



Sowing Excellence Program Criteria

The Sowing Excellence program, a collaboration of the IDEA Center for Public Gardens and the U.S. Botanic Garden, supports the growth of plant-centered activities that tap into the potential of communities and organizations, including peer-to-peer learning opportunities and networking to support success.

1. Individual, entity, or organization must be based in the U.S. and serve U.S. communities.
2. Funds must be spent within one year of award issuance. .
3. Plant-centric: the work and/or outcomes promote the connection between plants and people and emphasize the significance of the role of plants in our world. Including, but not limited to the following categories:
 - Horticulture/Gardening (including community gardens, design, and landscaping)
 - Professional Development (funds for travel, certificates, broader learning)
 - Education (educating the public of all ages)
 - Research (ecological, conservation, environmental)
 - Arts and Exhibits
 - Community Engagement (partnerships)
 - Capacity Building/Incubation (small business, entrepreneur, internships)
4. The person/organization OR the work itself is connected with a plant-centered element.
5. Participants agree to report back on results/impact and must provide a summary of funds were used and the impact the funds had on work/project/etc. (a template will be provided).
6. Participants agree to the communication plan and requirements (detailed below).
7. Participants cannot be a federal entity, but municipal, county, or state is allowed.
8. Funds can NOT be used for advocacy or partisan lobbying, political campaign, or put into a crowdsourcing campaign.

Awardees Agree to Criteria Required for Program Fulfillment:

1. All publicity from the award (or use of award funds) including press releases, websites/webpages, and social media postings related to collaborative work shall acknowledge the U.S. Botanic Garden and the IDEA Center for Public Gardens. Publicity items about the Sowing Excellence Awards (e.g., press releases, websites/webpages) should be created in collaboration with and approved by the USBG and the IDEA Center. The recipient institution (primary awardee) and/or the partnering institution(s) may not engage in advertising practices that feature the United States Botanic Garden in a manner that conveys, or is reasonably calculated to convey, a false impression of sponsorship, approval, or endorsement of any product or service by the United States Government, or any Department, Agency, or instrumentality thereof.
2. All products and work resulting from this Agreement, including but not limited to, published material, websites/webpages, social media postings, and presentations shall acknowledge both the USBG and the IDEA Center. This should be according to each institution's style guidelines and with express consultation and permission of each party.
3. The recipient agrees to indemnify, save and hold harmless, and defend the United States Government, the IDEA Center, Denver Botanic Gardens, and/or the American Public Gardens Association (the Association) against all fines, claims, damages, losses, judgments, and expenses arising out of, or from, any act or omission of the recipient institution (primary awardee), its officers, employees, or (members, participants, agents, representatives, agents as appropriate) arising out of or in any way connected to activities authorized pursuant to this Agreement. This obligation shall survive the termination of this Agreement.
4. The participant must be a U.S.-based individual, entity, or recognized tax-exempt nonprofit organization with an IRS W-9 Form and other requested tax information provided to the IDEA Center.
5. The award recipient institution shall cooperate with the IDEA Center and/or the USBG in the event of an investigation and defense of any claims that may be filed with the IDEA Center and/or the USBG arising out of the activities of the institution receiving the award, its agents, and employees.