



GROWBOSTON RAISED BED GRANT APPLICATION 2024-2026

About GrowBoston

GrowBoston is the City of Boston's Office of Urban Agriculture, and part of the Mayor's Office of Housing (MOH).

MOH has been supporting the development of community gardens, urban farms, food forests, and other open spaces for more than 25 years through the Grassroots Program, which is now part of the new GrowBoston. GrowBoston works to increase community gardens, urban farms, and other food-growing spaces throughout Boston; develop and implement innovative food production strategies; provide technical assistance to prospective and existing gardens and farms; develop resources for gardeners, farmers, and other residents; and coordinate with other City departments associated with food production in Boston. For more information:

<https://www.boston.gov/departments/growboston>

Raised Bed Grant 2024-26

GrowBoston is offering a total of \$400,000 to fund the installation of at least 500 raised garden beds for Boston residents. Raised bed construction must be completed by October of 2026. These grants are being made available from federal American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funds. The purpose of this grant program is to expand food production by providing low-income and food-insecure residents with garden beds. Organizations will propose a number of raised beds they have the capacity to build between August 2024 and October 2026.

Recipients may be a registered 501(c)(3) non-profit, a community group with a fiscal sponsor, or a for-profit business. Grants will be paid on a reimbursement basis and will require documentation of spending. MOH reserves the right to make more funding available.

- **Source of Funding:** American Rescue Plan Act Funds
- **Total Amount Available for Grant Program:** \$400,000
- **Award Amount per Grant per Organization:** Award amounts will range depending on the number of raised beds each organization chooses to build. The maximum award per organization is \$100,000.

Application Timeline & Process

Task	Date
Grant Application Opens	June 21, 2024
Application Deadline	July 31, 2024 at 6:00pm
Notification of award recipients	mid-August 2024
Disbursement of Payment	Reimbursement basis
*Project implementation period	August 2024 - October 2026
Submission of final report	January 15, 2027

*Please note: If an organization is interested in building raised beds for just one year, rather than the full 26 months, this is an acceptable option. Please note this in your timeline in the application form.

Eligibility

Applicants

Nonprofit (501(c)(3) organizations, community groups with a fiscal sponsor, and for-profit businesses are eligible to apply. All grant funds must be used for the public purpose of support through the production of raised beds for Boston residents, and not for the private benefit of the organization or business.

Project Eligibility

Awarded funds must be used to build raised beds and cannot be used for the organization's general operational or staffing costs. Funds are intended to be used to install raised beds at the homes of low-income households, community organizations, or public agencies serving those households. Review the following guidelines to confirm whether your project is eligible for this program. If you have other questions about the eligibility of your project, contact **Emily Reckard-Mota, Program Manager, at 617-635-1370 or by email at emily.reckardmota@boston.gov**.

Eligible Uses

This grant is for the construction of raised beds. Allowable uses include, but are not limited to:

- Labor to build raised beds: salaries, wages, stipends, etc. for staff, interns, or volunteers
- Raised bed garden materials (wood, soil, compost, seedlings or seeds, etc.) and ground preparation
- Indirect/administrative costs, not to exceed 10% of the total grant budget

Ineligible Uses

The following expenses are not allowed using ARPA grant funds: gardening tools and equipment, organizational operations, ongoing staff costs, ongoing administrative costs, and/or salaries of staff not involved with directly delivering the program.

Selection Criteria

Eligible applications will be evaluated by an evaluation committee on a comparative basis, and scored based on the following criteria:

- Applicant organization's experience constructing raised beds
- Realistic timeline for the building of raised beds
- Reasonableness of budget
- Extent to which the organization is mission-aligned with the values of this project to serve low-income, food insecure individuals

Other considerations will include:

- Proposed schedule for start and completion of the project, with a priority placed on readiness to proceed and capacity to build raised garden beds early in the grant period
- Extent to which prior grants awarded by MOH have been utilized, and the projects completed

Design Requirements

We are looking for raised bed garden proposals that meet the following specifications:

- The standard size for raised beds is 4 feet x 8 feet (width and length) and 10 inches in height. If bed recipients request a smaller bed for space reasons, we ask that you accommodate their request.
- Materials used to build the beds should be untreated - recommended materials include cedar, spruce, and black locust.
 - GrowBoston will connect grantees to one another so they can determine if they would like to coordinate a bulk order of soil and lumber.
- Beds must be built using heavy duty landscape fabric material. Soil and compost used should be tested, and garden builds should follow proper precautions and use best practices for gardening/farming in urban environments ([EPA Best Practices for Urban Gardening](#)).

If you don't have experience building raised beds in large quantities, please reach out to Emily at emily.reckardmota@boston.gov. She can connect you with a previous grant recipient who can share their process and experience so you can get a sense of the work required. This may help you determine if this project is a good fit for your organization.

Referral Process

Raised bed recipients can be identified through the Office of Food Justice (OFJ) and referred to grantee organizations. Alternatively, recipients can be identified by grantee organizations as long as they abide by OFJ's screening guidelines to ensure recipients meet certain income criteria. This will require a dedicated staff member willing to coordinate outreach and applicant screening. Your application must state how many recipients you plan to recruit, if any, and how many referrals you would like to receive from OFJ, if any. Grantees can also do a combination of recruiting their own recipients and receiving referrals. Referrals from OFJ will likely not be ready until the spring of 2025.

All recipients must be low-income Boston residents. Applicants will be screened for income eligibility based on SNAP eligibility screening guidelines. Priority will be given to:

- Residents in Roxbury, Dorchester, Mattapan, and East Boston
- Individuals who have experienced food insecurity within the past year
- Families with children
- Seniors

Recipients must have a written permission letter to build on the property where they would like raised beds installed. This letter must be signed by the landlord and given to the grantee.

Bed-Building Process

Each grantee organization must follow a standardized process for building these raised beds. These steps include:

- Contact the identified raised bed recipient either by phone or email to schedule an initial site visit.
- Conduct an initial site visit to identify a location for the raised bed.
 - Conduct a sun-check, ensure there is an even, flat space, and check for sufficient drainage to ensure the bed will not rot.
 - The individual receiving the bed must be present for this visit. This is to ensure they are committed and interested and to identify the location where they want the bed built.

- Organizations must fill out demographic information and contact information at this site visit.
- Follow up via email or phone to schedule a date for installation.
- Build and install raised beds for the recipient.

Please take into consideration the significant preparation required to build raised beds.

This includes:

- Ordering and storing large quantities of needed materials, including wood and soil
- Scheduling and conducting a site visit in coordination with recipient's availability
- Shoveling soil into buckets or other containers for transport to the site: for one raised bed, it can take about twenty-five 5-gallon buckets of soil to fill the bed
- Loading a vehicle with containers of soil, wood, weed fabric, and other materials needed to build the bed
- Transporting these materials to each site, and to the specific raised bed location at the site (this can sometimes involve a decent number of stairs)
- Building the raised bed and filling the bed with soil

Follow-Up & Education

GrowBoston is committed to ensuring that residents are equipped to grow food in the raised beds they receive. For every individual who receives a garden bed, grantees are required to provide the following:

- 12 seedlings (can be provided upon installation, or at a set pick up date)
- Basic gardening guide (GrowBoston will work with grantees to determine exact materials to be distributed, and technical assistance may be available to develop them) and GrowBoston Tip Sheets
- Grantees are also welcome to provide supplemental information

Please note: we are exploring ways to support an education program specifically for raised bed recipients, and will require grantees to record contact information for recipients so that GrowBoston can connect recipients with educators in their area.

Reporting Requirements

- Grantees will receive a mid-term and final report form along with a demographic form template which must be completed and returned. Additional reporting may be required at GrowBoston's discretion.
- Grantees will be required to provide regular updates on the number of beds completed.
- Grantees will be required to keep a record of contact information for raised bed recipients and must share this record with GrowBoston. This is essential for

GrowBoston to follow up with raised bed recipients with educational resources and feedback.

Application Form

Please fill out [this form](#) to apply for this grant. The deadline is July 31, 2024. Contact Emily Reckard-Mota, Program Manager, at emily.reckardmota@boston.gov or 617-635-1370, with any questions about this application and grant opportunity.

See below for application content preview.

Application Contents

The following components must be included in each application:

- **Organization Information**
 - Organization Name
 - Organization Street Address
 - Organization City
 - Organization State
 - Organization Zip Code
 - Organization's Annual Budget
 - Organization Website (if applicable)
 - Primary Contact Person Name
 - Primary Contact Person Email Address
 - Primary Contact Person Phone Number
 - Is your organization a 501(c)(3) tax-exempt non-profit, community group, or a for-profit business?
 - 501(c)(3)
 - Community Group
 - For-profit business
 - Are you applying with a fiscal sponsor?
 - Yes
 - No

Additional Organizational Information *The below information is required for all 501(c)(3) organizations.*

- Organization EIN Number
- Please submit proof of your organization's non-profit status. (This may include the letter of IRS determination, a 990-EZ or 990, or any other form of proof you may have.)
- Please enter your City of Boston Supplier/Vendor ID.

- You must have a valid Supplier/Vendor ID number to receive a grant from the City of Boston. This also enables you to sign up for direct deposit! If you are using a Fiscal Sponsor, they must register for the Supplier/Vendor ID. If you do not have a Supplier/Vendor ID yet, please type in “Pending”.
- Supplier/Vendor ID is NOT required to apply for a grant, but the Supplier/Vendor ID MUST be established before a grant is approved and a payment is processed. Find detailed first-time instructions [here](#) or returning-user instructions [here](#). Please email vendor.questions@boston.gov or call 617-961-1058 for additional assistance.
- By checking this box, please confirm that your organization is in good standing with both the MA Attorney General’s Office and the IRS.

Fiscal Sponsor Information (if applicable):

- Fiscal Sponsor Organization Name
- Fiscal Sponsor Organization Street Address
- Fiscal Sponsor Organization City
- Fiscal Sponsor Organization State
- Fiscal Sponsor Organization Zip Code
- Fiscal Sponsor Organization EIN#
- Please upload a copy of your fiscal sponsor’s most recent Form 990 that was filed with the IRS. If your organization is not required to file a Form 990, 990-EZ, or 990-N (e-postcard) please upload your most recent audited financial statements or annual report.
- Fiscal Sponsor Organization Contact Person Name
- Fiscal Sponsor Organization Contact Person Email Address
- Fiscal Sponsor Organization Contact Person Phone Number
- Please enter your fiscal sponsor's City of Boston Supplier/Vendor ID:
 - Your fiscal sponsor must have a valid Supplier/Vendor ID number to receive a grant from the City of Boston. This also enables your fiscal sponsor to sign up for direct deposit if you are selected to receive a grant.
 - Supplier/Vendor ID is NOT required to apply for this grant, but the Supplier ID MUST be established before a grant is approved and a payment is processed.
 - Please email vendor.questions@boston.gov or call 617-961-1058 for additional assistance. For assistance using the Supplier Portal, creating a new vendor account, updating existing vendor account updates, creating a User ID, etc. you will find detailed instructions with screenshots [at this link](#).
 - If your fiscal sponsor does not have a Supplier/Vendor ID yet, please enter "Pending" below.

- Please check this box to confirm that your fiscal sponsor is in good standing with both the MA Attorney General's Office and the IRS.

- **Organizational Background**
 - A brief overview of the organization's mission, programs, and experience in urban agriculture
 - What is your organization's staff size?
 - Demographic Information on Organization's Leadership *This is a multi-select question. Please answer this question for your President/Executive Director.*
 - American Indian-led
 - Asian- or Pacific Islander-led
 - Immigrant-led
 - Woman-led
 - Black- or African-American-led
 - LGBTQI-led
 - Hispanic/Latinx-led
 - Older Adults (60+)-led
 - Veteran-Led
 - Led by people with disabilities
 - Youth-led
 - Other
 - Describe the communities, neighborhoods, and populations served by your organization
 - Does your organization serve any of the following races? (Multi-select)
 - American Indian or Alaska Native
 - Asian
 - Black or African American
 - Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander
 - White
 - Not listed here / other (write in as other)
 - Does your organization provide employment or job training opportunities designed for BIPOC individuals?

- **Organizational Experience Narrative**
 - Please list current or past raised bed garden-building activities and experience (if applicable)
 - What is your plan for staffing this project? List each person and their role in the project, along with relevant experience. Please share if your construction plans include interns or volunteers.
 - Please share your experience working with the populations you intend to serve and how your organization incorporates community engagement into your overall operations.

- **Recipient Recruitment**
 - How many garden beds do you plan to build?
 - In what neighborhoods do you plan to build raised beds?
 - Do you plan to recruit raised bed recipients, wait on referrals from OFJ, or a combination of both?
 - If you would like raised bed recipient referrals from OFJ, how many referrals do you want?
 - For organizations planning to select their own recipients, please share detailed plans and a timeline for recruiting and selecting individuals.
 - Plans to collaborate with other organizations (if any)
- **Evidence of Financing**
 - Documentation of the organization's financial resources available for this project, given that grant agreements will be reimbursement-based
 - Narrative description of the financial and administrative capability to execute the project
 - Property affidavit: Grantees must be in good financial standing with the City of Boston. Such standing is determined through a review process based on a Property Affidavit Form. Please fill out the [Property Affidavit Form](#) and upload it here. If your organization owns no property, you must still fill it out - write "N/A" where you are asked for addresses.
- **Project Timeline & Budget**
 - Please share a project timeline, detailing the work required to complete the project, including a list of tasks and key milestones from project start to finish.
 - Upload a detailed budget, including the following:
 - A clear and detailed budget of all expenses necessary to implement the raised bed garden-building project (including all materials, soil, etc.)
 - Explicit detail on the cost per raised bed (please note, we have \$650 budgeted per bed).
 - Description of any additional sources of funding you may have for this project (note: additional funding is not required). Use of MOH funds must be clearly distinguished from other funding sources.
 - Please upload a budget narrative, including a description of each line item in the budget you uploaded in the previous question. Be sure to include the rate and number of hours used in your personnel calculations.