

FY27 UGROW Hydroponics Grant Program

Information & Guidelines for the Request for Grants Fiscal Year 27

**The funding of all STEM Action Center grants is contingent on
continued funding from the Utah State Legislature.**

Application Deadline: August 31, 2026



**Utah STEM
Action Center**

Questions regarding this application, including interpretation and clarification of any section of this grant project should be directed to reichert@utah.gov

General Information

The purpose of this grant program is to provide funding and equipment to individual schools and communities in support of hydroponics learning. Applicants are encouraged to develop activities that support integration of hydroponics into existing classroom or school curriculum.

Hydroponics is the water-based alternative to gardening/farming that uses water rather than soil. For this grant, the hydroponics process will include a self-built, hands-on unit which will allow educator and student learning through the germination, planting, maintenance and harvesting of plants in a deep-water environment.

The UGROW hydroponics model measures 36" wide, 75" high and 14" deep. The unit will also require nearby power and water sources. A bucket will be provided for filling the hydroponic tubs. No sunlight is required for successful growth.

The time commitment for unit maintenance and growth is estimated at 20 minutes per day. The daily duties can be assigned to students or community members.

Each awarded grantee will receive:

- Funding to cover the cost of equipment and supplies
- A detailed setup and maintenance Manual
- Video Tutorials
- A Digital Resource Library
- A Youth Market Guide
- Access to the STEM Action Center's HydroBot AI tool
- Access to a regional HydroMaster who will support local hydroponics activities

Eligibility

- Public K-12 schools, libraries, and community partners are eligible to apply.

NOTE: Public school educators MUST follow their district policy and gain approval from their principal and district business office prior to application. Districts will be required to invoice the STEM Action Center for reimbursement of the approximately \$800 cost per unit.

NOTE: Please do not apply to this round if you are unable to germinate and then plant your first crop by the end of October, 2026.

Period of Performance

Grantees will be required to report on the use of their unit during the one-year performance period. Simple surveys will be provided to document performance and knowledge gained.

Funding

Funding for the hydroponics units will be provided by the Utah STEM Foundation.

Funding will be distributed upon a full signed and approved partner agreement and an invoice to the Utah STEM Action Center. Grantees will be required to provide documentation of specific purchases made. All funding must be spent out no later than March 31, 2027.

The STEM Action Center intends to award approximately 50 units in this round. A detailed purchasing list of equipment and supplies will be provided.

Contracting and Reporting

The STEM AC will be responsible for partner agreement development, oversight, and monitoring for approved applications. The STEM AC will monitor grantees to support program implementation, impact, outcomes and financial expenditures. The applicant will be required to report at the midpoint and end of each year through a simple survey. The surveys are intended to provide formative assessment, ensure that the STEM AC can fully support the applicants and partners with any ongoing challenges, and sustain the ongoing funding by reporting on successes and outcomes on a regular basis.

The surveys will include questions which address:

- Number of students and educators/partners served
- Integration of the hydroponics unit into classroom and community activities
- Type and amount of produce grown
- Distribution/use of the produce grown
- Students' increased STEM skills and interest
- Educators'/partners' increased STEM learning and interest
- Feedback regarding the units, the supplies, and the resources provided

Site visits may also be included in our monitoring and support of the grantee projects. Pictures will also be requested to show grantee learning and successes.

All funded applicants will be expected to participate in quarterly community of innovation webinars. The intent of the Hydroponics Program is to foster collaboration across regions,

and the entire state. The result of the collaboration is to share successes, challenges, and ensure that all partners have the opportunity to work with their peers outside of their typical network. This communication will allow all partners to not only have access to other ideas, but to share their insight on design, implementation, and outcomes. The STEM Action Center anticipates learning new and innovative uses of the systems from our grantees.

Allowable Activities and Expenditures

Participants are encouraged to integrate hydroponics activities into existing curriculum and instruction and may target students and community members in any age, grade or discipline. The STEM Action Center will provide a comprehensive supplies list from which all grantees will order the needed items for successful hydroponic growing.

NOTE: Applicants are not allowed to supplant existing Career and Technical (CTE) with funding from this program.

NOTE: Applicants are requested to disclose all existing sources of funding that may be leveraged for their projects, including other state and federal dollars awarded by other grant programs, as well as any in-kind donations from industry partners.

Application Guidelines

Applicants must complete a brief application at: <https://utahstemgrants.smapply.io/>
Information required will include: Name, Email Address, Phone Number, City, School Name or Entity, School District(as appropriate), and Grades or Specialty Taught. Complete this information for each educator or partner who will be involved with the hydroponics unit.

The STEM Action Center will work with each awardee to complete a partnership agreement and an invoice for funding.