

REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

Building -Integrated Agriculture for Community Resilience

ABOUT

The Building Integrated Agriculture (BIA) Academy, led by the National Urban Research & Extension Center in partnership with NLCU is an introductory cohort program that supports municipal leaders in exploring BIA as a strategy for community and environmental resilience, sustainability, food access, and economic opportunity. Participants engage in self-paced learning, monthly expert-led sessions, peer exchange, and technical assistance, with a focus on applied learning and practical implementation. The program emphasizes connections to university research and Extension partners to help cities translate knowledge into action and inform future practice.

WHO SHOULD APPLY

This program is for city leaders and teams—particularly those early in exploring building-integrated agriculture—who want to develop practical, locally grounded strategies that advance food access, climate resilience, and economic opportunity.

Proposal Due: October 5, 2026,
11:59 PM ET

**Selection
Announcement** October 15, 2026

Course Dates: November 1, 2026 –
November 30, 2027

**Submission
Information:**
Maggie Anderson
Fasy, Program
Manager at
msanderson@wsu.edu



Questions:
Jeanne Milliken Bonds, NLCU,
millikenbonds@nlc.org

Maggie Anderson Fasy, msanderson@wsu.edu or
206-788-5808

OVERVIEW

About the Building Integrated Agriculture Academy

The Building-Integrated Agriculture (BIA) Academy is a cohort-based program that helps city leaders explore how food production can be integrated into the built environment to advance local priorities.

This **introductory program** is designed for cities that are:

- Exploring BIA for the first time, or
- Ready to move early ideas toward implementation

Participants will build foundational knowledge, assess local readiness, and develop a **practical concept or next step** for their community.

What is Building Integrated Agriculture?

Building-integrated agriculture (BIA) refers to food production systems intentionally incorporated into buildings and urban infrastructure.

Examples include:

- Rooftop farms and edible green roofs
- Vertical farming systems in repurposed buildings
- Greenhouses attached to or embedded within structures

BIA helps cities make more efficient use of existing space while supporting local food systems and sustainable development.

Why BIA Matters

BIA can help cities address multiple priorities at once, including:

- **Food access:** Expanding local production and improving community resilience

- **Climate resilience:** Reducing heat, managing stormwater, and strengthening green infrastructure
- **Economic development:** Supporting new business models and green jobs
- **Land use efficiency:** Reimagining underutilized buildings and spaces

Program Approach

The Academy combines applied learning with practical support. Cities will engage in:

- Self-paced learning modules
- Monthly live sessions with subject matter experts
- Peer exchange with other cities
- Technical assistance from university and practitioner partners

A core goal is to connect cities with **university research and Extension expertise**, helping translate knowledge into action and inform future practice.

What Participants Will Gain

By the end of the Academy, participating cities will be able to:

- Understand the fundamentals of BIA and its applications
- Identify opportunities and constraints in their local context
- Explore a specific site, project, or policy direction
- Develop an actionable concept, pilot idea, or strategy
- Build relationships with peers, experts, and technical partners

Program Structure

The Academy is designed as a practical, low-barrier learning experience that integrates directly into city work.

Each month includes:

- **Pre-work:** Short readings and reflections
- **Live session:** Expert-led discussion and examples
- **Peer exchange:** Light engagement with other cities
- **Application:** Optional local follow-up activities
- **Technical assistance:** Ongoing access to support

Capstone Project

Each city will complete a capstone project that applies Academy learning to a real opportunity.

Examples include:

- A concept plan for a BIA project
- A policy or zoning recommendation
- A partnership or implementation strategy

The capstone is intended to **be practical, achievable, and aligned with city priorities.**

Facilitating Organization / Course Lead

The National Urban Research & Extension Center (NUREC),

Purpose & learning objectives

The Academy supports cities that are early in exploring BIA or ready to advance initial ideas into practical concepts or pilots.

Participants will:

- Gain foundational knowledge of BIA and its applications

- Explore connections to community health, workforce development, sustainability, and economic opportunity
- Assess local readiness for implementation
- Develop actionable concepts or pilot plans
- Build relationships with peers, experts, and Extension partners

PROGRAM STRUCTURE

The Academy follows a simple monthly rhythm:

- Pre-work: Brief readings and reflection
- Live session: Interactive discussion with experts and peers
- Peer exchange: Light engagement with other cities
- Applied learning: Optional local follow-up
- Technical assistance: Ongoing support as needed

Participation is flexible and designed to fit within existing city responsibilities.

Capstone Project

Each city will develop a **practical, city-focused capstone** that applies Academy learning to a real opportunity.

The capstone should be:

- Grounded in a specific site, policy, or partnership
- Aligned with existing city priorities
- Feasible to advance beyond the Academy

Examples include:

- A concept plan for a BIA project
- A policy or zoning update
- A partnership or implementation strategy

Participant Expectations

Participants are expected to:

- Complete brief pre-work before sessions
- Engage in discussion prompts
- Attend or view monthly sessions
- Apply learning locally
- Participate in technical assistance and partner connections

Program Deliverables

- Monthly learning modules
- Live sessions (or recordings)
- Peer discussion forums
- Technical assistance support
- Final capstone product

TIMELINE

The technical assistance period will occur November 2026 – November 2027

ACTIVITY	DATES
Informational Session	August 18, 2026
Proposal Due	October 5, 2026 11:59pm ET
Kick-Off Event	NLC City Summit, November 19-21 Nashville, TN
9 Monthly Learning Modules	Nov 2026 – Sept 2027
Capstone Project	Aug 2027 – Oct 2027
Peer sharing	NLC City Summit, November 17-20, 2027; Houston TX

Selection Criteria

1. Alignment (30%)
2. Readiness (25%)
3. Clarity of goals (20%)
4. Team capacity (15%)
5. Impact (10%)

PROPOSAL INSTRUCTIONS

To be considered for this initiative, the applicant must submit a fully completed online application.

APPLICATION PROCESS

Instructions: Please complete all required sections. Keep responses concise and focused.

Short answers: 1–2 sentences. Narrative response: 250–350 words total. Use checkboxes where indicated.

An informational webinar about the program will be on **August 18, 2026, at 8:00 AM ET**. This session will be recorded.

All proposals must be submitted online by 11:59 PM ET on October 5, 2026.

If you have questions or would like more information, please contact Maggie Anderson Fasy, Program Manager at msanderson@wsu.edu or 206-788-5808

Application Questions

1. CITY INFORMATION

City Name:|

State:|

Population:|

Primary Contact (Name, Title, Email, Phone):|

Executive Sponsor (Mayor / City Manager / Designee):

2. READINESS SNAPSHOT:

Current Activity (Select all that apply):

- ☐ Indoor/vertical farms
- ☐ Rooftop agriculture
- ☐ Greenhouse project
- ☐ BIA projects
- ☐ No current projects but exploring

Readiness Stage:

- ☐ Early interest
- ☐ Planning/policy development
- ☐ Active implementation

Barriers (Select up to 2):

- ☐ Zoning
- ☐ Financing
- ☐ Workforce
- ☐ Community awareness
- ☐ Regulatory
- ☐ Other:_____

Policy Context: Does your city have any policies, plans, or regulations that support or hinder BIA?|

3. TEAM & PARTNERS (REQUIRED)

Team Lead

Name

Title

Department:

Departments Involved:

- ☐ Planning/Zoning;
- ☐ Economic Development;
- ☐ Public Health;
- ☐ Sustainability/Climate;
- ☐ Housing;
- ☐ Public Works;
- ☐ Other:_____

External Partner

Name/Organization:

Type

- ☐ Community;
- ☐ University/Extension;
- ☐ Developer/private;
- ☐ Other:_____

Commitment:

- ☐ Our team can participate throughout the Academy
- ☐ A city leadership sponsor supports this effort

4. INTENDED OUTCOMES

Primary Outcome

- ☐ Planning & Design (e.g. concept plan, site assessment, feasibility study)
- ☐ Policy & Governance (e.g. policy or zoning recommendations, regulatory roadmap, partnership or governance framework)
- ☐ Implementation (e.g. pilot project implementation plan, funding/investment strategy, operations and maintenance plan)
- ☐ Community Development (e.g. community engagement strategy)
- ☐ Workforce Development (e.g. workforce development training pathway)
- ☐ Economic Impact (e.g. economic development strategy, market development or supply-chain strategy)
- ☐ Integration with current strategic initiatives (green infrastructure, sustainability)
- ☐ Other: _____

5. CITY INTEREST, GOALS & EQUITY (SINGLE NARRATIVE – REQUIRED)

Prompt (250–350 words total):

Describe your city’s interest in building-integrated agriculture, the primary challenges you hope to address, and the outcomes you want to achieve. Include:

- Why this is a priority now
- One specific idea, site, or opportunity you may explore
- How this work connects to your city’s goals

- How equity and community benefit will be incorporated

Success Indicator (Short Answer, 1–2 sentences)

How will you know the effort is successful by the end of the Academy?

6. IMPLEMENTATION CONTEXT (OPTIONAL BUT RECOMMENDED)

(Use bullet points – no narrative required)

6.1 Opportunity Sites (Optional)

List any buildings, districts, or redevelopment areas being considered.

6.2 Workforce / Economic Goals (Optional)

What economic or workforce outcomes could BIA support?

6.3 Existing Data (Optional)

Does your city track any related metrics (e.g., food access, climate, jobs)? If yes, list briefly.