

## YVAS Matching Fund Grant Program

### Motion Approved by the YVAS Board of Directors August 9, 2021:

YVAS members or others may donate through YVAS within the Conservation and Education Grants program to established social support organizations (hereafter 'applicant') within the following guidelines:

- *The YVAS grant is intended to help fund individuals, families or small groups with limited incomes or opportunities to attend classes or events consistent with the YVAS Mission and available through local or regional program sponsors and facilities (ex. MT Audubon Center/Billings; Zoo MT/Billings; MT Fish Wildlife and Parks/Billings, Miles City, etc. - hereafter "sponsored programs"). The YVAS grants may be used to fund transportation to and from the classes or events. Additionally the applicant may use the funds to purchase such things as relevant books (e.g. field guides) or field tools (e.g. binoculars). Through the applicants, YVAS aims to provide bird and natural world education and related recreation opportunities for youth and adults that might not otherwise be able to afford or access such opportunity, with special attention on underprivileged and minority youth and/or families.*
- *The applicant will submit a proposal along the lines of that in Attachment A. The YVAS Board of Directors will review such applications and if approved will document that along the lines of the approval letter in Attachment B.*
- *YVAS will match 25% of any donation - up to a maximum donation of \$4,000.00 per year by donors - that is no more than \$1,000.00 per year match by YVAS.*

### Administration notes:

The Board will advertise the YVAS Matching Fund Grant Program (Program), accept donations, and accept applications for grants.

YVAS is in a good position to evaluate organizations, process applications, and follow through on projects with *"aims to provide bird and natural world education and related recreation opportunities for youth and adults that might not otherwise be able to afford or access such opportunity, with special attention on underprivileged and minority youth and/or families."*

Grant donors would be informed that their Matching Fund donations would be set aside "to help fund individuals, families or small groups with limited incomes or opportunities to attend classes or events consistent with the YVAS Mission" as laid out in the Motion. YVAS will match 25% of any donation - up to a maximum donation of \$4,000.00 per year by donors - that is no more than \$1,000.00 per year match by YVAS.

The donors would not necessarily need to review or comment on individual applications for the grant(s) - that review and decision is up to the Board.

When matching Fund Grant donations are available and applications for such grants are received the Board would then decide to approve or decline single or multiple\* applications. If an application(s) is approved, the Matching Fund Grant from YVAS would be awarded by the Board, in line with the Motion.

\*YVAS will work with one organization/Program at a time until we know how successful this new grant offering is going to be (i.e. one grant agreement per year at least for the first few years). We can evaluate and revise when and if needed.

The grant period would be Sept 1 to Aug 31. Among other reasons for this, it could give the grantee the school year to use the money, depending on the age group, and would allow them to focus on the summer for grant application preparation when school is out.

Once the YVAS match grant is awarded for a given year, YVAS can accept and save donations designated for future Matching Grant awards. The YVAS Treasurer can write an acceptance letter and send a tax deductible receipt to the donor when we receive the donation.

A given application and a YVAS grant approval letter taken together would constitute the agreement between YVAS and the grant recipient.

YVAS Grant guidelines or parameters would typically include the following:

- Expending of grant funds: the grant recipient would administer the funds. YVAS expects the entire amount of the grant to be spent on youth and others in advancing their natural world education and opportunity through the recipients programs and staff and in line with the YVAS Mission
- Eligibility or scope of funding: Available to any person(s) who is benefitting from any of the recipients programs/services.
- Reporting requirements: The grant recipient would, at a minimum, submit a short written summary to YVAS shortly after the close of the grant year (August 31, [Year]) including information about numbers served, population served and experiences shared. Additionally, an invitation is extended by YVAS for a grant recipient representative to attend and give a short presentation at one of YVAS's monthly meetings about the utilization and benefits of the granted funds the grant recipients programming.
- Timeline of funds to be spent by: September 1, [Year] through August 31, [Year].

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**Attachment A**  
**Example Application/Template for YVAS Matching Fund Grant Program**  
**(Excerpted from a previous application)**

[Applicant name and address]

DATE

Dear Yellowstone Valley Audubon Society Board of Directors,

We are honored to ask for your support and to be a recipient of your education grant of \$\_\_\_\_.00 or more. [Applicant] provides individual and family focused ..... in which people can realize their full potential. [Applicant] is committed to providing comprehensive and progressive \_\_\_\_\_ services to meet the ever-changing needs of youth and families in Montana. We are a [Montana based non-profit organization, since \_\_\_\_]. [Applicant] has \_\_\_\_ locations across the state and directly serve hundreds of rural and frontier communities through these offices and group homes. Our services include [...., case management, family education and support, ..... mentoring, ..... and independent living skills].

Childhood is supposed to be a time for possibilities, filled with fun, innocence, and excitement for what lies ahead. However, for thousands of Montana's children and teens, this is not the case. They struggle *every* day with .....

One of your core values is Fun; the youth we help every day would greatly benefit from this, along with your other values of Education and Conservation. Many of the youth we treat do not have access to the natural world. The majority of the families we serve fall below the poverty line and cannot afford things like good hiking shoes, binoculars or field guides. With your support, these youth can incorporate growing and healing in a natural environment.

**[APPLICANT] QUICK FACTS:**

- Provided \_\_\_\_\_ in 2020
- \_\_\_\_ offices in \_\_\_\_ locations
- \_\_\_\_ Employees across Montana
- \_\_\_\_% percent of our clients are Medicaid eligible, we support kids in Montana's under-resourced families

**MONTANA AND APPLICANT STATISTICS:**

- In Montana, we have the #1 suicide rate in the Country
- Depression among teens has risen 63% since 2012
- 38% of teen girls and 26% of teen boys suffer from some type of anxiety disorder

**[APPLICANT] IMPACT:**

- Applicant is the \_\_\_\_\_ for many Montana communities.
- Last year, we provided over \_\_\_\_ individual services to over \_\_\_\_ children – a \_\_% increase over the past two years.
- We are on track to increase that pace of growth in 2020 and beyond

Our Ask: Minimum of \$\_\_\_\_.00

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If awarded, this grant will fund learning and activities for youth in our Eastern Montana services, falling under the area of YVAS. This would benefit approximately \_\_\_\_\_ youth/adults.

\_\_\_\_\_ may benefit the most. Staff in both services are in need of activities within our community that will help with a child's treatment. Funding for these activities is limited and only philanthropically supported. Funds can also be used to purchase educational material for our \_\_\_\_\_ areas.

Knowing the struggles our families face, we ask for flexibility to use the grant funds to meet urgent needs, as long as these needs fit under YVAS's mission.

We look forward to continuing this possible partnership. Thank you, immensely, for exploring support of our organization and ultimately, support of our next generation of Montanans.

With gratitude,

[Applicant name and address]

**Attachment B**  
**Example/Template YVAS Approval letter for Matching Fund Grant**



*The YVAS Mission "Building on the tradition of special interest in birds, Yellowstone Valley Audubon Society is organized to promote enjoyment and protection of the natural environment through education, activism, and conservation of bird habitat."*

PO Box 1075, Billings MT 59103

[www.yvaudubon.org](http://www.yvaudubon.org)

[Applicant name and address]

DATE

Hi Applicant,

Yellowstone Valley Audubon Society (YVAS) appreciates your grant application of \_\_\_\_\_ 2021 and the [Applicant] information, understanding of ideas and the guidelines, delineated therein. In accepting this grant from YVAS [Applicant] agrees to the guidelines in your application and details in this grant approval letter, together which constitute the agreement between YVAS and [Applicant]. Enclosed is a \$ \_\_\_\_\_ .00 check in accordance with this agreement.

The benefits of time spent in nature and studying the natural world are especially important. Opportunity to study and appreciate the natural world, conservation, birds and other wildlife can open doors to rewarding experiences, hobbies or careers. YVAS understands that [Applicant] would potentially utilize grant funds as follows, although not limited to the following ideas:

- Field trips, series of classes, education materials, guest speaker or summer programming for students as arranged by [Applicant] for your organizations participants and others, providing them with an opportunity to study and appreciate conservation, birds and/or wildlife.
- Field trips, classes, or professional development for [Applicant] employees that assist or teach [Applicant] participants and manage related outreach about wildlife, habitats, conservation and appreciation for outdoor experience.
- This could potentially include transportation to and from the programs and facilities for the above students and/or educators and groups or families who may not have a means for transportation.

As with all grants and funding opportunities there are guidelines or parameters:

- Expending of grant funds: [Applicant] would administer the funds. YVAS expects the whole amount (\$ \_\_\_\_\_ .00) to be spent on youth and others in advancing their natural world education and opportunity through your programs and staff.
- Eligibility or scope of funding: Available to any person(s) who is benefitting from any of the [Applicant]'s programs/services.
- Reporting requirements: At a minimum a short summary of numbers served, population served and experiences shared will be submitted to YVAS shortly after the close of the grant year (August 31, 2021). Additionally, an invitation is extended by YVAS for a [Applicant] representative to attend and give a short presentation at one of YVAS's monthly meetings about the utilization and benefits of the granted funds and [Applicant] programming.
- Timeline of funds to be spent by: September 1, [Year] through August 31, [Year].

We look forward to mutually rewarding outcomes in putting this grant into action.

Sincerely,

Yellowstone Valley Audubon Society, President

Enclosure