

Supporting the Use of Traditional Indigenous Foods in the Child Nutrition Programs (CNP) Cooperative Agreement

Request for Applications (RFA)
Informational Webinar



United States Department of Agriculture



Presenters



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Food and Nutrition Service



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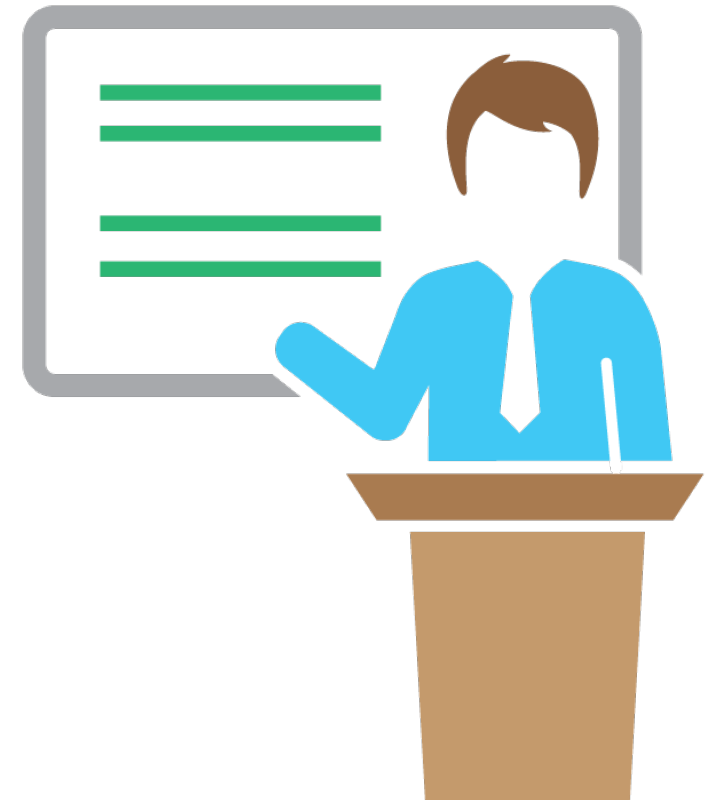


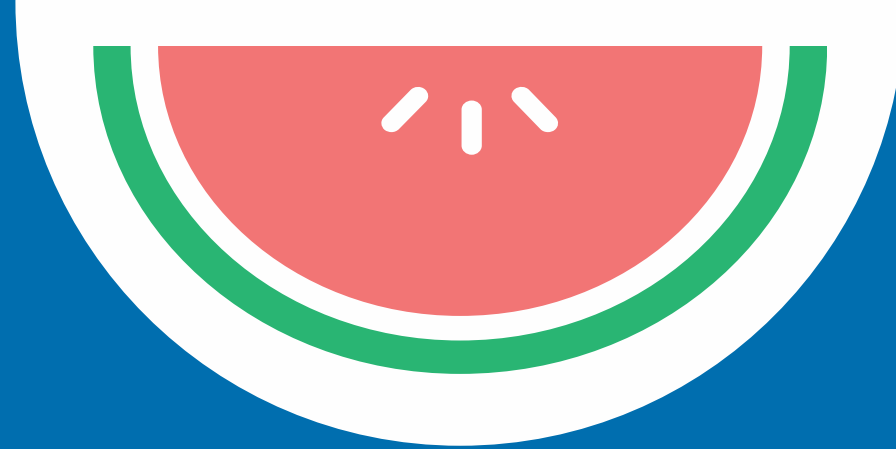
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Program Analyst
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Agenda

- ❖ **Background and Funding Amount**
- ❖ **Objectives and Outcomes**
- ❖ **Important Dates and Deadlines**
- ❖ **Eligibility Requirements**
- ❖ **Allowable Costs**
- ❖ **Application Process and Components**
- ❖ **Review Process and Evaluation Criteria**
- ❖ **Closing and Q&A**





Background and Funding Amount



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Biden-Harris Administration National Strategy on Hunger, Nutrition, and Health

Support food sovereignty, improve access to traditional foods, and ensure Tribal communities are equitably served in federal programs



Traditional Indigenous Food

- ❖ Forms a centerpiece of cultural and spiritual identities
- ❖ Reflects relationships with the land, water, plants, animals, and medicines formed over millennia
- ❖ Belief in food sovereignty is strong across Indian Country



Need for Traditional Indigenous Foods in the Child Nutrition Programs (CNP)

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Approximately 85% of Bureau of Indian Education operated, tribally controlled, and Navajo schools participate in the National School Lunch Program (NSLP) and many more students from Federally Recognized Tribes and/or Native Hawaiians receive meals through NSLP at other schools across the country

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Barriers to Incorporating Traditional Indigenous Foods



- ❖ Product availability and procurement
- ❖ High cost
- ❖ Lack of scratch cooking capacity
- ❖ Schools located in remote or rural areas
- ❖ Inadequate access to transportation
- ❖ Inadequate access to high-speed internet
- ❖ Language barriers
- ❖ USDA regulations that may be difficult to understand
- ❖ Schools with lack of access to training and resources

What is a Cooperative Agreement?

- ❖ A **grant** is federal assistance, in the form of money or property, authorized by federal law to support programs with a public purpose that the government wishes to encourage.
- ❖ A **cooperative agreement** serves the same purpose as grants, but also includes substantial programmatic involvement on the part of the agency, which in this case is USDA FNS.



Funding Amount

- ❖ A total of \$2 million in grant funding will be awarded
- ❖ Anticipated number of awards: up to four (4) (in different regions of the contiguous United States, Alaska, or Hawaii, regions may, but are not required to, correspond to USDA FNS regions)
- ❖ Minimum award amount (award floor): \$250,000
- ❖ Maximum award amount (award ceiling): anticipate \$500,000 but reserve the right to increase depending upon the number of awards made

See RFA page 13





Objectives and Outcomes



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Objectives

1. Gather barriers and strengths data
2. Provide culturally appropriate training and technical assistance
3. Market resources through culturally appropriate avenues
4. Develop culturally relevant nutrition education
5. Support procurement relationships and recipe development
6. Facilitate a regional Community of Practice
7. Provide funding to School Food Authorities (SFA), if applicable



See RFA page 9-10



Outcomes

- ❖ Increased understanding of barriers faced by SFAs serving tribal communities
- ❖ Increased capacity among organizations led and primarily staffed by members of the Federally Recognized Tribes and/or Native Hawaiians
- ❖ Engagement of school nutrition professional from tribal communities
- ❖ Resources for inclusion of Indigenous foods
- ❖ New procurement relationships



See RFA page 8-9



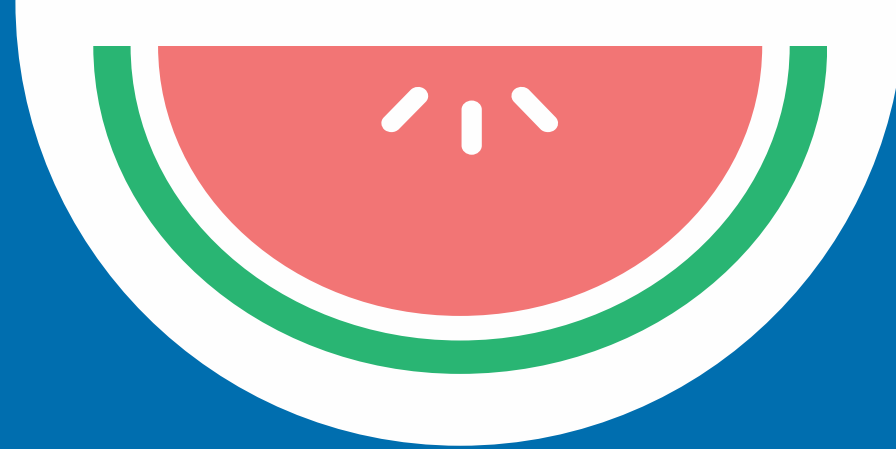
Outcomes (cont.)



- ❖ Recipe development using Indigenous foods
- ❖ Increased inclusion of traditional Indigenous foods in the CNP
- ❖ Increased engagement of stakeholders
- ❖ Updated nutrition education resources
- ❖ Sharing of best practices and outcomes data
- ❖ Increased partnerships among entities

See RFA page 8-9





Important Dates and Deadlines



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Important Dates



By February 22, 2024: Recorded webinar and Q&A Document Available on Grants.gov



February 19, 2024: Letter of Intent Due



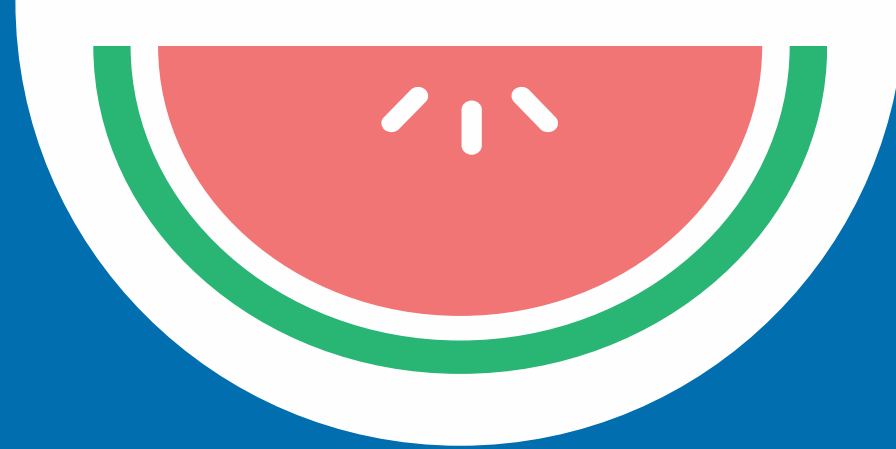
March 18, 2024: Applications due on Grants.gov by 11:59 pm ET



April 2024: Anticipated award date

All questions related to the RFA must be directed to Anna Arrowsmith (anna.arrowsmith@usda.gov)





Eligibility Requirements



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Eligibility Requirements of the Lead Applicant

See RFA
page 18-19

Lead Applicant entities must meet criteria A, B, AND C below:

A) Be one of the following entity types:

- ❖ 501(c)(3) non-profit organization
- ❖ SFA that participates in the NSLP
- ❖ Tribal government owned entity, arm, or instrumentality
- ❖ Native Hawaiian Organization as recognized by the Department of the Interior
- ❖ Other non-governmental entity including Tribal Colleges and Universities
- ❖ Fiscal sponsor of any of the above eligible organizations

B) The leadership and staff of the entity must be predominantly (more than 50%) members of Federally Recognized Tribes and/or Native Hawaiians

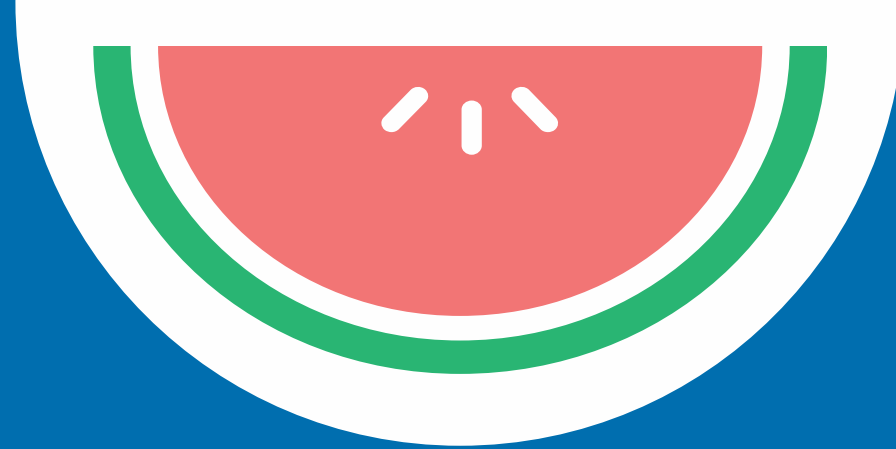
C) The entity must demonstrate existing relationships, experience and expertise in training, technical assistance, school nutrition, Indigenous foods, and nutrition education.



Partnerships

- ❖ Given the many complex barriers to serving more traditional Indigenous foods in the CNP, successful applicants may benefit from creating partnerships with multiple organizations that will provide the experience and scope necessary to carry out the activities required under this RFA.
- ❖ The Lead Applicant entity must meet Criteria A, B, and C on the previous slide; however, they can have non-qualifying partners.





Allowable Costs



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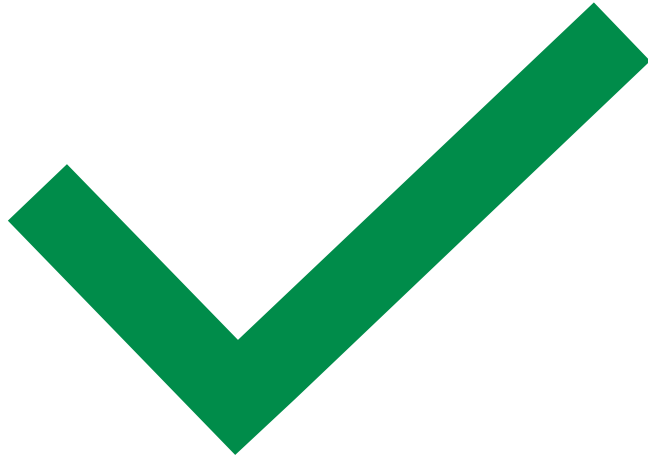
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Allowable Costs - Principles



Costs must be allowable,
allocable, necessary, and
reasonable in accordance with
OMB Code of Federal Regulations
Cost Principles: 2 CFR Part 200
Subpart E – Cost Principles

See RFA page 13-16

Allowable Costs (cont'd)



- ❖ Personnel Costs and Fringe Benefits
- ❖ Meeting/Training Space
- ❖ Technology/Software
- ❖ Travel
- ❖ Kitchen Supplies
- ❖ Training and Office Supplies
- ❖ Resource and Training Development
- ❖ Advertising and Public Relations (**for cooperative agreement activities**)
- ❖ Memberships and Professional Fees (**for the organization**)
- ❖ Nutrition Education Reinforcement Materials
- ❖ Food (<10% of requested funds, with certain requirements)
- ❖ Translation Services
- ❖ Stipends
- ❖ Sub-grants (optional)

See RFA page 13-16

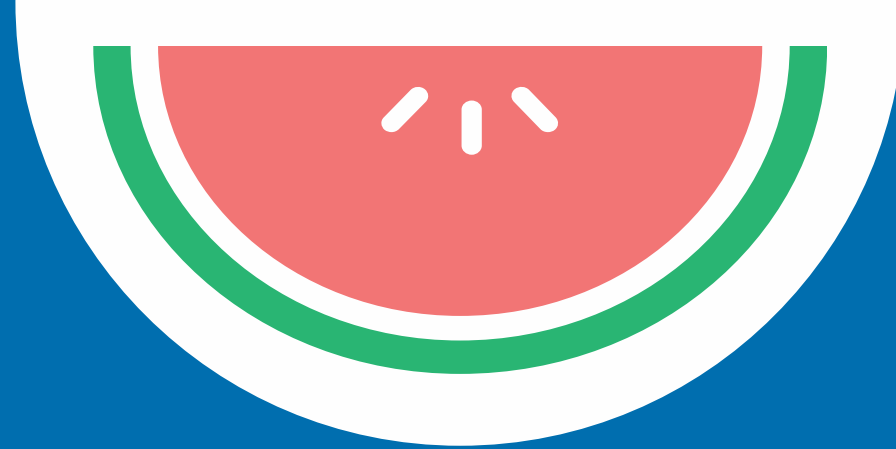
Unallowable Costs



- ❖ Entertainment
- ❖ Food costs (>10% of requested funds or for disallowed purposes)
- ❖ Advertising and Public Relations (**for the organization**)
- ❖ Memberships and Professional Fees (**for the individual**)
- ❖ Other Activities and Education

See RFA page 16-17





Application Process and Components



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Steps to Submit an Application

**Verify
Eligibility**

**Register on
Sam.gov
and
Grants.gov**

**Create
Grants.gov
Account
and Profile**

**Review
the
RFA**

**Gather
Partners**

**Draft
Proposal
and
Budget**

**Submit
Application
by 11:59
pm on
March 18,
2024**

Application Components



- ❖ Cover Page
- ❖ Table of Contents
- ❖ Executive Summary
- ❖ Applicant Information
- ❖ Project Narrative and Timeline
- ❖ Activities and Indicators Tracker
- ❖ Budget Table and Narrative
- ❖ Letters of Support
- ❖ Negotiated Indirect Cost Rate Agreement (NICRA)
- ❖ Required Forms

See RFA page 20-27

Project Narrative and Timeline (≤ 17 pages)

- ❖ Project Narrative should identify how the applicant is proposing to address the Objectives and Summary of Activities within the RFA.
- ❖ Providing adequate and qualified staff:
 - ❖ Lead applicants must have a Project Director at no less than 0.25 full-time equivalent for the entire performance period of this cooperative agreement.
 - ❖ Lead Applicant entity must be led and primarily staffed by members of Federally Recognized Tribes and/or Native Hawaiians.
 - ❖ Must ensure that 50% or more of those providing training and TA to staff or nutrition education directly to children are members of Federally Recognized Tribes and/or Native Hawaiians.
- ❖ The timeline should include dates for important project milestones and represent a plausible plan to complete the stated activities.



**See RFA
page 9-13;
20-23**

Activities and Indicators Tracker (≤ 3 pages)

See RFA pages 9-10; 26-27

Map each of the six (or seven) objectives to your proposed activities and indicators as demonstrated below:

Objective #2	Provide culturally appropriate training and TA to meet the unique needs of school nutrition professionals who procure, prepare, and serve meals for tribal communities – drawing on the expertise of school nutrition professionals and others from the tribal communities being served. 50% or more of those providing training and TA for staff must be members of Federally Recognized Tribes and/or Native Hawaiians.
Activity	TA sessions
Indicator(s)	Number of TA sessions conducted
Indicator(s)	Percent of school nutrition professionals receiving TA that indicate that the information would help them incorporate more traditional Indigenous foods into meals (utilizing an end of session evaluation)

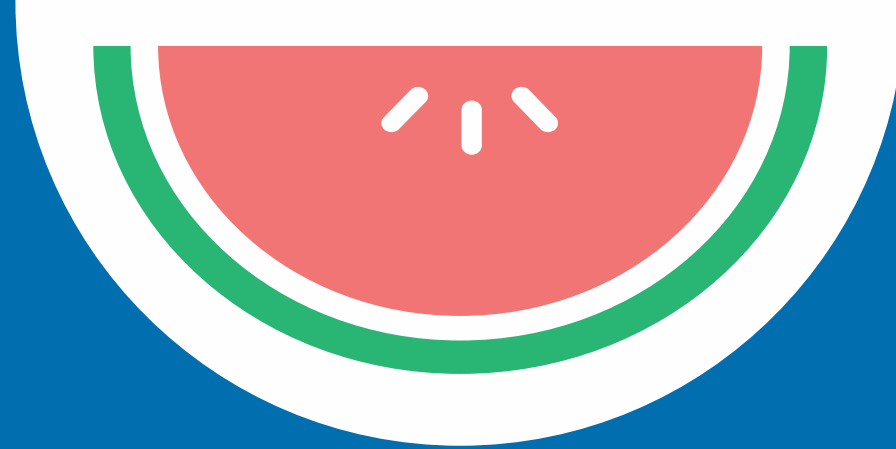


Budget Table and Budget Narrative

- ❖ Itemized budget, formatted in a table, describing appropriate use of grant funds, including calculations for how all expenses were derived.
- ❖ All expenses must be allowable costs as defined in the RFA and 2 CFR Part 200 Subpart E - Cost Principles and must align with the activities described in the Project Narrative.
- ❖ Budget narrative addressing every expense, describing how the total amount for expense was determined and how it supports project goals.
- ❖ Strongly encouraged to use Suggested Budget/Budget Narrative Template, available in Appendix B of the RFA and on Grants.gov as Excel file.
- ❖ If budget includes indirect costs, include NICRA as an appendix.
- ❖ All non-profit organizations must include their 501(c)(3) determination letter as an appendix.



**See RFA page
25-26;
Appendix B**



Review Process and Evaluation Criteria



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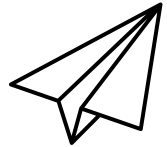
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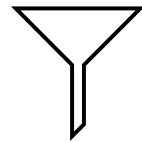


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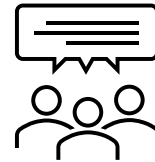
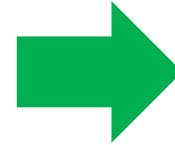
After Application Submission



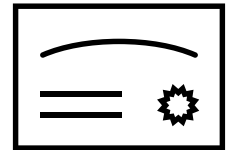
Submit Application
March 18, 2024
via Grants.gov



Screening Process



Review Panel



Award Notice
April 2024

Evaluation Criteria

**Applications will be evaluated based on the following criteria
(Total points = 100):**



1. Organizational and Community Readiness (10 points)
2. Project Effectiveness (30 points)
3. Staffing (10 points)
4. Project Management (15 points)
5. Evaluation (10 points)
6. Budget Table and Budget Narrative (25 points)

See RFA pages 33-36

Evaluation Criteria 1

Organizational and Community Readiness (10 Points)

- ❖ Demonstrates existing relationships and experience
- ❖ Demonstrates potential for strong teamwork and cooperation with stakeholders
- ❖ Provides rationale for choice of region and impact on tribes
- ❖ Provides Letters of Support (LOS)
- ❖ Provides LOS from State Agency, if Lead Applicant entity is an SFA
- ❖ Demonstrates experience with sub-grants, if applicable



Evaluation Criteria 2

Project Effectiveness (30 Points)

- ❖ Describes plan for community needs assessment
- ❖ Describes plan to assess resource needs
- ❖ Describes marketing and communications methods
- ❖ Provides plausible timeline for implementation
- ❖ Describes support for new procurement relationships and engagement
- ❖ Describes plan for collection and reporting of best-practices
- ❖ Demonstrates sustainability
- ❖ Describes sub-grant process, if applicable



Evaluation Criteria 3

Staffing (10 Points)

- ❖ Designates qualified Project Director
- ❖ Highlights key staff expertise in training, school nutrition, Indigenous foods, and nutrition education.
- ❖ Describes roles and responsibilities of key staff and partners
- ❖ Describes how 50% or more of those providing training and TA to staff or nutrition education directly to children will be members of the Federally Recognized Tribes and/or Native Hawaiians
- ❖ Proposes approach and timeline of hiring new staff, if applicable
- ❖ Describes plan for addressing staff turnover



Evaluation Criteria 4

Project Management (15 Points)

- ❖ Describes actions to be taken to adhere to project timeline and budget
- ❖ Discusses oversight needed for quality and compliance
- ❖ Demonstrates effective internal controls and plan for reporting
- ❖ Describes sustainability planning



Evaluation Criteria 5

Evaluation (10 Points)

- ❖ Provides activities/indicators for project evaluation
- ❖ Describes data collection and reporting plan
- ❖ Describes plan for monthly check-ins and quarterly reports
- ❖ Describes process for sub-grant monitoring and reporting, if applicable

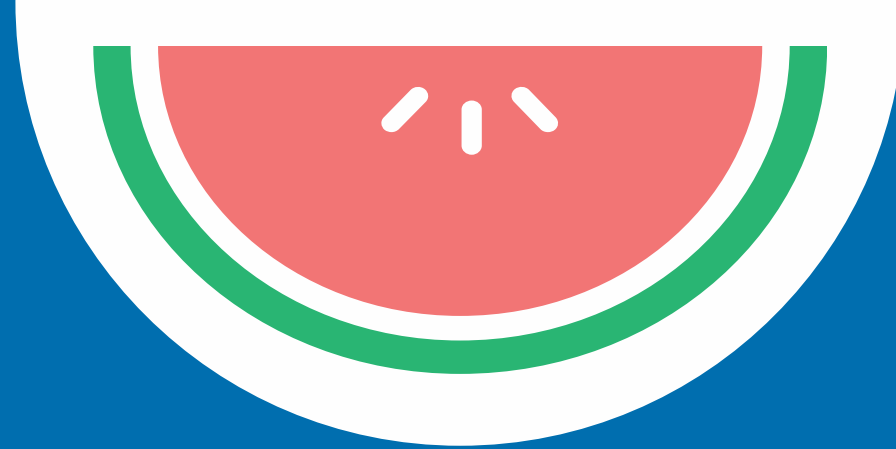


Evaluation Criteria 6

Budget Table and Budget Narrative (25 Points)

- ❖ Demonstrates justification for all project costs
- ❖ Describes how costs within the budget categories were derived
- ❖ Identifies linkages between expenditures and specific activities/tasks
- ❖ Provides documentation of all costs
- ❖ Includes NICRA, if applicable
- ❖ Compliant with cost principles





Closing and Q&A



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Important Dates Revisited



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Questions & Answers



**Type your questions into the Q&A box,
located on the bottom toolbar of the Zoom
window.**

Please Note: The posting of this recorded webinar and the Q&A will be found under the related documents tab at the top of the announcement on Grants.gov when they become available. Everyone who registered for this webinar will also receive an email notifying them when they are available.

Thank you!

Direct all questions related to this funding
opportunity to:

Anna.Arrowsmith@usda.gov

fns.usda.gov/grant/cn-supporting-indigenous-foods-cooperative-agreement

