**Official Questions and Answers for the FY23 Food Waste Innovation Grants**

Last updated November 17, 2022.

1. If a business has 4 part-time employees, do these employees count toward the Full Time Equivalent (FTE) employee limit?

To count FTEs, add up part-time employee hours: two 20-hour-a-week employees is equivalent to one FTE. One 10-hour-a-week employee is equivalent to 0.25 FTE.

1. We currently partner with local food businesses in DC to rescue their excess food, and some of the businesses that we already rescue food from meet the eligibility requirements for this grant. Are we able to apply for funding to support the work that we are already doing to rescue excess food or are you looking only for new projects?

The RFA does not require projects to be new. However, on [page 9](https://dslbd.dc.gov/sites/default/files/dc/sites/dslbd/page_content/attachments/Food%20Waste%20Innovation%20Grant%20RFA%2010-26%5B37%5D_0.pdf), you'll see the criteria for innovation and additionality, 20% of the grant scoring. Please review those criteria, along with the other criteria that will be evaluated. The RFA mentions that the grant asks, “Tell us what makes this project innovative: how does it add on or build from what is already happening in the business, community, and/or District as a whole. (20 points, 20%) § 1. How does this project build on or add to what is already happening in your business, in terms of food waste reductions and community impact? (2500 characters) § 2. How does this project push your sector and the District further in food waste reduction? How is this project new for the District? Feel free to include how you are applying lessons from other cities or sectors to your own or to DC. (2500 characters)”

1. What do nonprofits need to submit for their own eligibility and to demonstrate eligibility of the food businesses working with them?

Nonprofits should also have the same essentials as businesses as listed in the RFA: this includes an EIN, Clean Hands, a DC license (as a nonprofit or charitable solicitation), a W9, and a commitment to liability insurance. Nonprofits also should upload their 501c3 status letter and 3 years of their past taxes (or as many years as they’ve been in operation).

The application also includes the [template for letters of support](https://dcgovict-my.sharepoint.com/:w:/g/personal/inno_ed_dc_gov/EQTWOHpR8uVLt4ZjfT2aIegBhwGYzF88OefqBXhK6ZIglA?e=YZdjSe), linked here. It includes the business contact details, their EIN number, their DC Business License Number, 3 attestations, the roles and responsibilities of the business, and a copy of their Clean Hands Certificate.

1. If a business has multiple locations, each location with a unique business license, and each licensed location has <25 FTEs, can each location individually apply?

The FTE requirement is per business. If each business location has 25 or fewer FTEs working at that location and under that business license, that business would be eligible. Two or more eligible businesses can apply together in a collaborative application.

1. Are only brick & mortar food businesses eligible?

Any food system business that is producing, processing, or serving food is eligible: this includes mobile food businesses like food trucks, food makers operating in a shared kitchen, caterers, or food processors selling in distributed locations or exclusively delivery.

1. Can non-food businesses or other organizations submit letters of support?

Absolutely: while each collaborative application requires two or more food businesses that meet all eligibility criteria, an application can include letters of support from other types of organizations – community groups, larger food businesses, non-food businesses, etc.

1. We have two businesses adjacent to each other, so it would make a lot of sense to do a collaborative application. What's the best way to do that?

Regardless of ownership, any two or more businesses can submit a collaborative application together. One business should submit the application in ZoomGrants, while any additional business should submit a letter of support. The application also includes the [template for letters of support](https://dcgovict-my.sharepoint.com/:w:/g/personal/inno_ed_dc_gov/EQTWOHpR8uVLt4ZjfT2aIegBhwGYzF88OefqBXhK6ZIglA?e=YZdjSe), linked here. It includes the business contact details, their EIN number, their DC Business License Number, 3 attestations, the roles and responsibilities of the business, and a copy of their Clean Hands Certificate.

1. Does DSLBD’s trash compactor program (<https://dslbd.dc.gov/compactor>) still exist and is there funding available?

The commercial waste compactor grant has transitioned into the Food Waste Innovation Grant, to better align with the District’s Sustainability Plan (Sustainable DC 2.0) and the Zero Waste Omnibus Act. The Food Waste Innovation Grant does have funding available and is open until December 22, 2022 at 2 pm.

The Food Waste Innovation Grants can cover trash compactors, as well as many other interventions to address food waste. As you’ll see at https://dslbd.dc.gov/foodwastegrant and in the RFA (at the bottom of that page), we strongly recommend businesses or corridors to think through the food waste hierarchy — reducing food loss, diverting edible food to folks in need, and composting food scraps — in addition to finding ways to manage waste on site that minimize rodents.

1. Do businesses have to have been open for 2 years? How can new businesses document the age of their business?

There is no minimum time period for businesses or nonprofits to be operating in order to apply. Businesses of any age do need to submit all eligibility documentation listed in the RFA. This includes an active business license, Clean Hands Certificate, and W9, as well as attestations. Nonprofits do need to have additional documentation required from past years of operation. They need to submit their own eligibility documentation and either 2 years of taxes or as many tax years as they have been in operation.

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