



DC Urban Agriculture Small Grant Program

2021

Request for Applications (RFA)



Chesapeake Bay Trust

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DC Urban Agriculture Small Grant Program

At A Glance

Program Summary:

The DC Urban Agriculture Small Grant Program offers funding to increase the capacity of District farms, particularly for socially disadvantaged farmers, through improved infrastructure and operations.

Deadline:

May 21, 2021 at 6pm EST

Eligible Project Locations:

District of Columbia

Eligible Applicants:

Applicants physically located in the District of Columbia that are Nonprofit organizations; Faith-based organizations; Government agencies; Universities/educational institutions; or Private Enterprises.

Request Amount:

Up to \$10,000

Funds Available:

Approximately \$40,000

Submit Your Application:

https://www.grantrequest.com/SID_1520?SA=SNA&FID=35662

Contact:

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Introduction

The Chesapeake Bay Trust (Trust) is a nonprofit, grant-making organization dedicated to improving the bays, streams, rivers, forests, parks, and other natural resources of all of our local systems, from the Chesapeake to the Coastal Bays to the Youghiogheny River. The Chesapeake Bay Trust is partnering with the [District of Columbia Department of Energy and Environment](#) (DOEE) on the DC Urban Agriculture Small Grant Program. DOEE is the leading authority on energy and environmental issues affecting the District of Columbia. DOEE formalized the [Office of Urban Agriculture](#) in 2020 which works to increase food production in

the District of Columbia and to support a more sustainable, equitable, and resilient food system. The Office is a central hub working with the [DC Food Policy Council](#), sister agencies, the [University of the District of Columbia](#), farmers, and community members to support urban agriculture, increase access to fresh, healthy produce, empower communities, and create green jobs.

The source of funds for this grant program is the Government of the District of Columbia.

Program Goals

District farms are diverse in their form and function, including non-profit, for-profit, in-ground, rooftop, and hydroponic operations. Many of these farms contribute much-needed fresh produce to communities experiencing food insecurity. Currently, residents in Wards 5, 7, and 8 have higher rates of food insecurity and diet-related chronic illness than other District residents, which improved access to fresh produce can help address. Farms can also create valuable community convening spaces, where residents can enjoy the benefits of vibrant green spaces that provide opportunities for exercise, food and nutrition education, and working collaboratively with their families and neighbors. Despite a growing urban agriculture movement in the District, farmers are under-resourced, challenged by high land values, lack essential infrastructure, and have difficulty accessing capital. For socially disadvantaged farmersⁱ, this challenge is compounded by historic disenfranchisement in obtaining access to land and farm funding.

The goals of the DC Urban Agriculture Small Grant Program are to support increased infrastructure and operations at urban farms and to advance strategies to support the success of agriculture initiatives for socially disadvantaged farmers. Food and nutrition education remains an integral component of an informed farm operation and contributes to healthy communities. This grant program seeks to provide funding to building capacity for crop production and distribution, and to increase knowledge within farmers and District residents through agricultural education experiences.

The Trust is committed to the advancement of diversity and inclusion in its award-making and environmental work. As a result, the Trust strongly encourages applications directly from underrepresented groups, and for projects that increase awareness and participation of communities that are traditionally underrepresented, such as communities of color. For a full description of the Trust's efforts to engage under-engaged groups, please see our 2015-2020 Strategic Plan at www.cbtrust.org/strategic-plan.

ⁱ According to the United States Department of Agriculture, a socially disadvantaged group is a group whose members have been subjected to racial or ethnic prejudice because of their identity as members of a group without regard to their individual qualities. (<https://bit.ly/3ddTcvx>)

Eligible Project Types

A successful project proposal should produce outcomes in at least one of the following categories; however, additional points will be awarded for those that address multiple categories:

1. Increase food crop production, processing and/or distribution at an urban farm;
2. Improve distribution and access to fresh foods for residents of District Wards 5, 7, & 8;
3. Construct facilities that enable agricultural education experiences for District residents;
4. Accelerate the business and production capacity for socially disadvantaged farmers; and
5. Advance sustainable agricultural efforts in the District.

Examples of fundable projects include:

- ◆ Fencing, cold storage, wash/pack stations, sheds, pavilions for food processing and education events, hoop houses, greenhouses, and shipping containers for indoor growing
- ◆ Controlled Environment Agriculture technology: lighting, hydroponic and aquaponic components
- ◆ Utility Installation: water and electrical lines, solar panels

- ◆ Farm equipment such as tools and irrigation supplies

A project is NOT eligible if:

1. A law, or an order of a court or agency, requires that the work be done anyway. For example, DOEE’s stormwater management regulations, found at 21 DCMR Part 500, require certain properties to meet a stormwater retention requirement. Exception: A project involving required work IS eligible if the project’s capacity or function is in excess of the required work. (Example: if the regulations required a project of 10,000-gallon storage capacity, and you proposed a 15,000-gallon project, DOEE funding would be available for the extra 5,000 gallons.)
2. The same project is already being funded by another grant or contract. An exception is if the proposed project is adding a new scope that requires additional funding.
3. It uses invasive plant species, herbicides, or pesticides.
4. The applicant is an individual person, or it is an organization without a formal legal non-profit or business status. An “unincorporated association” is therefore, not eligible. (Example: a neighborhood association that has members, a bank account, and rules of organization, but no formal incorporation papers.) Exception and work-around: A sole proprietorship business IS eligible, if registered in the District. An otherwise ineligible person or group could submit their application through an eligible applicant (from the entities list above). If the project is selected, the Trust would award the grant to the eligible entity as the “fiscal agent.”

Continuing conditions of eligibility are that the information in the application is complete and truthful and that the Applicant at all times is able to meet any material conditions stated in its application. For instance, if an Applicant’s ability to fulfill the terms of the grant is based on the availability of skilled staff or volunteers and those staff or volunteers should leave after the application’s submittal or the grant award to the Applicant, the Applicant has the responsibility to advise the Trust in writing of this change in material conditions. Another example of change in material conditions that could result in the loss of eligibility would be the loss of the Applicant’s tax-exempt status.

Eligible Applicants

DOEE and the Trust welcomes requests from the following organizations physically located in the District of Columbia:

- ◆ Nonprofit organizations, including those with IRS 501(c)(3) or 501(c)(4) determinations;
- ◆ Faith-based organizations;
- ◆ Universities/educational institutions; and
- ◆ Private Enterprises.

Funding Availability and Restrictions, and Timeline

Funding Availability: The funding partner, DOEE, and the Trust anticipate approximately \$38,400 in funding available for this RFA.

Funding Restrictions: This grant program can NOT fund the following:

- ◆ Cannabis crop production or distribution;
- ◆ Purchase or rental of office space or farmland;
- ◆ Major equipment like vehicles;
- ◆ Interest payments on loans;
- ◆ Endowments, deficit financing, individuals, building campaigns, annual giving, research, fund raising, or venture capital;

- ◆ Mitigation or other projects required by an existing or pending regulatory permit or action.
- ◆ Political lobbying;
- ◆ Projects and programs located outside of District of Columbia; and
- ◆ Reimbursement for expenses incurred before the date of decision on the application.

Project Timeline: Projects must be completed by September 3, 2021. Requests to extend deadline to meet mini grant objectives will not be considered.

Evaluation Criteria

The following criteria will be used by internal and partner expert reviewers to evaluate applications:

- ◆ **Likelihood of Project Success** (Scale 1 to 20): What is the likelihood of success if this project were to be funded? Success should be defined as the accomplishment of outcomes proposed. Has the applicant presented a clear plan for producing project outputs and achieving project outcomes? Are methodologies sound and consistent with best practices? Are all required application components included for sound evaluation of the application? E.g., site plan or site photos.
- ◆ **Cost Effectiveness/Budget** (Scale 1 to 15): Is the budget appropriate and cost effective? Are the line items budgeted justified in the budget narrative?
- ◆ **Consistency with Request for Applications** (Scale 1 to 15): Is the project addition(s) proposed consistent with the intent of the Request for Applications? I.e., increases the capacity of District farms, particularly for socially disadvantaged farmers, through improved infrastructure and operations.
- ◆ **Partnership and Community** (Scale 1 to 10): Are any key partnerships required, and if so, are the selected partnerships appropriate? Are any partners missing that should have been engaged? Is the community to be served involved appropriately in the project? i.e., were community members involved in the development of the project, was community buy-in obtained, were community needs and desires assessed, and are there individual(s) in the community committed to serving as community leads? Does the applicant provide letter(s) of commitment from project partners?
- ◆ **Multiple Outcomes** (1 additional point per additional outcome): How many and which project outcomes will the proposed project address?

Deadlines

Applicants must submit applications in the **Chesapeake Bay Trust Online System** by **6:00 PM EST on May 21, 2021**. Late applications will not be accepted, and the online funding opportunity will close automatically and promptly at 6 PM EST. Applicants are strongly encouraged to submit at least a few days prior to the deadline given potential for high website traffic on the due date. The Trust cannot guarantee availability of technical assistance for our online system on the deadline date.

Application Review Process

All submitted applications are scored by technical experts in the field supported by this RFP. Reviewers score all applications based on the evaluation criteria listed in the above “Evaluation Criteria” section.

The Trust reserves the right to fund projects and budget items that advance our mission and meet specific funding priorities and criteria.

Awards and Notifications

All applicants will receive a letter stating the funding partnership’s decision. An application may be declined, partially awarded, or fully awarded. If approved, the Trust will send an award agreement with award conditions and due dates of status, progress, and final reports. Awardees are required to return signed award agreements and satisfy any award contingencies.

Upon project completion, awardees are required to complete final reports, which may include but are not limited to submission of all receipts for supplies, invoices for subcontractors/contractors, and copies of timesheets for personnel time used (timesheets must include date, name, time worked per day, and coding to tie the time worked to the award).

The 2021 DC Urban Agriculture Small Grant Program awards will be announced in late May 2021.

Narrative Questions

You will upload a MS Word or PDF file not to exceed three (3) pages of text, excluding photos or materials such as Letter(s) of Commitment, that address the following questions. **To ensure that you address all questions, we recommend that you copy and paste the questions and use them as an outline in your narrative.**

1. Check each of the project areas your project addresses. You may select more than one.

| Check here | Project areas your project addresses |
|------------|--|
| | Increase food crop production, processing and/or distribution at an urban farm |
| | Improve distribution and access to fresh foods for residents of District Ward 5, 7, & 8 |
| | Construct facilities that enable agricultural education experiences for District residents |
| | Accelerate the business and production capacity for socially disadvantaged farmers |
| | Advance sustainable agricultural efforts in the District |

2. **Project Goal:** Provide a detailed explanation about what your project will do to meet the goals of this RFA. Describe how the proposed project outputs will lead to proposed outcomes (as defined and described below).
 - ◆ Output: the immediate results of the work which is being completed (e.g.: the number of people that will attend a workshop focused on the importance of healthy local produce).
 - ◆ Outcome: the change that is prompted as a result of the output listed above (e.g.: increased knowledge about the value of local foods, and increased feeling of self-efficacy about how to access and purchase local produce).
3. **Priority Audience:** Define your priority audience(s). Think about the types and groups of people most relevant to your goal. Who is most likely to benefit from your project? Considering the Trust's commitment to the advancement of diversity in its award-making, provide demographic information about the community or population involved in or served by the project.
 - ◆ Describe how the population and/or the community are involved in the planning, development, and implementation of the proposed project, and in the development of this application.
 - ◆ The Trust encourages applications directly from under engaged and/or socially disadvantaged communities; however, if your organization is not a member of the community served by the grant (for example, an external non-profit doing work on land owned by another entity, such

as a faith-based organization), describe how “ownership” will be transferred to the community and how the ability of the community to carry the work forward will be developed and resourced.

- ◆ Provide your organization’s experience working within the specific communities that you will be prioritizing/engaging. If you have not had significant experience working with or as part of your prioritized demographic, explain how you intend to address this issue.
- ◆ The Trust encourages applicants to establish partnerships with local organizations that may have greater cultural competencies within the prioritized demographic(s).
 - i. Cultural competence involves understanding and appropriately responding to the unique combination of cultural variables which entails the integrated patterns of human behavior such as language, thoughts, actions, customs, beliefs and institutions of racial, ethnic, social or religious groups that the community or population bring to interactions.

4. Answer only if applicable –

- ◆ **Maintenance:** For projects involving an installation, describe how your project will be maintained during and after the grant period. Be sure to address who will maintain, how often, and how ongoing maintenance will be funded. If the project is not an installation and will not require maintenance, state so in the area below.
- ◆ **Consultants:** For projects involving the hiring a consultant, applicants should either (a) have already obtained cost estimates, quotes, or bids from at least three service providers prior to completing the application, or (b) indicate in the proposal that at least three estimates, quotes, or bids will be obtained. If neither route is indicated, the proposal will be deemed ineligible.
 - i. Has/will a consultant be hired and has a contractor been selected?
 - ii. Describe your consultant/contractor selection process, including justification and background of the selected consultant/contractor. If using a bid process, describe the process.

Budget Instructions

Application Budget Upload

You will be asked to upload your application budget. You may use the simple application budget spreadsheet found under the “Grant Application Budget Form” section [here](#).

Matching/leveraged resources are not required; however, if matching or leverage resources are in-hand or being pursued, indicate so in your application budget spreadsheet.

Online Application Budget Information

This online application component will ask you to enter budget category and request totals. These totals will reflect the totals in your application budget spreadsheet, so you will only need to copy and paste the values from the application budget spreadsheet to the Online Application.

Budget Narrative for additional project component(s)

This online application component will ask you to provide a descriptive and itemized budget narrative to justify costs requested.

For any personnel cost requests, list the percentage of overall time devoted to the project by each individual in the budget item column. It is expected that all personnel included in budgets will be directly involved in the

work conducted under this program. Requests that do not include full justification for personnel involved may not be fully funded.

Online Application Submission Instructions

The Trust uses an online system for the application process, and if awarded, project management. To apply for this funding opportunity, use the following invitation only, online application link:

https://www.grantrequest.com/SID_1520?SA=SNA&FID=35662

This will open a new window asking you to log in using your existing username and password (if you have forgotten either of these use the 'forgot password' feature).

By submitting an application to this program, applicants acknowledge that: 1) they are compliant with federal employment and non-discrimination laws and 2) they have not been debarred, convicted, charged or had a civil judgment rendered against them for fraud or related offense by any government agency (federal, state or local) or been terminated for cause or default by any government agency (federal, state, or local). In addition, all final products will be provided to the funding partners for use and distribution at the sole discretion of the funding partners.

Watch our video on how to apply for and submit an application using our online system at

<https://cbtrust.org/grants/>.

Online Application Form

You will be asked to provide or respond to the following information on the online application form: Applicant and Project Information, Work Plan, Narrative Questions, Budget Information, Additional Attachments and Term and Conditions.

**Appendix 1: DOEE Grant Promises, Certifications, Assertions, and Assurances and
Appendix 2: DOEE Grant General Terms and Conditions**

Beginning on next page.