



First Time Grant Guidelines

Grant Basics

Grow to Learn Mini-Grants range from \$500 to \$2000 and are available to any PreK-12 public or charter school in New York City with a DOE school number. Grants are offered twice a year, once during the Fall growing season, and once in preparation for the Spring growing season. For the 2014-2015 school year, the grant deadlines are November 3rd and February 11th. These dates are subject to change, depending on the calendar year. Check our website for exact deadlines.

In order to apply, schools must register or be registered with Grow to Learn. [For further information, click [here](#)]. Schools are eligible to apply once per year, and must submit:

- The online application (section 8 of the registration form),
- Principal's letter
- Garden map

Grants are awarded to individual schools, not campuses. Individual schools sharing a garden within a campus, or with separate gardens on the same property, are eligible to apply separately. Grow to Learn will only write grant checks to the school or the school's PTA. Grow to Learn grant funds may not be used to fund the administrative and ongoing costs of a non-profit organization involved in the space.

Awards can be used to support all types of gardens, including vegetable/herb gardens, flower/pollinator gardens, ornamental gardens, and others (rainwater, etc). We greatly encourage schools to garden with edibles and/or create gardens that support schools' educational and curricular goals. Grants that communicate these goals will be given precedence.

Compliance and Deadlines

Schools awarded a Grow to Learn Mini-Grant are expected to report on their progress two times. First, schools must submit an interim report at six months after receiving funding. Secondly, schools must submit a final report at one year after receiving funding. For both reports, schools are asked to provide a paragraph detailing their progress and use of funds, a garden "success story" or favorite moment, and a picture.

Furthermore, by applying, schools agree to submit and return all forms and materials by their respective deadlines.

Not Funded

Mini Grants currently do not fund field trips, the use of volunteers, or per session pay for teachers. They also cannot contribute to the salary of garden staff. However, \$100 of the grant may be used to go towards non-garden supplies, excluding food (art/classroom supplies, etc.).

Free Resources

There is an abundance of amazing garden resources from organizations all over New York City! Grow to Learn registered schools are eligible for free soil and lumber from GreenThumb. Many organizations in New York offer free workshops, often with seasonally-appropriate giveaways. Schools that plug into the school gardening scene will have greater access to assistance, skill-building, support, and materials. Schools that show this initiative and/or partner with greening and wellness organizations in the city may be given preference in the grant selection process. For more information on workshops and material giveaways, please check our [events page](#) online or email growtolearn@grownyc.org to request to be added to our email newsletter.

Consultants and Professional Development

Grow to Learn Mini-Grants are intended to directly support schools in creating or expanding school garden projects. Therefore, if the use of a consultant is included in the application, the application must include certain details such as hourly rate, number of hours committed to the project, services rendered, and materials being used. Consultants may only be funded once at a school.

Grow to Learn does fund professional development opportunities for school gardeners. However, we hope that, when gardeners receive funding for training, they take what they've learned -- and any materials gathered -- and share that information with other gardeners at their school. If your school is applying for grant money to fund professional development, please include the course name and/or organization providing the professional development.

Grow to Learn periodically offers workshops on basic garden construction skills, including beginner and advanced bed building, benches, and rainwater harvesting. We encourage schools to attend these workshops and use the skills they've learned on construction projects at their schools. It is likely that, within your school community, there exists the interest, skills, and basic power tools (drill) to build these structures. However, Grow to Learn will fund up to \$250 for basic carpentry projects (beds, benches, storage chests). We suggest making these build days a public event at your school, where you can observe and learn from the paid carpenter!

Some intensive projects, such as a shade structure, hydroponics system, rainwater harvesting system, or specialized beds, may provide more technical skill and expertise. If you believe your school will need more support (financial or staff) on an advanced project, please get in touch with the Grow to Learn staff at growtolearn@grownyc.org. Staff will be able to advise you whether or not your project is entitled to funding above the \$250 limit, how to describe and allocate labor funds in your Mini-Grant application, and may even be able to make suggestions of partner organizations within New York City who can help with your project.

School Voice

While Grow to Learn encourages schools to partner with outside organizations on their garden projects, we also require that each application for a Mini-Grant display the applying school's unique voice. In other words, the grant should be written by the school (teachers, staff, or

parents of students attending the school), and partner organizations planning on contributing to the garden may lend a hand during the writing and planning process.