

GRANTS 101



A RESOURCE SHEET FROM A WEBINAR TO PREPARE BUSINESSES FOR OBTAINING FUNDING

The Great Lakes Midwest Regional Food Business Center will distribute over \$10 million in Business Builder Grants and assistance to eligible food and farm business owners in Illinois, Indiana, Michigan, and Wisconsin. This resource sheet is designed to assist entrepreneurs in preparing to apply for grant funding from various sources, including forthcoming Business Builder Grant Program. This resource follows a webinar hosted on August 22, 2024 that outlined the basic steps to applying for grants. [Find the webinar recording here.](#)

STEPS TO APPLYING FOR A GRANT

STEP 1

BE PREPARED

- Research potential grants
- Review the guidelines to understand the requirements
- Stick to a timeline
- Ask the funder questions if needed

STEP 2

BUILD A STRONG APPLICATION

- Tell a compelling story in the narrative
- Be sure your budget matches your narrative
- Obtain strong letters of support
- Gather other necessary documentation

STEP 3

SUBMIT EARLY

- Follow all instructions
- Review proposal
- Access the application early
- Ask others to review your application

STEP 4

WAIT FOR THE ANNOUNCEMENT

- Be patient
- Respond quickly to requests from funders
- Provide necessary paperwork
- Look for communication

STEP 5

ACCEPT THE AWARD

- Complete all paperwork
- Look for communication
- Share your story!
- Celebrate!

GENERAL GRANT WRITING RESOURCES

1. [More Than Grant Writers Cohort](#)
2. [New Entry Sustainable Farming Project](#)
3. [Grant Writing Tips from New Entry Sustainable Farming Project video \(recording\)](#)
4. [Grant Writing Strategies from the North Central SARE Program \(recording\)](#)
5. [Michael Fields Agricultural Institute](#)

WHERE TO LOOK FOR GRANT FUNDING SUPPORT

1. ***YOUR STATE DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE***

- [Illinois Department of Agriculture](#)
- [Indiana State Department of Agriculture](#)
- [Michigan Department of Agriculture and Rural Development](#)
- [State of Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection](#)

2. ***UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE - FUNDING TRACKER***

- [Agricultural Marketing Services](#)
- [National Institute of Food and Agriculture](#)
- [Natural Resources and Conservation Services](#)
- [Rural Development](#)
- [Sustainable Agriculture Research and Education](#) coordinators are available in each state.

3. ***MSU CENTER FOR REGIONAL FOOD SYSTEMS FUNDING SOURCES FOR FOOD RELATED BUSINESSES***

4. ***FARMERS.GOV FOR USDA GRANTS, LOANS, ETC.***

5. ***LAKE MICHIGAN SCHOOL FOOD SYSTEM INNOVATION HUB – GRANT FUNDING AVAILABLE FOR FARMS AND PARTNERS THROUGH 2028.***

6. ***THE PARTNER ORGANIZATIONS ENGAGED IN THE GREAT LAKES MIDWEST REGIONAL FOOD BUSINESS CENTER FOR BUSINESSES LOCATED IN IL, IN, MI, OR WI.***

KEY TAKEAWAYS

Research potential grants

Understand the requirements

Develop a strong project plan

Gather necessary documentation

Engage stakeholders

Draft and review proposal

Submit proposal



BUSINESS BUILDER GRANTS –

How can my business get ready for the application?

- Watch for updates from [Great Lakes Midwest Regional Food Business Center](#) or your [Regional Food Business Center](#).
- Connect with your [state or regional network](#) coordinator.
- Review your incorporation status and business plan.
- Consider your business values and how you would articulate them through your business story.
- Consider these questions:
 - Is your business entity registered with your state regulatory agency?
 - Do you have an Employer Identification Number (EIN)?
 - Do you have a Unique Entity Identifier (UEI) from [Sam.gov](#)?

Follow the Great Lakes Midwest Regional Food Business Center and its partners for updates.

ABOUT THE GREAT LAKES MIDWEST REGIONAL FOOD BUSINESS CENTER

The Great Lakes Midwest Regional Food Business Center is dedicated to offering coordination, technical assistance, and capacity building opportunities for small- to mid-sized historically marginalized food and farm business entrepreneurs in support of a more resilient, diverse, and competitive food system.

Michigan State University Center for Regional Food Systems (MI) coordinates the [Great Lakes Midwest Regional Food Business Center](#) that is comprised of network coordinators – [Chicago Food Policy Action Council](#) (IL), [Northwest Indiana Food Council](#) (IN), [Food Finance Institute of the University of Wisconsin System](#) (WI), and the [Menominee Indian Tribe of Wisconsin Department of Agriculture and Food Systems](#) – who seek to take a transformational, rather than transactional, approach. Learn more at [glm-rfbc.msu.edu](#) or contact glm-rfbc@msu.edu
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