

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

New York Restoration Project Announces Transformative Gift from The Novogratz Family Foundation to Expand Urban Tree Canopy in Northern Manhattan and Across New York City

Support will advance reforestation in Northern Manhattan's Highbridge Park and help revive the iconic American chestnut

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Courtesy of New York Restoration Project

April 15, 2026 — New York, NY — [New York Restoration Project \(NYRP\)](#) is proud to announce a generous gift from **The Novogratz Family Foundation** to support a major urban forestry initiative in Northern Manhattan's Highbridge Park and communities across New York City.

As part of this initiative, NYRP will launch a two-year effort to dramatically increase native tree canopy in its **Highbridge Park**, replacing invasive species and restoring the park's unique urban forest ecosystem. The project will include the planting and care of **700 native trees**, supported by NYRP's Highbridge Park team, dedicated volunteers, and long-term partnership with NYC Parks.

The project will also significantly expand NYRP's **American chestnut restoration efforts** via NYRP's [1,000 Chestnut Challenge](#), planting and distributing **300 American chestnut seedlings citywide** in partnership with community members and environmental advocates. Once one of the most abundant and productive tree species in North America, the American chestnut was nearly wiped out in the early 20th century. This initiative reflects NYRP's long-term commitment to restoring native biodiversity and exploring innovative, research-driven pathways to urban ecological recovery.

Together, these efforts will deliver meaningful environmental and community benefits, including:

- **700 native trees planted over two years in Highbridge Park**
- **300 American chestnut seedlings planted and distributed in community spaces across New York City via NYRP's 1,000 Chestnut Challenge**
- **Enhanced biodiversity and habitat restoration**
- **Increased urban cooling and heat mitigation**
- **Improved stormwater management**
- **Expanded community engagement and access to healthy green space**

"This extraordinary support from The Novogratz Family Foundation is an investment in the future of New York City," said **Lynn Bodnar Kelly, Executive Director of New York Restoration Project**. "By helping NYRP restore and expand the urban forest in Highbridge Park and beyond, this partnership will bring more

beauty, biodiversity, and climate resilience to our city. It will also create more opportunities for New Yorkers to connect with nature in meaningful ways.”

“This was the perfect birthday gift from my wife, Sukey, and our children,” said **Michael Novogratz**. “In a world full of ‘stuff,’ we could sure use more trees. We look forward to watching this urban canopy grow and shade future generations of New Yorkers.”

About New York Restoration Project

Founded in 1995, New York Restoration Project believes that every New Yorker deserves access to high-quality green space. NYRP restores, creates, and cares for community gardens, public parks, and the urban tree canopy across New York City, helping communities thrive through the life-changing benefits of nature. Learn more at nyrp.org

Media Contact

New York Restoration Project

Lauren Wilson

Sr. Director of Marketing & Communications

lwilson@nyrp.org

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