



Invitation to Apply... *to the* Sunflower Trails “Trail Champion Cohort”

Sunflower Foundation is excited to offer this learning opportunity to Trail Champions across the state. You or others in your community have worked hard to develop trails; now you are ready to take the next step to evaluate, promote and elevate those trails.

Working with [Harbinger Consultancy](#), we are designing a customized course for Winter 2022 with virtual workshops, 1:1 coaching, technical assistance and peer networking. The course will be approximately 3 months with sessions and coaching offered at different times.

The course is designed to expand your knowledge and connections so you can better champion the trails you love. The focus will be on budget-friendly, Do-It-Yourself (DIY) strategies to evaluate and demonstrate the value of trails... and then create effective messaging for different stakeholders. The course will also tackle the increasingly important issue of diversifying your trail base: users, supporters and volunteers.

We are seeking a limited number of community teams with 2 - 4 individuals from different stakeholder sectors related to local trails. These teams will also have the chance to provide input to Sunflower regarding future support for projects connected to the course curriculum.

Please see next page for more details on the cohort; link to application is below.

To review and submit your application, click [Trail Champion Cohort Application](#)

Submission date for applications: November 9, 2021

Applicants will be notified on or before the week of December 13, 2021

For more information, contact Elizabeth Burger at Sunflower Foundation at eburger@sunflowerfoundation.org

Trail Champion Cohort FAQ's

WHO should apply?

We are seeking community teams of 2-4 individuals from different sectors in your community/region that serve in some kind of stakeholder role in regards to local trails, including but not limited to:

- Economic/community development,
- Chambers of commerce; Tourism/visitor entities,
- Units of local government,
- Nonprofits with missions aligned to active, healthy living; quality of life; and/or equitable opportunities to access trails/green space.

We strongly encourage that each team member represent a different sector. One person on the team will need to serve as “lead” and primary liaison to Sunflower and Harbinger Consultancy.

WHY should I participate?

Curriculum for the Trail Champion Cohort will be designed and led by [Harbinger Consultancy](#), a team nationally known for its integrated approach to community and economic development as those relate to people and places. **This is a unique opportunity for Kansas Trail Champions to benefit from high-level expertise, hands-on coaching and valuable technical assistance in a course customized for the needs of our state.** Course content will include:

- *Tell the Economic Story of Your Trails Without Hiring an Economist*
- *Do-It-Yourself Visitor Surveys for Parks, Trails and the Towns that Serve Them*
- *Do-It-Yourself Trail Research You Can Start Right Away*

The course will also address the shared need to diversify the base of trail stakeholders, from users to supporters to volunteers.

Finally, the cohort will connect Trail Champions across the state and encourage peer networking and sharing to advance collective goals.

WHAT are the logistics?

- Week of January 10, 2022: Course will kick off with introductory session.
- Approximately 8 to 10 sessions will follow over the next 12 to 14 weeks.
- Each live session will be offered twice (Tues @ 12n CST & Thurs @ 6pm CST).
- Participants will have access to recorded sessions & materials.
- All sessions will be virtual, with the exception of the final session in April or May 2022. Depending on COVID, we hope to offer a wrap-up workshop onsite at the Sunflower facility in Topeka.

HOW will teams be selected?

Cohort size will be limited to ensure the best learning environment and personal attention. Community teams will be selected based on the quality of the application; past history and future plans regarding trails; and demonstrated commitment to full engagement to the course and the cohort goals.

As part of the course, the cohort will have opportunities to provide insight and ideas to Sunflower, providing guidance on the best ways to support projects related to the course curriculum (e.g., DIY economic impact analysis, trail user evaluation, marketing and outreach to diversify trail base).

We are excited to offer this course and learn from not only the national experts, but also local experts (you) about advancing trails in the Sunflower State.