

YOUTH CLIMATE ACTION FUND

Supported by Bloomberg Philanthropies



ABOUT THE GRANTS

Bloomberg Philanthropies launched the Youth Climate Action Fund in 2024 to empower young people aged 15 to 24 to address climate change. Last year, La Crosse was chosen as one of 100 cities across 38 countries to receive this grant. In 2025, La Crosse won another year of funding, opening up \$85,000 in microgrants to youth-led climate projects. These funds will allow area youth to develop and implement urgent climate solutions tailored to the City's Climate Action Plan.

LA CROSSE CLIMATE ACTION PLAN

The City of La Crosse's Climate Action Plan aims for a 40% to 50% decrease below 2019 greenhouse gas (GHG) levels by 2030 and achieving carbon neutrality by 2050. The plan emphasizes the need for creation and resilience, underscoring the importance of community engagement. [Continue reading](#)

WHAT IS THE YOUTH CLIMATE ACTION FUND?

The YCAF is a new opportunity to fund creative and innovative ideas to tackle climate change at the local level. This funding is made possible through a grant from Bloomberg Philanthropies. Through the YCAF, youth-led and youth-serving organizations and groups can receive up to \$5,000 to support actions that focus on environmental change issues in our community.

WHAT KIND OF PROJECTS ARE ELIGIBLE TO BE FUNDED?

This program can fund any youth-led (15-24 years of age) project that is focused on sustainability and climate change that directly benefits La Crosse. Example projects can include school community gardens, waste collection programs, road/waterway cleanups, renewable energy projects, tree plantings, energy efficiency projects, sustainable transportation projects, murals, etc. Additionally, projects could also include hosting events or organizing online or in-person activities. Be creative!

HOW WILL FUNDS BE DISTRIBUTED & MANAGED?

Youth projects must have a partner organization that serves as the micro-grant recipient and fund administrator. Entities must have a formal tax-exempt status of some kind, (for example a school district or not-for-profit organization), a bank account in its name, and an ability to manage the funds. **La Crosse Area Community Foundation can only disperse funds to tax exempt, charitable organizations.** If a youth does not have a partner organization who fits the requirements to receive and manage the project funds, the La Crosse Area Community Foundation and/or the Sustainability Institute can help in locating a supportive project partner.

Successful applicants will receive a microgrant, distributed to their sponsor organization, ranging from \$1,000 - \$5,000 to fund their projects. Youth can apply for more than one project; however, sponsor organizations cannot support more than three projects.

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WHAT CAN THE FUNDS BE USED FOR IN THE PROJECT?

Funds may be used to cover all project related expenses such as materials, equipment, and community outreach activities. **NEW for 2025, no more than 50% of grant dollars can be allocated towards equipment, capital investment and infrastructure.**

WHEN SHOULD MY PROJECT START?

Your project should commence once you receive the funds. Project must conclude no later than September 30, 2025. (Projects can be single events or run the entire period of funding).

WHAT IS REQUIRED WHEN MY PROJECT IS COMPLETE?

When you have completed your project, you will need to submit a final report. That report should include a brief description of what activities were undertaken and how the funds were spent and at least one output (ex: number of trees planted, or square feet of community gardens created) and one outcome (ex: reducing the urban heat-island effect or reducing CO2 emissions and food miles). The report should also include your actual expenditures. Have questions or need help? The La Crosse Area Community Foundation and Sustainability Institute are here to help you through!

The Youth Climate Action Fund spans
100 cities,
38 countries,
6 continents,
and represents over
62 million residents.

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UCLG
United Cities and Local Governments

BLOOMBERG
Center for Public Innovation

2024 PROJECTS

Environmental Education

Members of La Crosse Film Academy is producing a short film focusing on the impact of environmental education and community engagement in La Crosse.

Pollinator Hedgerows

La Crosse Central High School planted pollinator hedgerows at their new hospital farm space. This diverse planting will provide food and shelter for pollinators.

Transportation

Downtown Bike Parking Expansion project installed 20 new bike posts to improve downtown bike access.

Finalized Locations

- Filled in gaps, targeted highly frequented locations. Needed to install on concrete not bricks.
- Result: 20 total posts installed
 - 15 downtown locations
 - 1 post per location
 - 1 Riverside Park location
 - 5 posts



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2024 PROJECTS CONTINUED

Energy Efficiencies

The Reclaimed Draft Blockers addressed sustainable energy by teaching a class to make door draft blockers out of reclaimed fabric.

Waste Management

La Crosse Youth Symphony Concert (LYSO) reduced their paper waste by printing programs and posters on recycled paper and purchased reusable 100% post-consumer waste recycled folders.

Water Conservation

Logan Middle School Rain Garden Project tackled stormwater management issues and enhanced sustainability at the school. The project managed stormwater runoff, improved water quality, and supported local biodiversity.



Greenspace

Hmong Tree Legacy planted ginkgo trees to increase community access to medicinal resources and preserve Hmong heritage and knowledge.

EXAMPLE PROJECTS FROM OTHER CITIES

River Erosion Mitigation (Oberlin, Ohio)

Youth volunteers worked to reinforce the Vermilion riverbank to prevent erosion from the trails that run through the camp.

Bike Loaner Program (Guelph, Canada)

A local high school established a bike loaner program to equip youth with bicycles and provide essential bike management education.

Waste Upcycle Microbusiness (Hudson, New York)

Created a microbusiness that focuses on repurposing plastic bottle tops into gorgeous jewelry.



Postes Solares (Córdoba, Argentina)

Youth educated the community on renewable energy and created, installed, and maintained solar-powered light poles.