

Request for Proposals: The RI State Conservation Committee (RISCC)/Natural Resources Conservation Service (USDA NRCS) People's Garden Project in Providence County

Submissions Due: Friday, January 3, 2020 at 4 pm to Gennifer Keller, NRICD Urban Agriculture Coordinator. Submissions are due electronically to gkeller.nricd@gmail.com. Chosen projects will be notified of funding by January 30, 2020.

Background and Requirements:

Northern Rhode Island Conservation District (NRICD) is seeking a minimum of three organizations in urban, suburban, or rural areas of Providence County 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). A maximum of \$6,000 is available to fund each proposed project; 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 2019 growing season.

Organizations receiving funding must agree to the following requirements, set in place by the USDA NRCS:

- 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.
- The recipient is responsible for maintaining the selected community garden site for approximately 18 months beginning with the installation of the garden, or 36 months beginning with the installation of a high tunnel.
- The recipient must provide NRICD with two written stories about its garden project at the end of each growing season, and include five photos showing progression/installation of the project. Awardee must provide on-camera release forms for any people in the photos. Photos will be shared and may be used by USDA NRCS. NRICD may provide release forms for recipients to use.
- The recipient must install signage at the garden or high tunnel site acknowledging NRCS along with other partnering organizations who provided support for the community garden or high tunnel. Agreement funds may be used for the installation of signage, and NRICD staff is available to assist with the creation of signage.
- The recipient must agree to host one educational workshop at its garden site. NRICD staff will be available to assist with coordinating, hosting, and advertising the workshop.
- Each installed garden must have an irrigation system. Agreement funds may be used for the installation of the system.

- The use of raised beds and imported soil is required for sites where soil is contaminated. Raised beds may also be used to increase accessibility. Agreement funds may be used to pay for these costs.

Funds may not be used for staff time, and will be dispersed on a **reimbursement basis**. This means that recipient organizations will document purchases with receipts, paid invoices, and/or cancelled checks, and then receive reimbursement from NRICD. Although reimbursement is generally processed within 1-2 weeks of receiving required documentation, unexpected events such as government shutdowns can occasionally cause longer delays.

Required Match: For every dollar of funding that you apply to receive, you must agree to provide one dollar of *matching funds*. Matching funds can take the form of volunteer hours documented by your organization (currently valued at \$26.82 per hour), time spent by paid staff at your organization (valued at their rate of pay plus fringe as documented by pay stubs/time sheets), or the financial value of supplies that your organization provides to complete the project (documented by receipts, cancelled checks, and/or paid invoices, or a best estimate for donated items). NRICD staff will be available to assist you with properly documenting your match commitment. Match must be funded by non-federal sources.

How To Apply: Please submit a 1-3 page single-spaced proposal electronically to gkeller.nricd@gmail.com by Friday, January 3, 2020 at 4:00 pm. Your proposal should include:

- The name of your organization, as well as the type of organization (i.e. school, nonprofit, business entity, nonprofit, or quasi public)
- The name, email, and phone number of your organization's contact person for the project.
- A description of your proposed community garden (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).
- A description of how the project will benefit your organization's community.
- A proposed budget outlining how you will spend your requested funds and how you will provide match. A maximum of \$6,000 may be requested.
- A description of any other partners involved in the project.
- If you have previously discussed your project with USDA NRCS staff, please briefly describe these interactions in your proposal.

With any questions about preparing your proposal, please contact Molly Allard (mallard.nricd@gmail.com) or Gennifer Keller (gkeller.nricd@gmail.com).

NRICD, RISCC, and USDA NRCS reserve the right to accept or reject any proposal submitted, or any portion thereof, for any reason.

USDA NRCS is an equal opportunity employer, provider and lender.