

Program Explanation

The Illinois Native Plant Society Research Grant Program was developed to promote the conservation of Illinois native plants and communities through scientific research.

Availability of Funding

Several research grants are available for funds ranging from \$500-\$1500 each.

The INPS Central Chapter will provide additional funding for an approved project up to \$1,000 focused on research in the Central Illinois Region (see the Central Chapter's grant information at <https://ill-inps.org/central-chapter-grant-info/> for a listing of Central Region Counties).

Eligibility

Any person, institution or group conducting research on Illinois native plants can apply, with the exception of Illinois Native Plant Society State Officers and Board members. Only one award will be given to any applicant. Eligible research projects may include studies on Illinois native plants and communities (including those that are threatened or endangered), such as life history, reproductive biology, demography, genetics, comparative site inventories, community ecology, ecological interactions, and threat impacts. Projects focused on research relating to education about or restoration of native plants and plant communities, including the effects of management practices, will be considered, but INPS funds cannot be used for plants, seeds, or restoration supplies and equipment (except as an essential part of a research project). Applicants must demonstrate the justification or need for the research project, including providing references or other evidence as applicable.

Priority is given to:

- student research or projects that involve students
- citizen science projects by qualified individuals
- projects involving qualified volunteers (e.g. students, interns, or citizen scientists)
- applicants previously unfunded through the INPS Research Grant Program;
- projects conducted on public property or on private property with protected status such as a Conservation Easement, an Illinois Nature Preserve or a Land and Water Reserve. If a project is proposed for other private property, the applicant must explain how the project will benefit the public;
- projects conducted by non-profit individuals or groups; however, applications from for-profit individuals or groups will be considered based on the merits of the application. For-profit group applications involving partnerships with non-profit groups or individuals are given preference.

Consideration will be given to a geographic spread among qualified projects in the State. All projects must demonstrate how they support the mission of the Illinois Native Plant Society, as presented on the INPS Website: <https://ill-inps.org/about-us/>

Grant Process and Funding Cycle: Submission, Review and Reporting

Proposals are due by January 31, 2020, and must include copies of any applicable permit applications or copies of permits already in place. Late or incomplete applications will not be considered. Permits must be in place before funding is released. Multi-year funding will not be considered. Confirmation of receipt of application will be made by email upon submission. Grant applicants will be notified by March 31, 2020 of the outcome of their application and 50% of grant funds will be disbursed to successful grant recipients by separate USPS mail. Recipients will be asked to confirm via email that they agree to accept funding, will comply with the award criteria as outlined in the application, will sign and return a contract, and will provide the name and address of the person or entity who should receive the funds, if not themselves. Final reports are due to INPS by March 31, 2021. Upon approval, the remaining 50% of funds will be disbursed.

Requirements for Funded Projects

Project must be all or partially based in Illinois. Projects which require a permit, e.g. scientific collector's permit, endangered species permit, nature preserves special use permit, or permit to conduct research on federal, state, county, or local municipality properties, will not be considered unless copies of these permit applications or copies of permits already in place are included as part of the application. INPS will not submit permit applications. **NOTE:** to facilitate the process of receiving permits from the Illinois Nature Preserves Commission (INPC), it is strongly recommended that applicants whose research will be conducted on an IL Nature Preserve contact landowners simultaneously with submitting a permit application to INPC. INPC will not issue permits without landowner approval.

Approved projects will be considered contractual arrangements between the Illinois Native Plant Society and the individual or group who submitted the application – the Principal Investigator (PI). Expenditures on contracts cannot exceed Illinois standard rates for mileage, lodging and per diem as outlined in the Instructions, Item 10. Indirect costs required by institutions cannot be included in the grant. Grant funds cannot be used to displace PI or staff salaries, but can be used for project assistants such as interns, or to engage for-profit contractual services for specified tasks the PI lacks the resources to perform, as indicated in.

No matching funds are required, but providing matching funds from other sources (excluding grantee salaries and indirect costs) will merit extra consideration. Other grants for the same project can be used as a match. Volunteer hours are not considered a monetary match.

NOTE: Requests for the purchase of equipment of value equal to or greater than \$100 will not be considered unless upon submission of the application and approval of INPS, the equipment is mutually agreed to become the property of INPS following completion of the project.

Successful applicants will be asked to supply a Federal Vendor Number or Social Security Number as applicable. Final grant funds will not be paid until the final report and invoice from the PI are received and approved. Receipts are not required except for equipment valued at \$100 or greater.

Final Report Requirements (upon completion and approval of which final funds will be released but not before January 1, 2021)

1. A final report must be submitted electronically to the INPS website by March 31, 2021 (Microsoft Word or PDF format only. Excel attachments acceptable). This report may take the form of a technical report or a manuscript for publication, and should include: Abstract, Introduction, Materials and Methods, Results, Discussion and Summary sections. If the project is a part of a thesis, dissertation, or publication in preparation, draft sections are acceptable provided the draft includes a results section that demonstrates the grantee fulfilled all requirements. A budget report must be submitted to demonstrate alignment with the budget submitted with the original application. Volunteers hours contributed should be reported.
2. At least five color high quality digital images depicting the study species, project site, project activities, or other aspects of the project must accompany the final report. These images are intended to allow future applicants and INPS membership to understand what types of research projects are being funded. Unless the grantee requests otherwise, these images may be used for INPS digital media and marketing materials, such as the INPS website, *The Harbinger*, or the INPS Facebook page.
3. Grantees must submit to the INPS grant email INPSGrants@gmail.com within six months of project completion, a short, popular-type article to the INPS member newsletter, *The Harbinger*, or to an INPS Chapter newsletter, local newspaper or conservation newsletter. The article should describe the project, its results, the importance to native plant conservation, and how the project supports the INPS mission. If the project is suitable, recipients are encouraged to submit an article to INPS's professional journal, *Erigenia*, or another peer-reviewed journal.
4. Grantees are encouraged to present their research project findings to a local INPS chapter meeting, at the INPS Annual Gathering or to another conservation group.
5. Copies of any publications or newspaper articles must be sent to the INPS Grant email INPSGrants@gmail.com. Unless the grantee requests otherwise, these may be posted or linked on the INPS Grants web page, with appropriate credits or permissions as applicable.

6. All publications and presentations must include a statement acknowledging that the project was funded by the Illinois Native Plant Society Research Grant Program.