



United States Department of Agriculture

Food and Nutrition Service

Team Nutrition E-STAR Program Training Grant: Fiscal Year 2019 Request for Applications

(Enhanced School Nutrition Strategies, Training, Action Plans, and Resources)

Catalog for Federal Domestic Assistance Number (CFDA): 10.574

DATES:

Release Date: March 5, 2019

Letter of Intent Due Date: April 15, 2019

Application Due Date: 11:59 PM, Eastern Time (ET), June 2, 2019

Anticipated Award Date: September 30, 2019



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IMPORTANT NOTICE

On December 31, 2017, **Grants.gov officially retired the legacy .PDF application package** as a method to apply for a Federal grant. This changed the way many Grants.gov users completed and submitted their grant applications.

For information on Workspace application process, visit:
<https://grants.gov/web/grants/applicants/workspace-overview.html>

APPLICATION CHECKLIST

This application checklist provides a list of the required documents; however FNS expects that applicants will read the entire Request for Applications prior to the submission of their application.

In order to apply, **at least four weeks** prior to submission, you must have:

- ☐ Obtained a Dun and Bradstreet Data Universal Numbering System (DUNS) number;
- ☐ Registered the DUNS number into the System for Award Management (SAM); and,
- ☐ Registered in Grants.gov.

When **preparing your application**, ensure:

- ☐ Your application format and narrative meet the requirements included in Section IV “Application and Submission Information,” including page limits, priorities outlined in Section IV, and all necessary attachments.

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

- ☐ All key staff who are paid by this grant.
- ☐ The percentage of time the project director will devote to the project in full-time equivalents.
- ☐ Your organization’s fringe benefit amount along with the basis for the computation.
- ☐ The type of fringe benefits to be covered with Federal funds.
- ☐ Itemized travel expenses (including type of travel), travel justifications, and basis for lodging estimates.
- ☐ Types of equipment and supplies, justifications, and estimates, ensuring that the budget is in line with the project description.
- ☐ Information for all contracts and justification for any sole-source contracts.
- ☐ Justification, description and itemized list of all consultant services.
- ☐ Indirect cost information (either a copy of a Negotiated Indirect Cost Rate Agreement (NICRA) or if no agreement exists, the basis of the indirect costs requested). If none requested, please indicate this in the budget narrative.

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-LLL – [Disclosure of Lobbying Activities](#)
- ☐ FNS-906 – Grant Program Accounting System & Financial Capability Questionnaire (in Attachment D)
- ☐ Negotiated Indirect Cost Rate Agreement (PDF - Upload using the “Add Attachments” button under SF-424 item #15)

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	PAGE
I. PROGRAM DESCRIPTION & OBJECTIVES	5
II. FEDERAL AWARD INFORMATION	16
III. ELIGIBILITY INFORMATION	26
IV. APPLICATION AND SUBMISSION INFORMATION	29
V. APPLICATION REVIEW INFORMATION	38
VI. FEDERAL AWARD ADMINISTRATION INFORMATION	42
VII. FEDERAL AWARDED AGENCY CONTACT	47
VIII. OTHER INFORMATION	48
IX. APPENDICES	
A. Comparison of STAR to E-STAR	
B. Guidance for Interpreting Cost Principles for Grants and Sub-Grant Awards	
C. Frontline Staff Training Topics	
D. Progress Report- Sample	
X. ATTACHMENTS	
A. Letter of Agreement	
B. Memorandum of Understanding (MOU)- Sample	
C. Conflict of Interest Form- Sample	
D. Pre-application Questionnaire: Grant Program Accounting System & Financial Capability	
E. Application Cover Page	
F. Activities/Indicators Tracker	
G. Letter of Intent	

I. PROGRAM DESCRIPTION & OBJECTIVES

A. Background and Legislative Authority

The Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) administers the nutrition assistance programs of the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA). The mission of FNS is to work with partners to provide food and nutrition education to people in need in a way that inspires public confidence and supports American agriculture. Among these nutrition assistance programs are the Child Nutrition Programs, including the National School Lunch Program (NSLP), School Breakfast Program (SBP), the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP), and the Summer Food Service Program (SFSP). Administered by State agencies, the Child Nutrition Programs help fight hunger and obesity by reimbursing organizations such as schools, child care centers, and after-school programs for providing nutritionally balanced meals to children at low or no cost.

Team Nutrition Training Grants are authorized under Public Law 111–296, which amended Section 19 of the Child Nutrition Act of 1966. As authorized under Section 6(a)(3) of the Richard B. Russell National School Lunch Act, 42 USC 1755(a)(3), FNS provides training and technical assistance for school nutrition professionals, nutrition education for children and their caregivers, and encourages school and community support for healthy eating and physical activity. These activities are implemented under the FNS Team Nutrition initiative. Team Nutrition Training Grants have been a part of the Team Nutrition initiative since its inception in 1995, to provide State agencies with funds to implement training and nutrition education within the Child Nutrition Programs in their State.

During FY 2018, FNS has worked cooperatively with the Institute of Child Nutrition (ICN) to develop the School Nutrition Strategies, Training, Action Plans, and Resources (STAR) training program. The STAR training program provides important job-skills training and tailored technical assistance to school nutrition managers as a means to improve managers' knowledge, skills, and abilities related to meal service and increase their capacity to train frontline school nutrition staff on key topics. The STAR program includes a workshop on the topics of meal preparation and service, procurement and inventory management, and nutrition and menu management. After the workshop, managers then self-select which of these topic areas to work on after the training based upon the needs of their school(s). Mentorship is another key component of the STAR program. FNS and ICN piloted the STAR training program with the Kansas State Department of Education during October 2018 and is currently offering the training to additional States during the remainder of FY 2019.

This FY 2019 Team Nutrition E-STAR Training Grant will provide States with funds to implement and evaluate an enhanced version of the STAR training program that is focused on school meal quality, referred to hereafter as E-STAR Program. A detailed chart comparing the

components of STAR and E-STAR can be found in Appendix A. By focusing on meal quality, one component of the broader STAR training program, E-STAR can provide a more intensive training intervention which facilitates robust evaluation. Research¹²³⁴⁵⁶⁷ has shown that meal quality, particularly among adolescents, can influence students' food choices and their overall perceptions of school meals. While NSLP meal pattern requirements set minimum standards for the nutritional quality of lunches served, there are opportunities at the local level that influence how meals are prepared and served that may impact overall meal quality. Using the funds awarded under this grant, States will provide school nutrition managers with comprehensive training on meal quality through E-STAR and make impacts at the local level by assisting schools in developing and implementing customized activities and trainings to improve meal quality based upon their needs.

B. Key Definitions

- School Nutrition Professionals:** School nutrition program employees at the district or school level who are administering or operating the NSLP and/or SBP or who contract with a food service management company to provide school meals and manage aspects of school food service operations. In general, there are three job categories related to school food service operations: directors, managers, and frontline staff. At the local level, there are many different job titles of individuals who perform similar duties. The definitions below are general enough to cover most local school nutrition program employees:

Directors- plan, administer, implement, monitor, and evaluate all district-wide aspects of school nutrition programs.

¹Perceived Barriers and Facilitators to Healthy Eating and School Lunch Meals among Adolescents: A Qualitative Study. Payán DD, Sloane DC, Illum J, Farris T, Lewis LB. *Am J Health Behav.* 2017; 41(5):661-669.

² Variables Affecting High School Students' Perceptions of School Foodservice. Meyer MK, Conklin MT. *J Am Diet Assoc.* 1998; 98(12):1424-31.

³ Student Feedback to Improve the United States Department of Agriculture Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Program. Lin YC, Fly AD. *Nutr Res Pract.* 2016; 10(3):321-7.

⁴ High School Students' Recommendations to Improve School Food Environments: Insights from a Critical Stakeholder Group. Yuka Asada, Alejandro G. Hughes, Margaret Read, Marlene B. Schwartz, Jamie F. Chiqui *J Sch Health.* 2017; 87(11): 842–849.

⁵A Qualitative Study on Factors that Influence Students' Food Choices. Murimi, Mary & Chrisman, Matthew & R. McCollum, Heather & McDonald, Olevia. *J Nutri Health.* 2016; 2(1): 1-6.

⁶ School-Level Factors Associated with Increased Fruit and Vegetable Consumption among Students in California Middle and High Schools. Wendi Gosliner, *J Sch Health.* 2014; 84(9): 559–568.

⁷ Is Lunch Still Gross? A Qualitative Evaluation of a New School Lunch Program. Cohn, D. J., Pickering, R., & Chin, N. P. *ICAN: Infant, Child, & Adolescent Nutrition.* 2013; 5(6), 383–392.

Managers- have direct responsibility for the day-to-day operations at one or more school buildings. May also be referred to as “supervisors”.

Frontline Staff- prepare and serve meals, process transactions at point of service, and review the free/reduced price applications, along with other routine work. Typically, frontline staff do not have management responsibilities.

- **Grantee:** State agency receiving Team Nutrition Training Grant funds and implementing approved grant-funded activities.
- **ICN Trainer:** As part of this grant, the Institute of Child Nutrition (ICN) will provide Grantees with a trainer(s) for the Mentor Orientation and the E-STAR Manager Workshops.
- **Mentors:** States will hire individuals with school nutrition supervisory experience (such as a School Nutrition Director) with operating the NLSP to serve as Mentors. These Mentors will work with a cohort of school nutrition managers participating in the E-STAR Program.
- **Self-Efficacy:** The belief individuals have in their own abilities to meet workplace challenges and complete a task successfully.
- **School Meal Quality:** Characteristics of food that affect its acceptability to consumers. This includes food appearance (size, shape, color, gloss, and consistency), texture, flavor, nutritional value, and freshness. Examples of factors related to meal quality that have been cited in the research to affect students’ perceptions of school lunch and willingness to eat it include: variety, flavor, attractiveness of food on the serving line, choices that allow students to meet cultural and ethnic preferences, access to fresh foods, etc. Meal quality can be measured against developed quality standards or by assessing consumers’ perceptions of meal quality (e.g., satisfaction surveys, taste-testing ballots, etc.).
- **Control Group:** A group that does not receive the E-STAR training, mentoring, or sub-grants. This group is compared to the group that receives the E-STAR training, to see if it works as intended.

C. Team Nutrition Grant Purpose

The purpose of the FY 2019 Team Nutrition E-STAR Training Grant is for State agencies to implement and evaluate the E-STAR Program within the NSLP. This grant awards funding to State agencies to support professional development and job-skills training for school nutrition managers and to support managers in providing training for frontline staff to implement changes to practices affecting meal quality at schools.

This grant enables States to:

- Support SFAs/managers in goal setting and implementing an action plan with strategies to improve school meal quality and students perception of school meal quality.
- Provide extensive professional development training for school nutrition professionals (53 hours for managers, and 4 hours for frontline staff).
- Award sub-grants to schools to implement strategies that improve meal quality.
- Assist in the development of evidence-based training for school nutrition professionals.
- Receive recognition for grant activities in FNS presentations, reports, social media, etc.
- Participate in a rigorous evaluation of a job skills training program.

D. Team Nutrition Grant Objectives

Activities under this grant must be clearly aligned to the three objectives below.

	Objectives
1.	To implement the E-STAR Program to increase school nutrition managers' and frontline staff' knowledge, skills, and self-efficacy related to school meal quality.
2.	To engage school nutrition managers in implementing a goal-oriented action plan to improve school meal quality or students' perceptions of school meal quality.
3.	To assess activities and impacts that result from participation in the E-STAR Program to inform best practices for training school nutrition professionals and increasing their capacity to improve school meal quality.

E. Team Nutrition Grant Period of Performance

The period of performance for the FY 2019 Team Nutrition E-STAR Training Grant is four years. The anticipated grant period of performance is September 30, 2019 through September 30, 2023.

F. E-STAR Overview

The Enhanced School Nutrition Strategies, Training, Action Plans, and Resources (E-STAR) workforce development and job skills training program is designed to provide managers with innovative training opportunities, tailored technical assistance via mentoring, sub-grants to implement action plans, and the capacity to conduct skills-based trainings for frontline staff to enhance school meal quality. The unique features of E-STAR are described below. For a more detailed description of the program elements, please see section H.

1. **Training-** Training for managers including pre-workshop online courses, an in-person 2.5 day workshop, and follow-up training and mentoring. Managers then provide in-person training for their frontline staff. Managers who complete the program as outlined, will receive 53 hours of professional development.
2. **Goal setting and action plan development-** School nutrition managers will leave the in-person training workshop with a goal and action plan to implement specific school-based strategies to improve meal quality and student perceptions of school meals. The provision of training for frontline staff will be part of this action plan. School nutrition managers who oversee multiple school buildings, will implement their action plan and train frontline staff at only one of their school buildings.
3. **Mentoring-** Mentors will provide a minimum of eight mentoring sessions (virtually or in person; starting at one month following the in-person workshop) to participating school nutrition managers over the course of two years to:
 - Discuss progress on action plan implementation and delivery of frontline staff trainings;
 - Work through any identified challenges; and
 - Identify successes.
4. **Sub-Grants-** To support the successful implementation of school-based strategies, Grantees may award sub-grants to School Food Authorities (SFAs) participating in E-STAR. Team Nutrition sub-grant funds may support the purchase of small equipment that supports the improvement of meal quality as outlined in a participating school nutrition manager's action plan. The Guidance for Interpreting Cost Principles for Grants and Sub-Grant Awards provide more direction and can be found in Appendix B.

G. Evaluation Overview

Grantees are required to hire a full-time Social Scientist who will work collaboratively with FNS' evaluation contractor to design and execute an evaluation plan. E-STAR's evaluation will consist of two components:

1. A FNS-led evaluation of the E-STAR training and mentoring school nutrition managers receive and its impact on managers' knowledge, skills, and self-efficacy, and
2. A Grantee-led evaluation of the implementation of action plans at schools and the impact on meal quality or students' perceptions of meal quality.

FNS and its evaluation contractor will oversee, conduct, and analyze all evaluation aspects of component one. The Grantees' Social Scientist will oversee, conduct, and analyze all evaluation aspects of component two. All data collected for these evaluations, and any analyses conducted, will be shared with FNS to inform the final evaluation reporting.

FNS-Led Evaluation Activities:

- Draw samples of SFAs to participate in E-STAR and to serve as controls.
- Develop measures and related instruments to evaluate the E-STAR curriculum as designed and implemented.
- Obtain Office of Management and Budget (OMB) clearance for data collection.
- Collect data from E-STAR and control group participants to measure the impact of the training.
- Provide technical assistance to Grantee's Social Scientist to ensure valid and reliable measure of student satisfaction for the small scale (school-based) evaluations.
- Conduct analysis of data collected regarding E-STAR.
- Analyze the relationship between the training and the effectiveness of the school-based strategies.
- Write reports (and manuscripts) that present the evaluation results of the training, including recommendations for strengthening the training, etc.

Grantee-Led Evaluation Activities:

- Provide administrative information/data as requested by FNS (or FNS' evaluation contractor) to enable random (stratified) sampling of participants, and subsequent data as identified for tracking.
- Secure (recruit) and support (financially or otherwise) the participation of selected SFAs in E-STAR and ensure that no additional or similar training is funded/offered to the control SFAs during the period of performance of the study.
- Hire a Social Scientist who:

- Insures Institutional Review Board (IRB) approval is obtained for any data collection.
- Coordinates with FNS on tracking outputs that result from the training (or monitoring similar activity in control SFAs).
- Works with FNS to finalize instruments that measure student satisfaction.
- Carries out data collection related to student perceptions of meal quality in both E-STAR and control schools at key intervals.
- Proposes additional evaluation components, if needed, to enhance understanding of the outcomes and impacts associated with the school-based strategies selected and implemented.
- Shares data with FNS for subsequent analysis and reporting.
- Conducts analysis of data related to school-based strategies.
- Track and report on activities undertaken, including narrative descriptions of school-based strategies; reactions to these strategies by school staff, students, and other stakeholders; and quantitative results describing observed changes in student perceptions.
- Agree to cooperate fully with FNS regarding the evaluation approach, proposed evaluation tools, and metric reporting methods (see Attachment A).

H. Detailed Description of E-STAR Components

The E-STAR Program includes the following components.

1. Pre-Workshop Online Courses

School nutrition managers will complete two one-hour online pre-requisite courses prior to attending the workshop: 1) *Effective Facilitation Techniques*, to aid delivery of frontline staff training, and 2) *Action Plan Development*, to aid development of a goal and action plan during the workshop. These courses will be available at no cost through the ICN's E-Learning Portal for E-STAR.

2. Mentor Orientation

Mentors hired by the Grantee will provide ongoing technical assistance to school nutrition managers during the grant. These Mentors will participate in an eight-hour in-person orientation, which focuses on facilitation techniques and mentoring expectations. An ICN trainer will provide the orientation. This training will take place prior to the Manager Workshops, in a location determined by the Grantee. The Mentors will attend and participate in the Manager Workshops. The maximum ratio of Mentor to managers is one to ten.

3. Manager Workshops

School nutrition managers will attend a 2.5 day in-person training workshop at a location determined by the Grantee. During the training, an ICN trainer will deliver a standardized curriculum that includes content focused on specific meal quality topics. The workshop will include hands-on culinary training for managers regarding the preparation and presentation of school meals. Mentors must attend and will lead small breakout sessions and work with managers to identify meal quality challenges and assist each manager in setting meal quality goal(s) and developing an action plan to implement at one of their school sites. School nutrition managers will also refine skills in conducting training for frontline staff by teaching a 15-minute lesson, and receiving feedback from their peers and the trainers.

4. Action Plan Development and Implementation

During the Manager Workshop, participants will develop goals and a tailored action plan, with assistance from Mentors, that they will implement during the grant's period of performance in one of their school sites in an effort to enhance the school's actual and student-perceived meal quality. The action plan must include goals for conducting trainings for frontline staff in that same school site using ICN's Manager's Corner curriculum focused on meal quality. Participant managers will be required to share their goals and action plan with their immediate supervisor (e.g. School Nutrition Director). During follow-up meetings with the manager's Mentor, the action plan (and progress towards the goals/action steps) will be discussed.

5. Virtual Instructor-Led Trainings (VILTs)

After the Manager Workshop, school nutrition managers and Mentors will participate in six one-hour interactive webinars developed and facilitated by the ICN. The first three webinars will occur in year two of the grant, one of which will focus on marketing and communication strategies to improve students' perception of school meal quality. The remaining three VILT webinars will occur in year three of the grant and will serve as an opportunity to provide "refresher" instruction on key curriculum topics. Participants will be able to receive live content from instructors and engage in discussions with the instructor and other participants. These webinars will also serve as a forum for sharing ideas, educational resources, and best practices among school nutrition managers and Mentors.

6. Mentor Technical Assistance (TA)

Ongoing TA is a critical component of the E-STAR Program. Each school nutrition manager will meet individually, with their Mentor at least eight times (virtually or in person) over a two year period. After the workshop, they will meet to provide progress updates on their goal and action plan, to work through any identified challenges, strategize on delivering frontline staff trainings, and share successes.

7. Trainings for Frontline Staff

School nutrition managers will conduct trainings for the frontline staff at one of their school sites (the same school site where the manager is implementing their action plan strategies). School nutrition managers who oversee multiple school buildings, will implement strategies and train frontline staff at only one of their school buildings, which has a minimum of three frontline staff.

Managers will deliver a minimum of sixteen 15-minute trainings over a two-year time period. ICN will provide the training materials for the managers to use in delivering their trainings. Managers will receive training on how to use the materials and provide effective frontline staff training during the 2.5 day workshop. A list of examples of Frontline Staff Meal Quality Training Topics can be found in Appendix C.

I. E-STAR Logic Model

The following logic model is a graphic depiction (road map) that presents the shared relationships among the resources and activities (inputs, outputs, and outcomes) for the E-STAR Program. It depicts the relationship between E-STAR's training activities and its intended effects.

Inputs	Outputs	Outcomes		
		Short Term	Intermediate	Long Term
Grantee Staff ICN Trainers Grant Funds Grantee Mentors Social Scientist School Nutrition Managers School Nutrition Frontline Staff Time E-STAR Program: Manager Training • Pre-Workshop Online Courses • Manager Workshops • Actin Plan Development and Implementation • VILTs • Mentor TA Frontline Staff • 16 Staff Trainings	Number and duration of Mentor /manager TA meetings. Number and hours of trainings completed by managers. Number and hours of trainings completed by frontline staff. Number of goals and meal quality improvement action plans. Identified training barriers and challenges. Identified cost of training per participant.	Increased hours of training for managers and frontline staff. Increased knowledge skills and self-efficacy among managers related to meal quality. Increased self-efficacy among managers regarding their ability to train frontline staff.	Increased knowledge of how to improve school meal quality by frontline staff. Increased self-efficacy among school frontline staff members regarding the ability to improve meal quality at school. Number of meal quality improvement strategies implemented at schools. Improved frontline staff skills related to meal quality. Increased student and frontline staff engagement due to strategies implemented in efforts to improve meal quality. Professional Standards training hours.	Increased student ratings of school meal quality. Recommendations for improvement of the E-STAR Training Program. Identification of effective methods to deliver training for school nutrition professionals.

J. Grant Timeline

Grantees have some flexibility in scheduling activities over the grant period, within the following guidelines:

Year 1: Planning and Coordination

In order to ensure the quality of both the training program and its evaluation, the training workshop can be held no earlier than one year after grant award. During the first year, Grantees are expected to:

- Hire key and necessary staff, such as Mentors, Projects Director, and Social Scientist.
- Develop sub-grant agreements, implementation, and tracking process.
- Schedule trainings to occur during Year 2, in collaboration with ICN.
- Work with their Social Scientist to refine the evaluation plan for school-level interventions.
- Communicate with FNS' evaluation contractor on E-STAR Program evaluation, manager identification and recruitment, assignment to training and control groups.
- Obtain any State or local IRB approval needed for evaluations.
- Begin baseline data collection.
- Ensure attendance and participation tracking mechanisms are in place for the implementation phase of E-STAR.
- Complete quarterly and cumulative annual reports.
- Translate or adapt frontline staff training materials, if needed.

Year 2: Implementation of E-STAR

During the second year, Grantees are expected to:

- Implement sub-grants.
- Ensure completion of Pre-Workshop Online Courses by managers and Mentors.
- Coordinate logistics and conduct Mentor Orientation in collaboration with ICN.
- Coordinate logistics and conduct Manager Workshops in collaboration with ICN.
- Ensure Mentors provide four mentoring sessions to each manager, starting at one month following the In-Person Workshop.
- Ensure managers discuss their goal and action plan with their supervisor (i.e., School Nutrition Director) within one month following the In-Person Workshop.
- Ensure managers participate in three VILTs, led by ICN trainers, after the workshops.
- Ensure managers provide a minimum of seven trainings to frontline staff.

- Ensure managers begin implementation of action plans at the one identified school.
- Collect data.
- Complete quarterly and cumulative annual reports.

Year 3: Implementation of E-STAR

During the third year, Grantees are expected to:

- Ensure Mentors reach out to managers and provide four mentoring sessions to each manager.
- Ensure managers participate in three VILTs, led by ICN trainers.
- Ensure managers provide nine trainings to frontline staff.
- Ensure managers continue implementation of action plan at the one identified school.
- Continue to manage sub-grant program.
- Collect data.
- Complete quarterly and cumulative annual reports.

Year 4: Wrap-up of E-STAR

During the last year, Grantees are expected to:

- Wrap up any delayed mentoring sessions and frontline staff trainings, as necessary (if carried over from Year 3).
- Collect and analyze data.
- Complete quarterly, cumulative annual, and final reports.
- Contribute to the final Grantee report to share findings related to school-based interventions.

II. FEDERAL AWARD INFORMATION

A. Total Amount of Funding Expected to Award

In FY 2019, up to \$5 million in funding is anticipated to be awarded for Team Nutrition E-STAR Training Grant, subject to the availability of funds.

B. Anticipated Award Amounts

FNS anticipates awarding this FY 2019 Team Nutrition E-STAR Training Grant to **two** State agencies. Up to \$2,500,000 per State agency may be requested for executing this training program and its evaluation over a period of performance of four years. FNS reserves the right to

make greater or fewer grant awards based upon the level of funding requested, the quality of applications received, or other Agency priorities. The submission of an application does NOT guarantee funding. FNS reserves the right to reduce, increase, or revise proposed budgets based on the availability of funds. State agencies that administer the NSLP are eligible to apply for this grant.

C. Anticipated Start Dates and Period of Performance

Through a competitive grants process, the anticipated grant period of performance is September 30, 2019 through September 30, 2023.

D. Type of Federal Financial Assistance

Funding for approved Team Nutrition E-STAR Training Grants will be provided through the Grant Award/Letter of Credit process, upon receipt of a fully executed grant agreement between USDA/FNS and the Grantee. These awards are subject to availability of funding. All FY 2019 Team Nutrition E-STAR Training Grant funds must be obligated and all activities must be fully completed by September 30, 2023.

E. Use of Grant Funds-Allowable Costs

All requested costs must be allowable, allocable, necessary, and reasonable in accordance with new OMB Code of Federal Regulations Cost Principles as follows:

- 2 CFR Part 200: “Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards.”
- 2 CFR Part 400 “Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards.”

Among other costs, budgets may include expenses related to personnel, contractors, technology, equipment, supplies, meeting expenses, sub-grants, food supplies, travel, and trainings.

Considerations for Development of Grant Budgets: The following information is provided to assist States in determining budget costs related to implementing E-STAR.

- a. At a minimum, include staffing costs for a full-time Project Director and a full-time Social Scientist (one Full Time Equivalent (FTE) for each position).
- b. Allocate grant funds to cover travel costs for all managers and Mentors including, but not limited to: transportation costs, hotel costs, and daily per diem.

- c. A minimum of 120 SFAs in total, are needed to support Grant evaluation efforts. Managers (at least one) within each SFA will be randomly assigned to either receive E-STAR training or to serve as a control. However, Grantees may provide the E-STAR training to additional managers within the State. Grantees should keep in mind the maximum capacity of each workshop and maximum allowed ratio of managers to mentors when planning grant activities, staffing needs, and budgets.
- d. Allocate funds for workshop facility rental(s). The in-person training workshop will include culinary training, and the workshop location must have the following equipment: colander, mixing bowls, analog and digital scale, sheet pans (4), spider strainer, steamtable pan (2, full size 4”), steamtable pan (3 full size 2”), stock pots (4), dishwashing facilities, food processor or large blender, ovens (4), pot and pan sink, range-top cooking space, steamer, tilting skillet (if possible), and other small equipment such as knives, ladles, and graters.
- e. Budget for Mentors to participate in pre-workshop online trainings, workshops, orientation training, VILTS, and to provide mentoring sessions to managers as described in this RFA. The activities that Mentors are involved in are expected to require a minimum of 220 hours throughout the period of performance of this grant. Each mentor will work with up to 10 managers actively participating in E-STAR. A minimum of 60 managers are required to receive E-STAR training, which would result in a minimum of 6 Mentors needed.
- f. The ICN will provide all frontline staff training materials in English. If Grantees have a need for these frontline staff training materials in other languages, they may include translation costs of the materials in their budget.
- g. The maximum number of school nutrition managers to attend each workshop is 25, or the number that the culinary training facility can reasonably accommodate. Additional workshop sessions should be budgeted for and scheduled as needed, to accommodate all training participants.
- h. Allocate resources for all training locations, equipment, and food supplies for training (e.g., orientation training, workshop, and frontline staff training).
- i. ICN will provide trainers for the Managers Workshops and Mentor Orientation training at no charge to the Grantee.
- j. Expenditures for both equipment and supplies, less than \$5,000 are allowable expenses. Team Nutrition sub-grant funds may support the purchase of small equipment to assist in the improvement of meal quality as outlined in a school

nutrition manager's action plan. An audit trail and strict accounting systems to guard against comingling or improper expenditures of funds is necessary.

- k. Resources may be allocated for the procurement of technology (both hardware and software such as tablets, laptops, display boards, etc.) necessary to implement training (may NOT exceed ten percent of requested funds).
- l. Grantees will be asked to submit high-resolution photographs of grant-funded activities, with each annual report. Funds used to purchase high-resolution photography equipment shall not exceed \$2,000 total. These photos and the accompanying photo releases (for photos including children and adults) will provide USDA with additional documentation of grant-funded activities and will aid in the promotion of the Team Nutrition Training Grant program. USDA will retain rights to these photos and may use them in social media and other USDA materials.
- m. No more than two percent of the grant funds may be used for food purchases in the grant budget. Food purchases should be limited to educational and training purposes such as culinary training. Food costs related to conducting tests of new recipes or product are also deemed an appropriate use of funds. The Guidance for Interpreting Cost Principles for Grants and Sub-Grant Awards can be found in Appendix B.
- n. Grant recipients will be asked to host USDA officials for at least two site visits during the course of their grant award. All costs associated with the site visit will be paid for by USDA and are not expected to be included in grant budgets.
- o. Budget the travel costs related to having one State agency staff person attend each Manager Workshop.
- p. Allocate funds for necessary and appropriate office supplies and equipment.
- q. Grantees should include all costs related to the evaluation of the school- level interventions, including setup and structure, instrument development, data collection, and analysis.
- r. The purchase of promotional items is allowed if they are directly related to improving student's perception of school meals and enhancing school meal quality or they aid in increasing frontline staffs' knowledge, skills, and self-efficacy related to school meal quality. Any cost associated with such promotions must be reasonable in comparison to the grant funding. A total expenditure of promotional items should not exceed two percent of the total sub-grant awarded.

- s. Budget for the Project Director and Social Scientist to attend and present at a minimum of at least three national nutrition conferences, as approved by FNS.
- t. Budget for the Project Director and Social Scientist to meet face-to-face with the FNS staff and the national evaluator in the Washington D.C. area two times during the grant.
- u. Allocate funds to be able to award sub-grants to SFAs.

F. Grantee Requirements

In their proposal, applicants should address the following:

1. Recruitment of School Food Authorities/Managers

To support the rigorous evaluation of the training intervention and follow-up activities, the applicant must propose the SFAs that will participate in grant activities. School nutrition managers within the identified SFAs will be assigned by the FNS evaluation contractor to either participate in the E-STAR training or to serve as a part of a control group. Control group participants will not receive E-STAR training but will participate in certain evaluation activities during the course of the grant such as surveys, logs, and/or interviews.

Eligible managers must supervise at least three frontline staff that work at the school where the manager will be able to implement their action plan. School nutrition managers who oversee multiple school buildings, will implement their action plan and train frontline staff at only one of their school buildings. The manager's supervisor (i.e., School Nutrition Director) must be willing to allow time for the manager to participate in all training activities and implement a goal and action plan that is mutually agreeable to both the supervisor and manager.

Managers must be able to understand the training provided orally and in writing in English. The E-STAR Program materials will not be provided in other languages. Grantees may translate frontline staff training materials into other languages as part of their grant activities.

The applicant's demonstration of their ability to provide at least 120 SFAs willing to participate in the grant will be a significant consideration of FNS' evaluation of the grant application. Signed Memorandums of Understanding (MOUs; see Attachment B for a sample), from all of the proposed SFAs must be included in the application package.

2. Recruitment and Hiring of Mentors

The applicant must describe their recruitment plan, the number of Mentors to be hired, and the anticipated ratio of Mentors to managers. Mentors should have experience as a School Nutrition Director, with expertise in providing quality school meals as part of the NSLP. Ideally, Mentors will not be currently employed as a School Nutrition Director within the State of the Grantee as this relationship can sometimes prove complicated in terms of lines of supervision. Mentors are intended to provide coaching to managers, but managers must still discuss and get approval for their goal and action plan from their supervisor. Retired school nutrition managers or directors could be ideal Mentor candidates. States may hire Mentors that reside outside of their State. A conflict of interest form (Attachment C- sample) should be signed by each mentor, prior to their hiring, indicating that there is no conflict of interest with the SFAs/managers they will mentor, from previous and/or current roles they have held. As previously mentioned, all Mentors will receive standardized training from the ICN regarding the mentorship protocols.

3. Project Management and Quality Control

The State agency is responsible for overseeing and coordinating grant activities; providing fiscal oversight; and exercising effective internal control of funds that are provided to a sub-contractor or sub-grantee. Applicants must submit a staffing plan that identifies individuals who are designated as key personnel for this grant. Key personnel generally are identified as those individuals who:

- Assume a substantive responsibility for developing, modifying, and achieving project objectives;
- Are responsible for managing, administering, conducting, or providing oversight for a significant component of the project; and
- Have a direct bearing on the outcome of the project.

A contingency plan must be provided to explain how the grant will continue if key personnel leave the project before the end of the period of the grant.

The Project Director is key personnel required at one FTE for this grant. At a minimum, the Project Director will be responsible for administration of the grant, including fiscal management (including exercising effective internal controls of funds that are provided to sub-grantees as per the “Guidance for Interpreting Cost Principles for Grants and Sub-Grant Awards” listed in Appendix B), reporting to FNS, and providing oversight for grant activities.

The grant application should describe the qualifications of the Project Director. His or her resume must demonstrate that he or she has experience in school nutrition, training, and in managing a project of a similar size and scope. A current resume and letter of commitment from the Project Director should be included in the application. A letter of commitment from the Project Director's supervisor is also required.

The Social Scientist is key personnel required at one FTE, who will be responsible for managing the State-led evaluation of grant-funded activities; pre-testing or developing appropriate evaluation tools; collecting data on performance measures; and reporting regularly on these measures. The Social Scientist must have experience in evaluating nutrition and/or public health programs. Experience in evaluating school-based programs is highly desired. A current resume and letter of commitment from the Social Scientist should be included in the application.

In addition to the information noted above, applications must contain a staffing plan that includes a clear description with the following information for any additional key project position that must be filled during the course of the grant:

- Position title
- A detailed position description with required qualifications, experience, skills, and knowledge
- A description of specific roles and duties on the project, referencing the project or evaluation narrative
- An anticipated date of hire;
- Expected time commitment with percentages of FTE or total work hours for each year of the grant; and
- Contingency plan if the position is not filled in a timely manner.

Applicants should include an organizational chart that indicates chain of command of all key project entities.

4. Implementation of E-STAR as Intended

As part of their proposals, applicants must describe how they plan to manage the implementation of E-STAR in their State, including how the State will:

- Oversee and coordinate grant activities; provide fiscal oversight; and exercise effective internal control of funds that are provided to a sub-contractor and sub-grant recipients, including the appropriate use of the "Guidance for Interpreting Cost Principles for Grants and Sub-Grant Awards" listed in Appendix B.
- Provide appropriate training facilities for the Mentor Orientation and Managers Workshops, as per the requirements listed in this RFA.

- Coordinate all workshop logistics and travel plans including, but not limited to: selecting training dates and locations (in collaboration with ICN); ensuring appropriate technology and equipment at training facilities; ensuring appropriate culinary training facilities with appropriate food preparation and cooking equipment; coordinating participant travel arrangements, ensuring (in collaboration with ICN) that each participant receives the workshop materials. Team Nutrition Training Grant funds may be used to pay for food if the food is part of a specific training activity (see Section II Federal Award Information, part E, Use of Grant Funds- Allowable Costs, for limits on the amount of funds that can be used towards food).
- Schedule the workshop(s) at a time most convenient to participants, ideally during breaks when school is not in session or in tandem with State association meetings.
- Oversee and track Mentor, participating manager, and frontline staff attendance and participation in the E-STAR activities as specified within this RFA.

5. Administration of Sub-Grants

- v. Applicants must clearly describe their plans for administering and managing sub-grants to SFAs participating in grant activities. The methodology, including the application and selection criteria and process, timing, and amount of sub-grants, must be clearly described in the application. The proposed approach must be consistent with the Guidance for Interpreting Cost Principles for Grants and Sub-Grant Awards (see Appendix B). Grantees should have the following components/policies in place to effectively manage sub-grants:
 - Application form
 - Award process
 - Allowable costs
 - Timeline
 - Sub-grant agreement/ award requirements
 - Support and technical assistance
 - Monitoring and reporting process

6. Evaluation Activities

Applicants must describe how they will support grant evaluation activities, which are divided into two components:

- 1) A rigorous evaluation conducted by FNS' evaluation contractor, which will examine the E-STAR Program's effect on the knowledge, skills, and self-efficacy of school nutrition managers as compared to controls.
- 2) Grantee-led evaluation of the implementation of school-based action plans and frontline staff training E-STAR managers.

Applicants must describe how they will support the FNS-led evaluation (component 1 above), including how they will:

- Provide FNS' evaluation contractor with administrative data for sampling, and for analysis of participant and control SFAs over the duration of the grant period.
- Obtain IRB approval as required by State and local entities for data collection.
- Track all outputs that result from the training (including individual adherence to requirements described above for trainings, mentoring, etc.). Provide this information to FNS in the specified format.
- Describe, monitor and track similar/relevant activity in treatment and control SFAs (e.g., trainings, school-based interventions, ad hoc grants, etc.). Provide this information to FNS in the specified format.
- Track and provide full accounting of costs associated with participation in the E-STAR Program and any training costs incurred by control SFAs. Provide this information to FNS in the specified format.
- Facilitate access to E-STAR managers and controls for qualitative and observational data collection to inform a process evaluation and capture the perspectives of participants.

Applicants must describe their evaluation plan for school-based interventions under this grant (Grantee-led/component 2) including how they will:

- Ensure IRB approval as required by State and local entities for data collection.
- Track activities carried out in schools as a result of participation in the E-STAR Program, in a manner developed in coordination with the FNS' evaluation contractor to ensure consistent reporting across Grantees. Describe, monitor and track similar/relevant activity in control schools, e.g., changes to meal preparation, food presentation, student engagement in school nutrition processes, school meal marketing efforts, etc.

- Identify/develop instruments to measure selected metrics, including student perceptions of meal quality and other relevant measures of school meal quality.
- Conduct data collection in schools where school-based interventions are implemented (and in matched control schools) for meal quality at key intervals.
- Conduct analysis of data related to school-based strategies.
- Contribute to the final Grantee report to share findings related to school-based interventions. Reporting shall include narrative descriptions of school-based strategies, reactions to these strategies by school staff, students, and other stakeholders, and quantitative results describing changes in student perceptions of meal quality.
- Applicants must identify a full-time Social Scientist as key personnel, who will lead grant evaluation efforts and collaborate with the FNS' evaluation contractor. In their proposal, Grantees must identify the Social Scientist with an advanced degree in social science or similar discipline with training and experience in school nutrition program evaluation. A resume and a letter of commitment from the Social Scientist should be included in the application.
- It is highly desirable that the Grantee collaborate with an academic or research institution. If so, the academic or research institution should be identified in the grant application as assisting the Grantee with the State-level evaluation. A letter of commitment from the institution should be included in the application.
- Identify any potential conflicts of interest (actual or perceived) that might prevent an independent and objective assessment of the implementation, impacts, or benefits of the proposed project (e.g. having a contractor both develop and assess a project) by the State, Social Scientist, or collaborating academic or research institution. If any conflicts are identified for key personnel (especially evaluation personnel or organizations), provide a discussion of what steps the State agency will take to ensure an objective and complete evaluation. Minimally, a signed conflict of interest form from the Social Scientist should be submitted as part of the application packet.
- All Grantees must agree to cooperate fully with FNS regarding the evaluation approach, proposed evaluation tools, and metric reporting methods. An agreement to cooperate with FNS must be submitted in the application (see Attachment A).

7. Grantee Reporting and Dissemination

Grantees are required to submit quarterly, cumulative annual performance reports, and a final report. Refer to Appendix D for an example of what a report may require. The specific reporting format will be provided to Grantees as a part of their Grant Terms and Conditions, and/or a part of grant orientation. Grantees should plan to present findings from the Team Nutrition E-STAR Training Grant at three national nutrition conferences; write and submit articles for publication; provide reports/updates at meetings; etc.

Grantees should submit a minimum of ten high-resolution photographs (including accompanying photo releases and supporting narrative) of grant funded activities, with each annual report.

Grantees will:

- Meet with the FNS staff and the national evaluator in the Washington D.C. area for a kick-off meeting.
- Present final outcomes and deliverables to the FNS staff at the conclusion of the grant in the Washington D.C. area.
- Host USDA officials for at least two site visits during the course of their grant award.
- Participate in quarterly calls.
- Provide FNS with all reports, materials, and deliverables electronically, at the conclusion of the period of performance of this grant.

H. Type of Federal Financial Assistance

Funding for Grantees will be provided through the Grant Award/Letter of Credit process, upon receipt of a fully executed grant agreement between USDA Food and Nutrition Service and the Grantee. These awards are subject to availability of funding. All Team Nutrition E-STAR Training Grant funds must be obligated and all activities under the grant must be fully completed by September 30, 2023.

III. ELIGIBILITY INFORMATION

1. Eligible Applicants

There are two FY 2019 Team Nutrition Training Grant opportunities: Team Nutrition Training Grant for Innovative State Training Programs and the Team Nutrition E-STAR Training Grant. Each State may submit only one application on behalf of all interested

Child Nutrition State agencies within that State and may apply to only one of the two aforementioned Team Nutrition Training Grants. States that submit applications for both grant opportunities will not be considered.

States must be able to demonstrate a minimum of 120 SFAs that are willing to participate in the grant training and evaluation activities. Managers (at least one) within each SFA will be randomly assigned to either receive E-STAR training or serve as part of a control group. However, Grantees may provide the E-STAR training to additional managers within the State. Eligible managers within these SFAs must supervise a minimum of three frontline staff (based out of one school) to which frontline E-STAR training can be provided. Managers who have previously participated in ICN's STAR training program, including the pilot, are not eligible to participate in the E-STAR training. States participating in the STAR pilot or STAR trainings through the ICN, may apply for this grant as long as they can guarantee the minimum required cohort (120) of SFAs with managers that have not received the STAR training.

State agency applications must include signed MOUs, Attachment B, that indicate they have at least the minimum number (120) of SFAs required to participate and complete E-STAR. SFAs must be willing to have all managers randomly assigned to either participate in E-STAR or serve as a control.

2. Cost Sharing or Matching

There are no cost sharing or matching considerations.

3. Pre-Application Screening Requirements

In reviewing applications in any discretionary grant competition, Federal Awarding Agencies, in accordance with 2 CFR 200.400, are required, prior to making a Federal award, to review information available through various OMB-designated repositories for eligibility qualification or financial integrity, and to have in place a framework for evaluating the risks posed by applicants before they receive Federal awards. The evaluation of the information obtained from the designated repository systems and the risk assessment may result in the FNS imposing special conditions that correspond to the degree of risk assessed. The Federal repository systems FNS will include:

- a. SAM, the System for Award Management, the Official U.S. Government system that consolidated the capabilities of CCR/Fed Reg, ORCA, and EPLS;

- b. FAPIIS, the Federal Awardee Performance and Integrity Information System, is a database that has been established to track contractor misconduct and performance;
- c. Dun and Bradstreet, the system where applicants establish a DUNS number which is used by the Federal government to better identify related organizations that are receiving funding under grants and cooperative agreements, and to provide consistent name and address data for electronic grant application systems. The Federal government requires that all applicants for Federal grants and cooperative agreements with the exception of individuals other than sole proprietors have a DUNS number.

Applicants must also respond to the pre-application assessment questions (Attachment D), Grant Program Accounting System & Financial Capability Questionnaire, to allow FNS to evaluate aspects of the applicant's financial stability, quality of management systems, history of performance, and reports and findings from audits. A questionnaire has been provided to facilitate the process. Applicants must answer all the pre-application questions. While answering "yes" may be an indicator of risk, the consideration and evaluation of these questions is only an indicator of potential risk and may or may not result in an additional oversight requirements or special conditions be placed on an award should an award be made. Decisions regarding additional oversight requirements will take into consideration the total number of risks identified.

Acknowledge USDA support

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

When acknowledging USDA support, Grantees should use the following language: "This material is based upon work that is supported by the Food and Nutrition Service, U.S. Department of Agriculture." Grantees are asked to follow the Grantees are asked to follow the [USDA Visual Standards Guide](https://www.usda.gov/sites/default/files/documents/visual-standards-guide-january-2013.pdf) at <https://www.usda.gov/sites/default/files/documents/visual-standards-guide-january-2013.pdf> when using the USDA logo.

IV. APPLICATION AND SUBMISSION INFORMATION

1. Applicants may request a paper copy of this solicitation and required forms by contacting the FNS Grants Officer at:

Anna Arrowsmith, Grant Officer
U.S. Department of Agriculture, FNS,
Grants and Fiscal Policy Division
3101 Park Center Drive, Room 740
Alexandria, VA 22302
E-mail: Anna.Arrowsmith@usda.fns.gov

2. Application Format

- Include a table of contents (not counted towards page limit).
- Limit the narrative portion of the application to the page lengths stated in section 4 below. Narrative response page restrictions apply only to content of the narrative application and do not apply to other required forms/attachments, nor the budget-related documents. Pages exceeding the stated page limits may be omitted during the review process.
- Use a 12-point Times New Roman font (smaller font may be used in tables, charts, and graphs as long as they are clearly readable);
- Use at least one-inch margins on the top and bottom of the page;
- Number all pages, excluding the form pages; and
- Submit completed application via grants.gov. Files should be submitted as a Portable Document File (PDF) through the grants.gov workspace.

3. Special Instructions

- Only State agencies that administer the NSLP may submit an application in response to this solicitation. There are two FY 2019 Team Nutrition Training Grant opportunities: Team Nutrition Training Grant for Innovative State Training Programs and the Team Nutrition E-STAR Training Grant. Each State may submit only one application on behalf of all interested Child Nutrition State agencies within that State and may apply to only one of the two aforementioned Team Nutrition Training Grants. States that submit applications for both grant opportunities will not be considered.
- Include signed MOUs from each participating SFA (see Attachment B for a sample).

- Include a Letter of Agreement to cooperate fully with FNS regarding the evaluation approach, proposed evaluation tools, and metric reporting methods (see Attachment A).
- Include the required Letters of Commitment and resumes for the Project Director, Social Scientist, and (if applicable) academic or research institution.
- Late application submission will not be considered in this competition. FNS will not consider additions or revisions to applications once they are received.
- Applications submitted without the required supporting documents, forms, and certification will not be considered.
- Applications that are not submitted via the Grants.gov portal will not be considered.
- If multiple application packages are submitted through the Grants.gov portal 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.
- Only State agencies that administer the NSLP may submit an application in response to this solicitation. There are two FY 2019 Team Nutrition Training Grant opportunities: Team Nutrition Training Grant for Innovative State Training Programs and the Team Nutrition E-STAR Training Grant. Each State may submit only one application on behalf of all interested Child Nutrition State agencies within that State and may apply to only one of the two aforementioned Team Nutrition Training Grants. States that submit applications for both grant opportunities will not be considered.
- Grant awards are contingent upon the availability of Federal funds.
- FNS reserves the right to make greater or fewer grant awards based upon the level of funding requested, the quality of applications received, or other Agency priorities. The submission of an application does NOT guarantee funding. FNS reserves the right to reduce, increase, or revise proposed budgets based on the availability of funds.
- There is no requirement for cost sharing or matching; therefore, this will not be considered in the review process.

4. The application should follow this format:

- a. Introductory Materials (maximum two pages)
 1. Application Cover Page (see Attachment E): Designate a single point of contact for your application. Provide the individual's name, job title, mailing

- address, phone number, and e-mail address.
2. Abstract: Provide a summary of your application with the following sections: Recruitment of SFAs/Managers (number of eligible SFAs to participate), Recruitment and Hiring of Mentors, E-STAR Implementation Approach, Administration of Sub-grants, and Evaluation (plan for supporting the national evaluation, plan for Grantee-led evaluation).
 3. Table of Contents (does not count toward page limit): Include all pages, appendices, and attachments. Each page of the application documents should be sequentially numbered.
- b. Project Narrative and Implementation (maximum 15 pages)
1. Must include the Activities/Indicators Tracker (see Attachment F).
 2. Must address all factors listed in Section II, part F: Grantee Requirements.
- c. Overall Project Timeline (maximum 4 pages)
- d. Key Personnel and Staff (maximum 4 pages).
1. Identify the staff (or contractors) who will manage the project. Describe roles and responsibilities of these employees or contractors, as well as relevant qualifications and experience. Include an organizational chart.
 2. If a key staff member (other than the Project Director or Social Scientist) has not been hired, please attach the job description that will be used to fill this position (including desired knowledge, skills and education).
 3. The application should identify the Project Director with appropriate qualifications as described in this RFA. A letter of commitment and resume is required for the Project Director.
 4. A letter of commitment should be included from the Project Director's supervisor.
 5. The application should identify a Social Scientist that has an advanced degree in social science or similar discipline with training and experience in school nutrition program evaluation. A resume and letter of commitment from the Social Scientist should be included in the application.
 6. It is highly desirable that the Grantee be affiliated with an academic or research institution. If so, the academic or research institution should be identified in the grant application as assisting with the evaluation of the State-level evaluation. A letter of commitment from the institution should be included in the application.
- e. Project Management and Quality Assurance (1 page).
1. Provide a description of the approach to managing the project to ensure that project activities are completed on time, within budget, and with quality results.
- f. Budget, Budget Narrative, and Management Plan (no maximum)
1. Provide a proposed budget describing appropriate use of grant funds and justifying costs. Refer to Section II. Federal Award Information, part E: Use

of Grant Funds-Allowable Costs, when developing the budget. Your budget must be submitted using the “Budget Information and Instruction Form” (SF-424A) Proposed costs must be necessary, reasonable and allocable to carry out the project’s goals and objectives. Include a total project budget, the amount requested from USDA, and the match contributed to the project.

2. In addition to the budget submitted via the “Budget Information and Instruction Form” (SF- 424A), you must also include a narrative line item description, formatted in a table with totals for each budget category, for every allowable cost and show how it supports the grant as well as briefly describe how the total amount for that line item was determined. If key partner(s) are receiving a portion of grant funds to provide essential services, please justify the organizations’ participation in the project. All funding requests must be in whole dollars.
 3. 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.
 4. All non-profit organizations must include their 501(c)(3) determination letter issued by the Internal Revenue Service (IRS).
 5. **Indirect Cost Rate:** If available the current Negotiated Indirect Cost Rate Agreement (NICRA), negotiated with a Federal negotiating agency, should be used. 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 note that this is what they are requesting. 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.
- g. Required Grant Application Forms (no maximum)
1. Signed MOUs- Attachments
 2. Signed Letter of Agreement- Attachment
 3. Grant Program Accounting System & Financial Capability Questionnaire- Attachment
 4. Application Cover Page- Attachment
- h. Appendices (no maximum)

Submission Date

Complete grant applications must be uploaded to www.Grants.gov by 11:59 PM, Eastern Standard Time (EST), on June 2, 2019.

- Late applications will not be considered.
- FNS will not consider additions or revisions to applications once they are submitted.

- Applications must be submitted via the Grants.gov web portal. Mailed, e-mailed or hand-delivered application packages will not be accepted.
- 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 or subsequent fiscal years should additional funds become available.

USDA strongly encourages applicants to begin the 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.

Electronic Submission Details

Please be aware that the Grants.gov system provides several confirmation notices; applicants should ensure receipt of confirmation that the application was accepted. Applicants experiencing difficulty submitting applications to www.Grants.gov should contact the grant support team noted in Section VII: Federal Awarding Agency Contacts.

In order to submit an application, you must:

1. Obtain a DUNS Number.

- In order to obtain a DUNS number, if your organization does not have one, or if you are unsure of your organization's number, contact Dun and Bradstreet via the internet at <http://fedgov.dnb.com/webform> or by calling 1-888-814-1435, Monday thru Friday, 8am-9pm ET. There is no fee associated with obtaining a DUNS number.
- **It may take 2-3 business days to obtain a DUNS number.**

2. Register in the System for Award Management (SAM).

- SAM combines Federal procurement systems and the Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance into one new system. For additional information regarding SAM, see the following link:
<https://www.sam.gov/SAM/pages/public/index.jsf>.
- Applicants must have their organization's DUNS, entity's Tax ID Number (TIN), and taxpayer name (as it appears on last tax return). **It may take 3-5 business days to register in SAM**, however in some instances the SAM process to complete the migration of permissions and/or the renewal of the entity record will require **5-7 days or more**.
- 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.

3. 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.

Completing this process automatically triggers an email request for applicant roles to the organization's E-Business Point of Contact (EBiz POC) for review. The EBiz POC is a representative from your organization who is the contact listed for SAM. To apply for grants on behalf of your organization, you will need the Authorized Organizational Representative (AOR) role. For more detailed instructions about creating a profile on Grants.gov, refer to:

<https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/applicants/registration.html>

4. Authorize Grants.gov Roles.

After creating an account on Grants.gov, the EBiz POC receives an email notifying them of your registration and request for roles. The EBiz POC will then log in to Grants.gov and authorize the appropriate roles, which may include the AOR role, thereby giving you permission to complete and submit applications on behalf of the organization. You will be able to submit your application online any time after you have been approved as an AOR.

5. Track Role Status.

To track your role request, refer to:

<https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/applicants/registration.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 EBiz 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.**

For additional information on organization registration in grants.gov, please visit:

<https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/applicants/organization-registration.html>

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), you can create individual instances of a workspace.

Below is an overview of applying on Grants.gov. For access to complete instructions on how to apply for opportunities, refer to:

<https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/applicants/apply-for-grants.html>

- 1) **Create a Workspace:** Creating a workspace allows you to complete it online and route it through your organization for review before submitting.
- 2) **Complete a Workspace:** Add participants to the workspace, complete all the required forms, and check for errors before submission.
 - a. **Adobe Reader:** If you decide not to apply by filling out web forms you can download individual PDF forms in Workspace so that they will appear similar to other Standard forms. The individual PDF forms can be downloaded and saved to your local device storage, network drive(s), or external drives, then accessed through Adobe Reader.
NOTE: Visit the Adobe Software Compatibility page on Grants.gov to download the appropriate version of the software at:
<https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/applicants/adobe-software-compatibility.html>
 - b. *Mandatory Fields in Forms:* In the forms, you will note fields marked with an asterisk and a different background color. These fields are mandatory fields that must be completed to successfully submit your application.
 - c. *Complete SF-424 Fields First:* The forms are designed to fill in common required fields across other forms, such as the applicant name, address, and DUNS number. To trigger this feature, an applicant must complete the SF-424 information first. Once it is completed, the information will transfer to the other forms.
- 3) **Submit a Workspace:** An application may be submitted through workspace by clicking the Sign and Submit button on the Manage Workspace page, under the Forms tab. Grants.gov recommends submitting your application package at least 24-48 hours prior to the close date to provide you with time to correct any potential technical issues that may disrupt the application submission.
- 4) **Track a Workspace:** After successfully submitting a workspace package, a Grants.gov Tracking Number (GRANTXXXXXXXX) is automatically assigned to the package. The number will be listed on the Confirmation page that is generated after submission.

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. For questions related to the specific grant

opportunity, contact the number listed in the application package of the grant you are applying for.

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.

Timely Receipt Requirements and Proof of Timely Submission

Online Submission. All applications must be received by 11:59 PM, Eastern Standard Time (EST), on the due date established for each program. 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 will receive an acknowledgement of receipt (AOR) 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 the Food and Nutrition Service 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 funding by the Food and Nutrition Service.

Applicants using slow internet, such as dial-up connections, should be aware that transmission can 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 are not supported.

All applicants **MUST** follow Grants.gov guidance on file naming conventions. To avoid submission issues, please follow the guidance provided in 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 (example: &, -, *, %, /, #', -), this includes periods (.), spacing followed by a dash in the file and for word separation, use underscore (example: Attached_File.pdf) in naming the attachments. **Please note that if these guidelines are not followed, your application will be rejected. FNS will not accept any application rejected from [Grants.gov](https://www.grants.gov) portal due to incorrect naming conventions.**

In order to submit an application via grants.gov, applicants must have obtained a Data Universal Numbering System (DUNS) number and registered in both the new Systems for Award Management (SAM) and on grants.gov. The applicant is strongly advised to allow ample time to initiate the grants.gov application submission process. All applicants must have SAM status at the time of application submission and throughout the duration of a federal award in accordance with 2 CFR Part 25. Please visit the following websites to obtain additional information on how to obtain a DUNS number

<http://fedgov.dnb.com/webform> and register in SAM

<https://www.sam.gov/SAM/pages/public/index.jsf>.

Please be aware that the Grants.gov system provides several confirmation notices; you need to be sure that you have confirmation that the application was accepted. For tools and tips regarding [Grants.gov](https://www.grants.gov), please visit:

<https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/applicants.html>.

Additional information and applicant resources is available at:

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

Letter of Intent

The eligible applicant that intends to submit an application should submit a Letter of Intent (Attachment G) notice by April 15, 2019. This notice does not obligate the applicant to submit an application, but provides FNS with useful information in preparing for the review and selection process. The notice should include the potential applicant's name and address, organization's name, telephone number, and e-mail address of the primary point of contact. The applicant can send the letter via e-mail to the FNS Grants Officer identified below:

Anna Arrowsmith
U.S. Department of Agriculture, FNS
Grants and Fiscal Policy Division

3101 Park Center Drive Room 740
Alexandria, VA 22302
E-mail: Anna.Arrowsmith@fns.usda.gov

Pre-award costs will not be awarded for this grant project.

Other Submission Requirements

Applicants experiencing difficulty submitting applications to www.Grants.gov should contact the Grants.gov Support Center at **Local Toll Free: 1-800-518-4726 or via e-mail at support@Grants.gov**.

Additional submission information and instructions are available at:
<https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/grantors/grantor-standard-language.html>.

V. APPLICATION REVIEW INFORMATION

EVALUATION OF GRANT APPLICATION CRITERIA

USDA will pre-screen all applications to ensure the applicants are eligible entities and are in compliance with all program regulations. USDA will not approve any waivers from program regulations for any projects submitted in response to this solicitation.

Review and Selection Process

After initial screening, USDA will convene an evaluation panel to consider the merit of each grant application. Each application that passes initial screening will be given to the panel to be evaluated and scored according to how well it addresses each application component. The panel will assign each application a score using the evaluation criteria and weights specified below. 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.

Application Evaluation Criteria and Scoring

Approach

25 points

- The identified sample of SFAs supports a robust evaluation of E-STAR. The applicant identifies and provides MOUs for at least 120 SFAs willing to participate in the random assignment process for the E-STAR grant. The applicant clearly identifies managers within each SFA that supervise at least three frontline staff in a school.
- The applicant agrees to not undertake another significant meal quality improvement initiative during the period of performance of the grant.
- The applicant demonstrates how the E-STAR program would address needs within the State and how the State can meet the minimum requirements of E-STAR.
- A timeline/action plan with a list of activities is included and clearly outlines the progression and coordination of the training activities, implementation of school-based strategies, and evaluation-related activities in accordance with the requirements specified in the RFA.
- Sub-grants support the implementation of manager action plans. The sub-grant process is clearly described and includes recruiting, application and selection process, timing and amount of sub-grants, reporting and accountability processes.
- There is a specific plan for hiring and retaining qualified Mentors to support the mentoring components of E-STAR as outlined in the RFA. Mentor hiring reflects maximum ratio of one mentor to ten managers.

Evaluation

35 points

- The narrative provides a clear evaluation plan for school-based interventions that describes data tools, collection, and analysis.
- The applicant and Social Scientist demonstrate familiarity and experience with State and local IRB approvals.
- The applicant demonstrates familiarity with the administrative data required for sample selection and describes how that information will be provided to FNS.
- The applicant provides a signed Letter of Agreement to cooperate with FNS evaluation activities related to the grant.
- Roles and responsibilities for monitoring and evaluating activities are clearly outlined (e.g. Social Scientist, other key personnel, etc.).
- The timeline allots adequate time prior to data collection to allow for OMB and IRB approval. The proposal clearly describes timeframes for data collection and how baseline data will be collected prior to implementation of training activities.
- The application includes a Social Scientist that has an advanced degree in social science or similar discipline with training and experience in school nutrition program evaluation. The proposed Social Scientist should have relevant documented training and experience

with program evaluation design, data collection and analysis, and preparing and publishing academic articles. A letter of commitment from the Social Scientist is included in the application.

- It is highly desirable that the Grantee be affiliated with an academic or research institution. If so, the academic or research institution and their role is identified in the grant application, including how the institution will contribute toward the evaluation effort. A letter of commitment from the institution should be included in the application.
- Any potential conflicts of interest (actual or perceived) that might prevent an independent and objective assessment of the implementation, impact, or benefits of the proposed project, are identified. Refer to Attachment C, as a sample. Minimally, a signed conflict of interest form from the Social Scientist should be submitted as part of the application packet.
- Proposal clearly explains how planned activities and participation (duplicated and unduplicated counts) will be documented.
- Proposal describes how the State agency will document and report on the number of targeted audiences reached, as well as best practices and lessons learned as result of the grant activities.
- The application includes all required components of project evaluation and appropriate appendices.

Project Management and Quality Assurance

20 points

- Applicant included resumes of relevant key staff and the qualifications of the staff involved and they reflect the expertise necessary to carry out the proposed project. If a key position has not been filled, a job description including desired knowledge, skills and education has been included in the application in lieu of a resume. A contingency plan for key personnel is provided.
- Resumes and letters of commitment are included from the Project Director, Project Director's supervisor, and Social Scientist.
- Identify any potential conflicts of interest (actual or perceived) that might prevent an independent and objective assessment of the implementation, impacts, or benefits of the proposed project (e.g. having a contractor both develop and assess a project). If any conflicts are identified for key personnel (especially evaluation personnel or organizations), provide a discussion of what steps the State agency will take to ensure an objective and complete evaluation. Minimally, a signed conflict of interest form from the Social Scientist should be submitted as part of the application packet.
- The management approach (including staffing, procurement of contractors, quality assurance planning, tracking timelines, monitoring progress, etc.) indicates that the applicant has the capacity to manage and execute the grant.
- The State demonstrates the capacity to coordinate and implement a large training and mentoring program.
- Roles and responsibilities of staff are clearly outlined. Proposal includes an organizational chart that indicates supervisory and reporting roles of all key project entities.

- Proposal discusses how the Project Director will be held accountable to keep the project on time and within budget and has the authority to make decisions. Proposal includes an organizational chart that indicates chain of command of all key project entities.
- Proposal clearly discusses and demonstrates that effective communication will exist among staff.
- Proposal describes how and by whom quarterly, annual and final reports to FNS will be prepared.
- Proposal discusses how and by whom relationships with all personnel outside of the State agency will be managed (e.g., personnel from partner agencies or outside entities, other State agencies, universities, consultants, contractors).
- Proposal describes State agency's commitment to provide financial and administrative oversight for the grant. Proposal funding used for sub-grants to SFAs has criteria provided for funding and plans for monitoring.
- Reviewers are able to clearly identify all required components of the following: key personnel, management plan, and appropriate appendices.

Budget Plan

20 points

- The total funding amount requested is appropriate for the scope of the project.
- Proposed costs are reasonable, necessary, and allocable to carry out the grant.
- The budget includes a line item description for every allowable cost and shows how it supports the grant.
- Budget calculations and documentation show clearly how the budget components were developed and costs estimated.
- A detailed plan for sub-grants is included.
- Budget narrative, itemized budget and the proposal narrative align with one another.
- The level of funding requested is economical and reasonable in relation to the proposed scope and effort of the project.
- The budget and training approach reflects efforts to provide cost-efficient training, while still including all required E-STAR components. Training larger numbers of managers may decrease the overall cost of training per participant, as would offering training at times that maximize attendance, etc.
- Anticipated contracts are described, and whether the procurement will be competitive or sole source. If sole source procurement is planned, a written request for an exception with the name of the proposed contractor; a brief explanation of why the state has decided to award this contract as sole source; and a description of how the state determined the proposed cost of the contract to be fair and reasonable is included.

VI. FEDERAL AWARD ADMINISTRATION INFORMATION

Federal Award Notice

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.

The Government is not obligated to make any award as a result of this RFA. 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.

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.

3. 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 new Systems for Award Management (SAM). If you were registered in the CCR, your company’s information is already in SAM and you will just 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) was developed to address these requirements. FAPIIS contains integrity and performance information from the Contractor Performance Assessment Reporting System, information from the SAM database, 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 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 Jennifer Weatherly, 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.

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 of the award may be obtained electronically. Please contact the Grants Officer at:

Anna Arrowsmith
U.S. Department of Agriculture, FNS
Grants and Fiscal Policy Division
3101 Park Center Drive Room 740
Alexandria, VA 22302
E-mail: Anna.Arrowsmith@fns.usda.gov

Reporting

Financial Reporting

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 grant recipient must obtain USDA e-authentication certification and access to FPRS. For additional information on FPRS, visit: www.fprs.fns.usda.gov.

Progress Reporting

The grant recipient will be responsible for managing and monitoring the progress of the grant project activities and performance. Grantees are required to submit quarterly, cumulative annual performance reports, and a final report. Refer to Appendix D for an example of what a report may require. The specific reporting format will be provided to Grantees as a part of their Grant Terms and Conditions, and/or a part of grant orientation.

Grantees must also be willing to participate in quarterly conference calls to discuss progress with FNS.

VII. FEDERAL AWARDING AGENCY CONTACT

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

Anna Arrowsmith
U.S. Department of Agriculture, FNS
Grants and Fiscal Policy Division
3101 Park Center Drive Room 740
Alexandria, VA 22302
E-mail: Anna.Arrowsmith@fns.usda.gov

VIII. OTHER INFORMATION

Debriefing Requests

Non-selected applicants may request a debriefing to discuss the strengths and weaknesses of submitted proposals. Debriefing requests must be made to the Grant Officer, within thirty days after receipt of the grant decision. This information may be useful when preparing future grant proposals. Additional information on debriefing requests will be forwarded to non-selected applicants. The Food and Nutrition Service reserves the right to provide this debriefing orally or in written format.

RFA BUDGET NARRATIVE CHECKLIST

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.

	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 and Social Scientist 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?		
Is the basis for the cost per item or other basis of computation stated in the budget?		

FY 2019 TEAM NUTRITION E-STAR PROGRAM TRAINING GRANT RFA

	YES	NO
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 X hourly wages, 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 under this heading 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 a Federal Agency? If yes, a copy of the most recent and signed negotiated rate agreement must be provided along with the application.		
If no negotiated agreement exists, the basis and the details of the indirect costs to be requested should also be reflected in the budget.		

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