

# Participatory Grantmaking

*Flexible funds for creating connections within Minnesota's food system*

**Total funds available: \$25,000**

**PRIMARY GOAL:** To provide communities with flexibility and support to creatively build or strengthen connections across difference (race, geography, sector, etc) to advance equitable access to healthy food for all Minnesota residents.

**WHY PARTICIPATORY GRANTMAKING?** Participatory grantmaking is a person-centered approach to allocating grant funds that integrates capacity, self determination and equitable access to resources. Applicants are the grantmakers and will make the final decision about how funds are allocated. Moving control of grant decisions from funders to communities greatly increases trust, accountability, reciprocity and relationships.

**ASSUMPTIONS:** The way that money flows through the food system has a huge impact on landscapes and communities, often reinforcing existing power structures and systems of oppression. Without disrupting these structures, disparities will continue to be perpetuated. If diverse leaders in the food system form authentic, trusting relationships, then they will find creative, innovative, and unpredictable ways to harness their collective assets for greater social benefit.

As engagement leads for the Minnesota Food Charter Network, we have learned that food systems leaders sometimes lack the resources and relationships needed to create connections across silos, whether rooted in race, geography, or perspective. We have also learned that food systems leaders are highly resourceful and innovative in using small amounts of flexible funding.

## **FUND PARAMETERS:**

- Projects include a plan for improving equitable access to healthy food.
- Projects demonstrate significant leadership by people of color throughout all phases.
- Projects build connections across different communities or organizations.
- Projects bridge differences such as race, geography, perspective, etc.
- Project lead commits to 3-4 online meetings to share learning and progress.
- Project budgets are between \$500 and \$5,000. Total funds available: \$25,000.
- Projects will be completed (or close to completion) by December 2019.

**ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES:**

Project Lead	MFCN Engagement Leads	Funders
-Review all proposals submitted -Attend online Participatory Grantmaking process and make decisions on how funding gets allocated -Share key learnings and impact	-Develop transparent, inclusive processes and meetings -Design and facilitate participatory grantmaking -Distribute funds -Support learning cohort -Prepare final report	-Support the democratic principles and non-hierarchical processes of participatory grantmaking -Work with communities as agents of change rather than beneficiaries of aid

**PROPOSAL.** In less than one page or in a short video (max of 5 min), include:

1. Purpose: How does the proposal align with the fund parameters? How does the proposal create new connections? How does the proposal support the Minnesota Food Charter?)
2. Activities: What are your planned activities and when do you plan to complete them?
3. Success: What does success look like in the short term and long term? Will the proposal build new partnerships across boundaries? Will the proposal support leadership of black, indigenous, and people of color?
4. Budget and justification: identify a fiscal host and how funds will be spent

**TIMELINE:**

- July-August: Gather feedback on this draft via conversation, survey and online meeting
- September: Launch application process. Deadline to submit proposal October 1.
- November: Allocate project funding using a participatory grantmaking process.
- 2019: Three to four online meetings that weave people and projects together. (Note: Meetings welcome to all people working to advance equitable access to healthy food.)

**POSSIBLE ACTIVITIES:** Field trips, network support, program needs, professional development, events etc.all are fair game. Need inspiration? Here are a couple examples. Please note that these examples are not the only activities that qualify. We encourage you to be creative and think big.

- [From Divide to Dividends: A Tour of Minnesota's Shared Connections](#)
- [The Future of Food, Health, and the Economy: What Can We Bring to the Table?](#)
- [Critical Conversations on Race in the Food Systems](#)
- [Food Network Gathering in Northwest Minnesota](#)

**OTHER USEFUL RESOURCES:**

- Learn more about participatory grantmaking: [4 minute video](#); [Grantcraft](#)
- Resources to support network health are available on the [Minnesota Food Charter](#) website.
- Learn more about how Extension has supported [food networks](#)

**QUESTIONS:** Please contact MFCN Engagement Leads - Stephanie Heim (507-252-6520, heim0106@umn.edu), Jamie Bain (612-239-5571, jbain@umn.edu) or Noelle Harden 218-280-5253, harde073@umn.edu

**ACKNOWLEDGMENT:** We'd like to thank the Leadership Learning Community for allowing us to use and adapt elements of their Action Learning Seed Fund Application for this proposal.