

Washington State Organic and Sustainable Farming Fund 2020

Overview

In partnership with HumanLinks Foundation, Tilth Alliance is accepting applications from farmers seeking financial assistance to support projects that will improve the economic viability, social impacts, or environmental sustainability of their farm businesses and/or community. The goal of this grant program is to support regenerative agriculture and mitigate climate change. Projects that enhance the operations of farmers utilizing these practices will be considered.

Eligibility

Below are the eligibility requirements. Note that an individual farm business is not eligible to receive more than \$20,000 over a five-year period. This grant program is open to all Washington State farmers who:

- ✓ Currently employ or are adopting practices that follow regenerative, sustainable, and/or organic principles (this includes conventional farms that are transitioning into organic, sustainable, or regenerative production).
- ✓ Have been in business for at least two years.
- ✓ Are seeking to improve and/or expand their operation, improve environmental impacts, or become a more sustainable business.

Funding Priorities

- Projects that enhance and measure carbon sequestration, restore soil health, utilize cover crops, preserve and create habitats, increase biodiversity, and employ environmentally safe waste management practices.
- Conventional farmers who want to transition to organic, sustainable, or regenerative practices.
- Previous grantees are eligible to apply but priority will be given to new applicants (see eligibility requirements above).

Funded Topics

Grant funds are available for projects that support regenerative farming practices and mitigate climate change. A successful project will improve the environmental, social, and economic impacts to farm businesses through actions that will create a new revenue stream, improve quality of life, improve operations, or increase sustainability.

Example topics (for illustration only, not an exhaustive list):

| Proposals on these topics are <u>likely</u> to receive consideration: | Proposals on these topics are <u>not likely</u> to be considered: |
|--|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Composting, soil control, erosion prevention, permaculture practices • Conserving and restoring natural habitats, protection of native pollinators • Production and/or use of renewable energy • Integrated Pest Management planning • Organic/regenerative farming practices • No till or reduced till planning • On farm seed saving and regional resiliency | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tractor purchase • Refrigeration projects* • High tunnels* • General operating funds, farm staff labor <p><i>*unless accompanied by a robust justification and explanation of sustainability including renewable energy or recycling plan as appropriate</i></p> |

Funding Levels and Term

Grant requests should be between \$2,000 and \$20,000. Proposals should have objectives that are realistically achievable with this level of funding in a 9-month period (March-December). The total granted amount must be spent by December 31st, 2020. The amount granted (whether in part or in full) will depend on proposed uses and need of applicant pool. Multi-year projects or those exceeding the maximum allowed request will not be funded. We recognize the importance of multi-year projects but cannot guarantee funding for projects beyond a single year.

Proposal and Review Criteria

In order to fairly evaluate grant proposals, all submissions should follow the instructions listed below. Proposals that exceed the word limit or otherwise do not meet requirements will not be considered for funding. The primary audience for your proposal is the grant review committee. This group is comprised of Tilth Alliance staff members, HumanLinks Foundation board members, and other agricultural professionals, with a wide range of expertise.

To Apply:

1. Complete the grant application form, which is a single document containing both a cover sheet and narrative description components.
The successful application will provide a clear rationale for the project and demonstrate a significant need for the proposed project. It is important that the objectives for your project be clear, well-structured and succinct. Demonstrate why your project is necessary, present measurable outcomes, and explain specifically what you hope to accomplish with the funds within the project period.
2. Obtain two letters of support from agricultural peers, mentors, educators, or community organizations, **to be submitted with your application as a single document** by email or mail to the addresses listed below. Letters should directly reference the applicant name and farm name.
3. Submit completed application, including the grant application form and the two letters of support, as a **single document** by email or mail to the addresses listed below. **Failure to submit application as a single document (Word, PDF, or by mail) could result in disqualification of your application.**

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| <i>Email option:</i> | <i>Paper option:</i> |
| <p>Email application to applications@tilthalliance.org</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Send proposal as a single Word or PDF attachment • We will not accept proposals submitted in the body of an email • Failure to submit proposal as a single document could disqualify proposal • Use the subject line “WSOSFF Grant Proposal” | <p>Mail application materials to Tilth Alliance Attn: Grant Applications 4649 Sunnyside Ave N, Suite 100 Seattle, WA 98103</p> |

Applications must be postmarked or received electronically no later than January 17, 2020.

Review Process

Proposals will be evaluated and award recommendations made by the grant review committee. The committee reserves the right to seek outside technical expertise as necessary. Decisions made by the committee are final.

The following criteria will be used to evaluate proposals:

1. Deliverables that will foster improvement of social, environmental, and/or economic sustainability of the operation, overall operational viability, and/or the application of sustainable or organic farming practices.
2. Identifiable and measurable outcomes specified.
3. Budget is well-justified and details project expenses. Matching funds or in-kind contributions to the project (if any) have been secured, or have been applied for.
4. Proposal is well-written and clear, demonstrates the conceptual adequacy of the project, and presents a realistic timeline for each of the project's activities.

If Your Project is Funded

Applicants will be notified by March 6, 2020 of award. Awarded funds will be transferred to the grantee after the grantee signs an award agreement and submits a W-9 form. Funds are expected to be distributed by March 16, 2020.

Final Reporting Requirements

Unless other arrangements have been made, grant recipients are required to provide a project final report by January 31, 2021. Evaluation involves analyzing whether the original project objectives were met.

The specific format for reports will be shared with grant recipients in December 2020. In general, however, preparation of a final report should require no more than two hours, and the report should include the following:

- Details on how funds were spent as well as actual cost of the project vs. original budget in the form of a formal expenditure verification
- Project challenges and successes from the recipient's perspective
- Completed questionnaire, narrative about how the grant has furthered your operation and general bio of farm

For Additional Information Contact:

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