UC Merced Community and Labor Center
Future of Farmwork Program
Futuros Campesinos Grant - Request for Proposals

The UC Merced Community and Labor Center conducts research and education on community, labor, and environmental issues in the San Joaquin Valley and beyond. The Center's Future of Farmwork Program strives to transform agricultural work into a safe, sustainable, and prosperous field. The Futuros Campesinos grant will further this goal by enabling farmworker-serving organizations to design and strengthen education and training programs serving for farmworkers at risk of displacement and ineligible to receive support through the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (hereafter "excluded farmworkers").

California's agricultural workers are confronting unprecedented challenges despite having few citizenship or worker protections. In recent years, California's agricultural sector has faced disruptions due to a changing climate, including droughts, wildfires, floods, and excessive heat. Farmworkers also face displacement due to increased automation which is changing the nature of farm work while eliminating jobs. The result has been historic disruptions to farm work and employment that will only increase as the climate changes and some farming operations transition to automated farming practices.

The Futuros Campesinos Grant Program expands upon the California Employment Development Department's Farmworker Advancement Program (FAP) and is specifically designed to build the capacity of organizations that serve and support excluded farmworkers to develop and build high-road training programs that increase excluded farmworkers' access to education, skills, and employment opportunities. All grant recipients will participate in a UC Merced Community and Labor Center-led workshop series to learn about excluded farmworker engagement best-practices, high-road economic development, popular education models, and strategies for addressing the unique employment barriers that excluded workers face. The grant program will also provide funding for qualified organizations to design and/or implement training and education programs for excluded farmworkers. Current FAP grant recipients are encouraged to apply.

Funding Tiers

Organizations may apply for funding under one of three tiers. The grant service period will run for 18 months for all tiers.

- Tier 1 – Up to $50,000 (Capacity-building awards): For organizations developing internal capacity around training programs and outreach to excluded farmworkers. Funding will support participation in the workshop series, staff training, the development of materials, and outreach activities.

- Tier 2 – Up to $100,000 (Planning and development awards): For organizations designing new employment and training programs that serve excluded farmworkers and are seeking targeted development support. Funding will support participation in the workshop series, staff training, the development of materials, outreach activities, curriculum development, planning activities, and supportive services.

- Tier 3 – Up to $150,000 (Implementation awards): For organizations ready to implement or expand comprehensive, worker-centered employment and training programs that directly serve excluded farmworkers. Funding will support participation in the workshop series, staff training, the development of materials, outreach activities, program costs, and supportive services for program participants.

Eligibility and Qualifications:

This program is open to non-profit organizations, tribal governments, and education and training providers that currently serve or work with excluded farmworkers in California. Organizations that are seeking to expand their services to include programs for excluded farmworkers are eligible for Tier 1 capacity-building awards only.

Proposal Instructions & Timeline

All Request for Proposals (RFP) submissions must be submitted by Sunday, February 1, 2026, at 11:59 PM PST. To apply, please respond to the following prompts and submit your completed application online or in an email attachment to communitylabor@ucmerced.edu.

Instructions for Applicants:

Please read all prompts carefully and provide clear, complete responses. Your application should:

- Answer all required prompts in **Part A (General).**

- Complete the tier-specific prompts in **Part B** and include the required budget information in **Part C**.
- Provide specific examples whenever possible that demonstrate your organization's direct engagement with farmworkers.

Application Prompts

Part A – General Prompts (All Tiers)

1. Applicant Information
   a. Organization
   b. Contact person and title
   c. Email
   d. Phone number
2. Which funding tier are you applying for?
3. Describe the existing services your organization provides to excluded farmworkers.
4. Describe the barriers excluded farmworkers may face in accessing your services, as well as any strategies you have identified to address or mitigate these barriers.
5. If funded, will your organization commit to participating in monthly check-ins and quarterly workshops?

Part B (Tier-Specific Prompts)

Tier 1 – Building Internal Capacity

1. Describe your organization's interest or experience in employment and training programs.
2. Describe how new employment and training programs targeting excluded farmworkers will align with or complement your existing program areas.

Tier 2 – Designing New Programs

1. Describe any efforts your organization has taken to assess the needs of the farmworkers you serve. If you have not yet assessed farmworker needs, please describe your plans to assess the needs of excluded farmworkers you serve.
2. Provide a detailed description of your proposed employment and/or training program, including goals, activities, and target populations.
3. Describe how your proposed program will lead to measurable improvements for excluded farmworkers.

Tier 3 – Implementing or Expanding Workforce or Training Programs

1. Provide a detailed description of your existing or new employment and/or training program, including goals, activities, and target populations.
2. Describe how your proposed program will lead to measurable improvements for excluded farmworkers.

3. Indicate the required education level to participate in your program, expected outcomes, and how it is realistic for excluded farmworkers to participate in your program, including those that are working full-time.

Part C – Budget & Justification

For Tiers 2 & 3
1. Provide an itemized, detailed budget showing how each line item supports activities for excluded farmworkers. See Appendix A for a template.
2. Describe any supportive services (e.g., childcare, travel stipends, food) your organization will provide.

Contact

Applicants should direct inquiries to communitylabor@ucmerced.edu.

Appendix A: Itemized Budget and Justification Template

Salary/Wages	Justification	Total
Staff Member		$0.00
Operating Costs		$0.00
Mileage		$0.00
Project Supplies		$0.00
Travel		$0.00
Communications		$0.00
Trainings		$0.00
Meals		$0.00
Participant Stipend		$0.00
Grand Total / Request		$0.00