What is a Pioneer “Seed” Grant?
Each year DuPont Pioneer offers grants to 4-H clubs for local community improvement projects. The purpose is to provide “seed money” that clubs can use as a starting point on their project. Clubs need to find additional resources in their communities for their projects. Application forms are available at all ISU Extension offices or at www.extension.iastate.edu/4h/pioneergrants.

How much money is granted?
Grants vary from $50 to $500. Proposals are reviewed by a committee of 4-H volunteers and staff. Clubs that received funding in past years must be undertaking a new project to be eligible for funding again. Grants are for new projects, not those already completed or in progress.

How and when should you apply for a grant? Plan a community project based on a need in your community. Develop an action plan and timetable to accomplish your goal. Appoint committee chairs to provide leadership. Invite community partners to join or support your project. Create a budget to determine how much seed money you’ll need. Set a deadline for completion, and decide who will write the final report.

The completed grant application is due to your County Extension office by January 17, 2017. Counties should submit applications to the State 4-H Office by January 31, 2017. All applicants should receive a letter by the end of March. Checks are sent directly to the 4-H clubs awarded.

Completing the Grant Application
Type or write legibly. A 4-H member or committee of 4-H’ers should complete the application. Do not repeat information in the proposal.

- **Statement of need:** Describe the problem/issue in your community you wish to address.
- **Proposed Project:** Describe the project and how it will be of lasting benefit to the community.
- **Goals:** What will be learned by club members of all ages as they plan, carry out and evaluate the project?
- **Methods:** Describe the plan and who will be responsible for completing the project. Develop a timeline that shows when each phase of the plan will be accomplished. Include a maintenance plan if the project requires ongoing care.
- **Involvement:** What part will 4-H members play in the planning and completion of the project and what other individuals or organizations and/or agencies will be involved?
- **Evaluation:** How will you measure the project’s success and completion of goals? How will you share these accomplishments?

Helpful Tips…

**Determining Your Project**
When planning your project, consider sustainability. For example, if you are planting flowers, use perennials rather than annuals. Also include a long-term care plan for watering and weeding the flower bed.

Consult area agencies for project ideas. Local park and recreation departments, community care facilities, public libraries, county conservation boards and historical museums often have needs which can be filled by 4-H clubs.

If the project requires permission, get it before submitting the proposal. Examples are fair boards (fair grounds improvement), city councils (town landscape projects), or county supervisors (rural cemeteries).

**Determining Your Budget**
Requests should fall between $50 and $500. The Pioneer grant should equal no more than half of the total budget.

Your budget should show that your club also is involved in financing your project. A portion of the budget for project materials should come from your club funds or fundraising efforts. Grant money cannot be used for refreshments, T-shirts or recognition items. Many of these items can be donated by other sources.

A brief description of fundraising activities (if any) is helpful. Show evidence of other community involvement in fundraising. These might include donations from businesses or service clubs in the form of money, materials, time, or expertise.

Contributions to your project other than money should be listed in the budget as in-kind donations. Be sure to include the estimated value of all in-kind gifts.

MORE
Don’t Forget Your Report!
A final requirement of the DuPont Pioneer Seed Grant is that your club maintains a record or scrapbook of the entire project.

Include photographs and news articles. You may want duplicate sets, one set to submit at the end of the project and one to keep as part of the club’s history. The award letter has an outline of all items needed to complete your report.

Your final report must be submitted to the county Extension office by Oct. 1. County Extension offices should mail reports to the State 4-H Office where data is recorded and sent to DuPont Pioneer for their review. Proper completion of the report is important if you want to be considered for future seed grants.

Project Suggestions
Many 4-H clubs look for ideas that are unique to their community. Here is a partial list of projects that have been funded with Pioneer seed money:
- Restoring a cemetery or historic monument
- Establishing a native prairie
- Improving ball parks
- Replacing dead trees
- Collecting children’s books for a homeless shelter
- Interviewing senior citizens for a history book or video
- Building or replacing park benches and picnic tables
- Providing service or needed items to a substance abuse center
- Repairing, painting or making curtains for a community center
- Making baby blankets for children’s hospitals or shelters

This is an offer of financial support by to local 4-H Clubs for carrying out worthwhile community improvement projects.

The Iowa 4-H Foundation is proud to partner with DuPont Pioneer to create better communities through 4-H youth in action.