



The Foundation for New York's Strongest

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Microgrants Available for NYC Small Businesses Wanting to Reduce Food Waste

Reducing Food Waste Good for Environment and Helps Save Money

The Foundation for New York's Strongest—the official non-profit partner of the NYC Department of Sanitation—announced its second Microgrant Program to help small businesses reduce their food waste. Selected businesses can receive an award of up to \$2,000, plus technical support from the New York State Pollution Prevention Institute, to develop and implement innovative food waste solutions.

The announcement was made at the Foundation's [Food Waste Fair](#), which featured more than 1,000 attendees, 75 exhibitors, 30 expert speakers and nine hands-on workshops all focused on helping food-related businesses prevent, recycle, and recover the more than 650,000 tons of food waste that New York City businesses throw away each year.

“The Microgrant Program harnesses the creativity and entrepreneurial spirit of NYC small businesses and empowers them to be thought leaders in tackling one of our City's largest environmental challenges, said **Julie Raskin, Executive Director of the Foundation for New York's Strongest**. “This is a great example of how business and government can work together to make New York City a healthier, cleaner and greener place to live and work.”

New York City businesses throw away more than 650,000 tons of food waste annually, which as it decomposes in landfills, produces more than 3.3 billion tons of methane every year. The Microgrant Program aims to help businesses develop creative solutions to prevent, recycle or recover food, that can serve as best practices for the larger NYC business community.

“I'm pleased to see the Foundation for New York's Strongest continuing to help small businesses make the investment in reducing food waste with the Microgrant Program,” said **Steven Costas, Acting Commissioner at NYC Department of Sanitation**. Reducing food waste is not only good for the environment, but it makes good financial sense too. I'm looking forward to seeing what NYC small businesses can do with the microgrants.”

“Food waste continues to be a significant and costly problem for NYC's businesses,” said **Bridget Anderson, Deputy Commissioner of Recycling and Sustainability at the NYC Department of Sanitation**. “By taking small steps to reduce, recover, or divert food waste for a beneficial use, all NYC businesses can help the city achieve zero waste to landfills. The

Foundation for New York's Strongest recognizes and supports NYC businesses that are doing their part to combat food waste and implement creative solutions.”

“The New York State Pollution Prevention Institute is pleased to support the Microgrant Program, said **Ava Labuzetta, P2 Engineer, New York State Pollution Prevention Institute**. “By offering both financial and technical assistance, the Microgrant Program is providing the type of support NYC businesses need to effectively reduce food waste.”

This is the second time the Foundation will be providing microgrants to city businesses, and the program exemplifies the organization's mission to engage New York City residents and businesses in diverting waste from landfills. Winners from the 2018 Microgrant Program included sustainable catering company [Ox Verte](#), which developed a storage system and donation program to give excess food to New Yorkers in need, and yogurt brand [White Moustache](#), which created a mobile vending unit to sell ice pops made from leftover whey, a by-product of their yogurt.

“White Moustache is a hand-made yogurt company that also makes products out of whey from the yogurt-making process - an example of how businesses can not only reduce food waste, but make such efforts profitable, said **Homa Dashtaki, Founder, White Moustache**. “The Microgrant Program helped our business implement a creative outlet to get our product to market.”

“As a plant-forward catering company, Ox Verte strives to nourish people and communities. Part of that mission includes reducing food waste. The Microgrant Program provides funding towards projects that help NYC businesses, like ours, achieve that goal,” said **Jessie Gould, CEO/Founder, Ox Verte, LLC**.

Applications are due on Monday, July 15, 2019. Eligible businesses must be located within the five boroughs, have 25 or fewer employees and net less than \$500,000 per year. Winners will be announced at the end of August. For more information, and to apply, visit foodwastefair.nyc/microgrants.

About the Foundation for New York's Strongest

The Foundation for New York's Strongest, Inc. is the official nonprofit organization of the New York City Department of Sanitation. Supported by private funding and in-kind donations, the Foundation leverages non-traditional strategies to promote sustainability and advance the essential services of Sanitation employees. To learn more, please visit nycstrongest.org.

About the New York City Department of Sanitation

The Department of Sanitation (DSNY) keeps New York City healthy, safe and clean by collecting, recycling and disposing of waste, cleaning streets and vacant lots, and clearing snow and ice. The Department operates 59 district garages and manages a fleet of more than 2,000 rear-loading collection trucks, 450 mechanical brooms and 693 salt/sand spreaders. The Department clears litter, snow and ice from approximately 6,500 miles of City streets and removes debris from vacant lots as well as abandoned vehicles from City streets.

About the New York State Pollution Prevention Institute

The New York State Pollution Prevention Institute is a partnership between the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation, Rochester Institute of Technology and the university's Golisano Institute for Sustainability, Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute, the State University of New York at Buffalo and Clarkson University, with a statewide reach. NYSP2I also works with the state's Manufacturing Extension Partnership to help disseminate data and strategy. NYSP2I's goal is to make the state more sustainable for workers, the public, the environment and the economy through pollution prevention. Pollution prevention is reducing or eliminating waste at the source by modifying production processes, promoting the use of non-toxic or lesstoxic substances, implementing conservation techniques, and reusing materials rather than putting them into the waste stream. Go to <http://www.rit.edu/affiliate/nysp2i/> to learn more about NYSP2I.