

# *FOOD EQUITY FUND*

## 2023 CAPACITY BUILDING GRANT GUIDELINES



# TABLE OF CONTENTS

|   |    |
|---|----|
| 2023 Capacity Building Grant Guidelines ..... | 1  |
| About the Food Equity Fund .....              | 3  |
| What We Fund.....                             | 3  |
| Who Should Apply .....                        | 4  |
| Examples of Eligible Activities .....         | 5  |
| Funding Restrictions.....                     | 5  |
| Example Proposals .....                       | 6  |
| How to Apply .....                            | 6  |
| 2023 Capacity Building Grant Schedule.....    | 7  |
| Virtual Interviews.....                       | 7  |
| Virtual Information Sessions & Support .....  | 7  |
| Evaluation Criteria .....                     | 8  |
| Eligibility Checklist:.....                   | 8  |
| Application Scoring Guidelines.....           | 8  |
| What to Expect If Awarded? .....              | 9  |
| Frequently Asked Questions .....              | 11 |

# ABOUT THE FOOD EQUITY FUND

The Food Equity Fund is a program of the Seattle Department of Neighborhoods (DON). The purpose of the Fund is to invest in community-led work that contributes to an equitable and sustainable local food system. By 'food system' we mean any activities related to food, this can include growing, sourcing, preparing, learning, distributing food and/or managing food waste.

Created in 2021, the Food Equity Fund supports work led by those who experience the most food and health inequities: Black, Indigenous, People of Color (BIPOC), immigrants, refugees, people with low incomes, youth, and elders.

## INTRODUCING THE CAPACITY BUILDING GRANT

In its pilot year, the Food Equity Fund's Capacity Building Grant prioritizes community organizations and groups with an annual budget of less than \$500,000. The intention is to provide a nimble grant to smaller, grassroots organizations advancing an equitable and sustainable local food system who historically have limited access to institutional funding. The submission process consists of a simple written application and a required virtual interview.

## WHAT WE FUND

Across the United States and in Seattle, there are deep and persistent inequities in the food system due to structural racism. The Food Equity Fund aims to increase investments in community food work led by: Black, Indigenous, People of Color, immigrants, refugees, people with low incomes, youth, and elders.

*Eligible proposals must:*

- Occur within Seattle
- Be accessible and benefit people who live, learn, work and/or worship in Seattle
- Focus on contributing to an equitable and sustainable local food system
- Be complete within 24 months of contracting

# WHO SHOULD APPLY

- Organizations that have 501(c)(3) nonprofit status with **less than \$500k annual budget**
- Community groups with **less than \$500k annual budget** that have a \*fiscal sponsor with 501(c)(3) nonprofit status,
- Tribes and tribal organizations, and/or
- Organizations and groups led by those who experience the most food and health inequities: Black, Indigenous, People of Color (BIPOC), immigrants, refugees, people with low incomes, youth, and/or elders.



**\*A FISCAL SPONSOR** is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization that agrees to act as the trustee of your project's funds and assumes financial responsibilities related to record keeping and the disbursement of funds. If you are not a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization, you are required to secure a fiscal sponsor for your contract with the City of Seattle. For groups that must hire a fiscal sponsor, a fee of 5% to 10% of the total grant award is often charged. This fee may be included in your proposal budget.

*Note: Only one application per organization is allowed, except if the organization serves as a fiscal sponsor for multiple projects*

## INELIGIBLE APPLICANTS

We do not accept proposals from applicants who are:

- **501(c)(4) political groups**
- **For-profit entities, including small businesses**
- **Individual persons**
- **Major institutions such as school districts, universities, hospitals**

# EXAMPLES OF ELIGIBLE ACTIVITIES

The following activities are *ideas* of eligible activities:

- \*Capital project or physical improvement such as a new greenhouse, farm irrigation, and/or commercial kitchen
- Coalition-building to advance food justice & food sovereignty
- Community organizing
- Capacity-building
- Elders/seniors-focused programs
- Food distribution
- Food justice leadership development
- Food pantry & meal services
- Food production such as gardening or farming
- Food-related job training
- Activities that advance economic opportunities in the food system
- Storytelling & cultural preservation and/or education
- Youth-focused programs
- And many more!



**\*CONTINGENCY:** All capital/physical improvement project budgets must include a 15% cash contingency for all construction related activities and costs, including sales tax.

# FUNDING RESTRICTIONS

The following activities are **not** eligible for funding:

- Expenses made before the organization is under contract
- Activities or projects related to for-profit entities
- Renovations on private residences
- Lodging or hotel expenses
- Organization's overhead costs not related to the Food Equity Fund proposal
- Projects/activities that are not accessible by the public
- Purchase of land or buildings
- Purchase of a vehicle
- Scholarships

Seattle Department of Neighborhoods reserves the right to make the final determination of eligible expenses or project activities. **Please contact a Food Equity Fund Project Manager directly with any questions about eligible activities prior to submitting a final application.**

## EXAMPLE PROPOSALS

- 1) A Native-led organization seeks funds to grow and provide free culturally relevant produce to elders in their community.
- 2) A trusted coalition of BIPOC farmers working in Seattle seek funds to conduct a visioning process with their community. The project includes climate resiliency planning, soil health testing, and growing culturally relevant produce.
- 3) A mutual aid group seeks funds to build a new greenhouse, and to re-design and expand their existing food storage and distribution area to make it more accessible. The proposal involves engagement with the property owner, community members, and volunteers to co-design and build the new distribution area.

## HOW TO APPLY

Follow this checklist to make sure you have downloaded key forms and have everything you need to submit a complete Food Equity Fund application:

- [Application](#)
- [Written Response](#)
- [Attachments](#): Project Timeline, Budget Request and Leadership Bios
- Additional attachments, if applicable:
  - IRS 501(c)(3) determination letter
  - Identified fiscal sponsorship if an unincorporated group
  - Property owner letter

Application and attachment(s) must be submitted via email to [FoodEquityFund@seattle.gov](mailto:FoodEquityFund@seattle.gov).

# 2023 CAPACITY BUILDING GRANT SCHEDULE

- **Award Amount:** \$5,000 - \$20,000 | **Proposal Length:** up to 24 months
- **Application Open:** Monday May 1, 2023 - October 31, 2023 (or until funding runs out)
- **Application Deadline:** rolling basis

## VIRTUAL INTERVIEWS



The review process will include a virtual interview component. Interviews will be scheduled after a Food Equity Fund Project Manager reviews the written portion of the application. Language and American Sign Language (ASL) interpretation are available upon request, please allow 5 business days for planning. Virtual interviews will take place **every Tuesday between 1:00-2:30pm**, you will work with a project manager to schedule the next available appointment slot.

## INFORMATION SESSIONS

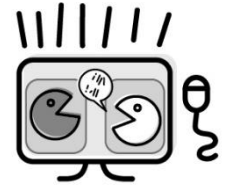
Join a virtual information session to learn about the application process and to ask questions. Register for an information session [here](#).



|  |   |
|--|---|
| Monday, May 15 <sup>th</sup><br>1:00 – 2:00 pm       | Webex Link: <a href="#">Food Equity Fund Capacity Building Info Session #1</a><br>Join by phone: (206) 207-1700<br>Access Code: 2480 103 9583 |
| Wednesday, June 14 <sup>th</sup><br>10:00 – 11:00 am | Webex Link: <a href="#">Food Equity Fund Capacity Building Info Session #2</a><br>Join by phone: (206) 207-1700<br>Access Code: 2492 040 6600 |
| Tuesday, June 27 <sup>th</sup><br>10:00 – 11:00 am   | Webex Link: <a href="#">Food Equity Fund Capacity Building Info Session #3</a><br>Join by phone: (206) 207-1700<br>Access Code: 2482 435 9514 |

**Technical Assistance:** Questions about the application or want to discuss your proposal idea? We encourage you to work with a project manager\* prior to submission of application.

Email [foodequityfund@seattle.gov](mailto:foodequityfund@seattle.gov) or call **206-727-FOOD (3663)** to schedule a one-on-one meeting with a project manager. Project managers are available to meet outside of regular business hours and weekends with advance scheduling.



*\*The project manager providing technical assistance to an applicant will not be the same project manager making grant recommendations.*

## EVALUATION CRITERIA

All proposals will be screened for basic eligibility requirements and reviewed by the Food Equity Fund staff.

### ELIGIBILITY CHECKLIST:

- Project occurs within Seattle
- Project is accessible and benefit people who live, learn, work and or worship in Seattle
- The applicant's annual budget is less than \$500,000
- Focus on contributing to an equitable and sustainable local food system
- Be complete within 24 months of contracting

## APPLICATION SCORING GUIDELINES

### Narrative:

- Is the group's history, mission, and vision aligned with proposal?
- Does the example accomplishment clearly align with the proposed work?
- Is the community they are a part of clearly defined?
- Are priority communities key decision makers and/or involved at most phases of the proposed work?



- Is the description clear? Does it align with the stated timeline and budget? Is it consistent with the Food Equity Fund purpose?

### **Attachments:**

- Is the budget complete and feasible?
- Are the outcomes and timeline realistic?
- Do the majority or all team members working on the proposed work reflect the lived experiences of the priority communities they work with?

### **Virtual Interview:**

- Does the applicant provide a clear description of the leadership structure and share how key decisions will be made during their proposed work?
- Does the applicant clearly demonstrate an understanding of their community's needs? Are the solutions culturally relevant?
- Is there a clear example about how BIPOC, people with low incomes, youth and/or elder leaders in the food system are intentionally developed or supported at multiple stages of the work?

NOTE: Funding recommendations made by the virtual interview panel will have final approval from the Food Equity Fund Program Supervisor.

## ***WHAT TO EXPECT IF AWARDED?***

### **If funded, organizations and/or fiscal sponsors will be required to:**

- Attend an orientation.
- Work closely with their assigned Food Equity Fund project manager to finalize project/program outcomes.
- Have a current City of Seattle business license.
- Secure and provide evidence of Commercial General Liability insurance
- If applicable, provide documentation upon request of Washington State Patrol background checks for all project volunteers and staff working with youth under 18 years of age.

- Ensure all design and capital projects on City of Seattle property follow Federal law to provide readily accessible facilities per the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). Capital projects are expected to pay prevailing wages.
- The Food Equity Fund makes payment based on mutually agreed upon outcomes. In addition, it includes a steady monthly rate that is negotiated during the contracting process.

# FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

- **Can Seattle Department of Neighborhoods (DON) staff review my application?**

Yes, Food Equity Fund project managers are available to provide feedback on your application and answer any questions.

For information on how to contact a DON Food Equity Fund project manager and details on office hours, please see page 8 or call 206.727.3663.

- **My office is not in Seattle, but the community we work with is based in Seattle. Can we apply to the Food Equity Fund?**

Yes. If your office is located outside of Seattle, you can apply if your project or program takes place within Seattle city limits AND benefits people who live, learn, work, and/or worship in Seattle.

- **As a current Food Equity Fund grantee, am I eligible to apply for this Capacity Building Grant?**

It depends! Current Food Equity Fund grantees are eligible to apply, however, if your proposal is awarded, your current Food Equity Fund contract must be complete by the time you start a new contract. If you are a current grantee and have any questions about this, please contact your assigned project manager. Organizations can't have simultaneous contracts within the Food Equity Fund Grant program.

- **Which fiscal year do you consider for the \$500k eligibility requirement?**

Either your organization or group's annual budget for 2022 or 2023 must be below \$500,000.

- **What is Commercial General Liability (CGL) Insurance?**

It is liability coverage for the length of the grant contract. The "City of Seattle" must be added as an additional insured party to the policy. Please work with your Food Equity Fund project manager to determine the appropriate insurance coverage. You may include the cost of insurance in your grant budget.

- **If I currently have an active grant contract with Seattle Department of Neighborhoods (DON), am I eligible to apply for this Fund?**

Organizations and community groups are allowed to hold multiple DON grants if they are for separate and unique projects.

- **Are there any matching requirements for the Food Equity Fund dollars?**

No. The Food Equity Fund General Grant does not require that their grant dollars be matched.

- **What is a City of Seattle business license?**

Anyone doing business in Seattle must have a Seattle business license tax certificate, also known as a business license or general business license. This is in addition to the Department of Revenue business license. You do not have to have a City of Seattle Business License to apply for this grant, however, if selected, your organization or your fiscal sponsor will be required to obtain one. For more information: [Business Licenses - City Finance | seattle.gov](https://seattle.gov/cityfinance/businesslicenses)

- **Where else can I get funding for food-related projects in Seattle?**

Here are a few other funding opportunities that support food or environmental justice related projects:

- [Equitable Development Initiative](#) - Office of Planning & Community Development
- [Environmental Justice Fund](#) - Office of Sustainability and Environment
- [KCD Seattle Community Partnership Grant](#) - King County Conservation District
- [Food Assistance Grants](#) - Washington State Department of Agriculture