



# CanGrow Farmer Training Grant Request For Proposal

April 9, 2026 (Updated June 2, 2026)

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To obtain this information in a different format, contact OCM ADA coordinator [info.cannabis@state.mn.us](mailto:info.cannabis@state.mn.us) or call 651-539-5844 no later than ~~May 19~~ June 29, 2026.

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# CanGrow farmer training grant executive summary

In accordance with [Minnesota Statutes, section 342.73](#), the Office of Cannabis Management (OCM) launched the CanGrow farmer training grant program to provide funding to organizations that assist farmers in navigating their entry into or expansion within the legal cannabis industry.

For the 2026 fiscal year, the Minnesota Legislature has appropriated \$2,387,166 for technical assistance and loans, with technical assistance grants ranging from \$10,000 to \$100,000 to be awarded. OCM will use 3% of appropriated funds to administer and monitor this grant program; a total of \$2,315,551 is available for grants. CanGrow farmer training grants range from \$10,000 to \$100,000.

These technical assistance grants are intended for organizations offering services to farmers such as compliance training, networking/conferences, education, business planning, mentorship, and addressing legal and environmental concerns. Funding will be allocated through a competitive process. If selected, you may only incur eligible expenditures when the grant contract agreement is fully executed, and the grant has reached its effective date.

Grantees are required to utilize the funds within one year, with project activities beginning within 90 days of award notice. Priority will be given to organizations with a demonstrated track record of success in serving communities with potential social equity applicants and farmers with barriers to education and employment. Eligible expenses include personnel, supplies, and contractual services, with administrative costs capped at 10% of the total award.

Applications are due by 4:30 p.m. CDT on ~~June 1~~ July 13, 2026, with projects starting ~~around Oct. 1, 2026~~ by early winter 2026-27.

## Important dates

- |                                   |  |
|-----------------------------------|--|
| • April 9, 2026                   | RFP posted on the OCM website                |
| • <del>May 19</del> June 29, 2026 | Requests for accommodations due              |
| • <del>May 26</del> July 7, 2026  | Questions due no later than 4:30 p.m. CDT    |
| • <del>June 1</del> July 13, 2026 | Applications due no later than 4:30 p.m. CDT |

### Estimated dates:

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| • <del>July 15</del> , August 2026             | Committee begins review of applications                   |
| • <del>Aug. 1</del> , September 2026           | Selected applicants may undergo pre-award risk assessment |
| • <del>Oct. 1, 2026</del> Early winter 2026-27 | Grant agreements executed and grant activities begin      |
| • <del>Sept. 30</del> , Winter 2027-28         | Grant period ends   |

## Questions and contact information

- Questions may be submitted by email to [grants.ocm@state.mn.us](mailto:grants.ocm@state.mn.us).
- Questions and answers will be posted on the [CanGrow Farmer Training and Farmer Loan Grants webpage](#), under **Frequently Asked Questions**.
- Please submit questions by ~~May 26~~ July 7, 2026, no later than 4:30 p.m. CDT.

## Request for proposals (RFP) overview

- **Agency:** Office of Cannabis Management (OCM)
- **Grant name:** CanGrow farmer loan grant
- **Website:** [CanGrow Farmer Training and Farmer Loan Grants](https://mn.gov/ocm/social-equity/grants/cangrow) (mn.gov/ocm/social-equity/grants/cangrow)
- **Open for applications:** April 9, 2026
- **Application due date:** ~~June 1~~ July 13, 2026, 4:30 p.m. CDT
  - Late applications will not be accepted.
  - Mailed paper submissions will not be accepted without a formal, approved accommodations request received no later than ~~May 19~~ June 29, 2026 ([ADA Notice](#)).
- **Estimated project start date:** ~~Oct. 1, 2026~~ Early winter 2026-27
- **Estimated project end date:** ~~Sept. 30,~~ Winter 2027

Established by [Minnesota Statutes, section 342.73](#) in 2023, OCM's CanGrow farmer training grant program funds eligible organizations ready to empower farmers with the skills, resources, and support they need to navigate the legal cannabis industry's regulatory framework. The CanGrow farmer training grant program prioritizes organizations with a proven track record of supporting farmers facing barriers to education or employment, especially those in areas with potential social equity applicants. Grants are awarded through a competitive process.

## Questions, technical assistance and information sessions

All questions regarding this RFP must be submitted by email to [grants.ocm@state.mn.us](mailto:grants.ocm@state.mn.us) no later than ~~May 26~~ July 7, 2026, at 4:30 p.m. CDT. Questions and answers will be posted on the [CanGrow Farmer Training and Farmer Loan Grants webpage](#), under **Frequently Asked Questions**.

All prospective applicants are encouraged to attend an information session. Details about session registration, dates, times and accommodation requests is available on the [CanGrow Farmer Training and Farmer Loan Grants webpage](#), under **Webinars**.

## Funding availability

- Estimated amount to grant: \$2,315,551
- Estimated number of awards: 20
- Estimated award maximum: \$100,000
- Estimated award minimum: \$10,000

For the 2026 fiscal year, the Minnesota Legislature has appropriated 2,387,166 for CanGrow technical assistance and farmer loan grants. OCM will use 3% of appropriated funds to administer and monitor the program, leaving \$2,315,551 available for grant awards. Of this amount, funds will be divided between CanGrow technical assistance grants and CanGrow farmer loan grants.

OCM expects to award approximately 20 farmer training grant projects, each ranging from \$10,000 to \$100,000. **Eligible organizations may submit only one application in response to this RFP.** Finalists will be notified in summer 2026, with projects anticipated to begin ~~around Oct. 1~~ by early winter 2026-27.

Projects must support activities that help farmers navigate, enter, or expand into Minnesota's legal cannabis industry. Grant funds must be used within one year, and outreach or training activities must begin within 90 days of the fully executed grant agreement. Funds are paid on a reimbursement basis.

Awards will be determined through a competitive review process by a committee representing subject matter experts, community members with lived experience, and state employees.

Applicants interested in the CanGrow farmer loan grant program should refer to the FY2026 Request for Proposals available at [CanGrow webpage](#).

## Eligibility and minimum requirements

Applicants must meet the minimum requirements to be fully considered for this grant opportunity. The proposed project must focus on supporting farmers, particularly those facing barriers to education or employment. **Projects may provide training, guidance, or resources to individuals but grant funds *cannot* be used to start, operate, or expand a business.** Revenue-generating or entrepreneurial business activities are not eligible for funding and will not be considered for award. *Applicants whose primary goal is to secure funding for their own business should not apply for this grant.*

Applicants must conform to all instructions, conditions, and requirements included in this request for proposals (RFP). Responders are expected to examine all documentation and other requirements. **The applicant must submit *all* required exhibits for the application to be considered complete.** Failure to observe the terms and conditions in the completion of the proposal is at the responder's risk and may, at the discretion of the state, result in disqualification of the proposal.

Applicants must meet the minimum requirements in order to be considered for this grant opportunity. Per [Minnesota Statutes, section 342.73](#), to be fully considered for this grant opportunity, applicants must be capable of helping farmers navigate the regulatory structure of the legal cannabis industry. Eligible organizations include educational institutions, nonprofit organizations, federally recognized Tribes, private businesses, community groups, units of local government, or partnerships among these entities.

Applicant organizations and their partners must meet the following eligibility criteria to be considered for funding under the CanGrow farmer training grant program:

- **Organizational capacity:** Eligible organizations must demonstrate the ability to empower farmers in their entry or expansion within the legal cannabis industry, with particular focus on farmers facing barriers to education or employment. Applicants must provide evidence of their past success in offering technical assistance to farmers, particularly those from target communities.
- **Organizational registration and status:** All applicant organizations and their partners must be properly registered and in good standing with both the Minnesota secretary of state and the Internal Revenue Service (IRS), as applicable. Eligible entity types include:
  - Nonprofit organizations
    - Must be incorporated and active with the Minnesota secretary of state.
    - Must have a valid IRS tax-exempt designation, typically 501(c)(3) (charitable) or 501(c)(4).
    - Must provide an IRS determination letter confirming tax-exempt status.
    - Must comply with all employment law and relevant licensing obligations.
    - Should have a board of directors and bylaws governing the organization's operations.

- As applicable, should be registered as a charitable organization with the Minnesota Attorney General's Office if they solicit or receive charitable donations in Minnesota.
- For-profit businesses
  - Must be registered and in active status with the Minnesota secretary of state.
  - Must have a valid Federal Employer Identification Number (FEIN) issued by the IRS.
  - Must comply with all state tax, employment law, and relevant licensing obligations.
  - Sole proprietorships must provide a Certificate of Assumed Name if operating under a trade name.
- Federally recognized Tribe
  - Must provide documentation of Tribal governance authority, such as a resolution or letter of authorization from the Tribal Council approving participation in the program.
  - Tribal entities or departments (e.g., Tribal colleges, agriculture divisions) may apply on behalf of the Tribe with appropriate documentation of authority.
- Educational institutions
  - Must be a Minnesota-accredited institution such as a university, college, community or technical college, or Tribal college.
  - Public institutions must demonstrate authorization from their governing body (e.g., board of regents or trustees).
  - Private educational institutions must be registered or licensed under Minnesota law and in good standing with the Minnesota Office of Higher Education.
  - Must have an active FEIN and be able to accept and manage state grant funds.
- Units of local government
  - Includes counties, cities, townships, and special districts (such as soil and water conservation districts).
  - Must provide documentation verifying legal status (e.g., resolution from governing body).
  - Must have demonstrated financial management systems capable of administering grant funds.
- Community groups or partnerships
  - Unincorporated community groups must partner with a fiscal agent that meets one of the eligible entity types.
  - The fiscal agent must assume legal and financial responsibility for managing the grant funds.
  - Partnerships must submit a memorandum of understanding (MOU) or letter of commitment outlining the roles and responsibilities of each entity.
  - All partners must be individually eligible and in good standing with the appropriate registration authorities as applicable.

## Additional notes

**Fiscal agents:** A fiscal agent, also known as a fiscal sponsor, is the entity responsible for receiving and disbursing the grant funds. This can either be the grant recipient organization or a separate organization designated by the applicant. The fiscal agent must satisfy all registration requirements outlined above. Please note that the grant agreement is non-transferable, meaning it cannot be passed to another entity after the grant is awarded. If the relationship between the grantee and fiscal agent is discontinued, the grant agreement will be terminated. Unlike with a subaward, a fiscal agent does not carry out project tasks or activities, and only manages the financial aspects of the grant. The applicant organization remains fully responsible for completing the project as outlined in the proposal.

**Subawards:** Subawards are not permitted. This means that applicants cannot pass part of the grant funds onto another organization (sub-recipient) to carry out project tasks or activities. The applicant organization must directly carry out the project or activity outlined in their proposal. Consultants and contractors may be engaged for specific services or tasks if they are clearly outlined in the approved work plan and budget. These contractors and consultants are not considered sub-recipients, as they are paid for their services rather than being responsible for completing a portion of the overall project work.

## Collaboration and partnership

Collaboration is not required for this grant, but applicants are encouraged to consider partnerships that enhance the effectiveness of the proposed technical assistance and maximize its impact. Applicants may consider partnerships with organizations such as farmers' groups, lenders, educational institutions, Minnesota CareerForce Centers, and Minnesota Small Business Development Centers (SBDCs) to provide comprehensive support for program participants. The proposal must identify a lead fiscal agent who will be responsible for administering the grant. If collaboration is included in the application, applicants must clearly describe the roles and responsibilities of each partner organization and explain how the collaboration will benefit farmers and improve service delivery.

Please note that sub-awardees are not allowed. Any financial agreements between collaborators must be structured as contracts, consultations, or unpaid partnerships.

## Priorities

It is the policy of the state of Minnesota to ensure fairness, precision, equity and consistency in competitive grant awards. This includes implementing diversity and inclusion in grant-making. [Office of Grants Management \(OGM\) Policy 08-02: Rating Criteria for Competitive Grant Review](#) establishes the expectation that grant programs intentionally identify how the grant serves diverse populations, especially populations experiencing inequities or disparities.

## Target population

Per Minnesota Statutes, section 342.73, OCM's CanGrow farmer training grants support eligible organizations in providing Minnesota farmers with essential tools and guidance to understand what is required to succeed in the legal cannabis industry. While grants are awarded to these organizations, the ultimate beneficiaries are farmers, who will gain access to expert mentorship, compliance training, business planning resources, and more.

In awarding CanGrow technical assistance grants, OCM will give weight to applications from organizations that demonstrate a history of successful technical assistance or navigation services to Minnesota farmers facing barriers to education or employment. OCM will also give weight to applications where the proposed technical assistance will serve areas where long-term residents are eligible to be social equity applicants.

**Social equity applicant criteria per [Minnesota Statutes, section 342.17](#):**

- Has participated in farm operations for at least three years, providing the majority of day-to-day labor and management on a farm with gross sales between \$5,000 and \$100,000 in the previous year.
- Was found delinquent for, received a stay of adjudication for, or was convicted of an offense involving the possession or sale of cannabis or marijuana prior to May 1, 2023.
- Had a parent, guardian, child, spouse, or dependent convicted of an offense involving the possession or sale of cannabis prior to May 1, 2023.
- Was a dependent of someone convicted of an offense involving the possession or sale of cannabis prior to May 1, 2023.
- Is a military veteran, including service-disabled veterans, or current/former members of the National Guard.
- Is a military veteran or National Guard member who lost honorable status due to an offense involving the possession or sale of cannabis.
- Has been a resident for the past five years in areas:
  - That experienced a disproportionately large amount of cannabis enforcement as determined by the study conducted by the office pursuant to [Minnesota Statutes, section 342.04](#), paragraph (b), or another report based on federal or state data on arrests or convictions.
  - Where the poverty rate was 20% or more.
  - Where the median family income did not exceed 80% of the statewide median family income or, if in a metropolitan area, did not exceed the greater of 80% of the statewide median family income or 80% of the median family income for that metropolitan area.
  - Where at least 20% of the households receive assistance through the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP).
  - Where the population has a high level of vulnerability according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry (CDC/ATSDR) Social Vulnerability Index.

**Social Equity verification resources**

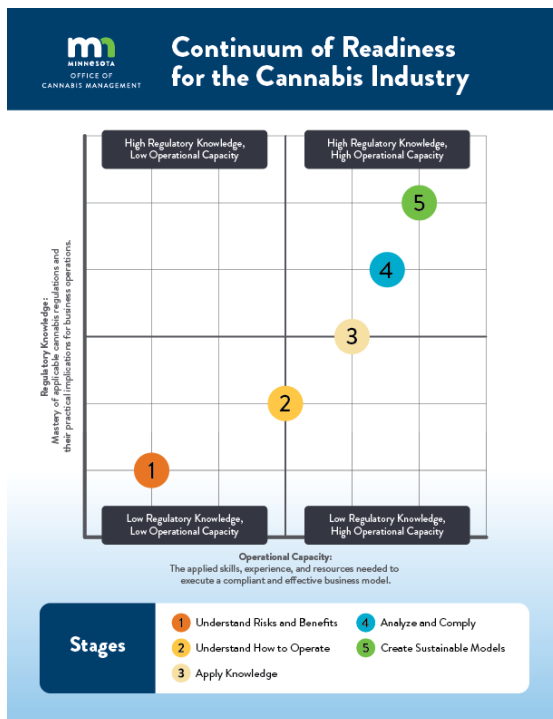
- [OCM Social Equity Map](#)
- [Social Equity Verification Process](#)

## OCM Continuum of Readiness

OCM developed a Continuum of Readiness to help individuals and organizations assess their capacity for success in the cannabis industry. Successful CanGrow grant projects will accelerate farmers' progress along this continuum, resulting in:

- Faster market entry and growth for individuals ready to start or scale a cannabis farming business.
- Cost and risk avoidance for individuals at various stages of readiness.
- Reduced compliance risks, costs, and infractions for cannabis farmers.

The OCM Continuum of Readiness is divided into four quadrants to help determine an organization's and an individual's level of readiness.



**Quadrant 1:** The first quadrant in the lower left represents those wanting to enter the industry but have no to minimal knowledge of the regulatory requirements and have very low operational capacity.

**Quadrant 2:** The second quadrant in the lower right represents those who have operational capacity but little knowledge of the regulatory requirements. Those in the second quadrant may already have a business but want to expand into the cannabis industry.

**Quadrant 3:** The third quadrant in the upper left represents those with a high regulatory knowledge but low operational capacity. This may look like individuals who have worked in the cannabis industry and now want to open their own business.

**Quadrant 4:** The fourth quadrant represents those who are ready to open or have opened their business, as they have high operational capacity and understand the current regulations.

## Project categories

Projects and activities should aim to empower farmers with resources and knowledge to guide their decision-making and reduce barriers to entering or expanding within the legal cannabis market.

In awarding grants, OCM will prioritize projects in one or more of the following categories:

- Cannabis-specific support
- Business planning
- Conservation and legal concerns
- Mentorship and expert assistance

Applicants will be required to identify one category that best describes the primary focus of their proposal.

The example activities listed below are provided for guidance only and do not represent an exhaustive list. Applicants are encouraged to propose projects that address the unique needs of their target audience.

**Cannabis-specific support:** Projects that help farmers understand and navigate the cannabis industry’s regulatory, legal, and operational landscape. Potential projects include:

- **Metrc (Marijuana Enforcement Tracking Reporting Compliance):** Training participants on how the state’s “seed-to-sale” tracking system operates. Note: OCM and the state of Minnesota will **not** provide or facilitate direct access to Metrc systems.
- **Internal Revenue Code section 280E:** Workshops or consultations that help participants understand cannabis-related tax restrictions and plan accordingly.
- **Compliance:** Activities to help farmers meet regulatory requirements for licensing, recordkeeping, testing, packaging, and labeling.
- **Production:** Technical support in cultivation practices, including soil health, integrated pest management, lighting, and sustainable growing methods.
- **Distribution:** Education on legal pathways for product movement, transportation requirements, and relationships with licensed distributors or retailers.
- **Risk management:** Guidance on identifying and mitigating operational, financial, and legal risks in cannabis farming.

**Business planning:** Projects assisting farmers in developing business plans for entering or expanding in the cannabis industry. Potential projects include:

- **Business plans:** Hands-on support to develop or refine business plans, including budgeting, cash flow analysis, and market research.
- **Operating agreements:** Legal and organizational support for structuring partnerships, defining roles and responsibilities, and protecting member interests.
- **Human resources (HR)/organization charts:** Assistance in designing HR policies, staffing plans, and organization charts that support fair, inclusive workplaces.
- **Standard operating procedures (SOPs):** Developing efficient, compliant, and replicable processes for daily operations.
- **Zoning and land use:** Guidance on complying with local zoning ordinances and securing appropriate permits.
- **Fire and safety codes:** Training or assessments to ensure compliance with fire prevention and facility safety standards.
- **Community benefits agreements:** Helping farmers design agreements that demonstrate commitment to local hiring, environmental sustainability, and community reinvestment.

**Conservation and legal concerns:** Projects that help farmers understand environmental obligations and protect their operations through sound legal and conservation practices. Potential projects include:

- **Federal subsidies and risk management:** Education on how participation in cannabis may affect eligibility for federal programs, and strategies to reduce related financial risks.
- **Crop insurance:** Guidance on coverage options and best practices for protecting cannabis crops from loss.
- **OSHA compliance:** Training on workplace safety, employee protections, and hazard communication requirements.
- **Erosion, pollution control, and environmental health protections (EHP):** Workshops or assessments to promote soil conservation, water protection, and pollution prevention.

**Mentorship and expert assistance:** Projects that promote professional growth, networking, and access to specialized expertise. These projects are intended to build supportive learning communities and reduce isolation for emerging cannabis operators, particularly those from communities disproportionately affected by past cannabis enforcement. Potential projects include:

- **Legal consultation:** Access to attorneys or legal clinics offering cannabis-specific advice.
- **Licensing assistance:** Support for navigating state and local licensing processes.
- **Accounting and tax assistance:** Guidance on record-keeping, reporting, and tax compliance.
- **Conferences and professional gatherings:** Support for the organization of or participation in events that promote learning, collaboration, and visibility within the cannabis industry. Examples include:
  - State or regional conferences that bring together growers, processors, and policy experts to share research and best practices.
  - Workshops and symposiums focused on specialized topics such as sustainable cultivation, cooperative business models, or social equity.
  - Networking expos or trade shows that connect emerging operators with experienced professionals, investors, and service providers.
  - Community-based mini-conferences or “learning days” hosted in partnership with local organizations to expand access for underrepresented groups.
  - Travel or presentation support enabling grantees to attend or present at larger state or national conferences to showcase Minnesota’s emerging cannabis community.

## Delivery methods

In awarding grants, OCM will consider projects being delivered using one or more of the following methods:

- Scalable information resources
  - Online video tutorials
  - Handbooks (virtual or print)
  - Train-the-trainer curriculum
- One-on-one technical assistance and navigation services
  - Legal consultation
  - Licensing assistance
  - Accounting and tax assistance
- Education and networking opportunities
  - Conferences
  - Seminars and workshops
  - Classroom-based learning

## Diversity and inclusion

OCM values diversity and inclusion and encourages applications from organizations that demonstrate a commitment to providing equal opportunities for historically underrepresented and marginalized groups. Organizations are encouraged to include relevant metrics or approaches to measure and track diversity and inclusion as part of their project implementation.

## Accessibility standards

When preparing your budget proposal, please ensure it includes funds to cover the costs of providing reasonable accommodations and communication access for all program participants. This includes, but is not limited to:

- Spoken and signed language interpreters for events and meetings
- Closed captioning for videos and webinars
- Accessible venues for events
- Print materials in alternative formats
- Costs associated with creating and maintaining accessible digital content (e.g., voice-overs, closed-captioned videos, accessible websites)
- Any necessary technology or software to facilitate accessibility

## Legal requirements

Grantees must comply with all applicable state and federal laws and regulations, including but not limited to the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and the Minnesota Human Rights Act, which require reasonable accommodations for individuals with disabilities and limited English proficiency.

## Proposal evaluation and finalist selection

A standardized scoring system will be used to describe how the applicant will be rated on the various criteria and used by reviewers to determine the extent to which the applicant meets the criteria. Proposals will be reviewed, scored, and ranked by a committee composed of state and non-state officials, as well as subject matter experts. The committee will provide a recommendation to the director of OCM, who will make the final award decisions.

## Public data

Per [Minnesota Statutes, section 13.599](#), names and addresses of grant applicants and the amount requested will be public data once proposal responses are opened. All remaining data in proposal responses (except trade secret data as defined and classified in [Minnesota Statutes, section 13.37](#)) will be public data after the evaluation process is completed. For the purposes of this grant, data will be considered public when all the grant contract agreements have been fully executed.

All data created or maintained by OCM as part of the evaluation process (except trade secret data as defined and classified in [Minnesota Statutes, section 13.37](#)) will be public data after the evaluation process is completed. For the purposes of this grant, data will be considered public when all the grant contract agreements have been fully executed.

## Selection criteria and weight

The review committee will be reviewing each applicant on a 100-point scale. A standardized scoring system will be used to describe how the applicant will be rated on the various criteria and used by reviewers to determine the extent to which the applicant meets the criteria.

Scoring will be on a 100-point scale across five sections:

- Organization capacity and relevant experience (up to 30 points)
- Project design, methods (up to 20 points)
- Workplan (up to 20 points)
- Outreach, community engagement and community partnerships (up to 10 points)
- Performance, evaluation and reporting (up to 10 points)
- Budget and matching (up to 10 points)

The review panel will evaluate all eligible and complete applications received by the deadline. Proposals will be reviewed, scored, and ranked by a panel of subject matter experts who will provide a recommendation to OCM for final review and award decisions. OCM will review all panel recommendations and is responsible for award decisions. The award decisions of OCM are final and not subject to appeal. OCM reserves the right to change the amount awarded to any selected project.

### **Additional considerations**

- **Past performance:** In accordance with [the Minnesota Department of Administration, Office of Grants Management Policy 08-13](#), past performance on awarded and closed Minnesota state grants will be considered when evaluating proposals for future grants. New grantees will not be held to this policy, and former grantees who have met outcomes as defined in the grant contract will be considered compliant.
- **Proven track record of effective assistance:** Organizations with a demonstrated history of successfully providing farming and business technical assistance or navigation services, particularly to farmers facing barriers.
- **Statewide geographic coverage:** OCM seeks to ensure grant-supported technical assistance opportunities are available across all regions of Minnesota.
- **Leveraging nonstate funds and in-kind contributions:** Applications may be strengthened by including matching funds such as nonstate funds, private donations, or partnerships that enhance the sustainability of the proposed services.
- **Cost-effectiveness and sustainability:** Successful applications will demonstrate cost-effective planning and a sustainable financial model. Preference will be given to organizations that show a clear budget for the proposed services, including any costs for program participants and plans for long-term sustainability.

### **Required financial and capacity forms**

Applicants will be required to complete financial and capacity forms to provide evidence of good standing and capacity to manage grant funds. These forms will not be accessible to community reviewers and will not be evaluated as part of the application review and scoring process.

The submission of inaccurate or misleading information may be grounds for disqualification from the grant contract agreement award and may subject an organization to suspension or debarment proceedings, as well as other remedies available to the state by law.

Refer to the section titled [CanGrow farmer training grant: Application checklist](#) for a list of required forms and document uploads.

## Post-selection requirements

If you are selected for an award from this program, your organization will be required to comply with the following post-selection requirements before a grant agreement contract is executed with your organization.

### Pre-award risk assessment and financial review

Per [Minnesota Statutes, section 6B.981](#), and OGM Policy 08-06: Pre-award Risk Assessment of Potential Grantees, it is required to consider a grant applicant's past performance and financial and operational capacity before awarding grants of \$50,000 or more; OCM will perform a pre-award risk assessment for all grantees before awarding grants of **\$10,000** or more. OCM will request, review, and analyze information, including forms and additional requested documentation, as applicable.

### Background study of principals

If your organization is selected for final consideration, its senior leaders (typically those in roles such as Chief Executive Officer, Executive Director, Board President, etc.) must complete a comprehensive local, state, and national criminal background study. OCM will facilitate this process, which will primarily be conducted by a third-party background screening company. All publicly available information identified during the study will be considered as part of the review. In addition, the state may conduct an open-source and public records review, which may include search engine results, news coverage, and social media activity.

Refer to [Form D: Certification of No Disqualifying Convictions](#) for further details.

The third-party background study will review records from all places where the applicant has lived and/or worked (company headquarters and physical location) for the past seven years. Search details include:

- Identity verification
- Address and Social Security number trace
- Criminal record searches
- County-level criminal record searches
- Statewide criminal searches
- Federal criminal searches
- A nationwide (multi-jurisdictional) criminal database search
- Minnesota-specific searches
- County-level searches through public access terminals
- Review of the Minnesota Judicial Branch, Minnesota Court Records Online
- Search details
- All names provided and discovered, including aliases or previous names
- Criminal records will be verified through primary sources, such as the original court of record
- Reporting will follow all state and federal laws
- Reporting time frame
- All felony convictions (no time limit) as per FCRA, state, county or other applicable law
- Misdemeanor convictions from the past five years

## Grant contract agreement

Each grantee must formally enter into a grant contract agreement. The grant contract agreement will address the conditions of the award, including implementation for the project. Grantees should read the grant contract agreement, sign, and once signed, comply with all conditions of the grant contract agreement. No work on grant activities can begin until a fully executed grant contract agreement is in place and the state's authorized representative has notified the grantee that work may start. The funded applicant will be legally responsible for assuring implementation of the work plan and compliance with all applicable state requirements including worker's compensation insurance, nondiscrimination, data privacy, budget compliance, and reporting. For reference, grant contract agreement templates are available for review at the [Office of Grants Management Policies, Statutes, and Forms/Forms and FAQs tab](#).

## Public posting of authorized representative contact

Pursuant to [Minnesota Statutes, section 16B.98, subd. 5\(d\)](#), grantees must clearly post on the grantee's website the names of, and contact information for, the grantee's leadership and the employee or other person who directly manages and oversees a grant contract agreement on behalf of the grantee.

## Tax identification numbers

OCM grantees are required to have both state and federal tax identification numbers.

## Vendor registration

The state of Minnesota's accounting and procurement system is called [State-Wide Integrated Financial Tools \(SWIFT\)](#). Every organization or subgrantee doing business with the state is considered a vendor. Vendors must be registered with the state of Minnesota. Vendors can interact with the state through the [Supplier Portal](#), which is part of SWIFT. The Supplier Portal allows vendors to sign in and view payment details as well as maintain address and contact information related to their vendor record. For new prospective grantees (vendors), if you are awarded a grant, you will need to register as a vendor via the [Vendor Registration](#) link.

## Other state and federal requirements

OCM grantees must also comply with all applicable state and federal laws and requirements including, but not limited to:

- Worker's compensation
- Affirmative action
- Data privacy
- Equal Employment Opportunity
- The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)
- Voter registration
- Unemployment insurance

## Monitoring and reporting

When awarded funds, grant recipients must maintain good standing by regularly updating OCM on key deliverables and tasks.

CanGrow farmer training grant recipients must report at least quarterly to OCM on the outcomes of the program based on the approved work plan, including but not limited to:

- The number and demographic information of small businesses/entrepreneurs recruited and served.
- The total hours of services provided.
- The number of licenses obtained.
- The number of events and training sessions held.
- Outreach and engagement efforts.

Additional reporting and monitoring requirements include:

- Progress report with initial reimbursement request and subsequent quarterly reports due within 15 calendar days of the end of each quarter.
- Biweekly, monthly, or quarterly reimbursement requests.
- Financial reconciliation upon request.
- OCM site visits upon request.
- Participation in evaluation and data collection efforts assessing the initiative's impact.
- Participation in statewide coordination meetings with other grantees as directed by the state's authorized representative.

## Grant payments

Per the Minnesota Department of Administration Office of Grants Management [Policy on Grant Payments 08-08](#), reimbursement is the preferred method for making grant payments. All grantee requests for reimbursement must correspond to the approved grant budget. Reimbursement requests may be made biweekly, monthly, or quarterly. All initial reimbursement requests must be accompanied by a progress report; subsequent reports will be due within 15 days of quarter end.

OCM will review each request for reimbursement against the approved grant budget, grant expenditures to date, and the latest grant progress report before approving payment. Grant payments will not be made on grants with past due progress reports unless OCM has given the grantee a written extension.

## Grantee bidding requirements

### Nongovernmental organizations and for-profit businesses

Any grant-funded services and/or materials that are expected to cost:

1. Between \$25,000 and \$99,999 must be competitively awarded based on a minimum of three (3) verbal quotes or bids.
2. Between \$10,000 and \$24,999 must be competitively awarded based on a minimum of two (2) verbal quotes or bids or awarded to a targeted vendor.

The grantee must take all necessary affirmative steps to ensure that targeted vendors from businesses with active certifications through these entities are used when possible:

- [State Department of Administration's Certified Targeted Group, Economically Disadvantaged and Veteran-Owned Vendor List](#)
- Metropolitan Council's Targeted Vendor list: [Minnesota Unified Certification Program](#)
- Small Business Certification Program through Hennepin County, Ramsey County, City of Minneapolis, and City of St. Paul: [Central Certification Program](#)

The grantee must maintain:

- Written standards of conduct covering conflicts of interest and governing the actions of its employees engaged in the selection, award and administration of contracts.
- Support documentation of the purchasing and/or bidding process utilized to contract services in their financial records, including support documentation of verbal quotes or bids and justifying a single/sole source bid, if applicable.

The grantee must not contract with vendors who are suspended or debarred in Minnesota: [Suspended/Debarred Vendor Information](#).

For grant-funded projects that include construction work of \$25,000 or more, prevailing wage rules apply per [Minnesota Statutes, sections 177.41](#) through [177.44](#). These rules require that the wages of laborers and workers should be comparable to wages paid for similar work in the community as a whole.

## **Municipalities**

Grantees that are municipalities must follow:

1. The contracting and bidding requirements in the Uniform Municipal Contracting Law as defined in [Minnesota Statutes, section 471.345](#)
2. The requirements of prevailing wage for grant-funded projects that include construction work of \$25,000 or more, per [Minnesota Statutes, sections 177.41](#) through [177.44](#) These rules require that the wages of laborers and workers should be comparable to wages paid for similar work in the community as a whole.

The grantee must not contract with vendors who are [suspended or debarred in Minnesota](#).

## **Audits**

Per [Minnesota Statutes, section 16B.98, subdivision 8](#), the grantee's books, records, documents, and accounting procedures and practices of the grantee or other party that are relevant to the grant or transaction are subject to examination by the commissioner of Administration, the state granting agency, the state auditor, the attorney general, and the legislative auditor as appropriate. This requirement will last for a minimum of six years from the grant contract agreement end date, receipt, and approval of all final reports, or the required period of time to satisfy all state and program retention requirements, whichever is later.

## Allowable expenses

CanGrow farmer training grant funds may be used for either developing or providing resources relevant to the regulatory structure of the legal cannabis industry. Please note that while staff time spent on grant activities is an allowable expense, this specific grant is capped at \$100,000. OCM encourages grant applicants to consider proposing project activities that are supplemental to existing services.

Expenses directly related to delivering grant objectives may include staff time (including fringe benefits), in-state travel, equipment, supplies, and contractual costs. These items should be included in the budget as specific budget line items.

- **Personnel and fringe benefits:** Salary costs based on time spent on allowable grant activities.
- **In-state travel:** In-state travel costs are allowed under this program with workplan approval. Out-of-state and international travel is not an allowable cost under this program. Minnesota will be considered the home state for determining whether travel is out of state.
- **Equipment:** Equipment that is generally defined as durable items with a useful life of more than one year may be allowed as a grant expense if it aligns and supports one or more priority areas outlined in this RFP and is necessary to conduct proposed project activities.
- **Supplies:** Supplies (also known as consumables) are allowed for approved program activities. This may include promotional items, printing costs, snacks/beverages for program participants, etc.
- **Contractual:** Costs associated with contracting a vendor are allowed with an approved workplan. Contractual costs may include space rental, interpreting/translation, catering for training, childcare for training participants, training providers, plan development, etc.
- **Administrative costs:** Pursuant to [Minnesota Statutes, section 16B.98, subdivision 1](#), the grantee agrees to minimize administrative costs as a condition of this grant. To comply with Minnesota Statutes, section 16B.98, subdivision 1, no more than 10% of the total project budget can be dedicated to administrative costs. Expenses not directly related to delivering grant objectives but necessary to support this grant-funded program are considered administrative costs. Administrative costs may include a portion of the following expenses: accounting, human resources, IT support, other general office expenses, executive or supervisory salaries and fringe, rent, facilities maintenance costs, utilities, fleet vehicles, etc.

## Unallowable expenses

Ineligible expenses, both direct and administrative, include but are not limited to:

- Fundraising
- Taxes, except sales tax on goods and services, and employer contributions to social security
- Lobbyists, lobbying activities, political contributions
- Bad debts, late payment fees, finance charges, or contingency funds
- Parking or traffic violations
- Out-of-state transportation and travel expenses (Minnesota will be considered the home state for determining whether travel is out of state)

OCM reserves the right to offset overpayments and disallowances by reducing a subsequent cash payment or requiring repayment of costs.

## Affirmative Action and non-discrimination requirements for all grantees

The grantee agrees not to discriminate against any employee or applicant for employment because of race, color, creed, religion, national origin, sex, marital status, status in regard to public assistance, membership or activity in a local commission, disability, sexual orientation, or age in regard to any position for which the employee or applicant for employment is qualified per [Minnesota Statutes, section 363A.02](#). The grantee agrees to take affirmative steps to employ, advance in employment, upgrade, train, and recruit minority persons, women, and persons with disabilities.

The grantee must not discriminate against any employee or applicant for employment because of physical or mental disability regarding any position for which the employee or applicant for employment is qualified. The grantee agrees to take affirmative action to employ, advance in employment, and otherwise treat qualified disabled persons without discrimination based upon their physical or mental disability in all employment practices such as the following: employment, upgrading, demotion or transfer, recruitment, advertising, layoff or termination, rates of pay or other forms of compensation, and selection for training, including apprenticeship ([Minnesota Rules, part 5000.3500](#)).

The grantee agrees to comply with the rules and relevant orders of the Minnesota Department of Human Rights issued pursuant to the Minnesota Human Rights Act.

## Voter registration requirement

The grantee will comply with [Minnesota Statutes, section 201.162](#) by providing voter registration services for its employees and for the public served by the grantee.

## Accessibility and accommodations

OCM is committed to making the grant application process accessible to all potential applicants. If you require accommodations to participate fully in this process, please contact us at [grants.OCM@state.mn.us](mailto:grants.OCM@state.mn.us).

We are prepared to provide the following accommodations:

- **Alternative formats:** Application materials in large print, audio, electronic, or other formats.
- **Mailed application:** Acceptance of mailed applications.
- **Language assistance:** Translation and interpretation services for non-English speakers.
- **Assistance with submission:** Support with submitting your application, including help with online forms or technical issues.
- **Additional support:** Other reasonable accommodations needed to ensure full participation.

Please notify us as soon as possible of any accommodation needs so we can best support you throughout the application process. Note: An extension to the due date and time is not an option.

## Conflicts of interest

State grant policy requires that steps and procedures are in place to prevent individual and organizational conflicts of interest, both in reference to applicants and reviewers per [Minnesota Statutes, section 16B.98, subdivisions 2-3](#) and [08-01 Conflict of Interest in State Grant-Making Policy](#).

Organizational conflicts of interest occur when:

- A grantee's objectivity in carrying out the grant is impaired or compromised due to competing duties or loyalties.
- A grantee, potential grantee or grant applicant has an unfair competitive advantage through being furnished unauthorized proprietary information or source selection information that is not available to all competitors.

In cases where a conflict of interest is in question or disclosed, the applicants or grantees will be notified and actions may be pursued, including but not limited to, revising the grant work plan or grantee duties to mitigate the risk, requesting the grant applicant to submit an organizational conflict of interest mitigation plan, disqualification from eligibility for the grant award, amending the grant, or termination of the grant contract agreement.

## Right of cancellation

The state reserves the right to cancel this solicitation. The state reserves the right to negotiate modifications to the application or to reject any and all applications received as a result of this request for proposals. The state does not intend to award a grant contract agreement solely on the basis of any response made to this request, or pay for information solicited or obtained.

## CanGrow farmer training grant: Application checklist

Applications must comply with all instructions, conditions, and requirements outlined in this RFP. Applicants are expected to review all materials thoroughly. Failure to follow submission requirements may result in disqualification at the State's discretion. Proposals must address all required services and agree to the contract conditions described in the RFP.

To be considered complete, CanGrow farmer training grant applicants must fill out all required fields in the online application and upload the following materials when prompted:

- [Online application content](#)
- Upload A: CanGrow Farmer Training Grant Project Narrative
- [Form B: Budget](#)
- [Form C: Affidavit of Non-Collusion](#)
- [Form D: Certification of No Disqualifying Convictions](#)
- [Form E: Nonprofit Grantee Documents](#) (if applicable)
- [Form F: For-Profit Required Documents, Lien Disclosure, and Certification](#) (if applicable)
- [Form G: Capacity responses](#)
- [Form H: Certification that the entity is not suspended or debarred by the State of Minnesota or the federal government](#)

Incomplete applications will not be evaluated. Do not submit unrequested materials, as they will not be reviewed. Applications submitted by mail without an approved accommodation will be rejected.

OCM reserves the right to reject any application that fails to meet these requirements. By submitting an application, the applicant certifies that all information provided is true, complete, and accurate. Submission of false or misleading information may result in disqualification, suspension or debarment, and other remedies as provided by law.

## Application submission

All applications must be received by 4:30 p.m. CDT on ~~June 1~~ July 13, 2026. Late submissions will not be considered. Paper applications will only be accepted with an approved accommodation request received no later than ~~May 19~~ June 29, 2026 (see: [ADA Notice](#)). Applicants are responsible for all costs incurred in preparing and submitting their proposals. **Eligible organizations may submit only one application in response to this RFP.**

## Review process and timeline

CanGrow farmer training grant awards will be determined through a competitive review process. Applications will be evaluated by a review committee composed of subject matter experts, community representatives with lived experience, and state employees with relevant regional and program knowledge. The review committee will use the point scale described in this RFP to evaluate all eligible and complete applications received by the deadline. Reviewers will meet to discuss proposals and develop funding recommendations based on the evaluation criteria. OCM will review the committee's recommendations and make final award decisions. All award decisions made by OCM are final and not subject to appeal. Applicants will be notified of their award status by email.

Selected grantees may only incur eligible expenditures after the grant contract agreement has been fully executed and the grant has reached its effective date.

## Timeline

- April 9, 2026 RFP posted on the OCM website
- ~~May 19~~ June 29, 2026 Requests for accommodations due
- ~~May 26~~ July 7, 2026 Questions due no later than 4:30 p.m. CDT
- ~~June 1~~ July 13, 2026 Applications due no later than 4:30 p.m. CDT

## Estimated dates:

- ~~July 15~~, August 2026 Committee begins review of applications
- ~~Aug. 1~~, September 2026 Selected applicants may undergo pre-award risk assessment
- ~~Oct. 1, 2026~~ Early winter 2026-27 Grant agreements executed and grant activities begin
- ~~Sept. 30~~, Winter 2027-28 Grant period ends

## Attachments and resources

Item	Instructions
CanGrow Farmer Training Grant Online Application	<p>Complete online application and upload required materials at <a href="https://mn.gov/ocm/cangrow-training-application/">https://mn.gov/ocm/cangrow-training-application/</a>.</p> <p>Use the <a href="https://mn.gov/ocm/cangrow-training-app-guide/">CanGrow Farmer Training Grant Application Guide</a> (<a href="https://mn.gov/ocm/cangrow-training-app-guide/">https://mn.gov/ocm/cangrow-training-app-guide/</a>) to prepare your online application.</p>
Appendix: CanGrow Farmer Training Grant Application Guide	Do not upload. Use to prepare for the online application.
Upload A: Project Narrative	Complete all responses to the questions listed on the online application in one document and upload as a PDF or Word document.
Form B: Grant Budget	Complete using <a href="https://mn.gov/ocm/grant-form-B/">template</a> ( <a href="https://mn.gov/ocm/grant-form-B/">https://mn.gov/ocm/grant-form-B/</a> ) and upload to the online application.
Form C: Affidavit of non-collusion	<p>Complete using <a href="https://mn.gov/ocm/grant-form-C/">template</a> (<a href="https://mn.gov/ocm/grant-form-C/">https://mn.gov/ocm/grant-form-C/</a>), notarize by due date, scan, and upload to the online application.</p> <p>Keep notarized copy on file and produce upon request.</p>
Form D: Certification of No Disqualifying Convictions	Complete using <a href="https://mn.gov/ocm/grant-form-D/">template</a> ( <a href="https://mn.gov/ocm/grant-form-D/">https://mn.gov/ocm/grant-form-D/</a> ) and upload to the online application.
Form E: Nonprofit Grantee Documents as Applicable	<p><i>Required only for nonprofit applicants.</i></p> <p>Complete using <a href="https://mn.gov/ocm/grant-form-E/">template</a> (<a href="https://mn.gov/ocm/grant-form-E/">https://mn.gov/ocm/grant-form-E/</a>) and upload to the online application.</p>
Form F: For-Profit Required Documents, Lien Disclosure, and Certification	<p><i>Required only for for-profit applicants.</i></p> <p>Complete using <a href="https://mn.gov/ocm/grant-form-F/">template</a> (<a href="https://mn.gov/ocm/grant-form-F/">https://mn.gov/ocm/grant-form-F/</a>) and upload to the online application.</p>
Form G: Capacity responses	Complete using <a href="https://mn.gov/ocm/grant-form-G/">template</a> ( <a href="https://mn.gov/ocm/grant-form-G/">https://mn.gov/ocm/grant-form-G/</a> ) and upload to the online application.
Form H: Certification that the entity is not suspended or debarred by the State of Minnesota or the federal government	Complete using <a href="https://mn.gov/ocm/grant-form-H/">template</a> ( <a href="https://mn.gov/ocm/grant-form-H/">https://mn.gov/ocm/grant-form-H/</a> ) and upload to the online application.