

Developing Your Project & Applying for Funding Informational Packet

This document is intended for individuals/organizations applying for a grant for the first time. The document will provide you with general information about grant applications and specific requirements to think about when applying to the People's Garden Project.

What is the People's Garden Project?

Each of the Rhode Island Conservation Districts (Eastern, Southern, and Northern) is seeking communities and organizations in urban, suburban, or rural areas to install community gardens or high tunnels and maintain them for a minimum of 18 months (gardens) or 36 months (high tunnels). This project is funded by an agreement between the RI State Conservation Committee (RISCC) and the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service (USDA NRCS). Funding can be spent on items such as tools, soil, seed, fertilizer, soil additives, irrigation materials, garden materials, lumber, high tunnels, pollinator plants, etc. Although funding cannot be used to maintain existing gardens, it may be used to create new garden beds at a site where other gardens already exist. An existing garden is defined as one that produced produce for human consumption during the previous year's growing season.

Brainstorming Your Project:

There are many ideas, goals, and visions you might have for your community or community garden. This section will help you decide your garden project.

1. Are you seeking to start a community garden or expand a current community garden?
2. Identify your target audience/community members.
 - a. Is there a waitlist to have a space at the community garden? Is there accessibility to all community members who wish to participate in the garden? Are you looking to bring students and their families into the garden?
3. Determining your long-term and short term goals for your community.
 - a. What are some needs of your community? What would be the most beneficial aspect that they would utilize within the community garden? Do the target community members want shared garden space or individual plots of their own? Would the surrounding community, not growing in the garden, benefit from specific access to excess fruits and vegetables produced?

Project Planning:

Once you have a vision for your community garden or garden expansion it is time to start planning the logistics and feasibility of your project.

1. Location & Space:
 - a. For starting a community garden, do you have a location in mind? Are you/your organization or community able to lease or buy the land for the community garden space? Keep in mind for the People's Garden Project you must have and

maintain control of the land for the duration of the Project, either by leasing, partner agreement or owning. You must have a location secured when you apply for the People's Garden Project.

- b. For a garden expansion, think about what your community needs and goals are. Identify how much space you have to expand the garden and what aspects are most important for the expansion. Do you have enough space for what your goals are?
2. Timeline:
 - a. Identify what the tasks you will need to complete to achieve the short-term and long-term goals developed for the community garden.
 - i. What tasks will need to be completed first, second, third and so on?
 - ii. Will you need partner collaboration? What community outreach will need to be completed? Who will assist in the planning and implementation of the project?
 - b. Identify your project completion date and how long each of these tasks will take. Work backwards from there to set up your own timeline of when you will need to complete each task. Keep in mind that the People's Garden Project will allow 18 months to complete a garden project and 36 month if you include a high tunnel within the project.
 2. Design:
 - c. Once you have a site and timeline, it is time to design the vision you have for your garden. Having a rough sketch of your plans for the space is a great way to make sure you are staying realistic to your space and utilising the space for the project goals. A general design of the community garden will also help identify the materials you will need for the project to start developing your budget.

Developing a Project Budget:

You have goals, a project plan/timeline, location/space, and a general design layout of the community garden project. You are ready to begin drafting a project budget. It is advised to use software like Excel or Google Docs to help you organize and edit the budget easily.

1. Make a list of any supplies you will need for the construction aspect of your garden project. It is helpful to go back to your garden design and to see dimensions of some of the constructed materials that you are planning on building to know dimensions for lumber, supplies, etc. needed.
2. Add additional materials you will need to assist in the garden construction (gloves, nails, tools, etc.)
3. Review your project tasks and add other materials needed to complete any tasks or goals for the project.
4. Research all the items on the list and identify cost, how, where and from whom the items will be purchased. Don't forget to include tax. Think about rounding up some items to give you a little extra room in your budget overall incase costs of an item change between when you develop your budget and purchasing those items.
5. Add up/sum up the total costs of all items. Reflect on the total amount you have budgeted for.

6. Think about partner contributions and donations. Will anything on the list of materials needed to be purchased or donated by another individual, partner, or organization? If so, take those materials out of your budget for requested funds and put this information aside to review when estimating match for the project.
7. Optional Step: Group materials into sections such as, "Lumber", "Soil, Mulch, & Compost", "tools" "Seedings & plants", etc. and add up the sum of the materials in each group.
8. Total the entire costs of the materials needed for the project.
9. Review the total costs. Check to make sure you can apply for the amount of funding needed for materials to accomplish the project.
 - a. Review any funding requirements in the People's Garden RFP and FAQ and make sure you are meeting those requirements.
 - b. Are you over your budget? You might have to go back through your project plans, and list of materials to either decide not to get something for the project or see if you can get that material from a partner or donation to count as match instead of purchasing it through the funding of the People's Garden Project.

Estimating Match:

Match is the amount, calculated by cash or in-kind contributions, including donations, additional grant funding, labor, or additional purchases provided/associated with the project separate from the requested funding from a grant or funding source. Cash match or in-kind match is NOT additional reimbursements or funding costs received by the grant or funding source. It is provided to the project as a separate supporting source. Match shares project costs and promotes sustainability of projects and programs outside of the grant or funding source. Keep in mind every grant's match requirements might be different.

People's Garden Project match requires cash or in-kind contributions of a \$1:\$1 ratio - meaning for every \$1 of funding requested, the applicant must provide \$1 of match contributions to the project. In-kind match contributions can be labor costs from staff time or volunteer time, either calculated at an individual's rate of pay or the current volunteer rate. Cash match is additional purchases to support the project. Both cash and in-kind match for the People's Garden Project CAN NOT be supported by federal funds. Additional match provided to the project over the required amount will not be reimbursed for the difference. Match for a project should be properly documented and tracked. A documentation template for Match tracking and submission will be provided to grantees.

1. When calculating match for your project it is advised to use a software like Excel or Google Docs to help you organize and edit the calculated match easily.
2. Review any materials that were set aside when making the budget that was identified as partner assistance or donations (cash match) and add those to the match list.
3. Identify additional staff and volunteer time (in-kind match) that will be used to complete the project. Think about the tasks you identified, the time it would take to accomplish those tasks, and who (staff or volunteers) would be implementing those tasks. Calculate the time either at the current federal volunteer rate or the staff pay rate.
4. Calculate the cash and in-kind contributions to the project.
5. Review the total match of cash and in-kind and make sure that the amount of match meets the required match (\$1:\$1 ratio). If the total match does not meet the required

The People's Garden Project

amount for the People's Garden Project you must revisit the project budget and match calculations to meet this requirement.

Grant Writing:

Once you have thoroughly thought through the project and developed a project plan, budget, and match you are ready to write your grant application/project proposal to the People's Garden Project. For the People's Garden Project you can either write your own proposal or fill out the application. If you chose to write your own proposal you **MUST** provide the information required in the application. Please use the application template as a guide to writing your application/proposal and review the proposal example provided below.

People's Garden Application Template

People's Garden Project 2022 Application

Each applicant is given priority for funding based on a **first come, first served** basis beginning on **Friday, January 21st, 2022 through Friday, March 18, 2022**. Priority will be given to (1) eligible entities that have previously applied to the People's Garden Project in 2020 and 2021 that have not received funding, (2) eligible entities that request larger projects seeking funding closer to the ceiling award amount, and (3) eligible new applications. As many projects as possible will be funded until the \$26,709 available for projects in each district has been allocated. Each Conservation District will be seeking to fund three projects with a maximum of \$8,903 per project. Eligible proposals received after January 21, 2022 will be awarded funding on a first-come, first-served basis. A proposal is still required to ensure that all costs are allowable by our funders at USDA NRCS. Applicants can complete the application form or submit their own proposal that includes similar information. **Each applicant must meet all of the criteria stated in the People's Garden Project Request for Proposal to receive the People's Garden Project funding.** If the applicant does not meet all the requirements for the grant, then the applicant will not receive funding and priority will be given to the next received applicant.

Applicant Project: *(Name of Project)*

Project Location:

Street: _____

Town: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Applicant Organization:

Name of organization: *(Please Provide the name of the organization that will be Coordinating the project. If you are not an organization please provide the community or individual coordinating the project and specify in the next question)*

Type of organization (i.e school, nonprofit, business entity, or quasi public):

Project Coordinator(s) - the contact person(s) for the project (Please provide the grant financial coordinator and project implementation coordinator if different):

(It is important to provide both the individual contact information for the coordinator who will be the individual(s) who will be in communication with your Conservation District for the project funding/budget and the implementation of the Project. In some circumstances this is the same individual or different individuals in the organization/group. The coordinator for the project funding/budget would be organizing the budget portion of the project, including documenting and reporting reimbursement. Whereas the project coordinator would be conducting the day-to-day project and include, communicating, documenting match, and reporting. Both of these coordinators are expected to communicate project logistics with one another as well as with your Conservation District. If for any reason, the project coordinator(s) will no longer be working on this project it is required that the coordinator(s) provide ample time for transitioning new coordinator(s) for the project and communicate with your Conservation District about such changes prior to the coordinators stepping away from the position.)

Name(s): _____

Email(s): _____

Phone number(s): _____

Project timeline (18months for a garden or 36 months for high tunnels): _____

Total Requested Funding: \$ _____

Total In-kind Match Pledged: \$ _____

Please answer the following questions:

1. Have your or this organization applied for the People's Garden Project before? Did you receive funding? If so, please state and explain the previous application or project funded. If you have received previous funding and are applying for more funding, your project must be a separate project from previously funded.

(Please state if you have or have not applied to the People's Garden Project. If you have applied to the People's Garden Funding, identify if you or your organization has or has not received funding by the Project in the past and explain the project.)

1. Does the project coordinator and/or applicant organization have permission to create a new garden on the land proposed? New beds adjacent to existing gardens may be considered, but this project cannot be used to fund maintenance on existing gardens that were active during the 2020 calendar year. Entities must have and maintain control of the land (such as a deed, lease, or written agreement with the landowner) where the garden and/or seasonal high tunnel will be established for the duration of the selected project, 18 months or 36 months.

(Please state if the applicant has permission to create or expand a community garden. If the applicant is leasing, partnering, or is part of a larger entity they must provide written documentation such as a letter stating permission for the project in this proposal application.)

1. Describe the proposed project (i.e beds required, materials that will be used, plants that will be grown) or high tunnel (i.e size of high tunnel required, brand or source of high tunnel, what will be grown in the high tunnel) and any other partners involved.

(Provide information about the goals and accomplishments of the project, aka the overall plan for the project. State if the project will be to start a new community garden(s) or expand on an existing garden(s). Explain what will be done at the site for the project. Include raised beds, fence, high

tunnel information, soil health, irrigation plans, community collaboration, event(s)/workshop(s), pollinator habitat, development, etc.)

1. Describe how the project will benefit the community
(Explain the purpose of the planned project described above and explain how this connects, helps, supports, educates, culminate the community, ect.)
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1. Budget:

Please fill out the proposed budget sheet or attach your own proposed budget with your application. A maximum of \$8,903 may be requested. Smaller requests are also welcome. Funding can be spent on items such as tools, soil, seed, fertilizer, soil additives, irrigation materials, garden materials, lumber, high tunnels, pollinator plants, etc. Projects with a budget lower than the maximum are encouraged to apply. Please refer to the People's Garden Project Request for Proposal for specific guidelines on project funding and required match. A maximum of \$1000 total should be requested for irrigation and fencing; this number should be reduced to \$500 for smaller projects.

Project Budget and Requested Funds:
(Review the People's Garden Application 101 for information on how you can identify, breakdown, and develop a project budget and calculate match.)

Item/activity and description (unit measurement, cost per unit, quantity, etc.)	Total cost of Item/activity

Total Funds Requested	\$

Project Match:

Item/activity and description (unit measurement, cost per unit, quantity, volunteer time, etc.)	Total cost of Item/activity
Total Match (much equal or exceed requested funds)	\$

People's Garden Application EXAMPLE

People's Garden Initiative 2020-2021 Application

Applicant Project: *Name of Project*

Project Location: *Address*

Applicant Organization:

Name of Organization:

Name of Organization

Type of Organization (i.e. school nonprofit entity, or quasi public):

Community volunteer group

Project Coordinator(s):

Name, Email, Phone #

Name, Email, Phone #

Name, Email, Phone #

Project Timeline (18 months or 24 months):

18 months

Total Requested Funding: \$1,489.00

Total In-kind Match Pledged: \$2,284.80

Please answer the following questions:

1. Have you applied for the People's Garden Project before?

No

2. Do you have permission to create a new garden on the land proposed?

Name of entity that is provided permission for the land to accomplish the project proposed.

Provide permission information such as a letter attached to this application.

3. Describe the proposed project (i.e. beds required, materials used, plants grown), and any other partner involved.

Project Name _____ will complete a two-part project within 18 months that includes, (1) the addition of eight raised beds for growing food, and (2) the establishment of a 900 sq. ft. native pollinator garden.

Community gardeners added four new raised beds during the 2020 growing season in unused spaces, in an attempt to keep up with the growing demand for plots. These beds are farther away from the water source but are still a great location to grow food. We will construct eight additional raised beds (8' x 4') in these spaces and will fill them with new topsoil. The distance from the water source to the new beds is easily remedied by the purchase of hoses.

To improve accessibility, four of the beds will be constructed to a height of 24" with 36" wide paths. Two ramps already connect terraced sections of the community garden. There remains a third section with one vertical step that prevents access to those with limited mobility. We will install a ramp to improve access to this section of the garden.

Project Name _____ have a strong interest in expanding the amount of space for native pollinator plants. We set an ambitious wildflower expansion goal in the spring of 2019, which involves converting approximately 1,500 square feet of hillside from grass to pollinator plants. We made significant progress, including the removal of all of the grass and the installation of 500 square feet of pollinator plants. We will establish two additional beds of pollinator plants in the remaining 1,000 square feet of hillside. This location is not ideal for raised beds because of the slope, but is perfect for pollinator plants. We will use the native northeast wildflower seed mix from American Meadows, which has proven successful before, as well as seeds saved by our gardeners. We will use sand to help scatter the seed and seeding mulch to minimize washout.

Project Name _____ continues its programming partnership with Partner Name _____. This includes a Partner Name _____, which removes the financial barrier to access the community garden and often serves as an entry point for new community gardeners. They also host educational garden workshops, like a seed starting presentation that reached 81 attendees prior to the pandemic. They will host at least one educational workshop at the garden site.

4. Describe how the project will benefit the community.

The project will equip **Project Name** the resources to reach up to 8 more families in the **Name of Location/Neighborhood of Project** with 256 square feet of new raised bed space to grow fresh, healthy and affordable food. Four of these beds will have improved accessibility features, such as increased height and wider paths. All eight new beds will be accessible by ramp, expanding gardening opportunities to community members with limited mobility. The project expands native pollinator habitat by 1,000 square feet, attracting birds, butterflies, bees, and other pollinators needed to foster a healthy environment, in addition to supporting happy, healthy community members.

5. **Budget:**

See attachment.

Project Budget and Requested Funds	
Item /activity and description (unit measurement, cost per unity, quantity)	Total cost of item/activity
(12) Twelve 2 "x 10" x 8' lumber (\$16.66/unit)	\$200.00
(36) Thirty six 2" x 8" x 8' lumber (\$13/unit)	\$468.00
(4) Four 4" x 4" x 8' lumber (\$17.50/unit)	\$70.00
(12) Twelve cubic yards of screen loam / topsoil screened to 3/4" (\$29/unit)	\$348.00
(1) One 10 x 2-1/2-in ceramic deck screws (5-lb)	\$30.00
(2) Two trigger nozzles (\$12/unit)	\$24.00
(2) Two 100-ft. hoses (\$50/unit)	\$100.00
(1) One 50-ft. hose	\$40.00
(1) One native northeast wildflower seed mix (1-lb)	\$75.00
(1) One 0.5 cu. ft. sand	\$6.00
(2) Two 2.5 cubic ft. bales of straw seeding mulch (\$18/unit)	\$36.00
(4) Four 5/4-in x 6-in x 8-ft pressure treated lumber (\$13/unit)	\$52.00
(4) Four 2-in x 6-in x 8-ft pressure treated lumber (\$10/unit)	\$40.00
Total Funds Requested	\$1,489.00
Project Match	
Item /activity and description (\$27.20/volunteer hour)	Total cost of item/activity
(16) Sixteen volunteer hours to install eight raised bed frames	\$435.20
(8) Eight volunteer hours to fill raised beds with new topsoil	\$217.60
(8) Eight volunteer hours to prepare the soil for the pollinator garden and sow the seeds	\$217.60
(30) Thirty volunteer hours to water the pollinator plants during the establishment period	\$816.00
(14) Fourteen volunteer hours to weed and maintain the growing pollinator plants	\$380.80
(8) Eight volunteer hours to install an access ramp	\$217.60
Total Match	\$2,284.80