

***Sustainable Food and Agriculture Funding***

***2023***

Application Packet

OFFICE OF SUSTAINABILITY, CLIMATE ACTION AND RESILIENCE (OSCAR)

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**Sustainable Food and Ag. Funding 2023**

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Sustainable Food and Ag. Funding Application

Background

In November 2016, voters approved the Sustainability Tax ballot initiative, to allocate a portion of sales and use tax revenue to fund countywide sustainability infrastructure and programs. Pending Boulder County Commissioner (BOCC) formal board approval of the 2022 budget, the allocation of $405,000 has specifically been set aside for sustainability-focused initiatives that will address the priority needs of local farmers and agriculture producers. The goal of this funding opportunity is to provide Boulder County farmers, agricultural producers, the private sector and non-profit organizations the means to undertake environmental sustainability priorities that benefit Boulder County agricultural lands.

This Funding Opportunity will Support Five Broad Local Food and Ag. Categories:

1. On-farm regenerative agriculture and soil health practices;
2. Farmer/producer education, conferences, and workshops that focus on sustainable and regenerative agriculture demonstrations;
3. On-farm and farmer’s market infrastructure;
4. Sustainable local food and crop production;
5. Programmatic and resource support for frontline farm workers and organizations.

Eligibility Requirements and Criteria

Boulder County’s Sustainable Food and Agriculture Funding 2023 is open to Boulder County farmers, local agricultural tenants, farmers markets, non-profits and private sector entities.

To be eligible for funding, projects must follow all federal, state/local land use regulations and permit requirements. Project applicants must be registered as a business, an official non-profit organization, or a governmental entity. Projects must also be based within Boulder County boundaries.

For the 2023 grant round, there will be two funding levels you can apply to. The rules, objectives, and reporting requirements are the same for both the small and large budget levels.

If you have received a grant award from the Boulder County Sustainable Food and Agriculture Fund in the past, you must wait two years to be eligible for funding again. For example, if you received funding in 2022, you must wait until 2024 to reapply. **Exception:** Projects that received funding in the Small Budget Funding Level in 2022, do not need to wait the two years, and may apply to the Large Budget Funding Level in 2023.

Funding Levels:

**Small Budget Funding Level:**

Maximum of $5,000 can be applied for and minimum is $2,000. These applications will be scored separately from the large budget funding level. The total small budget funding is $25,000 pending BOCC approval.

**Large Budget Funding Level:**

Maximum of $150,000 can be applied for and minimum is $40,000. Any infrastructure project over $75,000 must benefit multiple farmers. The total large budget funding is $380,000 pending approval.

If you are applying for two separate funding levels, you must submit two separate applications. **You can only submit 1 application per funding level.**

Project Categories and Examples:

There are five categories in which applicants may apply. We will ask you which category your project is addressing, and it is okay if your project addresses multiple categories. The bulleted list below each category is an example of what could be included in the application.

***Regenerative agriculture/soil health***

Projects must improve existing or new farm operations in ways that facilitate some or all of the following:

* Carbon sequestration
* Soil health
* Non-synthetic soil amendments
* Cover crops + crop seed
* Perennials
* Compost subsidies
* Ag enterprise areas

***Education and workshops***

* Support for sharing best practices, farm demonstrations, soil health conferences, backyard soil science efforts.

***Infrastructure***

* Farmer’s market infrastructure
* Farm infrastructure relative to sustainable operations
* Coop infrastructure
* Special equipment needed for sustainable operations
* Storage & refrigeration
* Processing equipment

***Local food and crop production / innovation processing***

* Support for organic and or local food production
* Innovative local processing ideas
* Food hub development
* Local food systems grant financing
* Fiber (hemp, sheep, flax linen, and etc.) production

***Programmatic and resource support for frontline farm workers and organizations.***

* Support for the frontline farming community
* Initiatives to increase health and safety for frontline workers
* Education
* Nonprofit support and collaboration

Definitions

**Frontline farm workers:**

Workers whose physical labor and presence is needed to run daily operations on a farm, food processing plant, or any other stage of food production.

**Frontline farm organizations:**

Organizations that support frontline farm workers to work safely, promote safe workplace practices, and have access to essential resources. Organizations that work to create a socially just food system.

*Ineligible Uses of Funds*

Funds may **not** be used for the following purposes:

* Repayment of existing debt, or pre-existing tax liens or obligations
* Payment of organizational overhead exceeding 15% of proposed project budget
* Legal fees
* Loan or bank fees
* Subsidization of existing contracts
* Funds for start-up business
* Labor for existing programs
* Travel

Application and Funding Calendar

Funding application issued December 1, 2022

Application Due January 5, 2023

Announcement of Awards Week of February 27(Tentative)

Project Start Date April 3, 2023 (Tentative)

End of Project Funding and Final Report Due April 2024 or \*April 2025

**NOTE:** Dates are subject to change. Applicants will be notified in advance of any schedule changes. \*Allows for a 2-year period to use funds due to growing cycles.

Application Instructions and Procedures

Applicants are advised to review the application packet in its entirety prior to preparing and submitting an application. If after reviewing the application materials you are uncertain whether a proposed project fits within the funding guidelines, please contact Tim Broderick at tbroderick@bouldercounty.org or Dede Croissant at dcroissant@bouldercounty.org.

Application Deadline

**APPLICATION(S) MUST BE RECEIVED BY 11:59 P.M. MST on January 5, 2023. Any application received after the deadline will not be considered.**

All submissions must be placed through the Sustainable Food and Ag. Funding Website via Boulder County.

General Conditions

All materials submitted will become the property of Boulder County and will not be returned. Funds awarded are public funds and any information submitted or generated is subject to public disclosure requirements.

The County reserves the right, at its sole discretion, to waive minor irregularities in submittal requirements, to request modifications of the application, to accept or reject any or all applications received, to grant full or partial funding of any request, and/or to cancel all or part of this solicitation at any time prior to awarding funds. Funds are awarded on a competitive basis, and no requests will be considered outside the standardized application and review process. There is *no appeals process* for applications not accepted for funding.

Application Evaluation Process

Applications will be reviewed and evaluated by a select application review committee made up of county Sustainability Staff, a representative from Parks and Open Space and select invited experts. To eliminate any potential conflict of interest, we will ask any review committee members that plan to apply or benefit from an application recuse themselves from being screening committee members.

During the review process, staff may contact the applicant for additional information or clarification. However, an expression of interest by staff should not be construed as an indication of forthcoming funding approval. Applicants are advised to make their submittal as clear as possible.

The advisory committee will make their recommendations to the Board of County Commissioners, who will make final decisions about award approvals. It is expected that awards will be announced in late February 2023 or early March 2023, following BOCC approval.

Application Evaluation Criteria

All submitted applications which follow the Sustainable Food and Ag. requirements will be evaluated according to the following criteria.

* Equity – Applicant’s project demonstrates consideration to equity. For example, geographic distribution of services, demographic diversity, support for underserved and underrepresented members of the agricultural and food systems community.
* Impact – Measurable impact to priority areas: (1) regenerative ag/soil health, (2) farmer education, (3) infrastructure, (4) local food and crop production/ innovative processing system, and (5) programmatic and resource support for frontline farm workers and organizations frontline. In addition, the effects beyond a project’s operation or organization.
* Outputs – Metrics provided for items such as: greenhouse gas (GHG) reduced, acres impacted, pounds of food produced, revenue generated, number of frontline farm workers supported, number of events held, hours spent educating, and number of people educated.
	+ ***Important note about the GHG metric:*** In the application we ask you to estimate your GHG reduction from your project. If this is not relevant to your project, this is OK! Just please write N/A. If GHG reduction is relevant for your project, please use the [Comet Planner](http://comet-planner.com/) to calculate your estimate. Comet Planner is an evaluation tool designed to provide approximate GHG mitigation potentials for Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS) practices. The tool is easy and quick to use. You simply enter in your conservation practices and then click the “Download Comet Planner Results” to receive your generalized estimate for GHG reduction. If you need further instructions, you can watch this [tutorial video](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sC63SJJ3LRM&t=179s) that walks users through step-by-step.
* Organizational Capacity - Applicants are qualified to implement project and achieve stated objectives.
* Financial Viability - Applicants demonstrate sound fiscal management. Project budget is realistic and cost effective.
* In-Kind or Cash Match Funds – Applications especially for equipment, infrastructure, and labor that include in-kind or matching funds are strongly encouraged. In-kind funds include an organizations staff time and cash match is direct cash in contribution to the project.

Application Content and Organization (Applicant's Check List)

A complete application must include all the following forms and supporting documents to be eligible for consideration.

* + [***Complete Wufoo Application***](https://www.bouldercounty.org/environment/sustainability/ag-grant-program/)
		- *Wufoo is the platform Boulder County uses for the Sustainable Food and Ag Fund application. Click on the link and scroll to the bottom of the webpage to find the Wufoo application form. The Wufoo form must be completed in one sitting, as it does not allow you to save your work and return to it later. To help with this, we recommend you fill out this* [*word document copy of the application*](https://assets.bouldercounty.gov/wp-content/uploads/2022/11/2023-Application-Summary-Form.docx) *(also known as the “Application Summary Form”) first, so you may take your time. Once finished, you may use the Application Summary Form to input your answers into Wufoo.*
	+ ***Mandatory Attachment in Wufoo:***
	+ [*Budget Form*](https://assets.bouldercounty.gov/wp-content/uploads/2022/11/2023-Project-Budget-Form.docx)
	+ ***Optional Attachments in Wufoo:***
	+ *Up to two letters of stakeholder support (Must be in PDF)*

Funding Awards

All applicants will be notified of the results of the review process. For successful applicants, funds will be available for expenditure reimbursement only after a service contract between Boulder County and the applicant is signed and executed. Funds must be expended during the grant period of 12 months or two- year period depend on need. Required reimbursement documentation will be: Completed invoice for amount to be reimbursed, receipts of items purchased, proof of payment for purchases (credit card receipt, bank statement, cancelled check). If requesting wages reimbursement employees should be identified by name, gross pay, withholdings, and net pay. Timesheets should be signed electronically or in ink with time coding and charged to the correct activity. Boulder County will not be liable for any project costs incurred prior to the legal execution of the contract, unless mutually agreed upon in writing. Unused funds are not available for other uses under this agreement.

Boulder County reserves the right to revoke any funding award for which a contract is not executed, due to delays on the part of the applicant, within two (2) months of the award. **Funded programs/projects must be initiated within three (3) months of execution of the contract, or funds may be withdrawn, unless specific written approval is granted for delays due to extenuating circumstances.**

Reports, Monitoring, and Payment Schedule

Boulder County reserves the right to monitor funded projects and to receive timely and pertinent information on status and progress. **Quarterly financial and programmatic reports, as well as a final report summary will be required from awardees**. There may also be an opportunity for a presentation to the commissioners and screening committee after one year of funding. A schedule for report submittals, reimbursement requests, and presentations will be established in consultation with Boulder County staff. ***Failure to submit quarterly and final reports shall invalidate the applicant for further funding requests for three years and may result in fund withdrawal.***

**NOTE: Funds will be reimbursed** **based on proper documentation of receipts and invoices billed specifically to the individual or organization that is listed within the signed contract.** **Typically, reimbursement checks take 4-6 weeks to arrive to the grantee.** Funds must be used in accordance with the final budget upon which the application was based.All publicity or promotional materials concerning the project must recognize boulder county funding including news releases, feature stories, public service announcements, brochures and product literature produced during the term of this Agreement.