



## The Future of Food Security in Stark County Request for Proposals

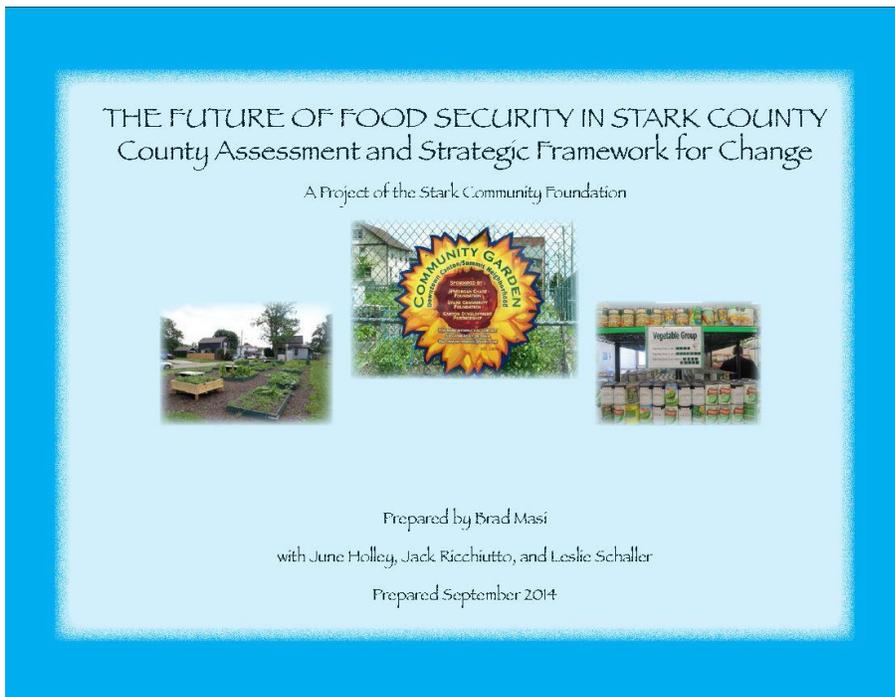
*Revised February 2017*

### Application Guidelines and Instructions

#### I. Background

Stark Community Foundation is leading the effort to address food insecurity in Stark County by conducting an analysis of current food security efforts and ultimately to create a framework for addressing food security that mixes healthy food access, community education and economic development.

As defined by the U.S. Department of Agriculture, food insecurity is “a measure of a lack of regular access to enough food for an active healthy life for all household members and limited or uncertain availability of nutritionally adequate foods.” In Stark County 15.3% of the population (57,730 people) and 23.8% of children (20,650) are considered “food insecure”, according to 2015 figures.



In December 2013, Stark Community Foundation commissioned a study about food insecurity in Stark County in order to gain a deeper understanding of the role of food in developing a secure, healthy and economically vital community. The Future of Food Security in Stark County: County Assessment and Strategic Framework for Change was released publicly in January 2015.

The first round of grants was awarded in August 2015.

Highlights from the report examine the following:

- Food Security Challenges- key drivers, health impacts, and agricultural capacity;
- Food Security Networks and Response Capacity- organizational review, survey results, network mapping;
- Future of Food Security- summary of results of community forums and participatory meetings;
- Strategic Framework- review of recommended core capacities and flagship projects.

While funding opportunities may exist for food security efforts (particularly through federal grant streams), it is our intention for local foundation funding to leverage additional impact. As part of the Foundations pro-active grantmaking activities, this RFP is being released to allow organizations in this realm to take their work to the next level.

## **II. Basis**

SCF is interested in investing in food system projects that are at the community (e.g. multi-neighborhood, city, county, or regional) level. We are not looking to fund individual organizations working in isolation.

Desired projects will noticeably improve a community or regional effort's ability to achieve its goals and objectives and increase community impact with a one-year planning grant or an implementation grant.

Projects must produce significant impact in at least two of three areas of interest:

1. advancing community education;
2. creating economic development opportunities;
3. increasing healthy food access.

As stated in the report, for this RFP, SCF is looking to support food system projects that will demonstrate the following progress indicators:

### **VIABILITY TESTING**

*Is the initiative viable? Does it show the potential for long-term self-reliance?*

### **HEALTH OUTCOMES**

*Does the overall health of participants improve over time?*

### **LOCAL ECONOMIC IMPACTS**

*Does the project have a positive impact on the local economy?*

### **VITALITY OF NETWORKS**

*Does the project involve a diverse base of stakeholders that bring multiple perspectives, assets, or backgrounds?*

### **FOOD ACCESS**

*Does the project improve the ability of residents to access healthy foods in their immediate community?*

## **FOOD ASSISTANCE**

*Does the project reduce long-term dependency of participants on food assistance?*

## **MULTIPLE FORMS OF CAPITAL**

*Do projects have access to or contribute to a diverse portfolio of community capitals?*

### **III. Examples of Food System Projects**

The Future of Food Security in Stark County RFP is targeting projects in Stark County that are working at the local and/or regional food system levels. Ideally, we are looking for projects with specific measurable outcomes that touch more than one organization, community group, farm, or food business.

The following are a few examples of local/regional food system projects:

- Advancing community awareness about reducing risks of food insecurity through education.
- Creating a partnership between emergency food providers that share distribution resources.
- Expanding access and increasing market for healthy and local foods.
- Improving access to healthy foods through grocery store development/partnerships or creating food co-ops in “food deserts”.
- Operating a network of community kitchens for micro-enterprise development and/or for small businesses to share space, equipment and costs as a way to increase access to local/regional food while addressing training and education issues.
- Providing low-income residents with job training opportunities in agriculture/food industry occupations.

### **IV. Proposal Requirements**

#### **A. Address SCF's Areas of Interest**

Projects should address components of the above stated purpose and at least two of SCF’s three top areas of interest:

1. advancing community education;
2. creating economic development opportunities;
3. increasing healthy food access.

## B. Project strengths

Strong proposals will include:

- a case that a SCF investment at this time will bring a successfully developed project to its next level of impact in addressing food insecurity in all or parts of Stark County;
- clearly presented proposed project and plan for achieving intended results, including specific strategies and objectives;
- ability to use SCF support to leverage additional project funding;
- sustainable funding plans post-SCF investment;
- multi-sector collaboration (potentially including for-profit partnerships) and multiple stakeholders spanning a larger systems-focused geographic area, such as multiple neighborhoods.

## C. Eligibility

Agencies must meet SCF's basic eligibility requirements. Visit our [Policies and Guidelines](#) page for more information.

## D. Proposal Submission

Applications for the second round of funding of The Future of Food Security planning and implementation grants can be accessed from SCF's website beginning May 1, 2017.

### One-year Planning Grants

Applications will open May 1, 2017. Applications will close at 4:30 p.m. on June 16, 2017. The application covers the following:

- Project contact person;
- Summary of the lead organization, its purpose, history, and major programs and activities;
- List of partner organizations that will participate in this planning process;
- Project description. Describe the existing conditions of your local/regional food system or food economy. What are the objectives and goals of conducting planning? How will planning be implemented? What planning outcomes is the planning project expected to achieve to support the local/regional food system or food economy?;
- A timeline highlighting monthly project objectives and the overall goal for the project throughout the planning year;
- Project budget, including other funding sources and how SCF funds will be used.

### Implementation Grants

Applications will open May 1, 2017. Applications will close at 4:30 p.m. on June 16, 2017. The application covers the following:

- List of project partners and what roles and commitments they bring to the project;
- Key staff qualifications;
- Project contact person;
- Summary of the lead organization, its purpose, history, and major programs and activities;
- Explain how project relates to SCF's interest in sustainable food systems;
- Beginning date of project;
- Length of project;
- Description of community need and benefit;
- Project description (including goals, objectives and outcomes);
- A timeline indicating milestones for project implementation, and include documentation that demonstrates the planning process up to this point;
- What areas will your project serve and/or take place in;
- Detailed project budget, including amount received or committed thus far;
- Financial History.

Note: If requesting multi-year funding, the project budget must include projected revenue and expenses covering all potential SCF grant years, **plus one additional year post-SCF funding.**

*If you need assistance with the online grant application process, please e-mail SCF's grants administration department at [djohnson@starkcf.org](mailto:djohnson@starkcf.org) or call 330-454-3426.*

## **V. Awards**

### Planning Grants

One-year planning grants up to a maximum of \$15,000 per project (note: receiving a planning grant is not a guarantee of future funding from SCF for a full project). Planning grant funds can be used for staff planning time, consultants, market research, economic analyses, etc.

SCF will consider one-year planning grants for projects that demonstrate further opportunity, but need additional research and planning to be ready for a more significant investment.

Planning processes should reflect collaborative/multi-organization efforts with one lead organization designated to apply for SCF funds.

## **Implementation Grants**

Implementation grants can be one-to-three years with a maximum award of \$100,000 per project.

SCF will consider multi-year implementation grants with a more significant investment for projects that are poised to expand capacity in a community.

Implementation projects should reflect collaborative/multi-organization efforts with one lead organization designated to apply for SCF funds.

*These grant dollars remain a competitive grant process in order to focus in several communities and to encourage collaboration amongst organizations.*

## **VI. Timelines**

Planning and Implementation Grants

2017 RFP issued: March 3, 2017

Application Open: May 1, 2017

Deadline: June 16, 2017

Grant decisions: August 2017

*SCF reserves the right to deviate from this schedule.*

## Frequently Asked Questions

How do we know we are qualified to apply?

*SCF is looking for food system projects that are thoroughly developed and ready to benefit from implementation funding. We are also interested in funding communities who are still in the planning and development stages.*

Will multiple proposals be considered from the same community?

*Yes. However, the strongest proposals will reflect coordination and community-based planning that avoids duplication, effectively uses resources, and demonstrates strategic goals.*

If multiple community partners are involved, who should apply?

*Select one lead nonprofit 501(c)(3) organization, tax-exempt private agency or local government entity to handle program and fiscal management. However, funding may be used to support the project activities of other community organizations (not individuals). All partner organizations and contact information must be included in the application.*

Our organization is not a 501(c)(3). Can we use another organization's 501(c)(3) or a fiscal agent to submit a Future of Food Security grant?

*No, we do not permit the use of fiscal agents for this grant opportunity. A 501(c)(3) organization, tax-exempt private agency or local government entity must adopt the project as its own, with its board assuming legal and fiscal responsibility, and submit its own application as lead for the project.*

Would someone at SCF meet with us to discuss our proposal ideas?

*We prefer not to meet with applicants before a proposal is submitted. If you have a question about the application process you can contact Dana Johnson, grants administrator, at [djohnson@starkcf.org](mailto:djohnson@starkcf.org) or 330-454-3426.*

Can an organization that currently has an active grant from SCF apply?

*Yes. The Future of Food Security RFP is a separate funding opportunity.*

Does having a Future of Food Security grant from SCF preclude an organization from applying for another grant opportunity?

*No, organizations who receive a Future of Food Security grant can apply for funding within the Foundation's other grant opportunities. Receipt of a Future of Food Security grant does not guarantee future SCF funding.*

Does an organization need to be a previous SCF grant recipient to apply for this RFP?

*No, lead/partner organizations do not need to be previous SCF grant recipients.*