



# OUTDOOR EQUITY FUND

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Catalina Norena - FIND Outdoors

The WNC: MADE X MTNS (Made By Mountains) Partnership works to expand the outdoor industry and economy across North Carolina's Appalachian region and to catalyze rural economic development. MADE X MTNS celebrates, supports, and builds a stronger sense of pride around our region, our people, and the extraordinary outdoor recreation industry and culture that these mountains have made.

MADE X MTNS has established a **\$125,000 Outdoor Equity Fund** to empower community-led initiatives that address identified barriers to outdoor recreation access and opportunity and help close these gaps in Western North Carolina.

The Fund will provide for **professional development** and **skill-building programming, equipment,** and/or **infrastructure** needed for community members to thrive outside.

The Fund Application is developed and reviewed by an Outdoor Equity Working Group to ensure an equitable and trust-based process. The Fund Application opens on **April 17th, 2023**, and is open through **May 17th, 2023**. A recorded info session will be made available the **week of April 24th**.

Fund Awards will be announced in **June & July 2023**.



# Vital Info

## Eligibility

This Fund will provide micro-grants to **non-profits, for-profits, community groups** and **sole proprietors**. People and communities served must be located in Western North Carolina, and funding utilized to advance equity and inclusion in the outdoors. Applicants must provide an **EIN** (preferred) or **Sole Proprietor SSN** in the application.

## Submission Deadline

Applications will be accepted online between **April 17th & May 17th, 2023**. [The Application Form](#) closes at **11:59pm EST on May 17th**. Applications will only be accepted through the online form. No paper or email applications will be accepted.

## Fund Lifespan

Program of work must be completed & all funds expended & accounted for **within 12 months** of award date (by or before June 30th, 2024.)

## Partial Project Funding

The Outdoor Equity Working Group reserves the right to offer **partial funding** of an application. In such cases, the Applicant may adjust application goals to align with corresponding partial funding.

## Project Summary

**1 brief progress check-in** during the grant period, and **1 final summary and reflection (due 7/15/24)** are required to discuss outcomes resulting from the program or effort that was funded and feedback for the future. Applicant is asked to submit photos and be willing to participate in MADE X MTNS storytelling efforts around the Fund.



# What Could Be Eligible?

## *Examples of eligible applications of Fund.*

- A non-profit, for-profit, or community group applies to send their leadership through wilderness first aid training to expand their opportunities to lead more trips.
- A non-profit, for-profit, or community group applies to buy equipment to supply a class or series of trainings.
- A non-profit, for-profit, community group or sole proprietor applies for funds to start or grow an outdoor-related business either owned by and/or serving under-represented populations with the goal of increasing access to outdoors.
- A non-profit, for-profit, or community group applies to fund the development of an outdoor business directory or outdoor recreation guide.
- A non-profit, for-profit, or community group applies to fund annual membership fees to a national outdoor leadership association or other outdoor industry-related professional development organization.
- A non-profit, for-profit, community group, or sole proprietor applies for funds to get (or provide) job training that makes them more hireable in the outdoor economy.



# What Is Not Eligible?

## *Examples of NON-eligible applications of Fund.*



Paying for a group to go into the outdoors without a skill building or professional development goal.



General operating costs that don't correspond to increasing opportunities or removing barriers to marginalized populations gaining access to participating in the outdoors.



Traditionally organized team and individual sports played on developed fields.



Projects that don't originate in or won't take place in Western North Carolina.



Equipment applications without a corresponding programming goal.



Unjust enrichment, personal gain, or uses other than those intended and outlined in the application that align with the purpose of the Fund.



Illegal activities or substances; alcohol purchases.



Lobbying.



# Frequently Asked Questions

## When and where do I apply?

Applications for the Outdoor Equity Fund will be accepted online between **April 17th** and **May 17th, 2023**; the application forms will close at **11:59 pm EST on May 17th**. Applications will only be accepted through the **online form** at <https://madexmtns.com/outdoor-equity-fund>. No paper or email applications will be accepted.

## When will I hear back once I apply?

You will receive a confirmation email upon submission. We anticipate beginning to contact awardees in mid-June and will be in touch no later than **June 30th, 2023** to update you on the status of your application.

## Does the order in which my application is received affect my application standing?

No. All applications completed and submitted before the deadline will be considered equally. There is no benefit to rushing an application. We encourage applicants to take their time to ensure a complete and well-supported request.



# Frequently Asked Questions

**Will I receive a confirmation email once I've submitted my application?**

Yes, you should receive a confirmation email once you've submitted your application, and be directed to a landing page confirmation. If you don't receive a confirmation email after a minute or two, (and you've checked your Spam folder), email [outdoorequity@madexmtns.com](mailto:outdoorequity@madexmtns.com) and our team should be able to confirm your application and send you a copy. Please note that during the weekend, our team members will be checking email periodically, so responses will likely take longer.

**Can I go back and change my answers after I submit?**

We can make very minor administrative updates to your application (i.e. changing the answer on a yes/no question). However, for any substantive changes (narrative questions or changes to key fields like the amount requested) will require a newly submitted application. You should be able to use the PDF copy of the form you received upon submitting your application to easily copy/paste the answers you won't be changing into the new form. The Outdoor Equity Working Group will refer to the most recently submitted application.



# Frequently Asked Questions

## Can my organization submit more than one application?

No. Only one submission per entity is allowed. Please do not submit multiple applications from different partners for the same program (in an attempt to increase the odds of it being funded). In this case, submit one application for the program, and include letters of support from your partners.

## What are the requirements if I receive a grant?

1 brief progress check-in with the Outdoor Equity Working Group will occur during the grant period. The progress check-in can be in the format of a brief email or Zoom. A final summary and reflection is due 7/15/24 to discuss outcomes resulting from the funded program or effort, and to give feedback for the future. The final summary and reflections will consist of a questionnaire. Applicant is also asked to submit photos and be willing to participate in MADE X MTNS storytelling efforts around the Fund.

## Any other Questions?

Email [outdoorequity@madexmtns.com](mailto:outdoorequity@madexmtns.com)

