



Forest Preserve District of Cook County Office of the Purchasing Agent

Sole Source Justification Form

General Information PO 74000014516	Date: 6/12/24
Department: Conservation & Experiential Programming	Phone 312-859-1982
Contact Name: Jacqui Ulrich	Email: jacqui.ulrich@cookcountyil.gov

Vendor Information	
Company Name: GRIT	Contact person: Derek Sanchez
Address: 10 Cabot Road Medford MA 02155 US	
Phone: 877-345-4748	Email: derek@gogrit.us

Description. Please provide a description of the goods or services required, pricing, the duration or frequency of the requirement, and where will the services or goods be delivered.
12 GRIT brand all-terrain wheelchairs for public use at all six Forest Preserves' nature centers, and for special events and programming. This is a one time purchase through an Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity Tourism Grant to increase access to nature and participation at Forest Preserves' events and programming for all people, with a total cost of \$44,820.00 including delivery fees, see attached quote.

Type. Please select one of the options and explain below.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Single Source <input type="checkbox"/> Proprietary/Copyright Restrictions <input type="checkbox"/> Equipment Compatibility <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Patented Product <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Exclusive or Unique Capability <input type="checkbox"/> Other, please explain

Explanation: Why is this product or service the only one that would satisfy the requirement(s)? The GRIT Freedom Chair is a lever driven manual all terrain chair designed, manufactured exclusively and patented by Global Research Innovation and Technology in the United States, see attached letter.

Due Diligence. Describe the due diligence performed that led to the conclusion that this is a sole source.
See attached memo.

Department Recommendation			
Requestor: Jacqui Ulrich	PO 74000014516	TBD	Date: 6/12/24
Department Head: Jacqui Ulrich			Date: 6/12/24

Purchasing Agent Officer or Designee Approval	
Signature: <i>Thomas J. Conlon</i>	Date: 7/11/24

Chief Financial Officer or Designee Approval	
Signature:	Date:

Chief Attorney or Designee Approval	
Signature:	Date:

Forest Preserves of Cook County

Quote created: May 8, 2024 Reference: 20240508-092855502

Comments

Derek Sanchez - GRIT



Products & Services

GRIT Freedom Chair: Spartan - 18"	10 x \$3,636.00
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GRIT Freedom Chair Spartan 20" seat width	1 x \$3,636.00
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GRIT Freedom Chair: Spartan 20" seat width

GRIT Junior - 11-12"	1 x \$3,636.00
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One-time subtotal \$43,632.00

Shipping \$1,188.00

Total \$44,820.00

Please note that the Forest Preserves is covering shipping costs as match.

This quote expires on August 6, 2024

Purchase terms

Questions? Contact me



Derek Sanchez
derek@gogrit.us

GRIT
10 Cabot Road
Medford MA 02155
US



May 7, 2024

Forest Preserves of Cook County
536 North Harlem Avenue
River Forest, IL 60305

RE: Sole Source - GRIT Freedom Chair

To whom it may concern:

This letter is to verify that Global Research Innovation and Technology, Incorporated is the sole manufacturer of the GRIT Freedom Chair. We are not aware of any other lever driven manual all terrain chair in the United States that has a similar design or is made from similar components.

Furthermore, we hold the following patents:

- **8,884,959** - WHEELCHAIR WITH LEVER DRIVETRAIN, exp. 2030
Scope: Wheelchair architecture with detachable, multi-hand position levers plus brake, coupled to the wheels with bike parts
- **9,644,730** - DEMOUNTABLE COUPLING SYSTEM AND APPARATUS, exp. 2035
Scope: Tool-free mount torque coupling for vehicle. Allows quick release of wheels for transport or service.

Please feel free to email me at derek@gogrit.us or call me at 877-345-4748 with any questions.

Sincerely,
GRIT, Inc.

By: *Derek Sanchez*
Name: Derek Sanchez
Title: COO



MEMO

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**General
Superintendent**

Arnold L. Randall

To: Sole Source Committee - Tom Conlon, Lisa Lee, Damon Howell
From: Jacqui Ulrich, Director Conservation & Experiential Programming
Subject: DCEO Grant for Purchase of GRIT Freedom Chairs
Date: 6/12/24
CC: Michelle Uting, Grant Administrator
Lydia Uhlir, Project Analyst

The Forest Preserves of Cook County has a directive from both its *Next Century Conservation Plan* and more recent Conservation & Policy Council adopted position paper *Amplifying Diversity and Inclusion in the Forest Preserves of Cook County* to increase accessibility for its outdoor recreation and nature programs and activities. The Forest Preserves recently received a notice of award for funding from the Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity Department through its Tourism Grant Program (Attachment A) to purchase specialized equipment to improve accessibility and inclusion at nature centers, campgrounds, programming and special events.

The grant application specifies the purchase of GRIT Freedom Chairs that would be distributed to the Forest Preserves' six nature centers and three year-round campgrounds. The GRIT Freedom Chairs would also be integrated into and available to the public through the Forest Preserves' Outdoor Gear Library. The DECO Tourism Grant covers 100% of the cost of the GRIT Freedom Chairs; the total project cost is \$89,545 and the Forest Preserves is providing a \$45,600 in match to cover shipping costs, programming and training.

The Forest Preserves' staff, including its Accessibility Manager, researched all-terrain wheelchairs that would be best suited for use by the public on the Forest Preserves' unpaved trails. Based on market analysis the GRIT company's GRIT Freedom Chair is the most appropriate and affordable specialized equipment that would fulfill the Forest Preserves' accessibility goals. This specific equipment was included in the Forest Preserves' DCEO Tourism Grant proposal (Attachment B).

The GRIT company manufactures the GRIT Freedom Chair an all-terrain lever driven manual chair developed by MIT engineers. The GRIT Freedom Chair uses an easy-to-push, lever-driven design for its wheelchair which comes with mountain bike wheels, a sturdy front wheel, and optional trail handles. Instead of grabbing onto the wheels directly, users push the levers forward to propel the wheelchair. For users to brake, they pull the levels backwards until they touch the tires, this is also used for turning, braking one wheel rotates the chair in that direction. To see the GRIT Freedom chair in use on trails visit <https://www.gogrit.us/hiking-wheelchair>.

In 2023, the Forest Preserves purchased one GRIT Freedom Chair to pilot and test (before investing in additional chairs) and concluded that this chair works well at special events and programs, as well as at nature centers and campgrounds where the chair was available for public rental and is maintainable by staff.

Additionally, the GRIT Freedom Chair is being used by other conservation-based public agencies including the Will County Forest Preserves that recently purchased a GRIT Freedom Chair for its Four Rivers Environmental Education Center in Channahon, IL; this education center received accreditation from the National Inclusion Project <https://www.reconnectwithnature.org/news-events/news/new-all-terrain-grit-freedom-wheelchair-available-four-rivers/>. The GRIT Freedom Chairs are also utilized by the US National Park Service, including the Great Smokey Mountains National Park <https://www.nps.gov/grsm/learn/news/great-smoky-mountains-national-park-and-partners-to-expand-adaptive-programs-in-2024.htm>.

The purchase of this specialized equipment would allow the Forest Preserves to positively contribute to this region's tourism efforts, which is what the DECO grant is for, by enhancing its ability to serve people with disabilities and their families and friends. The Forest Preserves understands that people's decisions on where to spend their free time and their resources is deeply influenced by how welcoming and inclusive that environment or activity will be for themselves and for every member of their family or group.

The purchase of GRIT Freedom Chairs would eliminate some of the barriers that people with disabilities may experience when trying to recreate outdoors and would ensure that more than 300 miles of Forest Preserves' trails become more accessible.

The DCEO grant includes a state-funded budget of \$43,945.00 to purchase as least 11 all-terrain GRIT Freedom Chairs, in addition to funds for accessibility training for FPCC staff, with matching funds provided by the Forest Preserves.

Market Analysis

There are only two manual lever driven all-terrain wheelchairs currently on the market.

The GRIT Freedom Chair is patented and manufactured in USA. It is designed to be an affordable and easy-to-maintain all-terrain wheelchair, which comes with a 2-year warranty and is priced at \$3,636.00 for the Spartan model.

The Mountain Trike is manufactured in the UK, and has features such as direct steering, air suspension, hydraulic disc brakes, and optional e-assist and comes with a 3-year warranty and is fully customizable and is priced at over \$8,800.00 for the basic price including delivery.

Based on the limited options available for all terrain push lever wheelchairs and the designated budget of the DCEO grant to purchase at least 11 of this specialized equipment the GRIT Freedom Chair is the only option to fulfill the needs of the Forest Preserves and the DCEO grant requirements.

STATE OF ILLINOIS GRANT INFORMATION	
State Award Identification	Name of State Agency (Grantor): Commerce And Econ Opp Department/Organziation Unit: Office of Grants Management
State Award ID Number (SAIN)	2168-51514
State Program Description	Tourism Attraction funding is for the development or improvement of tourism attractions in Illinois.
Announcement Type	Initial
Agency (Grantor) Contact Information	Name: Greg Mihalich Phone: 217-299-1323 Email: ceo.tourismgrants@illinois.gov

GRANTEE INFORMATION	
Grantee / Subrecipient Information	Name: Forest Preserve District of Cook County Address: 536 N. Harlem Ave., River Forest, IL 60305 Phone: (312) 859-1982 Email: jacqui.ulrich@cookcountyil.gov
Grantee Identification	GATA: 678250 UEI: WMJHTNM1AL36 FEIN: 366006543
Period of Performance	Start Date: 7/1/2024 End Date: 6/30/2025

FUNDING INFORMATION			
FUND	CSFA	CFDA	AMOUNT
763	420-25-2168		\$43,945.00
TOTAL			\$43,945.00

(M) Currently used by State of Illinois for "Match" or "Maintenance of Effort" (MOE) requirements on Federal Funding. Funding is subject to Federal Requirements and may not be used by Grantee for other match requirements on other awards.

Illinois Grant Accountability and Transparency Notice of State Award

TERMS AND CONDITIONS	
Grantee Indirect Cost Rate Information	Rate: 0% Base: Waive Period: 1/1/2024-12/31/2024
Research & Development	No
Cost Sharing or Matching Requirements	Yes : Match amounts required are: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If the grantee is a county, municipality, not-for-profit organization, unit of local government or local promotion group, match required shall be no less than 50% of the total project costs. • If the Grantee is a for-profit business, match required shall be no less than 75% of the total project cost.
Uniform Term(s)	CODE of FEDERAL REGULATIONS Title 2: Grants and Agreements PART 200 - Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards (2 CFR 200) Grant Accountability and Transparency Act (GATA), 30 ILCS 708/1 Illinois Administrative Code
Grantor-Specific Term(s)	This Notice of State Award (NOSA) is not an agreement. This NOSA is not a guarantee of an agreement. Grantor-Specific Terms that will be included in the final grant agreement can be found by clicking on "Uniform Grant Agreement Template" under the Grant Agreement Overview section at: https://dceo.illinois.gov/aboutdceo/grantopportunities/learning-library.html
Program-Specific Term(s)	Program-Specific Terms and requirements are included in the Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO) for this grant opportunity. THE FOLLOW ARE GATA EXCEPTIONS AND ARE NOT REQUIRED FOR THIS PROGRAM: INDIRECT COST RATE Single purpose entity.

Illinois Grant Accountability and Transparency Notice of State Award

SPECIFIC CONDITIONS ASSIGNED TO GRANTEE - FISCAL AND ADMINISTRATIVE

The nature of the additional requirements

GATA Conditions:

05 - Audit

Grantee must submit, at least semi-annually, documentation to support the status of implementation of corrective action for audit findings.

Agency Adjustments / Explanation:

05 Audit requirement" from the FY25ICQ (FISCAL AND ADMINISTRATIVE) section of the NOSA below. This specific condition seems to be immaterial to the program and will not be included in Exhibit E of the eventual Grant Agreement.

The reason why the additional requirements are being imposed

GATA Conditions:

05 - Audit

Medium to high risk will result in repeated audit findings, potential questioned cost, and increase of administrative and programmatic specific conditions that will increase the cost of managing the grant program.

Agency Adjustments / Explanation:

None

The nature of the action needed to remove the additional requirement, if applicable

GATA Conditions:

05 - Audit

Implementation of grantee's corrective action plan.

Agency Adjustments / Explanation:

None

The time allowed for completing the actions, if applicable

GATA Conditions:

05 - Audit

When corrective action is complete.

Agency Adjustments / Explanation:

None

The method for requesting reconsideration of the additional requirements imposed

GATA Conditions:

05 - Audit

When corrective action is complete.

Agency Explanation:

None



Illinois Department of Commerce & Economic Opportunity

JB Pritzker, Governor

Tourism Attraction Grant Program

NOFO ID: 2168-2633

Directions: Complete this program application and submit as part of your application to the Tourism Attraction Grant Program. Detailed information on the program and submission requirements can be found in the Notice of Funding Opportunity. If necessary, additional pages may be attached.

Legal/Common Name: Forest Preserve District of Cook County

- 1. Provide a detailed project description including the viability of the attraction, why funds are needed, and whether the project is located within 30 miles of an area with supporting visitor services. For capital projects, provide a geographic and physical address location for the tourism attraction. For capital projects with infrastructure components, provide how the project will enhance the visitor amenities and experience and increase visitation to the tourism attraction.**

The Forest Preserves of Cook County proposes to increase accessibility for its outdoor recreation and nature programs and activities by purchasing specialized equipment and providing its staff with Disability Awareness Training so they can understand the challenges faced by people with disabilities and to improve accessibility and inclusion at nature centers, campgrounds, programming and special events. This type of training will help staff understand different disabilities and learn what can be done to treat everyone with dignity and respect. Funds would be used to purchase eleven (11) GRIT Freedom Chairs (a mix between a manual wheelchair and a mountain bike). The equipment would be distributed to the Preserves' six nature centers and three year-round campgrounds all of which are located within 30 miles of cities or towns that offer supporting services. The equipment would also become part of the Forest Preserves' Outdoor Gear Library. The Outdoor Gear Library seeks to ensure that people do not experience financial barriers to participating in outdoor recreation activities.

The Forest Preserves strives to ensure that all Cook County residents and visitors can access and enjoy nature and collaborates with many organizations to grow and offer adaptive programs including Misericordia, Opportunity Knocks, Adaptive Adventures, Chicago Hearing Society, and many local Special Recreation Associations. These organizations will work with the Forest Preserves to attract participants and promote this new amenity.

In addition, the Forest Preserves recently hired an Accessibility Coordinator who has a strong background in special recreation programming for individuals with disabilities and who is tasked with ensuring that the Forest Preserves' amenities are accessible. Acquiring a wheelchair that can navigate unpaved trails is a substantial financial investment and could be a financial barrier to many individuals. The addition of the GRIT Freedom Chairs to the Forest Preserves' gear library would help advance its goal to eliminate barriers to outdoor recreation and improve access to nature.

The Forest Preserves will promote the addition of the GRIT Freedom Chairs through four special events and through its communication vehicles including its e-newsletter, quarterly printed brochure, website, and social media platforms.

The Forest Preserves' Conservation and Experiential Programming Department will lead this project with the support of the Accessibility Coordinator.

2. Describe how the project has the potential for sustainable economic growth and job creation, or a significant impact on the area's overall tourism efforts.

As the nation's oldest and largest conservation district, the Forest Preserves of Cook County protects nearly 70,000 acres of public lands and 300 miles of trails. These lands receive an estimated 62 million visits annually, a number that jumped to 100 million during the COVID-19 pandemic as people sought solace in nature. The nature centers received nearly 400,000 visitors in 2022 with an additional 90,000 people participating in experiential programs. The campgrounds received over 70,000 visitors in 2022.

The proposed project would allow the Forest Preserves to positively contribute to this region's tourism efforts by enhancing its ability to serve people with disabilities and their families and friends. The Forest Preserves understands that people's decisions on where to spend their free time and their resources is deeply influenced by how welcoming and inclusive that environment or activity will be for themselves and for every member of their family or group.

3. Describe if the Project will be completed and open to the public with regular scheduled hours at the end of the grant period.

Yes, the purchase of the equipment, as well as the staff training, will be completed within the project period. The equipment will be available through the Forest Preserves' nature centers and three of its year-round campgrounds. The equipment will also be incorporated into the Outdoor Gear Library and will be available to be "checked out" by members of the public to be used at other forest preserves trails. The nature centers and campgrounds are open to the public throughout the week and have regularly scheduled hours.

The Forest Preserves and its trails are open every day of the year from sunrise to sunset. The equipment will also be utilized during special events, including four special public events within the project period.

4. Describe if and how the project will increase expenditures from additional visitors to generate a return on investment (ROI) for the State within three years.

The Forest Preserves anticipates that expanding accessible outdoor recreation opportunities will contribute to increased expenditures from additional visitors that travel to Illinois and/or Cook County to enjoy the outdoor recreation opportunities and significant natural treasures that this region offers. People with disabilities attend Forest Preserves' programs and sites and the Forest Preserves makes every effort to provide requested special accommodations. In addition to programs, the Forest Preserves has invested in developing accessible trails, restrooms, picnic groves, campsites, paddling launches, fishing areas and more. The proposed purchase of the GRIT Freedom Chairs would provide people with physical disabilities with the opportunity to be active on some of the more rugged unpaved trails and to explore nature on their own terms.

Outdoor recreation continues to be a growing industry and in 2022 contributed \$1.1 trillion dollars in economic output (The Outdoor Recreation Economy by State - Headwaters Economics). And according to a study published by Statista Research Department hiking is the second most popular activity in the US (running ranked first), while Outdoor Industry indicated that a record number of people tried outdoor recreation activities for the first time during the COVID-19 pandemic <https://outdoorindustry.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/03/2022-Outdoor-Participation-Trends-Report-1.pdf>.

5. Describe how the tourism attraction is currently being marketed or will be marketed to visitors outside of a 50-mile radius.

The Forest Preserves Communications Division actively promotes the Forest Preserves and its amenities through its website (1.5 million sessions) and social media accounts (over 1.5 million impressions), and a monthly e-newsletter that highlights nature center events and programs has 100,000 opens. A quarterly guide is printed and has a distribution of 55,000 copies at more than 300 locations (nature centers, libraries, municipalities, etc.)

6. Describe how the costs itemized on the uniform budget are reasonable and necessary to enhance or develop the tourism attraction.

The cost of the proposed equipment and training has been researched. While the addition of 10 wheelchairs may seem like a small investment it will have a big impact on creating greater inclusivity for people with disabilities and their families and friends. The proposed equipment and training will ensure that people with disabilities will be able to accompany their family and friends on walks, hikes, wildlife viewing, and birdwatching.

7. Describe how the Project will adequately track and evaluate successes and outcomes.

The Forest Preserves' staff will track the number of times the equipment is utilized.

8. Describe how the attraction meets the definition of a tourism attraction as defined as fishing and hunting areas, State parks, historical/cultural sites, areas of historic or scenic interest, museums, recreation areas, botanical gardens, theme/amusement parks, interpretive programs and other facilities or businesses which attract or serve visitors that are open to the public for a minimum of 100 days per year (if the tourism attraction is entirely event-driven, then it shall be open for a minimum of 200 hours per year), and are marketed and promoted to visitors from more than 50 miles away.

The Forest Preserves meets the definition of a tourism attraction as a public land agency that offers a wide array of outdoor recreation activities including hiking, cycling, fishing, and camping, as well as offering interpretive and experiential programs through its nature centers and campgrounds. The Preserves receive an estimated 62 million visits each year.

The Forest Preserves are open every day of the year from sunrise to sunset; campgrounds are open every day of the week; the nature center buildings are open six days a week, while the grounds are open seven days. Hours are posted on the Forest Preserves' website at <https://fpdcc.com/things-to-do/nature-centers/#locations>. There are no entrance fees to preserves or nature centers and the majority of offered programming is free of charge (or a modest fee applies).

9. Describe how the project will increase visitation, length of stay and/or tourism expenditures from outside 50 miles.

Ensuring the accessibility of the Forest Preserves trails, natural areas, and programs will help to attract visitors and groups. The Forest Preserves is a unique destination that protects some of the best remaining examples of Illinois' natural and cultural heritage. The proposed project would expand the Forest Preserves' Outdoor Gear Library System which aims to ensure that cost or equipment expenses do not prevent families from experiencing nature and participating in healthy outdoor recreation. The Outdoor Gear Library includes camping equipment, hiking and paddling equipment, and binoculars

and environmental education backpacks. Checking out the GRIT Freedom Chairs would be free-of-charge and would contribute to creating a more inclusive Forest Preserves.

10. Describe the overall effectiveness of the project.

The purchase of the GRIT Freedom Chairs and the staff training would eliminate some of the barriers that people with disabilities and their families and friends may experience when trying to recreate outdoors and would ensure that more than 300 miles of trails become more accessible. The GRIT Freedom Chairs would allow people with disabilities to create their own adventure. The training would ensure that Forest Preserves' staff create and maintain an inclusive, respectful, and welcoming environment that contributes to all people feeling like they belong and that these public lands and amenities are theirs to explore and enjoy.

Forest Preserves' staff has extensive experience managing engagement and outdoor recreation projects and initiatives of this size and scope.

Programmatic Risk Assessment **(required):**

This information will be used in conjunction with responses in the program application to analyze programmatic risk.

Financial Stability:

1) How significant is the funding need in relation to your overall organizational budget?

Grant funding is critical to the Forest Preserve District of Cook County's outdoor recreation and programming efforts. Grants are essential to leveraging the Forest Preserves' resources and help to ensure that access to outdoor recreation activities is available to all people.

Management Systems and Standards:

1) Have there been any significant changes in your organization in the last fiscal year related to, if yes check all that apply:

- Leadership
- Significant Program/Grant Initiative
- Structural structure
- Fiscal changes
- Statutory or regularity requirements
- Other, please explain: [Click or tap here to enter text.](#)

2) Does your organization have written policies and procedures that guide program delivery on the following topics, click all that apply:

- Quality assurance
- Outcome tracking and reporting mechanisms.
- Relevant documentation of services/goods delivered.
- Staff performance management policies and procedures
- Personnel policies and procedures that include conflict of interest statements.
- Complaint/grievance resolution policies and procedure
- Governing body policies and procedures that includes conflict of interest statements.
- Safeguarding funds, property, and other assets against loss from unauthorized use or disposition
- Management of grant term extensions, where applicable

3) Does your organization have internal controls that govern program delivery on the following topics, click all that apply:

- Quality assurance reporting
- Appropriate (to industry) supervision of staff
- Unit costs analysis and management
- Accreditation/licensing compliance program

History of Performance:

- 1) **How many years of experience does the project leader/key staff member have managing the scope of services required under this program?**
- 3 years or more
 - 1-2 years
 - Less than 1 year

Capacity:

- 1) **What is the staffing plan for the program implementation, are there reasonably planned resources available?**

The Forest Preserve's Conservation & Experiential Programming Department staff will manage this project with support from the the Office of the General Superintendent; the Forest Preserves has identified the resources to implement this project.

- 2) **Will the grant funds be less than 25% of the organizations budget?**
- Yes
 - No

Reporting:

- 1) **Does the organization have adequate resources to meet reporting requirements such as identifying a designee to oversee performance reporting? Is there a separation of duties to ensure accurate, and validated reporting?**
- Yes
 - No

2) Are there mechanisms in place to ensure accuracy and integrity to data points collected, verified, and reported?

Yes

No