



TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE AND MATCH FUNDING FOR CITIES TO DEVELOP THEIR CITY-WIDE BIOCHAR PROJECT

Bloomberg Philanthropies are offering cities an opportunity to apply for support to improve their cities and engage residents in the fight against climate change: with help from Bloomberg Philanthropies expert partners and learning from the success of the Stockholm biochar project.

Recognizing that the fight against climate change is more urgent than ever, Bloomberg Philanthropies is inviting proposals from cities to develop city-wide biochar projects. Selected cities will receive implementation and technical support to help develop their plans and may be eligible to apply for match-funded financial support. Selected cities will work together implementing their biochar projects to help sequester carbon and engage residents in tackling climate change.

WHY IS BIOCHAR IMPORTANT?

Biochar is a charcoal-like material that helps to fight climate change and support improved tree and plant growth. What are the key benefits?

- Production of biochar captures carbon from the atmosphere and locks it into the soil
- When added to soil biochar acts as a soil improver making soils more fertile, helping trees and plants grow better
- Production of biochar produces clean, climate positive energy

THE SUCCESS OF THE STOCKHOLM BIOCHAR PROJECT

The [Stockholm Biochar Project](#) is an internationally ground-breaking project that has turned park and garden waste (biomass) in Stockholm into biochar through a process of high temperature carbonization (pyrolysis). The biochar is used in plant beds and gardens across Stockholm, substituting for finite resources such as sand and peat. The production of biochar captures carbon from the atmosphere (sequestration) and locks it into the soil, produces renewable energy for the local heating system, and engages Stockholm residents in fighting climate change.

Stockholm was a winner of the **Bloomberg Philanthropies 2014 Mayors Challenge** in Europe. The competition helps cities to develop bold and effective ideas, deliver impact for residents, and spread effective strategies to other cities around the world. Few global issues today are as significant as fighting climate change: with the support of Bloomberg Philanthropies' Mayors Challenge prize, Stockholm developed the first large-scale collaboration between city government and residents in the generation of biochar.

IMPACT OF THE PROJECT SO FAR

Since opening in 2017, the Stockholm pilot biochar plant has

- produced more than 100 tonnes of biochar (over a year, in terms of carbon sequestration, the amount of biochar that the pilot plant can produce is the equivalent of taking over 700 cars off the Stockholm roads)
- given over 10 tonnes of biochar direct to citizens for use in their own gardens
- provided renewable heat for Stockholm apartments (over a year, the pilot plant is able to provide renewable heat to up to 80 Stockholm apartments)
- enabled all Stockholm city trees (300 every year) to be planted in biochar, with a 15% observable increase in the foliage of trees planted with biochar
- received acclaim and interest from cities and universities around the world – with more than 2,000 visitors to the Stockholm site
- won national recognition including the Swedish Award for Most Innovative Recycling Project in 2018 and a visit from Crown Princess Victoria of Sweden in 2019.

Biochar has become an integral part of Stockholm’s fight against climate change. The production and use of biochar has been written into Stockholm’s published Climate Action Plan as a key pillar in the city’s strategy to reach net zero emissions by 2040. Political support has been sustained across two mayoral administrations, and current Mayor (Anna König Jerlmyr) and Vice Mayor for Environment (Katarina Luhr) are powerful ambassadors for the project. City-owned company Stockholm Water and Waste (Stockholm Vatten och Avfall) which runs the pilot plant is in discussions with the city-owned energy company (Stockholm Exergi) to build a larger biochar plant in the city.

THE POTENTIAL OPPORTUNITY FOR YOUR CITY

Stockholm’s Biochar Project has received acclaim and interest from cities and universities around the world – with more than 2,000 visitors to the Stockholm site. Now, Bloomberg Philanthropies will support a select group of cities to develop their own biochar projects, integrating the latest technology, replicating and scaling the success of Stockholm’s groundbreaking plant to reduce carbon emissions and improve lives for residents.

To support the development of city-wide biochar projects in other cities, and build on learning from the Stockholm Biochar Project, we are offering three types of support:

1. **Implementation support:** We will provide implementation and delivery support to help short-listed cities develop their ideas into realistic plans, learning from the lessons of the Stockholm Biochar Project
2. **Technical support:** We will provide technical support from global experts to help short-listed cities understand biochar and its uses, how your city can benefit, and the technology available
3. **Financial support:** Following the initial implementation and technical support, cities that may require financial support will be eligible to bid for a range of grants to match their city’s funding up to a maximum of \$400,000

Participating cities will also benefit from robust **best practice sharing and peer-to-peer networking** to share lessons learnt.

HOW DO WE WANT TO WORK TOGETHER?

We want to support cities that want to produce biochar on a city-wide scale and engage their citizens in the fight against climate change. You might be a city that has been investigating the uses of biochar for a while. You might be a city planning a green response to build back better from the Covid-19 pandemic.

We want you to work with us to develop your plan to implement a city-wide biochar project. We also want you to be one of a group of cities working together to develop biochar projects, sharing your learning and learning from others as you develop your plans. We will select a group of cities to support based on responses to this invitation. We will provide implementation and technical support to those cities through Spring-Summer 2021, with potential eligibility to apply for financial support to follow later in 2021 through 2023.

HOW TO RSVP

In selecting cities to work with, we will consider your city's rationale for developing a biochar project, existing political support for the project, and your plans to ensure maximum positive impact for both the climate and residents.

To respond to this invitation, tell us more about your plans by answering the following questions about your city biochar project. **Responses should be submitted via email to Louise Ellaway at lellaway@bloomberg.org no later than 12 PM GMT on Wednesday March 31, 2021.**

Please submit a statement of interest that responds to the following prompts.

Section 1: General Information

1. City Name
2. Name of person completing the application
3. Title of person completing the application
4. Email address of the person completing the application
5. Phone number of the person completing the application
6. Start and end dates of Mayor's current term and if she/he is eligible to run for another term

Section 2: Your City's Biochar Project (Please limit your response to each question to max 250 words).

7. Why do you want to develop a city-wide biochar project?
8. How would your biochar project fit with your other environmental or Mayoral commitments or your Covid-19 response?
9. What engagement and support have you had from your local politicians and/or the Mayor?
10. How far have you developed your plans and what is the potential timetable?
11. What capacity is there to lead and co-ordinate your project?
12. Of the support outlined above, what support from Bloomberg Philanthropies would be most useful for your project?
13. Are you working with any other cities or networks to develop your biochar project? How might you benefit from working with other cities as you develop your plans?

Section 3: Budget

We're keen to understand what funding you have secured, what might you need additional funding for, and at a high level, what budget might you need to get your project operating.

Please complete the following questions with as much detail as you have available at this stage in your project planning:

14. Please state any budget or resources you have already secured for your biochar project
15. Please state estimated costs of your biochar project (that you are aware of at the moment) over an upcoming 2-year period – if you wish to break this down into separate costs (for example research, staffing, operation costs) please do so.
16. Please state any future funding for or income from your biochar project that you think is likely but has not yet been secured.

WHAT'S NEXT?

We will be in touch with any questions and we aim to select participating cities and launch this program in Spring 2021.