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WIC MIS Strategy Cooperative Agreement

Fiscal Year 2024 Request for Applications (RFA)
Assistance Listing Number (ALN): 10.557

Release Date: June 10, 2024

Application Due Date: July 25, 2024 11:59 pm Eastern Daylight Time

Anticipated Award Date: September 2024

OMB BURDEN STATEMENT:

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Application Checklist

This Application Checklist provides applicants with a list of the required documents. 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](https://www.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)
- ☐ 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 United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) works to end hunger and promote nutrition security. The Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children (WIC) is a Federal nutrition assistance program that serves pregnant, postpartum, and breastfeeding individuals, infants, and children up to five years old who are income eligible and at nutritional risk. WIC provides nutritious foods, nutrition education including breastfeeding promotion and support, and referrals to health and social services to participants in all 50 geographic states, the District of Columbia, 33 Indian Tribal Organizations (ITOs), and five U.S. territories (American Samoa, Guam, the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, Puerto Rico, and the U.S. Virgin Islands).

The Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2024 (The Act) (P.L. 117-2) provided the USDA with an appropriation to carry out the WIC Program as authorized by section 17 of the Child Nutrition Act of 1966 (CNA) (42 U.S.C. 1786). The American Rescue Plan Act of 2021 (P.L. 117-2) provided the USDA with \$390,000,000 to carry out outreach, innovation, and program modernization efforts to increase participation and redemption of benefits in WIC and the WIC Farmers' Market Nutrition Program (FMNP).

This is an announcement of the availability of funds for a one-time initiative, competitive cooperative agreement for up to four years. Funds are available to a nonprofit organization (i.e., a civic technology nonprofit or other nonprofit type with similar staffing and experience/expertise; a research institute that is public, private, or nonprofit; or an accredited college or university) that meets the technical requirements outlined in this RFA. USDA anticipates awarding up to \$15,000,000 to one selected applicant. The anticipated Period of Performance for this project is from September 2024, and will not extend beyond March 31, 2029. The recipient of this cooperative agreement is referred to in this document as “the Grantee”.

The Grantee will develop a WIC Management Information System (MIS) Strategy (“the Strategy”) through the completion of the objectives described in this RFA, described below, using an agile process.

Program Description

WIC is modernizing to better serve applicants and participants. As a part of this effort, USDA seeks a Grantee to develop a comprehensive WIC Management Information System (MIS) Strategy (“the Strategy”). WIC MIS, for the purpose of this RFA, means the various systems used by WIC State agencies as they administer and report on the Program. The WIC MIS used by each State agency serves as the system of record for program data and performs a variety of functions essential to program operations. Specifically, WIC MIS contain data collected on WIC families. This includes data related to enrollment and eligibility (including income, as well as

nutrition assessment-related data such as nutrition risk codes and anthropometric data), nutrition education, appointments, and referrals, as well as data on food benefit issuance and redemptions. There are a variety of different WIC MIS and they vary in the data they contain and the use of interfaces and other data transfer mechanisms used to gather other program data, such as information supporting WIC vendor management, (food product) manufacturer rebates, and financial management and administration. All data are used by local agencies, State agencies, and FNS to administer the program and to track and understand program operations and performance.

WIC MIS touch almost all program activities, including the application and certification (i.e., WIC's term for checking eligibility and enrolling applicants) processes, food package prescriptions, appointment scheduling, benefit issuance, and vendor (i.e., WIC authorized grocer) authorization and management. By shaping how applicants and participants experience the program, WIC MIS affect enrollment, retention, benefit redemption, and the impact of the program. MIS also affect the allocation of State and local staff time, and thereby, how efficiently and effectively the program operates and its potential to evolve and improve. More information on WIC MIS and related electronic benefit transfer (EBT) systems can be found [here](#) (applicants should pay particular attention to [the FReD, WIC EBT Technical Standards, Handbook 901](#)).

The Strategy developed through this cooperative agreement will guide USDA as it takes appropriate next steps to ensure that all WIC State agencies use modern MIS that meet the needs of the WIC Program and users in the near- and long-term (i.e., both a transitional plan and a future state strategy will be developed and integrated into one WIC MIS Strategy). The Grantee will develop a comprehensive WIC MIS Strategy that provides a roadmap for USDA through the completion of the objectives described in this RFA.

The Objectives of this cooperative agreement are as follows:

- Assess the current landscape of WIC MIS.
- Develop a transitional plan for improvements to current WIC MIS.
- Develop a future state WIC MIS Strategy that includes both a product strategy and a market strategy.
- Assist USDA in implementation of the WIC MIS Strategy.

Key Objectives

Below is a list of the Program Objectives with suggested maximum timeframes. Proposals may diverge from these timelines if: 1) staffing is sufficient to accelerate the timeline or 2) the proposal outlines a benefit to the government to re-ordering projects (i.e., more can be completed if a certain activity is completed earlier or later in the schedule). Timelines may not, however, exceed the period performance end date of March 31, 2029.

As noted in Section 4 within the “[Activities/Indicators Tracker](#)”, proposed activities must be clearly aligned to these objectives and their associated activities and indicators.

#	Objective	Expected/Suggested Maximum Timelines
PROGRAM YEARS 1–2		
1	Assess the current landscape of WIC MIS. At a minimum, this objective must include the following activities: a) Develop and deliver plans for: a. conducting agile, human/user-centered discovery on all current WIC MIS, to include both desk review of existing USDA and external documents and discussions with affected parties and key partners (e.g., WIC system developers/contractors, WIC State agency staff, WIC local agency staff, FNS HQ and Regional Office staff) (Discovery Plan) b. ensuring that all relevant Grantee staff (including contractors and new staff onboarded after introductory activities) are informed about the goals and activities of this project, WIC MIS, government program MIS, and other relevant favors (Staff Development Plan) b) Develop and deliver to USDA reports and visualizations that 1) show which MIS is used by each State agency, 2) show key features, functionalities, and technical information on each MIS in a manner that allows for comparison across MIS, 3) outlines governance structure of each MIS, 4) shows the intersection between EBT (processors and technology used) and MIS in a way that allows for identification of system groupings by EBT processor/type and MIS, and 5) other relevant information that will be used in the WIC MIS Rating System and will assist as USDA implements the transitional plan. c) Develop and deliver to USDA a State agency-level WIC MIS Capability Model to assess the capabilities, strengths, and weaknesses of existing systems; and to highlight priorities and timelines for critical system maintenance, upgrades, and/or replacements. The Model must use key features, functionalities, technical information, and other relevant factors identified during discovery to enable prioritization	Activities begin within 30 days of award. Draft Discovery Plan submitted within 45 days of award. Final Discovery and Staff Development Plans submitted within 60 days of award. Complete the majority of discovery within 6 months of award, with tailored follow up throughout the rest Objectives 1 and 2, as needed. Deliver the first draft of the WIC MIS Capacity Model within 4 months of award. Deliver the final draft of the WIC MIS Capacity Model within 6 months of award. Other final deliverables submitted on an ongoing basis, with all under this Objective submitted by 9/4/2025.

	and decision-making about system maintenance, upgrades, and replacements. The WIC MIS Capacity Model must include information that will inform the transitional plan to be developed under Objective 2. d) Develop and deliver to USDA an assessment of all WIC State agencies' current state MIS according to the approved WIC MIS Capability Model.	
2	Develop a transitional plan for improvements to current WIC MIS. a) Using the approved WIC MIS Capability Model, develop and deliver two sets of recommendations to the government on next steps for all WIC MIS over the next 10 years, with particular focus on the next 5 years to ensure that near-term WIC MIS needs are met. The two sets of recommendations must be based on two different funding constraint scenarios that USDA will provide after award (e.g., one lower amount available annually or one higher amount available in a lump sum, one lower annual amount and one higher annual amount). Each set of recommendations must include a timeline, estimated costs, and rationale for all recommended activities. And, they must consider and document relevant constraints and risks. b) Develop and deliver documents, visualizations, and presentations to support the refinement, socialization/dissemination, and implementation of the transitional plan. Deliverables of particular interest are technical assistance strategies, tactics, and/or materials USDA could offer State agencies to enable near-term, transitional MIS improvements, as well as dissemination and engagement strategies for these technical assistance resources. Additional deliverables could include, but are not limited to summary/briefing documents; messaging materials for State agencies on what USDA will fund, when, and how; visual roadmaps; tracking documents; a plan to update WIC MIS landscape analysis data, Capacity Model Assessments,	Final transitional plan submitted by 8/30/2025. Other final deliverables submitted on an ongoing basis, as needed to implement recommendations, with all under this Objective submitted by 9/4/2026.

	and/or the transitional plan in future years to reflect changes and progress; webinars explaining the transitional plan to various affected parties and key partners.	
3	Develop a future state WIC MIS Strategy that includes both a product strategy and a market strategy. a) Develop and deliver a plan for conducting agile, human/user-centered discovery to gather information necessary to develop a future state WIC MIS Strategy. This discovery must build on the discovery done under Objective 1 and must include discovery on similar government programs and their MIS modernization activities (i.e., the plan must include research into how other public health and/or similar programs that are administered by State agencies are solving similar problems). The Strategy must answer the following questions, at a minimum: ○ What is a “modern WIC MIS”? ○ What does USDA need to do to ensure all WIC State agencies use a modern WIC MIS? ○ How should USDA approach these tasks? ○ Approximately how much will this effort cost? And what types and frequency of costs should be expected? b) Develop and deliver to USDA a WIC MIS Strategy to enable effective, efficient, and sustainable MIS management by USDA and State agencies beyond a 10-year time horizon. This strategy should be composed of a WIC MIS Product Strategy and a WIC MIS Market Strategy. The WIC MIS Product Strategy must consider and include information and/or recommendations on all the following, at a minimum: ○ Feature, functionality, and user experience expectations for a modern MIS. ○ Features necessary for the delivery of WIC virtual services. ○ Recommended and/or required non-functional capabilities, such as interfaces, performance	Final Discovery Plan submitted by 10/15/2025. First draft of WIC MIS Strategy submitted by 5/1/2026. Other final deliverables submitted on an ongoing basis, as needed to implement recommendations, with all under this Objective submitted by 9/4/2026.

expectations, security standards, data structures, and architectures. ○ Architectures, approaches, or other methods to facilitate implementation of future policy or delivery changes and that enable adaptability and extensibility. ○ Human centered design approaches to modernizing that ensure a positive user experience for WIC staff, applicants, and participants. ○ Metrics and data to enable monitoring and continual improvement of program delivery. ○ Updates to technical documentation (e.g., what needs to be updated, how/when should documents be updated). The WIC MIS Market Strategy must consider and include information and/or recommendations on all the following, at a minimum: ○ Models for procurement, with risks and benefits of each (e.g., who should procure, why, and how). ○ Models for funding, with risks and benefits of each (e.g., USDA procures, USDA provides grants to State agencies to procure). ○ Models for staffing at State and federal level to ensure management of relevant documents, systems, funding, and procurement. ○ Actions that can encourage new entrants into the MIS market. ○ Recommendations to encourage sharing or reuse of MIS among State agencies, including governance models for shared system functionality. ○ A gap analysis between the current WIC MIS market and the future state MIS market, with actionable recommendations for achieving the future state. Both Strategy components must also consider, at a minimum: ○ Barriers to modernization. ○ Risks, including mitigation strategies for recommended activities likely to be at high risk. ○ Availability of products on the market and/or vendors available to develop new products. ○ FNS research needs. ○ Federal and State procurement processes.	
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○ WIC State agency and federal technology management capacity. Note: The final Strategy must integrate the landscape analysis developed in Objective 1 and the transitional plan developed in Objective 2. The Grantee must ensure both transitional and future state plans, goals, and strategies are integrated seamlessly into one roadmap that clearly articulates: ● The current state of WIC MIS (Objective 1). ● The target future state of WIC MIS (WIC MIS Product Strategy). ● How FNS will enable migration to the future state of WIC MIS (WIC MIS Market Strategy). ● A high-level roadmap of near-term, transitional improvements and longer-term, target future state system enhancements, upgrades and/or replacements to complete the transition of all WIC State agencies to a modern WIC MIS (to be defined during Objective 2). c) Develop and deliver documents, visualizations, and presentations to support the implementation of the WIC MIS Strategy. Deliverables could include, but are not limited to summary/briefing documents; topical one-pagers on aspects of the Strategy; messaging materials for various affected parties and key partners; roadmaps; tracking documents; a plan to update WIC MIS landscape analysis data, Capacity Model Assessments, and/or the transitional plan in future years to reflect changes and progress; webinars explaining the MIS Strategy to various affected parties and key partners. d) Optional: Proposals may include additional activities that can be done within the funding and period of performance provided that the applicant determines would advance WIC MIS Strategy development and/or implementation or would answer key outstanding WIC MIS questions. Such activities/deliverables could include, but are not limited to developing designs, prototypes, user research	
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	plans, proofs of concept, API standards, sample guidance, procurement requirements or specifications, procurement resources, other technical assistance resources, and/or code; conducting user research; and/or other activities proposed by the Grantee that address WIC MIS needs.	
PROGRAM YEARS 3 – 4		
(Note: These activities may begin earlier, if feasible considering the full proposal)		
4 Assist USDA in implementation of the WIC MIS Strategy.	a) Develop and deliver a flexible and agile implementation/project management plan for the WIC MIS Strategy in MS Project or similar. For each task in the Strategy, the implementation/project management plan must identify who is responsible (by organization and name/title), affected parties, dependencies, costs, and timelines. The plan must allow for real time project tracking and identify the parties responsible for such tracking. The plan must include tasks that the Grantee will lead or assist with to complement USDA's staff and resources and must make clear which party is responsible for which parts of the plan via work breakdown structure or similar breakdown that allows for assigning of resources. b) For any tasks assigned to the Grantee in the implementation/project management plan, the Grantee must develop and deliver a project plan indicating how and when it will accomplish all assigned tasks. Year 3-4 Project Plans must include a table of deliverables. c) Implement the plans approved in 4a-b. d) Optional: Manage the implementation/project management plan. This includes bringing all items up to date at least weekly, providing updates to USDA at appropriate intervals for key audiences (e.g., weekly for the project team, quarterly for Agency leadership).	Final implementation/project plan submitted by 11/16/2026. Final Year 3-4 Project Plan submitted by 1/15/2027. This plan must be flexible and agile in nature, and updated on a regular schedule, to be proposed by the Grantee. Other final deliverables submitted on an ongoing basis, as appropriate, with all under this RFA submitted by 9/8/2028.

Cooperative Agreement / Substantial Involvement

This grant will be awarded in the form of a cooperative agreement. This agreement is a legal instrument reflecting a relationship between the federal government and the Grantee. Cooperative agreements will allow more involvement and collaboration by FNS in the project

compared to a grant, and they provide less direction of project activities than a contract. The roles and responsibilities of both the Grantee and FNS will be stated in the terms and conditions of the cooperative agreement.

FNS's involvement in this cooperative agreement will largely entail serving as subject matter experts (SMEs) to provide key input, steering, and information to the team. FNS staff will also review and provide feedback on deliverables. FNS must approve all final deliverables before they may be publicly posted by the Grantee or FNS. FNS will comment on major project aspects and issues in advance of their implementation in a manner and timeframe agreed upon between the Grantee and FNS.

FNS involvement with the Grantee will include:

- Providing comments on and having ongoing conversations with the Grantee regarding plans to meet this RFA's requirements.
- Reviewing and/or co-authoring documents.
- Receiving files for all Grantee-produced documents (e.g., plans, resources, deliverables), as well as data collected (e.g., raw data from discovery, as well as summary documents/files) developed under this cooperative agreement.
- Meeting with the Grantee on a regular basis.

Program-Specific Requirements

This section outlines requirements for this grant program. As noted in Section 4, proposals should clearly describe how applicants will comply with all of these program-specific requirements. The Grantee will be required to meet these requirements throughout the period of performance.

Required Program Experience/Expertise

- Demonstrated experience in civic technology, public benefits technology, and/or government service delivery technology research, strategy, and/or implementation; agile human centered design discovery processes; and providing high-quality consultation to government entities or similarly large organizations with a policy/oversight role.
- Demonstrated knowledge of and/or capacity, and a plan included in the proposal, to quickly learn about the WIC Program, WIC MIS nationwide (from both a policy and technical standpoint), and lessons learned from projects related to MIS in similar government programs.
- Knowledge of and/or experience in implementing technological innovations in public benefits, public health, or other large governmental programs, as evidenced by previous projects that include research on technical feasibility, policy options and implications, and development of and/or implementation of technical specifications and/or system requirements.
- Experience with and/or capacity for providing high-quality, evidence-based recommendations to the government, as well as providing technical assistance

resources/documents to government entities, and/or other entities similar to WIC State agencies.

Deliverable Requirements

- For all deliverables, FNS requests 3 drafts for review and 1 final, clean version.
- Final deliverables must be compliant with Section 508 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (29 U.S.C. 749d) as amended by the Workforce Investment Act of 1998 ([P.L. 105-220](#)).
- Final deliverables must follow any style guides/standards provided by USDA and must be checked for quality by the Grantee before each draft is submitted.
- For draft reviews, FNS requests 8 business days for documents under 10 pages, 10 business days for documents 10-20 pages, and 15 business days for documents 20+ business days. The Grantee must work around scheduling of USDA staff, where needed to ensure that documents can be reviewed (i.e., applicants should build in some buffer time in timelines for reviews, especially around major holidays).
- To the extent possible, all written documents will be written in Plain Language in accordance with principles outlined at [PlainLanguage.gov](#). FNS recognizes that some items cannot be written in plain language (e.g., code). Some deliverables will require technical words and phrases but should still be written in Plain Language to the extent possible. For example, documents should explain technical jargon in a parenthetical, use short sentences, use common words where possible (like “use” instead of “utilize”).
- To the extent possible, applicants should propose timelines that allow for deliverables to be submitted throughout the project (e.g., several deliverables should be submitted each quarter (or similar) rather than all at the end of the project).
- FNS encourages review and discussion of interim topics, findings, and/or recommendations related to deliverables to validate alignment.
- Proposals must describe the expected set of final deliverables that will be submitted to USDA and/or published by the Grantee during and at the end of the Cooperative Agreement period of performance. Since the project is expected to be conducted in an agile manner using human centered design, some deliverables will not be known until after discovery processes. When exact deliverables are unknown, proposals should describe and/or quantify deliverables to the extent possible (e.g., 10-15 pages of resources, 5-10 visualizations with appropriate narrative descriptions, five topical one-pagers, two one-hour webinars).
- Proposals must include an engagement plan that describes on how they will disseminate information at key stages to impacted parties (e.g., federal WIC staff, USDA FNS leadership, State agencies, local agencies, the WIC technology community at large).

Process Requirements

- The Grantee must use human centered design processes to gather feedback from impacted groups at key points throughout the project. Discovery processes should begin with thorough desk reviews of available documentation (both USDA-provided and publicly available information) to build on previous research and knowledge, both to accelerate learning and make effective use of user/affected party/key partner time

during research activities. Discovery with these parties should be tailored to obtain the necessary information a manner that minimizes burden.

- The Grantee must provide debriefs back to impacted groups and/or individuals who participate in discovery on at least a yearly basis.
- Proposals must provide a clear timeline for carrying out all proposed activities, including dependencies and unknowns that are inherent to an agile, human centered design project.

Program Management and Meeting Requirements

The Grantee must:

- Provide program management for this project, including maintaining updated project plans, running meetings, etc. to ensure that the project runs smoothly, and that USDA is informed and can provide appropriate direction and input throughout the project.
- Select and hire appropriately credentialed/experienced personnel to manage and operate project components. This must include staff who are able to conduct human centered design research, manage a large project, manage a large budget, and staff who have appropriate WIC, MIS, and/or civic technology expertise to complete the objectives of the grant.
- Delegate responsibilities to staff or other partners, as appropriate.
- Conduct appropriate training and provide necessary support for staff and other partners to successfully handle project responsibilities. USDA subject matter experts should not be expected to train Grantee staff or partners.

The Grantee must conduct the following meetings:

- Bi-weekly (once every two weeks) virtual meetings to provide an overview of the activities conducted during the previous two weeks, major accomplishments with completion dates and budget, deviations from the proposed plan, difficulties encountered, solutions developed to overcome difficulties, assistance needed from FNS on technical issues, and major planned activities for the next month. Should a major issue arise between calls, the Grantee must contact the FNS Grants and Program Officers immediately.
- Quarterly briefings for leadership (e.g., via one hour webinar with a PPT update on key activities completed in the quarter and next steps, with an opportunity for questions/feedback from leadership). At the beginning of each quarter, the Grantee must work with USDA to identify a date and audience for the next briefing. Briefing PPTs including robust talking points must be provided to FNS four weeks prior to each leadership briefing with an opportunity for reviews. Briefing slides should be largely visual.
- Additional calls/virtual meetings as recommended by the Grantee or requested by USDA.
- In these meetings, FNS encourages review and discussion of interim topics, findings, and/or recommendations related to work and deliverables, as appropriate, to validate alignment.

Proposals must include:

- Travel for 1-2 staff to attend one conference per year to learn about WIC, network, conduct listening sessions, and/or present. FNS will determine the conference(s) that should be attended each year and work with the Grantee if they are to present on progress, results, and/or resources developed as a part of this grant.

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: up to \$15,000,000
- Anticipated number of awards: 1
- Minimum award amount (award floor): \$0
- Maximum award amount (award ceiling): \$15,000,000
- Anticipated award announcement date: September 2024
- Anticipated period of performance (start and end date of the award): September 2024 – September 2028
- Anticipated funding of individual awards: \$15,000,000
- Application due date: July 25, 2024

Please note:

- Grant awards are subject to the availability of funding and/or appropriations of funds.

Allowable Costs

Equipment and Supplies: Expenditures for equipment (i.e., items of personal property having a useful life of more than one year and a cost of \$5,000 or more) are allowable expenses with prior approval by FNS. While equipment expenditures are allowable, FNS reserves the right to approve/disapprove these expenditures based upon the needs of the Agency and the proposed project. Equipment and supplies purchased using grant funds must be used during the grant period for the sole purpose of accomplishing the stated program objectives. If purchased equipment or supplies are not fully dedicated to grant project objectives, including beyond the grant period end date, the applicant must determine what percentage of the good's time or space will be dedicated to project activities when developing a proposed budget.

Travel: Travel necessary for discovery may be included if virtual methods are insufficient (e.g., to visit a clinic to watch how staff use the MIS during a WIC appointment, to conduct usability/UX/CX testing in person). Travel for 1-2 staff to attend 1 conference per year to learn about WIC, network, conduct listening sessions, and/or present must be included in all proposals.

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.

Unallowable Costs

Entertainment: Costs of entertainment, including amusement, diversion, and social activities and any associated costs are unallowable (such as mascot costumes, promotional items, etc.) unless there is a programmatic purpose and prior approval is granted by FNS.

Food Purchases: In general grant funds may NOT be used to purchase meals or snacks for training or meeting attendees, unless approved in advance in accordance with 2 CFR 200.432.

3. Eligibility Information

Eligible Applicants

Funds are available to a nonprofit organization (i.e., a civic technology nonprofit or other nonprofit type with similar staffing and experience/expertise; a research institute that is public, private, or nonprofit; or an accredited college or university) that meets the technical requirements outlined in this RFA.

A nonprofit entity is any organization or institution with IRS 501(c)(3) status or accredited institutions of higher education, where no part of the net earnings benefit any private shareholder or individual. All non-profit organizations must include their 501(c)(3) determination letter issued by the Internal Revenue Service (IRS).

All applicant organizations must be domestic entities and shall be owned, operated, and located within the 50 States, 33 Indian Tribal Organizations that administer the WIC Program, American Samoa, the District of Columbia, Guam, the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, Puerto Rico, or the United States Virgin Islands.

Ineligible Applicants

Entities not meeting the eligibility definitions will be deemed ineligible and removed from competition without further consideration. This includes:

- WIC State and local agencies, other Federal agencies, and for-profit businesses are not eligible to apply.
- International (non-U.S. or non-U.S. territories) entities are not eligible to apply.

Note: If an applicant is deemed nonresponsive for failing to submit required elements or documents associated with this RFA, they will be considered ineligible and removed from consideration for grant funding.

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 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.
- FNS Risk Assessment Questionnaire
 - Applicants must complete the Grant Program Accounting System & Financial Capability Questionnaire that allows 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 several 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 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 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

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 narrative with relevant information should be captured on no more than 15 pages, not including the cover sheet, table of content, resumes, letter(s) of commitment, endorsement letter(s), budget narrative(s), appendices, and required forms. All pages, excluding form pages, must be numbered.

Special Instructions:

- Applicants are encouraged to submit an application that includes 4 years of work, but clearly delineates activities and budgets by years 1-2 and years 3-4.
 - The SF-424A should include one total budget. The budget narrative should separate costs for planning (Objectives 1-3) and implementation (Objective 4).
- Late application submission will not be considered in this competition. 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 are not required but if included, must be submitted with the application through Grants.gov. Letters submitted via email will not be considered.
- Applications submitted without the required supporting documents, forms, certification will not be considered.
- Applications missing a written proposal or budget narrative will be deemed nonresponsive and will not be considered.
- 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, FNS will accept the latest application package successfully submitted. All other packages submitted by the applicant will be removed from this competition.

Cover Sheet

The cover page should include, at a minimum:

- Applicant Organization's name and mailing address
- Primary contact's name, job title, mailing address, phone number, and email address
- Grant program title

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 the objectives of this RFA. It must include all information required in Section 1, organized into the following sections:

- **Introduction:** Provide background information on the proposed team's experience and a general overview of the proposal. Please note any successes, lessons learned, or challenges from previous, related activities that inform the proposal.
- **Objectives, Activities, and Timeline:** Provide information on how the team will meet the objectives of this RFA. Provide a timeline that includes required and recommended deliverables.
- **Management Plan:** Provide a clear description of the activities to be undertaken to manage the project to ensure that project activities are completed on time, within budget, and with quality results. Applicants should describe their organizational structure and identify the staff and/or contractors who will manage the project. Describe how quality assurance, recordkeeping, and accounting activities will be executed.
- **Staffing:** Describe roles and responsibilities of key employees and contractors, as well as relevant qualifications and experience, and a level of effort specified for specific staff proposed. Note any relevant experience. Explain contingency plans for staff turnover.
- **Engagement Plan:** Include information on how the team recommends disseminating information at key stages to impacted parties (e.g., Federal WIC staff, USDA FNS leadership, State agencies, local agencies, the WIC technology community at large).

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.

Examples:

Objective # 1	<i>Assess the current landscape of WIC MIS.</i>
Activity 1	<i>Develop a Capacity Model for WIC MIS</i>
Indicator(s) 1	<i>Number of elements included Capacity Model</i>
Activity 2	<i>Note: Projects may have more than one Activity (and related indicators per Objective).</i>
Indicator(s) 2	<i>Note: Align with Activity 2</i>

Objective # 2	<i>Develop a transitional plan for improvements to current WIC MIS.</i>
Activity 1	<i>Develop and deliver documents, visualizations, and presentations to support the implementation of the transitional plan.</i>
Indicator(s) 1	<i>Number and types of deliverables submitted</i>
Activity 2	<i>Note: Projects may have more than one Activity (and related indicators per Objective).</i>
Indicator(s) 2	<i>Note: Align with Activity 2</i>

Objective # 3	<i>Develop a future state WIC MIS Strategy that includes both a product strategy and a market strategy.</i>
Activity 1	<i>Deliver final WIC MIS Strategy</i>
Indicator(s) 1	<i>Number of recommendations provided</i>
Activity 2	<i>Note: Projects may have more than one Activity (and related indicators per Objective).</i>
Indicator(s) 2	<i>Note: Align with Activity 2</i>

Objective # 4	<i>Assist USDA in implementation of the WIC MIS Strategy.</i>
Activity 1	<i>Implement key elements of the WIC MIS Strategy</i>
Indicator(s) 1	<i>Number and types of elements implemented</i>
Activity 2	<i>Note: Projects may have more than one Activity (and related indicators per Objective).</i>
Indicator(s) 2	<i>Note: Align with Activity 2</i>

Application Budget Narrative

The budget narrative, formatted as a table, should correspond with the proposed project narrative and application budget. Budgets must clearly identify activities and cost by project year. The narrative must justify and support the needs of the budget's direct cost. If the budget includes indirect costs, the applicant must provide a copy of its most recently approved Federal indirect cost rate agreement. Budget categories in this 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 of this RFA. [Section 7](#) of this RFA.

Required Grant Application Forms

The required grants.gov forms are located at grants.gov/web/grants/forms/forms-repository.html.

- 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 your organization does not intend to lobby, write “Not Applicable” in boxes required to be completed.
- Additional Required Forms and Information
 - Unique Entity Identifier (UEI) number. Please see below for further information
 - SAM registration. Please see below for further information.

Letter of Intent

Eligible applicants that intend to apply should submit a Letter of Intent notice by June 24, 2024, if possible. This notice does not obligate the applicant to apply but provides USDA with useful information in preparing for the review and selection process. The notice should include the potential applicant’s name and address, the organization’s name, telephone number, and email address of the primary point of contact. The applicant can send the letter via email to the FNS Grant Officer identified in [Section 7](#) of this RFA.

Submission Date

Complete grant applications must be uploaded to [Grants.gov](https://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, FNS will accept the latest application package successfully submitted. All other packages submitted by the applicant will be removed from this competition.

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 having trouble 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](https://www.grants.gov) and [SAM.gov](https://www.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](https://www.gsa.gov/uei).

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](https://www.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](https://www.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.
- 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 can apply online using *Workspace*. *Workspace* is a shared, online environment where members of a grant team may simultaneously access and edit different web forms within an application. For each funding opportunity announcement 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 questions related to the 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).

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. 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 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 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 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.

Intergovernmental Review

This funding opportunity is subject to the requirements of EO 12372, “Intergovernmental Review of Federal Programs.” This Executive Order was issued with the desire to foster the intergovernmental partnership and strengthen federalism by relying on State and local processes for the coordination and review of proposed federal financial assistance and direct federal development. The Order allows each State to designate an entity to perform this function.

If you are located within a State that does not have a Single Point of Contact (SPOC), you may send application materials directly to a federal awarding agency.

For a list of State agency contacts, please visit [whitehouse.gov/wp-content/uploads/2020/04/SPOC-4-13-20.pdf](https://www.whitehouse.gov/wp-content/uploads/2020/04/SPOC-4-13-20.pdf).

Funding Restrictions

- Pre-award costs will/will not be awarded for this grant project/cooperative agreement.
- Projects predicated on waiving WIC regulations and/or policy are not allowable and will not be considered for funding.

5. Application Review Information

Review Criteria

FNS will pre-screen all applications to ensure the applicants are eligible entities and that proposed activities comply with relevant Program regulations, and any applicable waivers.

Overall Approach and Feasibility (20 points)

The approach is agile, uses human centered design, and is likely to achieve the objectives of this grant within the period of performance. The proposal includes all required deliverables. Preferred: the proposal includes additional deliverables to meet USDA's needs.

Technical Merit of Project Design and Implementation (35 points)

The approach reflects the applicant's theoretical and practical understanding of challenges and opportunities in the benefits information system space, and is likely to yield a technically and operationally viable MIS strategy. The proposal notes specific deliverables, activities, and/or capabilities that will ensure technical and operational success.

Management Plan (15 points)

The proposal demonstrates that the applicant can run a well-managed and well-documented project. The proposal includes a plan to achieve the objectives of this grant within the period of performance, as well as procedures to adapt project approach as required throughout the period of performance based on the Grantee's findings and/or USDA feedback.

Staffing (20 points)

Staff and partners, including contractors, have an appropriate mix of experience, expertise, and skills to execute the activities in the proposal. The applicant has an appropriate plan in place to train all staff on key WIC and WIC MIS topics early in the project and in the event of a staffing change.

Engagement Plan (10 points)

The plan identifies affected parties and tailors communications and dissemination of information to their specific needs. The plan will ensure that affected parties understand the project and key results.

Total Points Available: 100

Review and Selection Process

Following the initial screening process, 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 highest to lowest score. The panel members will recommend applications for consideration for a grant award based on the evaluation scoring. The Selecting Official reserves the right to

accept the panel's recommendation or to select an application for funding out of order to meet agency priorities, program balance, geographical representation, or project diversity.

Note: If an applicant is deemed nonresponsive for failing to submit required elements or documents associated with this RFA, they will be considered ineligible and removed from consideration for grant funding.

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 FNS Grants or Program Officer should not be considered as a notice of a grant award. No pre-award or pre-agreement costs incurred prior to the effective start date are allowed unless approved and stated on FNS' signed award document (FNS-529). Only the recognized FNS authorized signature can bind the USDA, Food and Nutrition Service to the expenditure of funds related to an award's approved budget.

Administrative and National Policy Requirements

Confidentiality of an Application

When an application results in an award, it becomes a part of the record of FNS transactions, available to the public upon specific request. Information that the Secretary determines to be of a confidential, privileged, or proprietary nature will be held in confidence to the extent permitted by law. Therefore, any information that the applicant wishes to have considered as confidential, privileged, or proprietary should be clearly marked within the application. Any application that does not result in an award will be not released to the public. An application may be withdrawn at any time prior to the final action thereon.

Safeguarding Personally Identifiable Information

Personally Identifiable Information (PII) is any information that can be used to distinguish or trace an individual's identity, such as name, social security number, date and place of birth, mother's maiden name, or biometric records, and any other information that is linked or linkable to an individual, such as medical, educational, financial, and employment information (National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST) SP 800-122, Guide to Protecting the Confidentiality of Personally Identifiable information, April 2010).

Applicants submitting applications in response to this RFA must recognize that confidentiality of PII and other sensitive data is of paramount importance to the USDA Food and Nutrition Service. All federal and non-federal employees (e.g., contractors, affiliates, or partners) working for or on behalf of FNS are required to acknowledge understanding of their responsibilities and accountability for using and protecting FNS PII in accordance with the Privacy Act of 1974; Office of Management and Budget Memorandum M-06-15, *Safeguarding Personally Identifiable Information*; M-06-16, *Protection of Sensitive Agency Information*; M-07-16, *Safeguarding*

Against and Responding to the Breach of Personally Identifiable Information; and the NIST Special Publication (SP) 800-122, Guide to Protecting the Confidentiality of Personally Identifiable Information.

By submitting an application in response to this RFA, applicants are assuring that all data exchanges conducted throughout the application submission and pre-award process (and during the performance of the grant, if awarded) will be conducted in a manner consistent with applicable Federal laws. By submitting a grant application, applicants agree to take all necessary steps to protect such confidentiality, including the following: (1) ensuring that PII and sensitive data developed, obtained, or otherwise associated with UDSA FNS funded grants is securely transmitted. Transmission of applications through Grants.gov is secure; (2) ensuring that PII is not transmitted to unauthorized users, and that PII and other sensitive data is not submitted via email; and (3) Data transmitted via approved file sharing services (WatchDox, ShareFile, etc.), CDs, DVDs, thumb drives, etc., must be encrypted.

Conflict of Interest and Confidentiality of the Review Process

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

Administrative Regulations

Federal Tax Liabilities Restrictions

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

Felony Crime Conviction Restrictions

None of the funds made available by this or any other Act may be used to enter into a contract, memorandum of understanding, or cooperative agreement with, make a grant to, or provide a loan or loan guarantee to, any corporation that was convicted of a felony criminal violation under any Federal law within the preceding 24 months, where the awarding agency is aware of the conviction, unless a Federal agency has considered suspension or debarment of the

corporation and has made a determination that this further action is not necessary to protect the interests of the Government.

Debarment and Suspension 2 CFR Part 180 and 2 CFR Part 417

A recipient chosen for an award shall comply with the non-procurement debarment and suspension common rule implementing Executive Orders (E.O.) 12549 and 12669, “Debarment and Suspension,” codified at 2 CFR Part 180 and 2 CFR Part 417. This common rule restricts sub-awards and contracts with certain parties that are debarred, suspended, or otherwise excluded from or ineligible for participation in Federal assistance programs or activities. The approved grant recipient will be required to ensure that all sub-contractors and sub-Grantees are neither excluded nor disqualified under the suspension and debarment rules prior to approving a sub-grant award by checking the System for Award Management (SAM) at [SAM.gov](https://www.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](https://www.ecfr.gov/current/title-2/chapter-I/subchapter-A/part-25/subpart-1/section-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 public.

Primary Grantees, including State agencies, are required to report actions taken on or after October 1, 2010, that obligates \$25,000 or more in Federal grant funds to first-tier sub-Grantees. This information must be reported in the Government-wide FFATA Sub-Award Reporting System (FSRS). 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. FNS will review and consider any information about the applicant reflected in FAPIIS when making a judgment about whether an applicant is qualified to receive an award.

Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) Requests

The Freedom of Information Act (FOIA), 5 U.S.C. 552, provides individuals with a right to access records in the possession of the Federal Government. The Government may withhold information pursuant to the nine exemptions and the three exclusions contained in the Act.

Application packages submitted in response to this grant solicitation may be subject to FOIA by requests by interested parties. In response to these requests, FNS will comply with all applicable laws and regulations, including departmental regulations.

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

For additional information on the Freedom of Information (FOIA) process, please contact the 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 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 the Agency's Privacy Policy, visit: <https://www.usda.gov/privacy-policy>. <https://www.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 CRR 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 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.

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. To access FPRS, the grant recipient must obtain USDA e-Authorization, verify their identity, and submit an FNS-674 form, which will be provided by the Grant Officer to access FPRS. For additional information on FPRS, visit fprs.fns.usda.gov.

Performance Progress Reports (PPR)

Grantees will be required to submit progress reports to 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. For reference, a sample of the PPR form can be found in the [Appendix](#).

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.

7. Federal Awarding Agency Contacts

For questions regarding this solicitation, please contact the Grant Officer.

Dawn Addison
Grant Officer, Grants and Fiscal Policy Division
U.S. Department of Agriculture, FNS
Email: Dawn.Addison@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. FNS reserves the right to provide this debriefing orally or in written format.

Conflict of Interest

Prior work on WIC MIS or related technologies does not confer conflict of interest to interested, eligible entities for the purposes of responding to this RFA.

However, organizations hired by the Grantee to perform work on this cooperative agreement *could* develop an organizational conflict of interest that would preclude them from bidding on future competitive acquisitions based on FAR 9 9.505-2 (a)(1):

If a contractor prepares and furnishes complete specifications covering non-developmental items, to be used in a competitive acquisition, that contractor shall not be allowed to furnish these items, either as a prime contractor or as a subcontractor, for a reasonable period of time including, at least, the duration of the initial production contract.

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. 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.)		

ITEM	YES	NO
Has the bona fide need been clearly identified in the project description to justify the cost for a contract or sub-grant expense(s) shown on the budget?		
A justification for all Sole-source contracts must be provided in the budget narrative prior to approving this identified cost.		
Other		
Consultant Services – Has the bona fide need been clearly identified in the project description to justify the cost shown on the budget? The following information must be provided in the justification: description of service, the consultant’s name and an itemized list of all direct cost and fees, number of personnel including the position title (specialty and specialized qualifications as appropriate to the costs), number of estimated hours 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 an 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.		

