

March 2, 2022

**SOLICITATION FOR NEW DAIRY BUSINESS INNOVATION INITIATIVE
APPLICATIONS**

Dear DBI Initiative:

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA), Agricultural Marketing Service (AMS) invites you to apply for additional Dairy Business Innovation (DBI) Initiative funding (7 U.S.C. 1632d). Approximately \$80 million is available through the American Rescue Plan (ARP) Act (Pub. L. No. 117-2) to fund applications submitted in response to this solicitation. Supplemental funding is available to support processing capacity expansion and technical assistance to producers. The pandemic has demonstrated that dairy producers and regional dairy processors, particularly those engaged in value-added production, faced systemic shocks over the past several years. This funding is intended to improve regional dairy supply chain resiliency.

The additional funds will be noncompetitively distributed to the Initiatives established as of the date of this solicitation. Each currently established DBI is eligible to apply for up to \$19 million (\$20 million minus USDA overhead expenses) to manage these funds. If an Initiative applies for less than their available \$19 million, AMS will redistribute the remaining funds equally to the other Initiatives.

The currently established Initiatives are:

- University of California, Fresno Foundation;
- University of Tennessee;
- Vermont Agency of Agriculture, Food & Markets; and
- University of Wisconsin

AMS encourages Initiatives to benefit smaller dairy farm businesses, underserved dairy producers, veteran dairy producers, underserved communities, and partner and/or collaborate with Minority Serving Institutions (MSIs) that have the expertise and can provide direct or indirect technical assistance to dairy businesses. For example, Initiatives may prioritize subawards to entities that are currently partnering with or receiving technical assistance from the above-mentioned groups.

Initiatives must submit an application in response to this solicitation. AMS will review the applications and, if approved, issue a new notice of award. AMS is not amending your fiscal year (FY) 2021 agreement.

The legal authority, purpose, and requirements outlined in the [2021 DBI Request for Applications USDA-AMS-TM-DBII-G-21-0008](#) will govern any grant agreements issued using ARP funds under this solicitation, with the following exceptions:

- The [SF-424A - Budget Summary](#) and [Project Abstract Summary](#) forms have been added to the required documents for application packages and must be submitted with your application.
- The [AMS General Terms and Conditions](#) have been updated to reflect changes to the AMS grants management and payment management systems.
- This solicitation includes the implementation of updated program performance measures (outcomes and indicators) as described in the Achievability section of the Project Narrative.
- The award period of performance for these funds is 4 years to allow Initiatives ample time to incorporate the increased funding from ARP. The period of performance must start no later than September 30, 2022 and end no later than September 29, 2026.
- The maximum subaward amount for funds received in response to this solicitation is being increased up to \$2,500,000.
- Each Initiative may request up to \$19 million in funding.

How to Apply

To apply, Initiatives must submit an electronic application via [Grants.gov](#) within 60 days of receiving this letter. Use the opportunity under either the Assistance Listing number “**10.176**,” or the DBI Initiatives Funding Opportunity Number “**USDA-AMS-TM-DBII-G-21-0008**. As a reminder, applications must include:

- SF-424 Application for Financial Assistance;
- [SF-424A Budget Summary](#) and [Project Abstract Summary](#) (NEW for FY22);
- DBI Project Narrative Form (attached);
- Letters of Commitment from Partners and/or Collaborators; and
- Negotiated Indirect Cost Rate Agreement (NICRA), if applicable.

AMS will accept and review applications as they are submitted through Grants.gov. AMS plans to issue a notice of award upon completion of the administrative review. In the project narrative form, please indicate whether you would have the capacity to utilize such funds in a manner that complies with the program’s statutory authority.

AMS anticipates that additional appropriated funds will be available in FY2022 for the current Initiatives. AMS will be issuing an FY22 RFA later this year, inviting the Initiatives to apply.

DBI Solicitation Letter, ARP Funds, March 2022

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If you have questions regarding this solicitation, please email Angela Davis at Angela.Davis@usda.gov or Patrick Kelley at patrick.kelley@usda.gov. For more information on the DBI program, please visit www.ams.usda.gov/dbi. We look forward to reviewing your application.

Sincerely,



Digitally signed by ELIZABETH
RAKOLA
Date: 2022.03.02 08:20:50 -05'00'

Betsy Rakola
Acting Deputy Administrator
Transportation and Marketing Program

Enclosure Attachment: SF-424A and Project Abstract Summary Instructions; DBI Project Narrative Form