

Wallace Center at Winrock International

Healthy Urban Food Enterprise Development Center Grant Guidelines

Deadline for Letters of Interest (LOI): March 8, 2010

Wallace Center at Winrock International

Since 1983, the Wallace Center at Winrock International has been a key organization in fostering a more sustainable food and agricultural system in the United States. Wallace Center, a business unit within Winrock International, is a leader in developing market based solutions that link more people and more diverse communities to “good food”—food that is healthy, green, fair, and affordable. The Wallace Center is improving the ability of small- and mid-sized producers to expand their markets; building capacity among nonprofits and for-profits to strengthen market linkages; and increasing access to fresh and healthy foods for historically underserved populations in both urban and rural areas.

Winrock International is a nonprofit organization that works with people in the United States and around the world to empower the disadvantaged, increase economic opportunity, and sustain natural resources. Winrock matches innovative approaches in agriculture, natural resources management, clean energy, and leadership development with the unique needs of its partners. By linking local individuals and communities with new ideas and technology, Winrock is increasing long-term productivity, equity, and responsible resource management to benefit the poor and disadvantaged of the world.

Wallace HUFED Center

The Healthy Urban Food Enterprise Development (HUFED) Center housed at the Wallace Center at Winrock International (here on referred to as “Wallace HUFED Center”) is a new center funded by the U.S. Department of Agriculture’s [National Institute for Food and Agriculture](#) (formerly Cooperative State Research, Education, and Extension Service or CSREES). The project is the outcome of congressional legislation passed in 2008 (Farm Bill Public Law No: 110-246). ***The purpose of the Wallace HUFED Center is to increase access to healthy affordable foods, including locally produced agricultural products, to underserved communities.***

The HUFED Center program was created to respond to the growing need to reorganize, rethink and transform the way food is grown, sourced, distributed, marketed and consumed in the United States, in order to make more healthy affordable food available in low-income areas; to increase market access for small and mid-sized agricultural producers; and to promote positive economic activities generated by attracting healthy food enterprises into underserved communities. The Wallace HUFED Center applies market-based business solutions to the problem of food access by providing technical and financial assistance to enterprising and innovative projects that directly address and resolve food access issues. With the announcement of these Grant Guidelines, the Wallace HUFED Center will launch a competitive,

fair and equitable grant process to support approximately 30 food enterprises and feasibility studies over the next 3 years.

This project was created to address a key problem faced by historically excluded and/or traditionally underserved communities. These communities more often than not lack access to healthy and affordable food for a number of reasons, including: limited availability of grocery stores, inaccessibility of existing stores, high cost of healthy food options, neighborhood safety and individual resource constraints such as time, income and transportation. Research has shown that these conditions exist in urban and rural areas across the country. Lack of access to healthy food can lead to high rates of hunger or food insecurity, or conversely and more prevalently, high incidence of diet-related diseases including obesity and diabetes.

Through grants, technical assistance and other activities, the Wallace HUFED Center seeks to build local capacity to serve food needs in urban and rural low-income, historically excluded, and traditionally underserved communities and communities of color. Therefore, we particularly encourage applications by organizations whose leadership and stakeholders reflect the populations they intend to serve. We are committed to ensuring that language differences and limited access to technology are not barriers to the submission of letters of interest and encourage potential applicants facing such potential barriers to contact us so that we can work to overcome them together.

Goals and Objectives of Wallace HUFED Center

The Wallace HUFED Center will address the mandate set forth by US Congress and USDA to create and implement replicable models of a green, healthy, fair and affordable food system that are proven to be economically, socially and environmentally viable for all stakeholders, including those who live in historically excluded and traditionally underserved communities.

GOALS: The specific goals of the Wallace HUFED Center are to:

1. Develop more socially and economically equitable access to high quality, affordable, and fresh foods in communities with healthy food deficits;
2. Support small- and mid-sized producer incomes and economic sustainability;
3. Promote and support market-based enterprises with the best chance for long-term success in addressing the structural deficits in the food distribution system; and
4. Determine successful and less-successful project strategies so as to enable effective adaptation or replication in similar communities nationwide.

OBJECTIVES: Our main objectives center on grantmaking and technical assistance activities that address four major supply and retail bottlenecks, which limit low income consumer access to affordable healthy food:

1. Reduce the supply chain bottleneck in the aggregation and processing of healthy, and locally produced food (whether fresh or processed in some way).
2. Increase the flow of healthy, fresh, and local food being distributed by resellers, wholesalers, and private marketing channels (e.g. supermarket warehouses; school food service providers).
3. Increase the number of retail sites (conventional or alternative, niche or other innovative approaches to retail) with healthy food available in underserved areas.
4. Increase the availability of healthy food options within existing retail sites.

What We Fund

The Wallace HUFED Center will provide grants to eligible entities (a) to carry out feasibility studies to establish businesses to increase access to healthy, affordable foods, including locally produced agricultural products, to underserved communities; and (b) to establish and otherwise assist enterprises that process, distribute, aggregate, store, and market healthy affordable foods to underserved communities. Grants will be made at levels between \$10,000 to \$100,000 total with smaller grants (\$10,000-\$25,000) being one year in length and larger grants (greater than \$25,000) being up to three years in length. Length of project depends on the proposed activity.

<u>Grant Type</u>	<u>Description</u>
Small enterprise grants \$10,000 to \$25,000 (one-year awards)	These typically will provide funding for equipment purchases (e.g. cooling units for fresh produce or produce sorting equipment), minor capital improvements (e.g. a loading dock for use in a local or regional food distribution project), and staff time related to acquisitions and installations. These should be of most relevance to retail food stores, food service operations, distribution businesses, and similar for-profits or non-profits looking to expand aggregation, distribution, sales or use of perishable foods. These awards may also incorporate training on produce handling and food safety, business planning and pricing for perishables, and/or assessing customer demand.
Larger enterprise grants \$25,000 to \$100,000 (one-to-three year duration, not to exceed \$100,000 over three years)	This funding will support local and regional initiatives such as (a) expanding underserved communities' access to healthy foods, particularly from local or regional suppliers and producers; and (b) linking multiple players in the value chain via direct distribution strategies, cooperative ventures, and value-added activities. Our priority is to address bottlenecks and 'weak links', such as product aggregation, producer-retailer coordination, and cooperative marketing. Funding for multi-year grants will be provided one year at a time. Future funding will be contingent on satisfactory performance and renewal of the HUFED Center's budget by NIFA.
Feasibility study grants Up to \$25,000 (typically one-year awards)	A feasibility study is an analysis of the viability of an enterprise and is done before implementation. It focuses on helping answer the essential question of "should we proceed with the proposed project idea?" Grants in this category will support a feasibility study and may include business planning and market research as well as other needed aspects. Such grants are designed to help community partners assess the viability of a potential food-related business with connection to a value chain, for example a retail food store upgrade, cooperative marketing development, or local customer demand assessment for fresh produce. They will also address common gaps in knowledge that can benefit other communities nationwide, with parts of the assessments being publically available.
Optional: Request for technical assistance	Modest funds for technical assistance are available and, if approved, will be awarded with the with the small and large enterprise grants (not available for Feasibility study grants), to support project implementation.

Funds dependent on award need	Technical assistance funding is best used to access tactical expertise that is not available on the project team and is needed in the short term. A maximum dollar amount of technical assistance will be made available to the grantee, based upon the application reviewers' recommendations, and will be reserved in a pool of TA funds. The Wallace HUFED Center will pay grantees' selected providers directly.
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Fund Request Process

The process for those that would like to submit a funding request to the Wallace HUFED Center is as follows:

- 1. Letter of Interest (LOI):** The LOI is the first step in the funds request process, and is **required**. The LOI provides Wallace Center with an overview of the organization's/ individual's/ or company's purpose and activities, organizational leadership, program or project timeline, and estimated budget. For a complete set of instructions and formatting requirements for the LOI, see our website www.wallacecenter.org/hufed or contact us. Online submission of the LOI is strongly recommended, but if that is not possible, please contact us for assistance. Please direct any and all questions about LOI to us at the contact info listed at the end of this document.
- 2. Review of Letters of Interest (LOIs):** The Wallace HUFED Center will review the LOI information, looking for alignment with the HUFED goals and objectives and selection criteria below. At this time it will be determined whether the applicant will be invited to submit a full proposal. During this review stage, Wallace HUFED Center staff may contact you for further information or with clarifying questions, or we may request to visit you to learn more about the proposed business enterprise or project.
- 3. Invitation to Submit Full Proposal:** If you are invited to submit a full proposal, you will be contacted with instructions on how to submit your request via our website. *Please do not submit a full proposal until you are invited to do so.* Wallace HUFED Center staff may also contact you for additional information or a site visit while reviewing the full proposal.

Estimated Timeline

<u>Date</u>	<u>Description</u>
March 8, 2010	Deadline for submission of LOIs
March 22, 2010	Finalists selected; Invitation to submit full proposal to LOI finalists
April 19, 2010	Full proposals due
April 19-30, 2010	Proposal review and applicant interviews by Wallace HUFED Center staff
May 2010	Award recipients announced; Award & funding process started; Projects begin

Eligibility

Enterprises and projects in underserved urban and rural areas are eligible¹. Special attention will be given to those that focus on historically excluded communities, American Indian communities, people of color, low-income communities, and other traditionally underserved communities. We encourage partnerships and collaborations between less experienced organizations and those with more capacity. This grant program is available to provide funding to both non-profit and for-profit organizations. Eligible entities may include:

- For-profit commercial enterprises & cooperatives (legal businesses completing IRS Schedule C or equivalent)
- American Indian communities
- Academic institutions which provide direct outreach or have direct connection to underserved populations on work on food access issues, including schools that serve historically excluded communities; and Minority Serving Institutions (MSIs), which include Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs) Hispanic Serving Institutions (HSIs), Tribal Colleges and Universities (TCUs), and Alaska Native/Native Hawaiian Institutions (AN/NHIs).
- Non-profit organizations with a 501(c)(3) designation
- Quasi-governmental entities or agencies.

Please check with Wallace HUFED Center staff if you are unsure or have further questions.

Selection Criteria:

Grants will be made to organizations that most directly address the goals and objectives of HUFED, as outlined above. In addition, special consideration will be given to those who demonstrate the following:

1. The degree to which applicant's proposal meets the Wallace HUFED Center goals/objectives ;
2. A proven track record and documented experience in business and enterprise development or experience addressing issues related to food and/or agriculture;
3. The potential for community impact on healthy food consumption, demonstration of need, and the incidence of diet-related disease in the targeted area (if data is available);
4. The degree to which the project will develop market opportunities for small- and mid-sized farm and ranch operations;
5. Documentation that target communities are in fact underserved is encouraged through the provision of relevant demographic data²;
6. Demonstrated track record of working collaboratively and with a diverse set of stakeholders, and the degree to which the underserved community members are consulted in project design;
7. Commitment to and demonstration of providing living wages and health benefits to employees;
8. Commitment to transparency and sharing data and learning from the business/project with Wallace Center and other entities in the sustainable agriculture and food systems sector ;
9. Plans for achieving self-sufficiency or continuity, as appropriate;
10. Matching and in-kind contributions are not required, but demonstration of such is welcome.

¹ Urban and rural as defined by US Census Bureau and other US Government sources

² Via US American Community Survey ; US Census Bureau, etc.

Preparing the Letter of Interest (LOI)

The Letter of Interest (LOI) is the first step in the funds request process. We strongly encourage all applicants to submit their LOI utilizing our online LOI submission form, which will be available on our website after February 8, 2010. (If you are unable to access or otherwise negotiate the online submission process, please call the help line number listed below.) To help you prepare your LOI, we have presented the major components below:

- Overview of the applicant's history, activities, and leadership
- Statement of purpose (one line)
- Goals/objectives of the proposed program or project
- Collaborators (if you have them) and their roles
- Activities and intended impact; how underserved communities will benefit
- Technical assistance required, if any, to develop program or project
- Major obstacles to achieving goals and your plans to address the obstacles
- How success will be measured
- What you anticipate learning and how it will be captured, shared, and communicated
- Total amount of funds being requested
- Time period that this request will cover (single year or multiple years)
- The main content for a single year LOI will be roughly 3 pages max (12 point font, single sided, single spaced)
- The main content for a multiple year LOI will be roughly 7 pages max (12 point font, single sided, single spaced)

To access the LOI form, please visit www.wallacecenter.org/hufed, where you will also find our instructions and other useful information that may help you develop your LOI. You may also call us at the Wallace HUFED Center hotline for assistance: (703) 531-8810. Wallace HUFED Center staff is available to provide basic technical assistance as you prepare your LOI.

The LOI due date is March 8, 2010. Submitting electronically is strongly encouraged but not required. If submitting a paper copy, LOI must arrive by 4pm Eastern Time on March 8, 2010, at our mailing address listed below. Please call for assistance with online submission before sending a paper copy.

Contact Information

Letter of Interest (LOI) Online Submission: www.wallacecenter.org/hufed

Wallace HUFED Center Help Line Phone Number: (703) 531-8810

Email: hufed@winrock.org

Mailing Address: Wallace HUFED Center, Winrock International, 2121 Crystal Drive Suite 500, Arlington VA 22202