United States Department of Agriculture
Food and Nutrition Service

Federal Nutrition Programs Healthy Fluid Milk Incentives (HFMI) Cooperative Agreement Project

Fiscal Year 2022 Request for Applications (RFA)

CFDA: 10.551

Release Date:	**July 19, 2022**
Application Due Date:	**11:59 PM, Eastern Standard Time (EST), September 2, 2022**
Anticipated Award Date:	**September 2022**

OMB BURDEN STATEMENT: This information is being collected to assist the Food and Nutrition Service to evaluate and rank applicants and protect the integrity of the grantee selection process. This is a voluntary collection and FNS will use the information to fund grants that offer healthy fluid milk incentives to SNAP households. This collection does request personally identifiable information under the Privacy Act of 1974. According to the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, an agency may not conduct or sponsor, and a person is not required to respond to, a collection of information unless it displays a valid OMB control number. The valid OMB control number for this information collection (IC) is 0584-0512. This expires on 7/31/22 but FNS is submitting the IC renewal package including this Request for Application (RFA) to OMB for their approval prior to the IC expiration. Fewer than ten agencies are expected to apply for this cooperative agreement, but this burden statement is included out of an abundance of caution. The time required to complete this information collection is estimated to average 50 hours per response, including the time for reviewing instructions, searching existing data sources, gathering and maintaining the data needed, and completing and reviewing the collection of information. Send comments regarding thisburden estimate or any other aspect of this collection of information, including suggestionsfor reducing this burden, to: U.S. Department of Agriculture, Food and Nutrition Service, Office of Policy Support, 1320 Braddock Place, 5th Floor, Alexandria, VA 22306 ATTN: PRA (0584-0512.) Do not return the completed form to this address.

FOOD AND NUTRITION SERVICE; U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Federal Nutrition Programs Healthy Fluid Milk Incentives (HFMI) Cooperative Agreement Project

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INITIAL ANNOUNCEMENT

CATALOG OF FEDERAL DOMESTIC ASSISTANCE: This program is listed in the Assistance Listings under the Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance number 10.551.

DATES: Applications must be received by **11:59 PM, Eastern Standard Time (EST)** on **September 2, 2022.** Applications received after this deadline will normally not be considered for funding (see Part IV, C of this RFA). Comments regarding this request for applications (RFA) are requested within sixmonths from the issuance of this notice. Comments received after that date will be considered to the extent practicable.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY: FNS requests applications for the Healthy Fluid Milk Incentives (HFMI) Cooperative Agreement Projects for fiscal year (FY) 2022 to support projects to increase the purchase of fluid milk among low-income consumers participating in the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) by providing incentives at the point of purchase. The total funding amount available for FNS to support this program in FY 2022 is approximately $3,000,000.

This Application Checklist provides applicants with a list of the required documents. However, FNS expects that applicants will read the entire RFA prior to the submission of their application and comply with all requirements outlined in the solicitation. The Application Checklist is for applicant use only and should not be submitted as part of the Application Package.

Complete the following **at least four weeks** prior to submission:

- ☐ Obtain a Unique Entity Identifier (UEI);
- ☐ Register the UEI number in the System for Award Management (SAM); and,
- ☐ Register in Grants.gov.

When **preparing your application**, ensure:

- ☐ Your application format and narrative meet the requirements included in Section IX "Application and Submission Information." This includes page limits, priorities outlined in Section IX, and all necessary attachments.

When **preparing your budget,** ensure the following information is included:

- ☐ Cost Allocation
  - o If other programs will benefit from this project, the costs supported by the grant will only fund the SNAP aspects of the project.
- ☐ Personnel
  - o Proposal includes all key employees paid for by the grant.
  - o Proposal identifies employees by name, position, and title.
  - o The percentage of time the Project Director will devote to the project in full-time equivalents (FTEs).
  - o Your organization's fringe benefit rate and amount, as well as the basis for the computation.
  - o The type of fringe benefits to be covered with Federal funds.
- ☐ Travel
  - o Expenses are itemized and explained in the budget narrative. For example: origination/destination points, number and purpose of trips, number of staff traveling, mode of transportation, and cost of each trip.
  - o Attendee objectives and travel justifications are included in the budget narrative.
  - o Basis for lodging estimates are identified in the budget narrative.
- ☐ Equipment
  - o Equipment costs are justified in the budget narrative.
  - o Types of equipment, unit costs, and number of items are listed in the budget narrative, along with basis for cost per item.
- ☐ Supplies
  - o Types of supplies, unit costs, and number of items are listed in the budget narrative, along with basis for cost per item.
- ☐ Contractual and Consultant Costs
  - o The need for a contractor has been identified in the proposal, and the cost is justified in the budget narrative.
  - o Applicants that are required to issue a bid have provided a narrative explaining the requirement and provided a reasonable estimate for contractual and consultant costs.

☐ Indirect Cost Information

o Indirect cost information (either a copy of a Negotiated Indirect Cost Rate Agreement (NICRA) or if no agreement exists and the applicant has never been approved for a NICRA, they may charge up to 10% de minimis). If applicant is requesting the de minimis rate or indirect costs are not requested, please indicate this in the budget narrative.

☐ Other

o Any other costs associated with this project are itemized, explained, and reasonable

When **submitting** your application, ensure you have submitted the following:

☐ SF-424 – Application for Federal Assistance (fillable PDF in Grants.gov)
☐ SF-424A – Budget Information and Instruction Form (fillable PDF in Grants.gov)
☐ SF-424B – Assurances for Non-Construction Programs (fillable PDF in Grants.gov)
☐ SF-LLL – Disclosure of Lobbying Activities
☐ FNS-906 – Grant Program Accounting System & Financial Capability Questionnaire (Appendix Pg. 46)
☐ Negotiated Indirect Cost Rate Agreement (PDF - Upload using the "Add Attachments" button under SF-424 item #15)

When applicable, application packages are required to include the following documents:

☐ All non-profit organizations must include their 501(c)(3) determination letter issued by the Internal Revenue Service (IRS)

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PART I - FUNDING OPPORTUNITY DESCRIPTION

A. AUTHORITY AND BACKGROUND

The Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), authorized under the Food and Nutrition Act of 2008, as amended, is the cornerstone of the Nation's nutrition assistance safety net. The United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) certifies low-income Americans to participate in the program and authorizes and monitors retailers to accept SNAP benefits for eligible food products. Currently, around 40 million low-income Americans receive SNAP benefits, and more than 250,000 retailers are authorized to accept SNAP benefits.

Section 4208 of the Agricultural Improvement Act of 2018, P.L. 115-334, ("Farm Bill") authorizes USDA, on a competitive basis, to enter cooperative agreements with governmental entities or nonprofit organizations to carry out Healthy Fluid Milk Incentives (HFMI) projects. The Further Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2022, P.L. 117-103, provides $3,000,000 for HFMI for fiscal year (FY) 2022.

FNS announces, through this Request for Applications, the availability of a maximum of $3,000,000 in total grant funding to award as many as 3 **cooperative agreements**. Eligible entities who can submit applications include government agencies (State, local, territory, or tribal agencies) and non-profit organizations. This solicitation is contingent upon the availability of funds and FNS reserves the right to make more than one award, and to use this solicitation and competition to award additional grants in this or the subsequent fiscal year should funding become available.

In 2020, FNS awarded the first pilot HFMI grant to develop and test methods to increase the purchase and consumption of healthy fluid milk at Lowe's Supermarkets in West Texas. In 2021, FNS awarded a second grant to continue and expand the project goals and objectives at Wakefern grocery stores in New Jersey and one Jubilee grocery store in West Texas.

The 2022 HFMI will continue developing and testing methods to increase the purchase and consumption of qualifying fluid milk by SNAP households by providing them an incentive at the point of purchase at authorized retailer locations in additional regions. "Qualifying fluid milk" includes all varieties of pasteurized cow's milk that (1) is without flavoring or sweeteners, (2) is consistent with the most recent dietary recommendations, (3) is packaged in liquid form, and (4) contains vitamins A and D at levels consistent with the Food and Drug Administration, State, and local standards for fluid milk.

B. PURPOSE AND OBJECTIVES

The primary purpose of the HFMI project is to develop and test methods to increase the purchase and consumption of qualifying fluid milk by SNAP households by providing them an incentive at the point of purchase at authorized retailer locations. "Qualifying fluid milk" includes all varieties of pasteurized cow's milk that (1) is without flavoring or sweeteners, (2) is consistent with the most recent dietary recommendations, (3) is packaged in liquid form, and (4) contains vitamins A and D at levels consistent with the Food and Drug Administration, State, and local standards for fluid milk.

Key Objectives

All HFMI projects must meet the following objectives:

#	Objectives
1	*Increase the purchase and consumption of qualifying fluid milk by SNAP households by providing a financial incentive at the point of purchase.*
2	*Develop and implement a point of purchase solution(s) to deliver and redeem the HFMI incentives.*
3	*Partner with selected SNAP-authorized retailer(s) to operate the point of purchase incentive solution in compliance with all relevant SNAP regulations and requirements.*
4	*Communicate and promote HFMI incentive availability and information to SNAP households.*
5	*Provide training and technical support to participating SNAP-authorized retailer(s) in administering the incentives.*
6	*Facilitate participation in the HFMI evaluation through data collection and sharing.*
7	*Separately track, report, and fund HFMI benefits through modified versions of currentlyexisting processes.*
8	*If implementing an automatic discount incentive model, provide education on the nutritional value of cow's milk in accordance with the latest Dietary Guidelines for Americans and in relation to the availability of HFMI incentives at the participating locations.*

C. FY 2022 FUNDING PRIORITIES

According to USDA's Economic Research Service (ERS), the food-at-home Consumer Price Index (CPI) increased 6.5% over the past 12 months and it's predicted dairy prices will increase between 2.5 and 3.5 percent in 2022. Additionally, it's been proven that good sources of calcium, iron and Vitamin C, nutrients have been shown to help reduce the absorption of lead in children's bodies. Therefore, in addition to the general program purpose and priorities, FNS will prioritize projects targeting SNAP households in:

- Tribal Lands and/or surrounding tribal communities.
- Rural communities as defined by the U.S. Census Bureau.
- Opportunity Zones, as defined by the Internal Revenue Service (IRS).
- Neighborhoods with contaminated water to mitigate lead absorption among SNAP households.

Specific Target Areas – Application Bonus Points
Applicants who demonstrate one or more of the community priorities listed above will be awarded an ***additional 15 bonus points*** for incorporating the specified target areas into the project design.

Applicants who propose to integrate their projects into a State's SNAP electronic benefit transfer (EBT) system by adding earned incentive amounts to an incentive account for subsequent use, or applicants who propose to use partnering retailer's point-of-sale (POS) systems to provide automatic discount incentives will be considered for an ***additional 10 bonus points.***

D. PROJECT DESIGN

The awardee(s) and its team of partners, including retailers, and optionally other community partners, must develop and operate the projects to test the impact of different methods and frameworks for providing incentives for the purchase of fluid milk at the point of purchase.

Below are the **required** design parameters.

1. Target Foods

HFMI is intended to increase the purchase and consumption of fluid milk by SNAP households. Qualifying fluid milk under HFMI is defined as all varieties of pasteurized cow's milk that is:

1. Without flavoring or sweeteners,
2. Packaged in liquid form,
3. Consistent with the Food and Drug Administration, State, and local standards for fluid milk vitamin A and D levels, and
4. Consistent with the most recent dietary recommendations.

2. Incentive Models

The grantee must select from the following HFMI incentive models to test:

- Low/no-fat milk for low/no-fat dairy: SNAP households must purchase *qualifying fluid milk* as defined above using their SNAP benefitsto receive an incentive that can be redeemed only for *qualifying dairy products*.

    Qualifying dairy products are any dairy products that have cow's milk as the first listed ingredient onthe ingredients list and meet the DGAs. (E.g., All varieties of low-fat or non-fat liquid, dry, or evaporated pasteurized cow's milk, without flavoring or sweeteners, including lactose-free and lactose-reduced product; low-fat or non-fat fresh or frozen yogurt; buttermilk; kefir; and cheeses. This does not include cream, including butter, sour cream, and cream cheese due to their low calcium content.)

- Any dairy for low/no-fat milk: SNAP households must purchase *any dairy product* as defined below using their SNAP benefitsto receive an incentive that can be redeemed for *qualifying fluid milk* as defined above.

    Any dairy product is any product that has cow's milk or cream as the first listed ingredient on the ingredients list, but the product does not need to be fat-free or low-fat (1%) dairy to meet the current DGAs. (E.g., whole dairy products and 2% dairy products can count as "any dairy product" but not "qualifying dairyproducts").

- Low/no-fat milk for any SNAP eligible item: SNAP households must purchase qualifying fluid milk as defined above using their SNAP benefitsto receive an incentive that can be redeemed for *any SNAP-eligible product*.

  Any SNAP-eligible product is any product that SNAP households can purchase using their SNAP benefits on a day-to-day basis.

- Low/no-fat milk for immediate point-of-purchase discount: SNAP households must purchase qualifying fluid milk as defined above using their SNAP benefitsto receive an automatic discount or dollar-off incentive at the time of the qualifying purchase.

  An automatic discount incentive does not require a subsequent purchase for the discount to apply; it is applied immediately at the point-of-purchase.

- Low/no-fat milk for discount to be used on subsequent shopping trip: SNAP households must purchase qualifying fluid milk as defined above using their SNAP benefitsto receive a set amount or percentage of the qualifying purchase back onto their EBT card (i.e. EBT integration).

  This model is based on the Healthy Incentives Pilot (HIP) project which allows the incentive amount to be redeemed subsequently in the same manner as any SNAP EBT transaction for any SNAP-eligible food.

Incentives must be offered to every SNAP household shopping at the partnering retailers.

Applicants may propose to implement different models and/or discount levels at participating stores. If an applicant elects to implement different models and/or discount levels, proposals must include: 1) a justification; 2) confirmation from the retailer(s) confirming the feasibility of programing different incentive scenarios into their POS system; and 3) a management plan explaining how the grantee plans to manage communication and promotional activities for varying incentive models.

Priority will be given to grantees who propose to integrate their projects into a State's SNAP EBT system or use the partnering retailer's POS systems to provide automatic discount incentives.

3. <u>Incentives Amounts</u>

Applicants must indicate whether the incentives will be a percentage-off discount, dollar-off discount, or a dollar-for-dollar match.

If applicants elect a percentage-off discount, the discount level must be equivalent to at least 50 percent of the purchase price for qualifying items. Include the maximum number of qualifying items that can be purchased per day, if applicable.

If applicants elect a dollar-off discount or dollar-for-dollar match, the proposal must include the ratio of SNAP benefits spent to incentive earned and the maximum incentive dollar amount that can be earned per day, if applicable.

4. Site Selection

Proposed project site(s) may include State or sub-State areas, such as county, community, or group of contiguous communities, and/or Tribal Lands.

Priority will be given to applicants who target communities and project areas that have not yet been tested in prior HFMI initiatives.

5. Retailer Selection

Applicants must establish partnerships with SNAP-authorized retailers located in the project site(s) prior to application under this RFA. Please see Part IV A.4. under "Retailer Recruitment" in the "Project Narrative" section for requirements related to the selection of firms not yet authorized to accept SNAP benefits. The retailers must typically sell qualifying fluid milk directly to households. Authorized retailers that do not typically sell fluid milk to households may not participate in HFMI.

Ineligible retailers include wholesalers, meal services, such as drug/alcohol treatment programs, battered women's shelters, communal dining facilities, group living arrangements,homeless meal providers, meal delivery services, senior and other residential centers, and specialty stores, such as bakeries, seafood, or meat specialty stores.

Ideally, projects site(s) would include some combination of supermarket chains, independent retailer grocers of all sizes and convenience stores. The SNAP-authorized retailer partners should offer a range ofqualifying fluid milk.

Retailers with integrated electronic cash register (IECR) systems that include scanners and point-of-sale (POS) interfaces will need to reprogram their systems to identify targeted foods, calculate and transmit their value, and print resulting incentive values. Retailers using standalone (side-by-side) POS terminals will need to create and manually enter a separate subtotal of target foods based on visual identification so that this additional value can be captured; these retailers would be expected to keep records to provide incentive issuance and redemption data. Technical assistance will be available from FNS as needed.

Applicants may propose using up to $2,000 of grant funds per retailer located in Priority Target Zones described in Section C. for POS system modifications to be able to provide incentives though a process that can be electronically tracked through the POS system and/or to provide an automatic discount at the point of the qualifying purchase. See Part IV.A.7. "*Budget".*

At a minimum, applicants must submit letters of commitment from each retailer banner or location that will participate in the project and include the following:

- A description explaining the type of POS system the retailer uses and any changes that will be made, if applicable.
- Retailers with IECR systems: Confirmation that the selected retailer(s) can program their systems to offer incentives or the intentions to upgrade their systems to offer incentives using the proposed project design.

- <u>Retailers with side-by-side POS terminals</u>: Confirmation that the selected retailer(s) has 1) a process in place to identify qualifying milk purchases at the point of sale and 2) a system to offer incentives using the proposed project design.
- Confirmation that the selected retailer(s) systems can provide data that reflects SNAP EBT transactions separate from other EBT transactions (i.e., TANF, WIC, etc.).

Applicants must indicate the number of retailers they plan to partner with and provide qualifying milk sales data for each retailer and indicate the likely amount of grant funds, based on that data, that will be redeemed by SNAP households over the proposed project period of operation. If qualifying milk sales data is not available by the application due date, applicants must provide justification and include a statement committing to providing this data within 2-months of award. If the data subsequently provided does not support the likelihood that at least 65% of the grant funds will be redeemed by SNAP households over the project period of operation, the grantee must agree to make a good faith effort to partner with a sufficient number of additional retailer locations to bring the estimated amount of incentives that will be redeemed up to at least 65% of the total grant funds awarded.

Indicate if the selected retailers offer other incentives (e.g., fruits and vegetables incentives) and whether the other incentives are operating under a Gus Schumacher Nutrition Incentive Program (GusNIP).

6. <u>Incentive Delivery Mechanism</u>

FNS is seeking applicants who, in collaboration with its partners, choose an incentive delivery method(s), which may include, but is not limited to, incentives placed onto household's EBT cards though integration with State Electronic Benefit Transfer (EBT) systems, coupons that can only be used to purchase eligible foods consistent with the incentive design optionsnoted under Part I.D-*Project Design*.

Priority will be given to applicants who collaborate with its partners to integrate their projects into a State's SNAP's electronic benefit transfer (EBT) system or to use partnering retailer's point-of-sale (POS) systems to provide automatic discount incentives.

All non-automatic discount incentives must include an expiration date.

Incentives delivered through State's EBT system integration would require substantial modifications to the EBTand retailer systems and procedures to enable them to:

- Recognize targeted foods and total their value;
- Transmit the information in the authorization request to the EBT system;
- Validate participating HFMI stores;
- Properly calculate and post incentive benefits (including account adjustments for any incentive food items returned by SNAP households);
- Identify incentives as a separate benefit type for back-end accounting and tracking purposes.
- Generate appropriate approval messages to retailers; and
- Print incentive values on EBT receipts.

Applicants proposing to implement an EBT integration incentive delivery method must provide letters of commitment from the SNAP State agency where the project will operate and,that State's EBT contractor.

Incentives delivered through a retailer's POS system may require technical enhancement if the retailer's system does not already have the capability.

Applicants must describe the incentive delivery method(s) in high-level detail, including any proposed system enhancements, as part of the proposal.

Ideally, projects would provide the incentive amount and, if tracked by individual household and applicable, the remaining accumulated value of incentives to HFMI households at the point of purchase in the form of a message on a cash register receipt, the incentive coupon, or other manner. An expiration date for non-automatic discount incentives must also be included. For example, the receipt could read "Fluid Milk Incentive Earned: $__.__; Remaining Incentive Balance: $ .... Incentives Expire: __/_/_" immediately above the remaining SNAP balance (which is already a SNAP receipt requirement).

7. Automatic Discount Incentives - Nutrition Education Component

Automatic discount incentives apply to all SNAP households, without requiring the SNAP client to return to use the incentive earned on a subsequent visit and regardless of whether the SNAP client is aware of the HFMI program. As a way to more proactively create a behavioral change and increase the purchase and consumption of healthy milk, FNS is requiring a nutrition education component for an automatic discount incentive model to bring more awareness to the HFMI program. Proposals should include a description of planned activities.

Applicants who do not propose to offer automatic discount incentives should still indicate if nutrition education or similar interventions will be a component of the project and include any planned activities as a proposed enhancement.

All proposals should note any planned partnerships or collaborations (e.g., SNAP-Ed).

Proposed Project Enhancements

In addition to meeting the basic requirements of this RFA, applicants may wish to include in their proposal enhancements that exceed the project requirements. Enhancements may be submitted in the application as long as these do not detract from or interfere with the goals, rigor, and integrity of the project or contradict project design requirements. Such enhancements may include, but are not limited to: partnership with other entities which offer additional, or matching, funding, or nutrition education. Any enhancements should be presented separately from the core proposal in the application, and should include an accompanying budget proposal that is separate from the core proposal budget. It should be noted that this section will not be scored.

Key Timeframes

The period of performance for the FY2022 Cooperative Agreement will not exceed five (5) years. The awardee will be expected to launch the project in a fully operational form within 18 months of executing a signed cooperative agreement. During this 18-month period, the awardee will be expected to make and test all administrative and accounting systems adjustments to set HFMI up for operations. Once launched, the project operations may last for the remainder of the grant period of performance. The awardee will be responsible for collecting and reporting specified incentive issuance and redemption data during the entire project period on a monthly basis. Biweekly conference calls during implementation and monthly conference calls thereafter are required to report on project progress/status to FNS. Formal progress and financial reports are due quarterly.

A final project report, not to exceed 35 pages, which includes an assessment documenting the process, challenges, and success of implementation and operations, and final financial report are required.

E. COOPERATIVE AGREEMENT

This grant will be awarded in the form of a cooperative agreement. This agreement is a legal instrument reflecting a relationship between the Federal government and the awardee. Substantial involvement is expected between the Federal government and the awardee when carrying out the activity in the agreement. Cooperative agreements are subject to the same administrative requirements as grants.

Project Roles and Responsibilities

FNS will provide direction and technical assistance to the awardee(s). FNS will approve major aspects of the project(s) in advance of implementation in a manner and timeframe agreed upon between the awardee(s) and FNS. FNS will establish a funding mechanism consistent with the cooperative agreement and provide the awardee with detailed directions on claiming and accounting for HFMI funds. FNS will evaluate quarterly progress reports and financial reports to ensure objectives, terms, and conditions of the agreement are met. FNS will participate in periodic collaborative meetings with the awardee.

The awardee(s) has overall responsibility for project planning, implementation, and operations in cooperation with retailers and other partners as designated by the awardee(s). FNS encourages consultation and partnering with SNAP-Ed agencies who have experience with participant training through teaching SNAP households how to make healthy meals and how to stretch their SNAP dollars. The awardee(s) shall:

- Select/hire appropriately credentialed personnel to manage and operate the project;
- Delegate responsibilities to retailers and other partners as appropriate;
- Recruit and train retailers in all relevant aspects of HFMI and overseeing their activities to ensure project integrity and effectiveness, including:
    - Amending the retailer's point-of-sales service provider agreements, as needed, to support system and procedural changes at participating retailers;
    - Developing a plan for the tracking and use of incentives that ensures project integrity;
    - Developing Memoranda of Understanding with participating retailers that have the capability to identify HFMI target foods to ensure they understand their responsibilities and meet milestones of the HFMI management plan.
    - Informing and educating SNAP recipients on HFMI incentives and how to use them;
    - Collecting, recording, and reporting required data; and
    - Providing necessary support, resources, and oversight.

- Train other partners, as applicable, on the requirements and limitations of HFMI to ensure compliance;
- Maintain records on project costs;
- Seek FNS approval at critical junctures and checkpoints after award, including management plan, budget plan, training plans, EBT contractor's design and implementation plan (if applicable), and retailer accountability plans that are submitted in preliminary form in the application;
- Meet specific obligations and approval points that will be further delineated by FNS in terms of the cooperative agreement between FNS and the awardee;
- Submit timely progress reports, financial reports, data reports, and special reports during the project and a final progress report and a final financial report;
- Participate in periodic collaborative meetings during the project, as well as orientation and close-out meetings with FNS; and
- Account for HFMI funds separately from SNAP administrative funds (i.e., SNAP State Agencies), any other grant award funds, or funds provided by any other partner, and establish financial and management reporting and controls to ensure that HFMI funds are not commingled with other funding sources or used inappropriately. A separate and distinct audit training must be established and maintained for the expenditure of HFMI funds that clearly demonstrates they are solely used for HFMI purposes.

Retailers must develop and maintain EBT systems and other incentive procedures necessaryto support HFMI, including check-out procedures to support HFMI, maintaining a list of foods eligiblefor the incentive (if applicable), as well as a list of target foods, and procedures for informing SNAP recipients of any incentive received at the point of purchase.

Other partners may be engaged to facilitate HFMI projects. Duties of such partners should bedescribed clearly in the application.

To demonstrate that the applicant (see Part III for Applicant Eligibility, pg. 24) and its partners possess strong capability to work together to successfully carry out the obligations of this agreement in a timely, efficient, and effective manner,applicants must include in the proposal:

- A signed letter of commitment to work closely and cooperatively with FNS and its other partners in support of the grant objectives.
- Signed letters of commitment from each retailer banner or location that will participate in the project.

F. PROGRAM POLICY

This section addresses certain aspects of HFMI and SNAP policies as they pertain to the HFMI cooperative agreement project. This section also deals with policies regarding the participation of firms (e.g., convenience stores, grocery stores, farmers markets, direct-marketing farmers) in HFMI projects. "Firm" is defined at 7 CFR 271.2. Questions regarding the policies discussed below may bedirected to SM.FN.SNAP-RetailerPolicy@usda.gov.

Incentive Restrictions

HFMI Qualifying Fluid Milk. An HFMI project must incentivize the purchase of HFMI qualifying fluid milk in accordance with Part I.D. - Project Design.

Unallowable Incentives. HFMI awardees may not incentivize specific brand names or product lines of fluid milk, nor may HFMI awardees incentivize only a specific subset of qualifying fluid milk that are not considered by FNS to advance the spirit or purpose of HFMI. In addition, HFMI awardees may not provide incentives earned through a "no purchase required" mechanism.

Communication/Outreach Promotion

Applicants must include a detailed plan for communicating information about and promoting HFMI incentives to SNAP households in their grant application.

For each distinct HFMI project, the awardee must ensure the following is communicated to SNAP households:

- Availability of HFMI incentives and the conditions for receiving the incentives;
- Foods for which an incentive is offered, and the target foods that must be purchased with incentives;
- Location of participating firms;
- How to track the amount of incentives earned;
- How to use the incentives earned;
- The expiration date of the incentives earned; and
- Where to get additional information.

Awardees are encouraged to partner with State SNAP agencies to assist in providing promotional materialwith the above information to SNAP households. Examples of allowable State SNAP agency promotionalactivities include:

- Making HFMI promotional materials available at local SNAP offices;
- Allowing promotional videos to be played at local SNAP offices; or
- The State Agency sending awardees' promotional materials through direct mail to area SNAPrecipients. However, State Agencies may not provide HFMI awardees with a list of SNAP recipients' mailing addresses, even under a MOU.

Retailer Training and Technical Support Plan

Applicants must provide a plan for training cashiers and other on-site staff of participating firms on the mechanics, as well as the requirements and limitations of HFMI to ensure compliance. The proposal must also describe the process for addressing and resolving any technical, policy or operational issues that may arise at firm locations during the course of project implementation and ongoing operations and how that process will be communicated to participating firms.

A detailed description of the resolution process should include information on the organizations/partnersresponsible for such activities, including hours of availability, and expected response timeframes.

Data Collection and Evaluation

Given the limited funds available, FNS will conduct an administrative cost analysis and an outcome evaluation using data provided by the awardee. FNS will develop and monitor indicators of progress towards objectives by examining HFMI project activities in terms of (1) the project's administrative costs, (2) the amount of incentives issued, and (3) sales of fluid milk, as described below. For any awardee that gives out sub-awards, the data should be reported at the sub-awardee level. Also, the data should be reported separately by retailer outlet (e.g., individual stores/markets). The awardee must provide information on the incentive model (e.g., discount level) that all individual retailer outlets are implementing at the start of the project. The amount of the discount provided by an individual retailer outlet should not be changed without approval from FNS.

Awardees are required to have a Data Use Agreement with each firm or sub-grantee that guarantees each firm will provide the following required data elements related to administrative costs:

- If additional funding other than FNS grant is used to support this project, grantee must be able to separately identify and account for any SNAP funds used for the incentive program and for administrative costs; and
- Breakout of SNAP grant funding spent on administrative costs versus incentives to SNAP participants.

Data Use Agreements shall also guarantee that each firm or sub-grantee will provide the following required data elements related to incentive issuance and sales, at a minimum:

- Amount of incentives issued to SNAP participants, in dollars and number of transactions;
- Amount of incentives redeemed by SNAP participants, in dollars and number of transactions;
- Sales of qualifying skim/non-fat milk, broken out by SNAP EBT and all other tenders;
- Sales of qualifying 1% milk, broken out by SNAP EBT and all other tenders;
- Sales of 2% milk, broken out by SNAP EBT and all other tenders;
- Sales of whole milk, broken out by SNAP EBT and all other tenders; and
- Sales of flavored milk of any fat content, broken out by SNAP EBT and all other tenders.

Sales completed with non-SNAP EBT tenders may be aggregated and do not need to be broken out by tender type. All data elements related to incentive issuance and sales shall be aggregated at the weekly level, with the start and end dates of each week aligning with each retailer outlet's promotion (i.e., weekly pricing) cycle. Weekly reports shall include any information on unusual circumstances affecting sales for any retailer (e.g., natural disaster, systems outage, broken dairy case, supply chain issues, special milk/ dairy promotion unrelated to this project, etc.) to explain unusual/ unexpected sales data. Applicants may propose to provide other data elements, including but not limited to the number of unique SNAP participants earning incentives, average unit prices for fluid milk by fat content, and sales of other products not listed above. If applicable, applicants shall describe the feasibility of collecting such data.

To assist FNS in examining the impact of the incentive program, awardees also will be required to obtain (1) historical data from participating retailer outlets and (2) historical and current data from comparison retailer outlets. Historical data refer to data from the 12 months preceding incentive program implementation and include SNAP EBT and total sales of skim/non-fat, 1%, 2%, whole, and flavored milk. Comparison retailer outlets refer to outlets that are similar to participating outlets in terms of SNAP EBT sales volume, geographic location, and other characteristics but are not themselves participating in the incentive program. Applicants shall propose a strategy for selecting and obtaining data for comparison retailer outlets.

Along with providing data for the cost analysis and outcome evaluation to FNS, the awardee shall conduct a process evaluation to understand implementation of the incentive program. Applicants shall propose an approach to evaluating store staff training, promotion and marketing activities, and other aspects of implementation. Any data collection activities that involve human subjects must be approved by the awardee's Institutional Review Board. Time required to receive such approval shall be built into the proposed timeline.

Proposals should discuss any opportunities and challenges with the data collection requirements and how they will be addressed. Proposals should also describe any previous process evaluation experience with SNAP participants, food retailers, or nutrition incentive programs. The proposal should demonstrate the capacity and willingness to comply with the data collection and evaluation requirements.

Concurrent Participation in SNAP-Ed or GusNIP

Grantees that receive HFMI as well as SNAP-Ed and/or GusNIP funds must keep in mind the following guidelines:

- SNAP-Ed is an evidence-based program that helps people lead healthier lives. SNAP-Ed implements nutrition education to promote healthy food choices and physical activity consistent with the most recent Dietary Guidelines for Americans. Participation in both GusNIP and HFMI is permitted, however each program has its ownseparate funding, participation, and reporting requirements. SNAP-Ed fundsmay not be used to provide actual cash or other financial incentives and awardees must meet each program's participation and reporting requirements.

- Gus Schumacher Nutrition Incentive Program (GusNIP) is a grant program targeted to increasing the purchases of fruits and vegetables by SNAP recipients through incentives provided at the point of purchase. Participation in both GusNIP and HFMI is permitted, however each program has its ownseparate funding, participation, and reporting requirements. HFMI awardees participating in GusNIP cannot comingle funds between the programs and must meet each program's participation and reporting requirements.

Proposal Changes

If the awardee wishes to significantly change this plan after HFMI funds have been awarded, then the awardee must notify FNS in writing and in detail, regarding the change and the budget impact, and receive approval for the proposed change.

G. AWARDEE AND FIRM REQUIREMENTS

Sales Tax

In accordance with section 4405(a)(3) of the Food, Conservation, and Energy Act of 2008 (the 2008 Farm Bill), as amended by Section 4208 of the Agricultural Act of 2014 (the 2014 Farm Bill), no State or local sales tax shall be collected on any purchase of food made using HFMI incentives.

Equal Treatment

Because the statutory language of the 2018 Farm Bill authorizes HFMI projects to provide fluid milk incentives specifically to SNAP clients, the equal treatment provision of 7 CFR 278.2(b) and 7 CFR 274.7(f) does not apply to HFMI awardees for the purpose of providing incentives under the HFMI cooperative agreement. However, other than providing HFMI incentives to SNAP households, awardees must ensure that the same terms and conditions apply to purchases made by individuals with SNAP benefits and with incentives provided under HFMI as apply to purchases made by individuals who are not members of households receiving benefits.

Refunds

HFMI incentives are intended to increase the consumption of qualifying fluid milk and must be spent accordingly. The returning or refunding of HFMI incentives is not consistent with the intention of the HFMI. While spoiled or undesired food products purchased with HFMI incentives may be exchanged for equivalent food products at the firm's discretion, HFMI incentives may neither be refunded with cash, nor refunded onto a SNAP household's EBT card through a refund transaction on an EBT POS device. If an individual farmer that produces and sells dairy items is participating using a system that utilizes a distinct HFMI benefit (i.e., valid only for HFMI qualifying fluid milk), such HFMI benefits may only be redeemed as intended at the farmers' market; they may not be refunded or exchanged.

SNAP Firm Data Confidentiality

Under 7 CFR 278.1(q), certain forms of SNAP firm information are prohibited from disclosure. Local and State SNAP Agencies may not disclose such firm data to HFMI awardees. The names and addresses of SNAP authorized firm are available to the public and can be obtained via the SNAP Retailer Locator.

The FNS number for individual firms is not public information and is subject to restrictions in SNAP regulations at 7 CFR 278.1(q); therefore, it must be obtained directly from the firm. Likewise, SNAP redemption or transaction data at the individual firm level is considered protected data and must be obtained directly from the firm. HFMI awardees should work in close concert with their participating firm in order to obtain any such required information. Both the FNS number and individual firm transaction/redemption data, while necessary for data collection and evaluation purposes, are protected andshall not be published in a public report. SNAP firm transactions/redemptions should only be reported in aggregate. Whenever transmitting any confidential SNAP firm data to FNS, this data must be password protected.

SNAP Authorization for Participating of Retailers

It is necessary to partner with retailers to conduct a HFMI project. All retailer partners must be SNAP-authorized and in good standing with FNS at the time of award in order to participate in HFMI.

Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between Awardee and Retailers.

HFMI awardees must work with their retailer partners to enter into a MOU before that retailer can participate in the HFMI project. The MOU must be signed and dated by the awardee project director(s) andall of the firm's owners. If the awardee is working with a chain of centrally-owned and operated firms, thenone MOU that includes all relevant information on every participating firm location will be sufficient. The applicant/grantee organization should keep the original MOU in their records and be able to present it in the event of an audit.

Noncompliance with Program Policy.

Note: These conditions will also be included in the awardees Terms and Conditions.

Awardees and their participating firms are expected to comply with all of the policies and requirements laid out in this RFA document as well as any HFMI or SNAP policies or requirements further clarified in Q&As, memoranda, or other relevant USDA documents (including all applicable provisions of the Food and Nutrition Act of 2008 and SNAP regulations at 7 CFR 278). Awardees will be notified in writing of instances of noncompliance and will face serious repercussions for repeated instances of noncompliance. Examples of such noncompliance include, but are not limited to, failure to timely report a change of Project Director (PD), allowing unapproved firms to participate in a project, and/or incentivizing ineligible products.

First Instance of Noncompliance. If the awardee or the awardee's firms fail to comply with HFMI or SNAP rules and this is the first instance of noncompliance associated with that awardee, then the USDA will notify the awardee of the issue in writing and establish a timeline for corrective action. The general timeline for such corrective action is 30 calendar days, although the timeline may be extended or shortened depending on the nature and extent of the issue at hand at the discretion of the USDA.

If the grantee fails to take required corrective action within the established timeline, then the USDA will immediately suspend that awardee's access to HFMI funds. Access to HFMI funds will be restored when corrective action has been taken.

Second Instance of Noncompliance. If the awardee or the awardee's firms fail to comply with HFMI or SNAP rules and this is the second instance of noncompliance associated with that awardee, then the USDA will immediately suspend that grantee's access to HFMI funds, notify the awardee of the issue in writing and establish a timeline for corrective action. The general timeline for such corrective action is 30 calendar days, although the timeline may be extended or shortened depending on the nature and extent of the issue at hand at the discretion of the USDA. Access to HFMI funds will be restored when corrective action has been taken.

Third Instance of Noncompliance. If the awardee or the awardee's firms fail to comply with HFMI or SNAP rules and this is the third instance of noncompliance associated with that awardee, then the USDA will immediately suspend that awardee's access to HFMI funds, notify the awardee of the issue in writing and establish a timeline for corrective action. In addition, the USDA will rescind 10% of the total Federal HFMI funding. The general timeline for such corrective action is 30 calendar days, although the timeline may be extended or shortened depending on the nature and extent of the issue at hand at the discretion of the USDA. Access to the remaining HFMI funds will be restored when corrective action has been taken.

Further Instances of Noncompliance. If the awardee or the awardee's firms fail to comply with HFMI or SNAP rules and more than three such instances of noncompliance have already been documented, then the USDA will rescind the remaining Federal HFMI funds in their entirety.

Considering a History of Noncompliance during Application Evaluation. A history of noncompliance with HFMI or any other USDA grant policies and requirements will be considered during the HFMI application evaluation process.

Acknowledgement of USDA Support

As outlined in 2 CFR 415.2, awardees shall include acknowledgement of USDA Food and Nutrition Service support on any publications written or published with award support and, if feasible, on any publication reporting the results of, or describing, an award-supported activity. Awardees shall include acknowledgement of USDA Food and Nutrition Service support on any audiovisual which is produced with award support and which has a direct production cost of over $5,000.

- When acknowledging USDA support, use the following language: "This material is based upon work that is supported by the Food and Nutrition Service, U.S. Department of Agriculture." Awardees should follow the USDA Visual Standards Guide when using the USDA logo.

- Grant recipients *may* be asked to host USDA officials for a site visit during the course of their award. All costs associated with the site visit will be paid for by USDA and are not expected to be included in grant budgets.

PART II - FEDERAL AWARD INFORMATION

A. AVAILABLE FUNDING

The following information is intended to provide applicants with information to help applicants make informed decisions about proposal submissions.

- Total amount of funding expected to award: $3,000,000
- Anticipated number of awards: Up to 3
- Anticipated award announcement date: September 30, 2022
- Expected amounts of individual Federal awards: $1,000,000 - $3,000,000
- Anticipated start dates and period of performance: September 30, 2022 – September 30, 2027
- Application due date: September 2, 2022

Please note:

- Grant awards are subject to the availability of funding and/or appropriations of funds.
- FNS reserves the right to use this solicitation and competition to award additional grants this year or the subsequent fiscal year, should additional funds become available.

The award period for the FY2022 Cooperative Agreement will be up to five (5) years. All funds must be obligated and all program activities under the cooperative agreement (other than activities relating to the close out of the cooperative agreement) must be completed by the end of the award period. The close-out of the agreement must occur no later than 90 days following the termination date of the agreement, and all obligations incurred under the grant must be liquidated by this date. Any funds that are not liquidated within 90 days following the end of the award period must be returned to FNS. In addition, the final progress reports are due to FNS no later than 90 days following the end of the award period. Please see the section on Federal Award Administration Information for details on reporting requirements.

B. FUNDING ALLOCATION GUIDANCE

Funds provided under HFMI must primarily provide financial incentives at the point of sale to encourage SNAP recipients to purchase more fluid milk. As a result, a minimum of 65% of total Federal grant funds should be budgeted to and spent on incentives.

Project promotion, outreach and advertising is essential to a successful HFMI project. As a result, a minimum of 5% of total Federal grant funds should be spent on these activities.

A maximum of 25% of total grant funds should be spenton Administration costs, including Recordkeeping, Reporting, data collection and other related costs.

Costs that are indirect in nature and included in entities' indirect cost pool fall under the indirect cost rate.

Summary of HFMI Funding Allocation Guidelines:
- Incentives ≥ 65%
- Promotion, Outreach, and Advertising ≥ 5%
- Administration, including Recordkeeping, Reporting and Data Collection ≤ 25%

C. ALLOWABLE COSTS

Indirect Costs

A current Negotiated Indirect Cost Rate Agreement (NICRA), negotiated with a Federal negotiating agency, should be used to charge indirect costs. Indirect costs may not exceed the negotiated rate. If a NICRA is used, the percentage and base should be indicated. If the applicant does not have, and has never been approved for, a NICRA, they may charge up to 10% de minimis. In this instance, the applicant must indicate they are requesting the de minimis rate. An applicant may elect not to charge indirect costs and, instead, use all grant funds for direct costs. If indirect costs are not charged, the phrase "none requested" should be stated in the budget narrative. For questions related to the indirect cost rate, please work with the Grant Officer as noted in **Section VII** of this RFA.

Sub-awardee Costs

The applicant is expected to perform a substantive portion of the project and no more than 25 percent of HFMI funds may be sub-awarded or subcontracted. FNS will allow applicants to indicate in their proposal if they intend to sub-award or subcontract more than 25 percent of the HFMI. This deviation will require FNS approval. Projects may divide their budget allocations between partners as it fits their work plan. (For additional knowledge or expertise that is not available within the applicant organization, funds for expert consultation may be included in the “All Other Direct Costs” section of the proposed budget narrative and must identify the total amount in the line-item budget as “Sub-awardee” or “Sub-contract”.

Unallowable Costs

Funds awarded under this may not be used for any purpose that limits the use of benefits provided under the Food and Nutrition Act of 2008. Similarly, funds awarded may not be used for the purpose of providing access to ineligible items under the Food and Nutrition Act of 2008. Examples include, but are not limited to, giveaways of alcohol, tobacco, firearms, and lottery tickets.

Under no circumstances may HFMI awardees engage in any activities intended to persuade or recruit individuals to apply for SNAP benefits. The use of Federal and/or match funds to employ personnel tasked with enrolling individuals in SNAP is strictly prohibited.

Promotional activities must be limited to factual statements and HFMI awardees must generally avoid emotional appeals in their promotional activities. Promotional activities funded with Federal and/or match funds:
- Must present factual statements intended to inform, not to persuade,
- May include locational information about firms (i.e., the address of firms participating in the grantee's project),
- May also specify that firms accept SNAP and EBT (this includes appropriate logo use as outlined here: Using the SNAP Logo, and
- May include information describing the mechanics of the grantee's project (e.g., spend $1 on milk and earn $1 to spend on other dairy products).

Regardless of format, the following example would be an unallowable expense:

"Sign up to receive SNAP benefits and then you can also get 50% off a gallon of milk at Main Street Grocers! Drinking milk will keep you and your family healthy and happy, so come on down on the corner of Maple and Elm Streets!"

Unallowable costs may not be paid for with either Federal or matching funds. If an applicant is unclear as to whether a specific promotional material is acceptable, it can be submitted to SM.FN.SNAP-RetailerPolicy@usda.gov for review by FNS.

Non-Supplantation

Grants must be used to supplement, not supplant, non-Federal funds that would otherwise be available for expenditure on incentive program activities. Grant funds must be used to fund new projects. They may not be used to replace State or local funds that would, in the absence of Federal aid, be available or forthcoming for incentive programs.

PART III - ELIGIBILITY INFORMATION

A. ELIGIBLE APPLICANTS

Eligible entities include governmental or 501(c) nonprofit entities. A government entity is a State, local, territory, or tribal agency. A nonprofit entity is any organization or institution with IRS 501(c) status or accredited institutions of higher education, where no part of the net earnings benefit any private shareholder or individual. All applicant organizations must be domestic entities and shall be owned, operated, and located within the *50 United States, the District of Columbia, Guam, or the United States Virgin Islands*. All applicants must demonstrate in their application that they are a domestic entity and either a government agency or a 501(c) non-profit organization. Each eligible applicant may only submit one application in response to this grant solicitation. Suspended or debarred organizations are ineligible to apply.

In addition, applicants must meet the following requirements: (1) have experience in: (i) efforts to reduce food insecurity in the community, including food distribution, improving access to services, or coordinating services and programs; or (ii) experience with the SNAP program; (2) demonstrated competency to implement a project, provide fiscal accountability, collect data, and prepare reports and other necessary documentation; and (3) possess a demonstrated willingness to share information with researchers, evaluators, practitioners, and other interested parties, including a plan for dissemination of results to stakeholders.

Partners and Collaborators

Applicants are encouraged to seek and create partnerships with public or private, non-profit or for-profit entities, and/or other appropriate professionals; community-based organizations; and local government entities; and/or partnering entities for the purposes of providing additional resources and strengthening under- resourced communities. Only the applicant must meet the requirements specified above for grant eligibility. Project partners and collaborators need not meet the eligibility requirements. When planning collaborations awardees may sub-award to organizations not eligible to apply provided such organizationsare necessary for the successful completion of the project. See Part II, D, Funding Restrictions.

B. COST SHARING OR MATCHING CONSIDERATIONS

There are no cost sharing or matching requirements for this program. However, FNS supports collaboration among local, State, regional, or national partnerships that leverage assets to most effectively reach the goals associated with this solicitation. Collaboration may include sub-grants and in-kind contributions of resources by partner organizations. In-kind contributions may include donations of services, equipment, meeting space, or other resources to be used specifically for the proposed project. The value of these in-kind contributions should be calculated and noted both in the Project Narrative and the Budget Narrative. Commitments of in-kind contributions and/or cost- sharing should be demonstrated through letters of commitment and included in the application package. Any enhancements that include additional, or matching funding for incentives will not increase the applicant's score for award purposes under this RFA.

C. PRE-AWARD SCREENING REQUIREMENTS

In reviewing applications in any discretionary grant competition, Federal Awarding Agencies, in accordance with 2 CFR 200.205, are required, prior to making a Federal award, to review information available through any OMB-designated repositories of government-wide eligibility qualifications or financial integrity information. Additionally, Federal Awarding Agencies are required to have a framework in place for evaluating the risks posed by applicants before they receive Federal awards. The FNS review of risk posed by applicants will be based on the following:

- SAM.gov, the *System for Award Management*, the Official U.S. Government system that consolidated the capabilities of CCR/FedReg, ORCA, and EPLS;
- FAPIIS, the *Federal Awardee Performance and Integrity Information System* that has been established to track contractor misconduct and performance;
- FNS Risk Assessment Questionnaire:
  - Applicants must complete the Grant Program Accounting System & Financial Capability Questionnaire that allows FNS to evaluate aspects of the applicant's financial stability, quality of management systems, and history of performance, reports and findings from audits. The questionnaire contains a number of questions that may bean indicator of potential risk.

The evaluation of the information obtained from the designated systems and the risk assessment questionnaire may result in FNS imposing special conditions or additional oversight requirements that correspond to the degree of risk assessed.

PART IV - APPLICATION AND SUBMISSION INFORMATION

Content and Form of Application Submission

FNS strongly encourages eligible applicants interested in applying to this program to adhere to the following applicant format. The proposed project plan should be presented on 8 ½" x 11" white paper with at least 1-inch margins on the top and bottom. All pages should be single-spaced, in 12-point font. The project description with relevant information should be captured on no more than 35 pages, not including the cover sheet, table of contents, resumes, letter of commitment(s), endorsement letter(s), budget narrative(s), ,, list of partnering retailers, partnering retailer(s) SNAP qualifying milk sales data, appendices and required forms. All pages, excluding the form pages, must be numbered.

Special Instructions:

- Late application submission will not be considered in this competition. FNS will not consider additions or revisions to applications unless they are submitted via Grants.gov by the deadline. No additions or revisions will be accepted after the deadline.
- Applications submitted without the required supporting documents, forms, certification will not be considered.
- Applications missing a written proposal or budget narrative will not be considered.
- FNS reserves the right to request clarification on any application submitted in response to this solicitation.
- Applications not submitted via Grants.gov will not be considered.
- If multiple application packages are submitted through Grants.gov by the same applicant in response to this solicitation, FNS will accept the latest application package successfully submitted. All other packages submitted by the applicant will be removed from this competition.

A. Content of Application Submission

1. Cover Sheet

The cover page should include, at a minimum:

- Applicant's name and mailing address;
- Primary contact's name, job title, mailing address, phone number and e-mail address; and
- Grant program title and subprogram title (if applicable).

2. Table of Contents

The Table of Contents should include relevant sections and subsections, as well as associated page numbers.

3. Application Project Summary

The applicant should clearly describe the proposed project activities and anticipated outcomes that would result if the proposal were to be funded.

4. Project Narrative

The project narrative should clearly identify what the applicant is proposing and how it will address a solution, the expected results and/or benefits once the solution is achieved, and how it will meet the RFA program scope and objectives. The proposed project methodology should describe the project design, address program specific methodology needs, procedures, timetables, monitoring/oversight, and the organization's project staffing. It should include any partnerships involved and the firms that will participate in the project.

Be sure to include information responsive to this section as a clear and discrete section of your proposal; do not reference other sections or charts located elsewhere in your proposal.

Incentive Design. Please include the following information in this section:

- The products eligible to be purchased to trigger receipt of incentives at the point of sale (See Part I.D.-Target Foods).
- The products eligible to be received at the point of incentive redemption (See Part I.D.-Target

Foods).

- The incentive levels (e.g., ratio of SNAP spent to incentive earned; maximum incentive dollar amount that can be earned per day).
- The financial instrument used for incentive delivery (e.g., coupon, gift card, loyalty card, EBT).
- The method for reimbursing retailers for redeemed incentives.
- Any methods, if applicable, that will be used to track SNAP households' project participation (e.g., a store loyalty card issued to each participant).
- Indicate if nutrition education or other interventions will be combined with the incentive.
- List where the project and sub-grantee projects will operate.

Project Site. Describe the community(ies) in which the project will operate in detail, including:

- Community characteristics, including a detailed description of the locality for the project; its boundaries, whether it is rural or urban, or located in a priority target zone, and any other relevant characteristics.
- Retailer characteristics, including store types and locations.

Priority Target Zones. In order to qualify for the FY 2022 Funding Priority described in Part I.C, applicants must specifically indicate the retailer's location and provide justification, including the following, if applicable:

- Targeted Tribal Lands and/or surrounding tribal communities.
- Estimated number of SNAP households the retailer(s) serves.
- Distance from neighboring SNAP-authorized retailers.
- Evidence from community partners indicating contaminated levels of local water sources.

Retailer Recruitment. Provide the firm names and street addresses., Include a justification for the number of selected retailers. Selected grantee(s) will be required to provide the FNS authorization numbers in a secured format within 2 weeks of award. All applicants should confirm that selected partner firms are authorized though the retailer locator map. If the applicant wishes to partner with a firm(s) that is not currently authorized to accept SNAP benefits, the applicant should specifically identify such firms in the proposal, provide justification for the firms' selections, and include a statement in the firm's letter of commitment that the firm intends to meet the stocking/sales requirements for SNAP authorization and will submit an application for authorization within 30 days of award. For firms not authorized by the grant application due date, the required qualifying milk sales data should reflect sales through all and any sales tender.

Communication/Incentive Promotion. Include a plan for notifying SNAP households in the project area about the HFMI incentives and describe any incentive promotion activities. After award, final communication/promotion plans will be submitted to FNS.

Outlines of Training Plans. Provide a general outline of separate customized plans to train SNAP participants, participating retailers and all partners who would be involved in the project. The plan should provide general timeframes for the training. After award, final training plans will be submitted to FNS.

Data Collection. Describe procedures and duties associated with data collection, including how partners will work with FNS to meet evaluation needs. Specifically:

- How the data elements described in **Part I.F – Data Collection and Evaluation**, will be collected;

- The entities/individuals involved in the data collection;
- Plans for obtaining test data files from retailers prior to start of implementation to ensure shared understanding of the data in each field.
- How quality assurance will be completed before submission of data files to FNS; and
- How work will be done with FNS to troubleshoot and resolve issues and refine procedures as needed.

5. Staffing Plan

Key Personnel. Identify and describe the duties, experience, capabilities, and management lines of authority for all personnel who bear a substantive responsibility for managing, developing, and administering all significant components of the project. To define "key personnel," consider at minimum that this would include all personnel who will:

- Spend 25 percent of more of their time on the Pilot (including vacancies);
- Be designated to work with 1) FNS 2) EBT contractor and/or State agency if applicable, 3) retailers; and
- Be responsible for (1) quarterly and final progress and financial reports; 2) Monthly redemption reports; 3) special reporting upon request of FNS; and 4) a formal presentation to FNS at the close of the project.

Provide the following for all key personnel listed above:

- Current positions and what their title on the Pilot will be
- Salary and percentage of time committed to HFMI for the period of performance;
- Specific roles and duties;
- In the appendix attach current Resume or Vita for key personnel; and

Chain of Command and Responsibilities. Provide a chart or a narrative that describes the management relationships and channels of communication that will be used between key personnel and provide information on who has authority over whom.

Key Partners. The Staffing Plan should also identify key partners and describe the expertise and time commitments they will dedicate to the project. In the appendix to the application, provide copies of documentation in the form of letters, memoranda of understanding or agreement or other documentation that demonstrates each key partner's understanding of its role and commitment to HFMI and willingness to cooperate and actively participate in HFMI.

6. Management Plan

Quality Control. Discuss how the integrity of HFMI will be protected and ensured, including management and oversight; monitoring, management and financial controls, corrective actions and adjustment to operations to correct deficiencies or improve on operations.

- Describe accountability plan, including internal controls to ensure the integrity of payments or reimbursements to retailers.
- Describe internal controls to monitor the incentives accounting system to assure that target participant SNAP accounts are credited appropriately if EBT is the method of delivery. Describe how HFMI, SNAP and any private funds will be accounted for as distinct and separate accounts, and what audit trails and financial controls will be used to assure and demonstrate that SNAP funds are used only for SNAP purposes, and HFMI funds will be usedonly for HFMI-

related activities.

External management. Provide plans for management of outside personnel (those not in the direct line of supervision of the HFMI awardee such as those persons identified in Part IV.A-*Key Partners)*. Describe how strong interrelationships, communication and teamwork will be fostered among partners by the HFMI Awardee:

- Retailers
- State Agency and EBT contractor, if applicable
- Local agency(ies)
- Any community partners

Contingency Plans. Describe contingency plans for ensuring that the project is not unduly disrupted by any unforeseen changes in key personnel or disruption in the incentive delivery process.

7. Budget

A line-item budget detailing HFMI-related costs and how these costs were derived must be included.

Grant funds may not be used for retailer costs directly associated with HFMI implementation and operation, including any retailer system programing changes related to delivering incentives through State EBT systems *unless* the retailer is located in a Priority Target Zone.

Applicants may propose using up to $2,000 of grant funds per retailer located in Priority Target Zones, described in Part I.C- FY 20222 Funding Priorities, for POS system modifications to be able to provide incentives though a process that can be electronically tracked through the POS system and/or to provide an automatic discount at the point of the qualifying purchase.

8. Application Budget Narrative

The budget narrative should correspond with the proposed project narrative and application budget. The narrative must justify and support the bona fide needs of the budget's direct cost. If the budget includes indirect costs, the applicant must provide a copy of its most recently approved Federal indirect cost rate agreement. All non-profit organizations must include their 501(c)(3) determination letter issued by the Internal Revenue Service (IRS). All funding requests must be in whole dollars.

If applicable, costs for systems changes must be detailed and supporting documentation (e.g., quotes from State's EBT vendor and third-party processors) must be included.

If the budget includes indirect costs, the applicant must provide a copy of its most recently approved Federal Negotiated Indirect Cost Rate Agreement. All non-profit organizations must include their 501(c) determination letter issued by the Internal Revenue Service (IRS). All funding requests must be in whole dollars.

Indirect Cost Rate

A current Negotiated Indirect Cost Rate Agreement (NICRA), negotiated with a Federal negotiating agency, should be used to charge indirect costs. Indirect costs may not exceed the negotiated rate. If a NICRA is used, the percentage and base should be indicated. If the applicant does not have, and has never been approved for, a NICRA, they may charge up to 10% de minimis. In this instance, the applicant must indicate they are requesting the de minimis rate. An applicant may elect not to charge indirect costs and, instead, use all grant funds for direct costs. If indirect costs are not charged, the phrase "none requested" should be stated in the budget narrative. For questions related to the indirect cost rate, please work with the Grant Officer as noted in Section VII of this RFA.

9. Activities/Indicators Tracker

Proposed Activities and indicators measuring success must be mapped to Program Objectives (as described in Section I – PROGRAM DESCRIPTION) in the below format (additional Activities/Indicators can be added as needed). Note: Indicators are defined as any metric you anticipate will be able to be tracked during the period of performance of the grant. Common examples include Number of People Attended, Number of People Impacted, Number of Incentives Delivered, Number of Materials Created, Number of Trainings, Number of People Trained.

(Example)

Objective #	1
Activity	Provide automatic discount at the point of purchase for SNAP households purchasing qualifying milk at Retailer A
Indicator(s)	No. Milk Sales
Activity	Provide paper coupon for a dollar-to-dollar match at the point of purchase for SNAP households purchasing qualifying milk at Retailer B
Indicator(s)	No. SNAP households Impacted

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Objective #	
Activity	
Indicator(s)	

Objective #	
Activity	
Indicator(s)	

10. Timeline of Activities to Achieve the Goals

Discuss how the goals and intended outcomes will be achieved and include how the proposed activitiescomply with the rules and regulations of SNAP. Discuss how the proposed project outcomes will be realized by providing a systematic description of how the most important steps or milestones will be accomplished. Particular attention should be given to existing technical capabilities and any technical solutions that must be developed for goals, objectives, and outcomes to be achieved. In addition to these descriptions, it is recommended that a table of up to three pages be provided with implementationdetails for these activities, including: (a) specific steps and achievements in planning, implementing, and evaluating; (b) timetables for milestones, and, as relevant; (c) expected numbers of participantsinvolved in each step of the process.

Describe how the proposed project will develop effective and efficient strategies for incentive delivery that may be replicated and scaled in other States and communities in the future. Most relevant is an explanation of why the applicant and its partners selected the activities proposed in the application.

B. Required Grant Application Forms

Please refer to the Application Checklist for a list of required grant forms.

Appendices

Include each of the following as a separate appendix:

- Resumes and vitas for key personnel;
- Job descriptions for key personnel, indicating those that must be hired;
- Applicant letter of commitment to work closely and cooperatively with its partners to support the project objectives and methods, including all steps necessary to meet the design, implementation, and operation requirements of the project.
- Letter(s) of Commitment from retailer(s) or other organizations who will partner with the applicant to provide incentive(s). The letter should include the name, address, telephone number and e-mail address of the primary point of contact for the retailer(s). The letter should include a description ofthe retailer(s) or organization(s), and the services and role the retailer or organization is contributing to the project;
- Copies of letters, agreements or memoranda of understanding with local agency(ies), the EBT contractor if applicable, and retailers, including agreement to cooperate with the evaluation firm;and
- Any other supporting documentation referenced in the application.

C. Submission Date

Complete grant applications must be uploaded to www.grants.gov by 11:59 PM EST on the due date listed on the cover page.

- Applications must be submitted via Grants.gov. Mailed, e-mailed or hand-delivered application packages will not be accepted. For further instructions, go here.
- Late or incomplete applications will not be considered.
- FNS will not consider additions or revisions to applications unless they are submitted via Grants.gov by the deadline. No additions or revisions will be accepted after the deadline.
- If multiple application packages are submitted through Grants.gov by the same applicant in response to this solicitation, FNS will accept the latest application package successfully. submitted. All other packages submitted by the applicant will be removed from this competition.

FNS strongly encourages applicants to begin the registration process at least **four weeks before** the due date and to submit applications to Grants.gov at least **one week** before the deadline to allow time to troubleshoot any issues, should they arise. Please note that upon submission, Grants.gov may send multiple confirmation notices; applicants should ensure receipt of confirmation that the application was **accepted**. Applicants experiencing difficulty submitting applications to Grants.gov should contact the Grant Officer noted in the Agency Contacts (Section VII) of this RFA. FNS will evaluate submission issues on a case-by-case basis.

D. Preparing for Electronic Application Submission through Grants.gov

Applicants must register with Grants.gov, and Sam.gov in order to submit an application to FNS via

Grants.gov, as required. FNS strongly encourages applicants to begin the registration process at least **four weeks before** the due date.

In order to submit an application, you must:

1. Obtain a Unique Entity IDUEI number
2. Existing entities can find their UEI by following the steps here: https://www.fsd.gov/gsafsd_sp?id=kb_article_view&sysparm_article=KB0041254. New entities can get their UEI at SAM.gov and, if required, complete an entity registration

   NOTE: As of April 4, 2022, entities can register in SAM.gov and will be assigned their Unique Entity ID (SAM) within SAM.gov. They will no longer obtain or use a UEI (DUNS) for entity registration or reporting. For additional information on the UEI process, please visit: SAM.gov | Duns - Sam UEI.

3. Register in the System for Award Management (SAM.gov)
   - SAM combines Federal procurement systems and the Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance into one system. For additional information regarding SAM.gov, see the following link: https://sam.gov/content/home
   - Access https://www.sam.gov and complete the online SAM registration process to obtain a UEI (SAM) or verify if your organization already has one. If your organization already has a UEI (SAM), go to Step 3
   - To register, you must have your organization's UEI, entity's Tax ID Number (TIN), and taxpayer name (as it appears on last tax return). **It may take up to 5 – 7 business days** or more to register and/or complete the migration of permissions and/or the renewal of an entity record.
   - Ensure you enter your EBiz POC name and EBiz POC email in SAM, and your organization/entity registration process is complete in SAM, this will allow you to register with Grants.gov (Step 3). Contact the Federal Support Help Desk at https://www.fsd.gov/ for help with the UEI.
   - All applicants must have current SAM status at the time of application submission and throughout the duration of a Federal Award in accordance with 2 CFR Part 25.
   - We strongly encourage applicants to begin the process **at least 3 weeks** before the due date of the grant solicitation.

4. *Create a Grants.gov Account:*

   The next step in the registration process is to create an account with Grants.gov. Applicants must know their organization's DUNS number to complete this process. For more detailed instructions about creating a profile on Grants.gov, refer to https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/applicants/registration.html.

5. *Authorize Grants.gov Roles*:

   After creating an account on Grants.gov, the E-Business Point of Contact (EBiz POC) receives an email notifying them of the registration and request for roles. The E-Biz POC will need to Grants.gov and authorize the appropriate roles. An approved Authorized Organizational Representative (AOR) must complete and submit the application online at Grants.gov. To learn more about the E-Biz POC role and other profile roles, please visit https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/applicants/registration/authorize-roles.html.

6. *Track Role Status*:

   To track your role request, please visit https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/applicants/registration/track-role-status.html.

   Electronic Signature: When applications are submitted through Grants.gov, the name of the organization's AOR that submitted the application is inserted into the signature line of the application, serving as the electronic signature. The E-Biz POC **must** authorize individuals who are able to make legally binding commitments on behalf of the organization as an AOR; **this step is often missed and it is crucial for valid and timely submissions.**

E. How to Submit an Application via Grants.gov

Grants.gov applicants can apply online using Workspace. Workspace is a shared, online environment where members of a grant team may simultaneously access and edit different web forms within an application. For each funding opportunity announcement (FOA) or RFA, you can create individual instances of a workspace.

For additional training resources, including video tutorials, refer to: https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/applicants/applicant-training.html

Applicant Support: Grants.gov provides applicants 24/7 support via the toll-free number 1-800-518-4726 and email at support@grants.gov. If you are experiencing difficulties with your submission, it is best to call the Grants.gov Support Center and get a ticket number. The Support Center ticket number will assist the Center with tracking your issue and understanding background information on the issue.

For questions related to the specific grant opportunity, please contact the Grant Officer noted in the Agency Contacts (Section VII) of this RFA.

F. Grants.gov Receipt Requirements and Proof of Timely Submission

All applications must be received by 11:59 PM EST on the due date listed on the cover page, as detailed here. Proof of timely submission is automatically recorded by Grants.gov. An electronic date/time stamp is generated within the system when the application is successfully received by Grants.gov. The applicant AOR will receive an acknowledgement of receipt and a tracking number (GRANTXXXXXXXX) from Grants.gov with the successful transmission of their application. Applicant AORs will also receive the official date/time stamp and Grants.gov Tracking number in an email serving as proof of their timely submission.

When FNS successfully retrieves the application from Grants.gov and acknowledges the download of submissions, Grants.gov will provide an electronic acknowledgment of receipt of the application to the email address of the applicant with the AOR role. Again, proof of timely submission shall be the official date and time that Grants.gov receives your application. Applications received by Grants.gov after the established due date for the program will be considered late and will not be considered for FNS funding.

Applicants using slow internet, such as dial-up connections, should be aware that transmission could take some time before Grants.gov receives your application. Again, Grants.gov will provide either an error or a successfully received transmission in the form of an email sent to the applicant with the AOR role. The Grants.gov Support Center reports that some applicants end the transmission because they think that nothing is occurring during the transmission process. Please be patient and give the system time to process the application.

Additional Information on Grants.gov and the Registration Process:

NOTICE: Special Characters and Naming Conventions

All applicants **MUST** follow Grants.gov guidance on file naming conventions. To avoid submission issues, please follow the guidance provided by Grants.gov (per the Grants.gov Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ):

Are there restrictions on file names for any attachment I include with my application package?

File attachment names longer than approximately 50 characters can cause problems processing packages. Please limit file attachment names. Also, do not use any special characters (examples: & – * % / # ' -). This includes periods (.) and spacing followed by a dash in the file. To separate words in naming a file, use underscore, as in the following example: Attached_File.pdf.

Please note that if these guidelines are not followed, your application will be rejected. FNS will not accept any application rejected from www.grants.gov portal due to incorrect naming conventions. Additional information and applicant resources are available at:

PART V - APPLICATION REVIEW INFORMATION

https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/applicants/workspace-overview.html

A. REVIEW CRITERIA

Evaluation of Grant Application Criteria

FNS will pre-screen all applications to ensure the applicants are eligible entities and are in compliance with all Program regulations. If an application does not include all appropriate information, FNS will consider the application to be non-responsive and will eliminate it from further evaluation.

FNS will not approve any waivers from Program regulations for any projects submitted in response to this solicitation.

Following the initial screening process, FNS will assemble a panel group to review and determine the technical merits of each application. The panel will evaluate the proposals based on how well they address the required application components, including any bonus points awarded, and array the applications from highest to lowest score.

Additionally, the review committee will evaluate proposals against the criteria below. The project narrative sections include a point value to indicate the importance of each section; however, reviewers will be evaluating proposals based on all sections regardless of whether point values are provided.

The panel members will recommend applications for consideration for a grant award based on the evaluation scoring. The selecting official reserves the right to accept the panel's recommendation or to select an application for funding out of order to meet agency priorities, program balance, geographical representation, or project diversity. FNS reserves the right to use this solicitation and competition to award additional grants in the next fiscal year should additional funds be made available.

B. EVALUATION FACTORS AND CRITERIA

The following selection criteria will be used to evaluate applications for this RFA.

1. **Project Design (35 points)**
    a. The proposal includes and describes the overall approach and the general strategies that will be used to provide incentives for the purchase and consumption of qualifying fluid milk by SNAP households,including but not limited a description of various incentive option(s) proposed and how each is intended to increase purchase and consumption of qualifying fluid milk; and
    b. The proposal clearly describes the point-of-purchase solution to be used to implement incentive program options, including but not limited to :
        i. Any changes to systems or point-of-sale equipment necessary; and
        ii. A description of the formal agreement between the awardee and the retailer(s) that clearly describes the relationship between the two entities and the responsibilities and obligations of each.
    c. The proposal describes the overall approach and the general techniques that will be used to support the training of retailer(s) and communication with SNAP households.
    d. The proposal clearly describes reporting methodologies and timeframes for incentive tracking and risks and issues monitoring.

2. **Implementation and Monitoring (15 points)**
    a. The proposal includes a Work Breakdown Statement outlining the incentive options with at least three levels of tasks and providing sufficient description and definition to allow for tracking the completion of events, task duration, and interrelationships between tasks based on a logical and efficient sequence of tasks designed to accomplish the project.
    b. The proposal should include a communication plan for communicating internally with FNS, and externally with retailers and project stakeholders.
    c. The proposal should include sample report templates for summarizing the purchases of fluid milk.

3. **Sustainability (10 points)**
    a. The proposal shows that the project can be replicated and scaled should additional funds become available.

4. **Budget Appropriateness and Economic Efficiency (25 points)**
    a. The proposal includes:
        i. A line item budget;
        ii. A narrative that demonstrates how funds will be spent, by whom and for what purpose. The narrative should provide enough detail for reviewers to easily understand how costs were determined and how they relate to the objectives of the project. There should be adequate justification for budget costs based on current industry costs/standards;
        iii. A copy of the approved negotiated indirect cost rate agreement must be attached if indirect costs are shown as a budget expense to the project; and
        iv. If applicable, the budget must show how the costs are going to be allocated for the proposed incentive options. It should demonstrate that this grant is only going to fund approved costs;
    b. The proposal should be cost effective; it must demonstrate that the anticipated

results are commensurate with the cost of the project;

c. Proposals that include hiring a consultant or contracting of work must provide the following information:
    i. Consultant's name and description of service;
    ii. Itemized list of all direct costs and fees;
    iii. Salaries must have the number of personnel including the position title;
    iv. Specialty and specialized qualifications as appropriate to the salary;
    v. Number of estimated hours times hourly wage;
    vi. All expenses and fees directly related to the proposed services to be rendered to the project;
    vii. Applications that are required to issue a bid should provide a narrative explaining the requirements and provide a reasonable estimate of Contractual and Consultant Costs;

NOTE: Proposal submissions that omit the required budget forms, budget narratives and/or line-item descriptions will not receive the full point value for this criterion. Therefore, applicants should recognize that a well-written budget narrative that justifies the proposed project expenditures assists the reviewers during the review process.

5. **Staff Capability and Management (15 points)**
    a. The proposal identifies the project director/manager and other key staff. The proposal includes resumes that demonstrate that the proposed staff has the appropriate technical and experiential backgrounds for their proposed roles. If the applicant is unable to identify the project director/manager or key staff, it must include, in the application package, job descriptions for the positions that must be assigned. Applicants should address their contingency or back-up plans in the event of key staff departures.
    b. The proposal outlines the amount of time and effort the project director or manager, key staff, and, if applicable, partnering organizations, will contribute to the project.
    c. The proposal demonstrates that effective and consistent oversight by qualified project managers will be implemented throughout the project, and that effective communication will exist within the applicant's organization.
    d. The proposal includes an organization chart of the proposed project.
    e. Applicants should address their contingency or back-up plans in the event of key staff departures.

Agency Priorities (35 Bonus Points)

FNS will provide no more than 35 additional bonus points to projects meeting Agency priorities. These bonus points will be added to the Evaluation Factors and Criteria score above. The priorities and additional bonus points are as follows:

For those applications submitted in response to this RFA, FNS will give priority to projects that:

- Target SNAP households in tribal lands or surrounding tribal communities, rural communities, and/or Opportunity Zones; and neighborhoods with contaminated water to mitigate lead absorption among SNAP households. (15 points)
- Implement an electronic incentive delivery process that minimizes cashier intervention and does not require individual paper coupons or receipts for each incentive earned. (10

points)
- Maximize the share of funds used for direct incentives to participants. (10 points)

C. REVIEW AND SELECTION PROCESS

Following the initial screening process, FNS will assemble a panel group to review and determine the technical merits of each application. The panel will evaluate the proposals based on how well they address the required application components listed above and array the applications from highest to lowest score. The panel members will recommend applications for consideration for a grant award based on the evaluation scoring. The selecting official reserves the right to accept the panel's recommendation or to select an application for funding out of order to meet agency priorities, program balance, geographical representation, or project diversity. FNS reserves the right to use this solicitation and competition to award additional grants in the next fiscal year should additional funds be made available.

NOTE: If a discrepancy exists between the total funding request (submitted on SF-424, SF-424A, and budget or budget narrative) within the application package in response to this solicitation, FNS will only consider and evaluate the estimated funding request contained on SF-424.

D. DETERMINATION OF AWARD AMOUNT

If an application has been selected for funding and the budget submission is realistic and well-supported, the application will be funded at the level requested. However, FNS reserves the right to fund applications out of rank order to achieve priorities identified earlier; or at a lesser amount if FNS judges that the application can be implemented with less; or if Federal funding is not sufficient to fully fund all applications that merit awards. This grant award is subject to the availability of funds. FNS also reserves the right to suspend or terminate an award for materially failing to perform.

NOTE: If a discrepancy exists between the total funding request (submitted on SF-424, SF-424A, andbudget or budget narrative) within the application package in response to this solicitation, FNS will only consider and evaluate the estimated funding request contained on SF-424.

PART VI - FEDERAL AWARD ADMINISTRATION INFORMATION

A. FEDERAL AWARD NOTICE

The Government is not obligated to make any award as a result of this RFA. Unless an applicant receives a signed award document with terms and conditions, any contact from a FNS Grants or Program Officer should not be considered as a notice of a grant award. No pre-award or pre-agreement costs incurred prior to the effective start date are allowed unless approved and stated on FNS' signed award document (FNS-529). Only the recognized FNS authorized signature can bind the USDA, Food and Nutrition Service to the expenditure of funds related to an award's approved budget.

B. ADMINISTRATIVE AND NATIONAL POLICY REQUIREMENTS

Confidentiality of an Application

When an application results in an award, it becomes a part of the record of FNS transactions, available to the public upon specific request. Information that the Secretary determines to be of a confidential, privileged, or proprietary nature will be held in confidence to the extent permitted by law. Therefore, any information that the applicant wishes to have considered as confidential, privileged, or proprietary should be clearly marked within the application. Any application that does not result in an award will be not released to the public. An application may be withdrawn at any time prior to the final action thereon.

Safeguarding Personally Identifiable Information

Personally Identifiable Information (PII) is any information that can be used to distinguish or trace an individual's identity, such as name, social security number, date and place of birth, mother's maiden name, or biometric records, and any other information that is linked or linkable to an individual, such as medical, educational, financial, and employment information (National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST) SP 800-122, Guide to Protecting the Confidentiality of Personally Identifiable information, April 2010).

Applicants submitting applications in response to this RFA must recognize that confidentiality of PII and other sensitive data is of paramount importance to the USDA Food and Nutrition Service. All federal and non-federal employees (e.g., contractors, affiliates, or partners) working for or on behalf of FNS are required to acknowledge understanding of their responsibilities and accountability for using and protecting FNS PII in accordance with the Privacy Act of 1974; Office of Management and Budget Memorandum M-06-15, *Safeguarding Personally Identifiable Information; M-06-16, Protection of Sensitive Agency Information*; M-07-16, *Safeguarding Against and Responding to the Breach of Personally Identifiable Information*; and the NIST Special Publication (SP) 800-122, *Guide to Protecting the Confidentiality of Personally Identifiable Information*.

By submitting an application in response to this RFA, applicants are assuring that all data exchanges conducted throughout the application submission and pre-award process (and during the performance of the grant, if awarded) will be conducted in a manner consistent with applicable Federal laws. By submitting a grant application, applicants agree to take all necessary steps to protect such confidentiality, including the following: (1) ensuring that PII and sensitive data developed, obtained or otherwise associated with UDSA FNS funded grants is securely transmitted. Transmission of applications through Grants.gov is secure; (2) ensuring that PII is not transmitted to unauthorized users, and that PII and other sensitive data is not submitted via email; and (3) Data transmitted via approved file sharing services (WatchDox, ShareFile, etc.), CDs, DVDs, thumb drives, etc., must be encrypted.

Conflict of Interest and Confidentiality of the Review Process

The agency requires all panel reviewers to sign a conflict of interest and confidentiality form to prevent any actual or perceived conflicts of interest that may affect the application review and evaluation process. Names of applicants, including States and tribal governments, submitting an application will be kept confidential, except to those involved in the review process, to the extent permitted by law. In addition, the identities of the reviewers will remain confidential throughout the entire process. Therefore, the names of the reviewers will not be released to applicants.

Administrative Regulations

Federal Tax Liabilities Restrictions. None of the funds made available by this or any other Act may be used to enter into a contract, memorandum of understanding, or cooperative agreement with, make a grant to, or provide a loan or loan guarantee to, any corporation that has any unpaid Federal tax liability that has been assessed, for which all judicial and administrative remedies have been exhausted or have lapsed, and that is not being paid in a timely manner pursuant to an agreement with the authority responsible for collecting the tax liability, where the awarding agency is aware of the unpaid tax liability, unless a Federal agency has considered suspension or debarment of the corporation and has made a determination that this further action is not necessary to protect the interests of the Government.

Felony Crime Conviction Restrictions. None of the funds made available by this or any other Act may be used to enter into a contract, memorandum of understanding, or cooperative agreement with, make a grant to, or provide a loan or loan guarantee to, any corporation that was convicted of a felony criminal violation under any Federal law within the preceding 24 months, where the awarding agency is aware of the conviction, unless a Federal agency has considered suspension or debarment of the corporation and has made a determination that this further action is not necessary to protect the interests of the Government.

Debarment and Suspension 2 CFR Part 180 and 2 CFR Part 417. A recipient chosen for an award shall comply with the non-procurement debarment and suspension common rule implementing Executive Orders (E.O.) 12549 and 12669, "Debarment and Suspension," codified at 2 CFR Part 180 and 2 CFR Part 417. This common rule restricts sub-awards and contracts with certain parties that are debarred, suspended or otherwise excluded from or ineligible for participation in Federal assistance programs or activities. The approved grant recipient will be required to ensure that all sub-contractors and sub-grantees are neither excluded nor disqualified under the suspension and debarment rules prior to approving a sub-grant award by checking the System for Award Management (SAM) at www.sam.gov.

Universal Identifier and Central Contractor Registration 2 CFR Part 25. Effective October 1, 2010, all grant applicants must obtain a Dun and Bradstreet (D&B) Data Universal Numbering System (DUNS) number as a universal identifier for Federal financial assistance. Active grant recipients and their direct sub-recipients of a sub-grant award also must obtain a DUNS number. To request a DUNS number visit: http://fedgov.dnb.com/webform.
The grant recipient must also register its DUNS number in the Systems for Award Management (SAM.gov). If you were registered in the CCR, your company's information should be in SAM and you will need to set up a SAM account. To register in SAM you will need your entity's DUNS and your entity's Tax ID Number (TIN) and taxpayer name (as it appears on your last tax return)

Registration should take **3-5 days**. If you do not receive confirmation that your SAM registration is complete, please contact SAM at https://www.fsd.gov/app/answers/list.
FNS may not make an award to an applicant until the applicant has complied with the requirements described in 2 CFR 25 to provide a valid DUNS number and maintain an active SAM registration with current information.

Reporting Sub-award and Executive Compensation Information 2 CFR Part 170. The Federal Funding Accountability and Transparency Act (FFATA) of 2006 (Public Law 109–282), as amended by Section 6202 of Public Law 110–252, requires primary grantees of Federal grants and cooperative agreements to report information on sub-grantee obligations and executive compensation. FFATA promotes open government by enhancing the Federal Government's accountability for its stewardship of public

resources. This is accomplished by making Government information, particularly information on Federal spending, accessible to the general public.
Primary grantees, including State agencies, are required to report actions taken on or after October 1, 2010, that obligates $25,000 or more in Federal grant funds to first- tier sub-grantees. This information must be reported in the Government-wide FFATA Sub-Award Reporting System (FSRS). In order to access FSRS a current SAM registration is required. A primary grantee and first-tier sub-grantees must also report total compensation for each of its five most-highly compensated executives. Every primary and first-tier grantee must obtain a DUNS number prior to being eligible to receive a grant or sub-grant award. Additional information will be provided to grant recipients upon award.

Duncan Hunter National Defense Authorization Act of Fiscal Year 2009, Public Law 110-417. Section 872 of this Act requires the development and maintenance of a Federal Government information system that contains specific information on the integrity and performance of covered Federal agency contractors and grantees. The Federal Awardee Performance and Integrity Information System (FAPIIS) is designed to address these requirements. FAPIIS contains integrity and performance information from the Contractor Performance Assessment Reporting System, information from SAM.gov, and suspension and debarment information from the SAM. FNS will review and consider any information about the applicant reflected in FAPIIS when making a judgment about whether an applicant is qualified to receive an award.

Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) Requests. The Freedom of Information ACT (FOIA), 5 U.S.C. 552, provides individuals with a right to access records in the possession of the Federal Government. The Government may withhold information pursuant to the nine exemptions and the three exclusions contained in the Act.

Application packages submitted in response to this grant solicitation may be subject to FOIA by requests by interested parties. In response to these requests, FNS will comply with all applicable laws and regulations, including departmental regulations.

FNS will forward a Business Submitter Notice to the requested applicant's point-of-contact. Applicants will need to review requested materials and submit and submit any recommendations within 10 days from the date of FNS notification. FNS will redact Personally Identifiable Information (PII).

For additional information on the Freedom of Information (FOIA) process, please contact the FNS Freedom of Information Act officer at FOIA@fns.usda.gov.

*Privacy Policy***.** The USDA Food and Nutrition Service does not collect any personal identifiable information without explicit consent. To view the Agency's Privacy Policy, visit: www.fns.usda.gov/privacy-policy.

C. CODE OF FEDERAL REGULATIONS AND OTHER GOVERNMENT REQUIREMENTS

This grant will be awarded and administered in accordance with the following regulations 2 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR), Subtitle A, Chapter II. Any Federal laws, regulations, or USDA directives released after this RFA is posted will be implemented as instructed.

Government-wide Regulations

- 2 CFR Part 25: "Universal Identifier and System for Award Management"
- 2 CFR Part 170: "Reporting Sub-award and Executive Compensation Information"
- 2 CFR Part 175: "Award Term for Trafficking in Persons"
- 2 CFR Part 180: "OMB Guidelines to Agencies on Government-wide Debarment and Suspension (Non-Procurement)"
- 2 CFR Part 200: "Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards"
- 2 CFR Part 400: USDA's implementing regulation of 2 CFR Part 200 "Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards"
- 2 CFR Part 415: USDA "General Program Administrative Regulations"
- 2 CFR Part 416: USDA "General Program Administrative Regulations for Grants and Cooperative Agreements to State and Local Governments"
- 2 CFR Part 417: USDA "Non-Procurement Debarment and Suspension"
- 2 CFR Part 418 USDA "New Restrictions on Lobbying
- 2 CFR Part 421: USDA "Requirements for Drug-Free Workplace (Financial Assistance)"
- 41 U.S.C. Section 22 "Interest of Member of Congress"
- Freedom of Information Act (FOIA). Public access to Federal Financial Assistance records shall not be limited, except when such records must be kept confidential and would have been excepted from disclosure pursuant to the "Freedom of Information" regulation (5 U.S.C. 552)

General Terms and Conditions (T&Cs) of an award may be obtained electronically in advance of award. For a copy of T&Cs, please contact the Grant Officer at:

Carla Garcia, Grant Officer
Grants and Fiscal Policy Division
U.S. Department of Agriculture, FNS
E-mail *carla.garcia@usda.gov*

D. REPORTING REQUIREMENTS

Financial Reports

The award recipient will be required to enter the SF-425 (Financial Status Report) into the FNS Food Program Reporting System (FPRS) on a quarterly basis. In order to access FPRS, the award recipient must obtain USDA e-authentication certification and access to FPRS. For additional information on FPRS, visit: www.fprs.fns.usda.gov.

Performance Progress Report (PPR)

Grantees will be required to submit progress reports to FNS 30 days following the end of each quarterly period, using the FNS-908 PPR form that will be sent to grantees at the time of award. The reports should cover the preceding period of activity. A final report identifying the accomplishments and results of the project will be due 90 days after the end date of the award. For reference, a blank copy of the FNS-908 PPR form can be found here. **Please note:** the FNS-908 PPR form specific to this opportunity will be sent to grantees at the time of award. Use of the FNS-908 PPR form for progress reports is required.

The recipient will be responsible for managing and monitoring the progress of the grant project activities and performance. The grant terms and conditions will indicate the reporting schedule for submitting project performance/progress reports to FNS. Any additional reporting requirements will be identified in the award terms and conditions, including results of the grant project.

More detailed specifications for the quarterly progress report content and submissions will be included in the award agreement for the selected applicant. Any additional reporting requirements will be identified in the award terms and conditions, including results of the grant project.

Final Progress Report. A report of up to 25 pages must be submitted within 90 days of the expiration of the grant period. This report will be composed of a short Executive Summary and the following:

- A project description including a concise summary of the major accomplishments, the difficulties encountered, and the solutions developed to resolve the difficulties; and
- A discussion of the project results and lessons learned.

Copies of any deliverables, media or publicity releases/articles and links to materials on websites also should be included or papers resulting from the grant should be attached to the final report. All products should include an acknowledgement of the source of funding. The Federal awarding agency reserves a royalty-free, non-exclusive, and irrevocable license to reproduce, publish or otherwise use, and to authorize others to use, for Federal Government purposes, the copyright in any work developed under a grant, sub-grant, or contract under a grant or sub-grant or any rights of copyright to which a grantee, sub-grantee, or a contractor purchases ownership with grant support.

PART VII - FEDERAL AWARDING AGENCY CONTACTS

For questions regarding this solicitation, please contact the Grant Officer at:

Carla Garcia
Grant Officer, Grants and Fiscal Policy Division
U.S. Department of Agriculture, FNS
E-mail: *carla.garcia@usda.gov*

PART VIII - OTHER INFORMATION

Debriefing Requests

Non-selected applicants may request a debriefing to discuss the strengths and weaknesses of submitted proposals. This information may be useful when preparing future grant proposals. Additional information on debriefing requests will be forwarded to non-selected applicants. FNS reserves the right to provide this debriefing orally or in written format.

APPENDIX

RFA Budget Narrative Checklist

FOR GRANT APPLICANT USE ONLY. DO NOT RETURN THIS FORM WITH THE APPLICATION.

This checklist will assist you in completing the budget narrative portion of the application. Please review the checklist to ensure the items below are addressed in the budget narrative.

NOTE: The budget and budget narrative, as well as forms SF-424 and SF-424A must be in line with the proposal project description (statement of work) bona fide need. FNS reserves the right to request information not clearly addressed. All funding requests must be in whole dollars.

ITEM	YES	NO
Personnel		
Did you include all key employees paid for by this grant under this heading?		
Are employees of the applicant's organization identified by name and position title?		
Did you reflect percentage of time the Project Director will devote to the project in full-time equivalents (FTE)?		
Fringe Benefits		
Did you include your organization's fringe benefit amount along with the basis for the computation?		
Did you list the type of fringe benefits to be covered with Federal funds?		
Travel		
Are travel expenses itemized? For example, origination/destination points, number and purpose of trips, number of staff traveling, mode of transportation and cost of each trip.		
Are the Attendee Objectives and travel justifications included in the narrative?		

Is the basis for the lodging estimates identified in the budget? For example, include excerpt from travel regulations.		
Equipment		
Is the need for the equipment justified in the narrative?		
Are the types of equipment, unit costs, and the number of items to be purchased listed in the budget?		

ITEM	YES	NO
Is the basis for the cost per item or other basis of computation stated in the budget?		
Supplies		
Are the types of supplies, unit costs, and the number of items to be purchased reflected in the budget?		
Is the basis for the costs per item or other basis of computation stated?		
Contractual: (FNS reserves the right to request information on all contractual awards and associated costs after the contract is awarded.)		
Has the bona fide need been clearly identified in the project description to justify the cost for a contract or sub-grant expense(s) shown on the budget?		
A justification for all Sole-source contracts must be provided in the budget narrative prior to approving this identified cost.		
Other		
Consultant Services – Has the bona fide need been clearly identified in the project description to justify the cost shown on the budget? The following information must be provided in the justification: description of service, the consultant's name and an itemized list of all direct cost and fees, number of personnel including the position title (specialty and specialized qualifications as appropriate to the costs), number of estimated hours and hourly wages per hour, and all expenses and fees directly related to the proposed services to be rendered to the project.		
For all other line items listed under the "Other" heading – List all items to be covered within "Other" along with the methodology on how the applicant derived the costs to be charged to the program.		

Indirect Costs		
Has the applicant obtained a Negotiated Indirect Cost Rate Agreement (NICRA) from an Federal Agency? If yes, a copy of the most resent and signed negotiated rate agreement must be provided along with the application.		
2 CFR 200 allows any non-Federal entity (NFE) that has never received a negotiated indirect cost rate to charge a de Minimis rate of **10%** of modified total direct costs (MTDC), which the NFE may use indefinitely as a Federally-negotiated rate.		

PURPOSE

Recipients of Federal funds must maintain adequate accounting systems that meet the criteria outlined in 2 CFR §200.302 Standards for Financial and Program Management. The responses to this questionnaire are used to assist in the Food and Nutrition Service Agency's (FNS) evaluation of your accounting system to ensure the adequate, appropriate, and transparent use of Federal funds. Failure to comply with the criteria outlined in the regulations above may preclude your organization from receiving an award. This form applies to FNS' competitive and noncompetitive grant programs. Please submit this questionnaire along with your application package.

ORGANIZATION INFORMATION

Legal Organization Name:

Unique Entity ID (SAM):

FINANCIAL STABILITY AND QUALITY OF MANAGEMENT SYSTEMS

Requirement	Yes	No
1. Has your organization received a Federal award within the past 3 years?	☐	☐
2. Does your organization utilize accounting software to manage your financial records?	☐	☐
3. Does your accounting system identify the receipt and expenditure of program funds separately for each grant?	☐	☐
4. Does your organization have a dedicated individual responsible for monitoring organizational funds, such as an accountant or a finance manager?	☐	☐
5. Does your organization separate the duties for staff handling the approval of transactions and the recording and payment of funds?	☐	☐

6. Does your organization have the ability to specifically identify and allocate employee effort to an applicable program?	☐	☐
7. Does your organization have a property /inventory management system in place to track location and value of equipment purchased under the award?	☐	☐

AUDIT REPORTS AND FINDINGS

Requirement	Yes	No
1. Has your organization been audited within the last 5 fiscal years? ***(If the answer is "Yes" and this report was issued under the Single Audit Act please note this in the box below marked "Additional Information" and if not issued under the "*****Single Audit Act", *please attach a copy or provide a link to the audit report in the Hyperlink space below).***	☐	☐
2. If your organization has been audited within the last 5 fiscal years, was there a "Qualified Opinion" or an "Adverse Opinion"?	☐	☐
3. If your organization has been audited within the last 5 fiscal years, was there a "Material Weakness" disclosed?	☐	☐
4. If your organization has been audited within the last 5 fiscal years, was there a "Significant Deficiency" disclosed?	☐	☐

Hyperlink (if available):	

Additional information including expanding on responses in previous sections:

APPLICANT CERTIFICATION

I certify that the above information is complete and correct to the best of my knowledge.

Signature of Authorized Representative | Date

Name of Authorized Representative: ______________________

Phone Number: ______________________

Email: ______________________

FNS-908 Performance Progress Report (PPR) – For Reference Only

The following pages contain screenshots of the PPR form that grantees are required to use for progress and final reports submitted to FNS. Upon award, a PPR PDF form, customized for the specific FNS program, will be included in award packages.

FNS-908 Performance Progress Report (PPR) – For Reference Only

Print | Submit by Email

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
Food and Nutrition Service

PERFORMANCE PROGRESS REPORT

The public burden statement: According to the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, an agency may not conduct or sponsor, and a person is not required to respond to, a collection of information unless it displays a valid OMB control number. The valid OMB control number for this information collection is 0584-0512. The time required to complete this information collection is estimated to average 3 hours per response, including the time for reviewing instructions, searching existing data sources, gathering and maintaining the data needed, and completing and reviewing the collection of in formation. Send comments regarding this burden estimate or any other aspect of this collection of information, including suggestions for reducing this burden, to: U.S. Department of Agriculture, Food and Nutrition Services, Office of Policy Support, 3101 Park Center Drive, Room 1014, Alexandria, VA 22302, ATTN: PRA (0584 - 0512*). Do not return the completed form to this address.

1. Recipient Organization

a. Organization Name:

b. Street Address:

City: State: Zip:

2. Program Information:

Program Area:

Federal Fiscal Year of Award:

Program:

Tag:

3. Primary POC:

a. First Name: Last Name: b. Title:

c. Telephone (Area Code & Number): d. Email Address:

4. Federal Award Identification Number (FAIN):

5. Type of Report (Select One):

Quarterly Semi-Annual Final

Reporting Fiscal Year: Period:

Original/Revision:

6. Federal Grant Agreement Number:

7. Additional POC (Optional)

a. First Name: Last Name: b. Title:

c. Telephone (Area Code & Number): d. Email Address:

8. Report Submitted By:

a. First Name: Last Name: b. Title:

9. Certification

I certify by checking this box that, to the best of my knowledge and belief, this report is correct and complete for performance of activities set forth in the award documents.

10. Date Report Submitted:

Form FNS-908
Version Number: 1.0 (5-19)

SBU

Electronic Form Version Designed in Adobe AEM 6.4 Version

Program Management Information

1. Progress Summary

Provide summary of progress this reporting period, highlighting your greatest achievements and challenges to date in this reporting period. For challenges, how did you resolve or overcome them? (Max 2000 characters):

2. Personnel Information

a. Number of FTEs: b. Were there any changes in key personnel? ☐ Yes ☐ No

c. If yes, please describe the changes in key personnel, including the individual leaving/joining the project as well as the name and contact information (email address, phone number, and name of organization) of the individual. Note: This information does not serve as a formal request to approve the change in key personnel. This request must be forwarded to the Grants Officer in a separate request (Max 2000 Characters):

3. Projected Amendments (Cost and No-Cost)

a. Number of amendments projected this upcoming quarter?

b. Do the projected amendment(s) require FNS approval? ☐ Yes ☐ No

c. Please describe the type of amendment(s) projected and justification for each. Note: This information does not serve as a formal request to approve amendments. This request must be forwarded to the Grants Officer in a separate request (Max 2000 characters:):

4. Expenditures/Purchases:

a. Were there any significant expenditures or purchases, including any contracts entered during this reporting period? ☐ Yes ☐ No

b. If so, please describe (Max 2000 Characters):

5. Deviations (Changes this quarter outside of the agreed upon budget, timeline, or scope):

a. Have there been any deviations? ☐ Yes ☐ No b. Type: ☐ Budget ☐ Timeline ☐ Scope ☐ Other

c. Describe any deviation(s), including a justification and impacts to budget/timeline (Max 2000 characters):

d. Please describe proposed activities to mitigate the impact of the deviation(s) (Max 2000 characters):

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Program Management Information (Continued)

6. Upcoming Activities and Anticipated Changes

a. Please describe activities planned for next quarter (Max 2000 Characters):

b. Do you anticipate any changes in your project timeline, activities or cost? Yes No

c. If yes, please explain the anticipated changes (Max 2000 Characters):

7. Final Reporting Summary (Final Reporting Period Only)

a. Are all goals and objectives completed at this time? Yes No

b. If no to answer 7a, briefly describe the goals and objectives that were not completed and why they were not completed (Max 2000 Characters):

c. Was the project budget sufficient for meeting the project goals? Yes No

d. If no to answer 7c, briefly describe why the budget was insufficient for meeting the project goals (Max 2000 Characters):

8. Additional Comments (Max 2000 Characters)

Page 3

__Instructions__: Complete this section by adding all Activities and Indicators as listed on your submitted proposal for each listed objective. For each reporting period, update these Activities/ Indicators with the most up to date information. **Note:** Objectives will be added by FNS and should not be altered. Additionally, note that indicator values vary by Indicator Type selected.

Program Activities

Objective 1

	Activity	Type	Anticipated Completion Date	Actual Completion Date	Optional		
					Location	Beneficiaries/ Audience	Topic (if training)
- + 1							

	Indicator Description	Indicator Type	Target	Actual (Cumulative)	Comments
- + 1					

Add Objective | Remove Objective

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