

Rural Alaska Community Action Program, Inc.

Request for Proposals & Application

Growing Rural Opportunities for Wellness (GROW) Program

Applications Due: October 22, 2021

Project Timeline: Fully Executed Memorandum of Agreement - September 30, 2022

I. INTRODUCTION

The Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security Act (CARES Act) Public Law 116-136 (2020) has awarded Community Service Block Grant (CSBG) funding to the Rural Alaska Community Action Program, Inc. (RurAL CAP) to do community gardening projects with rural Alaska communities, with the purpose of fostering healthy communities and improving food security for low-income individuals and families. RurAL CAP requests proposals from eligible applicants to establish new or improve upon existing rural Alaska community gardening projects through one or more of the following ways: infrastructure investment; gardening or food-related education; and expanding community access to locally grown foods and participation in gardening projects.

The purpose of the Growing Rural Opportunities for Wellness (GROW) Program is to support the food sovereignty of rural Alaska communities by expanding the capacity and reach of community gardens. Alaska Native customs continue to sustain life in rural communities through subsistence hunting, fishing, and gathering of food. However, food security, the ability to access sufficient and nutritious foods, is threatened by increasing costs of materials, high transportation costs, and climate change. Food not harvested locally is transported at great expense; the cost of food in rural Alaska is more than double the national average. Since at least the 1800s, gardening has provided a supplementary food source for some rural Alaska communities, and community gardens today continue to provide opportunities for food sovereignty and positive community engagement. Through the use of GROW funds and technical assistance, tribes and other eligible organizations can cover the start-up costs of a new community gardening project or expand the capacity and reach of an existing project.

Proposals must demonstrate a thorough understanding of the grant program goals and outcomes; and proposed projects must meet or exceed anticipated minimums described in this RFP. Proposals must include a description of proposed activities that support the goals and outcomes to be employed in the project. The applicant must also include a timeline for the project. RurAL CAP is soliciting proposals for community garden projects that are innovative and demonstrate high levels of community interest and commitment.

II. BASIC AWARD INFORMATION

RurAL CAP anticipates funding 3-7 projects of \$10,000 to \$20,000. However, there will be adjustments in this amount, based on the applications received. **RurAL CAP staff will work with grantees to spend up to \$10,000-20,000 total during the grant period based on the budget determined by the grantee.**

Total amount to be awarded: To be announced.

Match requirement: No match required.

a. TIMELINE FOR PROPOSAL

Request for Proposals released: September 27, 2021

Proposals are due: October 22, 2021

Awards will be announced: November 5, 2021

Unsuccessful applicants notified: Nov 12, 2021

b. PROJECT PERIOD

Start date is dependent on completion of mandatory training (online) and Grant Agreement, with grant period ending on **September 30, 2022**.

c. REPORTING

Quarterly progress reports will be due on the 15th of January, April, July and October 2022. Reports may be submitted by mail, fax, or e-mail to ilister@ruralcap.org.

d. ELIGIBLE APPLICANT

1) Applicants must be a federally recognized Indian Tribe, public or non-profit organization in rural Alaska.

2) Applicant organizations proposing projects to create or further develop community gardens in rural Alaska communities may apply. Non-profit organizations described in Section 501(c)(4) of the Internal Revenue Code that engage in lobbying activities as defined in Section 3 of the Lobbying Disclosure Act of 1995 are not eligible to apply.

e. ELIGIBLE PROJECTS

**All projects must address the goals stated above through one or more of the following ways:*

1) Infrastructure investments to community gardens. These may include, but are not limited to purchase, installation and/or updates to community garden equipment for: increasing growing space, season extension, increasing accessibility, composting, food washing and preparation and food storage. Examples of equipment include, but are not limited to: greenhouses, biomass heated greenhouses, hoop houses, compost bins, fencing, raised beds, washing station, cold storage and hydroponic grow walls. When possible, infrastructure will be purchased from Alaska vendors and installed by local hires.

2) Develop educational opportunities to increase gardening and food-related knowledge and skills within the community and/or community garden participants. Examples include curriculum development and classes/workshops on various topics, such as: fish composting, building good soil, permaculture, seed saving, food storage, canning, traditional subsistence food practices and more. When possible, funds will be used to hire regionally local rural Alaskan farmers, gardeners and harvesters to provide training and consultation to community members and participants of community garden projects.

3) Expand access to locally grown foods and participation in community gardening. Examples include, but are not limited to the following: developing a system for distributing produce to elders, hiring youth to serve as garden interns, developing promotional materials and hosting events at the community garden.

f. PROJECT DESCRIPTIONS

There are many projects that could be implemented with this funding. In order to have a more significant long-term impact, please demonstrate the sustainability of your project with regards to: level of interest among community members; future funding, materials and labor needs and sources after the end of the grant period; and leadership.

Successful project proposals should include a commitment to document the project in a way that can be shared and replicated. Assistance in capturing the project will be available from RurAL CAP staff. Examples of how projects may be shared with other communities include producing brochures, videos, slide shows, hand-outs, web-based presentations, or other documentation of, the steps that were taken, the lessons learned, the resources and supplies needed to implement a similar project and the changes that occurred. If you have any questions about whether a project is appropriate for this funding source, please contact the RurAL CAP staff person listed below.

III. EVALUATION OF PROJECTS

Successful applicants will be required to evaluate projects based on the output measures and utilizing survey tool(s) provided by RurAL CAP.

IV. THRESHOLD ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

Only proposals from eligible entities (see 'Eligible Applicants' above) that meet all of these criteria will be evaluated against the ranking factors in 'Evaluation Criteria' of this announcement. Applicants deemed ineligible for funding consideration will be notified within 5 calendar days of the ineligibility determination.

- Proposals must be submitted via e-mail.
- Applicants must demonstrate in their application that the project they will manage will be performed in Alaska.

V. PROPOSAL SUBMISSION

E-mail completed application to:

Iva Karoly-Lister, ilister@ruralcap.org, 907-602-0029

Community Development, Rural Alaska Community Action Program, Inc.

MUST be received by October 22, 2021. Proposals received after the closing date and time will not be considered for funding.

Rural Alaska Community Action Program, Inc.

GROWING RURAL OPPORTUNITIES FOR WELLNESS (GROW) PROGRAM

Applications Due: October 22, 2021

Project Timeline: September 30, 2022

The RurAL CAP Growing Rural Opportunities for Wellness (GROW) Program provides grant funding to organizations to do community gardening projects with rural Alaska communities, with the purpose of fostering healthy communities and improving food security for low-income individuals and families. Tribal, public and non-profit organizations as well as education institutions in rural Alaska communities are eligible to apply.

1) Title of the Project: _____

2) Legal Name of Organization: _____

3) Address of Organization: _____

City: _____ **State:** AK **Zip:** _____

4) Federal Tax ID# _____ **DUNS #:** _____

5) Non-profit status:

IRS 501 (c) (3) – Attach copy of certification

Other (explain):

6) Head of Organization: _____ **Title:** _____

Phone Number: _____ **Email address:** _____

7) Project Lead (office): _____ **Title:** _____

Phone Number: _____ **Cell:** _____

Email address: _____

8) Project Cost: Specify actual project costs. If total cost of the project is described, funding from other sources may be identified.

Amount Requested: _____ **Total Project Costs:** _____

9) Purpose for which funds are requested (check all that apply):

____ **Infrastructure**

____ **Education**

____ **Expand participation and access**

10) Signature of Authorized Official & Title: _____

Printed Name: _____ **Date:** _____

Budget Template

Detailed Budget Narrative

Describe the cost of the project and use the line items below. Include a description of how each line item was calculated. ABSOLUTELY no food can be reimbursed by this award. Personal Services mean wages and fringe benefits. Travel can include meal costs up to \$60 a day (no per diem).

Line Items	Budget Amount	Account Title	Narrative Description Please describe each item and cost
100	\$ _____	Personal Services	
200	\$ _____	Travel	
300	\$ _____	Facility	
400	\$ _____	Supplies	
500	\$ _____	Equipment	
600	\$ _____	Other	
Total	\$ _____		

NARRATIVE *Please complete the following with clarity and detail.*

- A. PROJECT SUMMARY**
- B. PROJECT APPROACH**
- C. KEY PERSONNEL**
- D. OFFICE/EQUIPMENT/LOCATION OF ACTIVITIES**
- E. EVALUATION**
- F. PROJECT REPLICATION/SHARING**

NOTIFICATIONS

Notification to the successful applicant(s) will be made, via telephone and electronic mail by November 5, 2021. The notification will advise the applicant(s) that its application has been successfully evaluated and recommended for award. This notification, which advises that the applicant's project has been selected for award, is not an authorization to begin performance. The project start date will begin when the Grant Agreement is signed by both parties and in hand at RurAL CAP by no later than November 12, 2021. The administrator anticipates notification to unsuccessful applicant(s) will be made via electronic mail by November 12, 2021. All notifications will be sent to the project lead as specified.

REPORTING REQUIREMENTS

Quarterly progress reports will be due on the 15th of January, April, July and October 2022. Reports may be submitted by mail, fax, or e-mail to ilister@ruralcap.org.

ACCEPTANCE OF TERMS

By submitting a proposal, an applicant accepts all terms and conditions of this Request for Proposals (RFP) including all attachments and guidelines identified in this RFP. If the grants are awarded, this RFP and the applicant's proposal become part of the grant agreement. The applicant will be bound by the provisions contained in their proposal, unless RurAL CAP agrees that specific parts of the proposal are not part of the agreement. The proposal must adequately address necessary procedures to protect client confidentiality and meet State and Federal standards. In addition, the facilities proposed for services must be safe and are appropriate to the purpose of the project; and provide adequate physical access for the proposed population. Proposals and other materials submitted in response to this RFP become the property of RurAL CAP and may be returned only if RurAL CAP allows. Proposals are public documents and may be inspected or copied by anyone after grants have been awarded.

RurAL CAP does not and shall not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion (creed), gender, gender expression, age, national origin (ancestry), disability, marital status, sexual orientation, or military status, in any of its activities or operations. These activities include, but are not limited to, hiring, firing of staff, selection of volunteers and vendors, and provision of services. We are committed to providing an inclusive and welcoming environment for all members of our staff, clients, volunteers, and subcontractors. Program service recipients have the right to file a grievance if s(he) is not satisfied with the response to a complaint. RurAL CAP is committed to providing timely, meaningful access for eligible

individuals to volunteer opportunities, services and activities. If you have questions or concerns, you may contact RurAL CAP's Community Development Division Reasonable Accommodation Coordinator. RurAL CAP intends to provide meaningful access to services to persons with Limited English Proficiency (LEP), within parameters that do not incur undue burden on RurAL CAP resources. If you have questions or concerns, you may contact RurAL CAP's Community Development Division LEP Language Access Coordinator.

TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE TO RECIPIENTS

RurAL CAP will provide technical training and technical assistance to all awarded projects, including information on: project administration; financial management; purchasing and shipping of supplies; accessing gardening resources; and reporting activities and volunteer hours. There will be one online webinar training at the beginning of the project award period and the date and time will be determined and scheduled by each awardee and RurAL CAP. This training is mandatory for a Project Lead from each community awarded.

PROPOSAL EVALUATION CRITERIA

Applicants should directly and explicitly address these criteria as part of their application submittal. Each application will be rated under a points system, with a total of 100 points possible.

Criteria Points

A. Narrative Proposal: Under this criterion, proposals will be evaluated based on the extent and quality to which the project approach demonstrates:

1. Proposed activities are well developed, reasonable and support program intent. **(10 points)**
2. Plan for staffing and volunteers is reasonable. **(5 points)**
3. Ability and descriptive plan to oversee and monitor the project for successful and timely completion. **(5 points)**
4. Exhibit willingness, creativity, and dedication to partnering with available resources to complete the projects. For example, this could include partnering with other tribes or tribal consortia, local volunteers, community health aides, etc. Project shows plan to network with other service providers. **(10 points)**
5. A clearly articulated timeline for project tasks and a description of roles and responsibilities of the applicant in carrying out the project components/tasks. **(10 points)**
6. The target population and service area are clearly identified and meet the intent of the RFP. **(10 points)**
7. Applicants will also be evaluated based on the extent and quality to which they incorporate culturally-appropriate practices or ways of achieving goals. **(10 points)**
8. Applicant's thorough understanding of grant program goals and desired outcomes.

Proposed goals and anticipated outcomes are achievable and compatible with program goals. The proposal description should also include the intent to complete the webinar training along with the name of the person who will be attending and his/her role in the proposed project.

(Total: 60 points)

B. Budget and Budget Narrative

Proposals will be evaluated based on the extent and quality to which the proposed project demonstrates each of the following sub-criteria:

Applicants will be evaluated based on the adequacy of the information provided in the detailed budget and whether the proposed costs are reasonable and allowable and if they describe the cost-effectiveness and reasonableness of all costs. **(15 points)**

C. Tribal Government Support:

Under this criterion, applicants will be evaluated based on the extent to which they demonstrate that they have Tribal government support for their project. For proposals submitted by Alaska Tribal governments, the signature from an Authorized elected Tribal Official is sufficient. For example, acceptable means of demonstrating support can be demonstrated by signatures by an elected Tribal Official, Tribal Council resolutions specific to the project being proposed, or letters of support. **(10 points)**

D. Evaluation Plan

Applicant's thorough understanding of grant program goals and desired outcomes. Proposed goals and anticipated outcomes are achievable and compatible with one or more of the following program goals **(15 Points):**

- a. Infrastructure investments to community gardens. These may include, but are not limited to purchase, installation and/or updates to community garden equipment for: increasing growing space, season extension, increasing accessibility, composting, food washing and preparation and food storage. Examples of equipment include, but are not limited to: greenhouses, biomass heated greenhouses, hoop houses, compost bins, fencing, raised beds, washing station, cold storage and hydroponic grow walls. When possible, infrastructure will be purchased from Alaska vendors and installed by local hires.
- b. Develop educational opportunities to increase gardening and food-related knowledge and skills within the community and/or community garden participants. Examples include curriculum development and classes/workshops on various topics, such as: fish composting, building good soil, permaculture, seed saving, food storage, canning, traditional subsistence food practices and more. When possible, funds will be used to hire regionally local rural Alaskan farmers, gardeners

and harvesters to provide training and consultation to community members and participants of community garden projects.

- c. Expand access to locally grown foods and participation in community gardening. Examples include, but are not limited to the following: developing a system for distributing produce to elders, hiring youth to serve as garden interns, developing promotional materials and hosting events at the community garden.

Checklist for Submission of Application:

- 1) Application Title and Program Information
- 2) Budget and Budget Narrative
- 3) Narrative & Timeline
- 4) Attachment by Applicant: 501 (c) (3), tribal organization or educational institution documentation attached
- 5) Attachment by Applicant: Letters or resolutions of tribal support for projects submitted, signature of an authorized elected Tribal Official.