Boston Urban Agriculture Strategy

Call for Artists Information Session Q&A | June 6, 2023

Find the project webpage here:  www.mapc.org/resource-library/boston-urban-ag-strategy


What are the broader goals/research questions that the community events are trying to answer?

Two of the primary questions we are hoping to answer are:

   a) Where are there opportunities for food production in the City of Boston?
   b) What resources do people need to support their ability to grow food?

At each community event, the project partners (MAPC and GrowBoston) will be gathering feedback from event attendees, as well as soliciting participation in a neighborhood-specific survey.

While it is not expected that artists will collect data, any sort of interaction with the public you deem appropriate for your activation is encouraged. Your activation does not need to be aligned with the overall strategy in order to be fun, engaging, or educational!

What do the arts have to do with urban agriculture?

No matter the accompanying topic, art brings people together. These artistic activations are intended to celebrate the beginning of a new strategy to increase occurrence of and access to food production across the city. These community events will be different than the traditional public meeting. We are working with artists to make each community event more fun; creating a connection between food, the earth, community, and a sense of place. These activations will inspire communities to think creatively about urban agriculture.

Does it matter what artistic discipline I practice?

Artists/artist teams of all disciplines and practices are encouraged to apply.

If selected, do I need to execute my activation at all four community events?

No. Artists may propose a concept to execute at all four events, or they may opt to propose a concept for one, two, or three of the neighborhood events. Your proposed budget included in submissions should reflect the number of events proposed.

Do I need to live in one of the neighborhoods in order to be eligible to apply?

While it’s preferred that the artist/artist team has experience working with communities in Dorchester, East Boston, Mattapan, and/or Roxbury, there is no residency requirement to apply.
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Were the meeting and event dates chosen based off specific growing seasons, or based off what made sense according to scheduling and availability?

We worked with the neighborhood committees to pick meeting and event dates based off of the best times to have outdoor events in Boston – in general, late summer and early fall provide good event weather. The dates were also chosen based on the timeline and scope of the project.

How often do the neighborhood committees meet?

The neighborhood committees have already met once all together for an orientation. Each individual committee will meet three more times: twice before their community event, and once after the events take place.

Can I find information about who is on each committee and when/where they are meeting?

Neighborhood Committee membership is not currently public, so at this time we are not sharing names or contact information of committee members.

Selected artists and artist teams will be put in touch with the neighborhood committee(s) they’ll be working with for their event(s), ideally attending a neighborhood committee meeting. At a minimum, artists/artist teams should be in contact with their respective neighborhood committees to share planning updates.

Tentative Neighborhood Committee meeting dates that fall after artist selection are:
- 7/6 Mattapan
- 7/12 Roxbury
- 7/17 Dorchester
- 7/24 East Boston

Do interested artists have access to what was discussed in the Neighborhood Committee Orientation?

No, these meeting notes are not publicly available. The Orientation served as an overview of the Neighborhood Committee members’ responsibilities and the timeline of the project. The project team believes it is important for artists to be knowledgeable about the event objectives, but do not need to consider Neighborhood Committee meeting discussions in their proposals.

What outreach strategies are being utilized to promote the events in each neighborhood?

While each neighborhood committee is encouraged to utilize outreach strategies that are best fit for their community (ex. social media, flyers, word of mouth, etc.), the MAPC Community Engagement team will
provide technical support for outreach needs (design, printing, etc.). The project team is leaning on Neighborhood Committee members to determine the best outreach channels for their communities.

If the anticipated award for one artist executing activations at four events is $10,000, does that offer a reasonable amount of funding for producing artwork, purchasing supplies, attending meetings, and attending each event, assuming a fair wage of $50/hour?

Artists should include their time in their proposed concept budget. The project team strives to offer a fair wage to cover the time and materials dedicated toward each creative activation, and will consider this when determining how many artists and activations to award grants to.

Has foraging and/or aquaculture come up as a possible priority for any of the neighborhoods? For example, there is a history of abundant shellfish harvesting in Dorchester Bay – but should I submit a concept focused on this if it’s not of interest to the Neighborhood Committees?

The focus of the GrowBoston initiative, and in turn this project’s strategy, is “food production,” and to our knowledge, foraging has not yet come up in conversations among committee members. However, even if this or other topics are not currently identified as priorities, if creative activations encourage communities to think creatively and expand ideas about urban agriculture, this is a positive outcome. The Artist Selection committee will not be judging concepts based on exact alignment with concurrent Neighborhood Committee conversations.