



DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

OFFICE OF THE STATE SUPERINTENDENT OF

**EDUCATION**

## 2019 School Gardens Grant Questions and Answers (Q&A)

The following questions were submitted to the Office of the State Superintendent of Education (OSSE) in regard to the 2019 School Gardens Grant competition. Additional resources can be found at the [2019 School Garden Grant Documents](#) page.

The pre-application question period ended on Aug. 13, 2019. Only technical questions related to the Enterprise Grants Management System (EGMS) will be answered. Please note that questions submitted close to the application submission deadline may not be resolved by the application deadline. Questions related to EGMS must be directed to the OSSE Help Desk at (202) 719-6500 or [OSSE.Callcenter@dc.gov](mailto:OSSE.Callcenter@dc.gov) anytime between Monday-Friday from 7:30 a.m. – 5:30 p.m.

### 1. I am new to the school gardens grant and would like to start a school garden program at my school. Is this grant for me?

Yes. This grant may be used to either establish or maintain a school garden program. The [School Gardens Program](#) webpage contains useful resources and information.

### 2. Who is eligible to apply for this grant?

Eligible applicants include public schools (i.e., schools within the District of Columbia Public Schools (DCPS)), public charter schools and community-based organizations (CBOs) that support school garden programs. Public schools and public charter schools must have completed the 2018-19 school year school health profile, required by Section 602 of the Healthy Schools Act (D.C. Official Code §38-826.02).

### 3. How do I start an application?

All OSSE grants are managed using EGMS. Visit [grants.osse.dc.gov](http://grants.osse.dc.gov) and click on new user to begin an application.

The [EGMS User Manual](#) is also available to assist applicants. Teachers and community members should work with an eligible organization, DCPS, or public charter school to submit applications through EGMS. Please reach out to the local education agency (LEA) or CBO, both of which have access to EGMS, to assist you.



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**4. How do I get access to EGMS?**

New EGMS users must request credentials. Instructions for becoming an EGMS user are available at <http://grants.osse.dc.gov/info/credentials>.

**5. How many applications can a CBO submit?**

A CBO may submit up to three applications. Each CBO application must encompass a minimum of one and a maximum of four school campuses.

**6. My school is eligible to receive the fiscal year 2020 (FY20) school garden grant competitive preference. Is there anything that I have to do to ensure that my school receives this preference?**

No. Schools that are eligible to receive the competitive preference (see [Competitive Preference Guidance Document](#) for the list of schools) automatically receive competitive preference upon submission of an application.

**7. My school has not received a school garden grant in the past, but is not on the list of schools that are eligible to receive the FY20 school garden grant competitive preference. Is my school eligible for any type of competitive preference?**

No. Only schools listed in the [Competitive Preference Guidance Document](#) will receive competitive preference.

**8. Is the maximum award amount \$35,000 per year or is this the total for the two-year grant period?**

The maximum grant award of \$35,000 is for the two-year grant period.

**9. Are grantees expected to spend a certain portion of the award amount in the first year?**

OSSE will reimburse for a maximum of 60 percent and a minimum of 40 percent of the total award between Oct. 1, 2019-Sept. 30, 2020, the first year of the grant award. It is OSSE's expectation that grantees submit reimbursements totaling a minimum of 40 percent of the total award amount between Oct. 1, 2020-Sept. 30, 2021.



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Note that when completing the budget in EGMS, applicants must enter only the first year budget under the “Detailed Planning Expenditures” tab and upload the full two-year budget as an attachment in the “Upload Supporting Documentation” tab.

**10. What CBOs are eligible to serve as partners?**

All CBOs that have the experience and capacity to support the project can serve as partners. The [Service Provider List](#) identifies organizations that have partnered with schools in the past to support garden programs.

**11. How do schools find a partner organization?**

All schools are required to partner with a CBO, many of which are listed on the [Service Provider List, which](#) identifies organizations that have partnered with schools in the past to support garden programs.

**12. What is a reasonable stipend and salary for staffing?**

When determining stipends and salaries, applicants should consider a number of factors including but not limited to, the individual’s responsibilities, experience, and qualifications.

**13. What expenses qualify as indirect costs?**

Indirect costs represent the expenses of doing business that are not readily identified with a particular grant, contract, project function or activity, but are necessary for the general operation of the organization and the conduct of activities it performs.

**14. Will we be penalized for including additional documents to the application?**

No.

**15. Is cost share required?**

No.

**16. Can applicants include FoodCorps service member fees in the budget?**

Yes.



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**17. The Request for Applications (RFA) states that classroom teachers must support the inclusion of garden-based teaching into their teaching practice through supporting the delivery of garden-based lessons using curriculum that is aligned to relevant standards. Do these lessons have to take place in one class or can they be distributed among multiple classes?**

There is no requirement around how many classes in which the garden-based lessons must be taught. Note that at least five classroom teachers must teach at least five garden-based lessons each during the first year (for a total of 25 lessons), and eight classroom teachers must teach at least five garden-based lessons each during the second year (for a total of 40 lessons).

**18. Do garden-based lessons have to take place in the garden?**

No. Some lessons may take place indoors as an alternative to the garden.

**19. What are the expectations for the scope of programming during the summer months when school is out of session?**

There is no requirement or expectation for summer programming.

**20. Are applicants prohibited from partnering with the Summer Youth Employment Program (SYEP)?**

No. Schools can partner with any CBO, including SYEP, if the organization has the experience and capacity to support the project.

**21. The RFA states that each applicant must engage one entire grade level in at least one [Meaningful Watershed Educational Experience \(MWEE\)](#). What is the minimum number of students that should be included in this experience?**

There is no minimum number of students that must participate in the MWEE experience.

**22. What type of community involvement is allowable?**

There is no limitation on the type of community involvement or support you receive for your project. CBOs, businesses, parent-teacher organizations, or nonprofit entities should indicate their support for the project and outline specifically how they plan to



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contribute. This commitment should be described in the application. For additional guidance, see our training webinar titled: [Strategies to Increase Community Participation](#).

**23. How do I identify a garden-based curriculum?**

Here is OSSE's [list of recommended curricula](#). In addition, partner organizations may be able to provide recommendations.

**24. School gardens support a wide range of subjects. Are any of these topics a higher priority than others?**

No. Applicants have the discretion to prioritize topics.

**25. Do charter schools or CBOs need to submit a letter of intent to apply?**

No. Only DCPS schools that choose to apply through DCPS' central office need to submit a letter of intent. The intent to apply was due to DCPS on June 24, 2019. DCPS schools applying under a CBO are not required to submit a letter of intent.