URBAN AGRICULTURE AND INNOVATION PRODUCTION (UAIP) COMPETITIVE GRANTS PROGRAM

FY 2020 Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

as of May 7, 2020

General Questions

Q: What support will USDA be able to offer applicants during the application process? A: USDA is happy to field any general, high-level inquiries that grantees may have regarding the application process. However, USDA is unable to offer specific guidance on how to craft, structure or write one's proposal. In an effort to provide unbiased support to all those interested in the funding opportunity, USDA will refrain from providing advice that cannot otherwise be obtained through the resources that have been made publicly available via www.farmers.gov/urban and Grants.gov.

Q: Will USDA host a webinar about this funding opportunity?
A: Yes. NRCS will host a webinar about the UAIP Competitive Grants Program on June 3, 2020 at 2:00 PM Eastern Standard Time. The presentation will provide an overview of the UAIP program purpose, project types, eligibility, and basic requirements for the submission of an application. To register for the UAIP webinar, visit the registration webpage. The webinar will be recorded and posted at www.farmers.gov/urban.

Q: If I have problems with Grants.gov, will USDA staff help me submit or accept my application package?
A: No. USDA cannot support applicants regarding Grants.gov accounts or provide applicants technical assistance with the Grants.gov system. The Grants.gov technical support center can be reached at 1-800-518-4726 or support@grants.gov.

Q: Do I have to register with Grants.gov before submitting an application through Grants.gov?
A: Yes. The applicant must be registered with Grants.gov. There is a one-time registration for using Grants.gov, regardless of the Federal agency you may be submitting an application to through Grants.gov. Information about how to register is included on the Grants.gov registration page. If you are with an institution, we strongly recommend that you reach out to your, e.g., Grants Office, to confirm that your institution is registered with Grants.gov.

Q: What is involved in the Grants.gov registration process?

A: More detailed information is included on the [grants.gov registration page](#) and the [Grants.gov On-line User Guide](#). The following is a general overview.

1. Obtain a DUNS number (optional for Individual applicants).
2. Register with SAM.gov (optional for Individual applicants). Organization Applicants will not be able to move on to Step #3 until this step is completed.
3. Create a Grants.gov username and password. You will need to create a Grants.gov user profile by visiting the Get Registered section of the website.
4. The E-Business Point of Contact (POC) at your organization must respond to the registration email from Grants.gov and login at Grants.gov to authorize you as an Authorized Organization Representative (AOR). Note there can be more than one AOR for an organization.
5. At any time, you can track your AOR status by going to the Applicant Login with your username and password.

Q: How long does the registration process take?

A: The registration process must be completed prior to submission of an application and the amount of time to register can vary. You should allow two full weeks to complete all registration steps, but additional time may be required.

Q: Is there a cost to use the System for Award Management (SAM)?

A: SAM is an official website of the U.S. government. There is no cost to use SAM. You can use this site for free to register to do business with the U.S. government; update or renew your entity registration; check status of an entity registration; and search for entity registration and exclusion records. More detailed information on how to use SAM is included on the [SAM.gov Help page.](#)

Program Information

Q: Where can I get more help if I still have questions about the Urban Agriculture and Innovation Production Competitive (UAIP) Grants Program or application?
A: The Office of Urban Agriculture and Innovative Production Team strongly recommends that you read the UAIP Notice of Funding Opportunity (NFO) before submitting questions. If you still have questions after reading the NFO, you can forward your question to:
annie.ceccarini@usda.gov.

Q: How is "urban" or "suburbs" defined?
A: The Urban Agriculture and Innovative Production Advisory Committee will advise the Secretary of Agriculture on words or terms and those definitions that apply to UAIP such as "urban agriculture," "urban areas," "suburbs," "suburban areas," and "urban clusters." These words and terms have specifically not been defined to create broad parameters for UAIP grants in fiscal year 2020.

Q: How do I identify areas where access to fresh foods are limited or unavailable?
A: Eligible applicants should have experience serving communities where access to fresh foods are limited or unavailable. The USDA Economic Research Service provides a definition for food access and tools like the USDA Food Access Research Atlas to measure food access.

Eligibility Information

Q: Who is eligible to apply?
A: The following entities in any of the 50 States, the District of Columbia, the Caribbean Area (Puerto Rico and the U.S. Virgin Islands), and the Pacific Islands Area (Guam, American Samoa, and the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands) are eligible to apply for either a Planning Project grant or Implementation Project grant:

- Tribal governments;

- Nonprofits having a 501(c)(3) status with the IRS (other than institutions of higher education);

- Nonprofits that do not have a 501(c)(3) status with the IRS (other than institutions of higher education);

- A unit of local government; and

- Any school that serves any of the grades kindergarten through grade 12.

Q: Is a description of the eligible applicant types available?

A: The following terms for local government, nonprofit organization and Tribal government are from the Common Data Element Repository (CDER) Library. The CDER Library is the authoritative, federal-wide source of financial and business terms, which is based on the Office of Management and Budget's (OMB) Uniform Grants Guidance and the Digital Accountability and Transparency Act (DATA Act).

Entity Type	Description
Local government	Any unit of government within a state, including a county; borough; municipality; city; town; township; parish; local public authority, including any public housing agency under the United States Housing Act of 1937 (50 Stat. 888 (P.L. 75—412); special district; school district; intrastate district; council of governments, whether or not incorporated as a nonprofit corporation under State law; and any other agency or instrumentality of a multi-state, regional, or intra-state or local government.
Nonprofit organization	Any corporation, trust, association, cooperative, or other organization, not including IHEs, that: (a) Is operated primarily for scientific, educational, service, charitable, or similar purposes in the public interest; (b) Is not organized primarily for profit; and (c) Uses net proceeds to maintain, improve, or expand the operations of the organization.
Tribal Government	Governing bodies or governmental agencies of any Indian tribe, band, nation, or other organized group or community (including any native village as defined in Section 3 of the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act, 85 Stat. 688 (43 U.S.C. § 1602)) certified by the Secretary of the Interior as eligible for the special programs and services provided through the Bureau of Indian Affairs.

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Q: Can Institutions of Higher Education (IHEs) apply for this funding opportunity?
A: No. IHEs as defined at 20 U.S.C. 1001 are not eligible. Any school that serves any of the grades kindergarten through grade 12 are eligible.

Application Process

Q: Can I submit an application for more than one type of grant (Planning and Implementation) in the same funding cycle?
A: No. Applicants must choose between submitting a grant application for a Planning Project or Implementation Project.

Q: How many projects can I lead or participate in?
A: An eligible applicant can serve as the lead on only one Planning Project or Implementation Project grant application. You may be listed as a partner on more than one application.

Q: I'm trying to decide between a Planning Project grant and an Implementation Project grant. Which should I apply for?
A: Planning Projects support the development of projects that will either initiate or build upon or expand the efforts of farmers, gardeners, citizens, government officials, schools, and other stakeholders in urban areas and suburbs. Implementation Projects accelerate existing and emerging models of urban, indoor, and other agricultural practices that serve multiple farmers or gardeners.

Q: What is the expected funding amount for Planning Project grants?
A: Awards for Planning Projects will not exceed $200,000 in any single year or $500,000 over three years.

Q: What is the time period for execution of Planning Project grants?
A: Projects may be between 12 and 36 months in duration.

Q: What is the expected funding amount for Implementation Project grants?
A: Awards for Implementation Projects will not exceed $100,000 in any single year or $300,000 over three years.

Q: What is the time period for execution of Implementation Project grants?

A: Projects may be between 12 and 36 months in duration.

Q: If we successfully complete the Planning Project grant, will we get an Implementation Project grant in the next round of funding?

A: While you will be encouraged to apply through the competitive process for an Implementation Project grant upon successful completion and close out of a Planning Project grant, there are no guarantees of additional funding.

Q: Do I need to partner with others?

A: Yes, to be eligible to receive a Planning Project or Implementation Project award applicants must collaborate with one or more partner organizations working in the project target area(s).

Q: How might I find others to partner with?

A: USDA recommends reaching out to public or private, nonprofit or for-profit entities, including academic institutions and/or other appropriate professionals, community-based organizations, and local government entities in your area of the United States. The USDA Office of Partnerships and Public Engagement may have useful tools and information to assist with partnership development. You can find more information at www.usda.gov/partnerships.

Q: Can I receive a UAIP grant and a grant from a different USDA agency?

A: Yes. If the projects have specifically different objectives, you may receive both a UAIP grant and a grant from a different federal agency. Please check with the other federal programs to ensure that you are not violating their terms and conditions.

Q: Do you have examples of projects that have been funded under this grant?

A: No. UAIP is a newly established grant program under the 2018 Farm Bill and fiscal year 2020 is the first time the Department is soliciting for applications for this grant opportunity.

Q: What is the timeline of the Urban Agriculture and Innovation Production Competitive Grants Program?

A: USDA will accept applications on Grants.gov until midnight Eastern Standard Time on July 6, 2020. The agency anticipates announcing or notifying successful and unsuccessful applicants by August 31, 2020   and expects to have Federal awards in place by September 30, 2020.

Matching Requirement

Q: Are matching funds required?

A: There is no cost sharing or matching requirement for this opportunity.

Indirect Costs

Q: What rate should I use for indirect costs?

A: A Negotiated Indirect Cost Rate Agreement (NICRA) is required if requesting indirect costs. The NICRA must be in PDF format and attached to the Grants.gov application package. Recipients without an approved indirect cost rate are prohibited from charging indirect costs to a Federal award. Accepting the 10 percent de minimis rate as a condition of the award constitutes establishing an approved rate. Recipients who do not request indirect costs are prohibited from charging indirect costs to a Federal award

Allowable/Unallowable Costs

Q: Is equipment an allowable expenditure?

A: Grant funds may not be used for general purpose equipment or lease agreements to own (i.e., lease-to-own or rent-to-own) such equipment. The rental of general purpose equipment is allowable and the lease or rental agreement must terminate at the end of the grant cycle.

Q: Are equipment, vehicles, land, and building space allowable costs?

A: Projects with budgets not including the purchase of special purpose equipment, vehicles, land, and building space during the length of the grant will be given higher consideration. Any lease or rental agreements must terminate at the end of the grant cycle.

Q: Is construction an allowable cost?

A: Yes. Grant funds may be used to construct, alter, or repair (including dredging, excavating, and painting) of buildings, structures, or other real property. Erecting a building or making substantial changes to the footprint of a building would be considered a construction project.

Q: Are seeds, plants, fish, and livestock an allowable cost?

A: Materials, supplies, and other costs related to rooftop farms, outdoor vertical production, green walls, indoor farms, greenhouses, high-tech vertical technology farms, hydroponic, aeroponic, and aquaponic farms, and other innovations in agricultural production is allowable including but not limited to soil, plants, seeds, shovels, gardening tools, fish, livestock, bees, and hoop houses, or other items necessary to grow and store food. However, the per unit cost of each supply item must be below $5,000 dollars. Any item with a per unit cost above $5,000 dollars is considered equipment.

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Q: Is building a greenhouse or permanent structure an allowable cost?

A: Building a non-permanent, temporary or movable structure is an allowable cost. Building a permanent structure, which may include, but not limited to, pouring concrete, laying asphalt or installing plumbing is not an allowable cost.

Q: Is revitalizing a greenhouse an allowable cost?

A: Funds can be used to expand or improve current operations of an existing greenhouse.

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