Thriving Gardens Grant: Start-up Projects

Vermont Community Garden Network (VCGN) is seeking proposals for new Garden Start-up Projects. Project readiness will determine the assistance granted--for example, those further along will receive funding to assist with the start of their community-based garden while those in the first stages of planning will receive training and planning support.

Before starting the application please review the following details. The following document is to allow you to preview the questions PRIOR to filling out the application. To complete the application go to: https://tinyurl.com/wamfnsk. We recommend that you also type and save all of your answers separately, as you will not be able to save or print your final online application.

For more details on grant benefits, requirements, and other details go to VCGN's "Thriving Gardens Grant" page, the "Garden Start-up Projects" section: http://vcgn.org/what-we-do/thriving-gardens-grant/.

Eligibility

- Any group (3 or more people) planning a new community-based garden
- Garden is located in Vermont
- Applicant is a VCGN Member (http://vcgn.org/membership/)

What does a thriving garden look like?

This will depend on your own garden’s goals and unique culture. However, elements we’ve seen over the years that encourage a successful, thriving garden include: a place where people want to be, with robust soil, plants and garden ecosystem, that provides equitable space and opportunity for your community to learn, gather and grow their own food.

How this grant works

Each applicant will be assessed as to their project’s readiness. VCGN promotes careful planning and a thoughtful community-engagement process when starting a community-based garden. We suggest that groups starting a new project spend their first season solely on planning their new garden, engaging stakeholders and gathering resources for the project; waiting until the following season to break ground, build and open the new garden. For groups that are just forming we offer training and planning support; no funding. However, if your group is farther along in the process and is ready to open the garden this season, VCGN may offer a small amount of funding to go towards start-up costs.

Timeline

- Application open: January 8, 2020
- Applications due: February 19, 2020
- Grantees announced: by March 11, 2020
- Reporting due: October 8, 2020

Questions? Please don’t hesitate to call (802-861-4769) or email Libby (libby@vcgn.org).
Applicant Contact Information

- Primary Contact Name *
- Primary Contact Title/Role in Garden
- Affiliated Organization (if any)
- Email *
- Phone *
- Names and emails for others on your planning team (at least 2 others) *

VCGN Membership

- Are you or is your garden a VCGN member? *

  To be considered eligible for the VCGN Grant the applicant or the applying garden group must be a VCGN member. More information and online membership sign-up can be found at http://vcgn.org/membership/.

- If you are applying under an individual VCGN membership (rather than your garden or organization), please list the name associated with the membership.

Garden Background

- Garden Name (or placeholder name if not yet determined) *
- Which of the following community-based garden types best describes the garden your group plans to start? * select one
  - Community (individual plots +/- shared space)
  - School (PreK-12, for school use only)
  - School/Community (school and community use)
  - Education (primary use education, not at school)
  - Housing (for housing community residents)
  - Workplace (for employee use)
  - Other

- How many people do you expect to participate in the garden on a regular basis? *
- In/nearby what town/city do you plan to start your garden? *
- The Garden Start-up Planning Grant is for starting new gardens. Has there ever been a garden on onsite/affiliated with your group in the past? *
- If yes, what happened to it?
- If your group has determined a specific location for your proposed garden site, please describe. If you haven’t determined your specific location yet but have some options in mind, please describe all potential locations. Include the area in square feet, general landscape features, accessibility, distance from a water source, who owns the land, etc.
Why does your group want to start a community-based garden? *
Include details regarding: an expressed need this garden meets in your community, overall goals for the garden, who you hope to benefit and how. Limit 250 words.

Describe your current vision for your proposed garden. *
Include details about: the population you hope to involve, types of activities that might take place in the garden, and other relevant details. Limit 350 words.

Will your garden offer summer programming for youth focused on gardening and food/nutrition education? Yes/No*

What steps has your group taken so far in planning/developing your garden? *
The following checklist will be used to help us determine the level of support your group is ready for at this time. Check all that apply.

- Stakeholders have met to discuss the idea of starting a garden.
- We have surveyed community members (potential gardeners) about interest and need for a community-based garden.
- Stakeholders have met to discuss how the garden will be used and managed.
- We have a short-list of possible locations for the garden.
- We have determined a location for the garden.
- We have assessed the location for suitability (i.e. space needed, hours of sun, slope, water access, etc.).
- Permissions have been granted for use of this location for the garden.
- We have designed our garden (i.e. bed layout, pathways, communal areas, etc.).
- We have created a budget for the garden (i.e. list of supplies, materials and other resources needed).
- We have started fundraising for the project and looking for donations.

Please list any additional steps your group has taken not listed above.

Our group hopes to... *
- ...break ground for the garden this year (spring/summer 2020).
- ...use this season for planning.

Is your group requesting funds in addition to planning support? Yes/No*

If so, what is the total amount of funding requested from the Thriving Gardens Grant ($400-$1000 funding range)?

What training and other non-financial support will help your group successfully complete your project?*

Please list everyone (individuals, groups of people, organizations, businesses, etc.) who has already committed their support in planning and/or carrying out the project. *

Please list anyone additional (individuals, groups of people, organizations, businesses, etc.) who you plan to contact to get involved in planning and/or carrying out the project. *
Grant Requirements

The following are requirements for all Garden Start-up grantees. Please mark all activities for which your group can commit. If you cannot commit to any of the following, please explain in the Additional Information section.*

- At least 1 person attend a Grow It! Workshop (in-person, located regionally in VT - April).
- At least 2 people participate in a planning call (March).
- At least 3 people will participate in a site assessment (in-person, on-site/local - to be scheduled at a mutually agreeable time in the spring/summer).

Attachments

- Please attach a letter of support for your proposed Garden Start-up Project that illustrates need and support.*
- ONLY FOR APPLICATIONS REQUESTING FUNDS TO START A GARDEN IN THE 2020 SEASON: Using this template (https://drive.google.com/file/d/1Ea7TuYa19kl0pE1UsE8SHvL6zi_n8gil/view?usp=sharing) please attach a detailed budget for your Garden Start-up Project, with project costs and inputs needed (financial and in-kind).

Additional Information

Anything else you want us to know? Questions?