



## Lowe's Community Improvement Project Partnership Guidelines

The Lowe's Charitable and Education Foundation (LCEF) is proud to partner with SIFE teams to develop community outreach projects that will improve the quality of life for communities in need. SIFE teams approved to participate will receive \$2,000 to fund materials needed for their community project. In addition to the initial grant funding, participating teams are eligible to win an additional \$5,000 grant to be used for continuation of this project or another project meeting the LCEF criteria. Following is the criteria as warranted by the LCEF to guide you through the process and success of your project.

### Assemble a Team:

- All participation is voluntary.
- Teams are encouraged to work with their local Lowe's store. Lowe's will send an initial introduction letter and contact information to the selected Lowe's store and SIFE team.

### Select a Project:

- Your team must work with a non-profit organization or K-12 school partner. A non-profit organization must have a 501(c) 3 designation from the IRS in order to partner with your team. Public schools and municipalities may not have a 501(c) 3 designation, but are considered appropriate partners for SIFE projects.
- You must request a W-9 from your non-profit partner and a copy of their 501(c) 3 if applicable. If approved to participate, you will be required to send these documents to SIFE.
- Each team participating in the SIFE/LCEF Program must select a project that addresses one of four topic areas below and meets the SIFE criterion:
  - **Community Improvement** – Teams may support a variety of community improvement projects such as community gardens, parks, playground projects or community cleanup initiatives. As with any project, please adhere to any building codes and be cognizant of removing Lowe's from liability. Where codes are in question, a city/county/municipal inspector must come and approve compliance with the initial construction followed by accepting ownership of the project (including maintenance).
  - **Public Education** – Teams may partner with a local K-12 public school to address school improvement needs, such as campus beautification, outdoor classrooms, playgrounds, etc.

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- **Safety** – Teams can help protect children or senior citizens in their community by embracing a safety project. Options may include a safety audit of a facility serving children, an at-risk population or older adults followed by a project to enhance safety features or accessibility to the facility.
- **Safe and Affordable Housing** – Teams can partner with one of our national partners such as Habitat for Humanity or Rebuilding Together to continue in our efforts to help build safe and affordable housing.

and

- **SIFE Criterion** - Considering the relevant economic, social and environmental factors, which SIFE team most effectively empowered people in need by applying business and economic concepts and an entrepreneurial approach to improve their quality of life and standard of living?

Please keep in mind the philanthropic focus areas of the Lowe's Charitable and Educational Foundation, which include K-12 public education, grassroots community improvement initiatives and safe/affordable housing projects. Community improvement projects are defined as public spaces where people gather or recreate, e.g. parks, libraries, senior or community centers, Boys and Girls Clubs, etc.

#### Follow Your Project Timeline

- The Lowe's Community Improvement Project Partnership will run from September 2011 through April 2012. However, in order to comply with this initiative and be eligible to compete for an additional grant, you must meet all deadlines.
  - Upon completion, submit your Final Impact Report via the Lowe's Community Improvement website no later than 11:59 p.m., Monday, April 30, 2012. (Website to be finalized shortly—watch your email for more information.) Your Final Impact Report will include documentation of your project, a copy of your press release and digital photography, a detailed expense report totaling to \$2,000, the total number of Lowe's volunteers who participated and the total number of volunteer hours expended in executing and planning your SIFE project. ***\*If the aforementioned documentation is not included in your team's Final Impact Report, your team will not be eligible to compete for the additional \$5,000 grant.*** The Final Impact Reports will be forwarded to Lowe's for judging by a committee.

#### Work Within Your Budget

- Each SIFE team will have a budget of \$2,000 to cover materials needed for the project. Please keep in mind that only 10% of the LCEF funds can be used for anything other than materials, so work with the Lowe's store for volunteerism and guidance.

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- LCEF funds are intended to cover materials for the project and **may not** be used as a donation to the nonprofit organization.
  
- To apply please click on the following link: [Lowe's Community Improvement application](#)**  
**The application deadline is January 31<sup>st</sup> at 11:59 CST.**
  
- For guidance regarding a press release template or media event, please contact Megan Edwards, SIFE Project Specialist at [medwards@sife.org](mailto:medwards@sife.org) or 417-575-3528. Please note that all media releases deviating from the template provided on the Lowe's Community Improvement Project Partnership must be approved by SIFE prior to distribution.**