



Department of Planning & Community & Economic Development

Economic Development Division

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Office of Business Resources
Office of Real Estate Services

Memo: 2026 SEED Grants Funding Recommendation

Date: Wednesday, March 18, 2026

To: Members of the Madison Food Policy Council

From: Members of the SEED Grants Review Team
George Reistad, Business Development Specialist
Nick Heckman, Food Systems & Food Security Coordinator

Members of the Madison Food Policy Council,

Below are the recommendations for 2026 SEED Grants funding. Seven proposals were ultimately recommended for funding via a thorough deliberation process that included 3-member review teams to score and evaluate proposals and a group discussion on recommendation strategies. Please note that in total, 22 applications were submitted, requesting \$166,204 in total funding and the SEED Grants funding authority for 2026 is \$50,000.

This year, many worthy projects were unable to be funded because community demand outstripped available budget. These include pantry and emergency food systems supports for high need and unhoused populations, healthy feeding programs for post-partum mothers, education and engagement projects, to name but a few. The 2026 SEED Grant application cycle, like every year before it, clearly illustrates that there are very high levels of community food systems needs within our city.

Please see below for Review Team's funding recommendations:

“EMCC Universally Accessible Community Garden”, *East Madison Community Center, Inc.*

- Up to \$7,338 to fund:
 - Accessible garden beds buildout

“Orchard Ridge Food Pantry and Community Garden Fence Replacement”, *Orchard Ridge United Church of Christ*

- Up to \$500 to fund:
 - Garden fencing Supplies

“Supporting Healthy Families Community Gardens”, *Urban Triage*

- Up to \$8,932 to fund:
 - Project costs associated with the community garden and community fridge launch

“Strengthening Volunteer Coordination to Improve Community Access to Fresh Produce”, *Madison Area Food Pantry Gardens*

- Up to \$6,434 to fund:
 - Volunteer Coordinator staff position

“Food Security Program”, Vera Court Neighborhood Center

- Up to \$8,932 to fund:
 - Project costs for the Food Security Program

“Refocused ePantry Online Ordering Program”, River Food Pantry

- Up to \$8,932 to fund:
 - Food purchases for the ePantry Online Ordering Program

“Expanding Healthy Food Access During the Non-Growing Season”, Allied Food Pantry (fiscal – Good Shepherd Lutheran Church Madison and Verona Inc.)

- Up to \$8,932 to fund:
 - Food purchases from ‘Clean, Fresh Food’ for the Allied Food Pantry

Sincerely,

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