

FY24 Food System Infrastructure Grant Program

Program Summary: The Montgomery County Office of Food Systems Resilience (OFSR), in partnership with the Montgomery County Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) and Manna Food Center (Manna), is soliciting grant applications for the County's FY24 Food System Infrastructure Grant Program from non-profit and for-profit entities currently engaged in both 1) food security initiatives that benefit underserved communities in Montgomery County, **and** 2) County-based food recovery **AND/OR** local food purchasing efforts.

\$230,000 in total grant funding is available to support the purchase, installation, and/or repair of cold-storage infrastructure that will contribute to a more interconnected, resilient County and regional food value chain. These County infrastructure investments will increase the availability of food resources to address nutrition insecurity in our community by facilitating the procurement and distribution of food produced by local farms and other businesses as well as increase the recovery of food from regional sources. In turn, this will increase economic opportunity and market access for County food producers and reduce resource loss and the climate impacts of wasted food.

This grant program was established as a component of Special Appropriation #24-37, which was approved by the Montgomery County Council in December 2023 to support the implementation of programs related to the Strategic Plan to End Childhood Hunger. One of the objectives of this plan is a geographically diverse distribution of cold-storage infrastructure throughout Montgomery County that will build the capacity of the local and regional food value chains to support access to locally produced foods for County residents experiencing food insecurity.

Proposals must describe a project model to establish cold storage infrastructure that will yield measurable outcomes within the performance period. The minimum award that applicants may request is \$5,000 and maximum award is \$75,000. Final award amounts may be lower than \$5,000.

Key Program Dates:

- **Application Opens:** March 11, 2024
- **Virtual Grant Program Information Session:** Wednesday, March 13th, 2024 from 10:00 am to 11:00 am. Click [here](#) to join the information session on Zoom.
- **Submission Deadline:** Wednesday, April 10th, 2024 at 11:59 PM
- **Grantees Notified:** Anticipated to be on/about April 26th, 2024
- **Funds Dispersed:** Anticipated to be on/about April 29th, 2024
- **Performance Period:** Anticipated to be on/about April 29, 2024, to on/about April 28, 2025.
 - **Mid-cycle Reporting:** September 30th, 2024
 - **End-of-cycle Reporting:** April 30th, 2025
 - **Two-year Reporting:** April 30th, 2026

Eligibility:

Lead applicants may only submit one application, and must meet all of the following conditions:

- The organization must be a nonprofit or for-profit organization based in Montgomery County that is engaged in both 1) food security initiatives that benefit underserved communities in Montgomery County, **and** 2) County-based food recovery **AND/OR** local food purchasing efforts;
- The organization must be currently registered and in Good Standing with the Maryland State Department of Assessments and Taxation (SDAT);
- The organization's principal place of business must be located in Montgomery County; if a national or regional organization, it must have a location in Montgomery County through which it provides related services;
- All activities and expenditures under this grant program must be provided in Montgomery County;
- Current Montgomery County contract or grant award winners must be current on all reporting obligations for other awards and those reports must reflect substantial progress towards the goals of their awards; and
- Proposed expenses must be for a new activity, expansion of existing activities, or a combination of both. Grant funding **cannot** be used for: any purchase which has already been made; purchases or activities unnecessary to accomplish grant purposes as determined by Montgomery County; prior obligations of and/or fines;

debts and penalties imposed on the grantee; lobbying expenses; alcoholic beverages; or supplanting (replacing) other funds.

Emailing Supplemental Documents

All applications whether submitted via Google Forms or via emailed PDF must include the following supplemental materials be emailed to Mfcgrants@gmail.com:

- IRS Tax Exempt Determination Letter for Nonprofit Organizations
- Most recent IRS 990 Form for Nonprofit Organizations (*if not including explanation of why your organization is exempt from filing 990s*)
- Public Copy of Most Recent Independent Audit Report, Financial Review, Agreed Upon Procedures. (*if not submitting a brief statement explaining why it's not available*)
- Project Budget (*supplemental materials optional*)

Grant Program Details, Submissions, and Support: Applications are due no later than **Wednesday, April 10th, 2024, at 11:59 PM**. All applications will be recorded upon receipt. **Applications received after the deadline will be disqualified and will not be forwarded to the Review Panel for funding considerations. Applications with incomplete, illegible, or corrupted digital materials will not be considered.**

For technical questions related to the application, please contact:

Morgan Crull – Senior Program Manager for Food Resources

Manna Food Center

(301) 578-5475

mfcgrants@gmail.com

Instructions: Please review the following application carefully. In each section, please be sure to include all information that is applicable to your organization. Please carefully note all the supplemental documents and materials that must be emailed for your application to be considered complete.

We recommend copying the entire PDF into a Word document, providing all the required information, and then saving the entire application as a PDF to be sent along with the required supplemental materials.

Section A: Applicant Information

Organizations must provide the following information and documents. Supporting documents will be used to assess legal eligibility for the Grant Program. The information provided will be used in any resulting grant agreement. Applicants should provide this information as if they were drafting a contract using specific and exact information.

In addition to completing the questions below, please **email the following supporting documentation to mfcgrants@gmail.com**.

- *(if applicable)* IRS Tax Exempt Determination Letter for Nonprofit Organizations
- Most recent IRS 990 Form for Nonprofit Organizations (or an explanation of why your organization is exempt from filing 990s)
- Public Copy of Most Recent Independent Audit Report, Financial Review, Agreed Upon Procedures (or if not available, please submit a brief statement of explanation below.)

Please submit the documents in the following format:

- Organization's Name - Title of Document
- ***(EXAMPLE) Food Pantry - IRS Tax Exempt Determination Letter for Nonprofit Organization***

NOTE: Although proof of Good Standing is not required as a component of the application, it is critical that applicants remain registered and in Good Standing with SDAT as applicants will be disqualified from a grant competition, delay or even lose a grant award, and/or face delays in grant payments if they are not in Good Standing.

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1. Legal Name of Applying Organization as registered with the Maryland State Department of Assessment and Taxation (SDAT)

You can verify your SDAT status via this link:

<https://egov.maryland.gov/BusinessExpress/EntitySearch>

2. Organization's Federal Tax Identification Number
3. *(optional)* Organization's website
4. Contact Information for the Organization's Proposal Point-of-contact (POC)

5. Contact Information for the Organization's Legally Authorized Signatory
6. Description of Organization's Grant and Financial Management Practices
7. Description of Organization's Data Collection and Management Practices
8. Submission of **IRS Tax Exempt Determination Letter for Nonprofit Organizations**. Please email supporting documentation to mfcgrants@gmail.com.
9. Submission of **most recent IRS 990 Form for Nonprofit Organizations**. (*or explain below of why your organization is exempt from filing 990s*) Please email supporting documentation to mfcgrants@gmail.com.
10. (*If applicable*) Explanation of why your organization is exempt from filing 990s.
11. Submission of **Public Copy of Most Recent Independent Audit Report, Financial Review, Agreed Upon Procedures**. (*If not available, please submit a brief statement of explanation below.*)
12. (*If applicable*) Explanation of why your organization is not uploading Public Copy of Most Recent Independent Audit Report, Financial Review, Agreed Upon Procedures.

Section B: Applicant Background

1. Organization or business's estimated staffing size serving Montgomery County in a given year. *Include Organizational Leadership, including CEO, Executive Director and Board Members (if applicable), or business owners' race and ethnic information.*

Section C: Project Strategy (500-word limit)

The Project Strategy includes several data components related to the proposal:

Project Title – If awarded, Project Title will become the grant agreement name

Project Overview – Brief description of the project (100 words maximum)

Current Data Collection– Please share how you are currently measuring the success of any existing projects/initiatives that relate to this application. See requested indicators below listed by focus area. In the Project Strategy, please speak to any/all of these that are applicable.

FY24 Food System Infrastructure Grant Program Funding Request – Total amount requested through this grant proposal

Total Project Cost – Total cost of project from all funding sources

*In this context, local refers to within Montgomery County, Maryland.

1. Please outline all components of the project proposal listed above.

Food Recovery

Please answer the following questions if you are an organization that is currently engaged in Food Recovery.

If you are responding as an organization that is only involved in local procurement, please skip to the next section - **Local Food Purchasing and Production**.

2. *(if applicable)* Please provide a brief description of your **Current Food Recovery Efforts** – for organizations currently engaged in food recovery initiatives. *(250 word maximum)*
3. *(if applicable)* Please indicate your **Pounds of Food Recovered in Calendar Year 2023** – For applicants currently engaged in food recovery.

4. *(if applicable)* Please indicate your **Pounds of Recovered Food Directly or Indirectly Redistributed in Calendar Year 2023** – For organizations currently engaged in food recovery.
5. *(if applicable)* Please indicate your **Partnerships with Local* Food Assistance Providers** – For organizations currently engaged in food recovery, please describe partnerships with other Montgomery County-based food assistance providers that receive and distribute recovered foods *(250 words maximum)*

Local Food Purchasing, Procurement and Production

Please answer the following questions if you are an organization that is currently engaged in Local Food Purchasing or Production.

6. *(if applicable)* Please list your **Current Local* Food Procurement Partnerships** – Brief description for organizations currently engaged in local food sourcing. Please include the names and locations of the partners you work with and what foods you are currently sourcing. *(250 words maximum)*
7. *(if applicable)* Please indicate your **Pounds of Locally* Grown or Produced Food Procured in Calendar Year 2023** – For not-for-profit applicants currently engaged in local food sourcing.
8. *(if applicable)* Please indicate your **Pounds of Local* Food Sold or Donated to Food Assistance Organizations in Calendar Year 2023** – For organizations currently engaged in in local* food production who have sold or donated product to programs such as Farm to Foodbank, Community Farm Share, Capital Area Food Bank, etc.
9. *(if applicable)* Please indicate the **Zip Code(s) Currently Served** – For food assistance provider organizations, list all zip codes that your organization currently serves.

Section D: Project Strategy (500-word limit)

This part of the proposal should provide the following information and answer the following questions.

Outline the infrastructure project proposal from start to finish, specifically addressing all the information listed below.

Food Recovery AND/OR Local Food Sourcing

1. A detailed description of the cold storage infrastructure project your organization or business is positioned to complete, including a timeline for the project;
2. How the project will increase capacity for local food recovery AND/OR local food sourcing;
3. Why your organization is uniquely suited to have a positive impact on Montgomery County local food recovery AND/OR local food sourcing with additional cold storage infrastructure;
4. The primary need that this proposal will address for your organization or business;
5. How the proposed project will address this issue or need; whether/how this project will benefit other businesses with local food recovery or food sourcing;
6. Way(s) your organization will ensure that the proposed project reaches and positively impacts the target population;
7. Describe your sustainability plan for maintaining this infrastructure investment.
8. Describe your organization's past experience and results related to food recovery or local food procurement.
9. For non-profit food assistance providers only: please list the specific zip code(s) your organization currently serves and your relationship to the population/geographic community in these zip codes.

Section E: Project Budget (No word limit, spreadsheet format preferred)

The FY24 Food System Infrastructure Grant Program funding supports the **capital costs** associated with proposed cold storage infrastructure projects. Operating costs, including staff time/labor, ongoing maintenance or utilities, insurance, and land/space rental are **NOT** eligible expenses.

The Program Budget should be sent as a separate document, preferably in a spreadsheet format. Please email your Project Budget and supplemental materials to mfcgrants@gmail.com.

The budget for this proposal should contain:

- **Expenses:** detailed itemized cost information for all proposed expenses, including capital costs (equipment, associated utility upgrades, fees, installation expenses, etc.) Include repairs of existing infrastructure and warranties on new equipment.
- **Revenues:** include the value of any cost-shares such as donations, other grants received, and in-kind or pro bono services that you anticipate being donated and that are related to this proposal

In addition to a Program Budget, the proposal **must include a Budget Narrative** that briefly describes how the proposed costs were calculated and their justification. If an organization wishes to include quotes or screenshots to verify any prices listed, they may attach these as supplemental materials to the project budget.

- Outline the purpose of the expenditures and an explanation of how costs were calculated.
- Please specify how your project would be affected if total funding awarded were less than the amount requested. State whether your project could be completed with a smaller amount, and how your projected outcomes would be affected by any funding reduction.

For non-profit food assistance providers ONLY:

- Please provide specific details around how this grant would contribute to the organization's **total food programs budget** for calendar year 2024 and how this

grant funding will specifically expand the organization's budget to support food recovery, food rescue, and/or local procurement efforts.

- If your organization provides services outside of Montgomery County, please describe in detail how your organization will ensure that funding provided through this grant will exclusively build the capacity of initiatives that serve Montgomery County residents.

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1. Budget Narrative - please explain budget calculations and justify expenses listed.

Section F: Project Work Plan/Timeline (500-word limit)

This section should outline the schedule for implementation of the proposed program over the 12-month grant performance period.

The implementation schedule over the performance period should list:

- The program's objectives and related activities, including the purchase, installation, and operation of cold storage infrastructure;
- Timeline for implementation and completion of each objective and/or activity; and
- Responsible staff or parties, including partner organizations, farms, etc. involved in the project.

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1. Outline the Project Work Plan/Timeline from start to finish, specifically addressing all bullet points listed above.

Section G: Performance Plan (500-word limit)

The Performance Plan should outline how you will measure the success of your proposed project. Please also include any historical outcomes achieved by similar projects that are being emulated or expanded through this proposal.

In this section of the application, applicants **MUST estimate the following milestone figures** (depending on focus area(s)) at 6 months (mid-cycle) and 12 months (end-cycle) of program implementation:

For **food assistance provider partners and non-profit agencies** involved in **food recovery and/or rescue** please estimate progress on the following metrics at 6 month and 12 months:

- Pounds of food from all sources recovered from being wasted;
- Number of unique food assistance provider partners receiving recovered food;
- Pounds of recovered food stored in grant-funded infrastructure;
- *(if applicable)* Number of **unduplicated* households and individuals** receiving food assistance.

For **local agriculture and food garden partners** involved in **local** sourcing efforts** please estimate progress on the following metrics at 6 month and 12 months:

- *(if applicable)* Pounds of locally** produced food sold in connection to food assistance efforts;
- *(if applicable)* Pounds of locally** produced food donated in connection to food assistance efforts;
- Total pounds of food stored in grant-funded infrastructure;
- Sales/revenue generated as a result of grant-funded infrastructure.

* For this reporting, an unduplicated household or individual is defined as: a household or individual served at least once throughout the reporting period. For example, the mid-cycle report may indicate 500 unique individuals served. From mid-cycle to end-cycle, if only 100 additional individuals received assistance, whether the 500 individuals in the mid-cycle report return for assistance, the end-cycle report should indicate that 600 unique individuals received assistance.

** For this reporting, local is defined as within Montgomery County.

Reporting Expectations: If granted funds, your organization may be required to report on additional metrics as listed in the [Grant NOFO](#) Please carefully review the NOFO for a full list of reporting requirements.

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1. Estimate milestone metrics and describe the data collection methods associated with them and any additional metrics you will be using to measure the success of the proposed project. *(Please describe the milestone metrics for your area of focus only)*

To Submit Your Application:

Please remember to email a PDF of the entire application along with the following supplemental materials to Mfcgrants@gmail.com:

- IRS Tax Exempt Determination Letter for Nonprofit Organizations
- Most recent IRS 990 Form for Nonprofit Organizations (*if not including explanation of why your organization is exempt from filing 990s*)
- Public Copy of Most Recent Independent Audit Report, Financial Review, Agreed Upon Procedures. (*if not submitting a brief statement explaining why it's not available*)
- Project Budget (*supplemental materials optional*)

To review the scoring criteria and rubric, please visit the [Scoring Rubric](#).

Thank you!