



## **FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS – 2025 Garden Grant Application**

Here are some FAQs about our Garden Grant program. We know that each garden is unique, so if this information does not answer your question, please email us at [grants@wholekidsfoundation.org](mailto:grants@wholekidsfoundation.org).

We will also hold informational webinars about the grant, application, and application process. Webinar dates, times, and signup links are included below and can also be found on our website.

### **Garden Grant Overview Webinar:**

Thursday, February 6, 2025 @ 9AM PST/11AM CST/12PM EST: [Register here](#)

### **Garden Grant Q&A Webinar:**

Thursday, February 20, 2025 @ 1PM PST/3PM CST/4PM EST: [Register here](#)

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### **IMPORTANT GRANT DATES**

- **Application Open:** February 5<sup>th</sup>, 2025
- **Application Close:** March 19<sup>th</sup>, 2025 @ 11:59PM CST
- **Notifications sent to all applicants:** August 1st, 2025

### **General Garden Grant FAQ's**

#### **Who can apply for a Garden Grant?**

- Public schools and public charter schools in the United States and Canada
- Private schools and private charter schools with 501(c)(3) non-profit status (US) or charity non-profit status (Canada)
- Tribally controlled and Bureau of Indian Education schools
- School districts supporting a garden at a public or non-profit private school
- 501(c)(3) non-profit status (US) or charity non-profit status (Canada) organizations supporting a garden at a public or non-profit private school
  - Note that this is an update for 2025 Garden Grant Cycle and beyond: we are no longer accepting applications from organizations with a garden that is **not** located at a school. If you are an organization that supports or plans to support a garden located at a school, please apply as the school and act as their fiscal sponsor.

#### **What types of applicants does your organization prioritize when awarding grants?**

We prioritize awarding grants to applicants who face barriers in accessing healthy food and nutrition education resources and opportunities, including situations of acute crisis. This focus allows us to direct our support to individuals and communities with the greatest need, helping to address food insecurity and improve nutritional outcomes where it's most critical. We understand that these circumstances can be challenging to quantify, so we trust applicants to answer this question as they see best fit, based on their unique situations and experiences.

**If my school received a Garden Grant in past years, are we able to apply again this year?**

We accept applications on behalf of entities who have previously received a Garden Grant from Whole Kids with a few criteria: 1) the previous grant must not have been received in the most recent grant cycle, 2) the progress report on the previous grant must be completed, and 3) at this time, we are limiting grants to two per recipient. That is, a recipient entity can only receive a total of two WK Garden Grants.

**Can preschool or early education schools or organizations apply for Garden Grants?**

While we believe preschool or early education (age 5 and younger) garden projects are incredibly worthwhile, the focus of our Garden Grant Program is on programs that support any grades Kindergarten through 12th grade or primary and secondary. Therefore, we are not accepting applications from programs that are solely early education. If your school includes both early education and older grades, then you are eligible to apply.

**If my garden has received funds or a grant from another organization or company, are we eligible to apply for this grant?**

Absolutely! We love to support gardens that will continue to be sustainable after our contributions. We highly encourage outside support for your garden. In fact, please share this with us in your application.

**Are there any restrictions as to how the \$3,500 funds can be used?**

If awarded, the \$3,500 grant funds may only be used to support the educational edible garden at the applying school. Funds can be used toward fees to attend a garden training, but this must not exceed 30% (or \$1,050) of the total grant funds. Funds may not be used for real estate, travel costs, or field trips.

**My school is located outside of the US or Canada. Can we apply?**

Applicants must be in the US (including territories) or Canada to be eligible to apply for the Garden Grant. Schools and garden projects based in other countries are not eligible at this time.

**What is a Community Partner?**

Gardens that are rooted in the community and supported in many different ways are the most successful. As a result, each grant applicant is required to partner with an organization or business from the community that will help to bring long-term sustainability to the initiative—a “community partner.”

A community partner can be any organization that intends to support the garden for years to come – some examples of a community partner organization include a local non-profit, a local farm, a hardware or garden store, a garden club, or a restaurant.

There is no particular arrangement you and your community partner must have. They can support the garden in any way, including volunteer support, in kind donations, free garden consultations, or financial support. This part is up to you!

If the grant applicant is a non-profit organization that will be working with a school, then the non-profit applicant may also serve as garden project’s community partner. *Please note: the school’s PTO/PTA*

cannot serve as the community partner, as this does not accomplish the goal of an outside organization supporting the garden.

**Do we need to be located within a certain radius of a Whole Foods Market to apply?**

No, you do not need to be located in a community with a Whole Foods Market in order to apply for a Garden Grant. It is not an eligibility requirement, and it will not be a determinant in the grant selection process.

**What if I am experiencing technical difficulties, such as information not saving or questions not loading?**

First, please make sure you are using the most up to date version of your browser and computer operating system possible. Clear your cookies and cache on your browser and restart the browser. If this does not solve it, please email us at [grants@wholekidsfoundation.org](mailto:grants@wholekidsfoundation.org) and detail what you are experiencing as clearly as possible, including screenshots.

**How will I know if my application has been submitted?**

Once you submit your application, you will receive an automatic email confirming your submission. In addition, on the homepage of your grant portal, you will no longer be able to edit your application.

**Garden Grant - School Applicant FAQ's**

**Can home schools apply for School Garden Grants?**

For a home school to apply for and be eligible for a Garden Grant, the home school would need to have 501(c)(3) non-profit (US) or registered charity (Canada) status.

Alternatively, if your home school is accredited, you can locate a non-profit to apply on your behalf. Garden Grants will not be made to individuals, families, and community groups that do not meet these requirements.

**If my organization applied on behalf of multiple schools last year and one school received a grant, but the others did not, are we able to apply for those other schools?**

Yes – you can apply for the other schools who did not receive a school garden grant last year. Please be sure to register and apply as the individual school (rather than as your organization).

**If our school does not offer free or reduced-price lunches, will we still be considered for a grant?**

Yes – your application will still be considered even if your school does not offer free or reduced-price lunches. Priority for grants will be given to projects connected with schools in limited - resource communities, so lack of a free or reduced-price lunch program may impact the overall competitiveness of your application.

***(Applicants in Canada) What is a Charity number?***

Most school districts and charity non-profit organizations in Canada have a charity number with a 9-digit bin number and a 4-digit RR number. You can find your charity number at the Canada Revenue Agency website [here \(https://apps.cra-arc.gc.ca/ebci/hacc/srch/pub/dsplyBscSrch?request\\_locale=en\)](https://apps.cra-arc.gc.ca/ebci/hacc/srch/pub/dsplyBscSrch?request_locale=en).

If your school or organization does not have a charity number, please contact us at [grants@wholekidsfoundation.org](mailto:grants@wholekidsfoundation.org) to understand alternatives.

***(Applicants in the US) Should I be using an NCES number, EIN, or both when applying for a Garden Grant?***

If you are a US public school, you will include your school's NCES number.

If you are a US private school and have non-profit 501(c)(3) status, you will include your NCES number and EIN.

If you are an organization applying for a grant to support a garden at a school location, you will register and apply as the school and use the information as outlined above.

***(Applicants in the US) What is an EIN?***

An EIN is an employer identification number and is used for tax identification purposes. The EIN is associated with and listed on a non-profit's 501(c)(3) tax exempt documentation. Non-profit organizations and U.S. private schools will need to provide it.

***(Applicants in the US) What is an IRS 501(c)(3) determination letter?***

An IRS 501(c)(3) determination letter is a letter from the IRS affirming a nonprofit's tax-exempt status under Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code. With very few exceptions, all nonprofits that are tax-exempt under Section 501(c)(3) have received a determination letter at some point in time, and all nonprofit grant applicants must provide a copy of that letter. To find out whether your nonprofit is tax-exempt under Section 501(c)(3), or to order a new letter affirming your nonprofit's tax-exempt status, you may contact the IRS Exempt Organizations Division. More information may be found [here](https://www.irs.gov/charities-non-profits/charitable-organizations) (<https://www.irs.gov/charities-non-profits/charitable-organizations>).

**Garden Grant - Non-Profit Applicant FAQs**

**We are a non-profit organization and would like to build a garden space that will not be located on the grounds of a school. Can we apply?**

As of the 2025 Garden Grant cycle, we are no longer accepting applications for garden grants that are not located on school grounds. We have made this change to refocus our efforts to better serve our core demographic.

**We are a non-profit organization and would like to apply to a grant to support a garden space that is/will be located on the grounds of a school with whom we work, can we apply?**

Yes! If you are applying to support a garden on the grounds of a school you work with, you will apply as that school. The location of the garden must match the applying entity. Your non-profit can, but does not have to, be included as the Fiscal Sponsor. The Fiscal Sponsor will sign the grant agreement and be issued the grant funds. You can decide who actually fills out the application.

**What types of non-profit organizations can apply for a Garden Grant?**

501(c)(3) non-profit (US) and registered charity organizations (Canada) that work with children in any grades K-12 on school grounds and grow food in their garden can apply. Examples include, but are not limited to:

- Boys and Girls Clubs located at schools
- After-school programs on school premises
- School Garden Support Organizations

*All must be within the United States or Canada.*

**If my organization has multiple educational gardens at multiple sites, can I apply on behalf of multiple garden locations this year?**

Yes – if your organization has educational gardens at multiple schools, you can treat each school as a separate applicant and can apply on behalf of each school.

***(Applicants in the US) What is an EIN?***

An EIN is an employer identification number and is used for tax identification purposes. The EIN is associated with and listed on a non-profit's 501(c)(3) tax exempt documentation. This information is required to verify eligibility. Non-profit organizations can look up their EIN# on

<https://apps.irs.gov/app/eos/>

***(Applicants in the US) What is an IRS 501(c)(3) determination letter?***

An IRS 501(c)(3) determination letter is a letter from the IRS affirming a nonprofit's tax-exempt status under Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code. With very few exceptions, all nonprofits that are tax-exempt under Section 501(c)(3) have received a determination letter at some point in time. To find out whether your nonprofit is tax-exempt under Section 501(c)(3), or to order a new letter affirming your nonprofit's tax- exempt status, you may contact the IRS Exempt Organizations Division:

<https://www.irs.gov/charities-non-profits/contact-irs-exempt-organizations>.