

For immediate release: March 3, 2025

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Daybreak Fund Launches 2025 RFP, Offering At Least \$1.5 Million for Nature-Based Climate and Water Initiatives

The Daybreak Fund has opened its 2025 Request for Proposals (RFP), making at least \$1.5 million available to nonprofits, tribes, local agencies, and educational institutions focused on advancing climate resilience, water protection, and environmental equity in Wisconsin's Lake Michigan basin and Lake County, Illinois.

Established in 2023, the Daybreak Fund is a collaboration of 10 philanthropic partners, operating under the Windward Fund, with a shared mission of supporting nature-based solutions that protect the environment and uplift communities. In 2024, the Fund awarded \$1.6 million to 16 innovative projects that combined practical environmental strategies with meaningful social impact.

"We were excited about the range of proposals we received the past two years incorporating regenerative agriculture, agroforestry, agrivoltaics, green stormwater infrastructure, and promotion of Indigenous ecological knowledge into the landscape," said Amber Meyer Smith, Program Officer for the Daybreak Fund. "This year, we're eager to find additional projects that bring fresh ideas, center equity, and champion local voices as they lead on climate and water solutions."

During the 2024 cycle, the Fund prioritized proposals that emphasized collaborative approaches, engaged frontline communities, and demonstrated the potential for systems change. "Our grants exemplify how forging strong partnerships can create lasting impact," said Vicki Elkin, Executive Director of the Fund for Lake Michigan, a key Daybreak partner. "We look forward to continuing that work in 2025 by supporting projects that unite diverse stakeholders and spark transformative change."

The RFP includes a mandatory pre-application, due by April 11, after which selected applicants will be invited to submit full proposals. Grant awards will be announced in August. Entities eligible to apply include 501(c)(3) nonprofits, municipalities, local government agencies, tribes, and educational institutions, with a strong emphasis on collaborations that integrate social equity, sustainability, and real-world impact.

For more details and to review the full RFP, please visit www.daybreak.fund.