

## Application Submittal Checklist

*The following items are required for submittal of the grant application. Please verify and check off that the items have been included in the application packet.*

- ☒ 1) Hawaii Compliance Express Certificate (If the Applicant is an Organization)
- ☒ 2) Declaration Statement
- ☒ 3) Verify that grant shall be used for a public purpose
- ☒ 4) Background and Summary
- ☒ 5) Service Summary and Outcomes
- ☒ 6) Budget
  - a) Budget request by source of funds ([Link](#))
  - b) Personnel salaries and wages ([Link](#))
  - c) Equipment and motor vehicles ([Link](#))
  - d) Capital project details ([Link](#))
  - e) Government contracts, grants, and grants in aid ([Link](#))
- ☒ 7) Experience and Capability
- ☒ 8) Personnel: Project Organization and Staffing

  
AUTHORIZED SIGNATURE

J. Kukui Maunakea-Forth Executive Director  
PRINT NAME AND TITLE

1.17.25  
DATE

**THE THIRTIETH LEGISLATURE**  
**APPLICATION FOR GRANTS**  
**CHAPTER 42F, HAWAII REVISED STATUTES**

Type of Grant Request:

☒ Operating

☐ Capital

Legal Name of Requesting Organization or Individual: Db:

Wai'anae Community Re-Development Corporation

MA'O Organic Farms

Amount of State Funds Requested: \$197,030

Brief Description of Request (Please attach word document to back of page if extra space is needed):

The requested State GIA funding will expand the WCRC-MA'O Mā'ona strategic plan, with a focus on the Farm Expansion Experience (FE'E) program. FE'E is a hands-on internship in organic produce farm management and food production designed to accelerate participants' capacity to lead organic fruit and vegetable operations through climate-smart agriculture, cultural revitalization, and community engagement. This initiative addresses Hawai'i's urgent need for food security and self sufficiency by building a culturally grounded workforce pipeline through community engagement. By fostering sustainable farming techniques rooted in Native Hawaiian knowledge and practices, MA'O Organic Farms strengthens local food systems and creates lasting opportunities for community resilience.

Amount of Other Funds Available:

State: \$0

Federal: \$0

County: \$0

Private/Other: \$249,976

Total amount of State Grants Received in the Past 5 Fiscal Years:

\$623,339.00

Unrestricted Assets:

\$2,854,047.27

New Service (Presently Does Not Exist): ☐ Existing Service (Presently in Operation): ☒

Type of Business Entity:

☒ 501(C)(3) Non Profit Corporation

☐ Other Non Profit

☐ Other

Mailing Address:

PO BOX 441

City:

Wai'anae

State:

HI

Zip:

96792

Contact Person for Matters Involving this Application

Name:

J. Kukui Maunakea-Forth

Title:

Executive Director & Program Director

Email:

kukui@maoorganicfarms.org

Phone:

(808) 696-5569

  
Authorized Signature

J. Kukui Maunakea-Forth

Name and Title

  
Date Signed

## Application for Grants

*If any item is not applicable to the request, the applicant should enter "not applicable".*

### **I. Certification – Please attach immediately after cover page**

**1. Hawaii Compliance Express Certificate (If the Applicant is an Organization)**

Compliance Express Certificate Attached

**2. Declaration Statement**

Declaration Statement Attached

**3. Public Purpose**

The requested State GIA funding will be used for a public purpose under Section 42F-103, Hawaii Revised Statutes as detailed in Section II (3). The funding will support MA'O's Farm Expansion Experience (FE'E) Initiatives that enhance Hawai'i's food security, provide workforce development opportunities, and promote sustainability and cultural revitalization, benefiting the public through increased access to local organic food, leadership training, and environmental stewardship.

### **II. Background and Summary**

**A brief description of the applicant's background:**

In 2000, the Wai'anae Community Re-Development Corporation (WCRC) founded MA'O Organic Farms (MA'O), a social enterprise designed to reconnect our community's primary assets-youth, land, and rural heritage. MA'O engages youth in restoring abundance to our moku (region) through an experiential learning environment rooted in real-world work. Over the past 25 years, this culturally grounded organization has grown into one of Hawai'i's largest diversified organic farms and a nationally and internationally recognized leader in youth leadership, entrepreneurship, and workforce training.

As a modern-day embodiment of traditional Hawaiian values and practices, MA'O's mission is to connect young people to their heritage while cultivating a future of mā'ona (plenty). We achieve this mission through college-career pathways, community-based social entrepreneurship, organic farming, and the daily practice of aloha' āina (stewardship of the land that nourishes). *Ma ka hana ka 'ike*, a traditional saying that translates to: through the work comes knowledge, reflects one of the many ways we connect our staff and the youth we serve to meaningful work and shared practices.

Since its inception, MA'O has supported 1,961 Wai'anae youth. Among them, 172 have earned an Associate's Degree, 73 have completed a Bachelor's degree, and 6 have attained a Master's degree and 1 a Doctorate. Additionally, 32 participants are currently pursuing higher education. These graduates enter the workforce equipped with the knowledge and skills to advance Hawai'i's diverse community-based economy, with a particular focus on sustainable food systems.

The organic produce grown by MA'O's youth mahi'ai (farmers) directly contributes to the health and resilience of the Wai'anae and O'ahu communities. Interns immerse themselves in an environment where fresh, locally grown produce is grown, harvested, and shared, encouraging healthier dietary habits. Many Interns bring surplus harvests home, improving their families' well-being. Preliminary results from a study conducted by researchers at UH John A Burns School of Medicine and UH Economic Research Organization affirm that within a year on the farm, over 60% of MA'O interns reduced their lifetime chance of contracting Type 2 diabetes.

From its humble beginnings on a 5-acre leased plot in 2001, MA'O has expanded its operations to 281 acres as of 2019. Most recently, in 2024, MA'O acquired an additional 249 acres of land in Mākaha, West O'ahu, further enhancing its capacity to grow food and empower youth. In 2024 alone, MA'O produced approximately 164 tons of fresh organic fruits and vegetables, supplying local markets, grocers, institutions, food hubs, and restaurants across O'ahu. The farm grows more than 50 varieties of fruits and vegetables, including salad greens, root crops, cooking greens, herbs, seasonal tropical fruits, and a growing number of tree crops such as avocados, mangoes, 'ulu, and citrus. This diversified production is vital in strengthening food security for our community and Hawai'i nei.

**The goals and objectives related to the request:**

The requested State GIA funding will expand the WCRC-MA'O Mā'ona strategic plan to increase participation in college-career farm leadership programs, boost organic food production, and create sustainable jobs. This initiative addresses Hawai'i's urgent need for food security and self-sufficiency by building a culturally grounded workforce pipeline through public schools and community engagement. By fostering sustainable farming techniques rooted in Native Hawaiian knowledge and practices, MA'O Organic Farms strengthens local food systems and creates lasting opportunities for community resilience.

**Goal 1: Expand the Farm Expansion Experience (FE'E) Program**

Enhance the FE'E program to include year-round, hands-on internships in organic farming and food production.

**Objectives:**

1. Enroll a minimum of 30 participants annually in the FE'E program.
2. Implement a structured curriculum that incorporates climate-smart agriculture, Native Hawaiian practices, and leadership development.
3. Track participant progress, learnings, and success with monthly Evaluations, focusing on skill development and leadership readiness.

**Goal 2: Strengthen Hawai'i's Food Security and Self-Sufficiency**

Increase local organic food production to reduce reliance on imports, utilizing the ho'oilō (cool) season to grow more food and diversity of production.

**Objectives:**

1. Increase organic fruit and vegetable production by 25% within a year.
2. Expand distribution of fresh organic produce to local markets, schools, and community organizations
3. Provide two education workshops annually to promote food security and sustainable practices in the broader community.

**Goal 3:** Build Community Resilience through the development of a culturally grounded workforce 'auwai (pathway of programs) that engage youth in sustainable agriculture and empower participants to become leaders in their kaiāulu (community).

**Objectives:**

1. Establish partnerships with at least 3 colleges and community organizations to recruit participants into the FE'E program.
2. Host quarterly community engagement events highlighting sustainable farming practices' cultural and ecological significance.
3. Mentor 5 program alums to support career advancement in agriculture or related fields.
4. Develop and implement a participant feedback system to assess cultural connection and community impact, ensuring alignment with program values.

**The public purpose and need to be served**

This farm expansion initiative enables MA'O to maximize community benefits through increased agricultural production, workforce development, and environmental stewardship. Hawai'i currently relies on imported food for an estimated 85–90% of its supply, leaving the state vulnerable to global supply chain disruptions. This project directly addresses these vulnerabilities by embedding MA'O's college and workforce training programs into the expansion, ensuring significant training, education, and local food production outcomes. By reducing dependence on imported food and fostering sustainable, climate-smart agricultural practices, this initiative strengthens Hawai'i's food security and self-sufficiency.

The project serves a public purpose in three primary areas:

1. **Food Security and Resiliency:** Expanding local organic food production to reduce Hawai'i's reliance on imports and build a more resilient food system.
2. **Workforce Development and Cultural Revitalization:** Creating employment opportunities, cultivating a skilled workforce, and integrating Native Hawaiian practices into agricultural education.
3. **Sustainability and Community Impact:** Promoting climate-smart farming techniques and fostering long-term environmental stewardship to benefit the community and future generations.

### **Food Security and Resiliency**

The impacts of climate change, global conflicts, and supply disruptions from COVID-19 have highlighted Hawai'i's urgent need to address food security. Hawai'i imports at least 85% of its food, underscoring the importance of increasing local farming and food production as a sustainable and thriving industry.

Currently, MA'O produces 6,300 pounds of organic produce weekly, with plans to increase this to 22,250 pounds over the next five years. Approximately 20% of this volume directly serves vendors, grocers, and families on the Wai'anae Coast, contributing significantly to community food security. At full capacity, MA'O will generate an estimated \$10 million annually in food sales, helping to bridge the \$106 million unrealized market opportunity for locally grown vegetables.

In addition, clearing up to 30 acres will enable MA'O's young farmers to produce approximately 250,000 more pounds of food annually. This expansion is a critical step toward strengthening Hawai'i's food system, reducing reliance on imports, and ensuring access to organic food for communities in need.

### **Workforce Development and Cultural Revitalization**

Academic success is vital to career growth, but equipping young people with leadership and workforce readiness skills is equally important. MA'O's farm expansion creates opportunities for hands-on training in organic farm management, including skills like land preparation and the use of specialized equipment.

Graduates of MA'O programs emerge as skilled leaders, equipped with practical experience in climate-smart agriculture and essential life skills. They break cycles of generational poverty, uplift their families, and strengthen their communities. MA'O bridges the gap between economic opportunity and cultural revitalization by fostering leadership and grounding youth in cultural practices.

### **Sustainability and Community Impact**

This initiative advances sustainability by integrating climate-smart agricultural practices and reducing reliance on imported food. MA'O incorporates Native Hawaiian knowledge into its training programs, emphasizing the reciprocal relationship between land, culture, and community.

By expanding organic farming practices and building the capacity of young leaders, MA'O creates long-term environmental benefits while fostering a resilient and empowered community. This holistic approach ensures the initiative will sustain its impact for future generations.

### **Describe the target population to be served; and**

MA'O is embedded in and primarily serves the Wai'anae community, one of the poorest and most food-insecure regions of Hawai'i. Much of the community struggles with the impacts of intergenerational poverty, including preventable diseases, homelessness, and hunger. The region's socio-economic disparities, compared to the State, disproportionately impact native Hawaiians, who comprise 58% of

the community, compared to 21% of the State's population.

The region's poverty is deeply tied to low educational attainment and low income. With 16% of the region's adult population lacking a high school diploma (compared to 11% statewide) and 88% lacking a Bachelor's degree (compared to 69% statewide), well-paying jobs are out of reach for the majority. Wai'anae's per capita income is \$17,800, compared to the State's \$29,500. Coupled with an unemployment rate that is three times that of the State, these low wages push a quarter of the community to live under the 100% federal poverty level, more than double the statewide poverty rate of 11%. Over half of Wai'anae households with children receive public assistance, compared to a quarter statewide.

Research shows a clear correlation between educational attainment and increased income levels. An individual in Wai'anae without a high school diploma earns an average annual salary of \$21,731, which rises to \$29,182 with a high school diploma and \$40,179 with a Bachelor's degree. Therefore, interventions that promote college enrollment, retention, and attainment are critical to building community wealth on the Leeward Coast.

The inverse of Wai'anae's deficits is a tremendous opportunity: to empower and educate Wai'anae youth to lead the community to a healthy and prosperous future by creating a culturally rooted sustainable food system. Over the past 24 years, MA'O has developed innovative strategies to do just this, growing young leaders within the cultural and socioeconomic context of the Wai'anae community, and contributing to holistic health and well-being.

**Describe the geographic coverage.**

WCRC and MA'O Organic Farm operate in Lualualei Valley, Wai'anae, O'ahu, within the City & County of Honolulu, State of Hawai'i. The majority of our youth participants come from the Wai'anae moku, which includes Nānākuli, Mā'ili, Wai'anae, Mākaha, and Kapolei. The region's population is 47,260, with 39% of residents under 24. Wai'anae has the highest concentrations of Native Hawaiians and Pacific Islanders in the State, with 41% of residents in the Census Designated Places (CDPs) identifying as such, compared to 10% statewide. Native Hawaiians are particularly concentrated in Homesteads in Nānākuli, Mā'ili, and Wai'anae.

The region struggles with significant socio-economic challenges, with a per capita income of \$21,300, compared to \$35,600 statewide. Food insecurity rates exceed 30% in Wai'anae, much higher than the statewide average of 20.5% among Native Hawaiians and Pacific Islanders. Youth in Wai'anae experience "at-risk" socio-economic behaviors, such as high rates of school absenteeism and teenage onset of diabetes, exacerbating the community's challenges. For those over 25 years old, only 13% of Wai'anae residents possess a Bachelor's degree, compared to 33% statewide. MA'O focuses on serving Native Hawaiian youth in this context, addressing the educational and employment disparities that affect their long-term well-being.

In addition to our primary focus on Wai'anae, MA'O also serves the broader O'ahu community by providing fresh, organic produce at various outlets, including Kaka'ako, Pearlridge, and Wai'anae

farmer's markets. Our co-producers, such as Foodland, Whole Foods Market, and Down to Earth, support purchasing local organic food from us. These markets span from Wai'anae to Kapolei, Pearl City, metro Honolulu, Aiea, and Kailua, reaching nearly two dozen restaurants across O'ahu that incorporate our produce into their menus.

### **III. Service Summary and Outcomes**

#### **Farm Expansion Experience (FE'E) Initiative**

The FE'E Initiative enhances Hawai'i's food security through education and workforce development rooted in sustainability and community well-being. It benefits the public by increasing access to local organic food, providing leadership training, and promoting environmental stewardship.

#### **1. Describe the scope of work, tasks and responsibilities;**

##### **1. Program Implementation**

- **Recruitment & Outreach:**
  - Recruit 30 participants annually, prioritizing Native Hawaiian youth and community members.
- **Mentorship & Education:**
  - Conduct weekly training workshops on topics including:
    - Organic Farming
    - Leadership Development
    - Lo'i Kalo
    - Soil and Pest Management
    - Crop Diversification
    - Heavy Machinery Operation
    - Conservation
    - Farm Management and Expansion
    - Fire & Farming
    - Financial Literacy
- **Sustainable Food Production:**
  - Operate and expand MA'O Organic Farm to produce [specific target] pounds of organic produce annually, integrating participants in hands-on, work-based learning experiences.

##### **2. Community Engagement**

- Conduct two community workshops annually focused on:
  - Food security
  - Organic farming practices
  - Health and sustainability
- Partner with three local organizations to amplify the program's impact and reach.

### 3. Capacity Building

- Enhance internal processes for program monitoring, evaluation, and reporting.
- Invest in staff development and training to ensure program delivery excellence.

## 2. Provide a projected annual timeline for accomplishing the results or outcomes of the service;

### Projected Annual Timeline

#### Months 1–3: Initiation

- Establish partnerships and finalize project implementation plans.
- Coordinate with partners to align objectives and timelines.

#### Months 3–6: Recruitment & Onboarding

- Conduct outreach campaigns to recruit participants, prioritizing Native Hawaiian youth.
- Onboard participants and interns, ensuring all necessary processes are completed.
- Organize the first community workshops and events to promote awareness and engagement.

#### Months 7–9: Program Launch and Mid-Year Check-In

- Launch FE'E Ho'oilō (January–March), initiating training sessions and mentorship activities.
- Host the first community event.
- Conduct a mid-program evaluation to assess participant progress and learning outcomes.
- Organize the second community event (Ho'ike).

#### Months 10–12: Evaluation and Reporting

- Perform end-of-program evaluations to gather comprehensive feedback from participants and stakeholders.
- Compile program performance reports, highlighting achievements and lessons learned.
- Submit final grant reports to the funding agency.

## 3. Describe its quality assurance and evaluation plans for the request. Specify how the applicant plans to monitor, evaluate, and improve their results; and

### Quality Assurance and Evaluation Plans

#### Monitoring and Feedback:

- Regularly track participant progress through surveys, interviews, and performance assessments tailored to measure skill acquisition, confidence levels, and program satisfaction.
- Monitor program activities using specific key performance indicators (KPIs), such as:
  - **Attendance:** Percentage of sessions attended by participants.
  - **Skill Proficiency:** Number of participants demonstrating mastery of organic farming practices or leadership skills.
  - **Program Completion Rate:** Percentage of participants who complete the program.
- Conduct monthly review meetings to analyze ongoing data and ensure program activities align with stated goals.

**Evaluation:**

- Conduct structured quarterly reviews to assess progress, including detailed comparisons against baseline data.
- Utilize pre- and post-program assessments to measure impact on:
  - Educational attainment (e.g., certifications earned or academic performance improvements).
  - Employment outcomes (e.g., number of participants securing related jobs).
  - Participant well-being (e.g., self-reported health improvements and reduced financial stress).
- Include qualitative evaluations through focus groups or participant testimonials to capture the broader impact.

**Improvement Plan:**

- Use findings from quarterly reviews and participant assessments to adjust the curriculum, delivery methods, and resource allocation in real-time.
- Create a structured feedback loop by hosting biannual focus groups with participants, staff, and stakeholders to gather actionable insights.
- Implement action plans based on survey findings, including targeted training for staff or introducing new resources to address identified challenges.
- Foster collaboration by engaging participants and stakeholders in advisory panels to co-create solutions and ensure the program remains culturally relevant and impactful.

**4. Measures of Effectiveness**

**1. Participant Outcomes:**

- Percentage of participants who complete the program.
- Improvement in academic achievement and employment outcomes, measured by:
  - Number of participants enrolling in higher education programs.
  - Number of participants gaining employment in sustainable or agriculture-related industries.

**2. Community Impact:**

- The total volume of organic produce distributed locally ([specific number] pounds annually).
- The number of community members engaged through workshops and events.
- Demonstrable increase in community awareness of food security, sustainability, and health.

**3. Operational Metrics:**

- Program retention rate: Percentage of participants who remain engaged throughout the program.
- Participant satisfaction is assessed via surveys with a target satisfaction rate of 85% or higher.
- Post-internship outcomes: Percentage of participants securing relevant employment or entrepreneurial ventures within six months of completion.
- Number of partnerships established or strengthened annually to expand program impact and reach.

**IV. Financial**

**Budget**

1. The applicant shall submit a budget utilizing the enclosed budget forms as applicable, to detail the cost of the request.
  - a. Budget request by source of funds - attached
  - b. Personnel salaries and wages - attached
  - c. Equipment and motor vehicles - not applicable
  - d. Capital project details - not applicable
  - e. Government contracts, grants, and grants in aid - not applicable

2. The applicant shall provide its anticipated quarterly funding requests for the fiscal year 2026.

Quarter 1	Quarter 2	Quarter 3	Quarter 4	Total Grant
\$68,960	\$29,554	\$29,554	\$68,960	\$197,030

3. The applicant shall provide a listing of all other sources of funding that they are seeking for fiscal year 2026.

- Kamehameha Schools, \$350,000
- Kosasa Foundation, \$99,856
- Weinberg Foundation, \$350,000
- Flora Family Foundation, \$10,000
- Marshall Foundation, \$150,000
- Atherton Foundation, \$100,000
- KUPU \$178,225
- National Fish & Wildlife Foundation, America the Beautiful \$495,000
- Bank of Hawaii Foundation, \$50,000

4. The applicant shall provide a listing of all state and federal tax credits it has been granted within the prior three years. Additionally, the applicant shall provide a listing of all state and federal tax credits they have applied for or anticipate applying for pertaining to any capital project, if applicable.

Not Applicable

**5. The applicant shall provide a listing of all federal, state, and county government contracts, grants, and grants in aid it has been granted within the prior three years and will be receiving for fiscal year 2026 for program funding.**

- DHHS - Administration for Native Americans (ANA) 2021-2023 \$1,112,277
- USDA Natural Resource and Conservation Service 2022 - 2024 \$693K
- Kaulunani Grant 2023 - 2024 - \$48,339
- USDA Natural Resource and Conservation Service 2024 - 2025 \$697K
- USDA Organic Market Development Grant (Proposed) 2024 - 2026 - \$1.6M
- State GIA FY24 \$50,000 - land clearing
- National Fish & Wildlife Foundation, America the Beautiful 2025 - 2027, \$1,499,365.91
- DOD Readiness and Environmental Protection Integration (REPI) Challenge 2025 - 2026, \$1,500,000

**6. The applicant shall provide the balance of its unrestricted current assets as of December 31, 2024.**

Unrestricted Current Assets as of 12/31/24: \$2,854,047.27 (unaudited)

## **V. Experience and Capability**

### **1. Necessary Skills and Experience**

The applicant shall demonstrate that it has the necessary skills, abilities, knowledge of, and experience relating to the request. State your experience and appropriateness for providing the service proposed in this application. The applicant shall also provide a listing of verifiable experience of related projects or contracts for the most recent three years that are pertinent to the request.

MA'O's capacity is grounded in our deep experience in educational program design and implementation, our organic farming expertise, and our partnerships with key allies. Over the course of our 24 year history, we have successfully navigated several earlier chapters of substantial expansion, during which we have grown educational programming and improved intern retention rates, while using additional acreage to scale up organic food production.

WCRC and MA'O Organic Farms can demonstrate years of verifiable experience in the performance of the specific work, activities and tasks related to this project in the areas of youth leadership development, agricultural and farm enterprise training, program & organizational capacity building.

As mentioned previously, to date MA'O has served 1,961 Wai'anae youth through the YLT internship and High School programs; of these participants, 172 have graduated with an Associate's Degree, 73 have secured a Bachelor's degree, 6 have received his/her Master's degree, and 1 a Doctorate. Additionally, 32 Interns/Staff are currently pursuing and working towards their higher educational goals. This success is grounded in the unique strategies to engage, retain, and graduate interns that successfully counter the structural impediments facing Wai'anae youth. The organization's approach

includes acculturating students to college attainment and lifelong learning by maximizing peer-to-peer engagement, balancing providing support with giving kuleana (farm work that requires responsibility), empowering youth to generate action-oriented goals, and providing individualized mentorship.

Successful youth recruitment, matriculation and graduation also requires close coordination with community and educational partners. To this end, we have built and maintained strong relationships with the area's public, private and charter high schools, Leeward Community College, and the University of Hawai'i West O'ahu.

MA'O also has a strong track record as a production-oriented organic farm. MA'O is the largest certified organic diversified farm on O'ahu, and has served as a source of expertise and inspiration for organic farmers throughout the state and beyond, as well as the site of numerous training and research projects conducted by University of Hawai'i. In 2024, MA'O produced 163 tons of fresh organic fruits and vegetables per year at area markets, as well as grocers, institutions, food hubs and restaurants island-wide.

## **2. Facilities**

In 2001, MA'O began its farm operations and educational programming on five leased acres with minimal infrastructure. Over time, the organization has grown significantly:

- 2008: Purchased an 11-acre property adjacent to the original farm.
- 2011: Acquired an additional 8 acres, bringing the Puhawai campus to a total of 24 acres.

The Puhawai campus now includes:

- Repurposed farm structures: Three 7,500-square-foot steel truss buildings have been adapted to serve as offices, classrooms/meeting spaces, kitchen/break areas, and facilities for equipment storage and maintenance.
- Modular office trailer: Provides additional office space, with Wi-Fi connectivity enabling farm management and online training.
- Post-harvest processing and training facility: Completed in 2021, this 11,500-square-foot facility processes over 10,000 pounds of certified organic fruits and vegetables weekly.

In 2019, MA'O expanded further, acquiring a 257-acre property approximately 5 miles from the Puhawai campus, known as "Palikea." Since then, MA'O has:

- Activated 40 acres of the land for row crop and agroforestry production.
- Constructed two shade cloth nurseries to support seedling cultivation.

Most recently, in 2024, MA'O was gifted nearly 250 acres of land in Mākaha, West O'ahu. This extraordinary opportunity allows MA'O to transition the land into productive agricultural use, fostering community benefit and furthering its mission to support food sovereignty and sustainable farming.

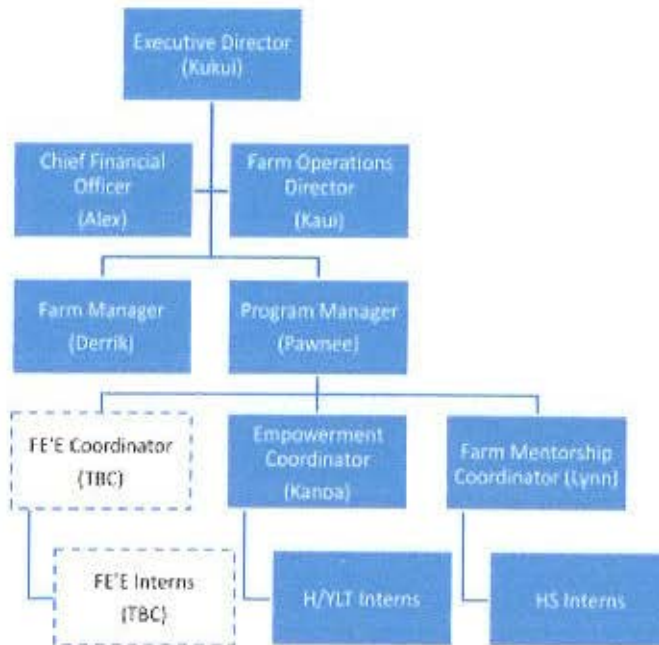
## **VI. Personnel: Project Organization and Staffing**

### **Proposed Staffing, Staff Qualifications, Supervision and Training**

The project team is composed of experienced professionals with diverse expertise to ensure successful implementation and alignment with organizational goals. As previously described, MA'O has successfully navigated several periods of significant scaling in farming operations and educational programming. The organization's seasoned co-founders, J. Kukui Maunakea-Forth, Executive & Programs Director, and Gary Maunakea-Forth, are prepared to lead a strong staff through this next chapter of expansion, including the work organized under this capital improvement project.

- **J. Kukui Maunakea-Forth, Executive & Programs Director:** Responsible for staffing the FE'E project team, ensuring team members meet the required qualifications, and providing overall supervision and training to ensure the project's success and alignment with organizational goals.
- **Alexandra Kazlauskys, CFO:** Oversees the financial management of the FE'E project, ensures fiscal compliance, and provides financial training and support to the project team.
- **Cheryse Sana, Farm Operations Director:** Oversees the Mahi'ai (farmers) who will serve as mentors, trainers, and supervisors for FE'E participants, provides planning and operational training, and ensures alignment with farm-based programming.
- **Derrik Parker, General Farm Manager:** Supervises the Mahi'ai (farmers), delivers hands-on mentorship and training to FE'E participants, and ensures successful implementation of farm-based learning activities.
- **Pawnee Maiden, 'Auwai Program Manager:** Coordinates the collaboration between the FE'E internship and 'Auwai programming, supervises and trains the FE'E Internship Coordinator, and ensures alignment with 'Auwai program goals.
- **Lynn Batten, High School Internship Coordinator:** Provides direct supervision of high school interns, supports the FE'E project, and integrates established high school internship programming to enhance participant success.
- **Kanoa Cleveland, YLT College Internship Coordinator:** Provides direct supervision of college interns, supports the FE'E project, and leverages established college internship programming to ensure program alignment and participant growth.
- **FE'E Internship Coordinator (To Be Hired):** Responsible for overseeing and implementing the FE'E project, receiving mentorship and training from program leaders to ensure effective

## 2. Organization Chart



## 3. Compensation

The Executive Director, Farm Operations Director, & Chief Financial Officer are paid between \$100,000 and \$130,000 annually.

## VII. Other

### 1. Litigation

The applicant shall disclose any pending litigation to which they are a party, including the disclosure of any outstanding judgement. If applicable, please explain.

Not applicable

### 2. Licensure or Accreditation

The applicant shall specify any special qualifications, including but not limited to licensure or accreditation that the applicant possesses relevant to this request.

Not applicable

### 3. Private Educational Institutions

The applicant shall specify whether the grant will be used to support or benefit a sectarian or non-sectarian private educational institution. Please see [Article X, Section 1, of the State Constitution](#) for the relevance of this question.

Not applicable

### 4. Future Sustainability Plan

The applicant shall provide a plan for sustaining after fiscal year 2026 the activity funded by the grant if the grant of this application is:

- (a) Received by the applicant for fiscal year 2026, but
- (b) Not received by the applicant thereafter.

The GIA grant period and project fall in years 7-8 of MA'O's ten-year strategic plan (2018-2027), encompassing the expansion and scaling of our farming operations. The initiative builds on the organization's 24-year history of robust operations and successful incremental expansion of acreage cultivated and youth served. It reflects our core strengths: a proven theory of change, experienced and dedicated staff, committed co-producers (customers), and mutually enriching partnerships with community institutions. This sustainability plan directly supports the proposed initiative's focus on Hawai'i's food security, education, and workforce development.

### Long-Term Financial and Operational Resilience

#### 1. Diversified Funding Model:

- MA'O operates as a social enterprise, blending earned revenue with support from philanthropic and civic partners. Over \$44 million has been secured in the past 24 years, demonstrating a strong history of successful fundraising to sustain programs.
- The farm's earned revenue has steadily grown, with its contribution to MA'O's operating budget increasing from 20% in 2008 to 36% in 2023, driven by expansion and strengthened market relationships.

#### 2. Strong Market Demand:

- Partnerships with grocery stores such as Foodland, Whole Foods Market, and Down To Earth, along with restaurant collaborations, ensure consistent market demand for organic produce.
- Sales projections, planting schedules, and crop selection are developed collaboratively with these partners, aligning production with demand and supporting the initiative's goal of distributing organic produce locally.

### Youth Development and Organizational Capacity

#### 1. Youth-Centric Focus:

- The initiative prioritizes engaging Native Hawaiian youth, providing them with organic

farming, leadership, conservation, and financial literacy training. The sustainability plan reinforces this focus by emphasizing youth success as a cornerstone of MA'O's mission.

- Key staff members, aged 25-40, possess the necessary expertise and experience to mentor youth and ensure organizational continuity, addressing concerns about future leadership and capacity.

**2. Program Retention and Impact:**

- The program incorporates participant evaluation, training feedback, and long-term mentorship to ensure high retention rates and participant success in educational and career pursuits.

**Community and Stakeholder Engagement**

**1. Collaborative Partnerships:**

- The initiative seeks to amplify its impact through collaborations with local organizations, mirroring MA'O's approach to nurturing strong community relationships. This ensures sustained support for program goals and alignment with broader community needs.

**2. Community Workshops and Events:**

- Hosting workshops and events on food security, sustainability, and health will build community awareness and engagement, reinforcing the program's impact and sustainability.

**Quality Assurance and Continuous Improvement**

**1. Data-Driven Monitoring and Evaluation:**

- Program outcomes, such as the volume of organic produce distributed, participant academic and employment achievements, and satisfaction rates, will be tracked and reported to demonstrate effectiveness and guide improvements.
- Quarterly evaluations and mid-program reviews will ensure goal alignment and provide opportunities for adaptive management.

**2. Strategic Refinements:**

- Evaluation findings will inform curriculum updates, delivery methods, and resource allocation, ensuring the program remains responsive to community and participant needs.

The sustainability plan directly supports the goals of the proposed initiative by ensuring financial stability, engaging youth participants, fostering community partnerships, and maintaining a robust system for monitoring and evaluation. With a history of success and a clear vision for the future, MA'O is well-positioned to sustain and grow the impact of this initiative beyond the grant period.

**DECLARATION STATEMENT OF  
APPLICANTS FOR GRANTS PURSUANT TO  
CHAPTER 42F, HAWAII REVISED STATUTES**

The undersigned authorized representative of the applicant certifies the following:

- 1) The applicant meets and will comply with all of the following standards for the award of grants pursuant to Section 42F-103, Hawaii Revised Statutes:
  - a) Is licensed or accredited, in accordance with federal, state, or county statutes, rules, or ordinances, to conduct the activities or provide the services for which a grant is awarded;
  - b) Complies with all applicable federal and state laws prohibiting discrimination against any person on the basis of race, color, national origin, religion, creed, sex, age, sexual orientation, or disability;
  - c) Agrees not to use state funds for entertainment or lobbying activities; and
  - d) Allows the state agency to which funds for the grant were appropriated for expenditure, legislative committees and their staff, and the auditor full access to their records, reports, files, and other related documents and information for purposes of monitoring, measuring the effectiveness, and ensuring the proper expenditure of the grant.
- 2) If the applicant is an organization, the applicant meets the following requirements pursuant to Section 42F-103, Hawaii Revised Statutes:
  - a) Is incorporated under the laws of the State; and
  - b) Has bylaws or policies that describe the manner in which the activities or services for which a grant is awarded shall be conducted or provided; and
- 3) If the applicant is a non-profit organization, it meets the following requirements pursuant to Section 42F-103, Hawaii Revised Statutes:
  - a) Is determined and designated to be a non-profit organization by the Internal Revenue Service; and
  - b) Has a governing board whose members have no material conflict of interest and serve without compensation.
- 4) The use of grant-in-aid funding complies with all provisions of the Constitution of the State of Hawaii (for example, pursuant to Article X, section 1, of the Constitution, the State cannot provide "... public funds ... for the support or benefit of any sectarian or nonsectarian private educational institution...").

Pursuant to Section 42F-103, Hawaii Revised Statutes, for grants used for the acquisition of land, when the organization discontinues the activities or services on the land acquired for which the grant was awarded and disposes of the land in fee simple or by lease, the organization shall negotiate with the expending agency for a lump sum or installment repayment to the State of the amount of the grant used for the acquisition of the land.

Further, the undersigned authorized representative certifies that this statement is true and correct to the best of the applicant's knowledge.

Wai'anae Community Re-Development Corporation DBA MA'O Organic Farms

(Typed Name of Individual or Organization)



(Signature)

1-17-25

(Date)

J. Kukui Maunakea-Forth

Executive Director

(Typed Name)

(Title)

# BUDGET REQUEST BY SOURCE OF FUNDS

Period: July 1, 2024 to June 30, 2025

Applicant: Wai'anae Community Re-Development Corporation

BUDGET CATEGORIES	Total State Funds Requested (a)	Total Federal Funds Requested (b)	Total County Funds Requested (c)	Total Private/Other Funds Requested (d)
<b>A. PERSONNEL COST</b>				
1. Salaries	23,631	0	0	45,000
2. Payroll Taxes & Assessments	3,545			6,750
3. Fringe Benefits	2,363			4,500
<b>TOTAL PERSONNEL COST</b>	<b>29,538</b>			<b>56,250</b>
<b>B. OTHER CURRENT EXPENSES</b>				
1. Internship Stipends	114,240			130,560
2. Trees & Tree Planting Supplies	32,340			44,660
3. Intern/Participant Supplies	1,500			3,750
4. Program Supplies	800			1,600
5. Contracted Services	700			2,300
6. Indirect Cost - 10% De Minimus Rate	17,912			10,856
7				
8				
9				
10				
11				
12				
13				
14				
15				
16				
17				
18				
19				
20				
<b>TOTAL OTHER CURRENT EXPENSES</b>	<b>167,492</b>			<b>193,726</b>
<b>C. EQUIPMENT PURCHASES</b>				
<b>D. MOTOR VEHICLE PURCHASES</b>				
<b>E. CAPITAL</b>				
<b>TOTAL (A+B+C+D+E)</b>	<b>197,030</b>			<b>249,976</b>
<b>SOURCES OF FUNDING</b>		Budget Prepared By: <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between;"> <div>                         (a) Total State Funds Requested                          (b) Total Federal Funds Requested                          (c) Total County Funds Requested                          (d) Total Private/Other Funds Requested                     </div> <div>                         197,030                          0                          0                          249,976                     </div> <div>                         Alexandra Kazlauskas                          Name (Please type or print)                            Signature of Authorized Official                          Alexandra Kazlauskas, Chief Financial Officer                          Name and Title (Please type or print)                     </div> <div>                         808-354-4373                          Phone                          1/17/2025                          Date                     </div> </div>		
<b>TOTAL BUDGET</b>	<b>447,006</b>			

BUDGET JUSTIFICATION - PERSONNEL SALARIES AND WAGES Period: July 1, 2024 to June 30, 2025

**Applicant:** Wai'anae Community Re-Development Corporation

POSITION TITLE	FULL TIME EQUIVALENT	ANNUAL SALARY A	% OF TIME ALLOCATED TO GRANT REQUEST B	TOTAL STATE FUNDS REQUESTED (A x B)
FE'E Internship Coordinator	1	\$60,000.00	25.00%	\$ 15,000.00
Director of Farm Operations	0.2	\$86,305.00	10.00%	\$ 8,630.50
				\$ -
				\$ -
				\$ -
				\$ -
				\$ -
				\$ -
				\$ -
				\$ -
				\$ -
				\$ -
				\$ -
				\$ -
<b>TOTAL:</b>				23,630.50
<b>JUSTIFICATION/COMMENTS:</b>				
<p>1 FTE FE'E Internship Coordinator: The dedicated internship coordinator is essential to the program's success - leading recruitment, intern placement, working with farm site supervisors of the various organizations and the coordinator of program activities. 75% of the position will be funded by private/other funds.</p> <p>2 FTE Director of Farm Operations: The Director of Farm Operations is a full time position, only .2 FTE is dedicated to the FE'E Internship Program to oversee the project and mentor the internship coordinator. 10% of the allocation will be funded by private/other funds.</p>				



STATE OF HAWAII  
STATE PROCUREMENT OFFICE

**CERTIFICATE OF VENDOR COMPLIANCE**

This document presents the compliance status of the vendor identified below on the issue date with respect to certificates required from the Hawaii Department of Taxation (DOTAX), the Internal Revenue Service, the Hawaii Department of Labor and Industrial Relations (DLIR), and the Hawaii Department of Commerce and Consumer Affairs (DCCA).

**Vendor Name:** WAI'ANAE COMMUNITY RE-DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION

**DBA/Trade Name:** WAI'ANAE COMMUNITY RE-DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION

**Issue Date:** 01/10/2025

**Status:** Compliant

Hawaii Tax#: 40484254-01

New Hawaii Tax#:

FEIN/SSN#: XX-XXX0803

UI#: XXXXXX3675

DCCA FILE#: 119748

Status of Compliance for this Vendor on issue date:

Form	Department(s)	Status
A-6	Hawaii Department of Taxation	Compliant
8821	Internal Revenue Service	Compliant
COGS	Hawaii Department of Commerce & Consumer Affairs	Exempt
LIR27	Hawaii Department of Labor & Industrial Relations	Compliant

**Status Legend:**

Status	Description
Exempt	The entity is exempt from this requirement
Compliant	The entity is compliant with this requirement or the entity is in agreement with agency and actively working towards compliance
Pending	A status determination has not yet been made
Submitted	The entity has applied for the certificate but it is awaiting approval
Not Compliant	The entity is not in compliance with the requirement and should contact the issuing agency for more information

INTERNAL REVENUE SERVICE  
P. O. BOX 2508  
CINCINNATI, OH 45201

DEPARTMENT OF THE TREASURY

Date:

Employer Identification Number:  
99-0350803

DLN:

17053272040040

Contact Person:

SHAWNTEL R MCGUIRE

ID# 31456

Contact Telephone Number:

(877) 829-5500

WAI-ANAE COMMUNITY RE-DEVELOPMENT  
CORPORATION  
C/O GARY FORTH  
85-751 KAUPUNI PL.  
WAIANAE, HI 96792

Accounting Period Ending:

December 31

Foundation Status Classification:

509(a)(1)

Advance Ruling Period Begins:

August 24, 2000

Advance Ruling Period Ends:

December 31, 2004

Addendum Applies:

No

Dear Applicant:

Based on information you supplied, and assuming your operations will be as stated in your application for recognition of exemption, we have determined you are exempt from federal income tax under section 501(a) of the Internal Revenue Code as an organization described in section 501(c)(3).

Because you are a newly created organization, we are not now making a final determination of your foundation status under section 509(a) of the Code. However, we have determined that you can reasonably expect to be a publicly supported organization described in sections 509(a)(1) and 170(b)(1)(A)(vi).

Accordingly, during an advance ruling period you will be treated as a publicly supported organization, and not as a private foundation. This advance ruling period begins and ends on the dates shown above.

Within 90 days after the end of your advance ruling period, you must send us the information needed to determine whether you have met the requirements of the applicable support test during the advance ruling period. If you establish that you have been a publicly supported organization, we will classify you as a section 509(a)(1) or 509(a)(2) organization as long as you continue to meet the requirements of the applicable support test. If you do not meet the public support requirements during the advance ruling period, we will classify you as a private foundation for future periods. Also, if we classify you as a private foundation, we will treat you as a private foundation from your beginning date for purposes of section 507(d) and 4940.

Grantors and contributors may rely on our determination that you are not a private foundation until 90 days after the end of your advance ruling period. If you send us the required information within the 90 days, grantors and

Letter 1045 (DO/CG)

## WAI-ANAE COMMUNITY RE-DEVELOPMENT

contributors may continue to rely on the advance determination until we make a final determination of your foundation status.

If we publish a notice in the Internal Revenue Bulletin stating that we will no longer treat you as a publicly supported organization, grantors and contributors may not rely on this determination after the date we publish the notice. In addition, if you lose your status as a publicly supported organization, and a grantor or contributor was responsible for, or was aware of, the act or failure to act, that resulted in your loss of such status, that person may not rely on this determination from the date of the act or failure to act. Also, if a grantor or contributor learned that we had given notice that you would be removed from classification as a publicly supported organization, then that person may not rely on this determination as of the date he or she acquired such knowledge.

If you change your sources of support, your purposes, character, or method of operation, please let us know so we can consider the effect of the change on your exempt status and foundation status. If you amend your organizational document or bylaws, please send us a copy of the amended document or bylaws. Also, let us know all changes in your name or address.

As of January 1, 1984, you are liable for social security taxes under the Federal Insurance Contributions Act on amounts of \$100 or more you pay to each of your employees during a calendar year. You are not liable for the tax imposed under the Federal Unemployment Tax Act (FUTA).

Organizations that are not private foundations are not subject to the private foundation excise taxes under Chapter 42 of the Internal Revenue Code. However, you are not automatically exempt from other federal excise taxes. If you have any questions about excise, employment, or other federal taxes, please let us know.

Donors may deduct contributions to you as provided in section 170 of the Internal Revenue Code. Bequests, legacies, devises, transfers, or gifts to you or for your use are deductible for Federal estate and gift tax purposes if they meet the applicable provisions of sections 2055, 2106, and 2522 of the Code.

Donors may deduct contributions to you only to the extent that their contributions are gifts, with no consideration received. Ticket purchases and similar payments in conjunction with fundraising events may not necessarily qualify as deductible contributions, depending on the circumstances. Revenue Ruling 67-246, published in Cumulative Bulletin 1967-2, on page 104, gives guidelines regarding when taxpayers may deduct payments for admission to, or other participation in, fundraising activities for charity.

You are not required to file Form 990, Return of Organization Exempt From Income Tax, if your gross receipts each year are normally \$25,000 or less. If you receive a Form 990 package in the mail, simply attach the label provided, check the box in the heading to indicate that your annual gross receipts

WAI-ANAE COMMUNITY RE-DEVELOPMENT

period, you should file Form 990 for each year in your advance ruling period that you exceed the \$25,000 filing threshold even if your sources of support do not satisfy the public support test specified in the heading of this letter.

If a return is required, it must be filed by the 15th day of the fifth month after the end of your annual accounting period. A penalty of \$20 a day is charged when a return is filed late, unless there is reasonable cause for the delay. However, the maximum penalty charged cannot exceed \$10,000 or 5 percent of your gross receipts for the year, whichever is less. For organizations with gross receipts exceeding \$1,000,000 in any year, the penalty is \$100 per day per return, unless there is reasonable cause for the delay. The maximum penalty for an organization with gross receipts exceeding \$1,000,000 shall not exceed \$50,000. This penalty may also be charged if a return is not complete. So, please be sure your return is complete before you file it.

You are not required to file federal income tax returns unless you are subject to the tax on unrelated business income under section 511 of the Code. If you are subject to this tax, you must file an income tax return on Form 990-T, Exempt Organization Business Income Tax Return. In this letter we are not determining whether any of your present or proposed activities are unrelated trade or business as defined in section 513 of the Code.

You are required to make your annual information return, Form 990 or Form 990-EZ, available for public inspection for three years after the later of the due date of the return or the date the return is filed. You are also required to make available for public inspection your exemption application, any supporting documents, and your exemption letter. Copies of these documents are also required to be provided to any individual upon written or in person request without charge other than reasonable fees for copying and postage. You may fulfill this requirement by placing these documents on the Internet. Penalties may be imposed for failure to comply with these requirements. Additional information is available in Publication 557, Tax-Exempt Status for Your Organization, or you may call our toll free number shown above.

You need an employer identification number even if you have no employees. If an employer identification number was not entered on your application, we will assign a number to you and advise you of it. Please use that number on all returns you file and in all correspondence with the Internal Revenue Service.

If we said in the heading of this letter that an addendum applies, the addendum enclosed is an integral part of this letter.

Because this letter could help us resolve any questions about your exempt status and foundation status, you should keep it in your permanent records.

WAI-ANAE COMMUNITY RE-DEVELOPMENT

If you have any questions, please contact the person whose name and telephone number are shown in the heading of this letter.

Sincerely yours,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Steven T. Miller".

Steven T. Miller  
Director, Exempt Organizations

Enclosure(s):  
Form 872-C