

The Food Connection @ UK

invites proposals for

Student Opportunity Grants

due April 1, 2025

The Program: The University's agreement with Aramark to operate UK Dining created an endowment to enhance student opportunities for study of food and food systems, and which contribute to the Food Connection's mission of promoting vibrant and sustainable agro-food systems. Proceeds of the endowment are distributed by the Food Connection at UK through this grants program.

Proposals clearly related to food or food systems will be accepted from any program at the University of Kentucky, until April 1. Priority will be given to proposals which advance undergraduate or graduate student research, innovation in instruction, experiential education, community engagement, or co-curricular activities.

Projects in food technology, food economies, food and culture, nutrition, health, or food production will all be considered. Multi-disciplinary projects are encouraged as are projects from the social and life sciences, arts, and humanities that address food systems in creative ways.

Eligibility: Proposals must include a University of Kentucky faculty or staff member as project leader or co-leader. Projects may be initiated or co-led by students, so long as a faculty or staff leader is identified. Students may be named and listed as co-leaders or participants; however, proposals will not be accepted if the specific student participants have yet to be identified.

Collaborators and co-leaders may include individuals not employed by or enrolled at the University. Community engagement will be a positive factor in proposal evaluation. Please note that in the case of non-UK collaborators all financial arrangements must be administered and facilitated by the department or unit of the UK lead.

Project leaders who have received awards in previous years may submit but must attach final or progress reports to new proposals.

Project Funding and Requirements: This is an annual program that funds projects to be completed by the end of the following fiscal year. A maximum of \$5,000 per student participant will be considered. Grants benefiting multiple students may be awarded for as much as \$10,000. Funds must be expended in FY26 (to be completed by July 1, 2026).

Operating costs, travel, small equipment and student compensation may be included in budgets. However, student stipends or wages may not exceed \$1,500/semester for undergrads, \$2,500 for grad students.

Project leadership must include a UK faculty or staff member whose home unit/department agrees to manage the dispersal of funds. Documentation (email or letter) from the budget officer of the home unit (department or center) confirming the willingness to manage the funds in the reimbursement grant format are a required component of the application packet.

IMPORTANT TO KNOW: This is a reimbursement grant; funds are not distributed up front. Funds are normally distributed at project completion by reimbursing project expenditures made from the leader's unit budget. Other arrangements can be considered when essential.

A final report must be completed, and all funds encumbered within 1 year of the award starting date. Typically projects are funded from July 1 to June 30. Extensions or continuations will be considered for sufficient reason, and awardees are expected to be proactive in their communication about a need for a project extension. Participation of leaders and/or participating students in an annual poster session open house (The Kentucky Local Food Systems Summit or other appropriate venue) is expected.

General Application: Proposals should be submitted as a Word file attached to an email to krista.jacobsen@uky.edu. Proposals should follow the outline below and should not exceed 6 pages in length:

1. Project Title
2. Concise summary of the project, including the project's contribution to the promotion of vibrant and sustainable agro-food systems
3. Project plan including goals, significance, methods/approach, and timeline
4. Description of student participation and resulting benefits, including number of students, how they will be selected, and their roles
5. Measures of success
6. List of team members, including leader and collaborating faculty, staff, students or community with name, title, position and concise statement of expertise or qualifications
7. Itemized budget
8. Documentation of home department demonstrating willingness to manage funds and acknowledgement of reimbursement policy.

Review and Funding: Proposals received by April 1 will be reviewed by a committee of Food Connection-affiliated faculty and staff and be considered for funding commitments during the July 1, 2025 – June 30, 2026 fiscal year. Email proposals or questions to: krista.jacobsen@uky.edu, or feel free to call 257-3921.