



Request for Proposals
Camden Food Innovation Grants

Release Date: Monday, December 21, 2015

Proposals Due: Friday, February 5, 2016

I. Background

In 2014, the Community Foundation of South Jersey (CFSJ) created a pooled fund – the Camden Food Innovation Grant Fund – to seed innovative projects that create economic opportunity and foster healthy eating habits in Camden City. The Fund builds on findings from CFSJ's partners' ongoing work, the Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission's food system planning efforts, and the Campbell Healthy Communities program.

Camden City faces a number of food access challenges. Like other post-industrial cities, Camden was once a center of commerce, retaining residents, attracting employers, and enticing visitors from nearby communities. Camden City has experienced disinvestment over the last 50 or more years as evident by rates of poverty, vacant land and abandoned housing, incidents of violent crime, and the erosion of its commercial districts. This decline in both population and retail establishments also means that the city and many of its current residents suffer from food insecurity.

However, interest in and activity to improve Camden City, and specifically its food system, has increased tremendously over the last 10 years. Camden City's anchor institutions, such as Cooper Hospital, Campbell Soup Company, and Rutgers-Camden have increased investment in the city and its neighborhoods. Camden City has a dynamic ecosystem of nonprofit organizations that serve many different needs; and several nonprofits are dedicated to improving the city's food system and increasing food access.

The primary goal of this grant fund is to provide funding for an innovative food access solution. Solutions can be big or small, ranging from policy changes, to establishing new businesses, to convening stakeholders.

II. Request for Proposals

The Camden Food Innovation Grant, made possible with generous funding from a group of funders, including Community Foundation of South Jersey (CFSJ), the Campbell Healthy Communities program, Wells Fargo Regional Community Development Corporation, and the TD Charitable Foundation (referred to as “funders”), seeks to support innovative approaches that support a healthy food economy in Camden City.

The following themes are the top priorities for the Camden Food Innovation Grant. Only proposals that address one or more of these themes will be considered.

- **People and Health**
- **Planning and Land Use**
- **Business and Economic Development**

The Camden Food Innovation Grant will support requests that:

1. Identify and address specific policy reforms required to increase access to healthy foods and/or create jobs within the healthy food system. (Policy)
2. Research the feasibility to increase access to healthy foods or create jobs within the healthy food system. (Research)
3. Demonstrate new approaches that significantly advance access to healthy foods or create jobs within the healthy food system. (Pilot)
4. Combine policy, research, and pilot projects to maximize and create long-lasting impacts.

Priority will be given to proposals that incorporate innovation, social entrepreneurship, and/or revenue generation. Clear outcomes should be identified for this work. The maximum grant request is \$50,000. All project tasks must be completed within a 24-month timeline.

III. Geographic Areas of Eligibility

Eligible projects must directly benefit Camden City’s population and/or economy. However, proposals may originate from an organization located outside of the city.

IV. Who May Apply?

Food Innovation grants are intended to support the efforts of many different types of organizations, including community-based organizations, statewide or national advocacy groups, academic institutions, and private foundations. If two or more organizations are submitting a joint proposal, a lead organization must be indicated in the proposal. Organizations that have officially participated in the Campbell Healthy Communities program, DVRPC’s Camden Food Economy Strategy, or Community Foundation of South Jersey’s past and current grantees are strongly encouraged to apply. Lead applicants may submit only one proposal.

V. Available Funds

The funders anticipate a total of \$50,000 will be available for Camden Food Innovation Grants. Grant requests should be between \$10,000 and \$50,000. Projects should have a 6- to 24-month timeline. The number of grants to be made will be determined by the Selection Committee after reviewing all eligible proposals.

VI. Selection Committee

A selection committee composed of food system experts and philanthropic professionals will review the submissions pursuant to this request for proposals (RFP), and may invite selected respondents for follow-up interviews. If needed, interviews will be held on Tuesday, March 8, 2016.

VII. Schedule

1. All submissions pursuant to this RFP must be submitted electronically to CFSJ no later than **5:00 PM on February 5, 2016**. All responses must be submitted via email to Alice Andrews at aandrews@communityfoundationsj.org. Responses should be in standard PC-compatible text file formats (DOC, TXT, RTF, WPD) or as a PDF (preferred). Proposals received after the due date and time will not be considered.
2. All respondents will be notified by Friday, March 25, 2016, as to the disposition of their requests for funding.
3. Applicants selected to receive a grant will enter into a grant contract with CFSJ. Progress and financial reports must be submitted to CFSJ during the term of the contract.

VII. Selection Criteria

The Selection committee will award grants based on the quality of the proposal, the fit of the proposed project with the food system plan's goals, and the likelihood that the proposed work can be carried out effectively. CFSJ and the Selection Committee reserve the right to reject all proposals. Specific criteria to be used in judging proposals include:

- Degree to which proposed activity fits within selected themes and categories (see Section II).
- Demonstrated relationship of proposed project to applicant's mission.
- Experience and organizational capacity of applicant.
- Demonstrated ability to leverage future or expanded work in Camden City.
- Demonstrated ability to continue, transfer the project, or scale the project after the grant term is completed.
- Special consideration will be given to:
 - New or innovative proposals.

- Proposals that respond to recommendations outlined in *Cultivating Camden: The City's Food Economy Strategy*.
- Proposals that engage partners from Camden's institutional, governmental, or business sectors.
- Proposed projects that can reach a tipping point in a particular food system sector or specific issue.

IX. Response Requirements

Responses to this RFP should include a narrative proposal limited to six (6) pages that includes the following information:

1. Applicant Organization Name
 - Contact person full name, email, and phone number
2. A brief history of the organization that includes its mission, current programs, impact or effectiveness, and information on key personnel .
3. The purpose and description of the proposed request:
 - The proposed project service area and/or the extent of the geographic area served.
 - How the proposed activity fits within the eligible activities. (See Section II.)
 - How you will define success and how you will measure the impact of this effort.
 - Partners or colleagues that will be key to your success and note if they are new partnerships.
 - Organizational capacity.
4. A current organizational budget and a projected grant budget and timeline, including all revenue sources (committed, pending, or proposed). (not counted within the 6 page limit)

Note: Responses should not include any additional pages. If a proposal involves several organizations collaborating, a lead organization must be identified and supporting organizations may supply letters of commitment. Letters of commitment are not counted against the six (6) page limit. No other letters of support will be accepted.

X. Grant Restrictions

Camden Food Innovation Grants may not be used for general operating costs, acquisition of land or buildings, litigation, lobbying, or scholarships.

XI. Contract Requirements

If selected, grant funds will be disbursed based on a project work plan and the receipt of progress reports. If selected, the applicant will be subject to the terms of a grant contract with CFSJ. The applicant and any consultant utilized will be required to provide detailed budget information during the contracting process. Receipt of funding is contingent upon selection and the negotiation of an acceptable final scope and budget.

XII. Contact

Please direct questions or concerns to Alice Andrews at aandrews@communityfoundationsj.org or 856-528 3385.