Grant Information & Eligibility Requirements

Background
As part of its ongoing commitment to minimize impact on the environment and build partnerships that drive innovation, Volkswagen of America is collaborating with The Conservation Fund to help protect and restore land across America, starting with Tennessee, where approximately 3,800 Volkswagen employees live, work and play.

The Conservation Fund shares Volkswagen’s commitment to the natural resources and communities of Tennessee. Since 1985, The Conservation Fund has worked to protect many of America’s most special landscapes, including more than 300,000 acres conserved in Tennessee. Working together with Volkswagen, The Conservation Fund will administer and manage a grant program, with support from the Tennessee Valley Authority that will deliver measurable and lasting benefits to Tennessee’s natural resources. The Tennessee Valley Authority, having been a steward of natural resources in Tennessee since 1933, welcomes the opportunity to engage with Volkswagen and The Conservation Fund on this endeavor.

Objectives
The Conservation Fund is soliciting applications from qualified entities working in eastern Tennessee to address the region’s highest environmental priorities with a focus on improving water quality, enhancing outdoor recreation, and providing environmental education.

Criteria
To qualify for these grants, eligible projects must:

1. Be located in eastern Tennessee.
2. Be a local government, tribal entity, OR a qualified 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization.

Eligible Uses of Grant Funds:
The following types of projects will be considered for funding:

- **Environmental education:** Any public and/or youth environmental education program related to good stewardship of natural resources and communities.
- **Water quality:** Implementation of projects that improve the water quality of the local watersheds.
- **Outdoor Recreation:** Any project that advances sustainable tourism, supports trail development/enhancement, or improves public access to outdoor recreation resources.

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1 Counties defined as: Anderson, Bledsoe, Blount, Bradley, Campbell, Carter, Claiborne, Cocke, Cumberland, Grainger, Greene, Hamblen, Hamilton, Hancock, Hawkins, Jefferson, Johnson, Knox, Loudon, McMinn, Marion, Meigs, Monroe, Morgan, Polk, Rhea, Roane, Scott, Sevier, Sullivan, Unicoi, Union, Washington
Preference will be given to:

1. Projects that can be completed within 90 days following disbursement of grant funds.
2. Projects that provide volunteer opportunities for Volkswagen employees.
3. Projects located in or around Cherokee National Forest.
5. Applicants that provide and document local match—either direct cash match or in-kind contributions—that leverage this grant with other sources of support.
6. Applicants that demonstrate an ability to reliably track and report on qualitative and quantitative impacts of their projects.

Funding cannot support the following:

- Research
- Refinancing or servicing existing debt
- Lobbying efforts or political groups
- Projects or activities carried out for religious purposes
- Purchase of property
- Scholarships
- Marketing materials or food

Amount:

Applicants are encouraged to apply for grants up to $50,000.

Schedule:

Application Deadline: February 14, 2020

Notifications sent to awardees and non-awardees: March 23, 2020

Disbursement of grant funds and announcement of community grant awardees: April 10, 2020

Monitoring & Reporting:

Upon receiving a grant award, successful applicants will be required to provide a 2-month and 6-month progress report following disbursement of funds, as well as one final 12-month evaluation as a condition of the grant. These reports will track outcomes resulting from the grant, such as the number of people served, evidence of improvements to the Tennessee River and surrounding lands, and long-term or secondary impacts. Grantees will also share any other measures of success. Details on reporting and monitoring requirements will be provided with grant award notifications.
About Volkswagen
Founded in 1955, Volkswagen of America, Inc. is an operating unit of Volkswagen Group of America and a subsidiary of Volkswagen AG, with headquarters in Herndon, Virginia. Volkswagen’s operations in the United States include research and development, parts and vehicle processing, parts distribution centers, sales, marketing and service offices, financial service centers, and its state-of-the-art manufacturing facility in Chattanooga, Tennessee. The Volkswagen Group is one of the world’s largest producers of passenger cars and Europe’s largest automaker. Volkswagen sells the Arteon, Atlas, Beetle, Beetle Convertible, e-Golf, Golf, Golf Alltrack, Golf GTI, Golf R, Golf SportWagen, Jetta, Passat, and Tiguan vehicles through more than 600 independent U.S. dealers. Visit Volkswagen online at www.vw.com or media.vw.com to learn more.

About The Conservation Fund
The Conservation Fund was founded in 1985 on the belief that environmental protection and economic vitality are mutually reinforcing. A nonprofit organization that operates with an entrepreneurial culture, the Fund protects land, water, and wildlife, generates jobs, and balances human demand with our need to use natural resources responsibly. As a national organization that delivers locally, we are headquartered in Arlington, Virginia, with a staff of 175 located in more than 30 states. We are independent and non-partisan, and do not have a membership. Our robust relationships and effective partnerships—in both the public and private sectors—prove that market-driven solutions and conservation work best together.

About TVA
The Tennessee Valley Authority is a corporate agency of the United States that provides electricity for business customers and local power companies serving 10 million people in parts of seven southeastern states. TVA receives no taxpayer funding, deriving virtually all of its revenues from sales of electricity. In addition to operating and investing its revenues in its electric system, TVA provides flood control, navigation and land management for the Tennessee River system and protects and preserves 293,000 acres of public land and 11,000 miles of shoreline as part of its mission of environmental stewardship. TVA’s commitment to natural resources stewardship fuels its partnerships and makes life better for the people of its service region.
Grant Application

In a separate document, the applicant should answer the following questions in five pages or less:

1. **Applicant Organization Information:**
   a. Organization Name:
   b. Program/Project Name (if applicable):
   c. County your project is located in:
   d. Eligible Entity Type: Note: all non-governmental entities must be tax exempt under section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code
      - [ ] Non-profit organization (provide Federal ID (EIN))
      - [ ] Governmental Agency (local, tribal, other)
   e. Has your organization participated in the Tennessee Valley Authority’s (TVA) Natural Resource Stewardship Stakeholder Engagement Focus Group Meetings facilitated by The Conservation Fund?
   f. Do you currently receive funds from TVA’s Natural Resource Stewardship Program?

2. **Contact Information:**
   a. Lead Applicant (name, title, mailing address, phone #, email):
   b. Application Preparer if different than project lead (name, title, mailing address, phone #, email):
   c. Organization serving as Fiscal Agent if different than applicant organization (organization, name, title, mailing address, phone #, email):
   d. Contact Information for Media Contact if different than lead applicant (name, title, mailing address, phone #, email):

3. **Grant Request:** Grant requests are available up to $50,000.
   a. Indicate amount requested
   b. Indicate amount of matching funds directly associated with use of grant funds

4. **Intended Use:**
   a. Project Type: Which grant category are you applying for?
b. Provide a brief (one sentence) statement on how grant funds will be spent.

c. Describe the specific issue/need this project will address and how it contributes to protection or improvement of Tennessee’s natural resources.

d. Describe why this is the best approach to deliver outcomes that support the grant category for which you are applying.

e. Summarize expected environmental, economic and social outcomes from your project.

f. Will this project be located in or around the Cherokee National Forest?

g. Will this project provide volunteer opportunities for Volkswagen employees? If yes, please describe.

h. Will this project face mobility challenges or does this project have transportation needs?

5. Work plan and Timeline: There is a preference for projects that can be completed in 90 days and project impacts realized within six months. If your project does not meet that preference, you are still encouraged to apply. Provide a brief outline of your scope of work and demonstrate how the project impacts will be realized by providing:

   a. A timeline of activities for implementation and evaluation of the project

   b. A list of individuals who will complete each activity

   c. A list of the resources required to complete each activity

   d. A list of partner organizations involved in this project

6. Applicant’s Experience: Describe the applicant’s experience implementing projects related to the proposed work. Also indicate the ability to track impacts of this grant and the metrics\(^2\) that will be used.

7. Detailed Budget and Budget Narrative:

   a. Please use the attached budget form to provide a detailed budget that includes the Volkswagen grant funds as well as matching and/or in-kind funds. In-kind contributions can include cash and donations of labor or services. \textit{Note: The budget spreadsheet}

\(^2\) Metrics could include miles of stream/river improved, miles of trail built, acres restored, number of people engaged/educated, number of dollars leveraged, etc.
includes a sample budget on the second tab. The form does not count toward the five-page limit.

b. A budget narrative that describes all expenditures is also required. Please answer the following questions in the narrative:

☐ If partial funding is awarded, can the effort still be carried out or is it dependent upon full funding?

☐ If leveraged (match) funds are not able to be obtained, please indicate if/how you would be able to proceed with the grant.

8. **Other Supporting Materials:** Enclose pertinent supporting materials that provide a better understanding of the impact of the proposed project. Applicants are encouraged to illustrate local demand for the project (e.g. letters of support) and sources citing the kind or amount of support committed and leveraged. **Note:** Supporting materials do not count toward five-page limit.

**Application Deadline**

Applications must be submitted via email to mcarey@conservationfund.org by midnight on Friday, February 14, 2020. Notifications will be made by the end of March 2020. Grants funds will be disbursed upon receipt of fully executed award agreement. The period of performance will be from April 1, 2020 to June 30, 2021. All applicants must be available for any requests for more information prior to the notification deadline to remain in consideration for a grant award.