



# **AGRI Urban Agriculture Grant Fiscal Year 2025 Request for Proposals**

**Applications due by 4 p.m. on Thursday, January 30, 2025**

In accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act, this information is available in alternative forms of communication upon request by calling 651-201-6000. TTY users can call the Minnesota Relay Service at 711. The MDA is an equal opportunity employer and provider.

# Contents

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- Grant Summary ..... 3
  - Overview..... 3
  - Funding availability..... 3
  - Priorities ..... 3
  - How to apply ..... 3
  - Definitions ..... 5
- Grant Eligibility ..... 6
  - Eligible applicants ..... 6
  - Collaboration ..... 6
  - Eligible projects ..... 7
  - Eligible expenses..... 7
  - Ineligible expenses ..... 7
  - Matching funds..... 8
  - Letters of support..... 8
- Application Review Policies ..... 9
  - Review process ..... 9
  - Conflicts of interest ..... 9
  - Privacy notice and data classification..... 9
- Requirements for Grant Recipients ..... 11
  - Pre-award risk assessment ..... 11
  - Accountability and reporting..... 12
  - Grant award agreement ..... 12
  - Payments ..... 12
  - Site visits ..... 13
  - Bidding requirements..... 13
  - Publicity ..... 13
  - Affirmative action and non-discrimination policy ..... 13
  - Audits of project ..... 13
  - Voter registration requirement ..... 14
- AGRI Background and Program Goals ..... 14
- Project Evaluation Profile ..... 15
- Application Questions ..... 16
- Appendix A – Eligible Cities ..... 21
- Appendix B – Eligible Tribal Communities ..... 23

# Grant Summary

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## Overview

The Minnesota Department of Agriculture (MDA) is now accepting applications for the Agricultural Growth, Research, and Innovation (AGRI) Urban Agriculture Grant program.

Grant funds are available to promote urban youth agricultural education and urban agriculture community development within the city limits of urban or peri-urban areas. This grant funds projects that help nonprofit organizations, for-profit businesses, schools or school districts serving preschool or K-12 students, Native American tribal communities, and local government entities obtain the materials and services necessary to successfully promote urban youth agricultural education and urban agriculture community development.

## Funding availability

We expect to award approximately \$1.87 million using a competitive review process. Applicants may request between \$5,000 and \$75,000 per project to buy equipment, make physical improvements, or cover staff time or contractor time to develop and implement urban agriculture programs. There is not a matching funds requirement for this grant.

## Priorities

It is the policy of the State of Minnesota to ensure fairness, precision, equity, and consistency in competitive grant awards. This includes implementing diversity and inclusion in grant-making.

[Policy 08-02: Rating Criteria for Competitive Grant Review \(PDF\)](#) sets up the expectation that grant programs intentionally show how the grant serves diverse populations, especially populations experiencing inequities or disparities.

This grant will prioritize urban agriculture projects that demonstrate a commitment to positive environmental impacts, promote economic justice, and are located in or serve distressed or disadvantaged communities. A description of each priority area can be found in the [Definitions](#) section of this request for proposals (RFP). Use this [map tool](#) from the USDA to determine if your project is located in or serves a distressed or disadvantaged community.

## How to apply

Apply for the AGRI Urban Agriculture grant using our [online application system](#).

- If you're a new user, you need to create an account first.
- Once you're logged in, select AGRI Urban Agriculture Grant 2025.

Applications are due by **4 p.m. Central Time (CT) on Thursday, January 30, 2025**.

- We will not accept late applications.
- Apply early so that there is enough time to get help with the application process. It's best practice to submit your application at least 24 hours in advance.
- We are not responsible for any technical or logistical problems that result in a late submission. It is your responsibility to ensure we receive your application before the deadline.

## Application guidelines

- Use plain, easily understood language. Write for reviewers who have general knowledge but may not have a thorough or deep understanding of your organization or project.
- Answer all questions completely within the character limits specified in the grant application.
- Review the [Project Evaluation Profile](#) included in this document as it is used to score and compare the grant applications.

## Tips for applicants

- Clearly explain the importance or potential impact of your project.
- Make sure your budget is realistic, includes only eligible items, and clearly explains how the money will be spent. More detail is better than less.
- Include just one or two clear objectives rather than trying to accomplish too much. Simple projects with one or two clear objectives tend to work better.
- Explain how the project will be evaluated or measured for success.

## Timeline and deadlines

Thursday, January 23, 2025, 4 p.m. CT...Deadline to ask grant program questions.

Thursday, January 30, 2025, 4 p.m. CT...Applications due.

Week of March 31, 2025.....Applicants notified of decisions; grant agreement negotiations begin.

Friday, May 15, 2025.....Anticipated project start date (after the grant contract is fully signed).

## Questions

For questions on the grant program or application:

- Submit your question in writing before **4 p.m. CT on Thursday, January 23, 2025**.
- Email [MDA.AGRIGrants@state.mn.us](mailto:MDA.AGRIGrants@state.mn.us) with “AGRI Urban Ag Grant” in the subject line.

Note: MDA employees are not authorized to give advice or feedback on any application. Applicants who solicit or receive advice from unauthorized MDA employees may be disqualified from eligibility for a grant award.

For help with the online application system:

- Call 651-201-6500, or
- Email [MDA.AGRIGrants@state.mn.us](mailto:MDA.AGRIGrants@state.mn.us) with “AGRI Urban Ag Grant” in the subject line.

## Definitions

For purposes of the AGRI Urban Agriculture grant, we use the following definitions to determine if a proposal falls into one of the areas given priority for this funding:

### Distressed community

A distressed community is a zip code-based geographic designation which identifies communities where their economic wellbeing is significantly lower than other communities. This designation is determined using the Distressed Communities Index (DCI), developed by the Economic Innovation Group. The DCI combines seven publicly-available metrics to assess the economic wellbeing of communities, including percent of the population 25 years and older without a high school degree and percent of the population living under the poverty line.

### Disadvantaged community

A disadvantaged community is a census tract-based geographic designation developed by the Climate and Economic Justice Screening Tool (CEJST) from the White House Council on Environmental Quality. Census tracts are considered disadvantaged if they meet the threshold for at least one of the CEJST's eight categories of burden: Climate, Energy, Health, Housing, Legacy Pollution, Transportation, Water and Wastewater, or Workforce Development.

### Economic justice

Examples of economic justice may include the creation of living-wage jobs; the reduction or elimination of health disparities related to food access; the protection of land tenure; the availability of entrepreneurial education and skills training; or the expansion of urban lands for agricultural use.

### Environmental impact

Examples of positive environmental impact may include the promotion of clean water, healthy soils, carbon sequestration, or pollinator habitats; the reduction of waste or more efficient use of energy, water, nutrients, or other inputs; or the promotion of organic or sustainable agriculture.

### Urban

Urban means a city with a population of 5,000 people or more. See Appendix A and Appendix B for a list of eligible areas in Minnesota.

# Grant Eligibility

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## Eligible applicants

Entities interested in stimulating urban agricultural education or urban agriculture community development are eligible. This includes:

- Nonprofit organizations
- For-profit businesses
- Schools or school districts serving preschool or K-12 students
- Native American tribal communities
- Local government entities

This grant is limited to projects in communities listed in [Appendix A – Eligible Cities](#) and [Appendix B – Eligible Tribal Communities](#).

School-based projects serving a city included in Appendix A or a tribal area included in Appendix B are eligible regardless of the physical location of the project.

Applicants should review the [conflicts of interest](#) section prior to applying. The selected grantee must agree to these rules as a part of signing the grant contract agreement.

Applicants must:

- Be in good standing with the State of Minnesota:
  - No back taxes owed.
  - No defaults on Minnesota state-backed financing for the last seven years.
  - Acceptable performance on past MDA grants.
  - Compliant with current state regulations.

MDA employees, their spouses, and businesses owned by them are not eligible to apply.

## Collaboration

Applicants are encouraged, but not required, to work in partnership with other organizations or groups in the community to enhance their urban agriculture grant project.

Organizations may apply on behalf of and act as fiscal agents of other organizations that meet the eligible applicant criteria. If you are using a fiscal agent, contact us for further instructions.

## Eligible projects

All project expenses must directly support the goals of promoting urban youth agricultural education or urban agriculture community development within the city limits of urban or peri-urban areas as defined in the eligible locations section. Projects must help multiple farmers and/or youth.

In addition, projects must:

- Not start until the grant contract is signed by all parties and has reached its start date.
- Begin within one year of the contract start date.
- Be completed by **May 14, 2028**. Contracts cannot be extended beyond three years.
- Be conducted in Minnesota.

## Eligible expenses

The AGRI Urban Agriculture Grant can cover personnel (staff/contractor), supplies, equipment (including the cost of construction and installation), transportation, or translation costs that are directly related to costs of the project.

Eligible expenses and projects include but are not limited to:

- Building a greenhouse at a school to teach agricultural lessons, promote skills training, or extend the growing season
- Supplies and materials to start or sustain a school garden
- Supplies and materials for the construction of raised beds, vertical agriculture production, community gardens, rooftop farms, etc. that serve multiple farmers
- Transportation to Minnesota farms for youth field trips
- Value-added or other meat processing equipment to support a school-based ag program
- Developing curriculum and facilitating ag-related job training
- Providing professional development opportunities relating to urban agriculture
- Starting or sustaining a youth agriculture club (e.g., FFA, 4-H, environmental club)
- Hiring youth interns or staff to support an ag-based program
- Providing translation services for project-specific materials and content

## Ineligible expenses

Ineligible expenses include but are not limited to:

- Expenditures incurred before the grant agreement is signed by all parties
- Land rental and purchases
- General operations, overhead, and indirect costs (expenses of doing business that are not readily identified with the project)
- Amusement, diversion, or social activity costs
- Donated or volunteer (in-kind) services. While these may be given to an applicant by professional and technical personnel, consultants, and other skilled and unskilled labor, the value of these services is not an eligible cost.
- Amusement, diversion, or social activity costs

- Fundraising
- Taxes, except sales tax on goods and services
- Lobbyists, political contributions
- Bad debts, late payment fees, finance charges, legal costs, or contingency funds
- Parking or traffic violations
- Out of state transportation and travel expenses. Minnesota will be considered the home state for deciding whether travel is out of state.

## **Matching funds**

Applicants are not required to provide matching funds to the grant award. Up to 100% of the total project cost may be covered by the grant, with a minimum grant award of \$5,000 and a maximum grant award of \$75,000. However, applicants and their grant proposals will be evaluated based on their long-term sustainability, including their ability to support the project after the expiration of grant funding.

## **Letters of support**

Applications must include at least one letter of support. Letters of support can be written by community partners, community members who may directly benefit from the project, financial or business contacts showing financial sustainability, or financial institutions or other organizations that will be used for external funding, etc. The letters will help demonstrate support for the project and may boost the application's evaluation score. For example, if the proposed project was an urban FFA chapter, it would be appropriate to include a letter of support from the school board.



# Application Review Policies

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## Review process

A review committee made up of MDA staff and external reviewers evaluates all eligible applications based on the criteria in the Project Evaluation Profile. Reviewers may recommend whole or partial funding of a project. The commissioner of agriculture reviews the committee recommendations and makes the award decisions. Both the review committee and commissioner may consider geographic distribution, applicant's history as a state grantee including progress made on previous grants, compliance with state rules and regulations, and capacity to perform the work.

The MDA will notify applicants, both successful and unsuccessful, in writing. Applicants may request a summary of reviewer comments.

## Conflicts of interest

State grant policy requires that steps and procedures are in place to prevent individual and organizational conflicts of interest, both in reference to applicants and reviewers ([MINN. STAT.16B.98](#) and [Conflict of Interest Policy for State Grant-Making, 2022 \(Word\)](#)).

Organizational conflicts of interest occur when:

- A grantee or applicant is unable or potentially unable to give impartial assistance or advice to the MDA due to competing duties or loyalties.
- A grantee's or applicant's objectivity in carrying out the grant is or might be otherwise impaired due to competing duties or loyalties.

In cases where a conflict of interest is suspected, disclosed, or discovered, the applicant or grantee will be notified and actions may be pursued, including but not limited to disqualification from eligibility for the grant award or termination of the grant agreement.

## Privacy notice and data classification

The information provided by an applicant will be used to assess the applicant's eligibility to receive a grant under this program. The decision to apply for this grant is voluntary, and applicants are not legally required to provide any of the requested information. Applicants may decline to complete this application without any legal consequence. However, only completed applications will be considered for a grant; incomplete applications will not be considered.

Data provided in this application is initially classified by the Minnesota Data Practices Act as private or nonpublic, although some or all of the data will generally become public at various points of the application process unless the data are otherwise classified by state or federal law. Access to private or nonpublic data is limited to those authorized by law, including but not necessarily limited to MDA staff and contractors with a valid work assignment to access the data, parties authorized by the applicant, parties identified in a valid court order or federal subpoena, Minnesota Management and Budget, Minnesota Department of Administration, the state auditor, and the legislative auditor. If necessary, the MDA may also share the data with law enforcement or the Office of the Attorney General.

Per Minnesota's statute on grants ([MINN. STAT. 13.599](#)):

- Names and addresses of grant applicants, and the grant amount requested, will be public data once application responses are opened.
- All remaining data in application responses (except for data otherwise classified by law, including trade secret information, see below) becomes public data after the evaluation process is completed (for the purposes of this grant, when all grant agreements have been fully executed).
- All data created or maintained by the MDA as part of the evaluation process (except trade secret information, see below) will generally be public data after the evaluation process is completed.

Procedure for claiming protection of trade secrets:

Trade secret information is classified as not public data. In order to qualify as trade secret information, the data in question must be provided to the MDA by the affected person (i.e. the data must be about the applicant) and otherwise meet the legal definition found in statute ([MINN. STAT. 13.37, subd. 1\(b\)](#)). In order for an applicant to assert trade secret protection for data submitted as part of this application: the applicant must: 1) clearly identify the specific formula, pattern, compilation, program, device, method, technique or process that the applicant believes to be trade secret information; 2) describe what efforts the applicant takes to maintain the secrecy of the data; and 3) adequately explain how the data derive(s) independent economic value from not being generally known to, and not readily ascertainable by proper means by, other persons. Merely asserting trade secret protection does not, in and of itself, classify the data in question as not public; determining what data meet the definition of trade secret information is ultimately the legal responsibility of the MDA, and the MDA cannot guarantee that data identified as trade secret information by an applicant will be classified as such. If the MDA determines that data do not meet the definition of trade secret information, the data in question will be available to the public unless the applicant secures a court order saying otherwise.

All persons, businesses, and individuals applying for grants in the state of Minnesota must comply with applicable laws. Under the law titled Right of Setoff ([MINN STAT 270C.65, subd. 3](#)), a grantee consents to disclosure of its social security number, federal employer tax identification number, and/or Minnesota tax identification number, already provided to the State, to federal and state tax agencies, and to state personnel involved in the payment of state obligations. These identification numbers may be used in the enforcement of federal and state tax laws which could result in action requiring a grantee to file state tax returns and pay delinquent state tax liabilities, if any.

# Requirements for Grant Recipients

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## Pre-award risk assessment

Under [Policy 08-06: Policy on Pre-Award Risk Assessment for Potential Grantees \(PDF\)](#), the MDA is required to complete a pre-award risk assessment of grantees selected to receive a grant award of \$50,000 or greater. Applicants will be asked to submit documents relevant to their entity.

If the MDA determines that the awardee has substantial risks that inhibit its ability to perform the required duties under the grant contract agreement, then the MDA may either request more information for the purpose of satisfying the concerns, develop a risk mitigation plan to protect the interests of the state, or not award the grant.

## Nonprofit organizations

- A copy of the nonprofit's most recent Form 990 or Form 990-EZ with the Internal Revenue Service. If the nonprofit has not been in existence long enough or is not required to file Form 990 or Form 990-EZ, then they must submit the following information:
  - Proof of its tax-exempt status
  - Most recent board-reviewed financial statements
  - Documentation of its internal controls
- Most recent certified financial audit if required to complete one under Section 309.53, Subd. 3.
- Confirmation that it is in good standing with the Office of the Secretary of State.
- Confirmation that none of its current board members or staff with authority to access grant funds have been convicted of a felony financial crime in the last 10 years.

## For-profit businesses

- A copy of the business' most recent federal and state tax returns. If the business has not been in operation long enough to have a tax return, then they must submit documentation of internal controls.
- Current financial statements including a balance sheet, income statement, and statement of cashflows.
- Confirmation that the business entity is not under bankruptcy proceedings and has disclosed any liens on assets.
- Confirmation that the business is in good standing with the Office of the Secretary of State.
- Confirmation that none of its current board members or staff with authority to access grant funds have been convicted of a felony financial crime in the last 10 years.

## Political subdivisions

Political subdivisions, including counties, towns, cities, school districts, and other municipal corporations or political subdivisions of the state authorized to enter into contracts will need to certify that none of its current public officials, board members, or staff with authority to access grant funds have been convicted of a felony financial crime in the last 10 years.

## Accountability and reporting

The grantee must submit an annual report each year of the grant. A final report must be submitted prior to receiving final payment. Annual and final reports must include a summary of project results to-date, impact of the grant program, and three to five photos of the project. The MDA reserves the right to modify reporting requirements during the project. Information submitted in any report or survey will be a public record.

The MDA conducts follow-up surveys to help determine the long-term impacts of the grant. Grantees must respond to requests for follow-up information for three years beyond the term of the grant agreement. Failure to respond to these requests promptly may affect a grantee's ability to secure future funding from the MDA.

## Grant award agreement

Grant contract agreement templates are available for review on the [Office of Grants Management Forms and FAQs](#) webpage.

Upon approval of an application, completion of the pre-award risk assessment, and before beginning work on the grant project and receiving reimbursements, the applicant must:

- Complete an IRS W-9 form or register as a vendor in SWIFT, the state's accounting system, or confirm that the information in SWIFT is still correct, and
- Submit other required documentation within 30 days of award notification, and
- Sign a grant contract agreement showing their intention to complete the proposed tasks. The agreement also authorizes the MDA to monitor the progress of the project. This agreement must be signed within 30 days of being sent to the grantee.

Eligible expenses may only be incurred after the contract has been signed by all parties. Grant contracts will have an expected end date of May 14, 2028, and cannot be extended.

## Payments

In the budget section of the application, Grantees can request an advanced payment of up to 50% of their total award amount or \$25,000, whichever is less. Advance funds will not be awarded to organizations with other open MDA grant agreements. These requests will be reviewed as a part of the grant contract agreement negotiation process. The MDA reserves the right to not honor requests for initial advanced payments or subsequent advances. Advance funds must be reconciled within one year of the start of the grant contract. Any cash advance that violates the terms of the grant agreement or does not adequately support the approved project will need to be repaid.

All other grant funds are dispersed on a reimbursement basis. All grantee requests for reimbursement must correspond to the approved grant budget. To receive grant payments, grantees must provide proof that grant project work has been done by submitting details of each purchase on receipts or invoices, and proof that the vendors have been paid.

Annual progress reports are required to be submitted during the duration of the project. Grant payments shall not be made on grants with past due progress reports unless the MDA has given the grantee a written extension.

Grant payments may be used to fulfill federal and state tax liabilities or may be withheld until the grantee has paid any tax liabilities (MINN. STAT. 270C.65, Subd. 3 and other applicable laws).

## Site visits

The grant agreement allows the MDA to monitor the progress of the project. The MDA will perform a monitoring visit for all grantees with awards of \$25,000 or more before a final payment is approved. Other grantees may receive monitoring visits at the discretion of the MDA.

## Bidding requirements

All funded applicants will be required to abide by the state's [bidding requirements](#) for larger purchases. Most grantees will likely need to follow the non-governmental/nonprofit organization tab.

## Publicity

All projects funded must publicly credit AGRI funding, including on the grantee's website when practical.

## Affirmative action and non-discrimination policy

The grantee agrees not to discriminate against any employee or applicant for employment because of race, color, creed, religion, national origin, sex, marital status, status in regard to public assistance, membership or activity in a local commission, disability, sexual orientation, or age in regard to any position for which the employee or applicant for employment is qualified ([MINN. STAT. 363A.02](#)). The grantee agrees to take affirmative steps to employ, advance in employment, upgrade, train, and recruit minority persons, women, and persons with disabilities.

The grantee must not discriminate against any employee or applicant for employment because of physical or mental disability in regard to any position for which the employee or applicant for employment is qualified. The grantee agrees to take affirmative action to employ, advance in employment, and otherwise treat qualified disabled persons without discrimination based upon their physical or mental disability in all employment practices such as the following: employment, upgrading, demotion or transfer, recruitment, advertising, layoff or termination, rates of pay or other forms of compensation, and selection for training, including apprenticeship ([Minnesota Rules, part 5000.3500](#)).

The grantee agrees to comply with the rules and relevant orders of the Minnesota Department of Human Rights issued pursuant to the [Minnesota Human Rights Act](#).

## Audits of project

The grantee's books, records, documents, and accounting procedures and practices of the grantee or other party that are relevant to the grant or transaction are subject to examination by the granting agency, the commissioner of administration, the legislative auditor, and the state auditor, as appropriate ([MINN. STAT. 16B.98, subd. 8](#)). This requirement will last for a minimum of six years from the grant agreement end date; receipt and approval of all final reports; or the required period of time to satisfy all state and program retention requirements, whichever is later.

## Voter registration requirement

The grantee will provide voter registration services for its employees ([MINN. STAT. 201.162](#)).

## AGRI Background and Program Goals

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The Agricultural Growth, Research, and Innovation Program (AGRI) was established to advance Minnesota's agricultural and renewable energy industries ([MINN. STAT. 41A.12](#)). AGRI has made significant economic impacts by increasing productivity, improving efficiency, and assisting the development of agricultural products. The primary goal of the AGRI Urban Agriculture Grant is to promote urban youth agricultural education and urban agriculture community development within city limits of urban or peri-urban areas.

# Project Evaluation Profile

AGRI Urban Agriculture evaluation criteria	Maximum score
<p><b>Project design</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Project advances urban youth agricultural education or urban agriculture community development.</li> <li>Proposal includes objectives that are clear and concise.</li> <li>Organization has a realistic plan for project evaluation that will inform future programming.</li> </ul>	20
<p><b>Organizational capacity</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Application demonstrates the entity has the capacity to successfully implement and sustain the project.</li> </ul>	15
<p><b>Community engagement</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Proposal demonstrates community engagement in and support for the project.</li> <li>Project demonstrates new or continued community partnerships.</li> <li>Application includes strong letter(s) of support.</li> </ul>	15
<p><b>Environmental impact</b></p> <p>Demonstrates a commitment to positive environmental impact such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Promotion of organic and sustainable agriculture</li> <li>Promotion of clean water, healthy soils, carbon sequestration, or pollinator habitat</li> <li>Reduction of waste or more efficient use of energy, water, nutrients, or other inputs</li> </ul>	5
<p><b>Economic justice</b></p> <p>Demonstrates a commitment to economic justice, such as through:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Creation of living-wage jobs</li> <li>Reducing or eliminating health disparities related to food access</li> <li>Protection of land tenure</li> <li>Provision of entrepreneurial education and skills training</li> <li>Expansion of urban lands for agricultural use</li> </ul>	5
<p><b>Distressed or disadvantaged communities</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Project is located in or meaningfully serves a distressed or disadvantaged community.</li> <li>Proposal demonstrates organization’s experience working with or plans to work with distressed or disadvantaged communities.</li> <li>Proposal describes how grant-funded activities will benefit distressed or disadvantaged communities.</li> </ul>	10
<p><b>Work plan</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Work plan is thorough and realistic.</li> <li>A detailed description of each step of the grant project including estimated dates is included. Project must be completed by May 14, 2028.</li> </ul>	15
<p><b>Budget</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Budget table and budget narrative are consistent.</li> <li>Budget narrative clearly details all project costs.</li> <li>Budget is cost-effective and amounts are backed by quotes or other sources.</li> </ul>	15
<p><b>Total</b></p>	<b>100</b>

# Application Questions

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## Contact information

### Applicant information

- Point of contact name
- Organization name
- Organization mailing address
- Organization telephone
- Organization email

### Authorized representative

- If awarded a grant, is the person authorized to sign contracts on behalf of the organization the same as the point of contact person listed above? (Yes or No)
- If no, please provide the following authorized representative information for signing any resulting grant contract agreement:
  - Name
  - Title
  - Telephone
  - Email

## Eligibility

Confirm that the following statements apply to you and your organization.

- I have the authority to apply for this grant. (Yes or No)
- The MDA is unable to reimburse for any work that is performed prior to the start date of the contract. Has work started on your proposed project or will work start before the grant contract agreement is signed by all parties? (Yes or No)

### Location eligibility

- Is the proposed project location listed in either Appendix A or Appendix B? (Yes or No)

If yes, answer each of the following eligibility questions as applicable to your project:

- The organization is a city with a population over 5,000. (Yes or No)
- The school or school district is in or serves a city included in Appendix A or a tribal community included in Appendix B. (Yes or No)
- The proposed project serves tribal communities and is located within the boundaries of federally recognized tribal land. (Yes or No)



## Previous grants

- Have you previously received an AGRI Urban Agriculture Grant or any grants from the Minnesota Department of Agriculture for similar projects? (Yes or No)
  - If yes, briefly describe your previous grant project(s), including date(s), amount(s) awarded, and funding source(s). (1,000 characters, including spaces)

## Project summary

### Grant request

- Project name.
- Location(s) where project will take place.
- Total grant request (minimum \$5,000, maximum of \$75,000.)
  - Grant amount requested.
  - Total project cost.
- Expected project end date (no later than May 14, 2028). Note:
  - Projects must begin within one year of the contract start date.
  - Contracts may last a full three years from start date.
  - You will have up to two months after your contract end date to submit for a reimbursement.
  - All items and services must be paid for by the end date of the contract.

### Project description

Provide a brief description of your project outlining your goals, what you plan to use your grants funds for, and the location(s) of the project. Limit your description to three to five sentences. The summary of this proposed project must be suitable for dissemination to the public. (1,200 characters, including spaces)

### Project design

Describe how the proposed project will specifically advance urban youth agricultural education or urban agriculture community development. (2,500 characters, including spaces)

### Objectives

Describe three to five project objectives and explain how they will support the mission of the grant. (2,500 characters, including spaces)

### Evaluation plan

Describe your organization's plan to evaluate the impact of the grant project. Examples of measurable outcomes include the number of youths served, the number of jobs created, wages generated, the number of people trained or educated, the amount of human and organizational capacity-building facilitated, and the quantity of agricultural products produced. (2,500 characters, including spaces)

## Organizational capacity

Provide a summary of your organization (2,000 characters, including spaces). This summary should stand alone to describe:

- The mission and goals of your organization.
- The services and products provided by your organization.
- The years of experience and years at project location(s).
- Your organization's experience in urban agriculture, community engagement, and/or youth education.
- The ownership and leadership structure of your organization.

Describe how your organization will sustain the project after you've used up the requested grant funds. (1,200 characters, including spaces)

## Community engagement

Describe how your organization will work with established or new community partners to leverage resources and increase the quality or quantity of services provided. You must upload at least one letter of support from a community partner in the Letters of Support section. (1,200 characters, including spaces)

## Environmental impact

Describe how your proposed project will have a positive environmental impact. Include information relating to topics such as the promotion of clean water, healthy soils, carbon sequestration, or pollinator habitats; the reduction of waste or more efficient use of energy, water, nutrients, or other inputs; the promotion of organic or sustainable agriculture; and/or any other relevant information you wish to provide regarding your proposal's positive environmental impact. (1,200 characters, including spaces)

## Economic justice

Describe how your proposed project demonstrates a commitment to economic justice. Include information relating to topics such as job creation, reduction or elimination of health disparities related to food access, protection of land tenure, available entrepreneurial education and skills training, expansion of urban lands for agricultural use, and/or any other relevant information you wish to provide regarding your proposal's commitment to economic justice. (1,200 characters, including spaces)

## Distressed or disadvantaged communities

Using this [map tool](#), check if your project is in a shaded area and answer the following questions:

- Is the proposed project located in or meaningfully serve a distressed or disadvantaged community as defined on the USDA Rural Development map? Yes/No
- Provide a summary of how your organization plans to work with or has worked with distressed or disadvantaged communities. (1,200 characters, including spaces)
- Describe how the grant funded activities will benefit distressed or disadvantaged communities. (1,200 characters, including spaces)

## Work plan

Complete a work plan table.

The work plan table is an overview of the steps you will take to successfully complete your project. For example, you might include target dates for requesting quotes, ordering equipment, hiring contractors, and full launch of the project. Don't plan to begin any work before the anticipated start date of projects (May 15, 2025).

In the online application, you can download the table from Google Drive by clicking "File" and selecting "Download As." Submit your work plan table as an Excel file (file size limit: 2 MB).

Timeframe	Description of task or action item	Responsible party
Example: June 2025	Order greenhouse	Garden Coordinator

## Budget

Complete a budget table.

The budget table is an overview of how grant funds will be spent and should reflect the total grant funds requested. In the online application, you can download the table from Google Drive by clicking "File" and selecting "Download As." Submit your budget table as an Excel file (file size limit: 2 MB). This budget will be included in your grant contract agreement.

Item	Quantity	Cost per unit	Total amount	Source of estimate
Example: Tomato Seed Packets	15	\$4.00	\$60.00	Joe's Seed Co.

## Budget narrative

Explain how the expenses outlined in the budget table will enable you to increase urban agricultural production capacity, enhance community education, and/or increase youth involvement in urban agriculture. (1,200 characters, including spaces).

Detail how the funds will be used and justify each expense listed in the budget table (1,000 characters, including spaces).

Explain sources of funds for any ongoing maintenance of equipment. (500 characters, including spaces).

Describe the necessity for grant funding to complete this project. (1,000 characters, including spaces).

## Costs and investments

Describe your organization's investments (monetary or non-monetary) in this project. If working with partners on the project, you may also include information about their investments (monetary or non-monetary). If contributing a cash match to the project, indicate the amount and source of the funding. (2,500 characters, including spaces).

## Advance funds

You may request an advanced payment of up to 50% of your total award amount or \$25,000, whichever is less, at the start of the grant contract agreement. Advance funds must be reconciled within one year of the start of the grant contract. Additional payments will not be made until advanced payments have been accounted for. The MDA reserves the right to not honor requests for initial advanced payments. Note that any cash advance that violates the terms of the grant agreement or does not adequately support the approved project will need to be repaid.

- Are you requesting advance funds? (Yes or No)
  - If yes, how much?
- Justify your need for upfront funding. (500 characters, including spaces)

## Letters of support

Letters of support are required for all applications. Letters of support can be written by community partners, financial or business contacts showing financial sustainability, or financial institutions or other organizations that will be used for external funding, etc. The letters will help demonstrate support for your project and may boost your application's evaluation score. For example, if the proposed project was an urban FFA chapter, it would be appropriate to include a letter of support from the school board.

- Letter of Support 1, File Size Limit: 2 MB.
- Letter of Support 2, File Size Limit: 2 MB.
- Letter of Support 3, File Size Limit: 2 MB.

## Appendix A – Eligible Cities

City	County
Albert Lea	Freeborn
Albertville	Wright
Alexandria	Douglas
Andover	Anoka
Anoka	Anoka
Apple Valley	Dakota
Arden Hills	Ramsey
Austin	Mower
Baldwin (township)	Sherburne
Baxter	Crow Wing
Becker (township)	Sherburne
Belle Plaine	Scott
Bemidji	Beltrami
Big Lake	Sherburne
Big Lake (township)	Sherburne
Blaine	Anoka
Bloomington	Hennepin
Brainerd	Crow Wing
Brooklyn Center	Hennepin
Brooklyn Park	Hennepin
Buffalo	Wright
Burnsville	Dakota
Byron	Olmsted
Cambridge	Isanti
Carver	Carver
Champlin	Hennepin
Chanhassen	Carver
Chaska	Carver
Chisago City	Chisago
Circle Pines	Anoka
Cloquet	Carlton
Columbia Heights	Anoka
Coon Rapids	Anoka
Corcoran	Hennepin
Cottage Grove	Washington
Credit River (township)	Scott
Crookston	Polk
Crystal	Hennepin
Dayton	Hennepin
Delano	Wright
Detroit Lakes	Becker
Duluth	St. Louis
Eagan	Dakota
East Bethel	Anoka
East Grand Forks	Polk
Eden Prairie	Hennepin

City	County
Edina	Hennepin
Elk River	Sherburne
Fairmont	Martin
Falcon Heights	Ramsey
Faribault	Rice
Farmington	Dakota
Fergus Falls	Otter Tail
Forest Lake	Washington
Fridley	Anoka
Glencoe	McLeod
Golden Valley	Hennepin
Grand Rapids	Itasca
Ham Lake	Anoka
Hastings	Dakota
Hermantown	St. Louis
Hibbing	St. Louis
Hopkins	Hennepin
Hugo	Washington
Hutchinson	McLeod
International Falls	Koochiching
Inver Grove Heights	Dakota
Isanti	Isanti
Jordan	Scott
Kasson	Dodge
La Crescent	Houston
Lake City	Goodhue, Wabasha
Lake Elmo	Washington
Lakeville	Dakota
Lino Lakes	Anoka
Linwood (township)	Anoka
Litchfield	Meeker
Little Canada	Ramsey
Little Falls	Morrison
Livonia (township)	Sherburne
Mahtomedi	Washington
Mankato	Blue Earth
Maple Grove	Hennepin
Maplewood	Ramsey
Marshall	Lyon
Medina	Hennepin
Mendota Heights	Dakota
Minneapolis	Hennepin
Minnetonka	Hennepin
Minnetrissa	Hennepin
Montevideo	Chippewa
Monticello	Wright

City	County
Moorhead	Clay
Morris	Stevens
Mound	Hennepin
Mounds View	Ramsey
New Brighton	Ramsey
New Hope	Hennepin
New Prague	Le Sueur, Scott
New Ulm	Brown
North Branch	Chisago
North Mankato	Nicollet
North Oaks	Ramsey
North St. Paul	Ramsey
Northfield	Rice
Oak Grove	Anoka
Oakdale	Washington
Orono	Hennepin
Otsego	Wright
Owatonna	Steele
Plymouth	Hennepin
Prior Lake	Scott
Ramsey	Anoka
Red Wing	Goodhue
Redwood Falls	Redwood
Richfield	Hennepin
Robbinsdale	Hennepin
Rochester	Olmsted
Rogers	Hennepin
Rosemount	Dakota
Roseville	Ramsey
Sartell	Stearns
Sauk Rapids	Benton
Savage	Scott
Shakopee	Scott
Shoreview	Ramsey
Shorewood	Hennepin
South St. Paul	Dakota
Spring Lake Park	Anoka
St. Anthony	Hennepin
St. Cloud	Benton, Sherburne, Stearns
St. Francis	Anoka
St. Joseph	Stearns
St. Louis Park	Hennepin
St. Michael	Wright
St. Paul	Ramsey
St. Paul Park	Washington
St. Peter	Nicollet
Stewartville	Olmsted
Stillwater	Washington

City	County
Thief River Falls	Pennington
Thomson (township)	Carlton
Vadnais Heights	Ramsey
Victoria	Carver
Virginia	St. Louis
Waconia	Carver
Waite Park	Stearns
Waseca	Waseca
West St. Paul	Dakota
White Bear Lake	Ramsey
White Bear (township)	Ramsey
Willmar	Kandiyohi
Winona	Winona
Woodbury	Washington
Worthington	Nobles
Wyoming	Chisago
Zimmerman	Sherburne

## Appendix B – Eligible Tribal Communities

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### Anishinaabe Reservations

Bois Forte Reservation
Fond du Lac Reservation
Grand Portage Reservation
Leech Lake Reservation
Mille Lacs Reservation
Red Lake Reservation
White Earth Reservation

### Dakota Communities

Lower Sioux Indian Community
Prairie Island Indian Community
Shakopee Mdewakanton Sioux Community
Upper Sioux Community