



## **Regional Food Recovery Hub Grant Program FAQ**

Updated: May 18, 2023

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### **The City my organization is located in is not listed specifically among the three regions. Is our organization ineligible for the grant?**

Your organization is not required to be located in one of the participating cities to be eligible. To be eligible for a grant, applicants must meet the minimum mandatory requirements (MMR):

- Food recovery organization (FRO) or food recovery service (FRS) currently collecting, or with the ability to collect food from edible food generators (EFGs) in at least one of the regions of the SGV (as noted in the Opportunity section), and
- Tax-exempt organization under Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code OR be fiscally sponsored by a 501(c)(3) OR partner with a 501(c)(3) as the lead applicant, and
- Experience in surplus food recovery/redistribution, and
- Commitment to partner with the SGVCOG, local FROs/FRSs, pantries and feeding sites to support existing programs and potential connections to other related programs.

### **If our organization is not listed in one of the participating cities, is it given the same weight as other applicants?**

Your organization is not required to be located in one of the participating cities to be eligible. SGVCOG staff will review submitted applications in accordance with the application criteria to determine an applicant's ability to create and potentially sustain and replicate a hub that increases regional surplus food redistribution. The scoring criteria is as follows:

- Organization Information = 10 points available
- Existing Food Redistribution Program = 30 points available
- Hub Vision = 30 points available
- Alignment with Project Objectives/Outcomes = 30 points available

### **We only distribute food in one city, though people come from other cities to receive food, are we eligible for this grant?**

The purpose of the grant is to develop food recovery hubs that will expand regional food recovery efforts to recover additional surplus food for distribution and/or redistribution to smaller organizations and community members facing food insecurity. The objective is to facilitate recovery of food from EFGs in the participating cities, and provide food to people who live in, and nearby, those cities. Strong applications will demonstrate an organization's ability to collect food from and distribute food to participating cities in the region.

### **What is expected in terms of increasing capacity to recover & distribute food? Are you looking for a particular percentage increase or number of pounds recovered?**

There is not a particular amount of food selected organizations are required to recover through this grant. As part of the application, applicants must include project goals and define what success looks like to highlight how this funding will help increase your organization's ability to recover and distribute food.

**Is there a certain amount of space required (refrigerated and/or non-refrigerated) in order to be considered for the grant?**

No, however our intention with this is that you would be able to recover or receive, break down, and redistribute potentially large amounts of donated food. So it would be useful to show how you are able to do that within your current space constraints.

**Is there a certain amount of food (pounds) or number of people that must be served weekly or monthly in order to be eligible?**

There is not a specific amount of food, whether in pounds or meals, that must be served on a weekly or monthly basis. In fact, we are looking mostly at the pounds of food you will be able to recover and redistribute, and are not requiring hubs to be actively involved in meal service.

**How much funding is available, and how will this funding be split amongst the applicants?**

Applicants can apply for up to the maximum amount of available funding, which is \$190,000. However, award amounts should be justified in your application funding request as it pertains to increasing food capacity and recovery in the three regions.

**What are the record keeping and reporting requirements?**

Reporting requirements are listed in the last section of the application. Reporting will need to satisfy the requirements of California SB 1383 as well as provide metrics that allow the SGVCOG to evaluate the program’s success and possible expansion. Applicants must confirm if they are able to provide the following information on a quarterly basis:

- Tons of food collected from each EFG (separate from any existing tonnage collected by your food recovery operation)
- Type of food (e.g., meat & seafood, packaged goods, produce, etc.) collected from each EFG
- List of new and expanded EFG relationships with addresses
- List of new and expanded distribution to organizations/pantries with addresses
- List of new direct to community distribution sites with number of individuals served
- Support provided to smaller organizations/pantries (if any)
- Additional resources needed to sustain/grow efforts past the initial grant period.

**I work with a small pantry but want to be a part of the hub development process to improve the regional distribution of recovered food. What are my options?**

One goal of this effort is to connect small-to-medium sized nonprofits and pantries with the larger “hub” so they can receive recovered food to distribute to their community members. The SGVCOG will host at least one workshop in the summer to connect these smaller organizations with the hub entity they can partner and engage with to receive recovered food.

Alternatively, these small organizations can also connect with larger organizations applying for the program to co-apply for the grant awards. If interested in coapplying and would like to be connected to lead applicants, please contact Mackenzie Bolger ([mbolger@sgvcog.org](mailto:mbolger@sgvcog.org)) ASAP.

**Is this only for those wanting to be a hub, or can others apply for equipment that would be useful at a smaller scale?**

These funds are specifically geared toward organizations or partnerships of organizations that want to be a hub. For smaller organizations, we intend to connect you with the larger hub. These small organizations can also connect with larger organizations applying for the program to co-apply for the grant awards.

We are also planning to submit a regional application to the California Department of Food and Agriculture Healthy Refrigeration Grant Program (HRGP) to help secure / replace fridges and freezers for food recovery programs and entities. If you are interested in joining the SGVCOG's HRGP regional application and/or interested in coapplying to the SGVCOG Food Recovery Hub Grant Program and would like to be connected to lead applicants, please reach out to Mackenzie Bolger ([mbolger@sgvcog.org](mailto:mbolger@sgvcog.org)) as soon as possible.

**For the organizations that are awarded funds, how will funding be dispersed?**

- Equipment or vehicles will be purchased by the SGVCOG.
- Funds for facility improvements, such as electrical, plumbing, engineering costs, site preparation, installation, kitchen design and construction will be reimbursed to the organization.
- Funds for staff salaries, technology and training will be reimbursed to the organization.
- Funds for other items will be determined with awardees.

**If equipment is owned by the city, will my organization need to make lease payments for that equipment?**

No. The SGVCOG will purchase the equipment and it will be owned by the City, but it will be loaned to the organization.

**Is this a one-time injection of funds? Is there a plan to sustain the selected hubs beyond this grant program?**

As of now there is no guaranteed future funding so this is a one time disbursement of funds. However, the SGVCOG is looking to apply for and leverage other funding sources that may provide additional support to the selected hub(s) and allow for future grant application opportunities for food recovery organizations.

We are also planning to submit a regional application to the California Department of Food and Agriculture Healthy Refrigeration Grant Program. If you are interested in obtaining a fridge or freezer through this program, please reach out to Mackenzie Bolger ([mbolger@sgvcog.org](mailto:mbolger@sgvcog.org)) as soon as possible.

**Is the plan to recover from Tier 2s next year? What is the plan to keep the word out to Tier 2s, such as schools?**

Yes. Organizations do not need to currently be recovering from Tier 2s, but can be. For next year, we want to work with hubs to help them begin to recover prepared foods from Tier 2s. We are currently conducting outreach to Tier 2 businesses and schools through our inspection and

outreach program as well as through workshops we host. For more information on the inspection and outreach program, please reach out to Mackenzie Bolger ([mbolger@sgvcog.org](mailto:mbolger@sgvcog.org))

**Do you require external financial audits? Or are internal documents acceptable?**

We will not require documentation of external financial audit documents. Internal documentation will suffice. Supporting documentation will be required for the disbursement of funds, and these requirements will be outlined in the funding agreement with the selected hub(s). In order to disburse funds, the SGVCOG will need to review and approve supporting documentation pertaining to the performance of the grant.

**What does the technical assistance / support from the SGVCOG team and the consultants include?**

The SGVCOG and consultants will be able to provide support matching with EFGs, executing contracts, obtaining software, selecting equipment, etc. The application allows room for applicants to identify what types of assistance would be beneficial. The SGVCOG also administers a workforce development program which provides paid job training, case management support, and wrap-around services for a variety of workforce opportunities for adults and transition-age youth experiencing, or at risk of experiencing, homelessness. Through this program, the SGVCOG may also be able to provide additional support to the hub(s).