

THE PETER AND CARMEN LUCIA BUCK FOUNDATION, INC.



Building Enduring Land Trusts

The Peter and Carmen Lucia Buck (PCLB) Foundation is pleased to announce a new grant initiative to encourage and support mergers among land trusts in Connecticut. These grants will help facilitate the successful completion of the merger process and will include significant multi-year, general operating support to the merged organization. Levels of support will be consistent with PCLB's other land conservation grants and with the organization's staffing and budgetary needs.

Why Merge?

Connecticut is home to the third most land trusts in the nation and the most land trusts per land area of any state. Many of these organizations work with limited resources and/or within a highly localized mission area. Based on experience in other states, PCLB believes it is possible for land trusts to achieve significant benefits through merger, including:

- Protecting and stewarding more land;
- Increasing organizational capacity and expertise;
- Expanding mission areas;
- Attaining greater efficiency in program delivery;
- Reducing competition for limited resources;
- Attracting more donors and volunteers; and ultimately
- Achieving long-term financial stability.

A merger might also be a way to address significant challenges such as changes in leadership or a financial crisis.

Merger Assistance Grants

Grants will be awarded *only* to Connecticut-based land trusts actively engaged in the merger process. Grant awards for merger implementation may be used to cover costs of professional assistance needed to advance the merger process, including, but not limited to:

- Legal fees
 - Re-filing for IRS 501(c)(3) status, filing state corporate registration, drafting human resources documents, preparing insurance filings, modifying by-laws, reviewing and transferring of land and easement holdings, etc.
- Accounting needs
- Branding and public relations
- Other due diligence and implementation costs

Multi-year general operating support will also be provided to the merged organization, to fund its core land conservation work.

Just beginning to consider a merger? [The Connecticut Land Conservation Council](#) (CLCC) helps organizations assess whether a merger is right for them. Land trusts interested in exploring a merger should contact CLCC's Executive Director, Amy Paterson, at abpaterson@ctconservation.org to inquire about available technical assistance and financial support. Organizations that advance through this initial feasibility stage may then be eligible to apply to PCLB for a merger assistance grant.

Grant Application Process

To initiate the application process, please submit a Letter of Inquiry (LOI) to PCLB by **May 27, 2020**. PCLB staff will follow up with strong applicants in June 2020 to discuss further details of their merger plans and organizations' work. Then, organizations demonstrating engagement in an active merger process will be invited to apply for funding during PCLB's grant cycle in late summer or early fall 2020.

Letter of Inquiry (Due by May 27, 2020)

The LOI should include the following, in no more than 3 pages (not including attachments):

- Names of lead and partner organization(s). Grants will be awarded to the lead organization but are intended to offset costs to all participants.
- Mission and service area of each organization involved, including a map of service areas.
- An outline of the current status of the merger process, including:
 - Name and role of the lead representative for each organization.
 - New name/identity of merged organization, if chosen.
 - Brief update on discussions/negotiations.
 - Any formal commitments made by each organization.
 - Any obstacles identified and solutions considered, including any challenges related to the impact on Board or staff members of each organization.
 - Whether the partners have agreed upon the retention/management of owned properties and easements. If so, please describe.
 - Expected timeline for completion of the merger.
 - Expenses incurred thus far (e.g. consultants, attorneys, etc.).
 - Estimated budget for future expenses.

Letters of inquiry should be emailed to grants@pclbfoundation.org with the subject line: Building Enduring Land Trusts - [Organization Name].

Contact Information

Questions about your organization's eligibility can be addressed to Senior Program Officer Bob Canace at bobc@pclbfoundation.org.

About PCLB

For over twenty years, PCLB has supported land conservation in the Hudson River Valley of New York and in Connecticut. PCLB directs its support to effective organizations that have sufficient capacity to carry out land conservation on a regional scale. In this regard, PCLB is determined to help land trusts in Connecticut grow to expand their impact and become more sustainable. For more information on PCLB's mission and other program areas, visit our website at www.pclbfoundation.org.