

Community Garden Sustainability Fund Application

"*" indicates required fields

Before You Begin

Welcome to the CGSF application! Even if you've been here before, please read through our updated [Frequently Asked Questions](#). Thank you!

Background Information

A partnership of Grow Pittsburgh and the Western Pennsylvania Conservancy, the Community Garden Sustainability Fund (CGSF) provides material and technical assistance to existing community food gardens. The fund supports projects that will improve or enhance gardens so that they may have a long-lasting positive impact as part of their communities.

At Grow Pittsburgh and the Western Pennsylvania Conservancy, we work to support gardens that will be enjoyed for generations to come. We define a sustainable garden as one made to last, where people feel safe and connected to their neighborhood, where plants and soil are healthy. A sustainable garden has access to sufficient materials, volunteers, and funds. Its leadership and membership is diverse, energized and creative.

Community Garden Sustainability Fund Applicant/ Recipient Process

Step 1: Make sure you understand how CGSF works. See the web page and FAQ.

Step 2: Plan your project and/ or figure out your supply request. If you need help with these details, contact the CGSF team well in advance of when applications close.

Step 3: Submit your application by the deadline. Mail-in applications are accepted.

Step 4: Expect to receive an email notification from a CGSF team member about your request status (awarded, partially awarded, or not awarded). In the spring round, notifications are sent in early April. In the fall round, notifications are sent in early September.

Step 5. If your request was approved, your CGSF team member will communicate with you to coordinate your project and/ or supplies. 1-2 months after receiving your approval notification, you should receive your supplies. This timing depends on the complexity and clarity of the project.

Who is Eligible?

Any existing community-focused food garden group in Allegheny County is encouraged to apply, including those managed by schools, community organizations, shelters, and religious institutions. “Existing” means you are actively growing food and/or host programming at the garden related to food-growing. You do not need 501(c)3 tax-exempt status to apply.

Garden groups must submit the following in order to be considered for support:

- Completed online application
- Written permission from landowner allowing gardening on the site*
- Garden Listing on Grower's Map

* If your garden is on city-owned property, learn more about the process to obtain permission to use the lot via the [Adopt-A-Lot Program](#). Please make sure your requests are in compliance with the Adopt-A-Lot program guidelines.

Application

By completing this application, you will automatically be added to the Community Garden Network e-newsletter list to keep you in the loop on garden related news and opportunities. You can unsubscribe at any time.

NOTE: THIS IS A MATERIAL (NOT MONETARY) MINI-GRANT. We cannot give gardens money, fund employee or internship positions, or pay ongoing garden expenses like utility bills or insurance. By filling out this application, you will be requesting specific supplies that we will purchase for you.

Community Garden Sustainability Fund Application

Garden Information

Garden Name

Garden Address

Neighborhood/Municipality

Zipcode

Garden's Website - Does your garden have a website or a Facebook page? Enter an address in www.website.com format or leave blank if not applicable.

How many beds does your garden have? - It's okay to approximate. We're looking to get a sense of the amount of growing space at your garden.

What are the dimensions of your beds? - (Required for community gardens but not required for school gardens.)

Size (length x width)	Total quantity of beds this size

How many people are regularly involved with your garden? - This includes consistent volunteers and garden organizers. Please do not include one-time volunteer groups in this count.

What are the garden's goals? - You can write sentences or just list your goals.

EXAMPLE ANSWER: "1. Offer garden beds that neighbors can rent to grow vegetables in 2. Host fun educational events about food growing and nature 3. Create a welcoming outdoor place where community members can relax, gather, and play"

Who benefits from the garden? How does the garden contribute to the local community?

Please attach a photo of your garden to this application.

Garden Leader / Applicant Information

Your Name

Your Role at the Garden - Are you the main coordinator, or the site and supplies coordinator, or the fundraising and social media coordinator? Or maybe your role is something different altogether. Briefly describe here.

How do you prefer to be contacted? Circle one.

EMAIL or PHONE - TEXT or PHONE - CALL or NO PREFERENCE

Your Daytime Phone

Your Email Address

Your Mailing Address

Garden Context and Documents

Has this garden applied to the Community Garden Sustainability Fund before? Circle one.

YES or NO or NOT SURE

Did you (or another representative from your garden) apply to the most recent round of the Community Garden Sustainability Fund? In this case, the most recent round was spring 2024. Circle one.

YES or NO or NOT SURE

Is your garden listed on Grow Pittsburgh's Urban Grower's Map? - Our Urban Grower's Map gives viewers a full picture of the many urban gardening projects in our region. People often find community gardens to get involved with by exploring this map. (See the Urban Grower's Map.) Creating an entry only takes a few minutes. Applicants without a Garden Map listing will not be

considered. If you have already submitted a listing, and it isn't reflected yet on our pending updates, you can still select "yes" here. Circle one.

YES or NO

If you are already listed on the Grower's Map, is the listing up to date? - If your listing needs to be updated, please email the info to claire@growpittsburgh.org. If you have already submitted updates to your listing this year, and it isn't reflected yet on the map, you can still select "yes" here. Circle one.

YES or NO

Is the garden lot publicly or privately owned?

Block-lot-Number - (To find your block-lot number, visit the Allegheny County Assessment or Lots to Love websites.)

Who owns the land? What is your/the garden's relationship to the landowner?

Please attach documentation/ proof that you have permission to use the land. - If you're with a community garden, this is a required step. Your proof of permission to use the land could be a letter, email, or lease from the landowner. If you're with a school garden and you have support from school administration, you can bypass this question.

How long are you permitted to garden on the site? - (i.e. 5 years, 10 years, etc.)

Has the soil at the garden ever been tested for lead? - If 'no', we strongly encourage you to apply for soil testing and reserve the right to not fund other projects until soil testing has been completed. You can connect with our friends at the Allegheny County Conservation District for free soil lead testing resources. Circle one.

YES or NO

If applicable, please attach a copy of soil test results from the garden.

Supply Request: OVERVIEW

Not sure about exactly which supplies you need, or how much? This means you aren't quite ready to fill out this section. If you'd like help planning your project and/ or supplies, get in touch with Claire at claire@growpittsburgh.org or 412-977-2836. Our team would be glad to consult with you and make recommendations.

Please describe your project or supply request. Then, explain how this project/ set of supplies will contribute to your garden. (What do you need, and what's the goal?)

EXAMPLE A: "We're seeking some essential spring materials that all our garden members can use, including compost, new hand trowels, and tomato seedlings. These supplies will help us maintain healthy soil in our garden beds and set us up for a successful May planting in our community farm section." EXAMPLE B: "Our garden team is building a shade structure and patio area and we are requesting building materials to get the job done. We need lumber, gravel, hardware (screws and brackets), quick setting cement, and metal roof panels. We want a shade structure and patio for hosting events at the garden, even when it's hot and sunny or lightly raining. This will also make it easier for older adults to spend more time at the garden, which we want to prioritize."

What category or categories of supplies are you requesting? Please select all that apply.

- ☐ Soil or Soil Amendments (soil, compost, or mulch)
- ☐ Plants (seedlings, seeds, fruit trees, etc)
- ☐ Garden Infrastructure or Repairs (raised beds, fencing, benches, etc)
- ☐ Gardening tools (shovels, wheelbarrows, hoses)
- ☐ Project supplies (paint, hardware, gravel, lumber, corrugated metal, etc)

Are you requesting soil or compost? Circle one. - These next few questions might feel repetitive. Thanks for your patience! This method of collecting info helps us coordinate your supplies quicker.

YES or NO

Are you requesting seedlings or a seedling voucher? Circle one.

YES or NO

Are you requesting straw bales? Circle one.

YES or NO

Are you requesting tools? Circle one.

YES or NO

Are you requesting raised beds or raised bed repair materials? Circle one.

YES or NO

Supply Request: BUDGET

Please outline the materials and costs for your project. Please provide as much detail as possible. Always include shipping and delivery costs. Remember that you are responsible for correctly budgeting the items in your request. See page 4 of our FAQ for specific budget tips. If you still aren't sure how to budget for your items after doing your own research and reviewing our FAQ, contact us for help figuring out how much your supplies might cost.

What will your project/ supplies cost? Most of the requests we approve cost less than \$1000. Occasionally, we can fund larger projects. Projects with budgets between \$1000-5000 will be asked to submit additional materials below. We cannot award amounts greater than \$5000, but we may be able to fund a portion of the total project (i.e. not the whole greenhouse, but perhaps the materials for the foundation/footing).

- ☐ Less than \$1000
 - ☐ \$1000-\$5000
 - ☐ Greater than \$5000
-

Budget - Please fill out these details for each item in your request. If you have trouble using this table, you may attach another sheet where you lay out your own budget and list your items in a format that works for you.

Item	Quantity	Cost Per Unit	Cost to Ship (if applicable)	Total Cost	Link to Product (if applicable)	Preferred Brand/ Source (if applicable)

TOTAL COST OF ALL ITEMS: - **What is the total \$ amount for your request(s)? Add up the numbers in the "Total Cost" field of the Budget list.**

\$

Prioritized Item List - Sometimes we won't have the budget to purchase all of your requested supplies. Please list the items in your request from highest priority to lowest priority. It's especially important to do this if your total costs will be \$1000 or more. **EXAMPLE ANSWER:** "1. Compost 2. Seedlings 3. Hand trowels. Compost is the most important and hand trowels are the least important."

Additional notes on the items requested?

IF APPLYING FOR OVER \$1000 OF SUPPLIES: Please include an image, sketch, or site plan of your project or the area of the garden that will be improved by your requested supplies, showing the plan of how you will install or utilize the supplies. You may attach this as a separate sheet.

Supply Request: STAFF SUPPORT

Would you like to request a consultation with a member of our staff? - Would you like to connect with a Grow Pittsburgh staff member so that we can help look something over, provide education on a garden-related topic, or assist in solving a problem? Please let us know here and describe what you are looking for. This does not have to be related to your supply request.

EXAMPLE A: "We have a groundhog getting in and we want to know what you think about how to keep it out." EXAMPLE B: "We want to be more organized about garden chores and meetings so that we're less stressed out in the summer, and we'd like to talk through our ideas."

Would you like to request our staff's support to install your supplies or complete your project?

Our baseline role is to order and/ or deliver supplies to you. We are also available for technical advice and assistance for your projects. This means we sometimes help with planning, installation, or education surrounding a CGSF project. Complex projects that require staff support will take longer to complete than basic supply requests.

☐ Yes

☐ No

We might know of a higher quality or more locally available product similar to what you're requesting. Or, we might be very familiar with the type of project you're doing and have tips. We'll let you know if we have suggestions about your supply request or project.

☐ I understand

Spring applicants hear back about their requests by the beginning of April, and we aim to fulfill all requests by the end of May. Late summer/ fall applicants hear back about their requests by the beginning of September, and we aim to fulfill all requests by the end of October.

We do our best to complete time-sensitive projects first, deliver planting-related supplies ahead of mid-May plantings, etc. If you would like to request your supplies on a date earlier than our stated timeline, please explain it below in the "Other" field. If our stated timeline works for you, just check the "I understand" field.

☐ I understand

☐ Other: _____

On the following page, Grow Pittsburgh's values are listed.

☐ I acknowledge I have read and understand Grow Pittsburgh's values and agree to adhere to those values for the duration of the Community Garden Sustainability Fund project.

Values

In January of 2015, Grow Pittsburgh adopted eight values to guide the long-lasting positive impact we may affect through our work within local communities. We include our values here to ensure all applicants are familiar with them. Our participation in your garden will be in accordance.

- **COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION:** prioritizing neighborhood voices to guide programs
- **ENVIRONMENTAL RESPONSIBILITY:** using, teaching and advocating for restorative practices
- **EQUITY:** working alongside communities to build access and power for all
- **FISCAL INTEGRITY:** making responsible and effective use of available assets
- **FOOD SOVEREIGNTY:** supporting everyone's right to access, produce and distribute healthy and culturally appropriate food
- **RESOURCEFULNESS:** creating hands-on opportunities to build individual and community self-sufficiency
- **SOCIAL JUSTICE:** understanding systems of privilege, oppression and racism, and using this knowledge to drive our work
- **TRANSPARENCY:** being accountable by using clear, direct and inclusive communication

Thanks for your application to the Community Garden Sustainability Fund! Please mail this application and all attachments to:

Grow Pittsburgh ATTN: Claire Matway

6587 Hamilton Ave #2 West

Pittsburgh, PA 15206

All mailed applications must be received by the end of the day that applications close. In the spring round, that's March 15. In the summer/ fall round, that's August 1. Thank you!