



What is the purpose of this funding program?

The purpose is to provide partial funding assistance to local Master Gardener programs in order to start or expand important community projects. Past recipients included educational gardens and programs about pollinators and native plants, MG Training at Decatur Correctional Center, The Mainstay Therapeutic Farm Garden, Adventures in Composting for children, Maywood Youth Mentoring Garden, therapeutic gardens for veterans, and Junior MG programs.

What is new for 2018?

The 2018 Mini-Grant program brings an exciting new collaboration to impact hunger in Illinois. A new category “4-H and MG Food Gardens” is available through Illinois 4-H Foundation’s *4-H Feeding and Growing our Communities*. The additional funding forges a connection between Master Gardeners and youth to work together to combat hunger locally by expanding healthy food access. Youth involved in gardens are not required to be 4-H members. Refer to the Pre-application Checklist for the 4-H and MG Food Gardens category. Note: This does not replace the Illinois *4-H Feeding & Growing our Communities* grants available directly through State 4-H.

What can be funded?

These allocations are for gardening/horticulture programs that benefit communities and meet the goals of the University of Illinois Extension Master Gardener program. Projects must have an educational focus. Projects that make multiple contacts with their audiences (rather than single day events) are preferred.

The 2018 application has two categories – 1) General category includes any of the MG projects. MG food donation gardens that do not involve youth are in the general category. 2) 4-H and MG Food Gardens category as outlined in pre-application checklist.

Existing projects or new projects are eligible for funds. Allocations are not intended to fund an entire project. Consider these funds as a starting point and then seek other sources of funding such as community partners or fundraising activities.

Refer to the table at the end of this document for allowed and unallowed expense items.

How much money will be available?

The amount of funds distributed each year depends on the previous year’s MG silent auction receipts and at the discretion of your State MG Advisory Committee. New source of additional funding with Illinois 4-H Foundation pledging up to \$3000 for available funding in 2018 of \$6000. Maximum award is \$1000. **Each county may submit only one application per funding cycle.** [Due to its population, Cook may submit three applications one from each office Cook North Suburb; Cook; Cook South Suburb.]

Who should write the mini-grant proposal?

Project proposals should be a combined effort and written in collaboration with Extension staff (horticulture and youth development if applicable) and Master Gardener volunteers.

How should the application be submitted?

Please type nomination application (minimum font size - 11; minimum margins -.75).

Applications must be submitted electronically as a PDF of no more than five (5) pages – no paper copies will be accepted. Upload completed application to Box sub-folder titled [2018 Mini Grant Applications](#) within the County Unit MG Coordinator Box folder. Coordinators were previously invited to collaborate in this folder. Please contact State MG Coordinator if access is needed. The submission must follow the instructions given.

Project leaders are encouraged to include drawings/and or pictures. The total application should be **no more than 5 pages** and fewer than 10 MB. Applications over the page limit or inconsistent with instructions will not be considered for funding.

Who decides what projects are funded?

Your State Master Gardener Advisory Committee along with the State Master Gardener Coordinator and State 4-H representative make the final decisions. Preferable projects demonstrate strong educational impact.

How will the money be awarded?

Unit offices will be reimbursed for expenses up to the amount of the awarded allocation. Unit offices must provide documentation of expenses incurred. Details on fiscal procedures for the allocations will be sent to those offices who are awarded funds.

What is the expectation for reporting?

Project leaders will be asked to write a summary of the project highlighting goals achieved, evaluation and impact. For food donation projects the number of youth participants and poundage of produce donated will also be required for project summary. Summaries will be used to give ideas to other MG programs and shared with stakeholders.

What is the timeline for the mini-grants?

Applications are due by end of day January 31, 2018. Winners will be announced via email on March 5, 2018. Winners should submit all paperwork and receipts for reimbursement and a brief summary of the project by January 31, 2019.

Questions?

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<u>Allowed Items*</u> No single item to exceed \$500	<u>Unallowed Items*</u>
Educational, exploratory materials i.e. books, magnifying glasses, viewer boxes	Promotion of messages inconsistent with University of Illinois Extension information
Seeds/seedlings/transplants/plants	Rental or purchase of land
Season extension materials; i.e. low tunnel construction	Permanent building structures
Lumber/ supplies for constructing raised beds	Staff salaries or benefits
Small gardening tools and supplies i.e., spades, trowels, stakes, enabling tools	Expenses not described in the approved application
Growing containers such as self-watering containers, Grow Boxes™, Earth Boxes® and fabric grow bags.	Staff/volunteer mileage reimbursement
Items that make a garden or garden program more accessible i.e. modular elevated garden beds to increase accessibility for participants	Honorariums or financial incentives to partners or participants
Fertilizer/compost/mulch	Lobbying
Irrigation supplies/hoses	Child care or transportation services
Compost bins	Utility/water bills
Soil, potting soil	Lawn mowers
Garden fencing/trellising materials	
Garden tags/labels/educational signs	
Harvest equipment/containers/colanders	
Quality scale to weigh produce	
*list subject to changes and additions as review committee deems appropriate	