



# Chicago Ornithological Society

## Douglas C. Anderson Bird Conservation Mini-Grant Guidelines

### **I. Introduction**

Chicago Ornithological Society (COS) offers annual mini-grants to local educators and organizations working on youth driven community projects furthering bird conservation, education, and advocacy. The grant was established in memory of Douglas C. Anderson, former COS president, longtime bird walk leader, and mentor to generations of birders. Mr. Anderson spent his childhood in the natural areas of Jackson Park where his love of birds began, a love which he shared with others throughout his life. Funded projects should support the COS mission to promote the appreciation and conservation of avian life and continue Mr. Anderson's legacy of sharing the joy of birds.

### **II. Grant Amount**

The total amount available for each annual cycle is up to \$1,000, which is awarded to one grantee per year.

### **III. Criteria for Project Proposals and Priority Preferences**

Proposals must demonstrate a project designed to engage youth in taking action for birds in their community.

Proposed projects should advance the COS mission of appreciation and/or conservation of birds in the Chicago region. Example projects may include but are not limited to: research, data collection, planting or habitat improvement, construction of nest boxes, art installations, educational materials or signage (physical and/or digital), or a short film about birds. While most projects fall within the scope of this list, creative projects of a different nature than those listed that still accomplish COS's mission will be considered equally.

Projects should be located in the City of Chicago with a priority for projects in or near Jackson Park. The priority area for the purposes of this grant is defined as falling within the following zip codes: 60609, 60615, 60617, 60619, 60620, 60621, 60637, 60649 and 60653. Priority is given to either applicants or projects that fall within this area.

Proposals that fund stipends, salaries, interpretive programs, or indirect costs of existing projects/programs will not be considered.

#### **IV. Criteria for Applicants**

Representatives or educators at a school or community organization, or individual adults, are eligible to apply in partnership with students ranging from 1st grade through high school.

No minimum or maximum number of students involved in the project is required. Projects involving higher numbers of students will not necessarily score more favorably; rather, the quality of experience and impact on individual students is of prime importance.

See Section III for geographic eligibility requirements.

#### **V. Criteria for evaluation**

Proposals will be evaluated according to the project's alignment with the goals of the grant and supporting factors as listed below:

- Project will advance the appreciation and/or conservation of birds in the Chicago region.
- Project will produce measurable impacts (conservation value, public engagement etc.) based on the nature of the project.
- Project is replicable, has growth potential, and/or can be built on further in the future.
- Project can be realistically completed within the timeline proposed.
- Project demonstrates creativity, innovation, and originality.
- There is a plan in place for maintenance and continued life of the project beyond its year of completion (or this is not necessary due to the nature of the project).
- Project is truly student-driven.
- Project impacts or inspires local youth to be interested in birds.

#### **VI. Timeline for grant application and execution of project**

December 11, 2023 - Mini-grant application opens for submissions

February 11, 2024 - Proposal submission deadline

February 26, 2024 - Applicants notified of decision

March 2024 - Funds disbursed

Date TBD - Project visit with COS board members

December 1, 2024 - Project completion deadline

January 2025 - Project representative presents at COS annual meeting

#### **VII. Output and Reporting**

Recipients will be required to complete a post-project report form, which will include a written report, photos of the project, and receipts from project expenditures. The grant recipient and project participants will be invited to the COS annual meeting the following January to give a 10-minute presentation on their project to COS membership.

#### **VIII. Proposal deliverables and submittal instructions**

Submit the completed application form to [chicagobirder@gmail.com](mailto:chicagobirder@gmail.com) by the application deadline. Optional supplemental materials may also be provided (e.g., photos, diagrams,

other media) along with the application. Indicate in the application form whether additional materials will be provided, and we will send a link to upload supplemental materials.

- IX.** Any questions can be submitted to [chicagobirder@gmail.com](mailto:chicagobirder@gmail.com). Indicate Douglas C. Anderson Mini-Grant in the subject-line.