

Introduction

Growing Equity Funding Urban Agriculture in San Diego County



Request for Funding Proposals

Opens February 3, 2025

Closes March 10, 2025 9pm PST

Growing Equity aims to promote community food sovereignty and health equity through urban agriculture. We will award a total of \$250,000 in 2025 to urban farmers in San Diego County, prioritizing socially disadvantaged farmers and work being done in California Climate Investment Priority Population communities.

Program Objectives

- Promote community food sovereignty and health equity through urban agriculture.
- Increase equitable access to public funding for local urban agriculture.
- Invest in California Climate Priority Population communities through urban agriculture.
- Organize and amplify urban farmers as agents of change, land stewards, and community leaders.

Eligibility

- Project site is within 25 miles of an “Urbanized Area” containing a population of 50,000 or more people within San Diego County. Cities in San Diego County that are 50,000+ include: San Diego, National City, Escondido, Encinitas, Chula Vista, Oceanside, San Marcos, Santee, Carlsbad, Vista, El Cajon, and La Mesa. *Please note: Indigenous and Tribal organization applicants are exempt from the requirement to be in an "urbanized area" and can be located anywhere in San Diego County.
- Project site must be located in or directly serve a California Climate Investments Priority Population area. All areas EXCEPT for the light grey color are eligible. Must also still meet urban geographic eligibility described above.
- Eligible entities: Non-profit organizations, for-profit farms and agriculture-related businesses, and Tribal organizations. Individuals without a business or non-profit entity are not eligible to apply. Fiscal sponsorship is allowed.
- Farms/organizations that received an Urban Agriculture Track 2 Practitioner award from the California Department of Food & Agriculture are not eligible to apply.

Funding Structure

- We will grant 10 awards of \$10,000 each and 3 awards of \$50,000 each.
- You may apply for both levels but we advise applying for \$50,000 only if you have an established growing operation (5+ years) and land security.
- Funding can be used for
 - Infrastructure
 - Technical assistance
 - Community engagement & education
 - Supplies
 - Equipment (must inventory all equipment over \$5,000 value & financing of equipment is not allowed)
 - See [CDFA guidelines](#) for more information on allowable costs.

Timeline

- Applications are due Monday March 10, 2025 9pm PST.
- The anticipated grant period is one year, starting Summer 2025 and ending Summer 2026.

Funding Priorities

- 100% of awards will fund projects located in or directly serving California Climate Investments Priority Populations.
- Minimum of 1 award set aside for eligible Indigenous and/or Tribal organization.
- Projects in alignment and support of the San Diego County Food Vision 2030 goals and objectives.
- Projects demonstrating capacity, experience, and impact. New projects will be considered, however we intend for this program to invest in urban

agriculture viability in the region.

Block 7

Do you need application assistance in Spanish or another language?

¿Necesita asistencia con la solicitud en español u otro idioma?

No

Yes, Spanish (Sí, Español)

Yes, another language. Please specify below.

Applicant Information

Applicant Information

First and last name

Preferred pronouns? *(select all that apply)*

She/her

He/him

They/them

Other - please specify:

What is your race or ethnicity? *(select all that apply)*

Asian / Asian American

Black / African / African American

Native American / Indigenous

Hispanic / Latinx / Latin American

Middle Eastern / North African

Native Hawaiian / Pacific Islander

White / European

Other- please describe:

Prefer not to disclose

Do you identify as LGBTQIA (*lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans, queer, intersex, asexual*)?

Yes

No

Prefer not to disclose

Would you consider yourself or your organization/business a "beginning farmer or beginning farm/garden"?

This means you have less than 5 years of experience in agriculture.

Yes

No

Email

Phone number

Communication method preference (*select all you prefer*)

Email

Phone Call

Text message

Name of farm/organization/business

Address of project site (*street, city, zip code*)

If you propose to use funds to support multiple project sites, please list your primary address site location and/or the one that meets eligibility requirements for geographic location and priority community.

Street:

City:

Zip Code:

Mailing address *(if different than project site)*

Street:

City:

Zip Code:

Website and/or social media handles *(if applicable)*

Name of proposed project

Eligibility Requirements

Eligibility Requirements

What type of agricultural entity are you applying for?

Eligible entities are listed below.

Non-profit organization

For-profit business/farm

Tribal organization

Is your urban agriculture operation located in San Diego County?

This program can only fund projects within San Diego County.

Yes

No

Are you applying on behalf of an Indigenous, Native American, or Tribal-led farm/business/ organization, either self-identified or federally-recognized?

Yes

No

Is your urban agriculture operation within 25 miles of an "urbanized area" with a population of 50,000 people or more?

The following cities have a population of 50,000+ in San Diego County: San Diego, National City, Escondido, Encinitas, Chula Vista, Oceanside, San Marcos, Santee, Carlsbad, Vista, El Cajon, and La Mesa.

Yes

No

Which one of the following priority population areas is your urban agriculture operation located within?

Choose only one unless you have multiple project sites in different priority

population areas.

Tip: Open a new browser tab to visit the [California Climate Investments Priority Populations](#) map. Type in your project site address in the map's search field to determine which population area it is in. All areas except the light grey color are eligible.

Low-income community

Disadvantaged Community: CES

Disadvantaged Community: Tribal Land

Disadvantaged Community: CES, Disadvantaged community: Tribal land, Low-income community

Disadvantaged Community: CES, Low-income community

Disadvantaged Community: Tribal land, Low-income community

DAC 1/2 mile neighbor: low-income community

DAC 1/2 mile neighbor: low-income household eligible

None of the above

Which of the following communities within the [California Climate Investments Priority Populations](#) does your urban agriculture operation primarily serve? Check all that apply.

Low Income Community

Disadvantaged Community: CES

Disadvantaged Community: Tribal Land

Disadvantaged Community: CES, Disadvantaged community: Tribal land, Low-income community

Disadvantaged Community: CES, Low-income community

Disadvantaged Community: Tribal land, Low-income community

DAC 1/2 mile neighbor: low-income community

DAC 1/2 mile neighbor: low-income household eligible

None of the Above

Please describe how your urban agriculture operation serves the above indicated priority population(s) you selected. Please limit response to 250 words.

Example: "We operate a CSA and deliver to customers in a Disadvantaged Community: Tribal Land".

Urban Agriculture Operation Information

What type of land/space are you growing on and/or conducting other urban agriculture activities? Please describe your land/space agreement? Please limit response to 250 words.

For example, please tell us if you own or lease land, if you have a written lease and the length of the lease. What type of location is it (e.g. private residence, school, ag-zoned land, etc.)? We do not need to know who you lease from or the cost of your lease but we are interested to know if your urban agriculture operation happens on private or publicly-owned land. If

you intend to use these funds to support multiple growing spaces, please explain each one.

Please describe any current or anticipated challenges to securing or maintaining land/space for your urban agriculture operation. Please limit response to 250 words.

How many years has your urban agriculture site been in operation?

This is referring to the site where your proposed project will take place.

0-2 years

3-5 years

6-10 years

10+ years

Other (please describe)

Briefly describe the agricultural products and/or services your farm or garden produces/offers and how you market and distribute the products/services. Please limit response to 250 words.

If your proposed project is for a different type of urban agriculture operation, such as an aggregation hub or retail operation, please explain your products, services, and customers.

Please describe the communities and specific populations your urban agriculture operation serves and estimate the number of people served either monthly or yearly. Please limit response to 250 words.

You might think of this as your "customer or client base" for your products/services.

Example: "We offer garden education and job training to at-risk youth

ages 14-21, serving approximately 100 young people each year with an 8-week curriculum and paid internship stipends."

Project Information, Goals, and Outcomes

Project Information, Goals, and Outcomes

This section of the application will be scored.

Please provide a short summary to describe the background of your urban agriculture operation. What exists now and what has been accomplished to date? Please limit response to 500 words.

Which program goals will your project accomplish? Select all that apply.

Must accomplish at least 1 goal for \$10,000 eligibility and at least two goals for \$50,000 eligibility.

Build social capital and gather communities: Demonstrate community engagement practices.

Provide education and skills development: Provide employment development opportunities, especially youth employment and development opportunities.

Supplement access to fresh food: Support the viability of urban food cultivation, processing, or distribution.

Cultivate agricultural literacy: Provide educational opportunities as it relates to growing or consuming locally grown seasonal produce.

Perform ecosystem services: Provide urban greening, habitat restoration and environmentally beneficial services such as but not limited to planting hedgerows, native plant gardens or food forests. Help mitigate climate risks.

Support economic development: Create new market opportunities and spur entrepreneurial activity.

Increase food sovereignty: Create or support spaces for community members to provide themselves with healthy and culturally appropriate food produced through ecologically sound and sustainable methods.

Pilot an innovation in production: Such as but not limited to mushroom propagation, aquaponics, aeroponics, hydroponics, rooftop gardens, or warehouse farms.

Use this [**workplan template**](#) to briefly describe how you will achieve the above indicated goals. Bullet points preferred. Upload here when complete. *If you are applying to be considered for both levels of the award, please indicate that on your workplan and ensure at least 2 goals are included for \$50,000 award. We will only award at one level.*

Tip: Open a new browser tab to download the workplan template (word doc).

Why is your work in urban agriculture important? Please describe how your proposed project would contribute to the viability of urban agriculture in our region? Please limit response to 500 words.

Please indicate which [San Diego County Food Vision 2030](#) objectives your project is aligned with and supports? *Select all that apply.*

Tip: Open a new browser tab to view the Food Vision.

Objective 1: Preserve Agricultural Land and Soils, and Commit to Long-term Food Production

Objective 2: Increase the Viability of Local Farms, Fisheries, and Food Businesses

Objective 3: Scale Up Local, Sustainable, and Equitable Food Value Chains

Objective 4: Expand and Improve Career Opportunities Within the Food System

Objective 5: Expand Integrated Nutrition and Food Security

Objective 6: Improve Community Food Environments

Objective 7: Scale Up Food Waste Prevention, Recovery, and Recycling Initiatives

Objective 8: Increase BIPOC Leadership Across the Food System

Objective 9: Build a Movement that Uplifts a Local, Sustainable, and Equitable Food System

Objective 10: Plan for a Resilient Food System

Please briefly explain how your proposed project supports the Food Vision 2030 objectives you indicated above. Please limit response to 500 words. Bullet points encouraged.

Example: Objective 1: Preserve ag land and soil by implementing climate smart ag practices like no till, compost application, and pollinator planting.

Budget and Allowable Costs

Budget and Allowable Costs

Please indicate how you intend to use funds if awarded. This list represents allowable cost categories. Select all that apply.

Tip: Open a new browser tab to view more details on [allowable costs](#).

Infrastructure

Technical assistance

Workforce development

Community engagement and education

Supplies

Equipment *must inventory equipment \$5,000+

Please download and complete this [budget template](#).

Instructions: Use Sheet 1 if applying for a \$10,000 award. Use Sheet 2 if applying for a \$50,000 award. You may complete both sheets if you wish to apply for both amounts. We will only grant one level of award.

You may include indirect costs (IDC) in your budget up to 30%. Indirect costs are costs incurred for common or joint objectives that cannot be identified specifically with a particular project, program, or organizational activity. Typical indirect costs include but are not limited to rent, utilities and internet service, telephone service, general office supplies, and insurance.

Tip: Open a new browser tab to download the budget template (excel).

Timeline

Please review the anticipated timeline:

- Application due: Monday March 10th 9pm PST
- Awards announced: May 2025
- Contract development period: June - August 2025
- Funds available for disbursement: Aug/Sept 2025
- Technical assistance, public engagement, and evaluation activities: Sept 2025 - July 2026
- Final project invoices and report due: August 31st, 2026

Please note: UC San Diego uses [PaymentWorks](#), a self-service online payee management tool to conduct business. If notified of a grant award, you will be invited to register for this system and we request a timely response to initiate the contracting process.

Please Note: Your responses will only be saved if using the same browser on the same computer to start and finish the application. Please finish all questions before moving to the next section. Some sections may not have an option to click back through previous responses. Before completing the application, a preview of your responses will be available to review. **A PDF of the application is available [Here](#) and on the [Growing Equity Website](#).**