

#33

COMPLETE

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Page 2: Application Deadline: Thursday, September 21, 2023 at 11:59PM PST

Q1

No

Is the primary focus of your project one or more of the following? Research and/or white papers Outdoor youth and adult leadership education Conference, event, festival, or panel (including both in-person and virtual) An expedition An individual A fundraiser, one-time event, or gala General marketing or awareness-raising projects Project focused solely on creating a book, video, or movie Maintenance or management of areas currently designated as protected by a local, state, or national agency, including general stewardship projects, trail maintenance, conservation corps projects, etc Recruitment costs to fill open positions 501c4 work and lobbying

Q2

Yes,

Does your group self-identify as being led* by historically racially excluded people? (Asian, Black, Brown, Hispanic, Indigenous, Latin American, and additional communities who identify as People of Color), or work with mixed status immigrant families? Please note: The Conservation Alliance considers "leadership" in this case as those with decision-making power on behalf of the entirety of the organization or effort.

If yes, please provide details, such as the approximate percentage of C-suite staff, leadership staff, and/or board members that identify as historically racially excluded.: Our Managing Director is a member of a Federally Recognized Indian Tribe with a board consisting of majority women, Native American, Afro-Indigenous, and South Asian individuals.

Q3

Virginia,

Which of these states, provinces or unincorporated territories is your project located in?

If your project is located in multiple locations, please enter them below or describe the area where your project is located.: We serve our indigenous diaspora in North Carolina, Ohio, and Maryland

Q4	2023	350000
Total annual operating budget amounts for the last five years (or as many years as your organization has been operating). This does not include federal or state pass-through funds. Please note: Organizations/groups must have had a general operating budget less than \$500,000 in three of the last five years to qualify. This does not include federal or state pass-through funds.	2022	300000
	2021	185000
	2020	250000
	2019	50000

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Q5

Name of individual completing this application

First Name	Luke
Last name	Tyree

Q6

Email address

lucastyree5@gmail.com

Q7

Phone number

540-355-8218

Q8

Name of the group or organization seeking funding

NDPonics

Q9

Mailing address for organization/group

PO Box 1475
Lexington VA 24450

Q10

Please share a brief description of your group, for example: purpose, vision, mission statement, size, location, and/or history. (700 character max)

NDPonics is an indigenous-founded-and-led private non-profit foundation in Virginia. NDPonics shares the same values as other indigenous people around the world - protect & enhance the natural habitat we live in, which in turn ensured our survival for thousands of years. NDPonics is dedicated to purchasing, preserving, and restoring lands in our mountainous region of the Blue Ridge in Virginia, containing areas of spiritual & historic significance to the indigenous people of the hills, supporting indigenous self-reliance & traditional ecological havens through land conservation, cultural rejuvenation, enabling food production, energy self-sufficiency, & energy efficiency in our community.

Q11

Organization/group's website and/or primary social media feed.

<https://www.ndponics.org/>

Q12

Five years or more

How long has your group been working together?

Q13

Name of the project

Onkyayun Oheki - Mountain to Valley

Q14

Tell us more about your team working on this project (e.g., field staff, administrative personnel, volunteers, interns). (700 character max)

Our team is part of the same community of dedicated BIPOC people seeking to protect the cultural lands upon which our very life-way depends. We have educated women of color who are committed to regaining our lands & bringing our people back to practice the culture & speak the language which gives their lives meaning & value. We have three paid staff and four board members. We have partnered with numerous organizations including Valley Conservation Council, Appalachian Trail Conservancy, Washington & Lee University, National Fish & Wildlife Foundation, & Virginia Outdoors Foundation; all of whom have provided support personnel & conduits for BIPOC youth to engage in our work.

Q15

In one sentence, please tell us what project success looks like.(300 character max)

Success would be buying back our mountain and conducting language and culture gatherings on our lands.

Q16

Please tell us about the land and/or water your group is working to protect, conserve, or restore, your plan to protect/conserve/restore it, and how it will help foster a planet where natural places, wildlife, and people thrive together. (3,500 character max)

NDPonics defends our lands, waters, & air, through acquiring back our lands within the traditional range of the Yessah people. The Yessah are eastern Siouxan language speakers, currently represented by members of the Monacan (Federally Recognized), Haliwa-Saponi (State Recognized), Occaneechi State Recognized), Sappony (State Recognized), & Ohio Saponi State Recognized) among others. Founded in 2015 as an independent indigenous-led 501c3 to address energy sovereignty for the Monacan Indian Nation, (reducing energy costs for the Monacan Government by 50% in 2015), NDPonics quickly progressed into a land acquisition & protection organization, focusing on the culturally & ecologically significant lands most at risk of exploitation in our area of Virginia. NDPonics' has, since 2019, purchased 932 acres including 15 sacred mountain peaks, over 3 miles of threatened eastern brook trout habitat, innumerable springs & vernal pools, 56 acres of threatened wetland, a lake, 2 ponds, & countless acres of field which, using traditional ecological knowledge, have been converted into highly valuable native grassland meadow. NDPonics, through funding from the Mellon Foundation, brings community members to these lands for language gatherings, indigenous science courses, and for safe space community gatherings. Each property that our organization has purchased was at direct & documented risk of clear-cutting & exploitation. NDPonics has placed easements on 141 acres of our land to prevent any & all exploitation and we plan to legally permanently protect the remaining lands by late 2024. This work is currently further achieved through a partnership with Washington and Lee University wherein the University has agreed, in conjunction with a 2023 donation of 6 acres of forest land and a dwelling for class gatherings, to donate annually to NDPonics supporting indigenous scholarship, a Native American student cohort, and the involvement of W&L staff in the further designated protection of Federal & State lands which border NDPonics lands, totaling 30,000 acres (all this land falls within traditional Yessah territory). NDPonics works with several other indigenous-led organizations to assist with community sustainable food systems. These include Native Seed Keepers (partnering to support healthy indigenous food systems and self dignity through food), Seven Directions of Service (land-back movement of Occaneechi Tribal Members in North Carolina), & the Yesanechi Language Program (Utilizing inter-generational language transmission and community members in the linguistics field to reclaim lost Tutelo grammar). NDPonics has lands with enormous water resources and riparian buffer remediation is a major goal of our organization. To this end, we have ongoing relationships, grant funding receipts, & collaboration with the James River Association Riparian Consortium (Funded through Virginia Environmental Endowment). Our commitment to net zero is exemplified by our commitment to reach 100% solar powered facilities and the sequestration of ~3700 tons of carbon per year from our forests (forest carbon works estimates). We advise tribes with forest lands to sell carbon credits & to utilize conservation easements to generate alternative revenue streams based on sustainable indigenous principles, avoiding extractive practices. Currently we are working hard to raise funds to purchase 60 acres of land at risk of being mined for bauxite; which would destroy our watershed.

Q17

How are impacted communities driving solutions for your project? (1,500 character max)

NDPonics as an organization defines the solutions we have presented here under the context of regenerative indigenous knowledge solutions. Our communities cannot overcome social, economic, and identity hurdles without the application of direct action on the ground. NDPonics staff have engaged with communities and in activism to protect indigenous rights and interests but it is the ultimate collective belief of our organization members, that the only way we can make truly transformative action that has long lasting follow-through, is tangible results on the ground. Purchasing these lands and acting in the best interest of the indigenous community and the forest ecosystem, which are inexorably tied, will serve as a model for "what we can do". This is not merely to "convince" the larger non-native community of the imperative to hear our voices and our knowledge and apply it on our lands which they currently "possess", but it is to take back our dignity and self respect. Far too long have the first inhabitants of these lands, been dictated to, by those with no lasting knowledge of how these ecosystems function WITH us, not in SPITE of us. NDPonics and our staff are well known across our regional tribal community as an organization dedicated to preserving our cultural lands and through direct input, we guide our efforts.

Q18

Does your project or group fit one or more of these descriptions? (please check all that apply):

Our project includes an intersectional approach to conservation that addresses the social, cultural, and environmental needs of a community.

Our project focuses on a geography that supports climate resilience and biodiversity.

Our project improves access to close-to-home recreation or healthy outdoor spaces, particularly those that are accessible by public transportation.

Our project increases opportunities for historically excluded communities to authentically engage and participate in public land and conservation management decision making processes.

Our project uplifts/centers traditional ecological knowledge, history, and culture in relation to land and water conservation.

Our group is working in collaboration with others to protect land or water.

If you answered yes to any of the above, please explain. (3,500 character max):

NDPonics is seeking to purchase 60 acres of land within our project area and watershed. This area is extremely important culturally and environmentally as the property has three mountain peaks including a 2800' peak of great religious significance to Yéssah People. This land is also known to have bauxite mineral deposits and two centennial mine shafts. Preventing the modern exploitation of this site through our purchase and permanent protection is essential to the purity of our water supply as it is upstream of the vast majority of NDPonics' properties and the Valley's primary stream runs through it. We intend to utilize the site for tribal community gatherings, language program, and traditional ecological knowledge courses. Many of the tribes in Virginia & North Carolina are landless or have very limited forest lands in which community members may gather to practice traditional indigenous science. Safe-spaces within the corridor of the Yessah tribes are limited and this project seeks to address this. NDPonics' founder and current managing director is a member of a Federally Recognized Tribe and traditional practitioner of forest indigenous-eco-engineering since the age of 1. This property gives us an opportunity to leverage the resources of our State, Federal,

and university partners, to reconnect and to re-affirm connection to these lands by our people. We are seeking funding for our project from Confluence towards this purchase and ultimately towards the effort to bring TEK and Indigenous Science (distinct principles and practices in our view) back to the landscape and into the eye of the scientific community so as to have an effect on the larger landscape of Federal and State lands which surround us. NDPonics lands have been found to have more biodiversity and carrying capacity than those lands which border them. These lands were our traditional territory and their mismanagement is an affront to our history, our people, and to the lands themselves. The example being set by NDPonics, with direct action on the ground, is the only way to convince these government entities to consider hearing our voices. More importantly, it is the only means by which to show our people that we can guide and direct our own future on this landscape. Safe spaces to gather, as simple as that sounds, are hard to come by and are essential to the continued survival of our culture and people.

Q19

Please list 2-4 intended outcomes for this project over the next two years. (1,500 character max)

We intend to purchase 60 acres of important cultural lands and to conduct culture and language classes with community members in a safe place on lands which are essential to the survival of our communities. Additionally, we intend to demonstrate how indigenous science can be successfully applied to our own lands. Being in close proximity to Federal and State lands, there are watchful eyes on how indigenous people are able to manage their lands. We will show how valuable our culture, people, and knowledge are, in the future protection of our lands. Through this, we hope to influence the protection of lands beyond our "borders", lands which are our homelands.

Q20

Please detail examples of your organization/group's success as related to this application, including experience with the proposed project. (2,000 character max)

We currently have funding support from the Appalachian Trail Conservancy, please see the announcement here: <https://appalachiantrail.org/news/2023-wild-east-action-fund-recipients/>, in the amount of \$45,000. Additionally, through conservation easements, we have acquired an additional \$75,000 to put towards this effort. The Wilderness Society is funding \$15,000 towards our efforts on this property. We are raising awareness across our community and volunteers from the Monacan Nation, Occaneechi, and Haliwa-Saponi have donated their time and resources to our effort. Our organization has experience with these types of projects, but it is very difficult to make reasonable offers on lands which are so deeply and spiritually connected to us. We are working diligently to make this project a reality and that is why we are requesting funding from Confluence.

Q21

Please list your top five key partners and how they have helped advance your work on this project. (1,500 character max)

Yesanechi Language Program - Language Classes and Volunteer Support Washington and Lee University - Land Donation and Faculty, Staff, and Student Support James River Association - Grant Funding Monacan Indian Nation - Resolution of Support Appalachian Trail Conservancy - Grant Support

Q22

What are the three primary ways you plan to use Conservation Alliance Funding in 2022?

First	Purchasing Back our Land
Second	Planting a Permaculture Forest
Third	Bringing Our People Back to the Land

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Q23

Are there any other relevant materials you would like to share with us that would be helpful for this our review process (e.g., partnership letter, letter of support, link to a video, article, or presentation)?

Relevant%20Materials.docx (7.6KB)

Q24

Yes

The funding needed for land and water conservation projects far exceeds the Confluence Program grant budget. We are going to encourage other funders to support groups who apply for funding through this program. Do we have permission to share your contact information and application details with other funders?

Q25

Yes,

Would you like to be connected to other Confluence Program applicants from this cycle?

If yes, please provide the best name and contact information and we will share this after the application closes.:

Lucas Tyree - 540-355-8218 - lucastyree5@gmail.com

Q26

Where/how did you hear about the Confluence Program and this funding opportunity?

Max Olsen - Appalachian Trail Conservancy
