



## 1. Is my organization or business eligible for acceptance to the program?

The following are the eligibility criteria for the program:

- The applicant works with a community-based organization or business that is situated in a community that experiences food insecurity. *See question 2 for more details on how the Community Food Leader program defines a 'community-based organization'.*
- The applicant is able to take time during their work week to attend training sessions.
- The applicant is able to allocate time to focus on their own organization food project in between training sessions.
- The applicant works in a neighborhood/region that is considered at-risk of experiencing food insecurity
- Their workplace supports travel to and from trainings

## 2. How does the Community Food Leader program define community-based organizations?

This program is intended for organizations who work at a local level to directly impact the lives of individuals experiencing food insecurity. The Community Food Leader Certificate Program stems from our previous work with organizations like family resource centres, schools, food banks, and community health centres to deliver food skills programming and other initiatives directly to their community members who experience food insecurity. We no longer facilitate direct program delivery to communities, but through the CFL program aim to support more organizations like the ones we worked with in the past to start or grow their own food initiatives for their neighbourhood or region through the Community Food Leader program.

Where the purpose of the program is to introduce community food security concepts and approaches to delivering sustainable food initiatives, we intend to work with organizations who do not already have extensive experience working in the field of community food security. We also welcome local businesses that have a social impact focus. Please be in touch if you have any questions about whether or not this program is the right fit for you. See the next question to understand the type of organizations we've accepted in the past:

## 3. What organizations participated in the Community Food Leader Program in the past?



- Chebucto Family Resource Centre
- Mulgrave Park Caring & Learning Centre
- African Community Investment Cooperative of Canada
- Halifax Public Libraries
- Laing House
- Fairview Family Resource Centre
- YWCA
- Uprooted Market and Café
- Gerald Hardy Memorial Society
- Memory Lane Family Place
- Black Cultural Centre for Nova Scotia
- Pathways to Education
- North Dartmouth Community Food Centre
- Cole Harbour Heritage Farm
- Loaded Ladle Halifax Cooperative Ltd.
- RD Lemmon Maple Products/Witch Haven Farm
- Shelter NS
- The Osberg Health & Wellness Group
- Prospect Road Community Centre
- Family SOS

#### 4. Can more than one person apply from an organization?

Our intention is to work with multiple organizations so that we can reach more communities. If more than one person applies from the same organization, they will be considered if:

- They work at different locations or neighbourhoods (e.g., libraries or rec centres)
- They work at the same location, but demonstrate the need for two people to work on a larger project to really help propel this forward. Or, they work at the same organization but on two distinct projects.

*\*In either case, both participants are required to attend all trainings.*

#### 5. My organization participated in the CFL program last year. Can another member of our organization apply again?

Priority will be given to new organizations. The same organization will be considered again if the proposed project is different than the one focused on in the previous year. Consideration will also be based on the level of commitment and participation of the organization demonstrated in the previous year. In the case of organizations such as libraries and recreation centres, more than one location may be accepted in the program over the course of the program.

#### 6. I live outside of the Community Food Leader Regions. Can I still apply?

Unfortunately we can't accept applicants who do not work within the Halifax Regional Municipality. This is based on the current geographical focus of the Our Food Project and funder requirements.



## 7. What types of community food initiatives have past Community Food Leader participants worked on?

*Below are some examples:*

- Community garden development
- Food box programs
- Strengthening existing farmers markets
- Adding public education component to farm (school tours, workshops, etc.)
- Increased programming around community oven and garden projects
- Youth cooking skills project
- Farm to Food Bank to Pantry Project
- Bulk Buying Group
- Cooking with Mobile Food Market
- Produce Pack sessions
- Recipe cookbook that includes stories from community members who experienced food insecurity, including their 'go to' meals when things get tight.
- School engagement
- Streetscape garden project – free food for the taking
- Development of an 'eco-village' with a focus on community food projects
- Expansion of youth-led social enterprise

## 8. Can volunteers apply to be a participant in the program?

The Community Food Leader Program is intended for organizational staff. This is based on the reality that volunteer turnover is common. This is not to devalue the role of volunteers, but we are looking to work with staff from organizations as there is a higher chance they'll be able to see a project through and support long-term organizational change. We might consider volunteers under special circumstances. Please contact us before applying.

## 8. Are there any funds available through the CFL program to financially support my food initiative?

No. We expect that participating organizations have some resources available to support their desired food initiative. Resources can include dedicated staff time, funds, existing materials or resources that you can use for this purpose, community connections to help propel a project forward etc. We encourage participants to choose projects that reflect their current access to resources, and likelihood to secure more. We don't expect everyone to have all the resources they need to get their project going – part of the program is identifying what else is needed and working toward securing more resources to make your goal a reality. However, it will be difficult for us to support an organization that currently has no resources available to realistically be able to focus on their project outside of the monthly trainings.



## 9. What can I expect during the monthly trainings?

There will be one full day training session each month at various locations within the Halifax Regional Municipality. Trainings will focus on key concepts that support meaningful and sustainable community food initiatives, while connecting with others in your region. These sessions are designed to be experiential, in that you'll experience tools and approaches during the trainings that you can then use and adapt in your own workplace and life. Some trainings will include guest speakers.

### *Facilitation support:*

Each month, 2-4 participants will be asked to sign up for a specific task to support the day. This will include items like facilitating a check-in, capturing notes and photos from the day, facilitating a specific activity with support from your coordinator, and other items as needed. Following experiential and adult education principles, this program aims to increase confidence and knowledge through practice. The trainings are safe and supportive spaces where participants can try their hand at new things and share some of their own approaches with the group.

## 10. How much of my time will be required between training sessions?

This will be partially informed by the food initiative you choose to focus on. At minimum, we expect participants to set aside approximately 8 hours each month to focus on their identified project goals.

## 11. What happens if I miss a session?

If you miss a session due to illness or because of other special circumstances, we will forward you materials and bring you up to speed as best as we can. You may also be invited to make up a session during the following CFL program cohort.

If you miss more than one session due to non-emergency or non-medical reasons, we will not be able to award you a certificate of completion. We identify training dates early on so that applicants know the required training dates well in advance and can receive permission from work to attend prior to committing to the program.

We understand that work is busy for many of us, but we do ask you to prioritize these trainings in your work schedule as a requirement to complete the CFL Certificate Program. A lot of care goes into planning these trainings with the interest and wisdom of the group at heart. We believe that taking the time to pause, learn new perspectives and skills, and reflect on our work is critical to the sustainability and growth of any program.



## 12. Are there any assignments?

Like any certificate program, there will be some required assignments. Each month you will be required to complete a monthly action form that identifies the progress of your community food leader project and next steps. You may also be asked to submit items like a project work plan, evaluation plan and other assignments that are discussed during trainings that are intended to support the forward momentum of your Community Food Leader project.

### *Reporting:*

As a condition of our funding we must monitor our impact with community partners. This includes learning about your experience in the CFL Certificate Program, and the impact of this program on your own community food initiatives. We'll measure this together through tracking and evaluation activities informed by organizational goal(s) identified early on. In our experience, partners have gained valuable insight from our evaluation approaches that allow them to better communicate the impact of their work and thus grow their initiatives.

## 13. Will I receive a certificate?

Each participant who successfully completes the program (attends trainings and completes monthly assignments) will be awarded a Certificate of Completion issued by the Ecology Action Centre.

**If you have any other questions, please contact the CFL program coordinator:**

**Erica Fraser**

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