**Capacity Building Grant Application**

**Fall 2021**

AUA is excited to announce the 2021 Capacity Building Grant. The Capacity Building Grant seeks to contribute to the construction of a stronger and more equitable local food system in Chicagoland by funding farms which are working to expand and scale up their operations, as well as farms working toward stability and sustainability.

Land Acknowledgement:

As Advocates for Urban Agriculture, we acknowledge that we all live and work on stolen land. Our region consists of settler colonial towns and cities which many of us came to as uninvited guests. The Chicago region is the ancestral home of the Council of Three Fires: The Ojibwe, Bodéwadmi(Potawatomi), and Odawa Nations as well as the Myaamia (Miami), Peoria, Ho-Chunk, Kiikaapoi (Kickapoo), Sac, Meskwaki (Fox), and Očhéthi Šakówiŋ (Sioux) Tribes. Despite past forced removal from these lands and on-going colonialism, Zhigaagong (Ojibwe word the name Chicago is derived from) is home to the 6th largest urban indigenous population in the USA, many of whom continue to practice their heritage and care for these lands and waterways we all call home. As agriculture practitioners and earth stewards, we honor their legacy in this place. We invite you to learn more about on whose land you reside by searching*:* [*https://native-land.ca/*](https://native-land.ca/)

This grant honors the legacy of Chicagoland’s indigenous earth stewards by providing direct support to local producers in need of funds and centering those whose livelihoods have been adversely affected, and their communities historically excluded, because of ongoing systems of racism, queerphobia, and other forms of discrimination, especially those which are due to unchanging identity markers such as race, gender, and sexuality. 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**: Building upon and advancing existing programming efforts
* **Infrastructure**: Soil, irrigation, fencing, compost, farm structures, refrigeration, land acquisition
* **Tools and equipment**: Personal protective equipment (PPE), farm tools, harvest supplies, work gear
* **Labor Support**: Labor costs, staff support
* **Logistics Support**: Contracting out with another organization for services, supplies sharing
* **Skills and Business Development**: 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)

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. If you need a translator or interpreter for your interview, AUA will provide.

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

The operation must meet all of 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 less than 5 growing acres
* Most current annual budget < $250,000

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

* Focused on providing food for the local community, especially BIPOC communities, or communities identified as divested
* Farms that have developed strong partnerships with the local community
* Farms that employ people from the community where they grow
* Farms that have existing community partners and incorporate those partnerships into their project proposal
* Farms that provide educational resources within their community
* Prioritizes partnerships with [‘historically underserved producers](https://www.nrcs.usda.gov/wps/portal/nrcs/main/national/people/outreach/slbfr/)' as defined by the USDA

1. Organizational Requirements

* Must be a legal entity or will be within a year. This can be For-profit, Non-profit, or DBA

Priority will be given to farms that...

* Operate in and partner with BIPOC (Black, Indigenous, People of Color) communities which may or may not be identified as divested
* Are 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 or non-profit farm (community gardens, food pantries, etc.)

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

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

5. Previous Capacity Building Grantees

To receive preliminary feedback on your application, please submit by October 1st to a separate form located on AUA’s website (this form will be available by September 10th). You will then have the chance to revise and resubmit your application by the October 27th deadline, detailed below.

Please complete the following application and submit by 11:59pm on October 27th, 2021. Applications will be reviewed on a rolling basis by the grant review committee and recipients will be awarded funds by December 1st, 2021. If you have any questions about this grant application please contact Bea Fry at bea@auachicago.org.

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

**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. If applicable, what is your operation’s annual operating budget? (If 2020-2021 have adversely affected your operation, please submit numbers based on 2019).
10. How long have you been in operation?
11. Please check all that apply. Is your operation led or owned by any of the following?

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | Owned | 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 farm’s decision makers 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. To the best of your knowledge, how many people on your team identify as BIPOC and/org trans/GNC/non-binary? Please list this as a ratio, (# of BIPOC/trans/GNC/non-binary individuals)/(total # of employees)
3. What are your avenues to accessing capital?
   1. Non-farm
   2. Grants
   3. Fundraising
   4. Farm profits
   5. Mutual Aid
   6. Other
      1. Please let us know what other sources of income you receive
4. 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? Please remember that 10k and 20k applicants will be required to interview. (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 statement directly connecting to the challenge(s) your project aims to rectify through capacity building (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)
   1. \*AUA recognizes that not everyone’s introduction to agriculture is linear, and encourages applicants to detail any experiences, both traditional and otherwise, which lend to your current expertise.
5. Please upload a letter/video of support from a collaborative partner, organization, and/or community entity detailing the relationship you have cultivated through sharing space, knowledge, and/or resources.

**Section 3: Detailed Questions**

1. How does your request increase your organizational capacity, and/or scale up your operation? (350 words)
2. What is the community your organization operates in and partners with? (250 words)
3. How does your operation identify and incorporate the needs of your identified community into the work you do (How are communities of color and/or communities identified as divested, uplifted and supported)? Please provide 2-3 examples. (250 words)
4. How do you promote equity within your operation? (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. What would the success of your proposed project look like to you? (150 words)
7. Please provide a projected work-plan for your proposal, including intended deliverables. If granted, funds will be disbursed by December 1st, 2021. Please use [this](https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/u/1/d/17ScgaupG-NA3HuSnAq6y7GgoUQZbEtTlrSwyalA72E8/copy) template to create your work-plan. **Please make a copy of this template, do not edit directly in this template.** 
   1. In this work plan, please list your project goals and intended outcomes. This can be a bulleted list.
8. 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. Please use [this](https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/u/1/d/1tPuZ5HvatA9e-zaR7KLhLUMd0Rrr7JljdPHTFmQrHYE/copy) example budget as a template. **Please make a copy of this template, do not edit directly in this template.**

**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.

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, additional letters/videos of support, or site photos which will help the committee have a better sense of your project proposal

3. Optional: How has COVID-19 pandemic affected your operation, community, and/or your partners? How has it affected your ability to successfully execute the proposed project?