



Request for Proposals Urban Agriculture Conservation Grants - FY2021

Program Background

The National Association of Conservation Districts (NACD) and the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) are proud partners in support of the Urban Agriculture Conservation (UAC) Grant Initiative. Since 2016, the Initiative has provided approximately \$5 million in competitive grants in support of over 100 projects. Through these grants, conservation districts increased their capacity related to urban technical assistance and small-scale conservation, while addressing community needs in both rural and urban contexts. More information about the program is [available online](#).

NACD will again award up to 18 grants of no more than \$50,000 to conservation districts in Fiscal Year 2021, ***pending the finalization of funds from NRCS***. Applicants may request less than \$50,000 and are required to match 25% of the requested funds through in-kind or cash match, from non-federal sources.

Proposed projects may provide agricultural technical assistance in developed and developing areas, in both urban and rural contexts. Activities can address a variety of community-based approaches to agricultural conservation, and districts are encouraged to think creatively to support conservation within their communities. Proposals may address any natural resource concerns in agriculture, for example, soil health, water quality/quantity issues, biodiversity and habitat improvement, etc.

Grantees will have one year to complete project activities but will be evaluated on how they plan to continue the activities after the grant period. Partnerships with neighboring districts and other organizations are heavily encouraged to achieve this goal.

An NACD Selection Team will independently review and evaluate the proposals. The team may prioritize proposals with an emphasis on underrepresented clients and areas, as well as proposals that address food insecurity and/or food sovereignty. Districts are encouraged to review NACD’s Board Statement on [Diversity, Equity and Inclusivity](#) before applying and to review [previous grantee projects](#) for example approaches to outreach and community engagement.

Proposal Guidelines and Timeline

Applications will be [accepted online](#) through **February 15, 2021, 11:59 PM Local Time**.

ACTIVITY	TIMELINE
NACD Announcement and Promotion	December 2020 – February 2021
Applicant Proposal Deadline	February 15, 2021
NACD Proposal Review and Selection	February 15 – March 15, 2021
NACD Award Notification and Announcement	Late March 2021
Applicant Project Implementation With ongoing reports submitted quarterly	April 2021 – March 2022



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Applicants are encouraged to draft their text prior to starting the [online application](#) (see application questions at the end of the RFP), as applications cannot be saved to return to later. Review the Proposal Evaluation Criteria below prior to drafting the application.

Previous grantees are eligible only if they have successfully completed all requirements related to their first grant, and can document ongoing activity which is not dependent on the NACD UAC grant (2020 grantees may only apply if their current projects have concluded and a final report is on file with NACD). Districts who have already received two UAC grants are not eligible for ongoing funding at this time.

Proposal Evaluation Criteria

To ensure consideration, proposals should address each of these criteria:

- Application provides clear and concise answers to each question.
- Proposals are submitted on behalf of a conservation district as defined by the state's legislation. Proposals include a resolution adopted by the district board stating that the board has reviewed and approved the proposal and has addressed potential conflicts of interest.
- Project provides technical support to conservation aspects of urban agriculture. See more information in [USDA National Agriculture Library's resources](#).
- Project addresses additional natural resource and community concerns, for example, outreach to underrepresented populations or areas.
- Proposal indicates that the district has the capacity or will gain the capacity to provide urban and community conservation technical assistance.
- Project incorporates partnership activities with neighboring conservation districts, nonprofits, the private sector, or others.
- Proposal identifies plans for project continuity beyond the grant timeframe (e.g. inclusion in conservation district planning documents, sources of second year funding/in-kind services, etc.).
- If this is a request for a second grant, proposal indicates how the project has continued and operated without NACD UAC grant funds.
- Proposal indicates how the district will promote the project.
- Although not required, applicants may provide up to 5 letters of support from partners.

Project Reporting Requirements

Grantees must submit quarterly reports to NACD demonstrating progress on the project and detailing all expenses to date. For uniformity, NACD will provide the quarterly and final report templates at the beginning of the project.

In addition, applicant must be willing to be interviewed post-project about ongoing project activities. Grantees must also agree to be featured in NACD publications, including reports, newsletters and additional media.

Contact Information

Ariel Rivers, NACD Pacific Region Representative

Ariel-Rivers@nacdnet.org

(925) 290-8925



Application Questions

Applicants must apply online by **February 15, 2021, 11:59 PM Local Time**. Application questions are numbered and italicized below, with additional instructions (including word counts) where indicated.

A complete application includes clear and concise answers to each question within the word limits. Any supporting documents (board resolution and letters of support) may be uploaded with the application or sent to Ariel Rivers (ariel-rivers@nacdnet.org) before the deadline.

1. **Applicant Information**

Provide the district name and address, contact person name/phone number/email address

2. **Project title**

3. **Project description - In 50 words or less**

4. **Total grant amount requested**

5. **Are you applying on behalf of a conservation district according to your state's legislation?**

If you are not applying for a conservation district, you are not eligible for this grant.

6. **Board Resolution**

Upload a resolution adopted by the district board stating that the board has reviewed and approved the proposal and has addressed potential conflicts of interest.

For larger files or to submit a document separately, contact Ariel Rivers, ariel-rivers@nacdnet.org. All documents must be received by the application deadline.

7. **Is your district a previous UAC grantee? – 200 word limit**

If no, note "Not Applicable".

If yes, provide a description of the previous grant's accomplishments and how the project has continued beyond the UAC grant time frame (2020 grantees may only apply if their current projects have concluded and a final report is on file with NACD). Please also explain how the new activity/service will enhance the initial project, or if the new proposal will begin a separate project. Districts who have previously received two UAC grants are not eligible at this time.

8. **Applicant Qualifications – 200 word limit**

Describe the conservation district's experience and expertise in providing technical assistance in urbanized settings, working with non-traditional partners and engaging communities and citizens. If the experience and/or expertise is limited, describe how district board and staff will prepare for the project implementation.



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9. District Capacity - 200 word limit

Describe how this project will enhance the district's future capacity to provide conservation technical assistance to urban agriculture.

10. Detailed Project Description – 1,000 word limit

Describe the community population and location, the potential for community and partners' support, the urban agriculture conservation assistance needs, and how the project will address those needs. Include the additional benefits of the project such as stormwater infiltration, invasive species management, community engagement, participant business skills, etc.

11. Geographic Focus – 200 word limit

Please describe how your project will address technical assistance in a specific community. If applicable, please also include any information outreach to underrepresented areas or populations, and how your project may address food insecurity or food sovereignty.

12. Project Goals and Timeline – 200 word limit

This is a one-year initiative running March 2021 to February 2022. List the specific goals of the project along with the proposed timeline for each.

13. Project Sustainability – 200 word limit

Describe how the project will continue after the NACD UAC grant term has ended. Include any expected contributions by partners to help support ongoing project activities.

14. Project Promotion – 500 word limit

Describe how the project will be showcased at the local, state and national levels. Include how the project can be used to encourage/mentor other districts' work in urban agriculture conservation. Please also link to any social media accounts you expect to use to promote the project, if not included elsewhere.

15. Project Budget – NACD Grant Funds

Indicate the dollar value requested for each category below, with the total budget not to exceed \$50,000, and within the percentage limits on the categories noted. Enter a 0 for any category not included in your budget.

- District Employees' Salary and Benefits
- Employee Training and Travel Costs
- Consultant/Contractor
- Supplies, Equipment and Promotion (No more than 15% of total budget)
- Administrative (No more than 10%)

16. Matching Funds

All applicants must commit to a match of 25% of the total budget in funds from non-federal sources. In-kind match and cash are both acceptable. Enter the values of match you expect to contribute in the same budget categories indicated above; enter a 0 for any category you won't use for matching funds.

- District Employees' Salary and Benefits
- Employee Training and Travel Costs
- Consultant/Contractor
- Supplies, Equipment and Promotion (No more than 15% of total budget)
- Administrative (No more than 10%)



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17. Budget Justification – 500 word limit

Provide a detailed description of how the funds will be used, making sure to indicate how the funds will help achieve project goals.

18. Letters of Support

Upload up to 5 letters of support from potential project partners. For larger files or to submit a document separately, contact Ariel Rivers, ariel-rivers@nacdnet.org. All documents must be received by the application deadline.