

Please note that this document refers to FNS forms instead of FNA temporarily, as the agency works towards an official process to update reporting form names.

Information Collection: 0584-0512
Expiration date: 03/31/2029



Food and Nutrition Administration
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Fiscal Year (FY) 2026 Child Nutrition Technology Innovation Grant for Child and Adult Care Food Program Integrity

**Fiscal Year 2026 Request for Applications (RFA)
Assistance Listing Number (ALN): 10.541**

Release Date: June 25, 2026

**Application Due Date: July 31, 2026; 11:59 pm, Eastern Daylight Time
(EDT)**

Anticipated Award Date: September 2026

This information is being collected to assist the Food and Nutrition Administration (FNA) in receiving key information from grant applicants that is needed to evaluate and rank applications, therefore protecting the integrity of the grantee selection process. This is a voluntary collection and FNA will use the information to solicit applications for the 2026 Child Nutrition Technology Innovation Grant for Child and Adult Care Food Program Integrity. 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 40 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 Administration, Office of Policy Support, 1400 Independence Avenue, SW, Washington, D.C. 20250 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, FNA 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 Content 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. Provide either a copy of a Negotiated Indirect Cost Rate Agreement (NICRA) or if no agreement exists, the applicant may charge up to 15% 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:

- SF-424 – [Application for Federal Assistance](#) (fillable PDF in Grants.gov)
- SF-424A – [Budget Information and Instruction Form](#) (fillable PDF in Grants.gov)
- SF-424B – [Assurances for Non-Construction Programs](#) (fillable PDF in Grants.gov)
- SF-LLL – [Disclosure of Lobbying Activities](#)
- FNS-906 – Grant Program Accounting System & Financial Capability Questionnaire (fillable PDF in Grants.gov)
- Negotiated Indirect Cost Rate Agreement (PDF - Upload using the “Add Attachments” button under SF-424 item #15)
- Additional attachments as required:
 - Project Application Checklist
 - Project Narrative
 - Activities/Indicators Tracker
 - Budget Narrative

Table of Contents

1. Program Description and Objectives	5
Executive Summary	5
Program Description	5
Key Objective	6
2. Federal Award Information	8
Allowable Costs	8
Unallowable Costs	9
3. Eligibility Information	10
Eligible Applicants	10
Cost Sharing or Matching Considerations.....	10
Pre-Award Screening Requirements	10
Acknowledgement of USDA Support.....	11
4. Application Content Information	11
Content and Form of Application Submission	11
Special Instructions:.....	11
Cover Sheet	11
Table of Contents.....	12
Application Project Summary	12
Project Narrative	12
Technical Requirements.....	13
Project Management Approach.....	13
Sustainability and Transferability	13
Activities/Indicators Tracker	13
Application Budget Narrative.....	14
Indirect Cost Rate	15
Required Grant Application Forms	15
5. Application Review Information.....	16
Review Criteria.....	16
Application Project Summary (10 points)	16
Project Narrative (25 points)	16
Technical Requirements (15 points).....	17
Project Management Approach (10 points).....	17
Sustainability & Transferability (10 points)	17
Activities/Indicators Tracker (15 points).....	17

Budget Narrative (15 points).....	18
Review and Selection Process	18
6. Application Submission Information.....	18
Submission Date	18
Preparing for Electronic Application Submission through Grants.gov	19
How to Submit an Application via Grants.gov	20
Grants.gov Receipt Requirements and Proof of Timely Submission.....	20
Intergovernmental Review	21
7. Federal Award Administration Information.....	21
Federal Award Notice.....	21
Administrative and National Policy Requirements.....	21
Confidentiality of an Application.....	21
Conflict of Interest and Confidentiality of the Review Process	22
Administrative Regulations	22
Code of Federal Regulations and Other Government Requirements	25
Reporting Requirements	25
Financial Reports	25
Performance Progress Reports (PPR).....	26
Final Presentation	26
8. Federal Awarding Agency Contacts.....	26
9. Other Information	26
Debriefing Requests.....	26
Appendix A: Application Template.....	27
Appendix B: RFA Budget Narrative Checklist.....	36
Appendix C: FNS-908 Performance Progress Report (PPR).....	38

1. Program Description and Objectives

Executive Summary

Under the leadership of Secretary Brooke Rollins, the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) is committed to supporting State innovation, developing, and implementing modernized systems, and minimizing instances of fraud, waste, and program abuse. To advance these priorities, the USDA's Food and Nutrition Administration (FNA) is excited to announce the availability of \$8.7 million to provide competitive grants to State agencies to strengthen the integrity of the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP). Through the Technology Innovation Grant for CACFP Integrity (TIG-CACFP), as authorized under the Full-Year Continuing Appropriations and Extensions Act, 2025 (Public Law [119-4](#)), States will have the opportunity to design and implement modernized information technology (IT) solutions that improve program operations, enhance accountability, and drive lasting improvements in CACFP integrity.

Program Description

FNA is investing grant funds to strengthen CACFP integrity and ensure that eligible children and adults who receive care at participating child care centers, day care homes, and adult day care centers receive the full benefit of the program. Recent high-profile fraud cases have demonstrated the urgent need for stronger safeguards to restore and maintain public confidence in CACFP. Although most program operators seek to comply with program rules in good faith, fraud—even when infrequent—undermines public confidence in government programs and jeopardizes their ability to serve the individuals who are in greatest need of assistance. Accordingly, FNA is committed to supporting State agency efforts to combat fraud, waste, and abuse.

The Full-Year Continuing Appropriations and Extensions Act, 2025 (Public Law [119-4](#)) authorized funding for grants to States for the purposes of developing, implementing, and improving modernized information technology (IT) systems used to operate and manage the Child Nutrition Programs (CNPs). In previous years, Technology Innovation Grants (TIGs) have been provided on both a competitive and non-competitive basis. This competitive Request for Applications (RFA) is a new initiative *specifically* for modernizing systems that operate and manage CACFP to improve program integrity and accountability. State agency applicants should review the RFA thoroughly to ensure full understanding of the updated requirements and procedures.

The TIG-CACFP will provide funds to CACFP State agencies for projects to develop, implement, and improve IT systems used to operate and manage CACFP. This grant opportunity is intended to encourage State agencies that administer CACFP to propose innovative technology solutions that improve program integrity, accountability, and efficiencies at both the State and local levels.

Further, FNA encourages applicants to propose projects that will support implementation of the CACFP integrity strategies outlined in the February 11, 2026, letter titled [Promoting Stronger Program Integrity and Oversight in the Child and Adult Care Food Program \(CACFP\)](#). Key strategies include:

- Using the onboarding process to help prevent bad actors from participating in CACFP.
- Training for institutions in program integrity.
- Monitoring, investigating, and correcting issues to support effective management of institutions.
- Using the serious deficiency and suspension process as required.
- Reviewing reimbursement claims for signs of program abuse.

State agencies administering the CACFP maintain automated systems at the State level that rely on operational data from the local levels including, but not limited to, program applications, eligibility certifications, verification, meal counting and claiming, menu planning, program monitoring, and program reporting. CACFP Sponsoring Organizations (SOs) typically use automated systems, manual systems, or a combination thereof to capture the local program data reported to the State agency. In some States, local agencies may be using 30 or more different software systems to submit program data to the State agency. Others still rely on manual, paper-based methods to capture and report Program data or to receive information from the site level. These inconsistencies create duplication of effort, increase the risk of errors, and reduce visibility of program operations for monitoring purposes. The TIG-CACFP can be used to bridge such gaps by modernizing automation, improving the integrity of CACFP and minimizing risk of fraud, waste, and abuse.

For example, the funds could be used to support activities such as:

- Enhance automated edit checks to validate data accuracy and consistency across program applications, meal claims, and monitoring reports, reducing errors and strengthening CACFP integrity.
- Develop seamless interfaces that connect SO systems with the State system in such a way that they perform seamlessly without duplicating effort yet remain as separate systems.
- Improve State and SO systems to better comply with USDA/FNA, State, and local requirements by incorporating automated compliance checks, standardized reporting formats, and real-time validation tools.
- Provide sub-grants to SOs for software to implement automated electronic systems for CACFP.
- Enhance State and/or SO systems to be able to upload documentation for applications and reimbursement claims, bank records, support disaggregated data, review meal claim forms electronically, improve edit checks, improve record keeping.
- Create a virtual statewide training system where the State agency provide SOs/sites access to program modules.
- Expand existing State systems to allow for the routine monthly collection, maintenance, and analysis of facility-level CACFP participation and meal claim records.

FNA will expect grantees to share challenges and successes from their projects broadly, so other State agencies can learn from these innovations and potentially adopt similar solutions to strengthen CACFP integrity. As a final deliverable of the grant project, grantees will be expected to virtually present an overview of their project to FNA and State agencies that operate CACFP, highlighting best practices and lessons learned. This presentation will be shared nationwide and may be posted on Child Nutrition (CN) PartnerWeb.

Key Objective

The Program Objective for the FY 2026 TIG-CACFP is **to strengthen CACFP integrity by developing, implementing, and improving information technology systems used to operate and manage the program.**

As noted in Section 4, within the “Activities/Indicators Tracker,” proposed activities should be clearly aligned to this **objective** and their associated activities and indicators. Note that if

awarded, grantees will be required to report on progress towards activities aligned with the required objective 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.

Examples of project activities that could be supported by FY 2026 TIG-CACFP funds and support the required objective include, but are not limited to:

- System planning activities *that support implementation of system project within the grant period*, such as:
 - Current IT systems evaluations, including internal reviews and/or hiring a contractor or university student to conduct a review and recommend solutions;
 - Feasibility studies, including business analysis, requirements analysis, alternative analysis, and cost benefit analysis to plan for an implementation of the system project;
 - Hiring a staff member, such as a project manager, to oversee planning and implementation activities;
 - Establishing a project management plan and/or risk management plan;
 - Preparing a functional requirements specification or document;
 - Consulting with stakeholders; and/or
 - Assessing current system training and oversight capabilities, needs, and effective system training.
- System implementation activities, such as:
 - Building a custom system or implementing a commercial-off-the-shelf (COTS) product to support CACFP integrity;
 - Packaging and transferring system code from another State agency;
 - Purchasing web-based software;
 - Creating uniform interfaces between diverse systems;
 - Creating interfaces to improve automation between State and local agencies, including sub-grant awards to SOs;
 - Purchasing technology equipment and/or software;
 - Implementing other innovative solutions to improve program operation accountability, monitoring, data accuracy, and overall program integrity at the State and local levels;
 - Hiring contractors such as a business analyst, project manager, and/or program developer;
 - Testing, including unit testing, integration testing, performance testing, end-to-end testing, user acceptance testing, and regression testing;
 - Training for staff and/or local SOs on new technology module(s) or equipment; and/or
 - Purchasing hardware to implement changes accordingly.

Note that while planning activities are allowed, the focus of the project should be to implement an innovative technology solution to support improved CACFP integrity efforts. Planning focused projects will not receive full scores, in accordance with the scoring criteria (See Section 4 – Application Content Information). Routine maintenance and ongoing operations activities are not an allowable cost for the FY 2026 TIG-CACFP.

Additionally, all grantees are required to include the following activity in their Activities/Indicators Tracker (see Section 4 – Application Content Information):

- Deliver final project overview presentation. This presentation must be conducted virtually, shared nationwide, and may be posted on CN PartnerWeb.

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: \$8.7 million
- Anticipated number of awards: 5-10
- Minimum award amount (award floor): \$100,000
- Maximum award amount (award ceiling): \$2 million
- Anticipated award announcement date: September 2026
- Anticipated period of performance (start and end date of the award): September 2026 – September 2029
- Application due date: July 31, 2026
- Type of Federal Financial Assistance: Grant
- Subawards may also be awarded under this grant

Please note:

- Grant awards are subject to the availability of funding and/or appropriations of funds.
- FNA reserves the right to use this solicitation and the results of this competition to award additional grants this year or the subsequent fiscal year, should additional funds become available.
- Applications, and all proposed activities, must comply with applicable laws, regulations, and executive orders. FNA reserves the right to exclude from consideration any applications proposing activities in contradiction of these requirements.

Allowable Costs

Among other costs, budgets may include expenses related to personnel, contractors, equipment and supplies, meeting expenses, travel, and trainings.

Please refer to the general guidance under the Cost Principles found at 2 CFR 200.

As with all Federal grant funds, procurement regulations at 7 CFR Part 210.21, 220.16, 225.17, and 226.22, and 2 CFR Part 200.317-326 apply, and technology needs competitively procured using these grant funds must be necessary, reasonable, and allocable. State agencies must follow all Federal and State procurement laws when purchasing equipment with these grant awards.

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 \$10,000 or more) are allowable expenses with prior approval by FNA. FNA reserves the right to approve/disapprove these expenditures based on needs as expressed by the proposed project. Supplies do not require a separate specific prior approval outside of the budget/proposal approval process.

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.

A complete listing of selected items of costs is located at 2 CFR 200.420 – 200.476.

Subawards: Applicants that provide subawards are expected to:

- Ensure that funds support the grant objective.
- Clearly describe their process for awarding subawards in the project narrative, to include subaward objectives, allowable costs, and plans for management and oversight of subawards.
- Provide oversight to subaward recipients to ensure that expenditures authorized under the subawards are allowable, allocable, and reasonable.
- Ensure that all expenditures are consistent with all local, State, and Federal policies, regulations, and procedures.
- Ensure that expenditures do not exceed that which would be incurred by a prudent person under similar circumstances and would qualify as a sound business practice.

Please note that all costs allowed for subawards must be allowable costs per this RFA. For example, if a cost is unallowable per this RFA and associated regulations, it is also unallowable for subawards.

Please refer to 2 CFR 200 for complete information on requirements for subawards, primarily [2 CFR 200.331](#) and [2 CFR 200.332](#).

Use of advanced automation technologies: Any potential use or development of advanced automation technologies—including robotic process automation, Artificial Intelligence (AI), AI Systems or Generative AI—in Child Nutrition Programs (including eligibility determinations, Statewide applications, etc.) must be reviewed and/or approved prior to expending FNA administrative or grant funding. Selection for award does not constitute approval of the use of advanced automation technologies for determining eligibility. USDA/FNA may request a demonstration to verify accuracy before issuing final approval.

Unallowable Costs

The following funding restrictions apply to the TIG-CACFP:

Maintenance costs: For the FY 2026 TIG-CACFP, costs for **routine** maintenance and ongoing operations—such as recurring license renewals, system hosting, and regular payments for **existing** software fixes and support are not allowed.

Other CNPs: In addition, funds **cannot** be used for technology systems that do not manage CACFP. Funds **can** be used for technology systems that manage other CNPs *in addition* to CACFP, as long as the project improves the integrity of CACFP.

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

3. Eligibility Information

Eligible Applicants

In FY 2026, 57 State agencies are administering CACFP and, therefore, are eligible to apply for the FY 2026 TIG-CACFP. The term State agency means 1) the State educational agency; and 2) any other agency of the State which has been designated by the Governor or other appropriate executive or legislative authority of the State and approved by USDA to administer CACFP. In States with more than one State agency, the State agency operating CACFP may coordinate with another agency within their State that operates the CNPs, but the CACFP agency must be the primary. The CACFP agency will be responsible for submitting an application and meeting grant requirements, if awarded.

Entities that do not meet the eligibility definition will be **deemed ineligible** and removed from competition without further consideration.

Note: Those applicants who fail to submit any required documents or forms will be deemed **nonresponsive** and therefore will be **ineligible** to participate in the competition and removed from further consideration.

Cost Sharing or Matching Considerations

There are no cost sharing or matching requirements for this award. Cost sharing or matching will not be considered in the review process.

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 200.206, 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 FNA 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, EPLS, and FAPIIS.
- FNA Risk Assessment Questionnaire (FNS-906)
 - Applicants must complete the Grant Program Accounting System & Financial Capability Questionnaire that allows FNA 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 FNA imposing special conditions or additional oversight requirements that correspond to the degree of risk assessed.

Acknowledgement of USDA Support

As required in 2 CFR 415.2, the recipient must have an acknowledgement of the USDA awarding agency support placed on any information dissemination products with any Federal financial assistance support, including those which report the results of, or describe, a Federal financial assistance-supported activity. 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 Content Information

Content and Form of Application Submission

FNA strongly encourages eligible applicants interested in applying to this program to use the application template (See Appendix A). However, use of the template is not required to apply to this grant. Applicants who do not wish to use the application template must 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 10 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:

- Late application submission will not be considered in this competition. FNA 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.
- Applications submitted without the required supporting documents, forms, certification will not be considered.
- Applications missing a written proposal or budget narrative **will not be considered** and will be deemed **non-responsive** and removed from further consideration.
- FNA 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, FNA 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:

- State Agency name and mailing address
- Agency Administrator name, job title, and contact information (telephone and email)
- Project Contact name, job title, and contact information (telephone and email)

Table of Contents

The Table of Contents should include relevant sections, subsections and associated page numbers. A Table of Contents is not required if the applicant uses the application template.

Application Project Summary

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

- The project scope and a statement explaining how the proposed scope fulfills the key objective of TIG-CACFP: *to strengthen CACFP integrity by developing, implementing, and improving information technology systems used to operate and manage the program.*
- A brief description of the current status of CACFP and the need for the project.
- A brief description of the proposed activities and the anticipated outcome and/or benefits.

Project Narrative

The project narrative should clearly identify what the applicant is proposing and how the project will provide a CACFP integrity system solution, the expected outcome 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 system project design, address program specific development methodology needs, procedures, estimated timeline, monitoring/oversight, and the organization's project staffing.

This section should include:

- A detailed description of the proposed activities and the expected outcome and/or benefits
- The metrics by which success will be evaluated (e.g. number of sub-grants awarded, amount of time saved, number of processes automated)
- Personnel who will manage and/or be funded by the grant, including current employees, potential hires, and/or contractors. Include:
 - their specific responsibilities in the project
 - their relevant qualifications and/or experience (For potential hires, provide the qualifications that will be included in the position description.)
 - what percentage of the person's time will be spent managing the grant
- State agency executive leaders supporting the project
- Whether other funding sources will be used to supplement project work. For example, if State agencies are also utilizing State Administrative Expense (SAE) funds for a project, be specific about what costs will be charged to the TIG-CACFP versus SAE.
- **Sub-Grant information:** If the project involves providing sub-grants to SOs, the applicant should describe the plan for awarding and monitoring local-level sub-grants. This description should include the staff, potential hires, and/or contractors responsible for sub-grants and monitoring, as well as the State agency's plan for allowable costs, oversight, and monitoring sub-grant awards.
- **Advanced automation technologies:** If the project involves use of advanced automation technologies, including use of robotic process automation and AI, in Child Nutrition Programs, the applicant should include the following details in their proposal:
 - Scope and use of advanced automation technologies, including any AI model being used, Child Nutrition Programs impacted, and expected outcome.

- Name, title, and qualifications of staff responsible for overseeing data input and any resulting outputs used for eligibility determinations, program operations, reporting, or other functional decision-making. The proposed process for ensuring data accuracy, system security, and compliance with civil rights, privacy, and USDA/FNA policy changes.
- Note: USDA/FNA must review and approve the final use of AI. Receipt of a grant award does not constitute approval to implement AI or make it operational.

Technical Requirements

This section should include:

- A description of the project technology solution and planned approach
- Any IT modules the State agency’s project will address:
 - Sponsor Application and Record Management
 - Financial Management (including CACFP Audit Funds & SAE Funds)
 - SO Reviews
 - SO Claims and Reimbursement
 - SO Seriously Deficient
 - Federal Reporting
 - Other (please specify)
- If utilizing contractors or consultants, include:
 - The name of potential or contracted vendors
 - The associated contract timelines
 - A detailed description of contractor/consultant responsibilities, anticipated tasks, and a reasonable estimate of contractual/consultant costs

Project Management Approach

This section should include a detailed description of the planned project management approach. Include detailed information on how the agency will monitor project scope, track schedules/costs/resources, monitor quality assurance, submit progress reports to FNA, and implement the plan for sustainability. Identify the staff, potential hires, and/or contractors responsible for project management.

Sustainability and Transferability

This section should include:

- A description of the plans to maintain the overall project, system and/or software and how the State will keep the system in operation beyond the grant period.
- A description of how the project outcomes and information will produce knowledge that is transferable to other State agencies for similar improvement projects.

Activities/Indicators Tracker

Applicants are required to complete an Activities/Indicators Tracker that identifies specific activities that the applicant will pursue to complete the project proposed in the narrative. The timeline should ensure that all project deliverables are completed and funds obligated in advance of September 30, 2029.

Note: As stated in the Section 1, grantees are expected to virtually present an overview of their project to FNA and State agencies that operate CACFP. Applicants **must** include this final

presentation as an activity in their Activities/Indicators Tracker (see Example Activity/Indicator Tracker below).

Proposed Activities and indicators measuring success must align with the Key Objective (see Section 1 – Program Description and Objectives) and must be presented in the below format (see Example Activity/Indicator Tracker below). 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. Some examples include: Number of Sub-Grants Awarded, Amount of Time Saved, or Number of Processes Automated.

This table may be formatted in either landscape or portrait orientation.

Example Activity/Indicator Tracker

Activity	Indicator(s) and Target Number	Anticipated Start Date (Month, Year)	Anticipated Completion Date (Month, Year)
<i>Example: Award subgrants to Sponsoring Organizations to develop automated CACFP systems</i>	<i>Number of subgrants awarded Target: 15</i>	<i>January 2027</i>	<i>March 2027</i>
<i>Example: Train staff on enhanced CACFP interface</i>	<i>Number of trainings conducted Target: 3 trainings Number of staff trained Target: 5 staff</i>	<i>September 2027</i>	<i>December 2027</i>
<i>Example: Deliver final project overview presentation (Note: This is a required activity.)</i>	<i>Presentation delivered Target: 1 Number of Presenters Target: 1</i>	<i>August 2029</i>	<i>September 2029</i>

Application Budget Narrative

Eligible applicants are encouraged to use the attached Budget Narrative Template (see Appendix A). The budget narrative should give the item-by-item breakdown for each category and show the calculations used to derive the costs. The budget narrative serves two purposes: it explains how the costs were estimated, and it justifies the need for the cost. The budget and budget narrative must be in line with the proposed project description; there should be no items listed in the budget narrative that are not described in the project proposal. Proposed costs must be necessary, reasonable, and allocable to carry out the project's goals and objectives.

The budget narrative must include:

- Categories that align with the SF-424A form.

- The amount of Federal funds requested, listed in whole dollars
- A narrative description of the Federal funds requested
- Calculations detailing how these funds were derived
- **Note:** If the budget includes indirect costs, the applicant must provide a copy of their most recently approved Federal indirect cost rate agreement

If the budget narrative is not formatted as a spreadsheet (e.g. Microsoft Excel), then it must be accompanied by a spreadsheet with all costs listed and which aligns to the categories on the SF-424. The budget table must be formatted to fit on an 8.5 x 11-inch page, with a font no smaller than 11-point.

Note that if a discrepancy exists between the total funding request (submitted on SF-424, SF-424A, and budget narrative) within the application package in response to this solicitation, FNA will only consider and evaluate the estimated funding request contained on the SF-424.

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 in the budget narrative and a copy of the agreement must be submitted with your application. If the applicant does not have a current Federal negotiated indirect cost rate (including provisional rate) they may elect to charge a de minimis rate of up to 15 percent of modified total direct costs (MTDC). 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 8 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](https://www.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)
- Disclosure of Lobbying Activities (SF LLL)
 - 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.
- FNS-906 (Grant Program Accounting System and Financial Capability Questionnaire)
- Additional Required Information
 - Unique Entity Identifier (UEI) number. Please see Section 6 for further information

- SAM registration. Please see Section 6 for further information.

5. Application Review Information

Review Criteria

FNA will pre-screen all applications to ensure the applicants are eligible entities and are in compliance with all applicable laws, regulations, and executive orders. FNA will not approve any waivers from Program regulations for any projects submitted in response to this solicitation.

Application Project Summary (10 points)

- The applicant includes each of the required elements:
 - The project scope and a statement explaining how the proposed scope fulfills the key objective of the TIG-CACFP
 - A brief description of the current status of CACFP and the need for the project, and
 - A brief description of the proposed activities and the anticipated outcome and/or benefits.
- The proposed project is clear and appropriately aligns with objective of the TIG-CACFP.
- The proposed project is innovative and addresses the need identified by the applicant.

Project Narrative (25 points)

- The applicant includes each of the required elements:
 - A detailed description of the proposed activities and the expected outcome and/or benefits.
 - The metrics by which success will be evaluated.
 - Personnel who will manage and/or be funded by the grant (including current employees, potential hires, and/or contractors) and their specific responsibilities in the project, relevant qualifications and/or experience, and what percentage of the person's time will be spent managing the grant.
 - State agency executive leaders supporting the project.
 - Whether other funding sources will be used to supplement project work.
- The applicant presents a clear and well-designed project that aligns with the objective of the TIG-CACFP. Success metrics identified are realistic, measurable, and clearly defined.
- The project is focused on achievable implementation activities, not planning or maintenance.
- The responsibilities among personnel are clearly outlined. The experience and qualifications of the personnel reflect the expertise necessary to carry out their responsibilities.
- If the applicant proposes subgrants: Applicant provides a clear and appropriate plan for managing subgrants and ensuring compliance. Applicant's plan includes the staff, potential hires, and/or contractors responsible for awarding and monitoring sub-grants, as well as the State agency's plan for allowable costs, oversight, and monitoring sub-grant awards.
- If the applicant's proposal includes use of advanced automation technologies, including use of robotic process automation and AI, in Child Nutrition Programs: Applicant's plan to use advanced automation technologies is clear, reasonable, and includes each of the required elements:

- Scope of use of advanced automation technologies, including any AI model being used, Child Nutrition Programs impacted, and expected outcome.
- Name, title, and qualifications of staff responsible for overseeing data input and any resulting outputs used for eligibility determinations, program operations, reporting, or other functional decision-making..
- The proposed process for ensuring data accuracy, system security, and compliance with civil rights, privacy, and USDA/FNA policy changes.

Technical Requirements (15 points)

- The applicant includes each of the required elements:
 - A description of the project technology solution and planned approach.
 - Any IT modules the State agency’s project will address.
 - If the applicant is utilizing contractors or consultants: Applicant includes the name of potential or contracted vendors, the associated contract timelines, and a detailed description of contractor/consultant responsibilities, anticipated tasks, and a reasonable estimate of contractual/consultant costs.
- The proposed solution is clearly outlined, addresses the need identified by the applicant, and aligns with the objective of the TIG-CACFP.

Project Management Approach (10 points)

- The applicant includes each of the required elements:
 - Detailed information on how the agency will monitor project scope, track schedules/costs/resources, monitor quality assurance, submit progress reports to FNA, and implement the plan for sustainability.
 - The staff, potential hires, and/or contractors responsible for project management.
- The applicant’s project management approach is clear and indicates the applicant has the capacity to manage and execute the proposed project.

Sustainability & Transferability (10 points)

- The applicant includes each of the required elements:
 - A description of the plans to maintain the overall project, system, and/or software and how the State will keep the system in operation beyond the grant period.
 - A description of how the project outcomes and information will produce knowledge that is transferable to other State agencies for similar improvement projects.
- The applicant’s plan for sustainability and transferability is clear and appropriate.
- The proposed project is likely to produce outcomes and information that will aid the grantee State agency in accomplishing program improvements and will produce knowledge that is transferable to other State agencies for similar projects.
- The applicant demonstrates that the State agency has the capacity to implement and sustain program improvements after grant funding ends.

Activities/Indicators Tracker (15 points)

- The Activities/Indicators Tracker is formatted correctly, including columns with the same headers in the same order as the instructions provided (in Section 4 – Application Content Information) and only one activity on each row. Overall, the table is readable.
- Activities are completed within the grant period (September 2026 – September 2029).

- The final presentation to FNA and State that operate CACFP (a grant requirement) is included as an activity within the Activities/Indicators Tracker. This presentation will be conducted virtually, shared nationwide, and may be posted on CN PartnerWeb.
- Activities and indicators proposed are specific, measurable, actionable, relevant, and timebound. The indicators align with their associated activity. Each activity and indicator aligns with the Key Objective (see Section 1 – Program Description and Objectives).
- Overall, the timeline proposed is realistic.
- The activities listed align with the other sections of the application. No activities have been selected that are not explained in the Project Narrative and Budget Narrative.

Budget Narrative (15 points)

- Budget narrative was provided and includes categories that align with the SF-424A form.
- Budget narrative includes an item-by-item breakdown (line item) for each category, shows the calculations used to derive the costs, and includes a narrative explanation for each cost. Costs listed are in whole dollars.
- The costs listed align with the other sections of the application. No costs have been listed that are not explained in the Project Narrative and Activities/Indicators Tracker.
- Proposed costs are necessary, reasonable, and allocable to carry out the project's goals and objectives. The total funding amount requested is appropriate for the scope of the project.
- If indirect costs are included, the applicant agency's Indirect Cost Rate Agreement with a Federal agency is provided and the indirect cost rate is applied correctly to allowable direct costs.
- The budget narrative is formatted as a spreadsheet (or accompanied by a spreadsheet) and meets the formatting criteria provided in Section 4.

Total Points Available: 100

Review and Selection Process

Following the initial screening process, FNA 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. FNA 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 or geographical representation. FNA reserves the right to use this solicitation and results of this competition to award additional grants in the next fiscal year should additional funds be made available.

6. Application Submission 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.
- FNA 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, FNA 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 documents or forms will be deemed **nonresponsive** and therefore will be **ineligible** to participate in the competition and removed from further consideration.

FNA 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**.

FNA 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](https://sam.gov) in order to submit an application to FNA 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 <https://sam.gov/entity-registration>.

Note: Entities can register in SAM.gov and will be assigned their “SAM UEI.” For additional information on the UEI process, please visit [SAM.gov](https://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://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.
- FNA 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 (except Federal holidays) 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 8 – Federal Awarding Agency Contacts of this RFA.

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 6 – Application Submission Information. 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 FNA 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 FNA 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.

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 (This includes periods (.) and spacing followed by a dash in the file. To separate words in naming a file, use underscore.)

Intergovernmental Review

This funding opportunity is not 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.

For purposes of this award application, please select Box C, “Program is not covered by E.O. 12372, for question number 19 on the SF-424 Application for Federal Assistance.

7. 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 FNA 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 FNA’ signed award document (FNS-529). Only the recognized FNA authorized signature can bind the USDA, Food and Nutrition Administration 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 FNA 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 Administration. All federal and non-federal employees (e.g., contractors, affiliates, or partners) working for or on behalf of FNA 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 USDA FNA 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 FNA 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 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 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), now part of SAM.gov. 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. FNA 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, FNA will comply with all applicable laws and regulations, including departmental regulations.

FNA 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 FNA notification. FNA will redact Personally Identifiable Information (PII).

For additional information on the Freedom of Information (FOIA) process, please contact the FNA 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, 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, audiotope, 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 Administration 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 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 FNA 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 8 – Federal Awarding Agency Contacts.

Reporting Requirements

Financial Reports

The award recipient will be required to enter the SF-425 (Federal Financial Report) into the FNA Food Program Reporting System (FPRS) on a quarterly basis. In order to access FPRS, the grant recipient must obtain login.gov and 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.FNA.usda.gov.

Performance Progress Reports (PPR)

Grantees will be required to submit progress reports to FNA 30 days following the end of each semi-annual 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 may be evaluated as high risk. All activities reported on the FNS-908 must align with the required “Key Objective” from Section 1 – Program Description and Objectives.

Final Presentation

As part of their project, grantees will be required to present a 5-10 minute overview of their CACFP project, best practices, and lessons learned. This presentation will be shared nationwide and may be posted on CN PartnerWeb.

8. Federal Awarding Agency Contacts

For questions regarding this solicitation, please contact the Grant Officer.
Carla Garcia
Grant Officer, Grants and Fiscal Policy Division
U.S. Department of Agriculture, FNA
Email: carla.garcia@usda.gov

9. Other Information

Debriefing Requests

Non-selected applicants may request a debriefing to discuss the strengths and weaknesses 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. FNA reserves the right to provide this debriefing orally or in written format.

Appendix A: Application Template

FY 2026 Technology Innovation Grant for Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) Integrity

Cover Sheet Information
State Agency Name and Mailing Address
Agency Administrator: Name, Job Title, Telephone & Email Address
Project Contact: Name, Job Title, Telephone & Email Address

<p>Application Project Summary: Describe the proposed project activities and anticipated outcomes that would result if the proposal were to be funded. Include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The project scope and a statement explaining how the proposed scope fulfills the key objective of the TIG-CACFP: <i>to strengthen CACFP integrity by developing, implementing, and improving information technology systems used to operate and manage the program.</i>• A brief description of the current status of CACFP and the need for the project.• A brief description of the proposed activities and the anticipated outcome and/or benefits.

<p>Project Narrative: This section should include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• A detailed description of the proposed activities and expected outcome and/or benefits• The metrics by which success will be evaluated (e.g. number of sub-grants awarded, amount of time saved, number of processes automated)• Personnel who will manage and/or be funded by the grant, including current employees, potential hires, and/or contractors. (See Personnel table below)• State agency executive leaders supporting the project• Whether other funding sources will be used to supplement project work. For example, if State agencies are also utilizing State Administrative Expense (SAE) funds for a project, be specific about what costs will be charged to the TIG-CACFP versus SAE.• Sub-Grant Information (Enter in the section titled Sub-Grant Information)• Use of Advanced Automation Technologies (Enter in section titled Advanced Automation Technologies)

Sub-Grant Information:

Does the State agency anticipate offering nTIG funding to the local level (i.e., SOs) with the intent to provide automation between State and local levels?

- YES
- NO

If YES, does the State agency currently have staffing or infrastructure in place needed to award and monitor the sub-grants?

- YES
- NO

If NO, describe the plan for awarding and monitoring local-level sub-grants without currently having staffing or infrastructure in place.

If YES, indicate the name and job title of State agency staff, potential hires, and/or contractors responsible for awarding and monitoring sub-grants. Applications should describe the State agency's plan for allowable costs, oversight, and monitoring for the sub-grant awards.

Advanced Automation Technologies

Does the State agency plan to use or develop Advanced Automation Technologies—including robotic process automation, Artificial Intelligence (AI), AI Systems, or Generative AI—in Child Nutrition Programs?

- YES
- NO

If YES, please include a response to the following three questions.

1. What is the scope of advanced automation technologies' use? Please include any AI model being used, Child Nutrition Programs impacted, and expected outcome

2. What are the name(s), title(s), and qualifications of the staff (e.g. state employees, potential hires, and/or contractors) who will oversee data input and any resulting outputs used for eligibility determinations, program operations, reporting, or other functional decision-making?

3. What is the proposed process for ensuring data accuracy, system security, and compliance with civil rights, privacy, and USDA/FNA policy changes?

Personnel: Provide information on the personnel managing and/or funded by the grant, including current employees, potential hires, and/or contractors. For potential hires, provide the qualifications that will be included in the position description.

Name	Responsibilities	Qualifications/Experience	% FTE

Technical Requirements: This section should include:

- A description of the project technology solution and planned approach
- Any IT modules the State agency’s project will address (See section titled **IT Modules**)
- If utilizing contractors or consultants, include:
 - The name of potential or contracted vendors
 - The associated contract timelines
 - A detailed description of contractor/consultant responsibilities, anticipated tasks, and a reasonable estimate of contractual/consultant costs

IT Modules: From the list below, mark all modules that apply that your State agency’s project will address.

- Sponsor Application and Record Management
- Financial Management (including CACFP Audit Funds & SAE Funds)
- SO Reviews
- SO Claims and Reimbursement
- SO Seriously Deficient
- Federal Reporting
- Other. Please specify: _____

Project Management Approach: This section should include a detailed description of the planned project management approach. Include detailed information on how the agency will monitor project scope, track schedules/costs/resources, monitor quality assurance, submit progress reports to FNA, and implement the plan for sustainability. Identify the staff, potential hires, and/or contractors responsible for project management.

Sustainability: Describe the plans to maintain the overall project, system and/or software and how the State will keep the system in operation beyond the grant period.

Transferability: Describe how the project outcomes and information will produce knowledge that is transferable to other State agencies for similar improvement projects.

Activities/Indicators Tracker

Applicants are required to complete an Activities/Indicators Tracker that identifies specific activities that the applicant will pursue to complete the project proposed in the narrative. The timeline should ensure that all project deliverables are completed and funds obligated in advance of September 30, 2029.

Note: As stated in the Section 1, grantees are expected to virtually present an overview of their project to FNA and State agencies that operate CACFP. Applicants **must** include this final presentation as an activity in their Activities/Indicators Tracker (see Example in Activity/Indicator Tracker below).

Proposed Activities and indicators measuring success must align with the Key Objective (as described in Section 1 – Program Description and Objectives) and must be presented 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. Some examples include: Number of Sub-Grants Awarded, Amount of Time Saved, or Number of Processes Automated.

Additional rows may be added as needed.

Activity	Indicator(s) and Target Number	Anticipated Start Date (Month, Year)	Anticipated Completion Date (Month, Year)
<p>EXAMPLE (Please delete this row prior to submission): Award subgrants to Sponsoring Organizations to develop automated CACFP systems</p>	<p>Number of subgrants awarded Target: 15</p>	<p>January 2027</p>	<p>March 2027</p>
<p>EXAMPLE (Please delete this row prior to submission): Train staff on enhanced CACFP interface</p>	<p>Number of trainings conducted Target: 3 trainings</p> <p>Number of staff trained Target: 5 staff</p>	<p>September 2027</p>	<p>December 2027</p>
<p>EXAMPLE (Please delete or customize this row prior to submission): Deliver final project overview presentation</p>	<p>Presentation delivered Target: 1</p> <p>Number of Presenters Target: 1</p>	<p>August 2029</p>	<p>September 2029</p>

Budget Narrative

Please delete all examples (italicized) prior to submission. Be sure to include all proposed costs for your specific project in your submitted budget narrative. Note: If planning to use all funding for sub-grants, please provide zeros for the other sections of the narrative.

1. PERSONNEL	CALCULATION (Federal requested amount)	TOTAL	NARRATIVE EXPLANATION (explain need for cost and how cost aligns with the project narrative)
<i>Name and Title</i>		\$	<i>Hourly wage x # of hours per year x # of years OR Annual salary x FTE x # years</i>
<i>EXAMPLE: John Smith, Programmer</i>	<i>\$80,000/year x 25%FTE x 2 years</i>	<i>\$40,000</i>	<i>John will provide programming services for an informational website, social media, training slides, and printed resources and nutrition education materials. John will devote 25% FTE to this project for the entire period of performance.</i>
Total Funding for Personnel		\$	
2. FRINGE BENEFITS	CALCULATION	TOTAL	NARRATIVE EXPLANATION
<i>Name, Title</i>			<i>Total Salary x Fringe benefits rate. Explain what costs are included in the fringe rate.</i>
<i>EXAMPLE: John Smith, Programmer</i>	<i>\$40,000 x 25% fringe</i>	<i>\$10,000</i>	<i>Fringe benefits for all full-time employees</i>

			<i>include health insurance, annual and sick leave, etc.</i>
Fringe Benefits Total			
3. TRAVEL	CALCULATION	TOTAL	NARRATIVE EXPLANATION
			<i>Registration fee per person x # of people and indicate who will be traveling. Provide a description of the travel proposed.</i>
<i>3.a. Registration Fee (for a conference if applicable)</i>			<i>Registration Fee per person x # of People (indicate who is attending and provide a description of the travel)</i>
<i>3b. Airfare</i>			<i>Roundtrip Name of Airport to/from name of Airport, Fare (base fare +taxes and fees) the date and X # of people (Indicate who is going to travel)</i>
<i>3c. Checked baggage fee</i>			<i>Cost per bag x # bags x # people</i>
<i>3d. Mileage</i>			<i>Cost per bag x # bags x # people</i>
<i>3e. Airport Parking</i>			<i>Cost per day x # of Days x # people.</i>
<i>3f. Ground transportation</i>			<i>Cost per day x # of days and # of people</i>
<i>3g. Lodging</i>			<i>Dates, In-State/out of state rate (including taxes and fees) x # of days x # of people</i>
<i>3h. Per Diem (M&IE)</i>			<i>In-State/out of State rate, full day, per day x # of days x # of people</i>

4. EQUIPMENT	CALCULATION	TOTAL	NARRATIVE EXPLANATION
			<i>Provide a description of the proposed equipment. Include the type of equipment and the cost per item and indicate whom will be utilizing the equipment. Be sure to include the proposed cost and the # of equipment items proposed.</i>
Total Funding for Equipment			
5. SUPPLIES	CALCULATION	TOTAL	NARRATIVE EXPLANATION
			<i>Provide a description of the proposed supplies. Be sure to include the cost per item.</i>
<i>5a. Office Supplies</i>			<i>Cost per item x # of items</i>
<i>5c. Professional Development materials</i>			<i>Cost per item x # of items</i>
<i>5d. Agriculture Education Materials</i>			<i>Cost per item x # of items.</i>
6. CONTRACTUAL	CALCULATION	TOTAL	NARRATIVE EXPLANATION
<i>6a. Type/Name of Contractor</i>			<i>\$xx Rate per hour x # hours x # of years.</i>

			<i>Describe the service that will be provided.</i>
Contractual Total			
7. OTHER	CALCULATION	TOTAL	NARRATIVE EXPLANATION
			<i>Provide a description of the proposed cost under other (that do not fit under all other categories). Be sure to include the rate charged and the # of proposed items.</i>
<i>EXAMPLE: Sub-Grants</i>			Amount per subawards x# of subawards.
Total Funding for Other			
8. TOTAL COSTS	CALCULATION	TOTAL (total requested funds)	
Total Direct Charges			
Total Indirect Charges			<i>Note the indirect cost (IDC) rate from your agreement Calculation = Total Direct Costs x IDC Rate</i>
7c. Total Charges (7a. + 7b.)			

Appendix B: 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. FNA reserves the right to request information not clearly addressed. All funding requests must be in whole dollars.

If a discrepancy exists between the total funding request (submitted on SF-424, SF-424A, and budget or budget narrative) within the application package in response to this solicitation, FNA will only consider and evaluate the estimated funding request contained on the SF-424.

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: (FNA 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		
<p>Consultant Services –</p> <p>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.</p>		
<p>For all other line items listed under the “Other” heading –</p> <p>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.</p>		
Indirect Costs		
<p>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.</p>		
<p>2 CFR 200.14 (f) De minimis rate; Recipients and subrecipients that do not have a current Federal negotiated indirect cost rate (including provisional rate) may elect to charge a de minimis rate of up to 15 percent of modified total direct costs (MTDC).</p>		

Appendix C: 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
PERFORMANCE PROGRESS REPORT			Management Settings
<p>Recommended File Name: FNS908_{Organization Name}_{Type of Report}_{Reporting Fiscal Year}_{Period}_{Original Revision}.pdf <i>Copy value then paste in Save As dialog when saving</i></p>			
<p>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.</p>			
1. Recipient Organization			
a. Organization Name:		2. Program Information:	
b. Street Address:		Program Area: <input type="text"/>	
City: <input type="text"/> State: <input type="text"/> Zip: <input type="text"/>		Federal Fiscal Year of Award: <input type="text"/>	
		Program: <input type="text"/>	
		Tag: <input type="text"/>	
3. Primary POC:		4. Federal Award Identification Number (FAIN):	
a. First Name: <input type="text"/>	Last Name: <input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	
b. Title: <input type="text"/>		5. Type of Report (Select One):	
c. Telephone (Area Code & Number): <input type="text"/>	d. Email Address: <input type="text"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/> Quarterly <input type="radio"/> Semi-Annual <input type="radio"/> Final	
6. Federal Grant Agreement Number: <input type="text"/>		Reporting Fiscal Year: <input type="text"/> Period: <input type="text"/>	
7. Additional POC (Optional)		Original/Revision: <input type="text"/>	
a. First Name: <input type="text"/>	Last Name: <input type="text"/>	b. Title: <input type="text"/>	
c. Telephone (Area Code & Number): <input type="text"/>		d. Email Address: <input type="text"/>	
8. Report Submitted By:			
a. First Name: <input type="text"/>	Last Name: <input type="text"/>	b. Title: <input type="text"/>	9. Certification
			<input type="checkbox"/> 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: <input type="text"/>			

Form FNS-908
Version Number: 1.4 09-22

SBU

Electronic Form Version Designed in Adobe AEM 6.4 Version

Page 1

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):

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)

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	

Add Objective Remove Objective