



Community Food Growers Network Members Intro Pack

So you want to join the Community Food Growers Network! What next?

The Community Food Growers Network is free to join, because we believe that being part of a movement for food justice should be accessible to all projects. We currently offer full membership to projects and organisations, and a supporter category for individuals who have experience of community food growing. If you are keen on our work, make sure you're signed up to our e-newsletter (you can sign up on our website) and follow us on social media to stay tuned, and get in touch with info@cfgn.org.uk if you'd like to chat about joining as a member project or a Supporter.

Why Join?

As a member of CFGN you get to be part of an exciting network of groups doing amazing things across the city. CFGN usually operates on a combination of a small budget and the energy and ideas of our members, so the more everyone puts in, the more everyone will get out!

As a member of CFGN, you get access to the support and training that we produce. We try as much as possible to ensure that support and training is free of charge for members. In the past, this has included workshops, one-on-one consultancy sessions, and subsidies for external trainings. We also bring together information and resources from across our membership (such as price lists, lease documents, template emails for contacting your Council, etc) and make it accessible to CFGN members. Members collaborate on projects and funding applications, and share tips, job opportunities and resources on the email list. We also publicise the events and news of our members through our monthly e-newsletter and social media. We also sometimes produce a newspaper - The Plot.

When we have capacity, CFGN responds to consultations of borough-wide Local Plans, as well as city wide policy and strategy documents. All of our submissions are written with the experiences and opinions of our members front and centre, so being part of the Network creates opportunities to feed into wider discussions of policy.

Last but not least, you get a chance to shape the landscape of food politics in London. CFGN is made up of passionate and inspiring people who are nurturing social change through growing, cooking and eating food. Together we can achieve so much more than we can on our own.

If you have any questions about joining the Community Food Growers Network, get in touch with us on info@cfgn.org.uk.

What we expect from members:

CFGN Gatherings & Democracy

Member projects take it in turns to host the quarterly gatherings, providing space and lunch for members to attend, meet each other, and make decisions about the Network together. We ask for member participation in the Gatherings - taking a turn at hosting, running skillshares, facilitating and contributing to the agenda.

We also ask members to participate in online decision making. We have an online decision making process that we try to follow for more formal decisions, as well as less formal calls for input and feedback. A core value of CFGN is being member led, so member input into online decisions and discussions is really crucial.

The core functions of the Network are held by a Core Group of member representatives, supported by staff when we have funded positions. This is a group of 4-5 people from member projects who make sure that Gatherings and other core functions of the Network are happening. We ask all member projects to take their turn on the Core Group of the Network on a rotating basis.

Solidarity and Values

We are a bottom-up, grassroots organisation, and ask members to be proactive and bring ideas and energy to the Network, rather than being passive members. We expect that members will support the Network and each other, and show up for each other in times of need. We ask all members to keep to the ethos of the [Manifesto](#), and promote the values and vision of CFGN as much as possible through their work.

Before you join:

If you haven't joined already, there's a few important boxes you need to tick:

Is your organisation happy with the [Manifesto](#)?

In order to join CFGN, your organisation needs to be happy to support the CFGN manifesto. A project of a bigger organisation can join CFGN on its own, such as a gardening project of a city farm. Your group needs to have read and agreed support for the CFGN Manifesto prior to getting official approval at a Gathering.

Getting the official approval of CFGN

This means coming to one of our gatherings and telling the Network a bit about your project, and why you want to join CFGN. You'll be asked to chat for a few minutes about what your project does, what your vision for a more sustainable food system in London is, and how your work fits in with our Manifesto. Members may ask you some questions about your project, and if everyone is happy with your proposed membership, CFGN will officially welcome you into the Network. If there are outstanding questions, we will ask you to go back to your project to feed back and discuss, and then come back to us either via email or at the next Gathering.

Once you've joined:

A bit of publicity...

We'll add you to the Members' Page on the website (we might need some info from you), and we'll introduce your project via a feature in the Plot newspaper if there is one due for publication. We'll also ask you to let members of your project know that you've joined CFGN, and act as a

distribution point for the Plot.

Project Visit

If capacity allows, someone from CFGN will get in touch to get to know you a bit better through a visit or phone call, and find out how CFGN can best support your project. We'll ask you about the challenges and threats your project may be facing, as well as the strengths and skills you bring to the Network.

Hosting a Gathering

At some point after joining the Network, we'll ask your project to host a Gathering. We understand that some projects don't have the space or facilities to host the Gathering, but if possible it's a great way for members to see projects and learn from each other. Gathering hosts get to receive feedback and input on their project, and can request that members help out with a bit of work.

Who Should Come to Gatherings?

Once your group is a member, you should make sure that a rep from your group comes to each Gathering to represent not just their personal opinions, but your entire project. Your group's rep can be a staff member, a volunteer, or a Trustee/Director etc.- as long as you are happy with them representing your group. Although we ask that each group sends one named rep, other people from your project are welcome to attend.

Getting connected

We'll make sure that you - and anyone else from your organisation who wants to be in the loop- is added to the members email list. This is a discussion list, so all members are welcome to post questions, comments and callouts for collaboration/input.

This intro pack was written in December 2018 and can be found online at www.cfgn.org.uk