



2017 RURAL SEED GRANTS

About Our Rural Seed Grants

Food Coop Initiative's Seed Grant program is designed to provide financial support during a new food co-op's early development, backed by the advice and guidance of our development specialists. We want to help co-ops move through the startup process effectively and efficiently. Our grant program provides proven resources to help you achieve success.

These grants are made possible by the USDA Rural Cooperative Development Program, the Blooming Prairie Foundation, and donations from food co-ops across the U.S.

Grant Package

As an integral part of the Seed Grant award, co-ops will receive:

- Up to \$10,000 for approved project costs
- Access to peers and training
- A site visit and consultation from a Food Coop Initiative specialist
- Priority access to our resources and specialists

The Seed Grant amount must be matched 100% by locally raised funds. Grant activities must be completed within one year of the signed contract date.

Timeline

Informational Video . . . View starting June 20, 2017 on [YouTube](#)

Applications accepted . . . June 19 through July 17, 2017

Application Deadline . . . July 17, 2017

Notify grant recipients . . . July 31, 2017

Public announcement . . . August 2, 2017

Deadline for completion of grant work . . . August 31, 2018

Application Requirements

In order to be considered for grant funding, the applicant must meet the following criteria:

- Rural status per USDA Rural Business Eligibility is required to apply for a grant. You can ask FCI for this information, or go to the [USDA MAP here](#) and select ACCEPT, then enter your address in the map search field. Areas in white (not purple-shaded) are considered Rural.
- The organization must be incorporated, either as a cooperative or in another manner, and operate under policies and bylaws consistent with the International Cooperative Principles.
- Only co-ops planning to open new retail food coops are eligible for these grants.
- The co-op must match grant dollars with funds raised locally.
- Use of the Four Cornerstones in Three Stages development model is highly encouraged.

The proposed use of the grant funds must include:

- 2018 Up & Coming food co-op conference registration for one or more of your board members.
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Other costs to attend this conference can also be included at your discretion. Costs for this event typically run \$245.00 registration per person, plus travel.

The applicant can propose the use of remaining funds for any the following activities:

- Payment to professional consultants for: timeline and work plan development, financial planning, market and feasibility research, site planning, legal review, or board training
 - Attorney fees or similar professional services
 - Registration fees and expenses to attend workshops, conferences or other relevant training opportunities
 - Staffing and expenses for member recruitment, capital campaigns, community outreach, or other aspects of organizing the co-op.
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How To Apply

- Complete the online **2017 Rural Seed Grant Application Form**
 - Compile all required additional documentation listed in checklist below
 - Submit all documents to info@fci.coop by the deadline of July 17, 2017
 - **Please send all application materials via e-mail to info@fci.coop**
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Application Checklist

Required:

- [2017 Rural Seed Grant Application Form \(online\)](#)
- Copy of Articles of Incorporation and Bylaws
- Sources & Uses Budget. You can download this template. Preliminary budgets are accepted: [Sources & Uses Template](#)
- Contact list for board of directors, including names, emails, and bios
- Race and Ethnicity Form, attached below
- Narrative description of the work done so far—no more than two pages
- W-9 Request for Taxpayer Identification Number and Certification, available for download [HERE](#)

Optional:

- Business plan
 - Feasibility or market study
 - Financial pro formas
 - Timeline or work plan
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Questions? Call: 844-324-2667
Email: info@fci.coop

Submit All Materials to info@fci.coop by July 17, 2017.



Race and ethnicity form

Please provide the following information so that Food Co-op Initiative will be in compliance with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964.

We suggest that you provide an estimated percentage of your current or expected membership for each of the categories, rather than a check mark. This form, although required for our documentation, was not created with cooperatives in mind.

The information regarding race, color, or national origin designation is requested in order to assure the Federal Government that [name] complies with Federal Laws prohibiting discrimination on the basis of race, color, or national origin. **You are not required to furnish this information, but are encouraged to do so.** This information will not be used in evaluating your request for services or to discriminate against you in any way. However, if you choose not to furnish this information, we are required to note your race/color/national origin on the basis of visual observation or surname.

Please check the appropriate information below:

Organization Name: _____

City, State, Zip: _____

RACIAL CATEGORIES (check one)

- American Indian or Alaskan Native
- Asian
- Black or African American
- Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
- White
- Some Other Race
- Two or More Races

ETHNIC CATEGORIES (check one)

- Hispanic or Latino
- Not Hispanic or Latino

DATE: _____

Who filled out this form? (check one)

- Participant
- Employee Observed