

**OFFICE OF THE DEPUTY MAYOR FOR PLANNING AND ECONOMIC  
DEVELOPMENT**

**NOTICE OF FUNDING AVAILABILITY**

**FY24 Resilient Food System Infrastructure Fund**

**Request for Application (RFA) Release Date: Friday, March 15, 2024**

**RFA Identification: FY24-RFSI**

**Background:**

The Office of the Deputy Mayor for Planning and Economic Development (“**DMPED**”) is soliciting grant applications from qualified private financial organizations to serve as the program administrator (“**Program Administrator**”) for the Resilient Food System Infrastructure Fund (“**Fund**”). The purpose of the Fund is to support and administer coordinated initiatives to build resilience across the middle-of-the-food-supply-chain and strengthen local and regional food systems by creating new revenue streams for District businesses. The Program Administrator will work with DMPED to implement the United States Department of Agriculture (“**USDA**”) Resilient Food System Infrastructure Grant Program (“**RFSI Program**”) in accordance with the District’s State Plan (pending approval from the USDA).

**Purpose:**

USDA funds offer an opportunity for DMPED to support the growth and development of food system infrastructure, which has been identified as a critical need for small and medium food businesses. Many lack the necessary access to co-packing and co-manufacturing facilities to scale operations, make investments in their staff, and access larger regional, national, and international marketplaces. Additionally, there are several distributors in the District focused on aggregating products from local growers who have identified a need for investment in physical space to expand their distribution to institutional buyers and individual customers. Receiving investment from the Fund will enable these food businesses and non-profits to develop the necessary facilities, purchase equipment, and invest in the growth of the District’s food system infrastructure. These investments will support DMPED’s goals of creating a more robust and resilient food system and increase the ability to combat food waste, increase local food access for its residents and businesses, and drive job and wage growth.

DMPED will select a private third-party organization to serve as a Program Administrator to manage and administer the Fund. The Program Administrator will provide grants and technical assistance to businesses operating in the middle-of-the-food-supply-chain to achieve the goals of the RFSI Program and fulfill all reporting and compliance requirements of the USDA and DMPED.

**Note:** This application is only for the Program Administrator, not for businesses seeking direct investment. The Program Administrator will be responsible for managing and administering the grant program in compliance with District and federal requirements.

**Eligible applicants:**

DMPED invites applications from Program Administrators with expertise in investing in small and medium food businesses and success in strengthening local food systems. Applications should show that the Program Administrator is capable of structuring, administering, funding, and managing a fund in Washington, DC.

Additional details about eligibility and criteria for selecting applicants will be included in the RFA.

**Available Funding:**

Subject to the approval of the District's State Plan by USDA, it is anticipated that DMPED will receive a total of \$2,000,000 in USDA funding. Pending receipt of such funds, it is planned that DMPED will disburse these funds to an approved Program Administrator in quarterly tranches. Up to 10% of the grant funds may be used for administrative costs by the Program Administrator. The remainder of funds shall be deployed in the form of competitive grants for middle-of-the-supply-chain infrastructure activities and equipment to eligible entities.

**Grant Information Session:** DMPED will host a virtual information session for interested applicants. Please check the <https://dmped.dc.gov/> website for more details.

**Contact Name:** DMPED Grants Team **Phone:** (202) 727-6365 **Email:** [dmped.grants@dc.gov](mailto:dmped.grants@dc.gov)

**Availability of RFA:** The RFA and grant application will be released on Friday, March 15, 2024, and posted at <https://dmped.dc.gov/>.

**Application Process:** The application process will include an initial screening of applicants, a review panel process, and a final review to determine the final funding decision. Each step will be further described in the RFA.

**Grant Application Deadline for Electronic Submission:** Applicants must submit a completed online application to DMPED via the Grant Vantage system no later than 5:00 PM/ET on Monday, April 15, 2024.

**Period of Performance:** The grantee's performance under the Program shall extend from the execution of the grant agreement with DMPED through September 30, 2027.