SOVEREIGN EQUITY FUND

Cultural Foodways

Frequently Asked Questions

This Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) document is meant to offer additional guidance for frequent questions that may arise. If your questions are not addressed within this FAQ, and you need further assistance, please contact SEF staff at:

grants@SovereignEquityFund.org.

Applicant Eligibility

1. **Which organizations are eligible to apply for a grant?**

   Only Tribal Colleges and Universities (TCUs) or a 501(c)(3) organization controlled by a TCU may apply for a grant. Tribes, non-TCU non-profits and other entities may partner with a TCU, but the TCU must be the lead applicant.

2. **Who can serve as the primary contact for a grant?**

   Any TCU employee (faculty or staff) may serve as the primary contact, given they have the full support of a signing authority. A signing authority is the person who is authorized to enter the TCU into a binding contract with another organization.

3. **Can a TCU submit multiple applications in the same cycle? (e.g., a TCU would submit one application for their own Tribe and another application for a sister tribe that doesn't have a TCU.)**

   A TCU may submit multiple applications for the Cultural Foodways Fund so long as each application has a different and distinct service community. This gives space for a TCU to apply for their own tribal community while partnering with a tribe that doesn't have a TCU on a project for that tribe's community. Please note that this is a competitive grant process, so all applications will be scored in the same pool on their own merits. It is possible that both, one or none of the applications would be awarded. In any case, the

TCU must be the lead applicant, manage the grant finances, have a significant role in implementation, and be responsible for reports.

Definitions

4. What is meant by "cultural foodways"?

The phrase "arts and humanities" includes the study of languages, history, philosophy, literature, writing, storytelling, theater, music, dance, painting, sculpture, photography, filmmaking, religion/spirituality, and other expressions of culture.

The phrases "food and agriculture" or "foodways" refers to all expressions of cultivating, harvesting, or transforming plants and animals for human sustenance, cultural practice, or economic activity on land or in the water.

Project Content

5. What activities can the grant cover?

Grant funding may be used for personnel (e.g., salary, wages, fringe), direct costs (e.g., events, travel, supplies, equipment, etc.), intermediary costs (e.g., scholarships or re-grants) and indirect costs. Please see the Budget Guidelines for more information.

6. Are any activities excluded from funding?

Grant funding may not be used for alcoholic beverages, entertainment, grant application costs or rent for a facility owned by the grantee (unless the grantee charges rent as standard practice).

Application Process

7. When are applications due?

The online grant application process closes on Monday, July 1, 2024, at 11:59 pm CT. There will be no extensions.

8. How many applications can an organization submit?

A TCU is allowed to submit one application for funding per year.

9. **Can the grant application be transferred to another user?**

    If the person who creates the application will no longer be overseeing the project, then SEF can transfer the application from one user to another. Please reach out to SEF at grants@sovereignequityfund.org to make this transition.

10. **Does the full application have to be submitted in one work session? Or can we upload part of the application and come back in another session to finish?**

    You can 'Save' and then later submit your application. The system will autosave every 100 characters typed or every time you click out of a field. If you have problems, please contact our SEF team to work through any technical issues associated with your application.

11. Can SEF assist with writing an application?

SEF is happy to provide technical assistance related to the grant documents, grant system and grant process. To maintain a fair and unbiased process, we will not aid in concept development or strategic decision-making.

12. Can I include visuals (pictures, graphs, charts, etc.) in my online application?

Yes. Since the text section does not allow for visuals, you will need to save them all as a PDF (only one file allowed) and upload it at the end of the application under "Optional Uploads." Please remind reviewers to refer to these visuals in your narrative.

Budget

13. Are grants from SEF considered federal funds?

No, this grant is private. As such, it may be used as a match for federal funds.

14. Are indirect costs allowed? If so, what is the percentage allowed?

We allow indirect costs of up to 15% on personnel and direct costs.

15. Are matching or in-kind funds required?

No, we do not require matching or in-kind funds.

Review Process and Evaluation Criteria

16. What will happen after I apply?

Applications will be screened for eligibility and completeness, then sent to a reviewer panel comprised of individuals with expertise in the arts and humanities of Native food and agriculture systems. Reviewers will follow the evaluation criteria set forth in the RFA Overview and prioritize projects for funding. A final decision on funded projects will be made by SEF Board of Directors.

17. What criteria will be considered when reviewing applications?

Please see page 2 of the RFA Overview for details.

18. Does SEF have a Conflict-of-Interest policy?

Yes. All SEF staff and all SEF Board of Trustee members are required to comply with Conflict-of-Interest policies. Anyone involved in evaluating the applications will recuse themselves from evaluating any applications from entities with which they have a conflict of interest or an appearance of a conflict of interest.

19. What will happen to the information and documents I submit during the SEF process?

All information and documents received during this process are held in confidence and will become a part of the records of SEF. All current and former applicants will have access to their former applications in a secure dashboard found on SEF's online grant portal.

20. Will I get feedback if my application is denied?

Yes, you may request a debrief of the reviewer panel notes.

Grant Information

21. When will grant recipients be announced?

We plan to announce decisions in early August.

22. How will funds be distributed?

SEF uses an installment system in which 50% is dispersed at the time of the award. Remaining funds are awarded based on completion of mandatory reports.

23. What reports are due throughout the grant period?

All successful applicants will be required to provide quarterly (every three months) update reports, an annual report and a final report through an online system.

Contact Information

24. If I have questions, how can I get answers?

You may reach out to SEF by email (grants@sovereignequityfund.org) or phone (479-790-2233).