year and the number/quality of eligible applications received. If there are no qualified applicants, the NWLAMG will not award donations or grants for that year.
* Grant applications ranging from $300 to $10,000 will be accepted.
* NWLAMG may provide full or partial funding for projects selected.

**What are the important dates and deadlines**

* October 31, 2016 – Deadline for submitting applications.
* Completed application and all accompanying documentation must be submitted to the NWLAMG Community Investment Committee **by email** on or before October 31, 2016. No written or faxed applications will be accepted.
* Applications should be emailed to nwlamggrants@gmail.com.
* December 31, 2016 – Applicants will be notified of funding decisions on or before December 31, 2016.
* Projects must be completed and an electronic report submitted to the NWLAMG within one calendar year of the award date.

**How to apply**

* An application form may be obtained from a Master Gardener or the NWLAMG website (go to www.nwlamg.weebly.com and look for details under the “Programs” tab).
* Complete all applicable questions on the application form. If you fail to complete all applicable questions, the application will be deemed incomplete. Submit the completed application **via email** by the deadline.
* The project should have clearly stated goals, time-lines, objectives, and measurable outcomes.
* The Community Investment Committee may request additional written information during the review process.
* A site visit, further consultation, and/or a direct meeting between the applicant and the Community Investment Committee may also be necessary.

**What are the expectations for projects that receive a donation or a grant**

* The project must be completed within one-year.
* The applicant must sign an agreement with the NWLAMG stating that the group will:
* Spend the monies awarded as outlined in the application unless prior approval received from NWLAMG Community Investment Committee.
* Return any unspent funds at the end of the donation or grant period to the NWLAMG.
* Provide a written report, financial accounting, and photos upon completion of the project.
* Provide additional information upon request.
* Allow visits by the NWLAMG Board or its representatives.
* Hold harmless the NWLAMG for any and all claims or liability arising from implementation of the proposed project.
* Allow the NWLAMG to publicize the award in local media outlets as well as Master Gardener publications.
* Credit the NWLAMG during project installation and in printed materials and public announcements along with other donors as appropriate.
* The recipient may be asked to make a short presentation to the NWLAMG general membership upon completion of the project.

**What support will NWLAMG provide**

* The Community Investment Committee will answer questions upon request regarding applications.
* For projects selected, NWLAMG will provide initial funding consistent with the approved application and a Master Gardener project implementation liaison will be designated.
* Funding will be dispersed according to generally accepted accounting practices and NWLAMG guidelines for projects funded.

**– FOR INFORMATION, CONTACT THE NWLAMG COMMUNITY INVESTMENT COMMITTEE VIA PHONE (318-564-1180 or 318-465-0000) OR EMAIL (nwlamggrants@gmail.com) –**