

## **2025 INPS SURVEY GRANT PROGRAM EXPLANATION AND GUIDELINES**

The Illinois Native Plant Society (INPS) Survey Grant for Listed and Rare Species is intended to: 1) assess the status of Illinois Endangered and Threatened species through field surveys in order to determine whether populations (Element Occurrences or EOs) are extant and provide information to help determine whether their listing status warrants change; 2) determine whether non-listed species of conservation concern warrant listing; 3) suggest possible recovery strategies for extant populations. The reports resulting from these surveys will be shared with the Illinois Department of Natural Resources Natural Heritage Database and the Illinois Endangered Species Protection Board.

### **Availability of Funding**

Grants are available for up to \$5,000 each.

### **Eligibility and Conditions**

Any individual or non-profit institution/group having professional experience conducting botanic field surveys can apply, with the exception of INPS State Board members who are on the Grant Committee and other grant reviewers. Only one award will be given to any applicant, and applicants are not able to receive both an INPS Survey Grant and a Research Grant in the same year. Applications from for-profit groups, or individuals working with for-profit groups, will be considered based on their merits. Of these, for-profit group applications involving partnerships with non-profit groups will be given preference.

### **Budget Considerations: Stipend, Salary, and Indirect Costs**

A stipend of up to \$2000 can be included as part of the budget, for the Principal Investigator (PI), or shared with a Co-PI. The Stipend is intended to acknowledge time spent in organizing and planning the project. Alternatively, some institutions may require, or prefer to support, grant applications by their employees or students that allow for **salary compensation** and/or for an **indirect cost** allowance. In this case, the stipend allotment of \$2000 may be used for salary compensation. The applicant may also include an indirect cost of up to 10% of the direct costs of the grant (maximum \$450) within the total budget, if required by the institution. If this option is chosen, the institution is likely to be the recipient of the grant funds which would be distributed according to their own procedures. However, applicants who do not have this institutional requirement for salary compensation and indirect cost can apply for a personal stipend of up to \$2000 and waive the indirect cost requirement.

The budget portion of the application will provide for all of these options.

Project funds may also be used for qualified interns or assistants. Each of these assistants, by name or by position, and their qualifications and tasks must be identified in the application form. The PI is responsible for distributing any funds to the Co-PI or paid assistants.

Volunteer or unpaid assistance by qualified individuals may also be utilized for the surveys. Volunteers are encouraged where appropriate, when they are trained or have adequate prior experience. However **volunteer hours are not considered a match for this grant.**

**Matching funds** are not required, but listing funds from other sources that support the project, including grants, will merit extra consideration (optional matching funds may not include grantee salaries or institutional indirect costs.)

### **Grant Duration: Extensions and Second Year Applications**

Grants are intended to be one year in duration, with final reports due by **April 1, 2026**. However, there is the potential for receiving a no-cost **extension** at the end of the grant year, upon request and if justified. (Applicants are strongly advised to choose a species or multiple species reflecting a realistic assessment of what they will be able to achieve in a single field season, based on the number of sites, travel distance, and research involved.) A no-cost extension request beyond the first season will be considered, but must be submitted in writing with a detailed rationale by **March 1, 2026**. Alternatively, an applicant may choose a species or multiple species having numerous Element Occurrences (EOs) that will clearly involve more than one season of effort. In this case the applicant should indicate in their proposal the intention to devote **two years** to the project, with the understanding that they will submit a second grant application in the following year. A second year application will be considered, but funding is not guaranteed; it will be reviewed equitably with all other applications. Substantial progress during the first year's efforts must be demonstrated by **submitting a final report by February 1, 2026**, in order for reviewers to properly assess a second grant application.

### **Priority Species for Survey Grants**

Refer to the [Survey Grant 2025 Plant Priorities](#) document.

### **Permit Requirements for Funded Surveys**

Survey Grants require research permits for all field work, because they normally minimally involve off-trail searches, moving within populations, flagging, etc. Permits include: endangered species permit, nature preserves special use permit, or permit to conduct research on federal, state, county, or local public properties. Applications will not be considered unless copies of permit applications or permits already in place are included as part of the application. Permits must show permission from the landowner to collect plant specimens if applicable and *only if specimens are needed - see voucher section below*. Permission to survey on private lands must be documented either by letter or email from the landowner, before funding is released. INPS will not submit permit or permission applications.

*(To facilitate the permit process, we recommend that applicants contact landowners directly, simultaneously with submitting permit applications to the Illinois Nature Preserves Commission or other public agency since those agencies will require landowner permission. Provide any related correspondence with the grant application.)*

### **Application Process and Funding Cycle**

1. Proposals are due by February 1, 2025, and must include required documents listed in the Instruction and Application Form. Late or incomplete applications will not be considered.
2. Permits or Permissions must be in place before funding is released.

3. Confirmation of receipt of application will be emailed upon submission.
4. Applicants will be notified by April 1, 2025 of the outcome of their applications – whether successful, successful providing certain conditions are met, or unsuccessful with explanation. 50% of grant funds will be disbursed to the PIs of successful grant applications **upon fulfilling the conditions described in # 5.and # 6 below**. The PI is responsible for providing funds to any Co-PIs or assistants included in the budget.
5. Recipients will be asked to confirm via email to [inpsgrants@gmail.com](mailto:inpsgrants@gmail.com) that they agree to accept funding, and that **they will** comply with the award criteria as outlined in these Guidelines, with the project as proposed in their application, and with any conditions required by the reviewers.
6. Following receipt of this confirmation email by INPS, recipients will be sent a contract to be signed and returned to INPS for the President’s signature. Approved projects are considered contractual arrangements between the Illinois Native Plant Society and the PI or the institution represented by the PI, if applicable.

On the contract, recipients are asked to provide a Social Security number or, if applicable, an institutional Federal Employer Identification Number (FEIN), and also to provide the name, address and phone number of the person or entity who is to receive the funds. **When the contract is completed and fully signed by the President, it will be resent to the grantee and a check for half the grant amount will be issued by the Treasurer.**

7. Final reports are due to INPS by April 1, 2026 (unless an extension, requested in writing **by March 1, 2026**, is granted). Reports from those intending to submit a second year grant application as described above are due by **January 31, 2026** to allow for review and approval before a second grant decision can be made. .

Upon report approval, the remaining 50% of funds will be issued, but not before January 2026.

8. INPS will issue a 1099-MISC form to the PI for tax purposes in January of each year following receipt of \$600 or greater.

## **FINAL REPORT REQUIREMENTS**

A final report must be submitted to the INPS email address, [inpsgrants@gmail.com](mailto:inpsgrants@gmail.com) by **April 1, 2026** (or by other dates stipulated above for extension requests or a second year application). PDF format is required and should include the report, all attachments and a budget report. Digital images must be submitted individually as JPEG files

Each species surveyed requires a separate report section. Report(s) should minimally include:

- Title: include species surveyed (scientific name, author, common name).
- Summary statement of project activities and results, including pre-survey research, methodology and contributions of paid or volunteer assistance.

For each species surveyed: species description, life history and habitat; current listing status (or any former listing status): Illinois, Federal (including the U.S. Forest Service's Regional Forester Sensitive Species), other states, NatureServe G rank. The Introductory section should include a list of all the species and each location surveyed (site name, landowner and county).

- Species' total range
- Species' Illinois distribution, both historic and current, by County
- Summary of Element Occurrence history, received from the IL Natural Heritage Database, or from other sources for non-listed species. Indicate whether any new EOs are submitted with this project. Discuss any notable trends (e.g. increase/decrease in numbers of populations, sizes of populations, number of counties represented, extirpations, etc.)
- Overall threats to populations of each species
- Reasons for recommending status change, or for retaining species with its current status, or for listing in the case of Species of Conservation Concern.
- For extant populations, suggestions for recovery strategies (not to be considered a fully developed recovery plan), such as management, monitoring, protection, population enhancement, translocation.

Reports of negative searches (populations not found) are important and must indicate the confidence in the results: *i.e.*, was the survey comprehensive and exhaustive, how much time was spent, and how much habitat was searched.

### **Element Occurrence reports for listed species**

Submit as a report attachment the Illinois Natural Heritage Database/IDNR Element Occurrence report form for listed species (<https://naturalheritage.illinois.gov/dataresearch/how-to-contribute-data.html>)

### **Plants of Concern reports for Species of Conservation Concern.**

Reports of non-listed surveyed should be submitted using the POC report form, since the Natural Heritage Database does not record non-listed species. Contact Plants of Concern (info@plantsofconcern.org; www.plantsofconcern.org) to get set up with an account and assignment for your species and instructions that will allow you to submit forms to their database either by mobile app. or on a computer. Once a report is entered, it can be downloaded as a PDF for submission with your Survey Grant report.

*Note: POC monitors numerous rare but non-listed species and may have data on non-listed species on the Priority List. They should be contacted for information for the proposal as well as for the final report.*

The **budget report** section must demonstrate alignment with the budget submitted on the original application or any variance explained. Paid assistant contributions must be described. Although not paid, volunteer contributions, if applicable, must be described.

**Digital images** of the project as separate JPEG attachments are required, titled as Last\_First\_Species Name\_Brief Descriptive Phrase. Plants found at each location surveyed must be vouchered by a photo or photos (see next section on Vouchers). Unless the grantee requests otherwise, submitted images may be used for INPS platforms such as the INPS website, *The Harbinger*, or Facebook page (without specific location information).

**Vouchers.** Species found at each location surveyed must be photo-vouchered by digital images that show the entire plant (habit), the inflorescence (in flower or seed; spores for ferns) and any diagnostic features. A physical herbarium specimen should be collected **only** when diagnostic characteristics are hidden, ambiguous or somewhat subjective and, even then, only above-ground portions of the plant should be collected and only when the population is large enough to warrant collection. (For example, populations with counts of fewer than 25 individuals, or having other factors negatively impacting population viability, should not be collected). If a physical specimen is deemed necessary, the landowner, and the Illinois Nature Preserves Commission for a nature preserve, must be contacted for a collection permit if one is not already in place. Consideration will be given by the Nature Preserves Commission if applicants show that they are updating historic Element Occurrences or reporting new EOs through the support of an INPS grant. Finally, information about the Herbarium where the specimen will be deposited must be included in the report.

### **Presentation and Publication Requirements**

Grantees are required to submit short, popular-type article to the INPS member newsletter, *The Harbinger*, or to an INPS Chapter newsletter, which describes the project, its results, its importance to the listing process for Endangered and Threatened species. Alternatively, a scientific article may be submitted to the INPS professional journal, *Erigenia*, or to another peer-reviewed journal to fulfill this requirement. **Note that specific locations, including site names, should not be given in presentations or popular-type articles, or via social media platforms such as iNaturalist.**

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

In the final report, grantees must provide the name of the publication where the article will appear, whether the article has been submitted, or when the article is expected to be submitted (within three months of the final report). Links to any future publications resulting from the grant project (apart from those appearing in *The Harbinger* or *Erigenia*), must be emailed to [inpsgrants@gmail.com](mailto:inpsgrants@gmail.com). Unless the grantee requests otherwise, these may be linked or referenced on the INPS website or social media sites, with appropriate credits.

Grantees are required to present a summary of their project findings at the INPS Annual Gathering held after their report is approved, as complimentary guests. Remote presentations are acceptable.

Grantees are also offered a complimentary membership in INPS for the year after their project is completed and final report approved.