Information Collection: 0584-0512
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Behind the Tray – Food Science for School Meals; an Immersive Education Program Cooperative Agreement

Fiscal Year 2024 Request for Applications (RFA)
Assistance Listing Number (ALN): 10.585

Release Date:	**May 13, 2024**
Application Due Date:	**11:59 pm, Eastern Daylight Time (EDT), July 12, 2024**
Anticipated Award Date:	**September 2024**

OMB BURDEN STATEMENT: This information is being collected to assist the Food and Nutrition Service in furthering food safety support for Child Nutrition programs. This is a voluntary collection and FNS will use the information to award food safety education funds for a cooperative agreement. This collection does not request any personally identifiable information under the Privacy Act of 1974. According to the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, an agency may not conduct or sponsor, and a person is not required to respond to, a collection of information unless it displays a valid OMB control number. The valid OMB control number for this information collection is 0584-0512. The time required to complete this information collection is estimated to average 20.00 hours per response, including the time for reviewing instructions, searching existing data sources, gathering and maintaining the data needed, and completing and reviewing the collection of information. Send comments regarding this burden estimate or any other aspect of this collection of information, including suggestions for reducing this burden, to: U.S. Department of Agriculture, Food and Nutrition Service, Office of Policy Support, 1320 Braddock Place, 5th Floor, Alexandria, VA 22314 ATTN: PRA (0584-0512). Do not return the completed form to this address.

Application Checklist

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

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

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

When **preparing your application**, ensure:

- ☐ Application format and narrative meet the requirements included in Section 4 – Application and Submission Information. This includes page limits, priorities outlined in Section 5 – Application Review Information, and all necessary attachments.

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

- ☐ All key staff proposed to be paid by this grant.
- ☐ The percentage of time the Project Director will devote to the project in full-time equivalents (FTEs).
- ☐ Your organization's fringe benefit rate and amount, as well as the basis for the computation.
- ☐ The type of fringe benefits to be covered with Federal funds.
- ☐ Itemized travel expenses (including type of travel), travel justification, and basis for lodging estimate.
- ☐ 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 an 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 and the applicant has never been approved for a NICRA, they may charge up to 10% de minimis). If an applicant is requesting the de minimis rate or indirect costs are not required, please state this in the budget narrative.

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

- ☐ FNS-906 – Grant Program Accounting System & Financial Capability Questionnaire.
- ☐ Negotiated Indirect Cost Rate Agreement (PDF – Upload using the "Add Attachments" button under SF-424 item #15).
- ☐ AD-3030 – Representations Regarding Felony Conviction and Tax Delinquent Status for Corporate Applicants (fillable PDF in Grants.gov). This document is only required if your organization is a corporation. The form is located in the optional tab of the grants.gov application package.
- ☐ Resumes of key staff.
- ☐ Letters of support/commitment from key staff and partners.
- ☐ Additional attachments as required.

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1. Program Description and Objectives

Executive Summary

The purpose of the Behind the Tray – Food Science for School Meals cooperative agreement, is to develop and implement a week-long in-person science-based food safety education training program. The education program is designed to enhance the food science literacy of school nutrition professionals. Program participants should learn the fundamentals of food science and food processing, with a special emphasis on food safety and food microbiology topics, learn how this information applies to their job, apply this knowledge to their nutrition programs, and how to better communicate these topics to stakeholders.

Authority for this project is designated in the Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2024 (Public Law 118-42) which provides legislative authority "for necessary expenses to carry out the Richard B. Russell National School Lunch Act (42 U.S.C. 1751 et seq) and the Child Nutrition Act of 1966 (42 U.S.C. 1771 et seq.)" of which $4,378,000 are appropriated for food safety education. The USDA FY 2024 Explanatory Budget Notes for the Food and Nutrition Service describe food safety education funding "to help ensure the safety of foods served to school children, including training for State and local staff."

USDA FNS seeks to enter into a 2-year cooperative agreement with one selected applicant to develop, implement, and evaluate the week-long in-person science-based food safety education training program.

Eligible entities include universities and colleges that are publicly funded and operate under the auspices of state or regional governments, and private institutions of higher education. To be eligible, the entities stated above must also:

1. Demonstrate experience and expertise in developing and delivering in-person adult training programs in food science, nutrition, agricultural science, or similar fields.
2. Demonstrate access to the necessary facilities, equipment, and content experts necessary to develop and deliver the course.
3. Demonstrate successful completion of rigorous research through publication of research in peer-reviewed journals within the food science, nutrition, agricultural sciences, or similar fields.

A total of $600,000 will be available for award (September 2024), contingent on the availability of Federal funds.

Program Description

The FNS Supplemental Nutrition and Safety Programs (SNAS), Food Safety and Nutrition Division (FSND), Food Safety Branch (FSB) promotes food safety practices in USDA FNS child nutrition programs through education, training, and outreach. This RFA cooperative agreement is a new program which provides funding for an immersive, multi-day, food science-based education program aimed at improving food safety knowledge, attitudes, awareness, and communication among school nutrition professionals. In addition to covering food science basics, the program should also address the latest food science and emerging issues with implications to school nutrition programs. The program should be comprised of a series of lectures, hands-on laboratories, field trips to farms and food processing operations, and other immersive food science experiences. The program preferably would be held during convenient times for school

nutrition professionals, such as the summer months, and would require selected participants to travel and stay for the week-long duration of the course.

One training session should be held each calendar year (2025 & 2026) of the cooperative agreement's period of performance, with a maximum of 30 participants per session.

The target audience for the program are school or district-level school nutrition program managers and directors. School nutrition professionals (SNPs) typically oversee all aspects of school foodservice, including program administration, procurement, menu planning, training, and more. The roles and responsibilities of SNPs vary, but all SNPs ensure that students receive safe and high-quality meals. The program would also be open to State agency staff involved in administration, training, and technical assistance for school nutrition programs. Participants would be selected through an annual national nomination process. All states and territories would be encouraged to nominate school nutrition professionals to attend. The curriculum should be geared towards the unique nature of school food service operations; this should be clearly demonstrated in project proposals.

Program participants have a wide range of educational and experiential backgrounds. The curriculum should be developed for an audience of school nutrition directors, or those in similar senior-level positions of school nutrition programming. They should have certification(s) with an accredited food handler certification, and appropriate knowledge of food safety and HACCP concepts, as their positions require. Project proposals should clearly outline activities and indicators that address the objectives included below. If the proposal includes any observational components, necessary approvals should be noted, including IRB review and approval for adult human observational methodologies where appropriate. Sub-awards may be considered for aspects of this project, if appropriate.

Foundations of the Curriculum

The program should be centered around food safety and cover the basic science and rationale behind food safety practices and behaviors, with special attention to those most relevant in schools and school food service operations. The program should cover *at a minimum* information about:

Food microbiology and food safety:

- Fundamentals of foodborne pathogens, including bacteria, viruses, fungi, parasites, prions, and their survival, growth, and pathogenesis.
- Foodborne pathogen control in food processing and food service operations.
- Basics of spoilage, spoilage microorganisms, and the differences between spoilage and pathogen control.
- Basics of beneficial microorganisms used in food processing (i.e. fermentation, acidification, preservation).
- Sanitation and personal hygiene, and their application to food processing and food service operations.
- Basics of foodborne outbreak tracking and epidemiological investigations.
- Process approach to HACCP programs for school food service operations.
- Foodborne allergens, allergen controls used in food processing and food service operations, and applicable regulations and labeling for food allergens.

- Principles of food safety and food regulation and those laws related to school food service operations.
- Food safety and risk communication.
- Strategies for the development of a food safety culture.

Food harvesting, processing, and manufacturing:

- Food processing concept basics, including canning, freezing, drying, pasteurizing, etc.
- Meat science and meat processing basics.
- Grain science and grain processing basics.
- Dairy science and dairy processing basics.
- Fruit and vegetable farming and processing basics.
- Basics of food packaging.
- Basics of food product formulation, ingredient sourcing, preservatives, additives, flavors, colors, food processing aides, and reading product labels.
- Current trends in the food industry (i.e. clean label, organic, antibiotic free, gluten free, local, etc.), and consumer focus on pesticides, hormones, and other processing aids.
- Navigating social media and news reporting on food related issues and events.

Food supply chain:

- Basics of the food industry supply chain and distribution.
- USDA Foods & USDA DOD Fresh procurement and distribution.
- Food safety considerations of imported foods, as related to the Buy American Act.

While some basics of fruit and vegetable farming and processing should be addressed, USDA FNS also delivers a companion program called Produce Safety University, which covers all aspects of produce safety from farm to fork.

Award Vehicle

USDA FNS seeks to enter into a new cooperative agreement with an entity capable of developing, planning, delivering, and evaluating the program. The curriculum could include but is not limited to the use of slide presentations and lectures from content experts, videos, group and hands on activities, scientific laboratory exercises, field trips to farms, food processing facilities, and food distribution centers, and other educational or immersive experiences used to enhance the participant knowledge, attitudes, and awareness on the curriculum topics. The curriculum should also be developed with the intent and ability to be continually re-evaluated and revised.

Participant nomination and selection will be a collaborative process between the awarded applicant and USDA FNS; the awardee will manage the nomination process and propose a list of program participants for USDA FNS to review and approve. The applicant should incorporate any staff or administrative costs for this process into their budget proposal.

Training Logistics

Travel logistics associated with delivering participants to the training and their housing will be handled through a separate contract managed by USDA FNS, however costs associated with field trips or other immersive experiences during the course should be incorporated into the project budget. Applicants should include information about coffee, refreshments, and viable lunch options for participants during the training. Breakfast and dinner per diem will be handled through

the same contract as travel logistics. The applicant should also plan to provide on-site meal options inclusive of dietary restrictions and allergies in accordance with the amount of funding available for meal per diems.

Legislative Authority

The Legislative Authority for this project comes from Public Law 118-42, the Consolidations Appropriations Act, 2024 which provides authority “for necessary expenses to carry out the Richard B. Russell National School Lunch Act (42 U.S.C. 1751 et seq) and the Child Nutrition Act of 1966 (42 U.S.C. 1771 et seq.)” of which $4,378,000 are appropriated for food safety education. The USDA FY 2024 Explanatory Budget Notes for the Food and Nutrition Service describe food safety education funding "to help ensure the safety of foods served to school children, including training for State and local staff.”

Program Development

Develop a Comprehensive Curriculum

All applications should provide a thorough plan outlining the process to develop a comprehensive science-based curriculum of appropriate rigor, that addresses the learning objectives of the course (outlined below). The plan should also outline the proposed pedagogical approaches. Applicants are encouraged to propose additional curricula based on their expertise in program development and delivery, in addition to the foundational topics provided in the program description.

Learning Objectives

Upon completing this program, *at a minimum* the participants will be able to:

1. Demonstrate increased knowledge of foodborne pathogen risks and food safety challenges within the food supply chain.
2. Demonstrate increased knowledge of foodborne pathogen control, sanitation, and personal hygiene processes used to protect the food supply chain.
3. Connect basic food microbiology to HACCP principles and operational decisions, such as developing and implementing a school food safety program.
4. Demonstrate a positive change in attitude towards using food safety principles and processes within the school food service operation.
5. Understand the flow of fruits and vegetables, meat and dairy, and grain commodities from farm to fork.
6. Describe basic food processing methods.
7. Understand the purpose of specific food ingredients, including preservatives, flavors, colors, processing aids, and other additives used in common food products.
8. Describe the differences between assessing the quality of foods and the microbiological or food safety condition of foods.
9. Identify regulatory agencies, laws, and rules and regulations that protect the food supply.
10. Implement and communicate food safety culture principles and strategies to develop a food safety focused school food service operation.
11. Assume an advocate and leadership-type role for ensuring food safety.
12. Assess scientifically supported and unbiased food safety information.
13. Objectively evaluate current food related news and media.
14. Clearly communicate unbiased food safety information to program stakeholders.
15. Understand the history, purpose, and operations of USDA Foods and USDA DOD Fresh.

Applicants are encouraged to refine the learning objectives based on their expertise in program development and delivery.

Program Planning
A comprehensive timeline for the development, planning, delivery, and evaluation of one training session to be held each calendar year (2025 & 2026) of the cooperative agreement's period of performance, with a maximum of 30 participants per session, should be included in project proposals. Applicants should provide a preliminary plan for all proposed supplemental activities supporting the main educational programming such as field trips, hands-on activities, scientific laboratory exercises, or other activities in their proposals. The program relies on a diverse learning experience to successfully convey the course's objectives. It should be clear that there is adequate time for all required activities. It should also be clear where USDA FNS review and approval will be incorporated at each stage in the proposal.

Proposals should include basic descriptions of all facilities, equipment, and services required for the training sessions and their purpose (which should also be included in the budget proposal). Applicants should include an overview of all instructors, consultants, and supporting staff (including students) involved in the project to include a brief biography, higher education attainment, applicable expertise to the program, and what role they will serve. Instructors, consultants, and supporting staff should have appropriate subject matter expertise for their roles and responsibilities in developing, delivering, and evaluating the program. It is important that the project team has adequate knowledge in food science, nutrition, agricultural sciences, or similar fields.

Program Delivery
Applicants should plan to complete all stages of program planning, logistical planning, scheduling, preparation, delivery, and evaluation of the program. Proposals should provide sufficient detail regarding the implementation of all project plans to deliver the training successfully.

Program Evaluation and Outcomes
Evaluation is a critical component of the program; it is important to determine the program's success and quantify the changes in participants' knowledge and attitudes. Information about the delivery, areas of improvement, and how participants used content and materials in their roles in school nutrition should also be gathered. A preliminary plan should be included outlining the proposed methodology to evaluate the program and measure its successes and areas of improvement. The evaluation plan should be rigorous, reliable, and:

- quantify short- and long-term changes in participant knowledge and attitudes associated with the learning objectives,
- evaluate the delivery of the training program,
- provide sufficient information to improve the training program, and
- provide information about how participants integrate knowledge learned in their professional roles and responsibilities following completion of the program.

Applicants should describe plans to provide an after-action report providing the results of the evaluation and internal assessment of the successes and areas of improvement for future training for USDA FNS review and approval in their proposals. Applicants should clearly articulate

recommendations about how to revise the training program based on the results of the evaluation and recommendations included in their after-action report.

A preliminary plan to document, report, and publish report(s) and manuscript(s) related to the project should be included in project proposals. USDA FNS anticipates this to be a collaborative effort; more information regarding USDA FNS substantial involvement is included in the "cooperative agreement information" in Section 4 of this RFA.

Key Objectives

Below is a list of the Program Objectives. As noted in Section 4, within the "Activities/Indicators Tracker," proposed activities should be clearly aligned to these objectives and their associated activities and indicators.

Application proposals must include all of the objectives identified below. Note that if awarded, grantees will be required to report on progress towards activities aligned with the required objective(s) and must use the FNS-908 Performance Progress Report. Carefully considering proposed activities and indicators will prepare grantees for their progress reporting requirements if awarded. Proposals should demonstrate an understanding that the program will be developed, delivered, evaluated, and improved each year of the cooperative agreement.

#	Objectives
1	Develop a comprehensive curriculum that successfully achieves the learning objectives for USDA FNS review and approval including all curriculum lectures, educational, experiential activity, and supporting materials ("**Develop a Comprehensive Curriculum**")
2	Successfully plan for the in-person delivery of the program, including creating comprehensive timelines, securing adequate facilities, equipment, and appropriate personnel, planning and executing a national nomination process to be reviewed and approved by USDA FNS, and planning supplemental experiential activities ("**Program Planning**")
3	Successful delivery of the program ("**Program Delivery**")
4	Evaluate the success of the program using a comprehensive and rigorous approach and provide an after-action report with recommendations for improvements ("**Program Evaluation and Outcomes**")

Final Deliverable(s)

The project proposal should address how the findings will be disseminated to program stakeholders. At a minimum, the Grantee shall prepare and deliver to USDA FNS one final report integrating all the information learned from all work funded by this project in an acceptable format for USDA FNS to circulate publicly (e.g., on the USDA FNS website). If appropriate, the Grantee may submit peer-reviewed journal articles for publication based on research using grant funds. All materials that will be published on USDA FNS websites **must be 508-compliant**. Please see http://www.section508.gov/ for more information. USDA FNS recognizes that the journal article may not be published by the end of the grant period, but a submitted draft is required.

USDA FNS reserves the right to utilize, disseminate, or share any deliverables and products produced with funding under this grant project in accordance with 2 CFR part 200 (including, but not limited to, tools developed by sub-grantees using grant funds).

Meetings

In meetings with USDA FNS, the Grantee shall provide an overview of the activities conducted since the last meeting, major accomplishments with completion dates and budget, deviations from the proposed plan, lessons learned, and challenges encountered, solutions developed to overcome difficulties, preliminary findings, assistance needed from USDA FNS on technical issues, and major planned activities for the next quarter. Should a major issue arise between meetings, the Grantee shall contact the USDA FNS Grants and Program Officers immediately. Meetings with USDA FNS shall occur at least monthly. The Grantee shall provide USDA FNS with an agenda a minimum 3 business days prior to each meeting.

Reports and Products Review

All reports and products generated by efforts funded through this cooperative agreement are subject to review and approval by USDA FNS before publication. This includes reviews of communications materials meant for general audiences, presentations and all training materials, final reports, and other items associated with the cooperative agreement. All materials that will be published on USDA FNS websites or delivered to subgrantees must be Section 508-compliant. Please refer to the following website for more information: http://www.section508.gov/. The Grantee is responsible for delivering 508-compliant documents to USDA FNS for publication. All deliverables funded by this cooperative agreement must be provided in an acceptable format for USDA FNS to publish on its websites and project findings shall be prepared for presentation at one or more national conferences. USDA FNS typically requires 2 weeks to review reports and products, but additional time may be required based on the level of review.

2. Federal Award Information

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

- Total amount of funding expected to award: USDA FNS anticipates awarding up to $600,000, contingent on the availability of the Federal funds.
- Anticipated number of awards: 1
- Minimum award amount (award floor): $0
- Maximum award amount (award ceiling): $600,000
- Anticipated award announcement date: September 2024
- Anticipated period of performance: September 2024 to September 2026
- Application due date: July, 12 2024

Please note:

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

Allowable Costs

All costs proposed in the budget and detailed in the budget narrative must be allowable, reasonable, necessary, and allocable. Refer to 2 CFR Part 200 Subpart E – Cost Principles for a detailed description of all allowable and unallowable costs.

Supplies: Supplies necessary to complete the proposed project are an allowable expense with prior approval by USDA FNS. USDA FNS reserves the right to approve/disapprove any expenditures requested for supplies based upon the proposed project, the needs of the Agency, and funding availability.

Travel: Expenditures associated with travel to and from the program sessions for project staff, including airfare, per diem, and other travel-related expenses are allowable with prior approval by USDA FNS. While these expenditures are allowable, USDA FNS reserves the right to approve/disapprove these expenditures based upon the needs of the Agency and the proposed project. Travel expenditures must be in accordance with the Federal Travel Regulation (FTR) contained in 2 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR), Chapter 200, and the Federal Acquisition Regulations.

Meals and Refreshments: Funding may be requested for the purchase of meals for program participants when meals are a necessary and integral part of the training (e.g. a working lunch or speaker during lunch) provided that meal costs are not duplicated in participants' per diem allowances. Per 2 CFR 200.432, discretion and judgment must be use to ensure meals costs are appropriate, necessary and managed in a manner that minimizes costs to the Federal award. When meal costs are justified by the applicant as appropriate and necessary as an integral part of a conference, funds may be requested and approved as part of the budget.

Software and Licensing: Software and licensing costs shall be justified based on the project activities and specified for all years of the project if applicable.

Unallowable Costs

Equipment: Equipment as defined in 2 CFR 200.1 is not an allowable expense.

3. Eligibility Information

Eligible Applicants

The following are eligible entities, which are described in more detail below:
Eligible entities include universities and colleges that are publicly funded and operate under the auspices of state or regional governments, and private institutions of higher education. To be eligible, the entities stated above must also:

1. Demonstrate experience and expertise in developing and delivering in-person adult training programs in food science, nutrition, agricultural science, or similar fields.
2. Demonstrate access to the necessary facilities, equipment, and content experts necessary to develop and deliver the course.
3. Demonstrate successful completion of rigorous research through publication of research in peer-reviewed journals within the food science, nutrition, agricultural sciences, or similar fields.

Entities not meeting the eligibility definitions and requirements above will be deemed ineligible and removed from competition without further consideration.

NOTE: Applicants must submit all required information with their application package, as described in Section 4 of this RFA. Those applicants who fail to submit any required elements,

document, or form, will be deemed nonresponsive and therefore ineligible and removed from further consideration.

Cost Sharing or Matching Considerations

- There are no cost sharing or matching requirements for this award.

Pre-Award Screening Requirements

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

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

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

Acknowledgement of 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, 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 should follow the USDA Visual Standards Guide when using the USDA logo.
- Grant recipients *may* be asked to host USDA officials for a site visit during the course of their 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.

4. Application and Submission Information

Content and Form of Application Submission

USDA FNS strongly encourages eligible applicants interested in applying to this program to adhere to the following applicant format. The proposed project plan should be presented on 8 ½" x 11" white paper with at least 1-inch margins on the top and bottom. All pages should be single-spaced in 12-point font. The project description with relevant information should be captured on no more than 15 pages, not including the cover sheet, table of contents, resumes, letter(s) of commitment, endorsement letter(s), budget narrative), appendices, and required forms. All pages, excluding form pages must be numbered.

Special Instructions:

- Late application submission will not be considered in this competition. USDA FNS will not consider additions or revisions to applications unless they are submitted via Grants.gov by the deadline. No additions or revisions will be accepted after the deadline.
- Letters of support must be submitted with the application through grants.gov. Letters submitted via email will not be considered.
- Applications submitted without the required supporting documents and forms will not be considered.
- Applications missing a written proposal or budget narrative will not be considered and will be deemed nonresponsive, and removed from further consideration.
- USDA FNS reserves the right to request clarification on any application submitted in response to this solicitation.
- Applications not submitted via Grants.gov will not be considered.
- If multiple application packages are submitted through Grants.gov by the same applicant in response to this solicitation, USDA FNS will accept the latest application package successfully submitted. All other packages submitted by the applicant will be removed from this competition.
- Include each of the following as separate appendices: curriculum vitae for key personnel, including a listing of related peer-reviewed research publications in the last 5 years (not to exceed 3 pages total per person); letters of support from cooperating departments; copies of agreements or memoranda of understanding with other organizations.

Cooperative Agreement Information:

USDA FNS and the recipient will work to accomplish the following:

1. The recipient will work with USDA FNS to develop the scope of the work until agreed upon by both parties. Changes to the agreed scope of work must be approved by USDA FNS.
2. Continuous communication between USDA FNS and the recipient will occur for the duration of the cooperative agreement.
3. After awarded, USDA FNS will initiate a first meeting and project staff introductions.
4. USDA FNS and the recipient will collectively identify a monthly time for regularly scheduled calls.
5. The recipient shall be responsible for keeping USDA FNS updated on project timelines and objectives, and USDA FNS or recipient may request any needed ad hoc meetings to address specific questions or concerns about the project while in development and

review.

6. Project and research instruments, methodologies, and materials will be reviewed by USDA FNS and agreed upon by both parties at appropriate intervals.
7. Any publications, posters, presentations, or other materials presented to the public as a product of project data collection, analysis, conclusions, or other project components shall be developed in collaboration with applicable USDA FNS staff as collaborating authors, unless determined by USDA FNS staff to be unrequired. USDA FNS reserves the right to utilize all developed project components for use in future programs, training, publications, or other research tools.

Cover Sheet

The cover page should include, at a minimum:

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

Table of Contents

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

Application Project Summary

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

Project Narrative

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

Activities/Indicators Tracker

Proposed Activities and indicators measuring success must be mapped to Program Objectives (as described in Section 1 – Program Description) in the below format (note that additional Activities/Indicators can be added as needed).

Note: Indicators are defined as any metric you anticipate will be able to be tracked during the period of performance of the grant. Common examples include Number of People Attended, Number of People Impacted, Number of Conferences Delivered, Number of Materials Created, Number of Trainings, Number of People Trained.

Example

Objective #	1. Develop a comprehensive curriculum to successfully achieve the learning objectives based on the proposed pedagogical approaches for USDA FNS review and approval including all curriculum lectures, educational, experiential activity, and supporting materials ("**Develop a Comprehensive Curriculum**")
Activity	Development of a comprehensive curriculum

Indicator(s)	Detailed and appropriate curriculum document reviewed and approved by USDA FNS
Activity	Description of the pedagogical approaches
Indicator(s)	Documented discussion of, review, and approval of pedagogical approaches incorporated in the curriculum
Activity	Detailed information, including original files, about the lectures, educational and experiential activities, and supporting materials that have been developed for the curriculum
Indicator(s)	Number of materials created; original files, including lectures (PowerPoint/PDF), educational and experiential activities (word/PDF), and supporting material (word/PDF) files

Objective #	
Activity	
Indicator(s)	

Objective #	
Activity	
Indicator(s)	

Application Budget Narrative

The budget narrative, and budget formatted as a table, should correspond with the proposed project narrative and application budget. The narrative must justify and support the bona fide needs of the budget's direct cost. The budget and budget narrative must be in line with the proposed project description. If the budget includes indirect costs, the applicant must provide a copy of its most recently approved Federal indirect cost rate agreement. Budget categories in the budget table must match those listed on the SF-424A form. If the budget table is created in a spreadsheet, it must be formatted to fit on an 8.5 x 11-inch page, with a font no smaller than 11-point Times New Roman. All funding requests must be in whole dollars.

Indirect Cost Rate

A current **Negotiated Indirect Cost Rate Agreement (NICRA)**, negotiated with a cognizant Federal agency, should be used to charge indirect costs. Indirect costs may not exceed the negotiated rate. If a NICRA is used, the percentage and base should be indicated. If the applicant does not have, and has never been approved for, a NICRA, they may charge up to 10% de minimis. In this instance, the applicant must indicate they are requesting the de minimis rate. An applicant may elect not to charge indirect costs and instead use all grant funds for direct costs. If indirect costs are not charged, the phrase "none requested" should be stated in the budget narrative. For questions related to the indirect cost rate, please work with the Grant Officer as noted in Section 7 of this RFA.

Note: Each organization is assigned to a single federal agency (by the Office of Management and Budget) that acts on behalf of all federal agencies in indirect cost rate negotiations and is referred to as the "cognizant agency."

Required Grant Application Forms

The required grants.gov forms may be previewed at grants.gov/web/grants/forms/forms-repository.html. These forms are part of the grants.gov Workspace application.

- Non-Construction Grant Projects Forms: SF-424 Family
  - Application and Instruction for Federal Assistance (SF-424)
  - Budget Information and Instructions (SF-424A)
  - Assurance-Non-Construction Programs (SF-424B)
- SF LLL (Disclosure of Lobbying Activities)
  - Indicate on your form whether your organization intends to conduct lobbying activities. If you organization does not intend to lobby, write "Not Applicable" in boxes required to be completed.
- Additional Required Forms and Information
  - FNS-906 Grant Program Accounting System & Financial Capability Questionnaire
  - Unique Entity Identifier (UEI) number. Please see below for further information
  - SAM registration. Please see below for further information.

Submission Date

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

- Applications must be submitted via grants.gov. Mailed, emailed, or hand-delivered application packages will not be accepted. For further instructions, see the "Preparing for Electronic Application Submission through Grants.gov" below.
- Late or incomplete applications will not be considered.
- FNS will not consider additions or revisions to applications unless they are submitted via grants.gov by the deadline. No additions or revisions will be accepted after the deadline.
- If multiple application packages are submitted through grants.gov by the same applicant in response to this solicitation, USDA FNS will accept the latest application package successfully submitted. All other packages submitted by the applicant will be removed from this competition.
- Those applicants who fail to submit any required elements, documents, or forms will be deemed NONRESPONSIVE, and therefore will be INELIGIBLE to participate in the competition and removed from further consideration.

USDA FNS strongly encourages applicants to begin the registration process at least **four weeks** before the due date and to submit applications to grants.gov at least **one week** before the deadline to allow time to troubleshoot any issues should they arise. Please note that upon submission, grants.gov may send multiple confirmation notices. Applicants should ensure receipt of confirmation that the application was **accepted**.

FNS will not accept applications outside of grants.gov. Applicants experiencing difficulty submitting applications through grants.gov should contact applicant support via the toll-free number 1-800-518-4726 and email at support@grants.gov. This service is available 24/7.

Preparing for Electronic Application Submission through Grants.gov

Applicants must register with grants.gov and SAM.gov in order to submit an application to FNS via grants.gov as required.

In order to submit an application, you must:

1. **Obtain a UEI number**

   What is a Unique Entity Identifier (UEI)?
   A UEI is a unique number assigned to all entities (public and private companies, individuals, institutions, or organizations) who register to do business with the federal government. For more information, visit the U.S. General Services Administration website.

   Where do I go to learn more about the UEI?
   The U.S. General Services Administration Unique Entity Identifier Update page contains the most up-to-date information about the UEI.

   Note: After April 4, 2022, entities can register in SAM.gov and will be assigned their "SAM UEI." They will no longer obtain or use a "DUNS UEI" for entity registration or reporting. For additional information on the UEI process, please visit SAM.gov.

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

   - On April 4, 2022, the UEI used across the federal government changed from the DUNS number to the UEI (generated by SAM.gov).
   - SAM combines federal procurement systems and the Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance into one system. Visit SAM.gov for additional information.
   - To register, you must have your organization's UEI, the organization's Tax ID Number (TIN), and taxpayer name (as it appears on the last tax return). It may take up to 5 to 7 business days or more to register and/or complete the migration of permissions and/or the renewal of an entity record.
   - 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.
   - USDA FNS strongly encourages applicants to begin this 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 Unique Entity Identifier (UEI) to complete this process. For more detailed instruction about creating a profile on grants.gov, visit grants.gov/web/grants/applicants/registration.html.

How to Submit an Application via Grants.gov

Applicants must 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 or RFA, you can create individual instances of a workspace.

For additional training resources, including video tutorials, visit grants.gov/web/grants/applicants/applicant-training.html.

Applicant Support: Grants.gov provides applicants 24/7 support via the toll-free number 1-800-518-4726 and email at support@grants.gov. If you are experiencing difficulties with your

submission, it is best to contact grants.gov support and get a ticket number. The Support Center ticket number will assist the Center with tracking your issue.

For programmatic and financial-related questions regarding this specific grant opportunity, please contact the Grant Officer noted in Section 7 – Federal Awarding Agency Contacts of this RFA.

NOTICE: Special Characters and Naming Conventions
All applicants **must** follow grants.gov guidance on file naming conventions. To avoid submission issues, please follow the guidance provided by grants.gov (per the grants.gov Frequently Asked Questions or 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 (e.g., ! @ # $ % ^ & * - ‘). This includes periods (.) and spacing followed by a dash in the file. To separate words in naming a file, use underscore (_). For example, Attached_File.pdf.

If these guidelines for file names are not followed, your application will be rejected. USDA FNS will not accept any application rejected from the grants.gov portal due to incorrect naming conventions.

Additional information can be found at grants.gov/web/grants/applicants/applicant-faqs.html#attachments.

Grants.gov Receipt Requirements and Proof of Timely Submission

All applications must be received by 11:59 PM EDT on the due date listed on the cover page, as detailed in Section 4 – Submission Date. 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 Authorized Organization Representative (AOR) will receive an acknowledgement of receipt and a tracking number (e.g., GRANTXXXXXXXX) from grants.gov with the successful transmission of their application. Applicant AORs will also receive the official date/time stamp and a grants.gov tracking number in an email serving as proof of their timely submission.

When USDA FNS successfully retrieves the application from grants.gov and acknowledges the download of submissions, grants.gov will provide an electronic acknowledgement 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 USDA FNS funding.

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

Funding Restrictions

- Pre-award costs will not be permitted for this cooperative agreement.

5. Application Review Information

Review Criteria

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

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

Developing the Curriculum (30 points)

- The applicant demonstrates through their proposal a clear understanding of the purpose, goals, and mission of the program in furthering food safety to school nutrition programs.
- The applicant's curriculum development plan demonstrates a science-based and rigorous approach, incorporating appropriate pedagogical approaches to achieve stated learning objectives.
- The applicant demonstrates an expert level approach and comprehension of the learning objectives and foundations of the curriculum, incorporating this expertise into the curriculum development plan, and clearly providing any modifications based on their expertise in program development and delivery.
- The applicant proposes achievable, supportable, and educationally enriching plans for incorporating supplemental educational activities, like field trips, laboratories, and other hands-on activities, into the program.

Planning and Delivering the Program (30 points)

- The applicant uses and provides sufficient support for utilization of specific pedagogical approaches in the planning and delivery of their proposed program.
- The applicant describes sufficient plans for a national nomination process in collaboration with USDA FNS.
- The applicant describes in sufficient detail the overall ability to deliver the proposed program, and process they will utilize to secure adequate facilities, equipment, appropriate personnel for the proposed program to include preliminary information about travel logistics, lodging, meals, and necessary supplies.
- The applicant provides clear, comprehensive, and achievable timelines for the planning and delivery of the program including sufficient descriptions of all activities, indicators, and descriptions of relevant staff required for those activities within the proposal.
- The applicant clearly demonstrates the ability and capacity to successfully implement all aspects of the proposed program delivery plans.

Evaluative Approach (20 points)

- The applicant provides a clear, comprehensive, and achievable evaluative approach to determine the program's ability to impact participant knowledge, attitudes, awareness on stated learning objectives, as well as overall program successes and impact.

- The applicant's evaluative approach is described in sufficient detail demonstrating that it is validated, scientifically based, and comprehensive.
- The applicant provides achievable plans in sufficient detail to deliver an after-action report with recommendations for meaningful programmatic improvements.

Staffing and Organizational Expertise (10 points)

- The applicant's proposed staff demonstrate appropriate experience and technical expertise to the relevant topics and provide evidence demonstrating an adequate level of overall staffing commitments to the project.
- The applicant demonstrates the commitment of the organization (e.g., university) and staff to support the cooperative agreement and support of the project's four major objectives: (1) develop a comprehensive curriculum; (2) program planning; (3) program delivery; and (4) program evaluation and outcomes.

Budget and Resource Allocation (10 points)

Budgets will be reviewed for overall appropriateness, adequacy, and for the allocation of resources across all proposed activities.

- The applicant should provide a budget that yields an efficient and effective allocation of funds to achieve the objectives of this announcement (i.e., curriculum development, program planning, delivery, and evaluation, as well as core administrative functions necessary to carry out the project's goal).
- The budget includes a narrative description and justification for proposed budget line items, demonstrates how costs are derived, and that the project's costs are adequate, reasonable, and necessary for the activities or personnel to be supported, and do not include unallowable costs.
- The budget and narrative demonstrate a clear and appropriate relationship to the proposed activities.

Possible Bonus Points (5 possible bonus points)

- Related to Staffing and Organizational Expertise
    - BONUS POINTS (5) will be awarded to Applicants working at or directly with scholars and programs at Minority Serving Institutions (MSIs)[1].

Total Points Available: 105 (Up to 100 review points possible; Up to 5 bonus points possible)

Review and Selection Process

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

[1] Under part F of the HEA, 20 U.S. Code § 1067q – "Investment in historically Black colleges and universities and other minority-serving institutions," the following institutions are eligible to receive funds under that section: a part B institution (a historically Black college or university) (§322 of the HEA, 20 U.S.C. §1061); a Hispanic-serving institution (§502 of the HEA, 20 U.S.C. §1101a); a Tribal College or University (§316 of the HEA, 20 U.S.C. §1059c); an Alaska Native-serving institution or a Native Hawaiian-serving institution (§317(b) of the HEA, 20 U.S.C. §1059d(b); (5) a Predominantly Black Institution (§§318(b) and 371(c)(9) of the HEA; 20 U.S.C. §§ 1059e(b) and 1067q(c)(9)); an Asian American and Native American Pacific Islander-serving institution (§§ 320(b) and 371(c)(2) of the HEA, 20 U.S.C. §§1059g(b) and 1067q(c)(2); or; (7) a Native American-serving nontribal institution (§§319(b) and 371(c)(8) of the HEA; 20 U.S.C. §§ 1059f(b) and 1067q(c)(8).

highest to lowest score. The panel members will recommend applications for consideration for a grant award based on the evaluation scoring. USDA FNS may request information from the applicant not clearly addressed in their proposal. 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. A bonus of 5 points will be given to applicants working at or directly with scholars and programs at Minority Serving Institutions (MSIs)[1]. USDA 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.

6. Federal Award Administration Information

Federal Award Notice

The Government is not obligated to make any award as a result of this RFA. Unless an applicant receives a signed award document with terms and conditions, any contact from a USDA 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 USDA FNS' signed award document (FNS-529). Only the recognized USDA 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 USDA 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" means information that can be used to distinguish or trace an individual's identity, either alone or when combined with other information that is linked or linkable to a specific individual (OMB Circular A-130, *Managing Information as a Strategic Resource*).

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 USDA FNS are required to acknowledge understanding of their responsibilities and accountability for using and protecting PII in accordance with applicable law, regulation, and policy [e.g., the Privacy Act of 1974; Office of Management and Budget (OMB) Memorandum, M-17-12, *Preparing for and Responding to a Breach of Personally Identifiable Information*; OMB Circular A-130, *Managing Information as a Strategic Resource* (this is a non-exhaustive list of requirements in this area)].

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, regulations, and policies. By submitting a grant application, applicants agree to take all necessary steps to protect PII, including the following: (1) ensuring that PII and sensitive data developed, obtained or otherwise associated with UDSA FNS funded grants is securely transmitted; (2) ensuring that PII is not transmitted to unauthorized users, and that PII and other sensitive data is not submitted via email; (3) data is transmitted via USDA FNS approved file sharing services or encrypted mobile media storage devices; and (4) ensuring that PII is encrypted and password protected both in transit and at rest.

Conflict of Interest and Confidentiality of the Review Process

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

Administrative Regulations

Federal Tax Liabilities Restrictions

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

Felony Crime Conviction Restrictions

None of the funds made available by this or any other Act may be used to enter into a contract, memorandum of understanding, or cooperative agreement with, make a grant to, or provide a loan or loan guarantee to, any corporation that 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.

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 12689, “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 SAM.gov.

Universal Identifier and Central Contractor Registration 2 CFR Part 25
Requirement for System for Award Management. Unless you are exempted from this requirement under 2 CFR 25.110, you as the recipient must maintain current information in the SAM. This includes information on your immediate and highest-level owner and subsidiaries, as well as on all of your predecessors that have been awarded a Federal contract or Federal financial assistance within the last three years, if applicable, until you submit the final financial report required under this Federal award or receive the final payment, whichever is later. This requires that you review and update the information at least annually after the initial registration, and more frequently if required by changes in your information or another Federal award term.

Requirement for Unique Entity Identifier: If you are authorized to make subawards under this Federal award, you:

- Must notify potential subrecipients that no entity (*see* definition in paragraph C of this award term) may receive a subaward from you until the entity has provided its Unique Entity Identifier to you.
- May not make a subaward to an entity unless the entity has provided its Unique Entity Identifier to you. Subrecipients are not required to obtain an active SAM registration, but must obtain a Unique Entity Identifier.

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 **$30,000 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 UEI prior to being eligible to receive a grant or sub-grant award. Additional information will be provided to grant recipients upon award.

Duncan Hunter National Defense Authorization Act of Fiscal Year 2009, Public Law 110-417
Section 872 of this Act requires the development and maintenance of a Federal Government information system that contains specific information on the integrity and performance of covered Federal agency contractors and grantees. The Federal Awardee Performance and Integrity Information System (FAPIIS) is designed to address these requirements. FAPIIS contains integrity and performance information from the Contractor Performance Assessment Reporting System, information from SAM.gov, and suspension and debarment information from the SAM. USDA 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, USDA FNS will comply with all applicable laws and regulations, including departmental regulations.

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

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

USDA Non-Discrimination Statement

In accordance with Federal civil rights law and U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) civil rights regulations and policies, the USDA, its Agencies, offices, and employees, and institutions participating in or administering USDA programs are prohibited from discriminating based on race, color, national origin, religion, sex, gender identity (including gender expression), sexual orientation, disability, age, marital status, family/parental status, income derived from a public assistance program, political beliefs, or reprisal or retaliation for prior civil rights activity, in any program or activity conducted or funded by USDA (not all bases apply to all programs). Remedies and complaint filing deadlines vary by program or incident.

Persons with disabilities who require alternative means of communication for program information (e.g., Braille, large print, audiotape, American Sign Language, etc.) should contact the responsible Agency or USDA's TARGET Center at (202) 720-2600 (voice and TTY) or contact USDA through the Federal Relay Service at (800) 877-8339. Additionally, program information may be made available in languages other than English.

To file a program discrimination complaint, complete the USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form, AD-3027, found online at How to File a Program Discrimination Complaint and at any USDA office or write a letter addressed to USDA and provide in the letter all of the information requested in the form. To request a copy of the complaint form, call (866) 632-9992. Submit your completed form or letter to USDA by: (1) mail: U.S. Department of Agriculture, Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights, 1400 Independence Avenue, SW, Washington, D.C. 20250-9410; (2) fax: (202) 690-7442; or (3) email: program.intake@usda.gov.

USDA is an equal opportunity provider, employer, and lender.

Privacy Policy

The USDA Food and Nutrition Service does not collect any personal identifiable information without explicit consent. To view USDA's Privacy Policy, visit: 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)"
- 7 CFR Part 16: "Equal Opportunity for Religious Organizations"
- 41 U.S.C. Section 22 "Interest of Member of Congress"
- Freedom of Information Act (FOIA). Public access to Federal Financial Assistance records shall not be limited, except when such records must be kept confidential and would have been excepted from disclosure pursuant to the "Freedom of Information" regulation (5 U.S.C. 552)

General Terms and Conditions (T&Cs) of USDA FNS grant awards may be obtained electronically in advance of an award. For a copy of T&Cs, please contact the Grant Officer noted in Section 7 – Federal Awarding Agency Contacts of this RFA.

Cooperative agreements are assistance mechanisms and subject to the same administrative requirements as grants; however, they are different from a grant or a contract. Cooperative agreements allow more involvement and collaboration by USDA FNS in the project compared to a grant, and they provide greater flexibility in direction of project activities than a contract. The roles and responsibilities of both the awarded entity and USDA FNS will be clearly stated in the cooperative agreement.

This cooperative agreement will be awarded and administered in accordance with 7 U.S.C. 3318(b) and applicable documents can be found in Terms and Conditions of Award. The electronic Code of Federal Regulations can be found at http://www.ecfr.gov/cgi-bin/ECFR?page=browse.

Reporting Requirements

Financial Reports

The award recipient will be required to enter the SF-425 (Federal Financial 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, verify their identity, and submit an FNS-674 form, which will be provided by the Grant Officer to access FPRS. A final Financial Status report is due 120 days after the termination date. For additional information on FPRS, visit fprs.fns.usda.gov.

Performance Progress Reports (PPR)

Grantees will be required to submit progress reports to USDA FNS 30 days following the end of each quarterly period, using the FNS-908 PPR form that will be sent to grantees at the time of award or the initial orientation. The reports should cover the preceding period of activity. A final report identifying the accomplishments and results of the project will be due 120 days after the end date of the award.

Please note: The FNS-908 PPR form specific to this opportunity will be sent to grantees at the time of award or the initial orientation. Use of the FNS-908 PPR form for progress reports is required. Previous grantees that have not submitted reports timely will be evaluated as high risk. All activities reported on the FNS-908 must align with the required objective(s) from the "Key Objectives" Section above.

7. Federal Awarding Agency Contacts

For questions regarding this solicitation, please contact the Grant Officer.
Patrice Williams
Grant Officer, Grants and Fiscal Policy Division
U.S. Department of Agriculture, FNS
Email: Patrice.Williams@usda.gov

8. Other Information

Debriefing Requests

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

Appendix

RFA Budget Narrative Checklist

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

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

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

ITEM	YES	NO
Personnel		
Did you include all key employees paid for by this grant under this heading?		
Are employees of the applicant's organization identified by name and position title?		
Did you reflect percentage of time the Project Director will devote to the project in full-time equivalents (FTE)?		
Fringe Benefits		
Did you include your organization's fringe benefit amount along with the basis for the computation?		
Did you list the type of fringe benefits to be covered with Federal funds?		
Travel		
Are travel expenses itemized? For example origination/destination points, number and purpose of trips, number of staff traveling, mode of transportation and cost of each trip.		
Are the Attendee Objectives and travel justifications included in the narrative?		
Is the basis for the lodging estimates identified in the budget? For example, include excerpt from travel regulations.		
Equipment		
Is the need for the equipment justified in the narrative?		
Are the types of equipment, unit costs, and the number of items to be purchased listed in the budget?		
Is the basis for the cost per item or other basis of computation stated in the budget?		
Supplies		
Are the types of supplies, unit costs, and the number of items to be purchased reflected in the budget?		
Is the basis for the costs per item or other basis of computation stated?		
Contractual: (FNS reserves the right to request information on all contractual awards and associated costs after the contract is awarded.)		
Has the bona fide need been clearly identified in the project description to justify the cost for a contract or sub-grant expense(s) shown on the budget?		

ITEM	YES	NO
A justification for all Sole-source contracts must be provided in the budget narrative prior to approving this identified cost.		
Other		
Consultant Services – Has the bona fide need been clearly identified in the project description to justify the cost shown on the budget? The following information must be provided in the justification: description of service, the consultant's name and an itemized list of all direct cost and fees, number of personnel including the position title (specialty and specialized qualifications as appropriate to the costs), number of estimated hours and hourly wages per hour, and all expenses and fees directly related to the proposed services to be rendered to the project.		
For all other line items listed under the "Other" heading – List all items to be covered within "Other" along with the methodology on how the applicant derived the costs to be charged to the program.		
Indirect Costs		
Has the applicant obtained a Negotiated Indirect Cost Rate Agreement (NICRA) from a cognizant Federal Agency? If yes, a copy of the most recent and signed negotiated rate agreement must be provided along with the application.		
2 CFR 200 allows any non-Federal entity (NFE) that has never received a negotiated indirect cost rate to charge a de Minimis rate of **10%** of modified total direct costs (MTDC), which the NFE may use indefinitely as a Federally-negotiated rate.		

FNS-906 Grant Program Accounting System & Financial Capability Questionnaire

This form is required. Please submit this questionnaire along with your applicant package.

PURPOSE

Recipients of Federal funds must maintain adequate accounting systems that meet the criteria outlined in 2 CFR §200.302 Standards for Financial and Program Management. The responses to this questionnaire are used to assist in the Food and Nutrition Service Agency's (FNS) evaluation of your accounting system to ensure the adequate, appropriate, and transparent use of Federal funds. Failure to comply with the criteria outlined in the regulations above may preclude your organization from receiving an 21

ORGANIZATION INFORMATION

Legal Organization Name: _____

UEI Number: _____

Financial Stability and Quality of Management Systems

Requirement	Yes	No
1. **Has your organization received a Federal award within the past 3 years?**	☐	☐
2. Does your organization utilize accounting software to manage your financial records?	☐	☐
3. Does your accounting system identify the receipt and expenditure of program funds separately for each grant?	☐	☐
4. Does your organization have a dedicated individual responsible for monitoring organizational funds, such as an accountant or a finance manager?	☐	☐
5. Does your organization separate the duties for staff handling the approval of transactions and the recording and payment of funds?	☐	☐
6. Does your organization have the ability to specifically identify and allocate employee effort to an applicable program?	☐	☐
7. Does your organization have a property /inventory management system in place to track location and value of equipment purchased under the award?	☐	☐

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

APPLICANT CERTIFICATION

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

_____ _____

Signature of Authorized Representative Date

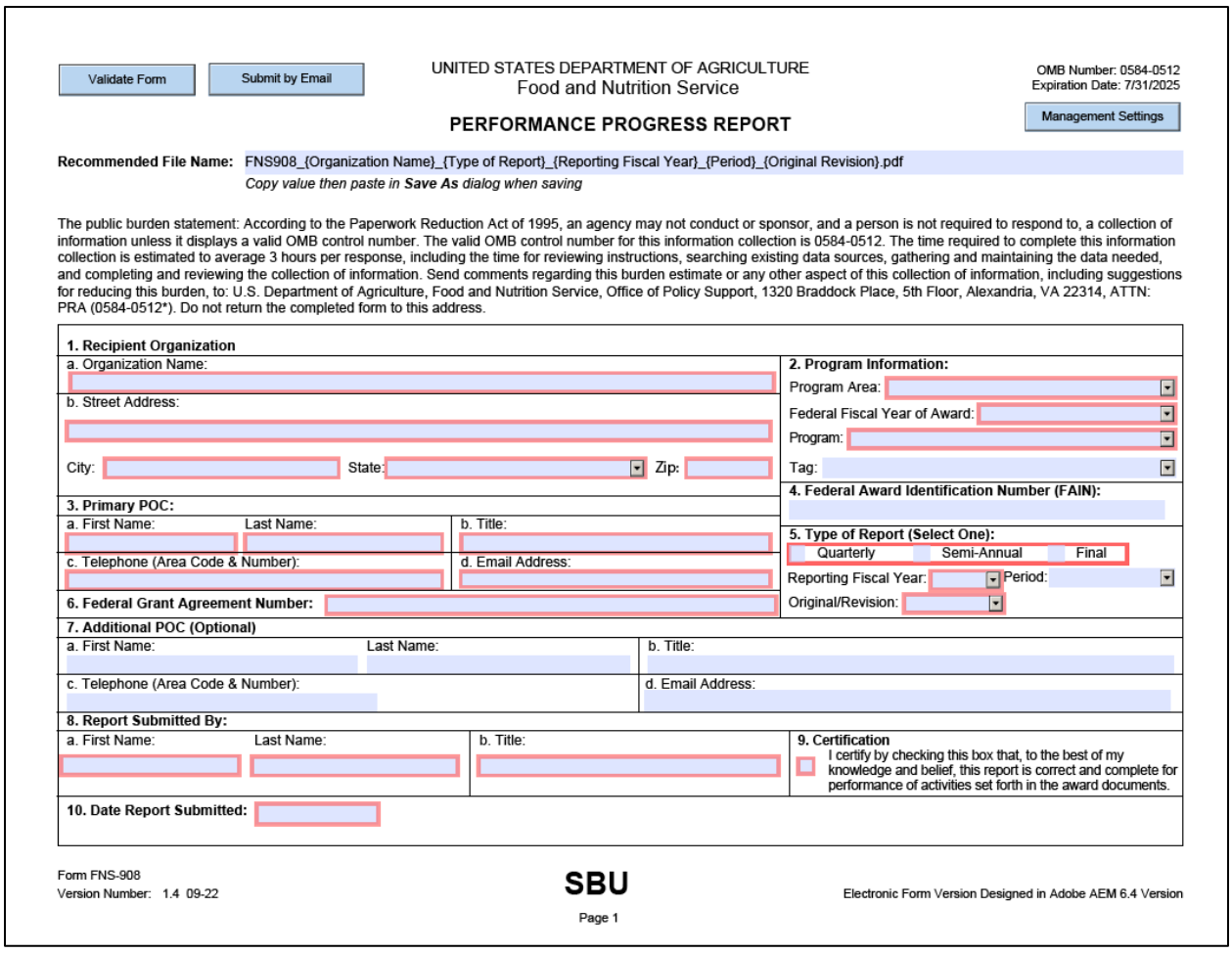
Name of Authorized Representative: _____

Phone Number: _____

Email: _____

FNS-908 Performance Progress Report (PPR)

FOR REFERENCE ONLY.



Validate Form | Submit by Email

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
Food and Nutrition Service

OMB Number: 0584-0512
Expiration Date: 7/31/2025

Management Settings

PERFORMANCE PROGRESS REPORT

Recommended File Name: FNS908_{Organization Name}_{Type of Report}_{Reporting Fiscal Year}_{Period}_{Original Revision}.pdf

*Copy value then paste in **Save As** dialog when saving*

The public burden statement: According to the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, an agency may not conduct or sponsor, and a person is not required to respond to, a collection of information unless it displays a valid OMB control number. The valid OMB control number for this information collection is 0584-0512. The time required to complete this information collection is estimated to average 3 hours per response, including the time for reviewing instructions, searching existing data sources, gathering and maintaining the data needed, and completing and reviewing the collection of information. Send comments regarding this burden estimate or any other aspect of this collection of information, including suggestions for reducing this burden, to: U.S. Department of Agriculture, Food and Nutrition Service, Office of Policy Support, 1320 Braddock Place, 5th Floor, Alexandria, VA 22314, ATTN: PRA (0584-0512*). Do not return the completed form to this address.

1. Recipient Organization

a. Organization Name:

b. Street Address:

City: State: Zip:

2. Program Information:

Program Area:

Federal Fiscal Year of Award:

Program:

Tag:

3. Primary POC:

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

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

4. Federal Award Identification Number (FAIN):

5. Type of Report (Select One):

Quarterly Semi-Annual Final

Reporting Fiscal Year: Period:

Original/Revision:

6. Federal Grant Agreement Number:

7. Additional POC (Optional)

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

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

8. Report Submitted By:

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

9. Certification

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

10. Date Report Submitted:

Form FNS-908
Version Number: 1.4 09-22

SBU

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Electronic Form Version Designed in Adobe AEM 6.4 Version

Program Management Information

1. Progress Summary

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

2. Personnel Information

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

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

3. Projected Amendments (Cost and No-Cost)

a. Number of amendments projected this upcoming quarter?

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

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

4. Expenditures/Purchases:

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

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

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

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

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

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

Page 2

Program Management Information (Continued)

6. Upcoming Activities and Anticipated Changes

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

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

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

7. Final Reporting Summary (Final Reporting Period Only)

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

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

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

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

8. Additional Comments (Max 2000 Characters)

Page 3

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

Program Activities

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

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

Add Objective | Remove Objective

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