

Instructions for Farm-to-School Request for Proposals Fall 2017

Pre-Submission Uploads: there are two attachments we provide to you as reference in the pre-submission uploads section of the Forms Menu. One is the USDA memorandum entitled “Unpaid Meal Charges: Guidance and Q&A” the other is a New York State Education Department memorandum entitled “Student Meal Charge Policy”. All applicants should read, be familiar with and in compliance with all requirements delineated in these documents.

Work Plan: While the Grants Gateway has a section for **Work Plan Objectives, Tasks, and Performance Measures**, we are not requiring that you enter details of your Work Plan in that section for your application. We do need you to provide your detailed Tasks and Performance Measures, but you will include them in the **“Project Summary”** section of the Work Plan Overview Form found in the Forms Menu. The suggestion is that you create your work plan in a Word (or similar) document, and copy/paste that into the Project Summary field of the Grants Gateway. The Grants Gateway will retain any bullets or numbering you would have added. Refer to the RFP and Instructions document for ideas for your program’s Tasks, but realize that you are free to come up with your own tasks and performance measures for your project.

To satisfy Grants Gateway application requirements, you will need to enter **one Objective, one Task, and one Performance Measure** in the Forms Menu. Please enter the following:

Objective: Increase the volume and variety of local farm products procured by schools/districts for inclusion in school meals programs.

Task: TBD

Performance Measure: TBD

Letters of Support: Letters of support are not required but are suggested. Please upload any letters of support in the Grantee Document Folder in the Forms Menu.

General

This document is intended to accompany the Farm-to-School Request for Proposals, (RFP) application published on the Grants Gateway. It may be supplemented by a hard copy version of the RFP posted on the website of the Department of Agriculture and Markets. In addition, a webinar for all potential applicants will be held on Thursday, October 12, 2017 at 10 am. Questions may be posed during the webinar.

<https://meetny.webex.com/meetny/j.php?MTID=mfca8257a780ad6fd70bccddcebedc059>

After the webinar questions may be submitted by 4:30 pm on October 24, 2017 to:

Meg McCabe
NYS Department of Agriculture and Markets
10B Airline Drive
Albany, NY 12235
Fax: (518) 457-2716
E-mail: meg.mccabe@agriculture.ny.gov

Answers will be posted on the Department website, www.agriculture.ny.gov under “Funding Opportunities” on or before Thursday, October 26, 2017. Proposals are due by 4:00 pm on or before Friday, November 3, 2017. No late proposals will be accepted.

All proposals must be submitted through the Grants Gateway. New York State vendors must register in the Gateway and establish users in the system. To start this process, from the Grant Opportunity Portal:

https://grantsgateway.ny.gov/IntelliGrants_NYSSGG/module/nysgg/goportal.aspx

For existing NYS vendors, there is only one step. You must submit a Registration Form for Administrators identifying a Delegated Administrator responsible for managing your organization’s profile and users.

To find out if your organization has already registered, enter its SFS Vendor ID number and search. If your organization is registered, the search result will include contact information for its delegated administrator, and you can contact this individual to request access to the system. If your organization is not registered, the search result will provide a link to the Request Form for Administrator, which you will need to complete and submit pursuant to the instructions provided.

If your organization is not currently doing business with NYS, you will need to submit a

Substitute W-9 Form to obtain a NYS SFS Vendor ID, in addition to the Registration Form for Administrators, in order to register.

All not-for-profit organizations that intend to submit a proposal in response to this RFP must also be pre-qualified prior to the submission of your proposal(s). If you have not pre-qualified with the Division of Budget by the time that you submit your proposal(s), each proposal you submit will be rejected and not considered for funding under this RFP. For more information regarding the pre-qualification process, please view:

[FAQs About Prequalification](#)

If you have not yet registered (or, as a not-for-profit, prequalified), please do so immediately.

Eligibility

Eligible Applicants

Eligible applicants include:

- Government entities including public schools and public school districts
- Charter schools (public charter schools are considered not-for-profit institutions and are therefore required to “prequalify” as a condition of applying for a grant.)
- Not-for-profit organizations including schools
- Indian tribal organizations

The following entities are not eligible to apply for funding:

- for-profit entities
- individuals

Proposed projects must be completed within two years of the contract start date.

Eligible Costs

Grant funds may be used for any of the following purposes directly related to completion of an eligible project, including but not limited to:

- salaries and wages, including fringe benefits
- contractor services
- permanent physical/structural improvements

- supplies and equipment
- insurance and permits (excluding permit to operate a farmers' market at proposed location)
- transportation costs other than vehicle purchases which are not an eligible expense

Ineligible Costs

Grant funds may not be used for the following:

- purchase of food
- purchase of a vehicle
- cell phones
- computer hardware and office equipment
- salaries and wages unrelated to the proposal
- costs associated with preparing an application
- costs incurred prior to the award of a grant

Program Specific Questions

In this section you answer all six questions posed. Answers should be responsive to the questions with quantitative data included. The content of the answer is more important than the length of the answer so be direct and limit extraneous material.

Budget

All pages of the **EXPENDITURE BASED BUDGET SUMMARY, JUSTIFICATION, DETAIL and NARRATIVE** pages should be completed. There is no match requirement. Be sure to take into account that the projects may be up to two years in duration. **Proposals must request at least \$25,000 and no more than \$100,000 in grant funding for the term of the project.**

Work Plan

General Overview

The **Objective** of the Farm-to-School Competitive Grants Program is:

To increase the volume and variety of local farm products procured by schools/districts for inclusion in school meals programs.

A wide variety of **tasks** may be proposed to meet this objective. Examples of some possible tasks intended to meet this objective would be:

1. Employ a local or regional Farm-to-School coordinator.
2. Conduct trainings for school procurement and fiscal staff to increase local procurement of farm products.
3. Conduct trainings for food service staff to increase knowledge preparation of locally produced farm products.
4. Purchase the equipment needed to increase capacity of school kitchen and food service staff to prepare and serve local produced farm products.
5. Implement capital improvements to support the processing, transport and/or storage of locally produced farm products.
6. Implement a meal program featuring locally produced farm products at regular intervals in the school meal program menu.
7. Work with other school districts to implement a coordinated local buying program with or without the assistance of distributor or other aggregating entity such as a food hub.

These “tasks” are intended as suggestions. Proposals may include these “tasks” or other “tasks” not listed intended to meet the overall objective.

The success of the proposed project will be judged by **performance measures**. Each “task” must be accompanied by one or more “performance measure(s)”.

Work Plan Summary

When completing the **Work Plan Activities** section of the application you will find a section entitled **Project Summary** on the **Work Plan Overview Form**. In this section you will start with the one objective “**to increase the volume and variety of local farm products procured by schools/districts for inclusion in school meals programs.**” In the summary you then articulate task(s) and the performance measures associated with the task(s).

As an example, one task might be:

Conduct trainings for school procurement and fiscal staff to increase local procurement of farm products.

The **Performance Measures** associated with that task might include:

Identify staff to be trained.

Develop a training curriculum.

Enlist the services of a trainer.

Conduct multiple training sessions.

Assist staff in implementing the lessons learned in the training.

Evaluate the effectiveness of the training.

Objectives

In this section you will insert the **Objective**:

To increase the volume and variety of local farm products procured by schools/districts for inclusion in school meals programs.

For the **Tasks** and associated **Performance Measures** you will enter **TBD**. This is because the details of your work plan, including **Tasks** and **Performance Measures** are explained in the Work Plan Summary section. If your proposal results in an awarded contract, you will work with the Department Program Manager to finalize the Tasks and Performance Measures.

Uploads

In the last section of the application you may upload documents to the end of the proposal. Only upload relevant documents. The content of your uploads is more important than the length and number of your uploads.

Items of Note

A few changes have been incorporated into this year's Farm-to-School Request for Proposals:

- All applicants are required to be in compliance with all state and federal requirement related to school meal charges. Specifically, all applicants must read, and be in compliance with all requirements delineated in the State and Federal memorandums attached to the Grants Gateway application for this year's Farm-to-School Grants Program.
- An increase in funding and a change in the source of the preponderance of the funding for the Farm-to-School Grant Program has allowed for the Program to be expanded to include farm products in general rather than exclusively specialty crops. That said, one quarter of the funding for this year's Farm-to-School

Grants Program is being provided by the USDA Specialty Crop Block Grant Program. Therefore, projects involving specialty crops continue to be a priority and since they are eligible for the entire pot of funding they stand a slightly increased chance of receiving funding. To be eligible for this portion of the funding proposals will need to follow the requirements for the Specialty Crop Block Grant Program including those pertaining to the purchase of equipment. Those requirements may be found at:

<https://www.ams.usda.gov/services/grants/scbqp>.

- Grantees from previous years may apply for funding this year even if their project is not complete and the final report has not been submitted. Should grantees from previous years intend to submit a proposal it is anticipated that there will be substantial progress demonstrated on previously funded projects.
- The preponderance of the funding for this year's Farm-to-School Grant Program will be provided by State sources rather than the Federal Specialty Crop Block Grant Program. Therefore, equipment purchases will not be required to meet the strict requirements of the Specialty Crop Block Grant Program.