

COMMUNITY | APPLICATION GARDEN



2024 COMMUNITY GARDENS

Do you want to start or re-establish a community food garden in Allegheny County?

Grow Pittsburgh can help! Using a tailored, community-based approach, Grow Pittsburgh provides materials, education and organizational support to groups like yours. This application helps us assess your community group's needs and assets. If your group is selected for our program, our support will include project management, education, and infrastructure investments.

Our goal is to help communities start sustainable food gardens that will be enjoyed for generations to come. Our program is funded in part by Allegheny County Economic Development.

Application is due August 2, 2024

Staff use only:

Received (date): _____ Municipality/Neighborhood: _____



GROW PITTSBURGH'S VALUES

MISSION

Our mission is to teach people how to grow food and promote the benefits gardens bring to our neighborhoods.

VISION

We envision the day when everyone in our city and region grows and eats fresh, local and healthy food.

VALUES

COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION: prioritizing neighborhood voices to guide programs

ENVIRONMENTAL RESPONSIBILITY: using, teaching and advocating for restorative practices

EQUITY: working alongside communities to build access and power for all

FISCAL INTEGRITY: making responsible and effective use of available assets

FOOD SOVEREIGNTY: supporting everyone's right to access, produce and distribute healthy and culturally appropriate food

RESOURCEFULNESS: creating hands-on opportunities to build individual and community self-sufficiency

SOCIAL JUSTICE: understanding systems of privilege, oppression and racism, and using this knowledge to drive our work

TRANSPARENCY: being accountable by using clear, direct and inclusive communication

APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS

This Application Packet will enable our team to begin to evaluate your group's needs, assets, and readiness to start a community garden.

- **DO THIS FIRST:** Email dora@growpittsburgh.org or call 412-362-4769 x213 to confirm eligibility for this program.
- Read through the Application Requirements and Program Timeline to make sure this is a good fit for your project. (pages 3 – 5)
- Identify two main contacts for your garden application. Convene at least 6 organized and motivated people in your garden group. Begin outreach to your broader community. (pages 6 – 8)
- Identify a Primary Sponsor for your garden. (pages 9 – 10)
- Visit at least 1 other community garden and speak with a garden leader or gardener. (page 10)
- Identify at least 1 garden site owned by a non-profit or municipality. Invite Grow Pittsburgh staff to complete a site visit and soil test. Then, get written permission from the owner to use a lot for at least 3 years. (page 11)
- Obtain support letters from Primary Sponsor and a local official. (page 9)
- **Submit complete Application Packet by August 2, 2024** to be considered for a Spring 2025 garden build. *Do not wait until the deadline to ask for an extension*
- Accepted groups will be informed by September 13, 2024.
- Plan to attend How to Start a Community Garden, our signature class designed for community garden leaders, in the fall.

Contact:

Dora Walmsley, Director of Community Projects
 Grow Pittsburgh
 6587 Hamilton Ave, #2W
 Pittsburgh, PA 15206
dora@growpittsburgh.org
 Phone: 412-362-4769 x213

PROGRAM TIMELINE

TIMELINE

2024: Application Year

- Spring/Summer 2024:
 - o Reach out to us to confirm eligibility as soon as possible.
 - o Visit an established garden, select a site and get permission from the owner, connect with a local community organization for sponsorship, and convene your garden group.
 - o Submit the complete application by August 2. If you need an extension, let us know before the due date.
- Fall 2024:
 - o Plan for one or two members of your group to attend How to Start a Community Garden workshop.
 - o If your application is approved, a member of our team will meet with your group to get started with planning and budgeting in the fall.

2025: Year 1 – Outreach and Organize, Design and Build

- Winter/Spring 2025:
 - o Gather a committed garden team, assign roles, and schedule regular meetings.
 - o Build community support with an outreach strategy and public events.
 - o Agree on shared goals for the garden.
 - o Design the garden with community input.
 - o Make a plan for how to maintain the garden.
- Spring/Summer 2025:
 - o Build and plant the garden with support from local volunteers.
 - o Begin weekly site visits with Grow Pittsburgh staff that integrates growing curriculum.
 - o Try out the maintenance and community engagement plans, caring for the garden space and the garden group throughout the season.
 - o Survey your garden members and record volunteer hours and harvest totals for reporting purposes.
- Fall 2025:
 - o Reflect on the season, setting goals for year two.

2026: Year 2 – Sustain

- Winter/Spring 2026:
 - o Reflect on garden progress on team building, community outreach efforts, growing efforts, and site maintenance.
 - o Keep learning what practices work best for the group and the project.
 - o Review and refine the shared goals for the garden.
- Spring/Summer 2026:
 - o Garden together, strengthen the team's ability to manage the garden.
 - o Expand or improve the garden as the group wants & is able.
 - o Slowly separate Grow Pittsburgh staff support from the community garden team.
- Fall 2026:
 - o Finish the growing season with a well-cared-for garden and active group of community members, practicing sustainable organic gardening and inclusive community outreach.
 - o Graduate into the county-wide Community Garden Network.

Post-Graduation: Community Garden Network

After your garden graduates from our program (typically 2 years of support), you become part of the **Community Garden Network**. This network will connect you to other gardens, funding opportunities and resources to keep your garden growing.

- Check in with Grow Pittsburgh staff annually to share updates, celebrate successes and find support when needed.
- Apply to the Community Garden Sustainability Fund for consultations, project support, and supplies.
- Plug into Community Garden Network educational offerings and gardener networking opportunities.

CONTACT INFORMATION

Gardens are most successful when multiple people hold leadership positions. Please identify two garden leaders.

PRIMARY CONTACT PERSON/GARDEN LEADER

Name:

Phone:

E-mail:

Mailing Address:

Organizational Affiliations:

SECONDARY CONTACT PERSON/GARDEN LEADER

Name:

Phone:

E-mail:

Mailing Address:

Organizational Affiliations:

Garden Pledges

PRIMARY AND SECONDARY CONTACTS ARE ASKED TO INITIAL EACH OF THE FOLLOWING STATEMENTS.

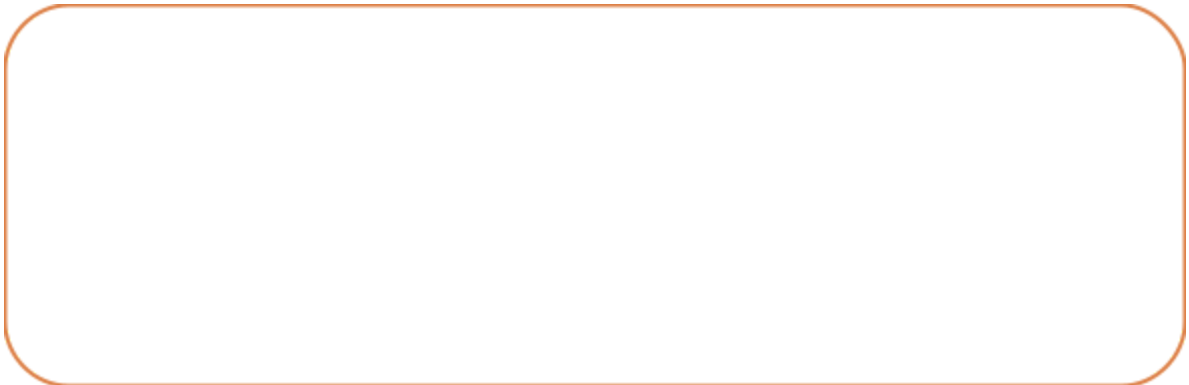
- _____ We pledge to send at least one garden representative to Grow Pittsburgh's How To Start A Community Garden workshop.
- _____ We pledge to hold monthly public garden meetings during the growing season.
- _____ We pledge to grow organically by sourcing organic amendments and pest control products and not using chemicals in the garden.
- _____ We pledge to host at least 1 free community event per year (i.e. workshops, celebrations, etc).
- _____ We pledge to positively engage our neighbors and keep our garden open to the public.
- _____ We pledge to assist with data collection, which includes tracking volunteer hours and produce harvested, and participating in surveys.

Tell Us About Your Interest

Please provide detailed answers to the following questions:


1

Why do you want to start a new garden as opposed to joining an established one? What would be unique about your new garden?




2

What do you hope to accomplish by starting a food garden? Are you meeting a community need? What is your vision? What are your goals?



3

What have you done already to engage your neighbors? How do you plan to engage your community in this project? (ex. yard signs, events, going door to door, talking to community groups)



PRIMARY SPONSOR

GARDEN GROUPS MUST BE SPONSORED BY A NEIGHBORHOOD-BASED GROUP

Primary Sponsor Organization:

Main contact at Organization:

How will the sponsor organization support the garden?

- | | |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Provide a responsive main contact to the garden group (<u>Required</u>) | <input type="checkbox"/> Meeting Space |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Tax exempt status/Fiscal sponsorship (Recommended) | <input type="checkbox"/> Bathroom access |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Liability insurance (Recommended) | <input type="checkbox"/> Purchase/Provision of materials |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Volunteer/Community outreach (Recommended) | <input type="checkbox"/> Staff time |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> Technical gardening assistance |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> Other: |
| | _____ |
| | _____ |

SUPPORT LETTERS

EVIDENCE OF SUPPORT

Community Gardens are most successful when they partner with and are supported by local organizations, municipalities, and individuals. **Collect and attach a letter of support from each of the following:**

- REQUIRED: Land Owner (approving use of site for at least 3 years)
- REQUIRED: Primary Sponsor Organization
- REQUIRED: Local government official
- RECOMMENDED: Additional community partner support letter(s)
- RECOMMENDED: Petition signed by supportive neighbors

The letters do not have to be long or complicated, but should include:

- Individual's name and job title or organization's name
- Their expressed support of your community garden project
- What they have committed to doing to help your community garden project
- Individual's or organizational representative's signature

COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS

Identify organizations, companies, and/or individuals in your community with whom the garden can form a mutually beneficial relationship.

Partner(s) you have already reached out to:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.

Partner(s) you plan to reach out to:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.

Are you seeking additional funding for this project?

- Yes
- No
- Unsure

If yes, please specify:

GARDEN RESEARCH

THERE ARE OVER 120 COMMUNITY GARDENS IN ALLEGHENY COUNTY! PLEASE VISIT AT LEAST ONE COMMUNITY GARDEN AND TALK WITH A GARDENER ABOUT GROWING FOOD, ENGAGING THE COMMUNITY, AND THE PROCESS OF STARTING AND MAINTAINING A COMMUNITY GARDEN.

To find a garden close to you, visit Grow Pittsburgh’s Grower’s Map on our website:
www.growpittsburgh.org

What is the name and/or address of the garden you visited? Who did you talk to?

What were your observations and initial reactions?

GARDEN SITE INFORMATION

IMPORTANT NOTE
This program prioritizes starting gardens in Environmental Justice Areas (<https://www.epa.gov/ejscreen>) and areas with low income/low access to fresh food. Additionally, community gardens located in Allegheny County, but outside of the City of Pittsburgh, must be located in an area that meets certain resident income requirements. Contact us to verify your site’s eligibility ASAP.

Have you identified a potential garden site?

- Yes. (If there is more than one, please complete this page for each site)
- No.
 - o We will need Grow Pittsburgh’s assistance to locate one.
 - o We will not need Grow Pittsburgh’s assistance to locate one.

If yes, which requirements does your site meet?

- | | | | |
|--|------------------------------|-----------------------------|---------------------------------|
| 1. The site is owned by the municipality or a non-profit organization. <i>(Private property is not eligible)</i> | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No | <input type="checkbox"/> Unsure |
| 2. This site has access to water or the potential to install a water line. | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No | <input type="checkbox"/> Unsure |
| 3. This site gets 6+ hours of sunlight. | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No | <input type="checkbox"/> Unsure |
| 4. I have written permission from the landowner to use the site for 5+ years. <i>(If Yes, be sure to include your written permission)</i> | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No | <input type="checkbox"/> Unsure |
| 5. The soil has been tested for lead and has less than 300ppm. <i>(If Yes, be sure to include your soil test results. <u>We can cover the cost of soil testing.</u>)</i> | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No | <input type="checkbox"/> Unsure |

Where is your garden site?

Neighborhood/Borough:

Address/Nearest Intersection:

Lot Block Number(s):

To find the Lot Block Number, visit the Allegheny County Real Estate website at <https://www2.alleghenycounty.us/RealEstate/Default.aspx>

On behalf of Grow Pittsburgh, and the Community Projects Team, thank you for your interest in growing food! Community Gardens are an important part of the food security safety net and would not exist without neighbors like you.

Email completed application packet to: dora@growpittsburgh.org or mail to:

Grow Pittsburgh
ATT: Dora Walmsley
6587 Hamilton Avenue #2W
Pittsburgh, PA 15206

Applicants will be notified of their application status by **September 13, 2024.**
