



THE UNIVERSITY OF ARIZONA

Cooperative Extension

Urban & Small Agriculture Production

The **Service Eligibility Partners (SEP) grant** program is aimed to help local growers participate in the “Service Incubator” series build the capacity needed in their business plans, and operations to become eligible for USDA-FSA and NRCS services and programs.

Funding and Duration:

Total funding available for 2024 is \$20,000 (to be repeated in 2025, 2026 and 2027 for a total funding of \$80,000).

2-4 awards of \$5,000-\$10,000 will be made in year one of this program.

8-16 awards will be made over the four years of the program.

Funds will be advanced to recipients but will require budget reporting with documentation of funds spent, with penalties for any misuse of funds.

Commitment:

- All work for this grant must be completed within 12 months after executing the official Grant Agreement with the The University of Arizona Urban Agriculture Production, Small-Scale, and Beginning Farmer Program. Grant recipients must agree to the terms required by the federal government and sign a Grant Agreement.
- All businesses must be registered with Arizona Department of Revenue prior to applying. See application information [here](#).
- Willingness to participate in the Service Incubator Series in Maricopa County.

Deadline:

Completed applications and proposals are due no later than **July 15th, 5pm 2024**.

Eligibility Requirements:

- Actively farming/ranching, or starting an operation. Goods are being produced for distribution, not for personal consumption.
- Farm/ranch in Maricopa County limits
- Have no more than 5 employees
- Operation is under 50 acres in size or under \$25,000 in annual revenue.

- Have not received prior FSA or NRCS funding in the past 10 years.
- Have an initial business plan draft.
- Priority will be given to [Historically Underserved Producers](#) by USDA definition.

Desired Projects include:

- Professional development in operating an agricultural business
- Enhancing financial literacy for FSA and NRCS programs
- Implementing or enhancing record keeping on operation
- Incorporation of an operation
- Translation services
- And/or other needs producers identify and justify to increase their eligibility for FSA and NRCS programs and services.

Criteria:

Proposals will be evaluated through the following:

- Project plan
- Project plan must include one or more of the desired project characteristics detailed in the previous section.
- Project plan must clearly demonstrate how project works toward eligibility in NRCS and FSA programming
- Project plan must outline how project will be completed within 12 months.
- Project Budget
- Budget is clear and presented as requested.
- Refer to below project budget details under Proposal Instructions section.
- Qualifications and experience of applicant(s)
- Please outline qualifications and prior experiences of each food system entity and team members.
- Please outline any prior participation in UArizona Urban Agriculture Production, Small-Scale, and Beginning Farmer events.

Proposal Instructions:

Grant applicants must attach a project proposal as part of this application process.

At a minimum, applicant proposals should include:

- Project plan
- Project summary
- Project timeline

- Eligible Costs and Project budget:
 - Equipment
 - Supplies
 - Contractual Services
 - Consultant (professional services)
 - Training and Education
 - Administrative costs
 - Miscellaneous costs
 - Other costs
- Qualifications and experience of applicant(s)
- Outline prior experience of individual(s).
- Proposals cannot exceed three pages excluding attachments

Apply now via the QR Code or link below:

<https://forms.gle/KmTfSkDiwnAPJaeY6>

