

Food System Fellowship Process: Eligibility, Application, Selection, Expectations

Introduction

Through the work of the [2018 Hunger Innovation Fellow](#), the Novak Family Foundation and the Community Foundation of Louisville engaged Louisville's food system leaders to better understand our local food system and raise awareness of food insecurity in Louisville. Louisville's local food system involves all stages of keeping people fed: growing, harvesting, packing, processing, transforming, marketing, consuming and disposing of food.

The Hunger Innovation Fellowship highlighted the commitment of dynamic leaders eager to keep people fed. As a result of this work, food system leaders from across our community identified three opportunities to further strengthen Louisville's food system:

- 1. Coalition building** – Multiple institutions within the local food system combine various forms of capital (i.e. financial, intellectual, social, and human) to promote System, infrastructure, and policy changes to keep people fed.
- 2. Cross-sector innovation** – Development of pioneering ideas which require effective partnerships between nonprofit, private, public and/or other entities for their realization.
- 3. Data collection and sharing** – Identifying and implementing best practices for a standard system of assessment and evaluation of program effectiveness across the local food system.

The goal of the 2020 Food System Fellowship is to fund learning experiences that advance one or more of these opportunities to strengthen both the organization and the local food system.

What We Hope Will Happen

1. Infuse the local food system with knowledge acquired from outside of Louisville.
2. Encourage spontaneous and continuous gathering and dissemination of food System information among all levels of leadership and staff.
3. Encourage cross-sector communication leading to improved client service and operational efficiencies.

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4. Cultivation of organizational leadership and relationships resulting in policy and System level advocacy.

Food System Investments & Timeline

Funding will be awarded in two stages.

Stage 1: \$10,000 each to four organizations who propose classroom, conference, or site-based opportunities to gather information or identify actions to be used within their organization to advance coalition building, cross-sector innovation and/or data collection (proposals can focus on one or any combination of these areas).

Organizations should think about what they need to know in the three identified areas and propose steps for getting that information in a way that is useful to their organization. Proposals can be influenced by national, regional, and local promising practices identified in the [Hunger Innovation Fellowship Promising Practices](#).

Stage 2: \$9,000 to each Stage 1 organization to promote continuous learning by covering additional expenditures necessary to implement a strategy for communicating, applying, and expanding the obtained knowledge from Stage 1 throughout their organization and/or other food system organizations. Expenditures may include compensation for staff training time, consultants, or training materials. In addition, each organization will present what they learned to a convening of local food leaders and discuss possible implications for the local food system.

Investment:

Stage 1: Learning Experience Grants (4 - \$10,000)	\$40,000
Stage 2: Expanded Learning Implementation Grants (4 - \$9,000)	\$36,000

Timeline:

Jan 2020: Application Window – Present learning experiences for consideration

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Mar – Apr 2020: Participatory Selection Process – Applicants and foundation representatives review and score proposals.

May 2020: Announce Fellows – Fellows present proposals to food leaders & community

Jun 2020 – Aug 2021: Participate in learning experience

Jul 2021 – May 2022: Implement strategy for Stage 2 learning

Eligibility

1. 501c3 nonprofit organization, or charitable project fiscally sponsored by a 501c3 nonprofit organization in good standing.
2. Currently working with communities and residents of Metro Louisville or other Kentucky counties.
3. The organization must be actively involved in some stage of keeping people fed: growing, harvesting, packing, processing, transforming, marketing, consuming and disposing of food.
4. Financial awards can only be made to a 501c3 organization; however, organizations can partner with non 501c3 organizations to execute their proposals.

Preferred Aspects of Proposal

Proposals must:

1. Demonstrate how the organization will gather information or identify actions to be used by the organization to advance (or has great potential to significantly advance) the local food system, which includes all stages of keeping people fed: growing, harvesting, packing, processing, transforming, marketing, consuming and disposing of food.
2. Demonstrate the organization's critical thinking about the underlying issues or System that expand the organization's ability to keep people fed.
3. Demonstrates the organization's understanding of its operational strengths and gaps related to Coalition Building, Cross-sector Innovation, *and/or* Data Sharing and Collection.
4. Identifies partnerships, collaborations, and/or resources to enhance the organization's strengths while narrowing gaps.

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5. List two key questions the organization needs to answer to further Coalition Building, Cross-Sector Innovation *and/or* Data Sharing and Innovation within the organization.
6. Explain how the proposed use of funds fulfills a unique need with actionable information that both *strengthens the organization* and has *broad impact across the local food system* to advance Coalition Building, Cross-sector Innovation, *and/or* Data Sharing and Collection.
7. Describe how two or more members of the organization will be engaged in the learning process while insuring the proposal can be implemented regardless of leadership and/or staff changes.
8. Identify a team leader who will involve, delegate, and communicate with other organizational members throughout the learning experience. The organization will determine the appropriate staff person(s) to participate in the learning experience.
9. Explains how the team leader will share knowledge across all levels of organizational leadership and staff.
10. Present a strategy for sharing and/or applying knowledge through multiple stages of the local food system.

Application Questions

1. Organization demographic information (name, address, annual operating budget, service ZIP codes, primary role in food system, contact person, contact information)
2. **Know your Organization:** Describe the underlying issues or System that expand your organization's ability to keep people fed. How do these relate to coalition building, cross-sector innovation, and/or data sharing and collection?
3. **Identify the Questions:** What are 2 key questions regarding coalition building, cross-sector innovation and/or data sharing and collection that the learning experience will help to answer? How will finding the answers to each of these questions specifically impact your organization?
4. **Understand the Impact:** How will answering these questions help others involved in some or all of the various stages of the local food system (growing, harvesting, packing, processing, transforming, marketing, consuming and disposing of food)?
5. **Describe the Plan:** How do you plan to use the \$10,000 learning experience funding to impact what you described above?

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6. **List the Expenses:** Provide a simple line item budget listing your proposed expenses.

Participatory Selection Process

The selection process is designed to ensure people most familiar with the local food system have a significant voice in selecting the four 2020 Food System Fellows.

1. One representative from each submitting organization, Novak Family Foundation and Community Foundation of Louisville will review, score and comment on all applications in both categories. All scores will be weighted equally.
2. An online digital platform will be used to anonymously review, score and comment on all applications. Applicants will not review their own submission or organizations with which they identify a conflict of interest.
3. Submitting organizations may choose not to review applications. If a submitting organization chooses not to review, there will be no negative consequences for that organization's individual application. However, the organization will give up the opportunity to help select the final fellowship recipients.
4. Applications will be submitted via the Community Foundation of Louisville online application website.
5. Two categories of fellowships will be awarded: Small & medium organizations (less than \$500,000 annual budget) and large organizations (greater than \$500,000 annual budget).
6. Two awards will be made in each category.
7. At least two awards will be made to organizations currently working with communities and residents of Jefferson County, Kentucky. Scores and comments will be aggregated to maintain the reviewer's anonymity.
8. All scores (applicants and foundation representatives) will be averaged. Two organizations with the highest scores in each category will receive funding.
9. In the event of duplicate scores, all reviewers will be invited to read reviewers' comments and rescore the top scoring applicants to determine the most beneficial proposal for the local food system.
10. All applicants will agree to abide by a *Confidentiality* and *No Use of "Insider" Information* statement.
11. All applicants will be asked to complete a *Conflict of Interest* statement for each reviewed application.

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Selection Rubric

Reviewers will use responses to the application questions to score three expectations with a score of 5 to 0 as described in the scoring rubric. Reviewers will be requested to provide comments explaining their scores.

Expectations

<i>Expectation 1: Does the organization’s proposal provide access to specific information and immediate actions that will be beneficial to the organization and multiple members of our local food system?</i>	
Applicant Response	Ask Yourself
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify the Questions • Understand the Impact • Describe the Plan 	Is this timely and relevant information? Can the organization act on the information immediately? Am I excited by the possibility of learning this information? Do significant policy changes, government intervention, or financial investments need to be made before action can be taken? Has this been tried before?

<i>Expectation 2: Does the organization’s proposal enable various levels of leadership and staff to apply knowledge and/or actions acquired through the proposal to impact coalition building, cross-sector innovation, and/or data sharing and collection?</i>	
Applicant Response	Ask Yourself
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Know your Organization • Identify the Questions • Describe the Plan 	Who within an organization will benefit from the ideas and actions? Does success depend on a team approach? Does the organization’s culture support the proposal? Can the proposal succeed even if organizational leadership changes?

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Expectation 3: Does the organization know its strengths and gaps well enough to use the proposal to improve their ability to work with others within our local food system to address issues regarding coalition building, cross-sector innovation, and/or data collection and sharing?

Applicant Response	Ask Yourself
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Know your Organization • Describe the Plan • Understand the Impact 	<p>Does the proposal build on the organization's strengths?</p> <p>How does the proposal help fill organizational gaps?</p> <p>Do you agree that the identified partners, collaborators or others from our local food system can benefit from the proposal?</p>

Scoring Rubric

Category	Score	Standards
Exceeds Expectation	5 or 4	Provides idea(s) that are unique, experimental and unconventional within the food system. The proposal provides overwhelming evidence of organizational willingness and ability to act on idea(s). Idea(s) have the potential to address two or more of the guiding opportunities for growth (Coalition building, Cross-sector innovation, Data collection and sharing)
Meets Expectation	3 or 2	Provides idea(s) proven to successfully elevate System or policies in other national or regional food System. The proposal provides acceptable evidence of organizational willingness and ability to act on idea(s). Idea(s) have the potential to address one or two of the guiding opportunities for growth (Coalition building, Cross-sector innovation, Data collection and sharing).
Inadequately Meets Expectation	1 or 0	Provides idea(s) that are standard, traditional, and conventional within national, regional and/or local food System. The proposal provides insufficient evidence to determine organizational willingness and ability to act on idea(s). Idea(s) have the potential to address one or none of the guiding opportunities for growth (Coalition building, Cross sector innovation, Data collection and sharing).

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Requirements for Selected Fellows

Selected Fellows are required to participate in a food system learning community by:

1. Participating in two in-person Food System Fellowship network gatherings to foster peer learning opportunities and collaboration. Fellows will help determine dates and location for these gatherings.
2. Preparing a grant report that will be shared on www.hungerinnovationfellowship.org and throughout the local food system.
3. Facilitating the sharing of data and feedback resulting from the grant.
4. Fellows will collectively help to determine the best way to prepare the grant report and facilitate the sharing of data and feedback.

Proposed Post Learning Experience Questionnaire

1. What answers did you find for each of your initial questions?
2. What new questions were raised after your learning experience?
3. What are three ways you plan to share and/or use this knowledge with other members of your organization?
4. What are some ways you can continue learning and building on this experience with others in the local food system?
5. How do you plan to use the \$9,000 to implement a strategy for communicating, applying and expanding the obtained knowledge from your learning experience?

Where to Apply

1. Visit HungerInnovationFellowship.org and click on the application link.
2. Create a new account or login to current account.
3. Look for the Food System Fellowship application.