

Food Waste Prevention and Recovery Grant Guidelines

BizRecycling – a program of Ramsey/Washington Recycling & Energy

Ramsey/Washington Recycling & Energy (R&E) is the organization through which Ramsey and Washington counties collaborate to responsibly manage waste. Through R&E, the counties strive to protect health and the environment. R&E offers programs to help residents and businesses reduce waste and recycle better.

The Food Waste Prevention and Recovery Grant provides up to \$20,000 for food donors, nonprofit organizations and college food shelves located in Ramsey and Washington counties to start or expand food recovery or gleaning efforts. In addition, up to \$5,000 of the total grant award may be used for community capacity, innovation and education projects addressing food waste prevention.

Visit BizRecycling.com to learn about additional grant options.

Available Funding

Funding for Food Waste Prevention and Recovery Grants is as follows:

- Up to \$20,000, depending on the organization's capacity and needs.
- Organizations may reapply in the application cycle after their grant closes (i.e., if the grant contract closes in April, an organization may reapply for the fall deadline).
- Applicants may be eligible for more than one BizRecycling grant at a time (i.e., Bin-Only, Recycling, Pollution Prevention and Waste Reduction and Innovation).

Multiple Grant Award Limitations: To ensure funds are used responsibly, any participant with more than three open BizRecycling grants must implement all required activities as agreed before applying for additional grant funding. New grants may be considered after at least one existing grant is successfully implemented. For this purpose, "participant" is defined as any business, business partnership, property management company, institution or nonprofit organization engaging in work under this program, regardless of the number of properties, businesses or ownership entities involved.

How to Submit a Grant Application

Applicants must work with one of BizRecycling's Recycling Experts to submit a grant application. The Recycling Expert will conduct an initial site assessment of the organization, answer questions about the grant guidelines and application process, and assess baseline measurements of food being donated/received/distributed. They will provide recommendations for how to best use grant funding to meet the applicant's food recovery goals. They will help assemble the necessary documentation and price quotes for the grant application and will help submit the grant application through an online application system. **Applications from organizations who have not had a site assessment will not be reviewed.**

To be connected to a Recycling Expert, email info@BizRecycling.com or call 651-768-6670.

Applications are accepted twice per year. Application deadlines will be announced on BizRecycling.com. Applications take approximately eight weeks to process, from the grant submission deadline to the grantee receiving funds. Applications will be reviewed and evaluated by staff from R&E, Ramsey County, and Washington County. During the review process, R&E may contact the applicant for additional information or clarification.

Eligibility and Requirements

Organizations that meet the following criteria are eligible for a Food Waste Prevention and Recovery Grant.

Eligibility

- Food donors (food producers, distributors, grocers, cafeterias and farmers' markets), nonprofit organizations and college food shelves participating in food recovery or gleaning in Ramsey and/or Washington counties.
- Must be in "active/good standing" status with the [Minnesota Secretary of State](#) at the time of application.
- Returning applicants must be in good standing with any previous and current R&E grants and may not have more than two active grants with R&E at the time of application.
- Must have active and appropriate Environmental Health license(s) for services being conducted, if applicable
- Ineligible organizations include individuals, home-based cottage food businesses, government organizations, and restaurants*. Organizations who are currently Food Recovery Partners with R&E are ineligible to apply.

**Restaurants are eligible for food recovery funding through other BizRecycling grants. Talk to your BizRecycling Recycling Expert for details. If you do not have a Recycling Expert, email info@BizRecycling.com to be connected to one.*

Guidelines

- All grant activities must take place in Ramsey and/or Washington counties. Food collected through funded activities must be distributed to people in need in Ramsey and/or Washington counties. Food shelves, nonprofit meal providers and other approved outlets are acceptable recipients of recovered food.
- Any food collected that is deemed inedible must be disposed of via organics recycling, food-to-animals and/or onsite composting whenever possible.
- Collected food must be distributed for free.
- Grant recipients must provide a baseline for (1) food donated (if a food generator/donor); (2) food received (if an organization that receives donated food); and (3) food distributed to people. Recycling Experts are available to help assess these baseline amounts for participating organizations.

Requirements

- Complete a site assessment with a BizRecycling Recycling Expert.
- Complete a Food Waste Prevention and Recovery Grant application.
- Enter into a contract agreement with R&E for a period of 12 months. The approved application will serve as the work scope for the agreement. Projects may be completed earlier, but biannual reports will need to be submitted to report on food recovery activities for the entire grant period.
- Provide a completed W-9.
- Agree to host up to three site visits with a BizRecycling Recycling Expert and/or R&E staff. The site visits are to (1) review current on-site operations and equipment, discuss objectives and approach and prepare the grant application; (2) if needed, implement the grant; and (3) complete a final walk-through at the end of the grant period.

Evaluation Criteria

Priority Areas (in order of importance)

1. Increase food recovery (food donated, received and distributed): estimated weight in pounds of food that would be recovered with support of project funds.
2. Support recovery of healthy and/or culturally relevant foods: project activities result in significant gains to healthy and/or culturally relevant foods.
3. Partnership/collaboration: project activities demonstrate new or expanded opportunities for partnership or collaboration.
4. Food recovery and food waste prevention education and capacity: project activities help staff and/or the community increase their capacity for/knowledge of food recovery and food waste prevention best practices.

Additional Criteria

- Activities: project activities are clearly stated, specific, realistic and measurable
- Sustainability: project can be sustained beyond the grant period
- Budget: budget supports project activities and impacts. Items are eligible for funding.

Evaluation criteria are a guide for Food Waste Prevention and Recovery Grant evaluators. Final funding decisions are made at the team's discretion.

Reporting Requirements

All applicants will fill out a baseline report as part of the grant application. If awarded a grant, the grantee is required to complete the Proof of Funds Spent form, two biannual reports and a final report.

The Proof of Funds Spent form is due once the first 50% of project funds have been spent and requests documentation of project spending up until that point.

Biannual reports will include the following information broken down by month and county:

- Pounds of food gleaned/donated (if a donating organization)
- Pounds of food received/collected (if an organization that receives/collects donated food)
- Pounds of food distributed (if an organization that receives/collects donated food)
- List and locations of organizations where food was gleaned or collected
- List and locations of organizations where food was distributed or donated
- Description of how weights were measured or estimated
- Project progress and number of people impacted (for community capacity, innovation, and food waste prevention education projects only)

The final report is due one month after the grant term ends and will include the same information as required for the biannual reports. In addition, the final report will include questions to summarize outcomes from the duration of the grant, highlight lessons learned and program successes, and provide feedback on the grant program. R&E withholds \$250 from the original grant award and will pay this amount upon approval of the final report by R&E.

Reports are due on the following dates during the 12-month grant duration:

- Biannual report for work completed January-June: due July 31st
- Biannual report for work completed July-December: due January 20th
- Proof of Funds Spent form: due once the first 50% of project funds has been spent
- Final report: due one month after the grant term ends

Appropriate Use of Funds and Restrictions

The following are eligible expenses to receive funding. If the organization has an idea outside of the items listed below, please consult a Recycling Expert.

Eligible Expenses

- Transportation costs: mileage reimbursement, vehicle rental or purchase
- Equipment for use in food donation/recovery efforts such as Energy star rated refrigerators and freezers, shelving, carts, reusable pallets, pallet jacks, etc.
- Equipment installation costs
- Supplies: reusable buckets, boxes, etc.
- Storage costs: storage equipment/facility rental and/or purchase
- Equipment and materials for processing recovered food for preservation, value-add or upcycling, up to \$10,000
- Taxes and shipping costs, included as a separate line-item in application, up to 10% of the order subtotal
- Staff training: two hours of training at hourly wage for each employee for R&E-approved trainings about food waste prevention, including topics such as food safety, gleaning, extending food shelf life and managing inventory/first in first out
- Staff time: up to \$20,000 or equivalent of 0.5 FTE, whichever is less, for work directly associated with food recovery and gleaning activities
- Repairs for food recovery equipment (refrigerators, freezers, etc.) up to \$750
- Other expenses as approved by R&E

For projects including food waste prevention education, capacity building or innovation – up to \$5,000 of the \$20,000 grant limit

- Staff time: available up to project maximum of \$5,000 for developing food waste prevention education materials, preparing for and facilitating workshops, providing food waste prevention resources (tabling, staff training, etc.), developing resources to better coordinate volunteers, etc.
- Project materials: supplies for workshops such as cooking/canning materials, reusable tubs for food donation sorting demonstrations, etc.
- Capacity building and innovation: volunteer outreach/coordination specific to food recovery/gleaning activities, development of organization-wide best practices for food recovery/gleaning, food waste tracking software implementation, etc.
- Participation incentives related to food waste prevention such as magnets demonstrating where to store food to maximize shelf life, reusable food storage containers, etc.

Ineligible Expenses

- Staffing costs unrelated to food recovery/gleaning or food waste prevention capacity building, innovation or education project activities, and amounts exceeding 0.5 FTE
- Fuel costs
- General operating expenses
- Materials that are not recyclable, compostable or reusable
- Gift cards
- Any expenses deemed unnecessary for food recovery/food waste prevention activities by R&E
- Funding for any activities taking place outside of Ramsey and/or Washington counties

Funds must be used for the expenses approved in the grant contract. Expenses exceeding the approved amounts for any grant item, or any items not covered by the grant contract, will not be reimbursed.

All requested items must be reasonable in price point. R&E reserves the right to deny any item or request that a more-cost effective substitute for the requested item be included in the grant application.

Fund Dispersal

Awardees will receive 50% of grant funds upon execution of the grant agreement. The remaining 50%, less \$250 for the final report, will be disbursed via a reimbursement process once the Proof of Funds Spent form is completed and invoices and receipts are submitted.

The remaining \$250 will be distributed after all final reporting requirements are complete.

Awardees have 12 months to complete all activities.

Rights of R&E

R&E may require confirmation of information furnished by applicants. R&E reserves the right to:

- Reject any or all applications if such action is in the public interest
- Cancel the entire grant program
- Appoint evaluation committees to review grant applications
- Negotiate with any, all or none of the grant respondents

An organization completing a Food Waste Prevention and Recovery Grant application does not commit R&E to enter into a contract, nor does it obligate R&E to pay for any costs incurred in the preparation and submission of applications or in anticipation of a grant.

R&E reserves the right to revise these guidelines as needed.

Definitions

- Client Choice: a food distribution model where people seeking food assistance decide which food they would like to receive. Food shelves that use client choice models are often set up like grocery stores, but this is not the only way for an organization to offer client choice.
- Cultural Grocer: a retail store that sells food products and ingredients that are desirable to specific cultural or ethnic identities.

- Food Bank: a nonprofit organization that stores food in bulk for delivery to local food distribution programs such as food shelves, food pantries and meal locations.
- Food Recovery: the collection of edible, surplus food from grocery stores, distributors and other sources for distribution to people in need.
- Food Shelf: a nonprofit organization that collects, stores and distributes food to people in need.
- Gleaning: the harvest and/or recovery of edible, surplus produce from farms and/or farmers' markets for donation to people in need.
- Gleaning Organization: an organization that harvests and/or recovers surplus produce from farms and/or farmers' markets for donation to people in need.