District of Columbia Urban Agriculture Small Award Program

2023

Request for Applications (RFA)

Chesapeake Bay Trust

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District of Columbia Urban Agriculture Small Award Program

At A Glance

Program Summary:
The District of Columbia Urban Agriculture Small Award Program offers funding to increase urban agriculture in the District through technical assistance to residences for home garden installation and management.

Deadline:
January 27, 2023, at 6pm EDT

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

Request Amount:
up to $23,500

Funds Available:
Approximately: $47,000

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

Contact:
Carlton Burns, Program Coordinator, 410-974-2941 ext. 125 cburns@cbtrust.org

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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 our local systems, from the Chesapeake to the Coastal Bays to the Youghiogheny River. The Trust, supported in large part by Maryland’s Chesapeake Bay License Plate and partnerships with other regional funders, engages and empowers diverse groups to take actions that enrich natural resources and local communities of the Chesapeake Bay region. Since 1985, the Trust has awarded over $140 million in awards to municipalities, nonprofit organizations, schools, and public agencies throughout the Chesapeake Bay watershed.

District of Columbia Department of Energy and Environment (DOEE) awarded the Chesapeake Bay Trust to implement the District of Columbia Urban Agriculture Small Award Program in 2022. DOEE is the leading authority on energy and environmental issues affecting the District of Columbia. DOEE formalized the Office of Urban Agriculture (OUA) in 2020 which works to increase food production in the District of Columbia and support a more sustainable, equitable, and resilient food system. OUA 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 award program is the Government of the District of Columbia and the US EPA Chesapeake Bay Implementation Grant.

Program Overview

District of Columbia Urban Agriculture Small Award Program seeks to support urban farms and launch Foodscapes DC, a new OUA program, by providing funding for projects in communities that are experiencing food insecurity and/or food insufficiency. Residents in parts of Wards 4, 5, 7 and 8 have fewer options for groceries and fresh food and have to travel further to access these amenities. While Ward 6 has 15 grocery stores, one for every 6,000 residents, there are only 4 grocery stores East of the Anacostia River serving over 150,000 residents. These same neighborhoods also have fewer farmers markets, which are important food access points for residents who use nutrition benefits like SNAP, WIC and Senior Farmers Market Nutrition Programs, and Produce Plus. Residents who live in low food access areas must travel further to access fresh food, increasing their cost and time burdens. Low food access areas have a higher percentage of low-income residents and Black and Latinx residents than the general District population. As of April 2021 in the District, 12.9% of Black and 17.1% of Latinx households without children experienced food insufficiency, meaning that they did not have enough to eat sometimes or often in the 7 days prior to reporting. This percentage increased for households with children to 21% for Black households, and 29.3% for Latinx households. Reporting from the DC Food Policy Council indicated that in 2019, the senior food insecurity (a lack of consistent access to enough food for an active, healthy life) rate in the District marked 13.9%, making it the highest percentage of senior food insecurity in the nation. These disparities are reflected geographically with Wards 5, 7, and 8 home to the highest rates of food insecure residents in the District.

Foodscapes DC (up to $23,500 per award)

OUA is developing a new program called Foodscapes DC to help address the socio-economic, racial, and geographic disparity in access to fresh, affordable food in the District. Awarded applicants will engage District residents by providing materials and technical support to cultivate crops at their home. Funded applicants will assist to launch the program and develop best practices. Launching this program will include performing site assessments, creating an edible garden plan, providing garden installations and maintenance, and offering ongoing technical support and education for residents to cultivate crops until the end of the project period. Each awardee will target 3-5 home-owning
residents with exterior landscape space where a raised bed, fruiting bushes/trees, and/or perennial herb garden is feasible.

Project installation sites will be determined post-award with guidance from DOEE. Project proposals should demonstrate experience working with District communities with emphasis on food insecure communities as described in the Program Overview.

In future iterations, it is anticipated that the program will expand to include edible landscape infrastructure at rental properties, non-profits, faith-based entities, and indoor growing resources as well. This RFA is focused on home-owning residents.

DOEE and the Trust are committed to the advancement of diversity and inclusion in its award-making and environmental work. 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, see our strategic plan at www.cbtrust.org/strategic-plan and https://cbtrust.org/diversity-inclusion/. DOEE upholds an intimate relationship between the natural environment and the built environment of Washington, DC, and acknowledges the complex history of the land upon which it sits. We strive to align our present and future work with the envisioned, yet not fully realized for all, aspirations of the nation’s capital by serving as a regional, national, and international leader in climate action, resilience, and environmental health. We prioritize equity, environmental sustainability, public health, and economic opportunity for the District’s communities. Learn more about DOEE’s Equity framework at https://doee.dc.gov/node/19312.

1The Road Ahead: 2021 Update on Food Access & Food Security in the District of Columbia
2Opportunities to Strengthen Nutrition Programs in DC to Address Senior Food Insecurity (February 2022)
3 Health Equity Report: District of Columbia 2018

Eligible Applicants

DOEE and the Trust welcome requests from the following entities 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.

All applicants must include Clean Hands Certificate of Compliance or a copy of Certificate of Non-Compliance with a brief explanation of how the applicant will come into compliance by March 2023. Clean Hands Certificate can be obtained for free at https://otr.cfo.dc.gov/page/certificate-clean-hands.

- In addition to the above, eligible applicants must:
  - Demonstrate experience building, cultivating, and maintaining small-scale garden installations
  - Demonstrate technical knowledge of cultivated crops and food growing needs specific to the District

The following types of applicants are NOT eligible:
- Organizations without a formal legal non-profit or business status, i.e. unincorporated associations
- Government entities
- Individual person
Eligible Project Types

Foodscapes DC Projects

**Location:** Project installation sites will be selected post-award with input from DOEE. DOEE-selected sites will primarily focus on homes located in the Anacostia Watershed that meet the defined criteria of food insecure communities, above. While project proposals do not need to include specific locations, applicants should show experience working with District and/or food-insecure communities.

**A successful project proposal should produce outcomes that address the following goals:**
1. Develop best practices to perform site assessments, create an edible garden plan, and offer ongoing technical support and education to site owners.
2. Install and maintain edible gardens in the form of raised beds, edible fruit bushes/trees, and/or perennial herb gardens, as well as associated infrastructure (if applicable), in 3-5 yards of District homeowners, depending on budget and site needs.
3. Develop techniques that are scalable and transferable.
4. Identify best practices for engaging with food insecure households in the District, with the goal of installing garden infrastructure to support at least 2 growing seasons.
5. Develop a plan for tracking and reporting project successes and challenges to make recommendations on how to expand and improve the Foodscape program beyond the scope of this grant. Program recommendations will be a priority component of the required final report for grant awardees.

Projects should provide the following products and services *for at least three* District households in food insecure communities:

- Site assessments
- Garden plans (digital site mapping and written report)
- Installation Services
  - Raised beds, fruiting trees/shrubs, perennial herb gardens
  - Drip irrigation
  - Seasonal seeds and transplants
- Technical support and education
- Maintenance

**NOTE:** DOEE understands the nature of site installations can vary based on client needs, the landscape, and costs. In your budget, please provide an estimated average cost of different types (raised beds, fruit trees, perennial herb garden) of installations. DOEE will work with the awardee, within the scope of their budget, to determine which plans and services to provide at each site. In the budget justification section in the online application, please describe the areas where you foresee the largest areas of cost fluctuation.

**Additional Project Information:**

- **A project is NOT eligible if:**
  - The project is already being funded by another federal or District Government grant or contract.
    - **Exception:** A project funded by another grant or contract IS eligible if the applicant is requesting additional funding for a proposed project outside of the original scope.
  - It uses invasive plant species, herbicides, or pesticides.
- Project deliverables must be completed prior to August 23rd, 2023.
- All awardees will be required to complete the [Urban Agriculture Census](#).

The United States Department of Agriculture defines socially disadvantaged farmers (SDFs) as those belonging to groups that have been subject to racial or ethnic prejudice. SDFs include farmers who are Black or African American, American Indian or Alaska Native, Hispanic or Latino, Asian or Pacific Islander, and women. (https://bit.ly/3ddTcvx)

## Evaluation Criteria

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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Scoring Criteria</th>
<th>Description of Scoring Criteria</th>
<th>Scoring</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Background and History</strong></td>
<td>• Does applicant demonstrate experience and background to perform site assessments, create garden plans, install and maintain gardens, and provide technical support and education?</td>
<td>Scale of 1 to 15</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| **Project Goals**         | • Does the proposal include a reasonable plan for installing at least 3 home edible gardens, with details for how they plan to provide technical and educational support?  
• Does applicant apply current best practices and techniques used in the garden installation, edible garden industry?  
• Does the applicant provide helpful and necessary supporting documents to allow successful evaluation of the application? E.g., site plan or site photos.                                                                                                                                                                                                                          | Scale of 1 to 20 |
| **Outputs and Outcomes**  | • Does the applicant provide an understanding of the steps required to be successful in this project and meet the outcomes of this program?  
• Has the applicant presented a clear plan for producing project outputs and achieving project outcomes?  
• Are methodologies consistent with best practices?                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   | Scale 1 to 15 |
| **Timeline**              | • Are there clear activities for this project?  
• Does the applicant include dates for when these activities will occur that align with at least 2 growing seasons?  
• Are the activities reasonable given the August 23rd, 2023 deadline, budget, and staff allocated for this project?                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     | Scale 1 to 10 |
**Partnerships and Community**

- Does the applicant demonstrate existing relationships with District communities? Does it have a strong history of relationship-building?
- Are the selected partnerships, if any, appropriate? (e.g. previous experience with work proposed, clear community connections, etc.)
- Is it clear that partners are aware of their role and does the applicant provide letter(s) of commitment from project partners?

**Long-term success**

- Does the proposal include details for how the applicant will measure and report project successes and challenges in order to make recommendations for the future of the program?

**Cost Effectiveness / Budget**

- Is the budget appropriate and cost effective? Are the line items budgeted justified in the budget narrative?
- Does the budget include average estimates for installation costs per site?
- Does the budget allow for at least 3-5 garden installations alongside personnel costs for technical and educational support?

**Total Score Possible**

100

**Funding Availability and Timeline**

**Funding Availability:**
- The funding partners anticipate approximately $47,000 in funding available for this program; applicants can request up to $23,500.

**Project Timeline:** Awards will be announced in February 2023. Projects must be completed by August 23, 2023. Requests to extend the deadline to meet award objectives will NOT be considered.

**Deadlines**

Applicants must submit applications in the Chesapeake Bay Trust Online System by 6:00 PM EDT on January 27, 2023. Late applications will not be accepted, and the online funding opportunity will close automatically and promptly at 6 PM EDT. Applicants are strongly encouraged to submit at least a few days prior to the deadline given the potential for high website traffic on the due date. The Trust cannot guarantee the 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 funding partners reserve the right to fund projects and budget items that advance their mission and meet specific funding priorities and criteria.

Awards and Notifications

The 2023 District of Columbia Urban Agriculture Small Award Program awards will be announced in February 2023.

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. The Trust will mail the first award payment to the requesting organization following satisfaction of any phase 1 payment award contingencies, including upload of the signed award agreement. Ten percent of the total award will be held until the final report is submitted and approved. In cases where the awardee fails to submit a status report, progress report, or final report by the due date, the Trust reserves the right to terminate the award agreement and require a refund of funds already transferred to the awardee.

When the project is complete, awardees are required to complete final reports that 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).

All financial back-up documentation will be grouped and numbered to correspond to the budget line item reported as spent. Organizations with outstanding final, progress, or status reports will not be awarded additional awards.

Narrative Questions

You will upload a MS Word or PDF file not to exceed six (6) 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. **Background and History:** Describe your organization and its experience in this work.

2. **Plans and Goals:**
   - **Goals:** Are there any challenges that you foresee in implementing the following goals in the given timeline for at least three District households?
     - i. Develop best practices to perform site assessments, create an edible garden plan, and offer ongoing technical support and education to site owners.
     - ii. Install and maintain edible gardens in the form of raised beds, edible fruit bushes/trees, and/or perennial herb gardens, as well as associated infrastructure (if applicable), in 3-5 yards of District homeowners, depending on budget and site needs.
     - iii. Develop techniques that are scalable and transferable.
     - iv. Identify best practices for engaging with food insecure households in the District, with the goal of installing garden infrastructure to support at least 2 growing seasons.
• **Site Assessment**: Describe your proposed process for site assessments and client consultations to determine the best structure/need to install in each site. What documents will be produced/provided as a result of your assessment? Do you have experience with GIS mapping?

• **Garden Plan**: What does an edible garden plan include? Please attach an example of an edible garden plan that you have developed in the past.

• **Installation Services**: Give detailed examples of your organization’s experience installing edible landscape features and infrastructure (e.g. raised beds, fruit trees, shrubs) and drip irrigation, including the size and scope of installations, and where you source supplies and materials.

• **Technical Assistance and Education**: Describe in detail the ongoing technical and education support you can provide residences, including the duration and frequency. Attach any specific curriculum that you may have.

3. **Outputs and Outcomes**: What are the project outputs? What are the project outcomes? What is the timeline? For the purposes of this RFA, we define these terms in the following ways:

   - **Output**: an immediate result of the work being completed (e.g. the number of people that will attend a workshop focused on the importance of healthy local produce)
   - **Outcome**: a change that is prompted as a result of an output (e.g.: increased knowledge about the value of local foods, and increased feeling of self-efficacy about how to access and purchase local produce)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Output</th>
<th>Outcome</th>
<th>Timeline</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

4. **Partnerships and Community**: Projects must be in Wards 5, 7, or 8 and/or directly benefit food insecure communities (as defined in “Program Overview” of the RFA).

   a. Describe your experience working with District communities and the neighborhoods with which you have worked. Please include details of your history of relationship-building with District communities.

   b. What are your key partnerships? The Trust encourages applicants to establish partnerships with other local organizations that may have greater cultural competencies within the prioritized demographic(s) in order to amplify the benefit to the community. **If you are working with partners, please include letters of commitment from all of them.**

      i. Why were those partnerships selected?
      ii. What makes them the best partners for this work?

5. **Past Grantees**: Have you received funds from the “District of Columbia Urban Agriculture Small Award Program” before? If yes, how did these funds result in improved infrastructure and/or capacity to support your work and organization? **(Please write N/A if not applicable)**

6. **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. **(Please write N/A if not applicable)**

   - Has/will a consultant be hired and has a contractor been selected?
   - What was your consultant/contractor selection process? Include cost estimates received, justification, and background of the selected consultant/contractor. If using a bid process, describe the criteria and process used.
7. **Sustainability:** The Trust aims to invest in projects that have the longest potential longevity and impact, after the award period has ended. Several factors may impact the long-term project value, such as changes in public interest, land use, or changes in mission, staff, or leadership.
   a. What factors may affect the project’s long-term value/impact, and how will you ensure its long-term value is maximized?
   b. How are you promoting crops and best practices that maximize stormwater management best practices?
   c. Can this project serve as a model that could be replicated elsewhere?
   d. *For projects involving infrastructure:* How will your project be maintained during and after the award period? Be sure to address who will maintain the project, for what period of time it will be maintained, and how ongoing maintenance will be funded. Please include drawings of your proposed infrastructure. (Please write N/A if not applicable)

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**Budget Instructions**

**Typical allowable costs are:**

- Employee salaries and benefits;
- Contractor labor, including professional services;
- Accounting and bookkeeping services;
- Communications, including telephone and data services;
- Printing, reproduction, including signage;
- Materials and supplies;
- Computers and printers;
- Small tools;
- Some field equipment, typically below $5,000 in value;
- Postage and shipping;
- Necessary travel, meals and lodging; and
- Insurance.

**Funding Restrictions:**

This award program can NOT fund the following:

- Cannabis crop production or distribution;
- Entertainment;
- Most food;
- Purchase or rental of office space or farmland;
- Land purchases;
- Major equipment above $5,000 in value;
- Lobbying, including salaries and overheads and out-of-pocket expenses;
- Interest payments on loans; and
- Endowments, deficit financing, individuals, building campaigns, annual giving, research, fund raising, or venture capital.

**Financial Management Spreadsheet – Application Budget Upload**

You will be asked to upload your budget using the “Application Budget” worksheet of the Chesapeake Bay Trust’s Financial Management Spreadsheet (FMS), an excel file template. The template can be found by visiting [https://cbtrust.org/forms-policies/](https://cbtrust.org/forms-policies/) where you can also watch a video with instructions on how to complete the FMS.
Financial Management Spreadsheet – Application Budget Information

This online application component will ask you to enter budget category and request totals. These totals will be automatically calculated in the FMS Application Budget, so you will only need to copy and paste the values from the FMS to the Online Application.

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

Additional Budget Justification

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.

NOTE: DOEE understands the nature of site installations can vary based on client needs, the landscape, and costs. In your budget, please provide an estimated average cost of different types (raised beds, fruit trees, perennial herb garden) of installations. DOEE will work with the awardee, within the scope of their budget, to determine which plans and services to provide at each site. In the budget justification section in the online application, please describe the areas where you foresee the largest areas of cost fluctuation.

Online Application Submission Instructions

The Trust uses an online system for the application submission and tracking, and for project management of awarded projects. To apply for this funding opportunity, go to https://cbtrust.org/grants/district-of-columbia-urban-agriculture/ and click on “Get Started” to begin a new application. 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, Timeline, Narrative Questions, Budget Information, Additional Attachments and Term and Conditions.
Appendices: DOEE Grant Promises, Certifications, Assertions, Assurances and DOEE Grant General Terms and Conditions

You may access all necessary Appendices here.