



## 2025 Design For Freedom Pilot Project Request for Proposal

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Design for Freedom invites your organization to respond to the Request for Proposal (RFP) to participate in its leading Pilot Project Program.

### 1. Introduction

Design for Freedom by Grace Farms exists to create a radical paradigm shift within the built environment. Our mission is to eradicate forced and child labor from the building materials supply chain.

The Pilot Project Program is a unique platform that highlights Design for Freedom principles in action and offers leaders and innovators the opportunity to be exemplars by demonstrating ethical supply chains and leading human rights due diligence in completed works. Three fundamental and inextricably linked principles guide our joint actions:

**Find and address embedded forced labor** - so that project stakeholders no longer profit from the slavery discount.

**Pursue ethical decarbonization** - ethical decarbonization recognizes the link between the climate crisis and embedded forced labor in our building materials.

**Prioritize circularity** - by shortening the supply chain by reusing and recycling materials, we reduce the risk of forced labor at the source or extraction level of the supply chain.

Each Pilot Project team identifies ten materials determined for project impact, aimed to be traced end-to-end in the building materials supply chain. Through this process, each Pilot Project brings awareness of the risk of continued exploitative practices to project partners, contractors, designers, engineers, manufacturers, suppliers, occupants, and consumers. This work also adds to the industry's body of knowledge through product transparency.

## 2. Project Team Responsibilities

Design for Freedom Pilot Project Goals and Objectives:

- To demonstrate ethical sourcing strategies that meet the needs of the proposed project and advance the use and engagement of ethical and transparent supply chains.
- To contribute to the industry body of knowledge by tracing materials along the supply chain and back to raw materials where possible.
- To increase awareness of forced and child labor in the building materials supply chain with suppliers and other stakeholders and to build capacity to address the issue.
- To contribute to the transformation of procurement practices and supply chains by selecting materials to reduce the risk of embedded forced and child labor.

Project Material Requirements:

Each Pilot Project identifies materials based on the following criteria:

- Trace a minimum of 10 building materials to the source of raw material extraction or harvest location with each tier of the supply chain identified.
- Include at least one circular, upcycled, salvaged, or reclaimed material.
- Select a variety of structural, interior, and innovative materials determined for project impact and representing a holistic view of the building.
- Identify through analysis where the highest risks of forced and child labor lie.
- Use relevant certification that include third-party fair labor auditing
- Employ supply chain risk activity and assessment processes, i.e. technology to inform decision-making.

Project Commitment Requirements:

Each Pilot Project should meet the following qualifications:

- Significant project work must begin by the end of 2025, otherwise partners are encouraged to submit for the RFP the following year.
- Project Funding must be secured by the public announcement in March 2025.
- Project Team Commitment from the owner, contractor and architect/designer including dedicated staff to support supply chain mapping due diligence allocated to fulfill the Pilot Project requirements.

### Design Considerations:

Grace Farms invites project teams to submit a project that exhibits the following:

- Features a mission-aligned purpose and identity to the building.
- Educates the user about ethical sourcing through visual representation such as signage and education sessions.
- Explores approaches to expressed materiality of the traced materials.
- Delivers an inclusive design that engages the community and promotes public access.
- Expands Design for Freedom's global reach through projects located in distinct geographies.
- Explores typologies not yet represented by Design for Freedom Pilot Projects such as: Multi-Family Housing, Workplace, Mixed-Use Developments, Landscape & Planning, Science & Innovation Centers, Performing Arts, Healthcare, Hospitality, Civic & Government, Transportation and Industrial Buildings.

### Grace Farms Foundation Responsibilities:

Grace Farms Foundation provides the following guidance to actualize the Pilot Project:

- Educates owners, project leadership, and key stakeholders to understand the Pilot Project process and commitment.
- Facilitates collaboration with industry experts on forced labor to advise project team based on materials identified.
- Direct project team to risk assessment tools and resources to research identified materials.

## 3. Proposal Requirements

- a. **Letter of Intent:** letter from Project Partners outlining commitment to the Pilot Project (maximum 500 words).
- b. **Qualifications:** a one-page statement of your qualifications, including firm size.
- c. **Similar Projects:** a description of a select number (maximum of 5) of previous projects that are similar in program, mission, or sustainability attributes.
- d. **Project Team:** name, title and bio of one or two key team members for each project partner.
- e. **Project Summary:** an accurate project description including street location in city, state or country. Please also include the main program type component with approximate gross square footage of the structure and additional gross square footage for other programs on-site, including, but not limited to, parking etc. In addition, please provide the size of the site. Include additional sustainability certifications the project is pursuing.
- f. **Identify 10 initial materials** to be traced for ethical sourcing including one circular material.
- g. **Visual Representation** of the project (renderings, site plan and/or drawings).

- h. **Project Schedule:** Specify where the project is within the construction process and projected key dates for project completion. It is advisable to submit projects currently within the design phases to accurately research and make informed decisions.
- i. Design Start (mmddyy)
  - ii. Concept Design (number of months)
  - iii. Schematic Design (number of months)
  - iv. Design Development (number of months)
  - v. Construction Documents (number of months)
  - vi. Construction Start (mmddyy)
  - vii. Construction (estimate number of months)
  - viii. Project Delivery (mmddyy)

#### 4. Submission Requirements and Proposal Contact:

Please submit your proposal in PDF form via the following link no later than 11:59pm ET on Thursday, December 12, 2024. This link is not publicly available.

[Submit Your Proposal](#)

RFP Candidate Selection Process:

- January 2025 - Grace Farms will identify short-listed applicants.
- January 2025 - Grace Farms will reach out to project teams for any additional clarification and/or to conduct interviews to learn more about the project.
- February 2025 - Selected Pilot Project Teams will be notified.
- March 27, 2025 - Official Design for Freedom Pilot Projects will be publicly announced at the
  - 4<sup>th</sup> Annual Design for Freedom Summit held at Grace Farms in New Canaan, CT.

For questions concerning the RFP process:

- Send questions to [info@designforfreedom.org](mailto:info@designforfreedom.org) by November 15 at 5:00pm ET. Questions will be assembled and distributed to all project teams by November 22.
- Attend Office Hours hosted by the Design for Freedom team on November 7, 2024 and December 5, 2024. [Register Here](#).

## 5. Proposal Acceptance

Grace Farms reserves the right to reject any or all proposals received under this Request for Proposal and is under no obligation to any of the prospective consultants as a result of this RFP process. You will receive no reimbursement for your expenses in preparing this proposal. A response to this RFP shall not be construed as a contract nor indicate a commitment of any kind on the part of Grace Farms Foundation.

### Confidentiality

The Design for Freedom Pilot Project RFP submissions are confidential to Grace Farms Foundation.

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## Design for Freedom Pilot Project Frequently Asked Questions

### What is a Pilot Project?

Design for Freedom has developed a Pilot Project Program that is a tangible example demonstrating ethical supply chains in completed works. Each Pilot selects at least ten building materials that are traced as far back as possible for provenance and labor inputs. Through this process, each Pilot Project brings awareness to project partners, contractors, designers, engineers, manufacturers, suppliers, occupants and consumers on the risk of continued exploitative practices and initializes institutional and civic responses.

### How can I integrate responsible sourcing into my practice?

Read the [Design for Freedom Report](#) to understand the scope of the problem and challenges facing the eradication of forced and child labor from the built environment. For material specific information, explore the [Design for Freedom Toolkit](#) to learn more about labor input certifications of high-risk materials within the built environment. Utilize the following tools to integrate responsible sourcing into daily practice.

**Ethical Design Requirements** - Add the Master Spec language to General Specs.

**Supplier Outreach Letter** - Begin a conversation about ethical sourcing with new contacts.

**Ethical Material Tracking Schedule** - Maintain a concise list of identified products for investigation.

**Supplier Questionnaire** - Request supply chain information from product manufacturers and suppliers.

The Design for Freedom International Guidance and Toolkit is forthcoming.

### How many proposals can I submit?

We invite project partners to submit only one proposal annually.

### **Is there a fee associated with initiating a Design for Freedom Pilot Project?**

Grace Farms does not charge a fee to submit or participate in the Pilot Project Program. Project teams participate in tracing responsible materials on a pro bono agreement, understanding each product investigation adds to the industry's body of knowledge and adds value to the project delivered. Grace Farms acts as an advisor to project teams who have committed to doing this work.

### **How many Design for Freedom Pilot Projects are there?**

There are over a dozen Design for Freedom Pilot Projects currently in design or completed on three continents, with a range of typologies. To learn more about the Pilot Project process, materials examined and outcomes read the [Pilot Project Case Studies](#).

### **Are there any geographical restrictions for pilot projects? Can it be international?**

Currently, Design for Freedom Pilot Project are located in the U.S., U.K. and India. We hope to continue to represent a diverse number of countries, cities, and communities throughout our portfolio of Pilot Projects. We encourage submissions from outside the United States when possible.

### **Can I submit a confidential project? Will Grace Farms sign an NDA?**

Yes, you can submit a confidential project under an NDA.

### **How many projects will be selected?**

There is no pre-determined number of projects that will be selected. We select the projects that most align with our mission and advance the movement.

### **Are pilot projects inclusive of all design typologies, such as community spaces, commercial offices, public or private, non-profit, or government projects?**

Absolutely! We are eager to share that Pilot Projects can demonstrate ethical supply chains across programmatic typologies and welcome a diverse pool of owners, partners and project types.

### Will my project receive Design for Freedom certification?

Design for Freedom is not a certification. The Pilot Project Program is a unique opportunity to conduct research at the forefront of the Design for Freedom movement and gain insight into the process of supply chain transparency within the built environment. Although we do not consider the projects 'certified', each project is considered an official Design for Freedom Pilot Project because it meets requirements to provide significant documentation into the labor practices of an identified number of building materials and revealing new outcomes.

### What is the process of a Pilot Project?

As an advisor, Grace Farms creates a project process that best suites each project. The Design for Freedom team meets regularly with project teams to identify materials for investigation and to support the integration of ethical sourcing. The Design for Freedom team facilitates discussions with industry experts and manufacturers who inform the project team and encourages educated decision making. Manufacturers encountered on the project utilize recommended tools to verify due diligence efforts for ethical sourcing and to meet compliance with global laws. As a final deliverable, Design for Freedom Pilot Project Case Studies are developed by Grace Farms to highlight the unique approach, relationships and outcomes produced by every project.

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### Additional Grace Farms Resources

For more information about the Design for Freedom movement to end forced labor in the building materials supply chain, explore relevant resources including the [Design for Freedom Report](#), [Design for Freedom Pilot Project Case Studies](#), [Design for Freedom Ethical Supply Chain Workshop Report](#), [With Every Fiber](#) virtual exhibit and [Additional Design for Freedom Resources](#).