



LONGLEAF ENHANCEMENT FUND

Request for Proposals for Nurseries and Seed Production

FAQs

Full Proposal Due Date: **Friday, April 30, 2024.**

The Longleaf Alliance (TLA) is soliciting proposals from established longleaf seedling or seed producers to increase the quantity and/or quality of longleaf seedling production and the pace of restoration of this species.

WHY EXPAND LONGLEAF SEEDLING PRODUCTION?

To reach the range-wide acreage restoration goal of [America's Longleaf Restoration Initiative](#) (ALRI), both longleaf seedling production and acreage established must increase significantly. To meet this goal, incentive funding for landowners is also increasing, pointing to a growing need for increased production, yet longleaf nurseries are often oversold, and landowners may change plans if unable to secure seedlings.

The Longleaf Enhancement Funds administered by TLA are intended to assist existing producers (nurseries, seed orchards, processors, etc.) in addressing their bottlenecks and limitations to expansion of capacity, or better realization of their potential capacity. It will be guided by a **Proposal Evaluation Team (PET)** charged with expanding nursery seedling capacity of 7M longleaf seedlings per year above current production trends and build resilience in the system to mitigate crop loss due to extreme weather, which has too often impacted nurseries and longleaf seedling production in recent years. While 7M longleaf seedlings per year is a modest increase, the goal is to grow production capacity while additional landowners are engaged and sites are prepared for the increased production of seedlings.

WHO SHOULD APPLY?

This RFP is open to all established longleaf nurseries or seed-producing entities, publicly or privately owned, who seek to expand their capacity or increase their efficiency. Those who seek to grow their business and have specific bottlenecks to address are strongly encouraged to apply for this opportunity.

- Eligible applicants include established (>three years) private, for-profit nurseries or seed companies, LLC's, sole proprietors, non-profit 501(c) organizations, state government agencies, local governments, and Tribal governments and organizations.
- Ineligible applicants include U.S. Federal government agencies, unincorporated individuals or businesses, and international organizations. U.S. Federal agencies, and unincorporated individuals or businesses are encouraged to partner with applicants but are not eligible to submit an application.

HOW MUCH FUNDING IS AVAILABLE?

The TLA Longleaf Enhancement Fund anticipates awarding between \$500,000 to \$1,000,000 total in project assistance funding in the 2024 cycle, and to continue this offering annually as future funding allows. Applicants should provide cash or in-kind match of at least 25% of the proposed project. This program has one annual application cycle, and the number and size of awards selected will be determined by the cost and impact of the proposals selected.

Some potential project examples could include one or more of the following strategies to increase quality or quantity of longleaf seedlings produced, including improvements to:

- Seed extraction plants
- Seed storage
- Seedling sowing and production
- Efficiency improvements to operations that increase yield
- Update infrastructure to mitigate crop loss from extreme weather
- Labor and staffing to increase production
- Nursery production expansion
- Other bottlenecks currently limiting quantity and quality

Generally, we are looking for projects that maintain, expand, and promote effective management of existing public or private nurseries or seed-producing entities.

WHAT ABOUT EQUIPMENT?

Applicants are encouraged to rent equipment where possible and cost-effective or use matching funds to make those purchases. TLA acknowledges, however, that some projects may only be completed using TLA funds to procure equipment. If this applies to your project, please contact the program staff listed in this RFP to discuss options.

INELIGIBLE USES OF GRANT FUNDS

Funds and matching contributions may not be used to support political advocacy, fundraising, lobbying, litigation, terrorist activities or Foreign Corrupt Practices Act violations.

- Funds may not support ongoing efforts to comply with legal requirements, including permit conditions, mitigation and settlement agreements. However, grant funds may be used to support projects that enhance or improve upon existing baseline compliance efforts.
- Federal funds and matching contributions may not be used to procure or obtain equipment, services, or systems (including entering into or renewing a contract) that uses telecommunications equipment or services produced by Huawei Technologies Company or ZTE Corporation (or any subsidiary or affiliate of such entities) as a substantial or essential component, or as critical technology of any system. Refer to Public Law 115-232, section 889 for additional information.

REQUIRED PROJECT ELEMENTS

Proposals should demonstrate how proposed projects will expand longleaf and total facility production, detail current longleaf vs. total production, the scope and timeline of the enhancement, the requested level of support, and the matching funds that can be brought to the proposed project. All information shared shall be confidential.

TECHNICAL MERIT

Program goals and priorities – The project must directly increase longleaf seedling or seed production and/or quality improvement over and above historic longleaf production for that site. Applicants should describe any significant benefits to other aspects of their operations.

Funding need – The project is technically sound and feasible, and the proposal sets forth a clear, logical, and achievable work plan and timeline. The project engages appropriate technical experts where necessary throughout project planning, design, and implementation. Project cost details should be completed in the [Longleaf Enhancement Fund Budget Excel file](#) and exported as a PDF for application upload.

Cost-effectiveness – The Proposal Evaluation Team will consider the planned increase in total production balanced against the cost of the needed enhancement, to identify the most efficient choices to expand longleaf seed or seedling production. Proposals will be compared to ensure that proposed costs are reasonable for the activities being performed and the outcomes proposed.

Project period – Project start and end dates, proposed work that will be accomplished, and the timing for expending requested funds and applying matching funds will be defined in the final project agreement between TLA and successful applicant.

Monitoring – The project includes a plan for monitoring progress during and after the proposed project period to track project success and adaptively address new challenges and opportunities as they arise.

Long-term sustainability – Project will be maintained for a period as specified in a legally binding Agreement that details the rights, duties, and responsibilities, signed by both parties, to ensure the enhanced capacity funded by TLA is achieved and sustained over the period of performance.

I'M IN A COMPETITIVE BUSINESS. WILL MY PROPOSAL BE KEPT CONFIDENTIAL?

Yes, confidentiality of proposals must be maintained. An NDA will be signed by the Proposal Evaluation Team members.

HOW WILL THE PROPOSALS BE EVALUATED?

All proposals will be screened for relevance, accuracy, completeness, and compliance with funding source policies. Proposals will then be evaluated and ranked by the Proposal Evaluation Team (PET) based upon these key criteria:

- Additive impact (production, bottleneck addressed, geography benefitted)
- Timeline to implement
- Benefit/cost
- Funds requested vs. matching contributions

WHO IS ON THE PROPOSAL EVALUATION TEAM?

An impartial and knowledgeable team, free of conflict of interest, has been recruited from Federal, State, Private, NGO and University perspectives for the evaluation and decision process.

WHAT MATCHING CONTRIBUTIONS ARE ACCEPTED?

Matching contributions consist of cash, contributed goods and services, volunteer hours, and/or property raised and spent for the project during the period of performance (specified in our Agreement). TLA requests the remaining costs of a project being shared be contributed as in-kind match toward the grant that funds the assistance. The match source of funds must be identified as

federal or non-federal and will not be used as match on any other project. TLA may request financial documents or letters to support these contributions.

At least 25% match is required and must be incurred during the project period. Larger matching fund contributions are encouraged and will be more competitive during application review. If unable to provide the required match, applicants must include a justification statement.

PROCUREMENT DISCLAIMER

If the applicant chooses to specifically identify proposed contractor(s) for services, an award by TLA to the applicant does not constitute TLA's express written authorization for the applicant to procure such specific services noncompetitively. When procuring goods and services, TLA's recipients must follow documented procurement procedures that reflect applicable laws and regulations.

PUBLICITY AND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF SUPPORT

Award recipients will be required to grant TLA the right and authority to publicize the project and TLA's financial support for the grant in press releases, publications and other public communications. Recipients may also be asked by TLA to provide high-resolution (minimum 300 dpi) photographs depicting the project.

HOW ARE AWARD FUNDS TREATED?

Award payments are primarily reimbursable. Projects may request funds for reimbursement at any time after completing a signed agreement with TLA. A request for advance of funds must be due to an imminent need of expenditure and must detail how the funds will be used and provide justification and a timeline for the expected disbursement of these funds.

ANY OTHER COMPLIANCE REQUIREMENTS OR PERMITS?

Projects selected may be subject to any existing Federal, state, or local requirements. Successful applicants must obtain all necessary permits and clearances and provide sufficient documentation compliance. Applicants should budget time and resources to obtain the needed approvals.

HOW TO APPLY

Submit project proposals [online](https://longleaf.info/EnhancementFund) at <https://longleaf.info/EnhancementFund> by **April 30, 2024**.

TIMELINE	Full Proposal Due Date	April 30, 2024
	Team Review Period	May-June 2024
	Awards Announced	Early Summer, 2024

DIRECT QUESTIONS TO:

Ad Platt, Vice President for Operations, The Longleaf Alliance, Ad@longleafalliance.org
12130 Dixon Center Rd., Andalusia, AL 36420.

Funding is derived from a National Fish and Wildlife Foundation (NFWF) Longleaf Landscape Stewardship Fund (LLSF) Award supported with public and private funds. Federal funding sourced from USDA's Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS), USDA Forest Service (USFS), U.S. Department of Defense (DoD), and private funding from Southern Company and the Bezos Earth Fund.



Longleaf Enhancement Fund for Nurseries and Seed Production

The Longleaf Alliance is soliciting proposals from established longleaf seedling or seed producers to increase the quantity and/or quality of longleaf seedling production and the pace of restoration of this species.

Project proposals should demonstrate how proposed projects will expand longleaf and total facility production, detail current longleaf vs. total production, the scope and timeline of the enhancement, the requested level of support, and the matching funds that can be brought to the proposed project. All information shared shall be confidential.

Please see the Request for Proposals and FAQs before submitting your project proposal.

* 1. Project Contact (application correspondence will be directed to the project contact)

Name

Job Title (Example:
Owner, Manager,
etc.)

Email Address

Phone Number

* 2. Nursery/Seed Producer Information

Entity Name

Address

Address 2

City/Town

State

ZIP/Postal Code

Email Address

Phone Number

* 3. Ownership Type

- Private
- Public

* 4. Which of these strategic areas does your project impact to increase longleaf seedling or seed quantity and/or quality? *(Please check all that apply)*

- Seed production
- Seed extraction
- Seed storage
- Seedling sowing and production
- Efficiency improvements to operations that increase yield
- Infrastructure updated to mitigate loss from extreme weather
- Labor/staffing levels
- Nursery production expansion
- Other (please specify)

* 5. Describe the project which must directly increase longleaf seedling or seed production and/or quality improvement over and above historic longleaf production for that site and establish a clear need for the funds being requested. *(500 word limit)*

* 6. What are the overall goals of the project? *(500 word limit)*

* 7. Project timeline with estimated start and end dates. *(Typically 3-12 months)*

* 8. Funding Amount Requested (\$)

* 9. Total cost of project (\$)

* 10. Match provided (\$)

At least 25% match (cash, contributed goods and services, volunteer hours, etc.) is required and must be incurred during the project period. Larger matching fund contributions are encouraged and will be more competitive during application review. If unable to provide the required match, applicants must include a justification statement.

11. Type of match

- Federal
 Non-federal

* 12. Upload the Budget Spreadsheet for estimated project costs.

Complete the budget in the Excel template provided and save as a PDF before uploading to your application. Only PDFs will be accepted.

No file chosen

* 13. Current longleaf seedling/seed production (*Example: # of seedlings produced*)

* 14. Anticipated additive impact (*Example: # of additional seedlings produced, # of additional landowners served, etc.*)

* 15. Which state(s) within the longleaf range will this project impact? (*Please check all that apply*)

- | | |
|--------------------------------------|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Alabama | <input type="checkbox"/> North Carolina |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Florida | <input type="checkbox"/> South Carolina |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Georgia | <input type="checkbox"/> Texas |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Louisiana | <input type="checkbox"/> Virginia |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Mississippi | |

16. Additional information you would like to share with us about your project?

Longleaf Enhancement Fund Budget Form

	(1) Funding Amount Requested (4)	(2) Matching Contributions		(3) Total Project Cost (\$)
		(i) Cash Contributions	(ii) In-Kind Contributions	
Expense Categories:				
Personnel + Fringe Benefits <i>Position*Rate*Time</i>				
				\$ -
				\$ -
				\$ -
<i>Subtotal</i>	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
Travel <i>#People*#Trips*Perdiem/Mileage</i>				
				\$ -
				\$ -
				\$ -
<i>Subtotal</i>	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
Equipment (Durable items > \$500) <i>Type*Qty*Cost</i>				
				\$ -
				\$ -
<i>Subtotal</i>	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
Supplies (Consumables) <i>Type*Qty*Cost</i>				
				\$ -
				\$ -
<i>Subtotal</i>	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
Contractual <i>Individual Contract</i>				
				\$ -
				\$ -
<i>Subtotal</i>	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
Other <i>Type*Qty*Cost</i>				
				\$ -
				\$ -
<i>Subtotal</i>	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
Total Direct Expenses	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
Indirect Expenses <i>At Federally Negotiated Indirect Rate or up to 10% of Modified Total Direct Costs</i>				
<i>Total Indirects</i>			\$ -	\$ -
Grand Total	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -

Tip: Use only the sections needed. If you need additional rows, insert them in the middle of the budget category.
Double check: Funding Request, Project Cost, and Match Contribution totals on this form should match the \$ amounts submitted in your online application (Questions 8 -10).