

NLR Community Garden Program

Policies

Applying for Funding

1. There are two funding rounds each year: spring and fall.
2. To qualify for funding, a garden must:
 - a. Be located within the city limits of North Little Rock.
 - b. Be partnering with an organization that is registered with the state as a nonprofit and is in good standing with the AR Secretary of State. (Some organizations are exempt from this rule.)
 - c. Submit a completed funding application by the due date. (June 15th for fall funding and December 15th for spring funding)
 - d. Be in good standing with the Garden Program.
 - e. Have spent and reported on any previous funding.
 - f. Have a garden manager and an assistant garden manager.
 - g. Have a signed License Agreement (provided by the program) from the property owner, if the garden is on privately owned land.
3. The garden funding is not allowed to be awarded to a private individual or entity, therefore a nonprofit organization must be managing, sponsoring, or partnering with the garden. This organization must be registered and in good standing with the AR Secretary of State. A 501(c)(3) status is not a requirement. This organization must be willing to share their bylaws with the program, if asked. They must also obtain a NLR business license by the time of funding. Funding checks will be made out to this organization. Before they can receive their funds, they must be set up as a vendor with the City of NLR, which will require a W9.
4. Gardens that are new to our program, or who haven't received funding in the past 3 years or more, or who have a new Garden Manager, must fill out a new garden application. These gardens are eligible for up to \$1,500 for this first year.
5. Returning gardens and all gardens within the NLRSD are eligible for up to \$5,000.
6. All funding applications are reviewed by the NLR Garden Advisory Committee. The committee makes recommendations to the NLR City Council for approval. Once the City Council approves funding, the applications are processed through the city Finance Department to have checks cut.
7. Before the Garden Advisory Committee reviews the applications, all applicants must have a consultation with the Community Garden Program staff. This may be in person or over the phone.

Receiving, Spending, and Reporting on Funds

1. All funding is disbursed in two payments unless otherwise requested by the applicant, or if the total amount of funding requested is \$500 or less.
2. Garden projects within the NLRSD will not receive their funding directly. Once their application is approved, they will work with the Community Garden Program staff to purchase their items.

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3. Garden managers must submit legible receipts (copies or originals) for the total amount of the first disbursement before they will receive the 2nd disbursement.
4. We cannot accept unpaid invoices, bill statements, or anything that does not show a completed transaction and proof of payment. Some exceptions may be made at the program's discretion.
5. Receipts must be submitted with the Receipt Report document, which is found on the program's web page or can be provided at any time that it's requested.
6. All funding must be spent by the date listed in the License Agreement and MOU, which is approximately 1 year from receiving funds.
7. Funds must be spent on items discussed in the application. If gardens need to spend money on items that were not discussed in the application, they must speak with the Garden Program Manager before spending.
8. Funds must be spent during the date range that the License Agreement is active. Receipts submitted for funds spent before or after the License Agreement is active will not be accepted.
9. If funds are spent for contract labor, such as mowing, plumbing, etc., the contractor must have a NLR Business License and be able to provide a receipt for their work.
10. All funded projects are required to submit a Mid-Year Progress Report *and* a Final Progress Report. Garden Managers will be provided with these documents and they can be found on our website.
11. If a garden does not submit their reports or receipts for their total amount funded, the project may be dropped from the program and any remaining funds must be returned to the City of North Little Rock.
12. In some circumstances, if a garden is unable to spend all of their money within the time listed on the License Agreement and MOU, they may request an extension. This request is made to the Community Garden Program Manager and will be reviewed by the Garden Advisory Committee. Upon approval, the Garden Manager will need to sign a new MOU, and, if necessary, a new License Agreement will need to be signed by the property owner. The extension will allow the garden to keep their funds until the next reporting date, either July 15th or January 15th, whichever date is closer.
13. Any funds remaining after the License Agreement has expired must be returned to the City of North Little Rock.
14. Any site that our staff provides labor or material support for must have a current License Agreement on file with our program. License Agreements may be renewed for up to two 1 year terms by the Community Garden Advisory Committee.

Allowable Expenses

1. Gardens may request funding for anything that is directly related to the growing of food. This can include items such as lumber for raised beds, garden tools, seeds and plants, storage, fencing (must obtain a NLR permit), etc.

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2. If a garden site does not have a water source or needs a new source, gardens may request up to \$600, in addition to their garden budget, to help cover that cost.
3. New gardens are not eligible for funding for animals, water bills, tree service, or mowing.
4. Returning gardens may request up to \$500 for mowing and weed-eating, up to \$500 for their water utility bill, and up to \$500 for tree trimming or removal. Expenses in these categories beyond the \$500 are the responsibility of the garden. New gardens are not eligible for these expenses. These requests *are* included in the total garden budget on the application (\$5,000 max).
5. Funds may be requested for contracted labor directly related to the garden, such as building storage sheds or building raised beds. This request must be listed in the application and all contractors must have a NLR Business License and be able to provide a receipt.
6. Gardens cannot use our funding to pay someone to maintain the garden beds. This includes tasks such as weeding, planting, and harvesting.
7. We will reimburse for two members from each garden to obtain Master Gardener or Master Naturalist certification. Reimbursement will be processed once the certification is earned. This must be approved by the Community Garden Program Manager. It is not listed on the garden funding application.
8. We will pay for garden members to attend conferences and any other events where they may learn more about gardening and bring back skills and knowledge to share with their community. We will not pay for gardens to be presenters and we will not pay for expenses such as traveling, hotels, or dining. We will only pay to cover the cost of attendance. Gardens should list this on their funding application.

Garden Manager Responsibilities

1. Garden Managers must be in communication with the Garden Program Manager via an email address listed on their application.
2. Meetings for Garden Managers are held every month and managers are expected to attend all the meetings they can.
3. All reports and receipt submittals for the garden project are the responsibility of the Garden Manager.
4. The maintenance, care, and planning of the garden project is the responsibility of the Garden Manager.
5. Recruitment of volunteers and garden members is the responsibility of the Garden Manager.
6. Tracking volunteer hours and weighing harvested produce are important requirements for our program. Garden Managers are responsible for finding ways to track and report this data at their project.