



# Branching out

A community grant program to plant trees and improve energy efficiency in Iowa

## Trees save energy. Apply for a *Branching Out* grant today!

*Branching Out* is a nationally recognized grant program in which Alliant Energy, Trees Forever and your community work together to carry out community tree-planting projects. The program is designed to encourage energy efficiency, volunteer involvement, environmental awareness and community stewardship in Iowa.

*Branching Out* is offered exclusively to Iowa communities where Alliant Energy provides electric and/or natural gas service. Alliant Energy provides grants of \$500 to \$10,000 for community-based tree-planting projects, including streets, schools, public buildings, trails, parks, entranceways, cemeteries and more. Obtaining other grants or in-kind funding for your project is strongly encouraged and will strengthen your application. However, matching funding is not required to apply for this program. Trees Forever administers the program by providing staff to help community leaders and volunteers complete successful long-lasting projects.

Grant Cycle	Application Deadline	Grants Announced	Funding Awarded
Spring	November 1	January 15	March 1-31
Fall	June 1	August 15	September 1-30

**To apply for a *Branching Out* grant**, you are strongly encouraged to use the online application found at [treesforever.org/branching\\_out](http://treesforever.org/branching_out). Paper applications are available from Deb Roman at [droman@treesforever.org](mailto:droman@treesforever.org) or 1-800-369-1269, extension 110. A site plan and budget page must accompany your narrative. The application process is competitive; applications must be complete. Send applications to Deb Roman at [droman@treesforever.org](mailto:droman@treesforever.org) or 770 7th Ave., Marion, IA, 52302.

**Grants are awarded two times per year**, to coincide with the spring and fall planting seasons. Applications are accepted on an ongoing basis throughout the year, but they are considered only in the next grant-making cycle (spring or fall). Your community may apply and receive funding for multiple projects in a single grant cycle.

## Application requirements



- Projects should involve volunteers in planning, planting and caring for trees. If your community does not have an active tree committee, please form an advisory committee that will help you plan your project.
- To accommodate volunteers of all ages and abilities, trees should be no larger than 1.5" caliper or 10 gallon container (shade trees) or 4' or 10 gallon container (evergreens). This makes it easier for volunteers to handle the trees. Research shows in many cases smaller trees experience less transplant shock and begin growing quicker than larger stock.
- Select species from the recommended list (found at [www.treesforever.org/branching\\_out](http://www.treesforever.org/branching_out)). If you would like to plant something not on the list, please talk with a Trees Forever field coordinator and document that conversation as part of your application.

**For more information on *Branching Out***, visit [alliantenergy.com/branchingout](http://alliantenergy.com/branchingout) or [treesforever.org/branching\\_out](http://treesforever.org/branching_out)

# Branching Out grant application form

Date \_\_\_\_\_ Grant amount requested \_\_\_\_\_

Community \_\_\_\_\_ County \_\_\_\_\_ Population \_\_\_\_\_

Organization/committee name (if applicable) \_\_\_\_\_

Primary Contact \_\_\_\_\_ Occupation \_\_\_\_\_

Address  Home  Business \_\_\_\_\_ City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone  Home  Work  Mobile \_\_\_\_\_ Email \_\_\_\_\_

Community's electric provider \_\_\_\_\_ Community's natural gas provider \_\_\_\_\_ Does Alliant Energy serve electricity or natural gas to the project site?  Yes  No

List a minimum of four other committee or community members who will assist with planning, planting and caring for your trees:

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Address  Home  Business \_\_\_\_\_ Primary Phone \_\_\_\_\_ Email \_\_\_\_\_

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Address  Home  Business \_\_\_\_\_ Primary Phone \_\_\_\_\_ Email \_\_\_\_\_

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Address  Home  Business \_\_\_\_\_ Primary Phone \_\_\_\_\_ Email \_\_\_\_\_

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Address  Home  Business \_\_\_\_\_ Primary Phone \_\_\_\_\_ Email \_\_\_\_\_

Organization grant checks should be made payable to \_\_\_\_\_

Federal tax I.D. number \_\_\_\_\_

Anticipated tree-planting event date \_\_\_\_\_

Local media contact \_\_\_\_\_

Name, business (Name of publication, radio station call letters, etc.) \_\_\_\_\_

Phone and email \_\_\_\_\_

I give permission to Alliant Energy and Trees Forever to reproduce and use any photographs taken at my community tree-planting event and/or that are submitted as part of our program summary report. I agree to care for our trees for no fewer than three years.

Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

We encourage you to email your completed application and supporting documents to **droman@treesforever.org**. Or, you can mail your documents to:

Trees Forever, c/o Branching Out  
770 7th Ave., Marion, IA 52302

## Questions?

Please call the Marion Trees Forever office at 1-800-369-1269, ext. 110 or 319-373-0650; fax 319-373-0528; or send email to **droman@treesforever.org**.

# Project proposal

## 1. Project description

Please describe your tree-planting project, including how volunteers will be engaged in planting and how it will benefit the community. Please remember people who may not be familiar with your community will review your application.

## 2. Energy-efficiency benefits

Trees planted in urban areas help moderate summer and winter climate. In the summer, trees cool their immediate surroundings through evaporative cooling and by shading built surfaces such as streets, sidewalks, parking lots, trails and buildings. In the winter, trees help break up and redirect cold winter winds from striking buildings. Please discuss how your tree-planting relates to energy efficiency.

## 3. Care and maintenance

Newly planted trees require a significant amount of care to get established. Describe your tree care plan for the first two years, which should include watering, mulching, pruning and possibly staking. Who is responsible for maintenance?

## 4. Education and advocacy

How will you provide education about the planting, care and benefits of trees to members of your community (including energy-efficiency benefits)? Trees Forever field coordinators will work with you to organize a presentation to a group in your community such as city council, service club or school group.

## 5. Volunteer involvement and community awareness

Explain how volunteers will be involved in this project. Tell us how the volunteers you've identified in the committee list provide a broad representation of your community. How will you promote your tree planting within your area? Will local media be invited to attend? Will you engage local elected officials? How will you recognize program partners (Alliant Energy and Trees Forever)? Trees Forever field coordinators will assist and/or attend your planting; please provide planting date well in advance.



## 6. Diversity

Many Iowa communities have an overabundance of maples, crab apples and ash trees, leaving them susceptible to devastation by future insect and/or pest threats. Due to the threat of Emerald Ash Borer, no ash trees will be funded. A list of recommended tree species can be found at [treesforever.org/branching\\_out](https://treesforever.org/branching_out). What species will you plant? Please describe how you are addressing diversity either within your project, or how your project diversifies your community's overall tree makeup. Does your community have an inventory of trees and if so, how does it factor in to your species selection? Fruit trees are allowed but should not make up more than 50% of the total number of trees requested.

## 7. Aerial map and site plan

Please upload or include an aerial map of your community and highlight area(s) of town where you plan to plant. In addition, please provide a site plan sketch. This may be a simple hand drawing and should include major roads, spacing, location of trees and overhead power lines, and a north directional arrow. Maximum size of site plan sketch is 8.5" x 11".

## 8. Budget worksheet

Please complete the worksheet on page four. Obtaining other grants or in-kind funding for your project is strongly encouraged and will strengthen your application. However, matching funding is not required to apply for this program. You are strongly encouraged to get two estimates from nurseries in your area as you plan your project. Keep in mind that many nurseries are willing to discuss discounts for volunteer-led community projects. This can be considered an in-kind donation and can be recorded as part of the matching funds shown on the budget page. *Branching Out* funds can only be used for trees. Shrubs, mulch and planting costs are not allowable.

## 9. Other support materials

Letters of support from community members, verification of other funding, photos, etc.

# Budget worksheet for community tree planting applications, 2017

Community: \_\_\_\_\_

TREES	Quantity	Species	Size*	Cost/tree	Total Cost

\_\_\_\_\_ Total number of trees

Total cost of trees \$ \_\_\_\_\_

\*Trees should be no larger than 1.5 inch caliper or 10 gallon container (shade trees) or 10 gallon container (evergreens).

Requested funds for trees \$ \_\_\_\_\_

MATCHING FUNDS**	Item	Value/Cost

\*\*Obtaining other grants or in-kind funding for your project is strongly encouraged and will strengthen your application. However, matching funding is not required to apply for this program.

Total Matching Funds \_\_\_\_\_

