2026 Program Application | Printable Preview

This printable version of the application was created to make previewing the application questions easy. We would prefer that you submit your answers using the online form if possible.

If you would prefer to turn in a hard copy, please reach out to Hanna Schuler, Business Stewardship & Outreach Director, by email at hanna@sdfsa.org, or by phone at 619-928-1600.

Thank you!

Thank you for your interest in joining the Pollinator 2026 cohort!
This written application helps us begin to get to know you and your business, understand your needs, and evaluate whether the program is a good fit.

This application is divided into several sections.
While none of the responses are required in order to submit the application, we strongly advise applicants to fill the application out as completely as possible.

Application deadline is February 28, 2026, at 11:59pm PST.

Contact Information

1. Name of Lead Applicant:

2. Email Address:

3. Phone Number:

4. Primary Address of Lead Applicant:
   Street Address:
   Street Address Line 2:
   City:
   State:
   Zip Code:

Business Information

5. Name of business / organization:

6. Provide a brief and simple description of your business, including the products and services you offer. (max of 200 words)

7. Business Type (select all that apply)
   - ☐ Farm
   - ☐ Ranch
   - ☐ Fishing operation
   - ☐ Honey production
   - ☐ Value-added food production
   - ☐ Food distribution
   - ☐ Restaurant
   - ☐ Catering
   - ☐ Micro-enterprise Home Kitchen Operation (MEKHO)
   - ☐ Sidewalk / street vending
   - ☐ Pop-up / Mobile vending
   - ☐ Retail
   - ☐ Composting
   - ☐ Other:

8. Business Location (if different from primary address):
   Street Address:
   Street Address Line 2:

City:
State:
Zip Code:

9. Business Website (if applicable):

10. Business Social Media (if applicable):

11. Business Email Address:

12. Business Phone Number (if different from applicant phone number):

Business Structure

13. What is your business's legal status? (select all that apply)
    - ☐ No legal entity / informal
    - ☐ Sole proprietorship
    - ☐ LLC
    - ☐ Partnership
    - ☐ Corporation (C-Corp or S-Corp)
    - ☐ Nonprofit organization
    - ☐ Cooperative
    - ☐ Fiscal sponsored project
    - ☐ Other:

14. Is your business applying on behalf of a collective, collaborative, or cooperative?
    a) Yes
    b) No

15. Is your business owned by a member or members of a tribal nation?
    a) Yes
    b) No

16. (OPTIONAL) Is there anything else you'd like to share about your business's structure? (max of 100 words)

Operations

17. How long has the business been in operation?

18. How long have you been working in this field/industry?

19. What were your gross sales of products / services in the year of 2025?
- ☐ Under $30k
- ☐ $30k - $50k
- ☐ $50k - $100k
- ☐ $100k - $250k
- ☐ $250k - $500k
- ☐ Over $500k

20. Did you have any sources of revenue other than gross sales in the year of 2025? If yes, please estimate the value of additional sources.

21. Is your business generating a profit? In other words, is your revenue greater than your expenses?
a) Yes
b) No
c) Prefer not to disclose

22. Number of full time employees (if applicable)
- ☐ 1-2
- ☐ 3-5
- ☐ 6-10
- ☐ More than 10

23. Part time and seasonal employees (if applicable)
- ☐ 1-2
- ☐ 3-5
- ☐ 6-10
- ☐ More than 10

24. Number of interns, apprentices, volunteers, family members assisting with the business, etc. (if applicable)
- ☐ 1-2
- ☐ 3-5
- ☐ 6-10
- ☐ More than 10

25. (OPTIONAL) Is there anything else you'd like to share about your business's operations? (max of 100 words)

Your Community

26. Who are your main customers and priority communities that you serve through your business? (max of 200 words)

27. Do you partner and/or collaborate with other local businesses, organizations, or community groups? If yes, which one(s)? (max of 200 words)

28. (OPTIONAL) Is there anything else you'd like to share about your community and/or the impact you'd like to have through your business? (max of 100 words)

Needs

29. Why are you applying to the Pollinator program? How do you hope it will help your business? (max of 200 words)

30. What are your top business needs? Select all that apply, ranking by order of priority, with 1 being the most important.

- ☐ Business planning and/or coaching
- ☐ Peer-to-peer mentoring
- ☐ Professional development
- ☐ Legal services
- ☐ Permitting and regulations
- ☐ Human resources and people management
- ☐ Marketing and/or communications
- ☐ Bookkeeping and/or accounting
- ☐ Business operations (crop planning, agricultural practices, value-added product development, etc.)
- ☐ Access to capital
- ☐ Access to land
- ☐ Access to markets
- ☐ Grant writing
- ☐ Cooperative development/conversion
- ☐ Employee ownership development/conversion
- ☐ Other:

31. Please share any other needs not included in the above list. (max of 100 words)

32. Have you received support from any other business development programs? If yes, what type of support? (max of 200 words)

Program

33. If selected, what are your ideal start and completion dates for receiving business development services? Do you have any time constraints that might keep you from fully participating in the program?

34. How did you hear about this program?
    a) Referral
    b) Through a San Diego Food System Alliance employee
    c) Local Food Economy Lab website
    d) LinkedIn
    e) Instagram
    f) Social media
    g) Another business
    h) Other:

35. In addition to the *Pollinator* program, the Local Food Economy Lab offers other opportunities for businesses to receive informal support. Are you interested in joining our Rhizome Listserv to receive more information and stay connected with other small-scale food businesses in San Diego?
    a) Yes
    b) No

About You

The San Diego Food System Alliance collects demographic information of those applying to Pollinator program to ensure that we select applicants aligned with the mission and goals of the Local Food Economy Lab. We recognize that some of these questions are personal, but we ask that you respond to the best of your ability. We also acknowledge that terminology we use is imperfect and constantly evolving and we strive to adapt and update our terminology as new information becomes available.

36. What pronouns do you use? Choose all that apply.
    a) She/Her/Hers/Ella
    b) He/Him/His/Él
    c) They/Them/Theirs
    d) Other:
    e) Prefer not to disclose

37. What is your current gender identity? Choose all that apply.
    a) Man

b) Woman
c) Nonbinary
d) Transgender
e) Other:
f) Prefer not to disclose

38. Do you Identify as LGBTQ+?
a) Yes
b) No
c) Prefer not to disclose

39. Which categories best describe you? Choose all that apply.
a) Asian / Asian American
b) Black / African / African American
c) Native / Indigenous
d) Hispanic / Latinx / Latin American
e) Middle Eastern / North African
f) Native Hawaiian / Pacific Islander
g) White / European
h) Prefer not to disclose
i) Other:

40. Are you an immigrant or first generation American?
a) Yes, Immigrant
b) Yes, Refugee/asylum seeker
c) Yes, first generation American
d) No
e) Prefer not to disclose
f) Other:

41. Do you consider your household as low income? (Answer what feels right—no questions asked!)
d) Yes
e) No
f) Prefer not to disclose

42. In what year were you born?
a) Born in 1961 or before
b) Born in 1962-1980
c) Born in 1981-1996
d) Born in 1997 or after
e) Prefer not to disclose

43. Is there anything else you'd like to share in this application about your story or your business?