The Children & Nature Network (C&NN) is a U.S.-based nonprofit organization leading the global movement to increase equitable access to the benefits of nature and advance Nature Everywhere children live, learn and play.

**Michigan Children & Nature Initiative Lead**

**REQUEST FOR APPLICATIONS**

**Purpose**

The Children & Nature Network (C&NN) seeks a Michigan-based partner to launch a sustained initiative to advance green schoolyards and other nature-focused engagement programs. This multi-year initiative should lead to increased funding and supportive state-level policies conducive to thriving green schoolyards and other nature-focused engagement programs in Michigan.

**About the Opportunity**

The Michigan Children & Nature Initiative Lead would further develop and implement the scope of work outlined below, with a key goal of deepening relationships and partnerships throughout the state in service to advancing access to green schoolyards and other nature-based learning programs in Michigan. C&NN with its Cities Connecting Children to Nature (CCCN) partner, the National League of Cities (NLC), has supported development of local projects in Dearborn, Detroit, and Grand Rapids, Michigan. C&NN and NLC also support analogous state policy efforts in other states such as Georgia and Utah.

**This opportunity is open to organizations and independent contractors.** Ideal applicants will have existing relationships and a working understanding of non-profit, public sector and governance structures in Michigan; the ability to work in politically sensitive environments; and feel comfortable navigating professional sectors at varying levels of leadership. Michigan-based organizations prioritizing issues related to children, nature and the environment may incorporate this work into a similar, existing position or paid fellowship. Contractors will have demonstrated experience in network and coalition building.

**SCOPE OF WORK**

The selected organization or contractor will launch, coordinate and facilitate a Michigan Children & Nature Initiative focused on policy action and collaborative peer learning to

Date: 8/7/2023
advance equity-based, districtwide, open-access green schoolyards across the state. The network will bring together representatives of existing local initiatives in Dearborn, Detroit, and Grand Rapids, and other related organizations subject to common policy and funding opportunities. The Initiative Lead will design and lead network-building, peer learning and advocacy activities including:

**DELIBERABLES**

1. Create a network or coalition to support children and nature policy efforts.
2. Conduct network mapping and a scan of regional or state policies, funds, partnerships and programs to identify key green schoolyards opportunities.
3. Convene the network/coalition, via in-person and virtual meetings, around issues connecting children to nature, such as Green Schoolyards and Green Stormwater Infrastructure across the state, for peer learning and advocacy.
4. Identify and make progress in accelerating systems-level change and increased state-level support for green schoolyards and other efforts to connect children to nature through the identification of policy and/or advocacy opportunities available to Michigan school districts, cities, counties, statewide entities, community partners and nonprofits advancing green schoolyards and outdoor learning.
5. Develop and facilitate a joint fundraising strategy to expand network capacity.
6. Create additional documentation/guidance regarding policy and funding for Green Schoolyards in Michigan.

**QUALIFICATIONS & REQUIREMENTS**

Successful applicants will demonstrate the following skills, education and experience:

- A commitment to and/or practice related to equitable outcomes and systems change and/or environmental justice.
- Significant knowledge of and connection to climate resilience, sustainability, stormwater management, green schoolyards or other related efforts.
- Experience working with municipal, county or state government, school districts or statewide organizations such as the Michigan Municipal League.
- Experience building networks or leading campaigns.
- Strong interpersonal, organizational and project management skills are required to form a sustainable network quickly.
- Public speaking, meeting facilitation and professional writing skills.
- Based in Michigan and able to work autonomously within a collaborative, virtual team environment.
- Proficiency with online platforms (must have own computer, phone, internet).
COMPENSATION & OTHER
Compensation: $75,000
Reports to: C&NN Director of Policy & Government Affairs
Period: October 2023 - March 2025
Other Support: Cost reimbursement for approved meeting and travel expenses.

C&NN will also provide onboarding & introduction to local, state and national partners; regular check-ins and team meetings; access to C&NN's research, external relations team and other assets; subject matter expertise on the benefits of nature; strategies for equitable access; and green schoolyard strategy implementation.

APPLICATION
Submit proposals to initiative@childrenandnature.org. Enter Michigan Children & Nature Initiative in the Subject line. Attach resume, proposal and other supporting materials (not to exceed 4 pages).

Application Period: August 14 - August 31, 2023

We appreciate that diversity of all kinds contributes to greater impact and innovation. We are striving to build a diverse team that reflects the races, ethnicities, religions, gender identities, cultures, and lived experiences of the international children and nature movement. We are committed to values of equity and inclusion in the way we work with each other, with partners and peers and in the communities we serve.