ILLINOIS LOCAL FOOD INFRASTRUCTURE GRANT
CSFA NUMBER 406-01-3252
RESPONSE TO APPLICANT QUESTIONS

Questions received from March 11, 2026 after 4:00 PM (CST) to
March 18, 2026 at 4:00 PM (CST)

Date Submitted: 3/12/2026

Question:

I am working on trying to apply for the Illinois Local Food Infrastructure Grant and keep running into a 403 forbidden access error. I am not even able to get to the application. I have filled out a SAM.gov and GATA Grantee Portal account however when I try the IL.amplifund.com I get the same error. I have deleted all cache and cookies on the computer but am still getting nowhere. Can you please provide assistance?

Response:

For further assistance, please refer to the Euna Grants powered by Amplifund support area: https://il-amplifund.zendesk.com/hc/en-us. There is an option to chat with someone, or you can submit a help ticket as well. The most common 403 Error can be cleared by deleting your recent browsing history, including cache and cookies.

Date Submitted: 3/12/2026

Question:

I'm interested in applying for LFIG funds to facilitate pickups for flower and food product manufacturers in central and northern Illinois. We are a cooperative with flower growers across the Midwest. We have operated pickup routes in Illinois and surrounding states. This year, there are several Illinois partner growers and I'm opening the route to food product manufacturers to fill out the trucks. The main need to expand the project is a refrigerated van to keep our products appropriately cooled while they travel.

There is a massive opportunity to shift buyers from imported blooms to Illinois-grown flowers. Sharing our transportation route with food product producers would level up profitability for all farms and connect small farms to large buyers that used to be out of reach.

Curious if this project would quality for the LFIG?

Appreciate your guidance!

Response:

To be eligible to apply for the Illinois Local Food Infrastructure Grant, the applicant must be:

An entity that is an Illinois resident. [505 ILCS 92/20(c)]

Applicants must comply with all relevant State and federal laws and rules, including prevailing wage requirements, when applicable.

To be eligible for a grant award, an applicant shall have an active GATA registration and be qualified on the GATA Grantee Portal and SAM.gov at the time the application is submitted.

The entity must store, process, package, aggregate or distribute value-added agricultural products or plan to do so, and must be one of the following [505 ILCS 92/15(1)]:

An Illinois farm with fewer than 50 employees. [505 ILCS 92/15(1)(A)].

An Illinois cooperative with fewer than 50 employees. "Illinois Cooperative" means a co-operative association organized under the Agriculture Co-Operative Act [805-ILCS 315] or the Co-operative Act [805 ILCS 310] or a limited worker cooperative association organized under the Limited Worker Cooperative Association Act [805 ILCS 317].

An Illinois slaughter and/or processing facility with fewer than 50 employees [505 ILCS 92/15(1)(C)]. Slaughter and/or processing facilities must be USDA or state licensed or be a custom exempt slaughter and/or processing facility.

An Illinois food business with fewer than 50 employees [505 ILCS 92/15(1)(D)].

An Illinois food hub with fewer than 50 employees [505 ILCS 92/15(1)(E)].

An Illinois nonprofit organization [505 ILCS 92/15(1)(F)].

A unit of local government in Illinois [505 ILCS 92/15(1)(G)].

All entities in a collaborative project must meet the eligibility requirements.

All grant funding must be used for purchasing, leasing to own, renting, building or installing infrastructure related to the processing, storage, aggregation, or distribution of value-added agricultural products. [505 ILCS 92/15(4)]. “Value-added agricultural product” is “any farm or agricultural product or by-product that has its value enhanced through processing in Illinois, packaging in Illinois, or any other activity in Illinois.” [505 ILCS 92/5].

Date Submitted: 3/12/2026

Question:

I see one of the requirements for the grant application is 3 years of continuous operations. We purchased this existing business May 30, 2025. My question is, with this application it states:

*Proof of "established”: at least two types of documentation per year for at least three years, including:

a. Documentation from a source other than the applicant of the date the business was started in Illinois.

b. Documentation from government agencies of the business' operations or activities; tax records; media coverage describing the project or business's first actions (or prior actions so long as they meet the definition of "established" in these rules).

Would our newly purchased business qualify for this grant?

Response:

"Established" means an entity that has been doing business in the agricultural or food sectors for at least three years. [8 Ill. Adm. Code 340.10(b)]

Points will be awarded for proposals from established farmers and food businesses. [8 Ill. Adm. Code 340.60(b)]

Date Submitted: 3/13/2026

Question:

I’m reaching out in regards to apply for the Illinois Local Food Infrastructure Grant. I have completed all the grant pre-registration requirements. Have been trying to apply using the link posted on Illinois Department of Agriculture page. It hasn’t been since the grant opened in February. Is there a different link that could be provided to me please? Or any help would be appreciated. Thank you for your time.

Response:

The direct application link is https://il.amplifund.com/Public/Opportunities/Details/482c857e-6783-47bb-b473-9de57fbe7024

Please refer to the State of Illinois Grant Accountability and Transparency Act (GATA) State Grantee Portal New User Guide for step by step guidance.

Date Submitted: 3/13/2026

Question:

As I click to apply for the LFIG, I am sent to a login page. After I login with my credentials that have been verified through email, this is the page I am presented with: (Picture shown is Administrator)

Response:

Euna Grants powered by Amplifund utilizes a Single Sign on process with the State of Illinois Grantee Portal. For Grantees to login to Euna Grants powered by Amplifund, they will need to have access to their Organization's GATA Grantee Portal account. Instructions on this process can be found on our Support Portal via the following link: How to Add New Users as a Grantee and Single-Sign-On (SSO) Process. Please follow these step by step instructions.

You may also refer to the State of Illinois Grant Accountability and Transparency Act (GATA) State Grantee Portal New User Guide for account guidance.

Date Submitted: 3/13/2026

Question:

I am working with a small u-pick flower farmer who also produces additional-value products from their farm. We are interested in exploring a commercial kitchen space to more effectively produce the value-added food-related products, such as syrups, jams/marmalade, as well as tisane.

There was wording that construction requires prior written approval; however, isn't construction required for the installation of infrastructure projects?

If you can provide some more clarification on this grant and if it meets the needs of this project, I would be greatly appreciative.

Response:

All grant funding must be used for purchasing, leasing to own, renting, building or installing infrastructure related to the processing, storage, aggregation, or distribution of value-added agricultural products. [505 ILCS 92/15(4)]

"Value-added agricultural product" is "any farm or agricultural product or by-product that has its value enhanced through processing in Illinois, packaging in Illinois, or any other activity in Illinois." [505 ILCS 92/5].

Allowable expenses include, but are not limited to, costs to purchase, lease, or install:

Equipment used in the production of value-added agricultural products [505 ILCS 92/15(4)(A)].

Sanitizing equipment.

Milling or pressing equipment [505 ILCS 92/15(4)(B)].

Honey processing equipment and packaging including mini extractors lines, extractors, uncappers, dehydrators, creamers, warmers, heated sumps, bottling tanks and bottlers.

Syrup processing equipment and packaging including syrup evaporators, cookers, finishers, canners and bottlers. Creamery or milk product processing and packaging equipment [505 ILCS 92/15(4)(C)].

Food hub development or expansion [505 ILCS 92/15(4)(D)].

Cooler walls, freezers and refrigeration units [505 ILCS 92/15(4)(E)].

Grading, packing, labeling, packaging, or sorting equipment [505 ILCS 92/15(4)(F)].

Refrigerated trucks [505 ILCS 92/15(4)(G)].

Custom exempt mobile slaughter units that meet all Federal and State regulations, including being licensed as an IDOA Type II slaughter/processing facility [505 ILCS 92/15(4)(H)].

Livestock, meat, and poultry processing equipment (including fixtures or equipment necessary to expand animal throughput, processing capacity, the amount or type of products produced or processing speed, equipment necessary for compliance with federal hazard analysis and critical control point (HACCP) plan) [505 ILCS 92/15(4)(H)].

Agroforestry processing equipment [505 ILCS 92/15(4)(I)].

Local fish, wild caught fish, and shrimp processing [505 ILCS 92/15(4)(J)].

Aquaponic and or hydroponic equipment.

Equipment for school meal scratch cooking (including, but not limited to refrigerators, freezers, ovens (convection, combi, or steamer), warming/holding equipment, serving tables (hot or cold), milk coolers, or dish machines.

Grant funding cannot be used for any of the following parts of a proposal:

Labor, marketing, or promotion or for the costs of production agriculture, including the costs for the purchase of hoop houses, irrigation, breeding, animal housing or other infrastructure related to starting or increasing agricultural production. [505 ILCS 92/15(4) and 8 Ill. Adm. Code 340.30(b)(1)]

Wages or travel costs.

Portions of a project that have already received funding or been reimbursed by another federal or state grant program.

Purchase or rental of a building or facility.

Land acquisition or associated fees.

Grant funding cannot be used to recoup previously-spent money on the project. [8 Ill. Adm. Code 340.30]

Date Submitted: 3/14/2026

Question:

I am preparing an application for the Fiscal Year 2026 Local Food Infrastructure Grant as a beginning woman farmer. My project focuses on increasing access to locally grown Illinois produce and value-added products within the Illinois regions, specifically underserved communities.

My proposed project involves a commercial kitchen build-out (including floor drains, HVAC requirement and ventilation) to scale my processing capacity. However, I have significant concern regarding the June 30, 2026 operational deadline.

1. Permitting Timelines: Given the complexity of municipal building permits, (Plumbing, Mechanical, and Health) it is highly unlikely that approved permits and final construction will not be completed by June 30.

2. Reimbursement eligibility: does the IDoA allow for the encumbrance of funds based on a legally binding construction contract signed before June 30, even if the physical work and final inspections extend into the Lapse Period (July/August)?

3. Project Rollover: For infrastructure projects involving fixed build-outs, is there a formal process to request a grant rollover to the December 31 deadline if municipal permitting delays occur?

As a small business, I am concerned about starting this work and incurring costs only to face a reimbursement denial due to the strict fiscal year-end timeline.

Response:

Funds must be spent for the project by June 30, 2026.

Date Submitted: 3/15/2026

Question:

I am working on the budget portion of my grant. I had a question on the equipment section. Under the equipment section it states "Equipment is defined as an article of tangible personal property that has a useful life of more than one year and a per-unit acquisition cost which equals or exceeds the lesser of the capitalization level established by the non-Federal entity for financial statement purposes, or $5,000. An applicant organization may classify equipment at a lower dollar value but cannot classify it higher than $5,000"

Does this mean the equipment we are requesting funding for have to cost less than $5,000?

Response:

The State of Illinois Grant Accountability and Transparency Unit has not updated the Euna Grants application budget definition for Equipment.

In accordance with the Code of Federal Regulations (CFR), Equipment 2 CFR 200.439 is defined as an article of tangible personal property that has a useful life of more than one year and a per-unit acquisition cost which equals or exceeds the lesser of the capitalization level established by the non-Federal entity for financial statement purposes, or $10,000. An applicant organization may classify equipment at a lower dollar value but cannot classify it higher than $10,000. (Note: Organization's own capitalization policy for classification of equipment can be used). Applicants should analyze the cost benefits of purchasing versus leasing equipment, especially high cost items and those subject to rapid technical advances. Rented or leased equipment costs should be listed in the Contractual Services category.

Expenditures for special purpose equipment are allowable as direct costs. Items with a unit cost of $10,000 or more require prior written approval from the awarding agency. When entering equipment budget line items, attach supporting documentation. All applications will be reviewed before award decisions are made.

Date Submitted: 3/15/2026

Question:

Under the Budget Page>Proposed Budget>Item #4 Equipment>

What is meant by:

"Attach a narrative describing the procurement method to be used."

Is there a form for this? Are there procurement methods we should be choosing from?

Response:

All grantees of the funding opportunity are required to use documented procurement procedures that are consistent with 2 CFR 200.317 through 2 CFR 200.327, which can be found here: eCFR :: 2 CFR Part 200 Subpart D - Procurement Standards.

Generally, the procurement standards must meet the following requirements:

- Full and open competition;
- Written procurement procedures;
- Documentation of vendor selection; and
- Price reasonableness.

Date Submitted: 3/15/2026

Question:

In working on the budget section, our proposal includes the purchase/installation of an 18'x20' walk-in cooler. To me, this would be listed under equipment. However, under the description box for Equipment, it states:

"Equipment is defined as an article of tangible personal property that has a useful life of more than one year and a per-unit acquisition cost which equals or exceeds the lesser of the capitalization level established by the non-Federal entity for financial statement purposes, or $5,000. An applicant organization may classify equipment at a lower dollar value but cannot classify it higher than $5,000."

Obviously, a walk-in cooler of this size far exceeds $5,000. Should this be classified as something other than equipment?

Response:

The State of Illinois Grant Accountability and Transparency Unit has not updated the Euna Grants application budget definition for Equipment.

In accordance with the Code of Federal Regulations (CFR), Equipment 2 CFR 200.439 is defined as an article of tangible personal property that has a useful life of more than one year and a per-unit acquisition cost which equals or exceeds the lesser of the capitalization level established by the non-Federal entity for financial statement purposes, or $10,000. An applicant organization may classify equipment at a lower dollar value but cannot classify it higher than $10,000. (Note: Organization's own capitalization policy for classification of equipment can be used). Applicants should analyze the cost benefits of purchasing versus leasing equipment, especially high cost items and those subject to rapid technical advances. Rented or leased equipment costs should be listed in the Contractual Services

category.

Expenditures for special purpose equipment are allowable as direct costs. Items with a unit cost of $10,000 or more require prior written approval from the awarding agency. When entering equipment budget line items, attach supporting documentation. All applications will be reviewed before award decisions are made.

Date Submitted: 3/16/2026

Question:

Can Match for the LFIG be the time and materials of our own to install the equipment we are requesting?

Response:

The recipient's comparable investments may be provided in cash, cash-equivalent investments, bonds, irrevocable letters of credit, time and labor, or any combination of those matching fund sources. Acceptable providers of matching funds include, but are not limited to, commercial, municipal, and private lenders; leasing companies; and grantors of funds. [505 ILCS 92/15(3)]

Date Submitted: 3/16/2026

Question:

I am assisting a collaborative of organizations apply for this grant, and we are wondering if equipment (such as a refrigerated truck) needs to be purchased brand new, or if refurbished equipment is acceptable?

Response:

The funding opportunity is not limited to the purchase of new equipment or vehicles. All grantees of the funding opportunity are required to use documented procurement procedures that are consistent with 2 CFR 200.317 through 2 CFR 200.327, which can be found here: eCFR :: 2 CFR Part 200 Subpart D - Procurement Standards.

Generally, the procurement standards must meet the following requirements:

- Full and open competition;
- Written procurement procedures;
- Documentation of vendor selection; and
- Price reasonableness.

Date Submitted: 3/16/2026

Question:

Our small meat locker in Illinois is an LLC with seven owners. I have started the application, but I am now a Florida resident. (I volunteered because I have more time). The other six partners are all Illinois residents. Do I need to submit the application under the contact info of one of the Illinois residents?

Response:

"Illinois Resident" means an entity that is registered to do business in Illinois and has its home-base of operations in Illinois as proven by a valid W9. [8 Ill. Adm. Code 340.10(b)]

To be eligible to apply for the Illinois Local Food Infrastructure Grant, the applicant must be:

An entity that is an Illinois resident. [505 ILCS 92/20(c)]

Applicants must comply with all relevant State and federal laws and rules, including prevailing wage requirements, when applicable.

To be eligible for a grant award, an applicant shall have an active GATA registration and be qualified on the GATA Grantee Portal and SAM.gov at the time the application is submitted.

The entity must store, process, package, aggregate or distribute value-added agricultural products or plan to do so, and must be one of the following [505 ILCS 92/15(1)]:

An Illinois farm with fewer than 50 employees. [505 ILCS 92/15(1)(A)].

An Illinois cooperative with fewer than 50 employees. "Illinois Cooperative" means a co-operative association organized under the Agriculture Co-Operative Act [805-ILCS 315] or the Co-operative Act [805 ILCS 310] or a limited worker cooperative association organized under the Limited Worker Cooperative Association Act [805 ILCS 317].

An Illinois slaughter and/or processing facility with fewer than 50 employees [505 ILCS 92/15(1)(C)]. Slaughter and/or processing facilities must be USDA or state licensed or be a custom exempt slaughter and/or processing facility.

An Illinois food business with fewer than 50 employees [505 ILCS 92/15(1)(D)].

An Illinois food hub with fewer than 50 employees [505 ILCS 92/15(1)(E)].

An Illinois nonprofit organization [505 ILCS 92/15(1)(F)].

A unit of local government in Illinois [505 ILCS 92/15(1)(G)].

Date Submitted: 3/17/2026

Question:

I lead a 501(c)(3) community and economic development organization and am attempting to complete the pre-application requirements to apply for LFIG. I have Pre-Award Requirements 2-5 completed but need help with #1. I'm attempting to log into the Illinois.gov Authorization Portal (see screenshot below) (Error received after login stating An Error Occurred - Contact your administrator for more information). In this case, who would my administrator be? Please advise on next steps.

Response:

Please refer to the State of Illinois Grant Accountability and Transparency Act (GATA) State Grantee Portal New User Guide for step by step guidance.

Date Submitted: 3/18/2026

Question:

I am currently in progress of completing the required information for the Local Food Infrastructure Grant Program CSFA number: 406-01-3252. I have the following questions that I would appreciate your guidance on allowing me to proceed with the best possible outcome.

Proof of Established: Due to the recent purchase of this operational business, how can we prove "Established" for three years? We have attached the signed deed prepared during day of ownership, Borrowers statement and working on getting a copy of our signed bill of sale. Is that enough? The prior owners are currently helping train and coach us. I'd appreciate guidance on this while all other items are being worked on or have since been uploaded.

Error Notice: I am having an error upon filling out the grant application associated with the proposed budget and not sure how to correct it. Can you provide some support on what I am messing up?

[Error in red states - The Total Overall Budget Cost must be $0.00]

Response:

"Established" means an entity that has been doing business in the agricultural or food sectors for at least three years. [8 Ill. Adm. Code 340.10(b)] Points will be awarded for proposals from established farmers and food businesses. [8 Ill. Adm. Code 340.60(b)]

For proof of "established": at least two types of documentation per year for at least three years, including:

A) Documentation from a source other than the applicant of the date the business was started in Illinois.

B) Documentation from government agencies of the business' operations or activities; tax records; media coverage describing the project or business's first actions (or prior actions so long as they meet the definition of "established" in these rules).

This video provides an overview of how to complete the budget. https://il-amplifund.zendesk.com/hc/en-us/articles/27454533681683-11-10-2025Euna-Grants-Applicant-Portal-Application-Overview-and-Submission (26-minute mark)

Date Submitted: 3/18/2026

Question:

1. Pre-Qualification

I am writing regarding the pre-award requirements. I believe we have completed the first four requirements listed in the RFP — we are registered and current with GATA and SAM; have completed the ICQ for this year; and have registered with Amplifund.

Is it possible for you to confirm that we have met the first four requirements?

2. Owner

For a non-profit organization, is the executive director considered the owner of the business applying for the grant?

Response:

You may review your account status at https://grants.illinois.gov/portal/. Registration steps can be found in the State of Illinois Grant Accountability and Transparency Act (GATA) State Grantee Portal New User Guide.

For the purpose of this funding opportunity, a nonprofit organization may choose to designate the executive director of the nonprofit organization as the "primary owner" of the entity applying for the funding opportunity.