



## USDA Farm to School Grant Program Fiscal Year (FY) 2025 | Frequently Asked Questions

Please refer to the request for applications (RFA) for more detailed information.

- [Implementation RFA \(click here\)](#)
- [State Agency RFA \(click here\)](#)
- [Turnkey RFA \(click here\)](#)

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## GENERAL

### *Q: How is “local” defined for the Farm to School Grant Program?*

A: “Local” is left to each applicant to define. Since USDA expects applicants to have varying definitions of “local” and “regional” specific to individual contexts, please make sure to clearly define your definition of “local” and “regional” in your grant application.

### *Q: Does my Implementation or State Agency Grant proposal have to include local sourcing-related activities?*

A: Yes, this is a required component of the objectives for both RFAs. This aligns with the overall purpose of the program to improve access to local foods in eligible schools. A strong proposal will address how the proposed project supports or aligns with local sourcing efforts in USDA CNPs.

### *Q: How many projects can I lead or participate in?*

A: Applicants can only submit one application across the three FY 2025 Patrick Leahy Farm to School Grant solicitations (i.e. Implementation, Turnkey or State Agency). If multiple packages are submitted through Grants.gov by the same applicant to more than one FY 2025 Patrick Leahy Farm to School Grant solicitations ALL submissions will be removed from further consideration. In other words, you may be listed as a key partner on more than one application, but you may only apply as a lead applicant for one of the three solicitations.

### *Q: Will my application be rejected if it exceeds the page limit?*

A: Applications will not be removed from consideration because of length; however, any information contained on pages beyond the limit will not be considered a part of the application, even if the text is a continuation of information from the previous page. Additionally, letters of commitment and resumes have a one-page limit, therefore only the information contained on the first page of each letter and resume will be considered. To guarantee that all sections of your application are scored, please abide carefully by the page limits listed in the RFA.

### *Q: Is the match requirement still applicable for Farm to School Grant proposals between \$100,000 and \$500,000?*

A: Yes. A 25 percent cash or in-kind funding match is required to receive all Farm to School Grant awards regardless of the requested funding level and cannot be waived for any applicant.

## ELIGIBILITY

### *Q: What are the eligibility requirements for Farm to School Grants?*

A: Please see Section 3.0 of each individual RFA for eligibility requirements specific to that RFA.

### *Q: Is an individual school eligible to apply?*

A: Individual schools are eligible to apply to either the Implementation Grant or Turnkey Grant.

### *Q: My school district was awarded a Farm to School Implementation Grant in, FY 2022, FY 2023, or FY 2024. Is our individual school still eligible to apply for a Farm to School Implementation Grant for FY 2025?*

A: No, the individual school is not eligible to apply for an Implementation Grant in the FY 2025 cycle. See Section 3.1.2 of the Implementation RFA for more detail.

*Q: Are local government agencies (such as city and county government agencies) eligible for State Agency Grants?*

A: No. Local government agencies, such as city and county government agencies, are not eligible to apply to the State Agency grant but may apply to either the Implementation or Turnkey Grant. Any other entity type applying to the State Agency Grant will have their application removed from consideration.

*Q: Are institutions operating the CACFP required to have non-profit status to be eligible?*

A: No, this is not required. For-profit institutions participating in the **CACFP** are eligible to apply, but only for projects implemented at facilities or sites participating in **CACFP**.

*Q: Our State agency is interested in applying for a Farm to School grant, but do not administer any CNPs. Are we eligible?*

A: All State agencies are eligible for the State Agency Grant. However, State agencies that **do not administer** CNPs are required to partner with a CNP-administering State agency and must include a letter of commitment from the CNP-administering agency. No other entity type is eligible for the State Agency Grant.

*Q: Are State commodity commissions eligible?*

A: Yes. For the purposes of the State Agency RFA, State agencies are any statewide government agency that administers or works in partnership with the agency that administers the Federal Child Nutrition Programs (e.g., Office of Public Instruction, Department of Education, Department of Agriculture, Department of Health, etc.). Therefore, State commodity commissions may be considered State agencies and eligible to apply for a Farm to School grant. Note that State agencies which do not administer a CNP must include a letter of commitment from the CNP-administering State agency. See Section 3.1 of the State Agency Grant RFA for more information.

*Q: Are entities located in the American territories eligible?*

A: Entities located in the U.S. Virgin Islands, Puerto Rico, and Guam are eligible to apply, given their participation in NSLP and SBP. Entities located in Northern Mariana Islands, American Samoa, and the Freely Associated States (Federated States of Micronesia, Republic of Palau, and Republic of Marshall Islands) are **ineligible** for this funding opportunity because they receive a Nutrition Assistance Program block grant.

*Q: We have some agricultural and farming activities already in place at our school that we'd like to expand, but we do not call them farm to school, nor have we received farm to school funding before. Can we include these activities in our application?*

A: There is no requirement related to what you call your programs. Note that FNS cannot provide support on whether specific activities are eligible, as it may create an unfair advantage. Applicants should carefully review eligibility requirements in Section 3.0 of the corresponding RFA for complete eligibility requirements.

*Q: Can produce grown in a school garden be used in school meals?*

A: School garden-related activities are allowable in the Farm to School Grant Program. While federal regulations allow for the use of school garden grown produce in school meals, schools must comply with all federal, State, and local laws and regulations and are encouraged to connect with State and local officials for guidance. For assistance reaching the appropriate point of contact in your State, please visit the [Contacts](#) page of the FNS website. Additionally, the [School Gardens factsheet](#) includes guidance for serving school garden produce in meals.

*Q: My organization utilizes a regional farm to school institute model to provide resources such as information on farm to school program development, practitioner education and training, and ongoing school year coaching and technical assistance to entities such as school districts. Is this activity eligible?*

A: Activities supporting regional farm to school institutes are permissible under the Implementation and State Agency Grants if proposed activities align with the required objective and are not otherwise unallowable. Please note that if a proposal intends to target specific school(s) or sites, those schools or sites discussed in the project proposal as benefiting from the project must be eligible as defined in the corresponding RFA.

*Q: I'm trying to decide between an Implementation or Turnkey Grant. Which should I apply for?*

A: The Implementation Grant is designed to support the required objective – improve access to local foods in eligible CNP sites through comprehensive farm to school programming that includes local sourcing and agricultural education efforts. Applicants propose their own project design but must clearly indicate in their proposal narrative how proposed activities are aligned with this required objective. Applicants applying to the Turnkey Grant agree to conduct one of three projects with specific activities defined by FNS. The Action Planning project under the Turnkey Grant focuses on beginning farm to school activities and culminates in the development of a written Farm to School Action Plan for submission to FNS at the end of the period of performance. The Agricultural Education project under the Turnkey Grant focuses on connecting students with their food and/or preparing them for careers in agriculture through thoughtful and relevant agricultural education. The Edible Garden Project under the Turnkey Grant focuses on developing or improving food-producing gardens based at CNP sites. Please use the Decision Document listed under “related documents” in Grants.gov for a breakdown of the differences between the grants.

*Q: Are any individual CACFP/SFSP operating sites eligible to apply for a grant?*

A: The lead applicant for the grant must be the organization with ultimate administrative and financial responsibility for Program operations.

*Q: Through my proposed project, I would like to work with an agricultural producer who does not meet the small- and medium-sized guidance outlined in the RFA. Is this allowable?*

A: Agricultural producers that are key partners of the grant project do not have to conform to the small- and medium-sized guidance outlined in Section 3.0 of the RFA. However, they are not eligible as a lead applicant unless you meet the size requirements.

*Q: My institution of higher learning or extension program is considered a non-profit 501(c); can I apply as a non-profit?*

A: No, **institutions of higher education or learning are not eligible to apply as a non-profit**, however they can be a key partner.

*Q: My institution of higher learning or cooperative extension program is considered a State or local agency; can I apply as a State or local agency?*

A: No, because the RFAs explicitly exclude institutions of higher learning, however you can be a key partner.

*Q: Are Tribal Colleges eligible for a farm to school grant?*

A: No, Indian Tribal Colleges are ineligible for any of the FY2025 grant opportunities because they are a higher education institution. A Tribal College can be a key partner.

*Q: We are applying now to participate in the NSLP or SBP but don't currently participate. Can we still apply for the grant program since we will be participating next year?*

A: No. Applicants must be eligible at the time that the application is submitted.

*Q: I don't have my non-profit status yet. I've applied and I expect to get it soon. Can I still apply as a non-profit?*

A: No, you must be a designated 501(c) organization at the time of application and include a copy of the 501(c) documentation you received from the IRS as an attachment in your submission.

*Q: Can we choose our own evaluation indicators?*

A: The Activities/Indicators Tracker tables in the RFA include the required indicators for each grant type. Grantees will be required to report on the included indicators and may propose additional indicators that are relevant and meaningful to their project activities.

## **PRIORITIES**

*Q: What do I need to submit to earn priority points?*

A: Applicants to the Turnkey Grant and Implementation Grant should fill out the checklist included in Appendix B of the RFA, entitled "Optional Priority Group Declaration Checklist (Bonus Points)" and include the completed document with the Project Narrative. Applicants should include the Priority Declaration Checklist as its own page or as a separate attachment to ensure full credit. The Priority Group Declaration Checklist does not count towards the narrative page limit. Applicants that do not complete the Priority Group Declaration Checklist will not be eligible for these bonus points. If USDA is unable to verify information declared on the Priority Group Declaration Checklist, the applicant will not be eligible to receive bonus points. Priority points are not available in the State Agency Grant.

*Q: I indicated on the Farm to School Coversheet that my organization is an ITO. Will I receive priority points?*

A: Applicants, regardless of entity type, will not receive priority points if they do not complete the priority declaration checklist and include it with their application. All ITO applicants are eligible

for at least seven priority points but must include a completed priority declaration checklist to receive them.

*Q: My organization is not an Indian Tribal Organization, but my proposal serves Native communities. Will my application be considered as meeting the Indian Tribal Organization or Alaska Native Corporation priority?*

A: If you would like to be considered for priority points related to serving a Native community, but your organization is not an ITO or ANC your organization must be an eligible entity where the leader or majority of the board, and/or staff are American Indians and Alaska Natives, and the proposed activities serve Native American communities in order to be considered for priority points. An applicant must submit the priority declaration checklist to be eligible for bonus points.

## PARTNERSHIPS AND REQUIRED DOCUMENTATION

*Q: Am I required to submit three letters of commitment?*

A: Applicants must submit at least one letter of commitment and may submit no more than three letters. Submitting zero letters demonstrates a lack of partnerships, which is evaluated in the Project Narrative section of the application review.

*Q: Does a letter of commitment from the CNP-administering State agency count toward the three-document limit for letters of commitment?*

A: Yes, this letter counts toward the three-document limit. A letter of commitment from a CNP operator or CNP-administering State agency is required for any applicant (such as a non-profit or local agency) that is not a CNP operator or an administering State agency. This helps ensure that projects reach eligible CNP sites.

*Q: Our school district operates NSLP. Do we need to submit a CNP Operator letter?*

A: Applicants who operate NSLP, CACFP, SFSP, and/or SBP do not need to submit a CNP Operator letter with their application. However, the applicant should clearly indicate which CNP program(s) they operate in their application materials. Note that if FNS cannot confirm the applicant's participation in NSLP, CACFP, SFSP, and/or SBP, the applicant will be deemed ineligible and removed from consideration.

*Q: We are a non-profit applying for an Implementation Grant. Do we need to have a school or school district partner in order to apply?*

A: Non-profit applicants that **do not operate** the NSLP, CACFP, SFSP, and/or SBP must include at least one letter of commitment from a school, child care institution, or summer institution operating the NSLP, CACFP, SFSP, and/or SBP. If specific partners operating one or more CNP(s) will not be identified until the project is awarded (for example, if the applicant intends to identify specific partners through an application process), the applicant can include a letter of commitment from a State Agency administering NSLP, CACFP, SFSP, and/or SBP.

If a non-profit applicant operates a CNP, they should select "eligible school," "eligible CACFP institution," or "eligible SFSP sponsor," as appropriate, on the application coversheet rather than

selecting “non-profit entity,” and they are not required to include non-profit documentation from the IRS or a letter of commitment from another entity operating NSLP, CACFP, SFSP, and/or SBP.

*Q: Can I submit a letter of support from one or more U.S. Congressperson?*

A: FNS does not require Congressional letters of support, and such letters do not carry additional weight during the evaluation process. Congressional letters of support included with the application package submitted in Grants.gov count towards the three-document limit on letters of commitment as described in the RFA. Congressional letters of support submitted outside of Grants.gov will not be included as a component of the applicant’s official submission and will not be considered during the panel review.

*Q: As a school food authority, can we apply with other schools in our area?*

A: Yes, in addition to individual submissions, USDA will consider submissions where a USDA investment might impact multiple districts and thus a broader geographic range than any one district might cover. This could take the form of a “multi-district” submission with one lead district that is collaborating with multiple districts to conduct a comprehensive regional or multi-district planning process. In this case, the lead district is the one that submits the proposal and, if awarded, is ultimately responsible for the grant deliverables and requirements.

*Q: Can I contract with or subgrant to a partner or another entity?*

A: Yes. Partners essential to the proposed project that may require funding from USDA to participate can be included in applicant budgets as a subgrantee or line-item contractor. Justification must be provided for any sole-source contracts.

*Q: My project will be working with three SFSP sponsors. How do I enter information for each sponsor on the Coversheet?*

A: After entering the first sponsor’s information in the form fields in the Child Nutrition Program Information section, click the “Next” button on the right if using the PDF version of the form or “Add CNP Operator” if using the webform.

*Q: As a non-profit applying for a Farm to School Grant, is an audited financial statement required?*

A: No, but if your organization has been audited within the last five years, you must include either a link to your audit report on the FNS-906 or a copy of the audit report as a PDF submitted with your application.

*Q: My non-profit has never been audited; are we eligible to apply as the lead organization?*

A: Grant applicants are not required to have received an audit prior to being selected for a USDA Farm to School Grant. However, under Federal audit requirements, recipient institutions that expend \$500,000 or more per year in Federal funds must have a single or program-specific audit for that year.

*Q: Can I attach any documentation in addition to what is required by the RFA?*

A: No, there are no optional attachments permitted with the application.



## FREE OR REDUCED PRICE LUNCH CALCULATIONS

*Q: How will information on the free or reduced price percentage be collected?*

A: In order to ensure the Farm to School Grant Program meets its purpose and priorities, applicants should complete the free or reduced price eligibility fields in the Child Nutrition Program Information section of the FY 2025 Farm to School Grant Program Coversheet (found on [Grants.gov](https://www.grants.gov)).

*Q: We're only working with select schools in our district. How do I submit the free or reduced price rate for only those schools?*

A: Enter each school's information separately in the FY 2025 Farm to School Grant Program Coversheet. After entering the first school's information in the form fields in the Child Nutrition Program Information section, click the "Next" button on the right if using the PDF version of the form or "Add CNP Operator" if using the webform.

*Q: Our district participated in the Community Eligibility Provision (CEP) last year. How do we calculate the free or reduced price rate?*

A: You may use the Identified Student Percentage (which is all direct certification [DC] and categorically eligible students) x 1.6 in place of free or reduced price percentages for CEP schools.

*Q: Our school has a free or reduced price rate below 40 percent. Are we eligible to apply?*

A: Yes, your school is eligible to apply regardless of your free or reduced price percentage. While projects that serve a high proportion of children who are eligible for free or reduced price meals are eligible for bonus points, all proposals will be scored against the criteria set forth in the RFA, and the highest scoring applications will be recommended to the Selection Official for funding. The Selection Official may give priority consideration to projects that serve a high proportion of children who are eligible for free or reduced price meals, among other priorities.

*Q: I am applying to an Implementation or State Agency Grant, but don't know specifically with which schools I will be working. How do I fill out the coversheet?*

A: In the Child Nutrition Program Information section, please provide a brief explanation of how you plan to partner with schools (e.g., our project will recruit 16 schools to participate in a statewide farm to school network, or, our project will award subgrants to three large districts in our state). In addition to providing a description, complete as much information as possible for the reach, free or reduced priced eligibility, and demographics as is available and relevant to your intended reach on page three of the Coversheet.

If a State Agency or Implementation applicant does not operate the NSLP, CACFP, SFSP, and/or the SBP, the applicant must include at least one letter of commitment from a CNP site or sponsor operating the NSLP, CACFP, SFSP, and/or SBP, or from a State agency administering NSLP, CACFP, SFSP, and/or the SBP.



## MATCHING FUNDS

*Q: Can matching funds be used as an in-kind contribution for this project and another federal grant?*

A: No. These contributions cannot satisfy a cost sharing or matching requirement for this grant program if they are used towards satisfying a match requirement under any other Federal grant agreement.

*Q: What is a cash contribution?*

A: A cash contribution means the recipient's cash outlay, including the outlay of money contributed to the recipient by non-Federal third parties. Some examples of cash contributions are:

- The salary and fringe benefits of the grantee or third-party employees in proportion to their efforts under a project.
- The grantee's cost to purchase supplies, equipment, or services to be used under a project.

*Q: Do I need all the required matching resources secured prior to issuing the award or submission of application?*

A: Yes, in order for the award to be issued, the grantee must meet the requirement of 25 percent matching by providing a match letter(s) showing confirmation that they have secured the matching funds and that they will be *available* during the grant period. The match funds do not need to be *in hand* at the time of submission, but they must be confirmed as secured for the project at the time of application. In addition, documentation of match must be maintained for audit or review of the project.

*Q: Can registration fees collected from participants attending a USDA-funded training count towards the match?*

A: No, these monies would be considered federal funds and would not count.

*Q: Can I use Federal food service funds as a match for this grant program?*

A: No. Federal funds of any type cannot be used as match.

*Q: Can I use a la carte sales as a match for my proposal?*

A: No. In accordance with 7 CFR Part 210.14(a), school food authorities are required to maintain a non-profit food service. Revenues, including a la carte sales, received by the non-profit school food service are to be used for the operation or improvement of such food services, and therefore, funds in the nonprofit school food service account take on a federal identity and cannot be used as match.

*Q: Is Cooperative Extension funding eligible to fulfill the match requirement?*

A: Cooperative Extension Service is defined by USDA National Institutes of Food and Agriculture as, "a nationwide, non-credit educational network that addresses public needs by providing non-formal higher education and learning activities to farmers, ranchers, communities, youth, and families throughout the nation." Because of this definition and because institutions of higher learning are deemed ineligible to apply for these grants, cooperative extension funding from a **Federal source** is not an allowable match for this grant. However, **non-federal** cooperative extension funds may be used

towards a match. The applicant should include match letters for each cash and/or in-kind resource.

*Q: Can Indian Self-Determination and Education Assistance Act funds be used to fulfill the non-federal match requirement?*

A: Funds provided under The Indian Self-Determination and Education Assistance Act (25 U.S.C. 5322) may be used to fulfill the non-federal match requirement of the Patrick Leahy Farm to School Grant Program, provided they are used in accordance with their intended purpose and align with the proposed project.

*Q: I have cash in hand for my project right now. Can it count toward the match since I'll spend it on the same project I'm proposing to USDA?*

A: Yes, however the match must be spent during the same time period as the proposed project. Any cash match expended before the start of the USDA grant period will not count toward the match.

Similarly, if the applicant intends to use future volunteer hours allocated against the project during the project period, please include a letter of intent from the lead official of the organization providing the volunteer(s).

The total grant budget submitted in the grant application must reflect the requirement of a split of 75 percent Federal and 25 percent non-Federal funds to support the project. If, during the grant period, the 25 percent match is not met, the grantee's Federal funds will be adjusted to ensure the Federal grant funds account for only 75 percent of the total project budget. Please note that previous volunteer work hours cannot be counted towards the in-kind match, as matching funds must be allocated towards the project during the period of performance.

*Q: Does time spent cultivating relationships with growers, coordinating purchases, and developing menu plans count towards an in-kind match?*

A: Yes, work performed by staff and volunteers on the proposed farm to school project may be used to satisfy the matching contribution.

*Q: Is the use of facilities an allowable source of matching funds? For example, our school would like to host trainings and meetings in our gymnasium. If we waive the rental fee for the meeting space, can this count towards the match?*

A: Yes; the use of a facility may be used as a match for this grant project. You may only charge "market rate" for the rent of the facility.

Please note, the value of buildings, land, and/or property are unallowable costs for the Farm to School Grant, and therefore unallowable as a source of matching funds. For example, if the typical rental fee is \$200 per event, the waived rental fee be used as a match; however, the property value of the facility is not permitted as a match.

*Q: Can indirect costs count towards our match?*

A: Unrecovered Indirect costs may be used to satisfy the match component of the grant project with prior approval of the federal agency. Your organization must have a negotiated indirect cost rate, you may not use de-minimis indirect for your match.

*Q: My organization is the applicant and is providing match. Does my organization need to provide a letter documenting the match?*

A: Yes. All sources of match, including match from the applicant, must be documented with a letter from the match-providing entity. Match letters must include the source of matching funds and specific dollar amount. This information must also be the same as amounts described in the official budget materials.

*Q: How do I calculate the necessary match for my project?*

A: You must calculate match as a percentage of the total project cost. For example:

Federal Grant Request: \$50,000

Match Amount: \$16,667

Total Project Cost: \$66,667

Match Percent: 25 percent (match ÷ total project cost)

USDA Percent: 75 percent (grant request ÷ total project cost)

If you know how much Federal funding you would like to request, you can identify how much non-Federal match you must provide by dividing your grant request by 0.75 to find the total project cost (since the Federal request will be 75% of the total project cost), then subtracting your Federal grant request. For example:

$(\$100,000 \text{ Federal Request} \div 0.75) - \$100,000 \text{ Federal Request} = \$33,334 \text{ Match Contribution}$

Note that the match contribution in the example above is rounded up from the actual amount of \$33,333.33. All request amounts must be in whole dollars. If you rounded down to \$33,333 in this case, the match contribution would be 24.99%, would not meet the 25% requirement, and your application would be removed. [rounding up for the match requirement is prohibited]

*Q: Are there any specific mistakes to avoid when calculating the required match amount?*

A: The Farm to School Grant Program has received applications requesting \$100,000 in Federal funds with a proposed \$25,000 match. The total project cost in this case is \$125,000, so \$25,000 would be a 20% match and the application would be removed from consideration. **If you request \$100,000 with a \$25,000 match, your application will be removed** as \$25,000 is not a sufficient match for that request amount.

## BUDGET

*Q: Is a vehicle an allowable expenditure?*

A: No, purchasing vehicles with grant funds is not an allowable cost. However, applicants can consider leasing a vehicle or purchasing a trailer/attachment. Trailers and/or attachments are not permitted to be self-propelling (i.e., have an engine).

*Q: Can I use grant funds to purchase food?*

A: No more than 10 percent of the federal share of grant funds may be used for food purchases in the grant budget. Food purchases should be limited to educational purposes, including but not limited to farm to school sample tables, taste tests, or promotional use. Food costs related to conducting a test run of a new local or regional product are also deemed an appropriate use of funds, as long as no more than 10 percent of the federal share of the grant contributes to this cost. Grant funds may not be used to purchase food for meals.

*Q: Do seeds/plants and livestock fall under the food purchases category?*

A: No, seeds and livestock are supplies.

*Q: Is construction an allowable cost?*

A: No, with the specific exception of greenhouses, construction is not an allowable cost. Replacing old equipment in a school cafeteria is considered a non-construction project and therefore is an allowable cost. Erecting a building or making substantial changes to the footprint of a building would be considered a construction project and therefore is not an allowable cost.

*Q: Is equipment that is used for multiple projects an allowable cost?*

A: If purchased equipment or supplies are not fully dedicated to the grant project objective, including beyond the grant period end date, the applicant must determine what percentage of the good's time or space will be dedicated to project activities. This percentage must then be applied to the value of the good to determine the amount of Federal funds that can be used to purchase said good.

For example:

Purchase of a large walk-in freezer that will store local foods for CNP site(s) but will also store food for the community food pantry.

- Walk-in freezer total cost: \$12,000
- 25 percent of freezer space used to store food that will be served in CNP site(s)
- $\$12,000 \times 25 \text{ percent} = \$3,000$  (amount of Federal funds that can be used to make this purchase)

*Q: We have several organizations that will be participate and receive funds. How do I determine where to input salary costs in the SF 424A?*

A: Essentially, salaries for personnel that are employed by the applicant would go on the personnel line and the rest would go under the contractual section (assuming they are contractors). Your budget narrative may include more detailed information on personnel, salaries, and contract related costs.

*Q: I am applying for the State Agency Grant. I would like to offer small travel stipends or reimbursements to training participants. May I include this in the budget?*

A: Yes. Stipends may be an allowable expense, but the applicant should describe how they will be used and how the amount was determined.

*Q: Is there a grantee gathering requirement?*

A: No. However, applicants are required to attend at least one national or regional-level networking and training event of your choice. You will need to add this expense into your budget and FNS encourages applicants to add it to the Federal portion of the budget.

*Q: How do we budget for the required national or regional-level networking and training event if we have not identified a specific event by the application deadline?*

A: You may include estimates for travel, such as transportation, lodging, and registration fee, in the budget narrative along with justifications for how the estimates were derived. If you have not identified a specific event in your application, you should include information in your narrative explaining how you will identify an appropriate event.

*Q: Am I required to use the budget narrative template provided in the RFA?*

A: No. However, it is strongly encouraged to use the provided budget narrative template. At a minimum, if the template is not used the applicant's submission must contain the same information.

*Q: Which sections of the SF-424A need to be completed?*

A: On the first page, Section A, your full federal request should be listed in Box 1e, and your full match amount in Box 2f. On the second page, Section B, your full federal request should be listed in Column 1, broken out by budget/cost category. Your full match amount should be listed in Column 2, also broken out by budget category. By "full federal request," that means that if you are applying for a two-year grant, the full two-year budget should be included on this form. You do not need to complete Sections C, D, E, or F of the SF-424A.

## **APPLICATION**

*Q: What support will USDA be able to offer applicants during the application process?*

A: USDA is happy to field any general inquiries that grantees may have regarding the application process. However, USDA is unable to offer specific guidance on how to craft, structure, or write one's proposal. In an effort to provide unbiased support to all those interested in the funding opportunity, USDA will refrain from providing advice that cannot otherwise be obtained through the resources that have been made publicly available via the [Farm to School Grant webpage](#). On November 5 at 2:00pm ET and November 6 at 2:00pm ET, USDA hosted two RFA webinars. You can register in advance of the webinars, and view recordings of those webinars after the live event, on the [Farm to School Grant webpage](#). Questions should be sent to the grant officer noted in the RFA.

*Q: What happens if I forget to include one of the documents in my Grants.gov application?*

A: The only means of making a correction or adding to a submitted Grants.gov application is re-submitting a new, complete application prior to the deadline. USDA will review the most recent submitted application from your organization (e.g., if an application is submitted on Tuesday without a vital attachment, and then resubmitted on Friday with the attachment, USDA will only review the Friday submission). Changes or additions to the application after the submission deadline will not be accepted.

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

A: 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 (e.g., ! @ # \$ % ^ & \* - '). This includes periods (.) and spacing followed by a dash in the file. To separate words in naming a file, use underscore (\_). For example, Budget\_Narrative.pdf. Additional information can be found at <https://www.grants.gov/applicants/applicant-faqs#attachments>. FNS strongly encourages applicants to use descriptive filenames such as Proposal\_Narrative.pdf or CommitmentLetter.pdf.

*Q: Our organization does not lobby. How should we complete the form SF-LLL?*

A: Grants.gov will not let you submit the package without this form. If you do not lobby, enter your information in Box 4, FNS's information in Boxes 6 and 7, and then enter "We do not lobby" in the first required field of Box 10 and "not applicable" in all the other required fields in Box 10, and then your electronic signature in Box 11.

*Q: If I have problems with Grants.gov, will USDA staff help me submit?*

A: No, USDA will not provide applicants technical assistance with the Grants.gov system. The Grants.gov technical support center can be reached at 800-518-4726 or [support@grants.gov](mailto:support@grants.gov). For additional Grants.gov training resources, including video tutorials, visit: <https://www.grants.gov/applicants/applicant-training.html>.

*Q: I have an active UEI, but I am not able to apply. How do I complete the registration process?*

A: Your organization must register in SAM.gov to apply for Federal grants. Obtaining a UEI does not automatically register your organization in SAM.gov. You must obtain and register your UEI with SAM.gov. Please use the link below for help and/or reach out to SAM.gov for assistance. [GSAFSD Tier 0 Knowledge Base - What's the difference between signing up and registering?](#)

*Q: Where can I get more help if I still have questions about the Farm to School Program or application?*

A: The USDA Farm to School Team strongly recommends that you read the entire Farm to School Grant RFA before submitting questions. If you still have questions after reading the RFA, you can send your question to the applicable Grant Officer Jean Bingham, [Jean.bingham@usda.gov](mailto:Jean.bingham@usda.gov) with a cc to the [SM.FN.FarmToSchool@usda.gov](mailto:SM.FN.FarmToSchool@usda.gov).