

Fiscal Year 2019 Team Nutrition E-STAR Training Grants for State Agencies

Request for Applications

Questions and Answers

FNS has received several questions regarding the staffing requirements of the Project Director and Key Personnel, specifically around Full Time Employees (FTEs) and education requirements.

In response to these questions, each of the two Team Nutrition Training Grant Request for Applications (RFAs) were written with separate and unique requirements. Applicants should adhere to these requirements as stated. However, if applicants want to propose an alternative in their application, for the areas mentioned or in additional areas, they may do so. This is a competitive grant process, and each proposal will be evaluated and scored appropriately.

The Questions and Answers listed below are **ONLY** applicable to the **Team Nutrition E-STAR Training Grants for State Agencies Request for Applications (RFA)**.

The following topics are addressed in this document:

• General	Q&A #1-7	Pages 1-2
• Personnel/Staffing	Q&A #8-12	Pages 2-3
• Eligibility	Q&A #13-17	Pages 4-4
• Programming	Q&A #18-25	Pages 5-6
• Evaluation	Q&A #26-27	Pages 6-6

General

1. Will there be any additional Team Nutrition Training Grant opportunities available for 2019?

The Team Nutrition E-STAR Training Grants for State Agencies and the Team Nutrition Training Grant for Innovative State Training Programs are the two Team Nutrition Training Grant opportunities for Fiscal Year 2019.

2. For the two FY 2019 Team Nutrition Training Grant opportunities, how long is the grant period?

The Team Nutrition Training Grant for Innovative State Training Programs has a three-year period of performance, and the Team Nutrition E-STAR Training Grants for State Agencies has a four-year period of performance.

3. Near the bottom of page 10 of the E-STAR RFA it states, “Secure and support 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

Fiscal Year 2019 Team Nutrition E-STAR Training Grants for State
Agencies
Request for Applications
Questions and Answers

study.” Can you advise us on how to address USDA’s annual Professional Standards requirements and/or union contracts that require school nutrition professionals to have training? Can they still receive training, just not training that closely mimics E-STAR? Or does that mean no training at all?

SFAs may participate in necessary/required trainings, even those trainings that cover topics addressed in E-STAR. SFAs will be asked to inform the E-STAR Social Scientist about the training and topic.

4. Could you define High Resolution photos?

High Resolution images are at least 300 pixels per inch (ppi). This resolution makes for good print quality, and is the standard requirement for printing hard copies. “High resolution” is used to describe something such as a screen or photograph that provides an extremely clear image.

5. Can two States submit one proposal?

No, two or more States may not submit a collaborative proposal for the Team Nutrition E-STAR Training Grants for State Agencies.

6. Is this the future of how Team Nutrition grants will be managed?

The E-STAR Training Grant for State Agencies and the Innovative State Training Programs Grant are the Team Nutrition Training Grant opportunities for Fiscal Year 2019.

7. How many State Agencies will be awarded this grant?

FNS anticipates awarding up to two E-STAR Training Grants to State Agencies that administer the National School Lunch Program (NSLP).

Personnel/Staffing

8. The Innovative State Training Programs Grant RFA references two positions that can be combined to make 1.0 FTE for Social Scientist and 1.0 FTE for Project Director. The E-STAR Training Grants RFA does not make this reference. Are two positions allowed to be combined for the E-STAR Grant as well?

Fiscal Year 2019 Team Nutrition E-STAR Training Grants for State
Agencies
Request for Applications
Questions and Answers

No; please refer to pages 21 and 22 of the E-STAR RFA. The two RFAs should be read as separate documents. Each RFA has its own unique requirements.

- 9. The E-STAR RFA states that the Full-time Project Director must have experience in school nutrition and training. The Innovative State Training Grant states that the Project Director must have a four-year degree in nutrition/dietetics AND experience in school nutrition. Can a substantial amount of school nutrition experience with a related degree, but not in nutrition/dietetics, be acceptable for the Innovative State training grant?**

The requirements for Project Directors are stated in each RFA. Please refer to the Application Review Information Section of each RFA (State Innovations p. 29 and E-STAR p. 38). Each RFA has its own unique requirements. If applicants would like to propose an alternative in their application and provide a justification in certain areas, they may do so. This is a competitive grant process, and each proposal will be evaluated and scored independently and appropriately.

- 10. We are concerned that the 1.0 FTE Social Scientist would result in funding being unused at the end of the grant period due to the amount of work and time the Project Director spends on evaluation. Due to this, can we use some of the Project Director's and Co-Director's time to assist with evaluation tasks?**

For the E-STAR Grant opportunity, the two FTEs (Project Director and Social Scientist) would need to be dedicated to this grant as required by the RFA. This grant has a robust evaluation (FNS-led and Grantee-led components) which requires a full-time (one FTE) Social Scientist. The administrative responsibilities of E-STAR requires a full-time (one FTE) Project Director.

- 11. A) If a manager that receives the E-STAR training wishes to train frontline staff at more than one of their buildings, is that allowable?**

Yes.

- B) If so, will both buildings be included in the data collection or only one?**

That will be determined by the FNS evaluator and the Social Scientist.

- 12. Can we hire a Project Director and Social Scientist after award?**

Yes. Please refer to pages 25 and 31 of the E-STAR RFA for the specific requirements.

Fiscal Year 2019 Team Nutrition E-STAR Training Grants for State
Agencies
Request for Applications
Questions and Answers

Eligibility

- 13. E-STAR RFA: Can more than one manager from a School Food Authority (SFA) participate? What if a large SFA wants all their managers to be a part of this? Can the minimum of 120 include managers/buildings from the same SFAs (i.e. 1 SFA, 5 managers)?**

Please refer to page 27 of the E-STAR RFA. “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.”

- 14. For the signed Memorandum of Understanding (MOUs), is USDA requiring an actual signature or can we type the MOU requirements into a survey of some sort (e.g., Survey Monkey) that has a “click here to sign” function?**

The applicant must identify and provide MOUs for at least 120 SFAs willing to participate in the random assignment process for the E-STAR Grant. It is up to the applicant as to how they collect the signed MOUs that must be part of the application package. If more than one Manager is participating from each SFA, the number of Managers should be included.

A summary page of SFAs and the number of Managers from that SFA that are identified for E-STAR could be included in the application package to clearly identify that the minimum SFAs/Managers have been identified.

- 15. Can a non-profit child care agency apply for this grant?**

No, only State agencies that administer the National School Lunch Program (NSLP) are eligible to apply for the E-STAR Training Grant Program.

- 16. Can each individual district apply or is it just the State that can apply?**

Individual school districts are not eligible to apply. We encourage interested school districts to contact their State agency.

- 17. Do you need a Food Service Director in order for the Food Service Manager (FSM) to participate?**

Fiscal Year 2019 Team Nutrition E-STAR Training Grants for State
Agencies
Request for Applications
Questions and Answers

Not necessarily. The FSM's supervisor could approve the FSM's SMART goal and action plan that will be developed during the workshop.

Programming

- 18. One document of the RFA (Appendix A-Comparison) states there are NO sub-grants for the STAR while the details of the Innovative State Training Program indicate there ARE sub-grants awarded. Could you please clarify?**

The STAR to E-STAR comparison that you are referring to only applies to the E-STAR RFA. Refer to Appendix A of the E-STAR RFA.

Sub-grants are optional, not required, for the Innovative State Training Programs and the E-STAR Training Grants.

- 19. Can a sub-grant go to only the participating SFA manager/ building or to the SFA in general?**

Sub-grants should only be given to the SFA-FSM/building identified as participating in the E-STAR to aid in implementing their SMART goal, action plan, and strategies.

- 20. Can we provide sub-grants for SFAs whose manager is participating in the control group?**

No. The FNS evaluator will be responsible for the overall structure of the control group.

- 21. Can a State have more than 120 SFAs sign –up for E-STAR?**

Yes, States can have more than the required minimum of 120 SFAs. However, they need to make sure that their budget can handle the additional costs associated with the additional E-STAR participants (travel, training, additional mentors etc.).

- 22. What's in it for the SFAs assigned to the control group? Can control groups receive incentives for participating?**

The FNS evaluator will coordinate the structure of the control group.

Fiscal Year 2019 Team Nutrition E-STAR Training Grants for State
Agencies
Request for Applications
Questions and Answers

23. What are the data collection requirements for the control SFAs? Can they receive funding to meet these requirements?

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. The FNS evaluator will coordinate the structure of the control group activities.

24. Because of facility availability, can grantees start the mentor and manager trainings at the end of Year One versus beginning in Year Two?

The first year is designed and intended to be a planning year to set-up training logistics and the evaluation structure with both the State's Social Scientist and the FNS Evaluator. However, if the training facility scheduling dictates starting the training at the end of Year One, and all the required components have been met, this would be acceptable. The application needs to include a justification and explanation of why the variation is necessary.

25. If the food service director wants to attend the training themselves instead of sending their manager, is that allowable?

No, the E-STAR training program and evaluation has been designed for school nutrition managers, and not for school nutrition directors. Please visit ICN's [website](#) for training opportunities for school nutrition directors.

Evaluation

26. E-STAR RFA: Do the control SFMs receive anything for serving as a control?

The FNS evaluator will coordinate the structure of the control group.

27. Can the control SFAs/ receive a sub-grant and/or intervention activities the following year?

Applicants should not plan sub-grant and/or intervention activities for the control group outside the grant period of performance with this funding.