The Philadelphia Food Justice Initiative (PFJI)

PDPH Division of Chronic Disease and Injury Prevention | Reinvestment Fund

Information Sheet – Round 6 2026-2027

In partnership with Reinvestment Fund, the Philadelphia Department of Public Health's Division of Chronic Disease and Injury Prevention (CDIP) seeks innovative proposals for community-led projects that grow food justice for all Philadelphians.

Funding: Approximately **$240,500** is currently available for grants. With this current funding amount, grants will have a maximum award of $50,000. There is no minimum grant award.

Project Period: Grant project activities must take place between January 1, 2027 – December 31, 2027

Application and Grant Timeline

- **October 29, 2026** - Virtual information session at 4:00 pm Eastern Time
- **December 4, 2026** – Applications due by end of day (11:59 pm Eastern Time).
- **No earlier than the week of February 1, 2027** – Grantees selected and all applicants notified.
- **Early February 2027** – Agreements finalized with selected grantees and grant funding disbursements begin.
- **December 31, 2027** – PFJI grant period ends.

How to Apply

Application submissions will be accepted electronically through Reinvestment Fund's online grants management platform, SmartSimple.

- **Application assistance is available throughout the submission period. See the office hours schedule and booking links on the PFJI website.**
- To submit an application, new applicants must register their organization with SmartSimple here. Returning applicants can log in to their SmartSimple profile to begin a new application.
- There will be a virtual info session (webinar) on **Thursday, October 29, 2026, at 4:00 pm Eastern Time**, on how to apply to the program, including how to use SmartSimple. Register for the webinar at this link. The webinar will be recorded for later viewing. The info session will be translated.
- You can submit questions at any time by emailing phillyfoodjustice@reinvestment.com.

To sign up for the PFJI email list and for more information and resources, visit: https://www.reinvestment.com/grants/phl-food-justice-initiative/.

Applications in additional languages will be made available upon request. If you would like an application, please email phillyfoodjustice@reinvestment.com.

Arabic:

ستكون الطلبات بلغات إضافية متاحة عند الطلب. إذا كنت ترغب في تقديم طلب، فيرجى إرسال بريد إلكتروني إلى phillyfoodjustice@reinvestment.com.

Chinese:

如果用户提出请求，我们将提供其他语言版本的申请表。如果您想要申请，请发送电子邮件至 phillyfoodjustice@reinvestment.com。

French:

Les candidatures dans d'autres langues seront disponibles sur demande. Si vous souhaitez obtenir un dossier de candidature, veuillez envoyer un courriel à l'adresse suivante : phillyfoodjustice@reinvestment.com.

Haitian Creole:

Aplikasyon nan land siplemantè ap disponib sou demann. Si ou ta renmen yon aplikasyon, tanpri voye imèl bay phillyfoodjustice@reinvestment.com.

Portuguese:

Mediante pedido, serão disponibilizadas candidaturas em outros idiomas. Se pretender uma candidatura, envie um e-mail para phillyfoodjustice@reinvestment.com.

Russian:

Заявки на дополнительных языках будут предоставлены по запросу. Если вы хотите получить заявку, пожалуйста, напишите по адресу phillyfoodjustice@reinvestment.com.

Spanish:

Las solicitudes en otros idiomas están disponibles bajo pedido. Si desea obtener una, pídala por correo electrónico a phillyfoodjustice@reinvestment.com.

Vietnamese:

Các đơn nộp cho những ngôn ngữ bổ sung sẽ có sẵn theo yêu cầu. Nếu quý vị muốn có đơn này, vui lòng gửi email đến phillyfoodjustice@reinvestment.com.

Please contact us if you have any issues with the online submission process. We encourage you to submit your application early, in advance of the application deadline, to avoid technical issues. If you have questions, please email phillyfoodjustice@reinvestment.com. Someone will respond to your email as soon as possible.

Definitions

1. **Health Justice**: the collective movement to heal society and eliminate barriers that prevent individual and community well-being. We advance health justice by challenging the systems that have created disparities in health outcomes based on social determinants of health constructs. The result of these efforts is a society in which every individual and community has equitable access to resources and opportunities for living long, happy and healthy lives. See more information here: http://foodfitphilly.org/health-justice-phl/

2. **Food Justice**: Food justice aims to address disparities in nutritious, affordable and culturally-appropriate food access, particularly for communities of color and low-income communities, by addressing land ownership, agricultural practices, distribution of technology and resources, workers' rights, and the historical injustices certain communities have faced. Food Justice is also closely intertwined with environmental justice. Achieving food justice within a community requires distinct strategies that target causes and conditions of injustice specific to that community. (from Advancing Equity in Food Systems | Healthy Food Policy Project).

3. **Equity**: fairness or justice in the way people are treated, specifically: freedom from disparities in the way people of different races, genders, etc. are treated.

4. **Healthy Food:** foods that build and sustain human health such as: Fresh fruits and vegetables; Whole grains; Beans, peas, lentils, and other legumes; Nuts and seeds; and Proteins such as fish, tofu, and lower fat dairy products. In general, healthy foods are fresh or frozen and don't contain added sugars, fats, or high levels of salt. Preference will be given to healthy food that is also grown, prepared and distributed in ways that support worker, environmental, and animal health, and/or that preserve and celebrate cultural traditions and foodways.

5. **Healthy Food Business:** retail or restaurant businesses like produce markets, cafes or stores that preference sales of healthy prepared and packaged foods that meet the definition of "healthy food" above.

Why Is This Needed?

We know that food justice is health justice (*see definitions*). Historically, the food system has displaced, enslaved, and undervalued the labor, land rights, and self-determination of Black and brown individuals, women, immigrants, and indigenous people.[1] In Philadelphia today, neighborhoods with higher concentrations of lower-income households and/or Black and Latinx/Hispanic Philadelphians still have fewer fresh food choices.[2] Poverty and high food costs continue to impact families' ability to afford healthy foods and contribute to food insecurity in Philadelphia. In addition, neighborhood conditions, such as access to food retailers, transportation, and safety concerns may further contribute to food insecurity[3].

Supporting community efforts to ensure access to healthy affordable foods and build a more equitable food system will keep us moving toward creating a healthy, just, safe, livable community for all Philadelphia residents.

We also know that Philadelphia has tremendous food assets and opportunities for individual and collective action. See the 5-Year PFJI Cumulative Impact Report[4] or Growing from the Root: Philadelphia's Urban Agriculture Plan[5] for examples.

[1] Framing from the Castanea Fellowship: https://www.castaneafellowship.org/about/

[2] Neighborhood Food Retail Report: http://foodfitphilly.org/neighborhoodfoodretail/

[3] Access to Affordable and Nutritious Food: Measuring and Understanding Food Deserts and Their Consequences: https://www.ers.usda.gov/webdocs/publications/42711/12716_ap036_1_.pdf?v=4477.4

[4] https://www.reinvestment.com/wp-content/uploads/2026/10/PFJI-5-Year-Impact-Report-Addendum-2026_v3_FINAL.pdf

[5] Growing from the Root: Philadelphia's Urban Agriculture Plan https://www.phila.gov/documents/philadelphias-urban-agriculture-plan/

Who Can Apply

This open call for ideas is for businesses or organizations doing community-led work that contributes to an equitable and sustainable local food system. The overall goal of this funding is to support and increase equitable access to grow, learn about, and eat healthy, affordable, and culturally relevant foods. Send us your ideas for food justice strategies that could grow or deepen with support.

Applicants must be located in the City of Philadelphia and may propose up to $50,000 for a project. Nonprofit organizations, for-profit businesses, cooperatives or collectives working on food justice are eligible to apply. Retail and non-retail food businesses are eligible. Applicants must make a commitment that their businesses and other spaces will be tobacco-free.

We welcome ideas and projects from any applicant that wants to build food justice in Philadelphia and embodies a health justice vision. If you have been working in food access for a long time and need some support to scale up and take the next step, we want to hear from you. If you have been community organizing and capacity building and see a clear way to include food justice in your work, we want to hear from you. If you are a budding entrepreneur with a fresh idea, we want to hear from you. If you make, grow, cook or sell food, we want to hear from you.

From 2019-2025, 41 organizations have been awarded PFJI grants. Of those, 37 are Black, Indigenous, People of Color (BIPOC) owned or led and 28 are owned or led by women. Grant awards have ranged from $4,000 to $100,000. Read more about previous grantees on the Philadelphia Food Justice Initiative website. Applicants who have previously applied to this initiative but weren't selected are encouraged to apply again. **Previously funded grantees cannot reapply for consecutive years of funding.**

What Can Be Funded?

Eligible projects include many kinds of community-driven solutions to create a more just food system that supports communities to grow, sell, and eat healthy food. Projects could include growing or making food (gardening, incubator or community kitchens, etc.), moving/distributing food (group purchasing, new delivery systems or solutions), selling food (retail or prepared), food waste recovery or food marketing, improving wages and/or working conditions in the food system, improving systems for free or emergency food or meals. Funds can also support collective work across organizations to grow, make, store, move, cook, or sell food.

Funds can be for hard and soft costs for planning or implementation, including land, property, building improvements, and equipment. Expenses related to land, property and building improvements will need to be reviewed by the City for compliance with City regulations.

Sample project ideas (but feel free to propose a project unlike those listed here):

- Re-opening a restaurant space selling healthy meals as a worker-owned cooperative
- Coordinating on covering delivery costs for food/produce for a summer meal site(s)
- Covering initial start-up costs for collective food buying across organizations or businesses
- Starting a new production or processing facility to make value-added products such as fruit salad cups or meal kits
- Creating a hyperlocal food hub for urban farmers and gardeners to aggregate, store, or sell or store produce or other staple and perishable foods
- Developing systems to distribute free surplus produce

- Food distribution delivery logistics solutions
- Cooperative purchasing to increase purchasing power for smaller businesses such as child care centers or healthy corner stores.
- Expanding existing healthy food businesses to serve more clients or starting a new healthy food business in a neighborhood that lacks access to healthy foods (starting soft costs could include feasibility studies, business consulting, predevelopment costs, or initial inventory).
- Adding a delivery and online purchasing model to a healthy food business to increase accessibility for disabled and/or homebound community members.
- Starting a produce distribution enterprise to help distribute produce more readily to smaller retailers or community-based organizations.
- Safe routes to healthy food (transportation alternatives or strategies)

Selection Criteria and Process

Applicants should propose a project for the Philadelphia Food Justice Initiative (PFJI) that will focus on community-driven solutions to strengthen the food system in neighborhoods or communities with a history of health or food injustice. Projects must also be led by groups or organizations made up of those same individuals or community members. Fair compensation of staff and partners is also required. The **City requires contractors to pay a minimum of $17.63/hour for living wages with limited exceptions**.

Projects must include **at least one** of the following:

- Deep roots in a neighborhood or (defined) community
- Broad citywide reach
- Potential for systems change or scaling up over time

Proposals will also be evaluated on the following criteria:

- **Applicant Qualifications** – The applicant of the proposed project demonstrates a track record and experience in food and health justice work and the ability to deliver the project described. The applicant demonstrates relevant industry experience, relevant partners in the project team, and/or the ability to obtain qualified services necessary to carry out a successful and sustained project.
- **Project Description and Activities** – The proposed project provides a clearly defined problem and proposed solution(s) through its project activities. The application communicates the extent to which PFJI funding will contribute to the project's success, and, in turn, the applicant's capacity to contribute to sustained food and health justice for its community.
- **Leadership** – The applicant organization is led by Black, Indigenous and People of Color and/or people with lived experience with health injustice, including immigrants and people living with disabilities. i.e. executive positions, Board membership, and/or staff demographics reflect the racial makeup of Philadelphia (55% POC). If subcontracting, sourcing with businesses that are local and/or have experience with health injustice.
- **Authentic Community Ownership** – The applicant organization demonstrates characteristics of community-based work: assets belong to the community, community members have leadership roles, community is represented on the Board of Directors (or similar), profits or surplus are re-invested or distributed for community benefit, tackles social and/or environmental problems pertinent to the community.
- **Impact** – The proposed project demonstrates a clear connection to healthy food and the food system, who will benefit, how many people will be served, and the greater impact in the

community or to the food system. The proposed project will benefit an area or a community that has experienced historic health or food injustices or disinvestment.

- **Transformation and Innovation** – The proposed project seeks to test, demonstrate, or scale a new strategy or build on a previously successful approach to strengthen community resiliency, address food injustice and/or improve the Philadelphia food system. The proposed project demonstrates the potential for systems change or the scaling of its impact up over time.
- **Feasibility** – Application proposal identifies clear milestones that seem possible to accomplish in the proposed time frame, and the budget is proportionate to the milestones. Application demonstrates a thoughtful approach to sustaining the work beyond the grant period.
- **Budget and Fair Compensation** – Application proposal provides a budget that is clear, reasonable, and appropriate for the project as described. Application proposes livable wages for workers and a healthy working environment (e.g. fair schedules, paid leave, climate).

Priority Points will be given to projects that have the following attributes. Points will be awarded for each attribute for a **total of 10 priority points** awarded on top of points awarded for the criteria above.

- Organizations and projects that have not been previously funded through the Philadelphia Food Justice Initiative
- Organizations located in or serving areas with higher rates of poverty and food insecurity. To check your location, please visit the Philadelphia Food Access Dashboard.
- Organizations that demonstrate a significant organizational capacity gap, including having a smaller annual operating budget, smaller staff size, or gap in project resources relative to total project costs
- Organizations and projects that are led by people with lived experience with health or food injustice, including Black, Indigenous and People of Color and immigrants and/or people living with disabilities

A selection committee will review applications and select grantees. The selection committee reserves the right to select one applicant or multiple applicants, and fund one or more applicants in full or in part depending on the nature of the proposals and available funding.

Applications not selected for a grant award may also be directed to future or other funding opportunities that are more appropriate to their work. For example, applicants proposing a healthy food business may be referred to the Commerce Department to see if they are eligible for any of their existing financial or technical assistance programs.

Award Administration

Applications selected for a grant award will be notified with details concerning grant award terms and conditions.

Reinvestment Fund seeks to collect impact metrics across all of its programs in order to assess the success of its funding initiatives. Grantees will be expected to collect and share measures of success, including both quantitative metrics and stories, from their PFJI funded projects. Grantees must collect and report data for their proposed projects, as applicable, such as:

- **Workshops and Trainings:** Number of events and number of attendees
- **Growing and Distributing Food:** Pounds of food grown and pounds sold/distributed

- **Physical and Financial Growth:** Increase in annual revenue, new jobs created and increase in square feet

Grantee reporting requirements may include:

- Semi-annual reporting of grant project progress and use of grant funds throughout the grant period. **Semi-annual reports will be due by July 31, 2027**.
- Final progress and financial closeout report which will include all backup documentation for grant expenditures during the grant period. **Closeout reports will be due by January 31, 2028**.

Additionally, all grantees will be expected to share stories and describe how they have advanced equity, developed partnerships, and included residents throughout the projects. Lastly, grantees will be invited to host and participate in site visits with other grantees to learn and share about each other's work. Impact data and project stories garnered from grantees may be used in public-facing materials such as reports, websites, social media, newsletters, and other communications as necessary.

The Philadelphia Food Justice Initiative (PFJI) is administered by Reinvestment Fund, a nonprofit intermediary Community Development Financial Institution. PFJI is a partnership of Reinvestment Fund and the Philadelphia Department of Public Health's Division of Chronic Disease and Injury Prevention (CDIP).

Application Questions

HOW TO APPLY

Application submissions will be accepted electronically through Reinvestment Fund's online grants management platform, SmartSimple. Below is a copy of the questions in the application on SmartSimple.

If you are unable to submit an electronic application, or would like to submit an application in Spanish, please email phillyfoodjustice@reinvestment.com to receive a paper application.

Register for SmartSimple to Begin Your Application

When you create an account in SmartSimple, you will be asked to enter organization and primary contact information to register your organization. Learn more about how to create an account in SmartSimple by watching this video.

If you have already registered (for example, to submit an application in a prior round), you can log in and skip ahead to Applicant Information.

If you are applying for a partnership or collective, one organization should register and apply on behalf of the partnership.

APPLY HERE.

APPLICATION

Applicant Information

Entity Information

- *When registering for SmartSimple, applicants will provide the following information:*
  - Legal Entity Name and d/b/a (if applicable)
  - Entity Address *(Organization and project must be located in Philadelphia)*
  - Primary Contact's First & Last Name
  - Primary Contact's Email & Phone
  - Primary Contact's Address

- *Applicants must provide the following information to evidence the legal status of the entity:*
  - Applicant entity type (For-profit business, Nonprofit organization, or Cooperatively-owned business, Other);
  - Applicant entity's EIN and IRS-issued Employer Identification Number (EIN) Notice;
  - An IRS-issued tax-exempt Determination Letter or Governmental Information Letter (only for applicants that are tax-exempt nonprofit organizations)

The information above must match the documentation submitted as evidence of the applicant's legal status as an entity.

Application Questions

1. **Organization website URL (if available):**

2. **What was your organization's total annual operating budget for the most recently completed fiscal year?**
   - Under $250,000
   - $250,000-$499,999
   - $500,000-$1 million
   - $1 million or more

3. **What is your organization's projected annual operating budget for the current fiscal year?**

4. **Approximately what percentage of your organization's annual operating budget is dedicated to your food work? Please include expenses related to staffing, programs, operations, and other resources that directly support this work.**

5. **How many staff (full-time or part-time) does your organization currently have?**
   - 0-4
   - 5-9
   - 10-19
   - 20-49
   - 50+

6. **Describe how many total staff are dedicated to supporting your food work?**

7. **Has this organization previously applied for PFJI funding? Please select each year that your organization has applied.**
   - 2019
   - 2020
   - 2021
   - 2023
   - 2024

8. **Describe the mission and vision of your group/organization/business (250 words)**

9. **How does your organization practice anti-racism? Explain how your leadership structure (executive director, board, or other) embodies racial, ethnic, gender and age diversity or lived experience with health or food injustice. (250 words)**

10. **Describe the management of the project you're proposing for this grant. Who is leading the project in your organization? What expertise or skills does leadership have with operating and/or implementing this or similar work in the community/ies being served? (250 words)**

Application Questions

Project Information

1. **Project Title:**

2. **Address of the project site (If there are multiple sites, please list all addresses): If the project does not have a site address, but serves a broader geography, applicants will be asked to identify the areas served (i.e. neighborhood(s), region of the city, zip codes, etc.). Applicant and project site(s) must be located in Philadelphia.**

3. **What is the total amount needed to operationalize this project (i.e. what is the total project cost?)?**

4. **What is the total amount of grant funding requested for this project? (Up to $50,000)**

5. **What type of project is this? (Select all that apply)**
    a. Food Retail Business and/or Initiative (including grocery stores, farmers markets, farm stands, prepared food businesses, etc.)
    b. Non-Retail Food Business and/or Initiative (i.e. enterprises and/or initiative focused on distribution, aggregation, processing, community kitchens, incubators etc.)
    c. Urban Agriculture (including production farming, community gardening and/or farming etc.)
    d. Community Food Distribution (includes improving systems for the distribution of free food/community meals)
    e. Other (Please explain)

6. **Select the activities that will be implemented through your project (Select all that apply)**

    a. Trainings/Workshops/Education
    b. Land Stewardship and Cultivation
    c. Community power-building, organizing, advocacy
    d. Systems Change
    e. Youth Leadership
    f. Workforce Development
    g. Cultural Preservation and Celebration
    h. Other (Please explain)

7. **If this is a food retail project:** Do you currently sell tobacco products?

8. **If this is a food retail project:** Can you commit to not selling tobacco products in your retail store/business?

9. **Project Description:** What is the project you are seeking grant funding for and what activities will you carry out through this project? How would funds be used? What are the key goals or accomplishments for the year? In other words, what will a grant make it possible for you to do? (750 words)

Application Questions

10. **Community Served and Need:** Describe the geographic and food landscape of the community to be served and demonstrate why the project is needed to increase the availability/consumption of healthy food or improve/enhance the food system (see definition). (250 words)

11. **How many people will be served by your project?**

12. **Capacity Building Needs:** What capacity building related skills, expertise, or services are currently needed to successfully complete this project? (250 words)

13. **Food Access/Justice:** How will your project aim to address disparities in nutritious, affordable and culturally-appropriate food access, particularly for communities of color and low-income communities (see food access/justice definition)? (250 words)

14. **Equity:** How will your project address and advance equity (see equity definition)? (250 words)

15. **Collective Action:** How will your organization partner or collaborate with other food justice and community organizations on this project? If your project has formal project partners, who are the project's partners and what are their roles) (250 words)

16. **Community Engagement:** How will your project include and engage residents in your community in decision-making? What communities or populations are engaged or served by this project? (250 words)

17. **Project Impacts:** How is your project transformative or innovative in its approach to strengthening community resiliency, addressing food injustice and/or improving the food system for the community/ies you serve? Include in your response how your project is catalytic, changing systems, or uniquely serving your community. (250 words)

18. **Impact Metrics:** Propose 3-5 metrics of success for your proposed project. These metrics will be included in what you will provide in reporting, if you are selected as a grantee. Metrics might include number of participants in your programs, number of volunteers engaged, number of customers at your business, annual revenue, pounds of food grown or distributed, etc. (250 words)

Project Timeline

We want to understand the specific activities and milestones that you hope to achieve through this project and the timeline. Applicants will be asked to provide a narrative and complete the chart below to outline specific milestones, the timeline to complete each activity, the expected deliverables, and the party responsible for carrying out the activity. If awarded, the activities detailed in your application will be included in your grant agreement. **Project activities must occur between January 1, 2027 - December 31, 2027.**

1. **Project Timeline Narrative:** Please provide an overview of the project's key milestones and target dates including the amount of time needed to fully complete the project as well as a description of any relevant factors influencing project timing and success. (250 words)

Application Questions

KEY PROJECT ACTIVITIES	TARGET DATE(S)	DELIVERABLES	RESPONSIBLE PARTY
Activity 1:			
Activity 2:			
Activity 3:			
Activity 4:			
Activity 5:			

Budget

1. Budget
Please provide a complete budget for your grant request using the following template. *It's okay to make estimates or projections for these costs.* Feel free to leave categories blank if they are not applicable. Please describe in detail the uses for each category. *For example, under Consultants/Subcontractors, write: hire a marketing and design firm for six months to develop an outreach and communications plan and design a new website - $10,000. For example, under personnel, write: Project Manager, part-time, $30/hour for 900 hours, responsible for oversight of project activities, grants management and reporting.* If awarded, the budget detailed in your application will be included in your grant agreement.

Project Budget		
Budget category	Dollar ($) amount	Description of funds
Personnel (Staffing)[1]		
Fringe [2]		
Consultants or Subcontractors [3]		
Travel [4]		
Materials and Supplies [5]		
Furniture/Fixtures/Equipment (FFE) [6]		
Land, Property, and Building Improvements [7]		
Indirect costs [8]		
Other		
TOTAL		

Application Questions

Notes for Budget Categories:

1. **Staffing**
   a. If staff positions will be supported, include for each person: salary (annual or hourly), percent effort for this project, titles and brief project responsibilities of each staff person.
   b. Please note living wages and fair compensation is a critical piece of this project. **The City of Philadelphia requires contractors to pay a minimum of $17.63/hour for living wages with limited exceptions**.[6]
2. **Fringe:** the cost of employee benefits beyond salary, such as health insurance. Please provide an explanation for how your fringe is calculated.
3. **Consultants or subcontractors:** If including, describe each subcontractor and include in the description what their roles are/relevant milestones they will work on.
4. **Travel:** include if you will incur expenses for local travel and what it will be used for.
5. **Materials and Supplies:** Short-term operational goods such as office supplies, materials like lumber, seeds, shopping carts, bags, marketing materials, etc. Note in the description what the items might be and general cost per item.
6. **FFE:** includes equipment or fixtures essential to the project (long-term assets with a useful life of longer than one year). Note in the description what the items might be and general cost per item. Examples include machinery, vehicles, cold storage and refrigeration, etc.
7. **Land, Property, and Building Improvements:** Includes hard construction costs for land or buildings. Expenses related to land, property and building improvements will need to be reviewed by the City for compliance with City regulations.
8. **Indirect Costs:** Includes expenses such as facilities and rent, utilities, administrative salaries, insurance, etc. Please note in description what this includes for your organization.

2. **Budget Narrative**: Please describe briefly how you arrived at the budget figures (such as based on existing expenses, quotes, estimates, or comparable figures) (100 words)

3. **Additional Sources**: Please describe any additional sources of funding you may have for this project (other funding is not required) (100 words)

4. **Sustainability**: How will your project be sustainable beyond the grant period? What other resources would you need to sustain this project and how would you go about getting those? (100 words)

[6] https://www.phila.gov/ExecutiveOrders/Executive%20Orders/EO%203-14.pdf