Rekindling Fire and Culture
Request for Applications
Respond by February 2, 2026

🔥 We are looking to fund projects! 🔥

Up to **$100,000** for Indigenous communities, Tribal governments, Indigenous-led partnerships, federally unrecognized Tribes and Indigenous-led non-profits
Up to **$25,000** for Indigenous individuals via an individual contractor agreement.

With generous support from the Department of Conservation's Regional Forest and Fire Capacity program, the Indigenous Stewardship Network is requesting applications for the Rekindling Fire and Culture Grant Program!! This funding opportunity is intended to support capacity-building for cultural fire or Indigenous-led fire in California. Applications can be submitted for an individual person, Tribe or organization or for a partnership. Applications **are due on February 2, 2026**

This RFA supports the following kinds of cultural burning or Indigenous-Led Fire

🔥 **Cultural Fire:** "Cultural burn" or "cultural burning" means the "intentional application of fire to land by a California Native American tribe, a tribal organization, or a cultural fire practitioner to achieve cultural goals or objectives, including for sustenance, ceremonial activities, biodiversity, or other benefits." (California Public Resources Code § 4002.4)

🔥 **Indigenous-Led Fire or Prescribed Fire with Cultural Objectives:** The intentional application of fire to land by a partnership of parties (i.e. non-Native non-profits,

agencies, and PBAs) and cultural fire practitioners where cultural objectives may be considered but aren't the only objectives that are planned for. Indigenous partners are leaders and at the forefront of decision making even if they are working in partnership with others.

🔥 Rekindling Fire and Culture Program Goals 🔥

The Indigenous Stewardship Network seeks to establish and enhance Indigenous networks, support capacity-building, affect policy change, and improve funding for Indigenous-led stewardship. The Rekindling Fire and Culture Program focuses on progressing community health and wellbeing, Indigenous traditions, and cultural values. The program values and requires respecting tribal sovereignty and traditional knowledge.

The Indigenous Stewardship Network seeks to support cultural fire and advance one or more of these desired outcomes (List 1):

- Strengthens California Native leadership
- Supports intertribal collaborations and partnerships
- Fosters traditional knowledge exchange or intergenerational learning
- Improves visibility and awareness on the importance of cultural burning
- Increase access and opportunities for cultural burning
- Sustains traditional lifeways
- Enhances capacity for scaling of Indigenous stewardship (i.e., equipment, staff time, individual/organizational development). More examples can be found on page 18 of this pdf (https://www.conservation.ca.gov/dlrp/grant-programs/Documents/2022%20RFFC%20Guidelines%20Final.pdf)

🔥 Grant Eligible Activities 🔥

Selected applications must include one or more of the following requirements (List 2):

- Capacity-building for cultural burning, including but not limited to staff time, staff training, and organizational development.
- Organizing or enabling demonstrations on cultural burning.
- Organizing intertribal knowledge exchanges
- Planning, implementation, research, monitoring and adaptive strategy development involving cultural burning (implementation of ground disturbing activities requires CEQA compliance).
- Supporting time for tribal staff and cultural practitioners to participate in collaboratives working to progress cultural burning.
- Increasing safety and effectiveness of individual cultural fire practitioners.

🔥 Requirements 🔥

All funded applicants must read and follow the Regional Forest and Fire Capacity Program Guidelines, found here: https://www.conservation.ca.gov/dlrp/grant-programs/Documents/2022%20RFFC%20Guidelines%20Final.pdf
Budget and actual expenditures must adhere to eligible costs provisions (as outlined on page 17 of the guidelines linked here).

Ineligible Costs:
- Meals, incidentals, tips, per diems, or refreshments for meetings or travel. Food is allowed if you are hosting a workshop or conference and are paying for meals for participants. Speak with RFC Program Staff for case-by-case approval.
- Incentive/participation gifts
- Out-of-state travel and activities
- Lobbying
- Endowments

Eligible Costs:
- Salary and Staff Time (can be staff time including fringe/fully benefited costs and/or contractors)
- In State Travel Costs (Please note reimbursement for lodging and mileage is based on state rate which can be found at https://hrmanual.calhr.ca.gov/Home/ManualItem/1/2203)
- Materials (defined as anything under $5,000/unit)
- Equipment (defined as anything over $5000/unit). See page 18 of the PDF guidelines above (document page 14) for more information or email program staff for questions.
- Indirect Costs: Indirect costs are expenses that you incur to carry out grant activities that are not directly budgeted for. Because this is a capacity building grant, many things traditionally considered under indirect costs can also be budgeted as direct costs. Indirect Costs must reflect actual costs that your organization is incurring to carry out grant activities and cannot be added to a general fund. Indirect costs may account for no more than twenty percent (20%), or responding entities' federally approved negotiated indirect cost rate agreement (NICRA). If using your NICRA rate, a copy of your entities' NICRA must be provided with your proposal. Examples of indirect costs include:
  - Office space
  - Supplies
  - Legal or management oversight
  - Prorated general liability, Workers' Compensation (may be included in payroll), and automotive insurance
  - Material costs not included as direct costs in the budget.

*A 20% advance for project expenses is available. If a 20% advance is expected, please note this in the application budget.

🔥 Application Process & Required Attachments 🔥

All applications must be submitted to **deniss@indigenousstewardship.org,** including submission of necessary attachments by **February 2, 2026**

The following attachments must be uploaded during the online submission process; details are in the corresponding application.

- **Application Form**
- **Timeline Template**
- **Budget –** Please include itemized budgets needed to complete the project, using the form starting on Page 4 in the application. Please note that all project funding must be spent in 1 year. There will be an opportunity for a no-cost extension.
- **Tax-Status Documentation -** IRS Determination Letter for 501(c)(3) organization or a community organization using a fiscal sponsor. Tribes may submit proof that they are a federal- or state-recognized tribe. Individuals must complete a W9.
- **Leadership and Staff List -** Tribal governments involved in a project should submit a resolution or letter of support for the project. Non-profits must provide a list of board members and key staff, outlining tribal affiliations. Individuals should outline their indigenous affiliation(s) and provide documented approval to burn by the governing body of their Tribe (i.e., letter or resolution) or contact information for three community references and assurance that permitting requirements will be met as required. Any burns supported by this grant should be in compliance with your Tribe's burn codes/policies where applicable.
- **A copy of your entities' current Negotiated Indirect Cost Rate Agreement (NICRA),** if using that as your indirect cost rate.

🔥 Selection Process 🔥

Projects that maximize the program goals will be prioritized, primarily based on their anticipated benefit to local Indigenous communities. Numerous entity types will be considered—including tribal governments, Indigenous-led 501(c)(3) organizations, Indigenous-led community organizations with fiscal sponsorship, Indigenous 7871 organizations, and cultural fire practitioners. Please review the Rubric for more information on scoring. Applications will be scored by ISN staff and reviewed by ISN board members.

🔥 Progress Sharing 🔥

Program Staff will meet with selected applicants once a quarter for the duration of the program. These touch base meetings will focus on the progress of the project and budget spend down. This will be an opportunity to see if ISN can support with networking or other resources. Awardees will be required to complete project goals and submit a final invoice by the end of the program. A one-page project summary will be due at the time of the final invoice, using a provided form.