**Capacity Building Grant Application**

**Fall 2020**

AUA is excited to announce the 2020 Capacity Building Grant. The Capacity Building Grant seeks to build a stronger and more equitable local food system in Chicagoland by funding farms working to expand and scale up their operations, as well as farms working toward sustainability. This grant opportunity will provide direct support to local producers in need of funds. Proposed projects must fall into one of the following categories. Examples of topics which fall into the predetermined categories are listed below. If you have questions about whether your proposed project can be considered capacity building, and is not explicitly outlined below, feel free to reach out to Bea Fry at bea@auachicago.org:

* *Programming efforts*: supporting and advancing existing programming efforts
* *Infrastructure*: Soil, Irrigation, Fencing, Compost, farm structures, refrigeration, land acquisition
* *Tools and equipmen*t: Personal Protective Equipment (PPE), farm tools, harvest supplies
* *Labor Support*: labor costs, staff support
* *Logistics Support*: Contracting out with another organization for services, supplies sharing
* *Skills and Business Developmen*t: Business consulting, agricultural workshops or classes

Funding Levels

You are able to apply for grant funding at one of the following levels:

- $2,500 (up to 12 possible grants available)

- $5,000 (up to 5 possible grants available)

- $10,000 (up to 3 possible grants available)

- $20,000 (up to 1 possible grant available)

Who is Eligible?

You must meet the following requirements to be eligible to receive funds:

1. Location - The farm must be located in one of the following Illinois counties:

-Cook, Lake, McHenry, DuPage, Kane, Kendall, Grundy, Will or Kankakee.

2. Small Farm Size (at least one of the following):

-Farm size (growing) less than 5 acres and/or

-Has an annual operating budget less than $250,000

3. Mission and Partnership Focused (at least one of the following):

-Focused on providing food for the local community or serving communities of color, or

low-income communities

-Farms who have positive engagement with community

-Farms who employ people from the community where they grow

-Farms who have existing community partners and incorporate those partners into their

project proposal

-Farms that provide educational resources within their community

-Prioritizes [‘historically underserved producers](https://www.nrcs.usda.gov/wps/portal/nrcs/main/national/people/outreach/slbfr/)' as defined by the USDA

4. Organizational Requirements

-Must be a legal entity or in the process of becoming one within the next year. This can

be For-Profit, Non-profit, or DBA

Priority will be given to farms which:

- Serve low-income and/or BIPOC (Black, Indigenous, People of Color) communities

- Are owned and led by BIPOC, trans, non-binary, and/or gender non-conforming people

Who is not eligible?

1. Farmers markets

2. Any entity or individual applying independently that is not a farm business (community gardens, food pantries, etc.)

3. Farm Businesses not operating in Illinois and whose primary markets are not located in Chicagoland counties.

4. Farm Businesses applying for funds not related to building the capacity of their operation through the purposes listed above

For all applicants applying for $10,000 worth of funding or more, you will be asked to interview with the Capacity Building Grant Advisory Committee.

This application requires a letter of support for your operation to be attached.

Please complete the following application and submit via email to bea@auachicago.org by 11:59pm on October 24th. Applications will be reviewed immediately by the grant review committee and recipients will be awarded funds by November 30th. If you have any questions about this grant application, please contact Bea Fry at bea@auachicago.org.

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**Section 1: Background Questions**

1. Contact person’s name
   1. Contact person’s phone number
   2. Contact person’s email
2. Secondary contact person’s name
   1. Secondary contact person’s phone number
   2. Secondary contact person’s email
3. Name of growing operation
4. Growing operation address
5. Growing operation phone number
6. Growing operation mailing address
7. Growing operation’s municipality
8. Growing operation's ward (if located in Chicago. If not, write "N/A')
9. What is your growing operation’s annual operating budget?
10. How long have you been in operation?
11. Please check all that apply. Is your operation led, owned, or founded by any of the following?

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | Owned | Founded | Led | N/A |
| Black, Indigenous, and/or People of Color (BIPOC) |  |  |  |  |
| Transgender, gender non-conforming (GNC), and/or non-binary (NB) folx |  |  |  |  |

1. What percentage of your leaders/founders/owners are BIPOC and/or trans/GNC/non-binary?
   1. Less than or equal to 25%
   2. Between 26% and 50%
   3. More than 50%
2. What are your avenues to accessing capital?
   1. Non-farm
   2. Grants
   3. Fundraising
   4. Farm profits
   5. Other
3. If chosen as a grant recipient, who should the check be made out to?

**Section 2: Proposal Description**

1. What is the amount of money you are requesting? (if the amount of funding you need is between categories, choose the higher category and feel free to reach out to bea@auachicago.org to talk about your situation)
   1. $2,500
   2. $5,000
   3. $10,000
   4. $20,000
2. Please provide a description of your farm business (250 words)
3. Please provide a detailed description of your proposal, including a problem statement describing the issues (500 words)
4. Briefly include relevant experience of the project leads, and how this experience lends to their ability to successfully execute this project (150 words)
5. Please upload a letter of support detailing relationships the applicant has cultivated with collaborative partners, organizations, and/or community entities who share space, knowledge, and/or resources.

**Section 3: Detailed Questions**

1. How does your project increase your organizational capacity, and/or scale up your operation? (350 words)
2. What is the community your organization serves? How does the project embody the need to support and serve communities of color, and/or low-income communities? (250 words)
3. In what ways does your operation serve the community outlined in the previous question? (250 words)
4. How do you promote equity within your operation? Please provide 2-3 examples. (250 words)
5. In what ways does your operation and/or this proposed project center sustainable and ecologically minded approaches to agriculture? (150 words)
6. Please list your project goals and intended outcomes. This can be a bulleted list.
7. How do you plan to evaluate the success of your proposed project? (150 words)
8. Please provide a projected work-plan for your proposal, including intended deliverables. If granted, funds will be disbursed by November 30th, 2020.
9. What barriers, if any, have you experienced trying to access funding for this project? (250 words)

**Section 4: Budget**

1. Please attach a detailed budget which includes all associated costs of the proposed project. Feel free to use this example budget as a template:<https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1tPuZ5HvatA9e-zaR7KLhLUMd0Rrr7JljdPHTFmQrHYE/edit?usp=sharing>
2. Based on the budget, please provide a narrative for how your operation plans to use the granted funds. (250 words)

**Section 5: Media Release**

Thank you for being comfortable with allowing us to boost your online presence on our communication outlets. Please provide the following information to share out.

1. If awarded, are you comfortable being featured in AUA’s communication outlets (including Instagram and Facebook)? Your answer will not affect your request for funding.
   * Yes
   * No
2. What is your website name?
3. What are your social media handles (Facebook and Instagram only)
4. What are your direct donation channels?
5. Please include a high-resolution photo we can use to highlight your operation if selected

**Section 6: Final Thoughts**

1. Optional: Is there anything else we need to know to have a holistic view of your operation and project proposal?

2. Optional: please upload up to 5 supporting documents, such as brochures, infographics, or site photos which will help the committee have a better sense of your project proposal