

OMB BURDEN STATEMENT: According to the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, no persons are 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 60 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.

SPECIAL SUPPLEMENTAL NUTRITION PROGRAM FOR WOMEN, INFANTS AND CHILDREN (WIC)

REQUEST FOR APPLICATIONS (RFA)

WIC Breastfeeding Peer Counseling Curriculum Update and Training

CFDA # 10.557

**APPLICATIONS MUST BE RECEIVED BY
5 pm (EDT) on August 20, 2010**

**SUBMIT APPLICATIONS TO:
Carla Garcia, Grant Officer
Grants and Fiscal Policy Division
FOOD AND NUTRITION SERVICE, USDA
3101 PARK CENTER DRIVE, RM 732
ALEXANDRIA, VIRGINIA 22302**

**Released by:
Supplemental Food Programs Division
Food and Nutrition Service, USDA**

An electronic version of this Request for Applications is available at
<http://www.fns.usda.gov/wic/Breastfeeding/peercounselingRFA.htm>

FNS 729
0584-0512

Table of Contents

| | | |
|-------------------------------|--|-----------|
| I. | Introduction | 3 |
| II. | Who is Eligible To Apply | 4 |
| III. | Background and Purpose | 4 |
| IV. | Project Goal | 8 |
| V. | Optional Task | 8 |
| VI. | Technical Proposal | 9 |
| VII. | Selection Criteria, Application Review, and Cooperative Agreement Award Process | 10 |
| VIII. | Use of Funding and Duration | 13 |
| IX. | Terms and Conditions | 14 |
| X. | Application Format | 17 |
| XI. | Due Dates for Letters of Intent and Applications | 18 |
| XII. | Submit Application | 19 |
| <u>Attachments</u> | | |
| | Attachment A - Budget Narrative Checklist | 21 |
| | Attachment B - Letter of Intent | 23 |

I. INTRODUCTION

The Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) will fund a competitive cooperative agreement award of up to \$350,000 in Fiscal Year 2010 to a qualified applicant to: (1) update two existing FNS breastfeeding peer counseling training curricula and (2) coordinate and conduct trainings, based on each of the updated curricula, in a “train-the-trainer” format for WIC State agency staff in each of the seven FNS geographic regions.

The existing FNS curricula to be updated: “Using *Loving Support* to Manage Peer Counseling Programs” for training WIC program managers and also “*Loving Support* Through Peer Counselors” for training peer counselors can be found at: http://www.nal.usda.gov/wicworks/Learning_Center/support_peer.html.

Updates shall include accompanying resources and materials for managers of breastfeeding peer counseling programs and peer counselors to reflect new research on effective peer counseling practices since the initial curricula was developed.

WIC promotes and supports breastfeeding as the optimal method of infant feeding. Peer counselors play a vital role in these efforts by serving as models for breastfeeding behaviors, and providing mother-to-mother encouragement and support during pregnancy and at critical times during the postpartum period. The intent of this project is to update existing FNS peer counseling training curricula and provide training to WIC staff to increase the skills and competencies necessary to continue to successfully manage a peer counseling program and train breastfeeding peer counselors. A cooperative agreement will be awarded by FNS on a competitive basis for the development and delivery of updated training curricula. The grantee will be responsible for organizing and conducting seven regional training sessions to present the trainings in the designated format.

Public Law 110-80, the Consolidated Appropriations Act 2010, provides that funds are available for the purposes specified in section 17(h)(10) (B) of the Child Nutrition Act as amended (<http://www.fns.usda.gov/cnd/Governance/nslp-legislation.htm>). FNS will provide only one award under this solicitation. This application is available only to a limited number of vendors who meet eligibility criteria. The award will be on a competitive basis, based on an objective review of all proposals according to the technical evaluation criteria outlined in this Request for Applications. FNS has structured this award as a cooperative agreement; therefore, the grantee can expect substantial collaboration, participation, and/or intervention in the management of the project by FNS. This will include, but is not limited to, ongoing technical direction and involvement in the creation of the training curricula by FNS at each stage of its development, i.e., reviewing drafts, providing input, and approving each training module before development of the next module.

II. WHO IS ELIGIBLE TO APPLY

This is a competitive, limited solicitation. Only non-profit organizations and Educational Institutions currently involved in the provision of breastfeeding education, training, or curriculum development and WIC State agencies are eligible to apply. FNS will not consider applications from entities that do not fit these eligibility criteria.

Non-profit organizations are required to submit a copy of the IRS Determination Letter, form 501(c)(3) or proof of application for exempt status under section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code, a list of their Board of Directors if applicable, and their most recent audited financial statements signed by the Treasurer or the Treasurer of the board. Educational entities are also required to submit their most recent financial statements signed by the Treasurer or Treasurer of the board. Applications submitted without these will be considered non-responsive and eliminated from consideration.

III. BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE

Overview of WIC Breastfeeding Promotion and Support

As part of its mission to improve the health of nutritionally at risk women, infants and children, the WIC Program provides breastfeeding promotion and support for its participants. WIC promotes breastfeeding as the optimal source of infant nutrition and funds are designated for education and support of breastfeeding activities.

Federal WIC Breastfeeding Regulations

<http://www.fns.usda.gov/wic/Breastfeeding/bfrequirements.HTM>

WIC regulations contain provisions to encourage women to breastfeed and to provide appropriate nutritional support for breastfeeding participants. WIC State agencies are required to provide training on breastfeeding promotion and support to local agency staff responsible for breastfeeding, and to establish standards for breastfeeding promotion and support which include, at a minimum, the following:

- (i) A policy that creates a positive clinic environment which endorses breastfeeding as the preferred method of infant feeding;
- (ii) A requirement that each local agency designate a staff person to coordinate breastfeeding promotion and support activities;
- (iii) A requirement that each local agency incorporate task-appropriate breastfeeding promotion and support training into orientation programs for new staff involved in direct contact with WIC clients; and
- (iv) A plan to ensure that women have access to breastfeeding promotion and support activities during the prenatal and postpartum periods.

Loving Support Campaign

“*Loving Support* Makes Breastfeeding Work” is the USDA National Breastfeeding Promotion Campaign. *Loving Support* uses mass media, client education materials, staff training and community outreach to provide breastfeeding support to WIC participants. This campaign emphasizes the concept that the support of family, friends, the health care system, and the community are all important for breastfeeding to be successful. *Loving Support* has been instrumental in guiding WIC and the community in the direction of a greater awareness and acceptance of breastfeeding. WIC State agencies use *Loving Support* materials in their breastfeeding outreach and promotion efforts. Additional information about the *Loving Support* campaign and related FNS breastfeeding projects can be found at

<http://www.fns.usda.gov/wic/Breastfeeding/breastfeedingmainpage.HTM>.

Staff Competencies

All WIC staff must have basic knowledge of breastfeeding and understand their roles and responsibilities in these efforts to effectively support the breastfeeding goals and requirements of the WIC Program. In FY 2009, FNS developed a *standardized* competency-based curriculum to ensure that all WIC staff, professionals as well as paraprofessionals, attain a level of proficiency in the skills required to promote and support breastfeeding in the WIC local agency clinic. The curriculum outlines competencies and skill sets appropriate for WIC local agency breastfeeding coordinators, WIC breastfeeding experts, competent professional authorities, office clerks and other WIC staff who provide community-based breastfeeding leadership and education through the WIC Program. “Using *Loving Support* to Grow and Glow in WIC: Breastfeeding Training for Local WIC Staff,” can be found at

http://www.nal.usda.gov/wicworks/Learning_Center/BF_training.html.

Revised WIC Food Packages

Competencies in breastfeeding promotion and support have become even more essential for WIC staff with recent revisions to the WIC food packages. An interim rule was published in the Federal Register on December 6, 2007. Under the interim rule, food packages are designed to better promote and support the establishment of successful long-term breastfeeding and strengthen WIC’s breastfeeding promotion efforts. The changes reflect The National Academies’ Institute of Medicine’s recommended revisions to the food packages for breastfeeding mothers and their infants, and are based on a thorough consideration of scientific research and public comments on how to promote and support breastfeeding in WIC. Emphasis is placed on support for the breastfeeding dyad as well as minimal supplementation with infant formula, especially during the early weeks after birth, with the goal of establishing a mother’s milk supply and continuing the breastfeeding relationship for as long as possible. The interim rule may be viewed at

<http://www.fns.usda.gov/wic/regspublished/foodpackages-interimrule.htm>.

Using *Loving Support* to Implement Best Practices in Peer Counseling

The use of breastfeeding peer counselors adds a critical dimension to WIC's efforts to help women initiate and continue breastfeeding. As part of its vision to institutionalize peer counseling as a core service in WIC, in FY 2003 FNS launched "Using *Loving Support* to Implement Best Practices in Peer Counseling." This training and technical assistance project was designed to equip WIC Programs with a framework to aid them in designing, building, maintaining, and sustaining peer counseling programs.

Key elements of the project included (1) formative research to understand barriers and motivators to implementing and sustaining WIC peer counseling programs and to identify training needs; (2) identification of best practices and the development of a model for successful peer counseling programs (the [Loving Support Model](#)); and (3) training for WIC peer counselors and managers of peer counseling programs.

Because the research is clear that strong management and administrative support is necessary to achieve long-term sustainability of peer counseling programs, a training curriculum designed for State WIC Directors and State Breastfeeding Coordinators was developed. "Using *Loving Support* to Manage Peer Counseling Programs" provides guidance for developing and sustaining peer counseling programs based on model components of successful programs identified through the research.

A second curriculum, "*Loving Support* for Peer Counselors," was developed for trainers of peer counselors and provides an evidence-based foundation for the key instructional elements needed to train WIC peer counselors. Included are the basic skills needed by successful WIC peer counselors, and strategies for providing appropriate breastfeeding education and support to WIC mothers.

Both training curricula, formative research brief and additional information on "Using *Loving Support* to Implement Best Practices in Peer Counseling," are available at http://www.nal.usda.gov/wicworks/Learning_Center/support_peer.html.

In FY 2004, FNS regional offices hosted the FNS training "Using *Loving Support* to Manage Peer Counseling Programs" for State-level WIC Program management staff. In FY 2005, FNS regional offices hosted the training "*Loving Support* Through Peer Counseling" for State teams of WIC staff who are involved in training peer counselors. Because both curricula are designed in "train the trainer" formats, WIC staff continues to use these curricula to train new management and peer counseling staff.

From FY 2004-2009, approximately \$15 million per year was distributed to WIC State agencies to enable implementation of effective and comprehensive peer counseling programs and/or expand existing programs. To receive the funds, WIC State agencies agree to implement/administer a peer counseling program based on the research-based components of the [Loving Support Model](#). Guidelines for implementing *Loving Support* peer counseling allow State agencies flexibility in determining how to implement their programs to meet unique local needs.

In FY 2010, \$80 million was provided to WIC State agencies for peer counseling. These funds represent a significant increase in the amount of peer counseling funds available to State agencies, and provide an important opportunity for State agencies to further expand the availability of peer counseling in WIC sites. Currently, all geographic WIC State agencies and all but 4 WIC Indian Tribal Organizations and Territories operate peer counseling programs in accordance with the [*Loving Support Model*](#).

Need to Update Peer Counseling Curricula

FNS recognizes the need to update both training curricula to reflect current science and program guidance, and provide consistency with the FNS curriculum “Using *Loving Support* to Grow and Glow in WIC: Breastfeeding Training for Local WIC Staff.” FNS wishes to update the peer counseling curricula, as appropriate, using effective practices and findings identified through recent WIC peer counseling research studies and other research, resources and materials available since initial trainings were conducted in the last 7 years. The teaching approach should also complement WIC’s national Value Enhanced Nutrition Assessment (VENA) initiative with opportunities that allow for practical application of rapport building and critical thinking skills that move WIC participants toward positive health outcomes. Information and resources about VENA can be found at

http://www.nal.usda.gov/wicworks/Learning_Center/Assessment_VENA.html

FNS is interested in recommendations from the grantee on the feasibility of technology-based methods of communication between peer counselors and WIC mothers, e.g., social networking internet sites, Short Message Service text messages, and other social media applications. The grantee will update the curricula to include such communication methods as appropriate. The updated curriculum should also include a variety of new learning activities appropriate for adult learners, along with new photographs and artwork.

FNS Research on Implementation of “Using *Loving Support* to Implement Best Practices in Peer Counseling”

In September 2006, FNS awarded a contract to Abt Associates Inc. to study implementation of its national breastfeeding peer counseling initiative “Using *Loving Support* to Implement Best Practices in Peer Counseling.” Information was collected, via a web-based survey in Fall 2008, on how WIC State agencies implement peer counseling programs using the [*Loving Support Model*](#). Site visits to a representative sample of 40 local WIC agencies were made in Spring 2009. The Final Implementation Report, which will be presented to the awardee, describes the following:

- Use of *Loving Support* Peer Counseling funding at the State agency level;
- General characteristics of local WIC agencies implementing *Loving Support* peer counseling programs;
- The nature of local program operations in the 40 local WIC agencies operating *Loving Support* peer counseling programs; and

- Detailed information on *Loving Support* peer counseling programs as implemented in 5 of the 40 local WIC agencies.

The grantee for the Fiscal Year 2010 cooperative agreement is expected to review the Final Implementation Report to identify (1) areas where additional technical assistance may be necessary to help WIC State and local agencies implement/administer peer counseling programs based on the *Loving Support* Model; and (2) areas of WIC program operations, (e.g., training, staffing, nature, timing and number of peer counseling contacts, service delivery sites and methods, start up, hiring, supervision, and collaborations) that demonstrate exemplary and/or innovative practices and approaches. As appropriate, this information will be incorporated into the training curricula. If necessary, the grantee will be responsible for contacting a limited number (5-9) of WIC State and/or local agencies to obtain additional details on a particular program's exemplary and/or innovative practices and approaches.

IV. PROJECT GOAL

The goals of this project are to:

- Revise and update two existing FNS peer counseling curricula (with accompanying resources and materials): (1) "Using *Loving Support* to Manage Peer Counseling Programs" for training WIC program managers and (2) "*Loving Support* Through Peer Counselors," for training peer counselors. Both training curricula must be completed by February 28, 2011. Coordinate and conduct trainings based on both curricula in a "Train-the Trainer" format to key WIC state agency management staff and those responsible for peer counseling training in each of the seven FNS *geographic regions*. Trainings will take place in the Summer of 2011.
- Coordination tasks include:
 - reserving a room for the training sessions;
 - making arrangements for audiovisual equipment;
 - providing training resources and materials for training attendees
 - providing a CD of the training curriculum for each State agency; and
- Provide technical assistance after training to State and local agency WIC staff, upon request, through duration of the funding period.

V. OPTIONAL TASK

The Agency (FNS), at its discretion, may issue an agreement modification or a separate delivery order to execute an optional task for the grantee to translate into Spanish one or both of the peer counseling curricula. If this option is selected, negotiations will be held depending on the availability of Federal funds.

VI. TECHNICAL PROPOSAL

This cooperative agreement competition will support a proposal that:

- Clearly describes an effective process for updating the two peer counseling training curricula;
- Proposes innovative and creative training strategies;
- Takes into account the competencies necessary for both managers of peer counseling programs and peer counselors;
- Demonstrates consistency with training goals and objectives of “Using *Loving Support* to Implement Best Practices in Peer Counseling,” the [*Loving Support Model*](#); and “Using *Loving Support* to Grow and Glow in WIC: Breastfeeding Training for Local WIC Staff.”
- Demonstrates knowledge of WIC as a public health nutrition program, and peer counseling delivery models that work within a WIC setting;
- Demonstrates knowledge of the WIC population and research that addresses the challenges faced by low-income mothers;
- Demonstrates knowledge of evidence-based breastfeeding management skills;
- Demonstrates knowledge of WIC breastfeeding regulations, goals, policies and procedures and Nutrition Services Standards;
- Demonstrates knowledge of staff roles and responsibilities related to promoting and supporting breastfeeding in the WIC Program;
- Considers the multi-cultural population served by the WIC Program.
- Demonstrates knowledge of community partnerships, role of coordination with other health care professionals, knowledge of community resources, health professional organizations and coalitions;
- Demonstrates knowledge, skill, and experience in instructional development and the design of training programs using adult learning strategies.

Instructional Design and Editorial Expertise: The proposal must demonstrate that adequate instructional design and editing expertise will be employed in all stages of the development of the training curricula and accompanying materials. The training manuals should be written in the format of existing peer training curricula, without excessive wordiness and jargon. Language and training approach should be appropriate for intended audiences. References and resources must be from peer-reviewed journals and not from lay books, magazines, commercial websites or similar sources.

Project Expertise and Staffing: The proposal must demonstrate that sufficient qualified staff is available to accomplish the goals of the project in a timely manner with adequate lead time for FNS review and cooperative discussion with the grantee at each stage of development. In the attachments section, a biographical sketch must be included for the project director and other key positions. Each of the biographical sketches must not exceed 2 pages in length. In the event that a biographical sketch is included for an individual not yet hired, a letter of commitment from that person must be included with his/her biographical sketch. Job descriptions for key personnel must not exceed 1 page in length. The suggested contents for biographical sketches and job descriptions are specified in the application packet in Section VII. The proposal should also include a current Organizational Chart.

Letters of Commitment

This cooperative agreement will be made on a competitive basis to a single entity. However, the grantee may subaward, i.e., contract or subgrant, with other organizations to complete or provide aspects of the development of the peer counseling curricula and training. If such subawards are anticipated, each “subgrantee” must submit a Letter of Commitment to the applicant, for inclusion with the cooperative agreement application, which describes its role in this project, the amount of time it intends to commit to this project, and an affirmation that it will cooperate with the grantee in implementing this project. The Letters of Commitment should be on the respective company’s or organization’s letterhead and should be addressed to the prospective applicant.

VII. SELECTION CRITERIA, APPLICATION REVIEW AND COOPERATIVE AGREEMENT AWARD PROCESS

Screening and Review Process

FNS will screen all applications that are received on or before the published deadline date for submission, to ensure that all the required application requirements and components are included. Only the applications, and the proposals contained therein, that are complete and conform to the screening requirements of this RFA will be reviewed competitively, i.e., considered for an award. FNS will not consider, under any circumstances, additions or revisions to applications once they are received.

One or more review panels may be comprised of United States Department of Agriculture staff, other federal agency staff, and other individuals committed to furthering the goals of the WIC Program. This may include one or more representatives of the State/local WIC community. The review panel will review and determine the technical merit of the applications and the proposals contained therein. The panel will numerically score each application, using the following evaluation criteria:

Merit of Project Design (40 points)

Project design: The proposal describes an effective and innovative method of revising and updating the peer counseling curricula and training WIC State agencies in the skills and competencies necessary to implement WIC peer counseling programs and manage and train peer counselors as described in this RFA. The proposal demonstrates a clear understanding of the purpose of the project and the goals of breastfeeding peer counseling within the public health community-based setting such as the WIC Program. The technical approach is appropriate to address the project goals. (25 points)

Materials development: The proposal also includes the delivery of training materials, in a variety of formats and addressing a variety of skill sets, that can be used by the WIC State agencies to train their local staffs. (15 points)

Organizational Experience and Management/Staff Capability (30 points)

Experience: The proposal describes each applicant's experience in and qualifications for administering Federal grants. The proposal includes resumes and/or job descriptions for key personnel in management, administration, and technical assistance, and describes the specific expertise that qualifies such personnel for their proposed roles. Adequacy of the proposed staff including evidence of the qualifications and experience of the proposed project staff to successfully carry out the projects goals as described in this RFA.

The proposal also provides a contingency plan for the loss of key personnel. (10 points)

Oversight: The proposal details effective and continuing oversight of the awarded project by qualified project managers, establishes the credibility and capabilities of any subgrantees by which specific elements of the proposal will be provided, and provides the means for successful communication both within the Cooperator organization and between the Cooperator and its subgrantees(s). (10 points)

Time commitments: The proposal includes a project timeline that shows sufficient time has been allotted for proposed tasks and justifies the proposed time commitments of key personnel and potential subgrantees. (10 points).

Budget Appropriateness and Economic Efficiency (30 points)

Budget Narrative: In addition to the standard form 424A, the proposal should include a budget narrative by line item, that clearly explains and justifies all project costs and how they relate to the proposed goals and objectives of the project. The narrative should provide enough detail for reviewers to easily understand how costs were determined, how funds will be spent, by whom and for what purpose. There should be adequate justification for budget costs based on

current industry costs/standards. If necessary, information on costs should be obtained from applicable organizations or from online sources. (15 points)

See Attachment A Budget Narrative Checklist to assure the questions are addressed in the narrative.

Efficiency: The proposal is cost effective – it demonstrates that anticipated results identified in the proposal are commensurate with the cost of the project. (15 points)

A Copy of the approved indirect cost rate agreement must be provided (only if the application includes indirect costs).

Selection of Cooperative Agreement Applications

After the panel evaluates and scores each application, it will rank them by score, starting with the highest score. The panel will provide recommendations for funding to the selection official. The selection official may follow the panel’s recommendation without amendment, or may consider other factors, e.g., geographic, demographic, or socioeconomic diversity, or agency priorities, in addition to the panel’s recommendation. FNS reserves the right to fund this award out of rank order should it be deemed necessary to achieve the goals identified above. The selection official may also determine that, based on the subsequent scoring, few applications are of technical merit. As a result, FNS may not award or may commit less than the total amount established for this purpose.

Number of Applications and Proposals

An organization may submit only one application for consideration under this RFA. However, applicants are not limited in the number of organizations with which they propose to subaward for specific elements of the project.

CRITICAL DATES

| | |
|----------------------------------|--|
| <u>June 17, 2010</u> | Request for Applications announced by FNS |
| <u>July 23, 2010</u> | Letters of Intent to Submit an Application due to FNS |
| <u>August 20, 2010</u> | Request for Applications due to FNS |
| <u>September 30, 2010</u> | Award to be announced |

VIII. USE OF FUNDING AND DURATION

This solicitation offers funding of this award in Fiscal Year (FY) 2010, subject to the availability of funds. A maximum of \$350,000 will be available in FY 2010. FNS will award the funding through a competitive process. The grantee may use the FY 2010 funds for the duration of the project period, ending September 30, 2011. The applicant's budget submission should reflect a breakdown of costs for the full cooperative agreement period.

Funding of this award will be provided through the *Grant Award/Letter of Credit* process. The award will be made via a Cooperative Agreement between FNS and the grantee, upon receipt of a properly executed Cooperative Agreement and subject to the availability of funding. The submission of an application does not guarantee funding.

FNS may elect to fund an organization's application in its entirety, may limit funding to specific subgrantee proposals contained in an application, and/or may negotiate proposed applicants to stay within available funding. All funds must be obligated and all activities under the Cooperative Agreement must be completed by September 30, 2011.

FNS reserves the right to initiate a second competitive process if it receives few applications of technical merit through this RFA.

Allowable Use of Funds

Funds must be used by the grantee to revise and update two existing FNS peer counseling curricula and provide training as described in this RFA. Expenditures must conform to the project design and budget identified in the Grantee's approved proposal. Funds expended by the Grantee may be used to pay sub Grantees for specific elements of the project, as described in the approved proposal.

Unallowable Use of Funds

Cooperative agreements provided through this RFA are intended to provide WIC State agencies with updated peer counseling curricula and training. A project's proposed budget cannot include:

- any pre-award costs associated with the development of the award application; or
- any payments to contracted sub Grantees not directly specified by the Grantee or associated with the project goals described in this RFA.

Sub-Grantees are also subject to the applicable costs principles and uniform administrative regulations.

Determination of Award Amounts

If an application is approved for funding, is realistically and appropriately budgeted, and has technical merit, the award may be funded at the requested amount. However, FNS reserves the right to:

- Fund applications outside of numerical ranking for the aforesaid reasons;
- Not fund an application based on a lack of merit; and
- Fund an award at less than the total amount requested, if:
 - Federal funding is not sufficient to fund the application(s) that merit(s) award;
 - It is judged that another proposal could be implemented with less funding; or
 - Other factors are considered, e.g., geographic, demographic, or socioeconomic diversity; agency priorities.

Award Notification and Issuance of Funds

FNS expects to notify the Grantee in writing by September 30, 2010 and to issue funds as promptly as possible thereafter, subject to the availability of funding.

IX. TERMS AND CONDITIONS

Once an award is made, the grantee must sign a Cooperative Agreement, which will contain the terms and conditions of the award, e.g., adherence to regulations, applicable cost principles, and instructions provided in *Use of Funding and Conditions* of this announcement.

All costs under the grant awards are subject to the provisions of the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) Circulars: A-87, Cost Principles for State, Local and Indian Tribal Governments; A-122, Cost Principles for Non-profit Organizations; and A-21, Cost Principles for Institutions of Higher Education, as well as USDA regulations. All costs must be allowable, i.e., necessary and reasonable, and are subject to review, in accordance with the applicable governing cost circulars. OMB Circulars may be found at <http://www.whitehouse.gov/omb/circulars/>. Information about implementing circulars may be found at the following Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) citations:

- 7 CFR Part 246, Regulations for the Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants and Children (WIC).
- 7 CFR Part 3015: “Uniform Federal Assistance Requirements” for entitlement Programs (Reference OMB Circular A-110 Common Rule);
- 7 CFR Part 3017: Subparts A-E: Government-wide Debarment and Suspension (Non-procurement);
- 7 CFR Part 3017: Subparts F “Government-wide Requirements for Drug-free Workplace (Grants)”;
- 7CFR Part 3018: “New Restrictions on Lobbying”;
- 7 CFR Part 3019: Uniform Administrative Requirements for Grants and Agreements with Institutions of Higher Education, Hospitals, and Other Non-Profit Organizations;
- 7 CFR Part 3021, Subpart F: Government-wide Requirements for Drug-Free Workplace (Financial Assistance); and
- 7 CFR Part 3052: USDA Implementation of Audits of States, Local Governments and Non-Profit Organizations.

The Code of Federal Regulations can be found at <http://www.gpoaccess.gov/cfr/index.html>

Required Recordkeeping –Grantees selected in connection with this Request for Applications will be required to submit quarterly Progress and Financial Status Reports (SF-425), with final reports due 90 days after the expiration date of the program. FNS will provide additional details at the time of award.

The selected agencies or organizations must operate a financial management system that provides accurate, current and complete disclosure of the financial status of the project. The progress reports must provide a brief description of the project activities conducted during the reporting period, major accomplishments with completion dates and budget deviations from the proposed plan, difficulties encountered and solutions developed, and major planned activities for the next quarter. The final report should be a project summary that includes lessons learned, future implications within the State, and transferability to other States.

Materials developed with funding from this grant must be submitted in MS Word format and a hard copy must also be submitted at the end of the grant period. In accordance with 2 CFR Part 215.36, the Federal awarding agency reserves a royalty-free, non-exclusive, and irrevocable license to reproduce, publish or otherwise use, and to authorize others to use, for Federal Government purposes, the copyright in any work developed under a grant, sub-grant, or contract under a grant or sub-grant or any rights of copyright to which a grantee, sub-grantee, or a contractor purchases ownership with grant support.

Quarterly and Final Narrative Program Report—

Grantee will be required to submit Quarterly Financial Reports throughout the agreement period. Final close-out, i.e., final reports and liquidation of all obligations, must occur by December 31, 2011.

A final narrative report will be due no later than 90 days after the expiration date of the agreement or December 31, 2011. Each report must include a brief Executive Summary and the following:

- 1) A project description which includes a concise summary of the major accomplishments, the difficulties encountered and the solutions developed to resolve the difficulties;
- 2) A discussion of the project results and lessons learned;
- 3) Plans for the continuation and the potential transferability of the project; and
- 4) Recommendations for future improvements.

Attached to the final report should be copies of materials used in the operation of the project that may be useful in the consideration of the sustainability of the project. Examples of relevant materials are media or publicity releases and training manuals. Links to materials on websites should also be included. More detailed specifications for the report will be included in the grant agreements. All final products should be submitted in approved format determined by FNS.

Financial Reporting - Grantees are required to submit quarterly and final financial reports. The quarterly reports are due 30 days following the end of each quarter and the final report is due 90 days after the expiration date of the grant program.

The Grantee is required to enter the financial reporting data into the FNS Food Program Reporting System (FPRS) which is an FNS operated online system. The system houses the Federal Financial Report (Standard Form (SF) 425). In order to access FPRS, the Grantee must obtain USDA e-authentication certification. Specific instructions will be provided with the grant agreement.

Intangible Property -In accordance with 2 CFR Part 215.36, the Grantee is free to copyright any books, publications, or other copyright materials developed in the course of or under this Cooperative Agreement, but the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Food and Nutrition Service shall reserve a royalty-free, nonexclusive, and irrevocable right to reproduce, publish, or otherwise use, and to authorize others to use the work for government purposes.

X. APPLICATION FORMAT

It is strongly suggested that applicants adhere to the following format. Use of this format will make it easier for the proposal reviewers to locate the requested information and to evaluate your proposal.

The original proposal must be ready for copying.

1. **Standard forms.** The following mandatory forms must be completed, signed, and submitted with the application package. Failure to submit these mandatory forms will result in applications being deemed nonresponsive and the application will not be considered in the grant competition.
 - a) SF-424 Core Form: Application for Federal Assistance, including:
 - (1) Data Universal Numbering System (DUNS) number
 - (2) Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance (CFDA) number (#10.557)
 - b) SF-424A (Budget Summary – Non-Construction Projects)
 - c) SF-424B (Assurances – Non-Construction Projects)
 - d) SF-LLL (Disclosure of Lobbying Activities). Indicate on the form whether your organization intends to conduct lobbying activities. If your organization does not intend to lobby, write —Not Applicable on the form.
 - e) AD-1047 Certification Regarding Debarment, Suspension, and Other Responsibility Matters;
 - f) AD-1048 Certification Regarding Debarment, Suspension, Ineligibility and Voluntary Exclusion-Lower Tier Covered Transaction (Must submit with application only if a Sole Source Contractor is identified); and
 - g) AD-1049 Certification Regarding Drug-Free Workplace Requirements
 - h) The Indirect Cost Rate Agreement (if applicable)

The grant application and required forms including the 424, 424A, and 424B can be downloaded from the Grants.gov web site:

http://www07.grants.gov/agencies/aforms_repository_information.jsp. Applicants should use these forms when submitting their applications via Grants.gov or via e-mail.

2. Technical Proposal:
 - a) 8 pages maximum length, exclusive of resumes, letters of reference or materials from the application packet. FNS reserves the right to reject any application with a technical proposal exceeding 8 pages in length;
 - b) single-sided;
 - c) unstapled, unbound;
 - d) on 8 ½" X 11" white paper;
 - e) single-spaced text;
 - f) at least 1" margins on top, bottom, and sides;
 - g) 12-point New Times Roman font size;
 - h) numbered pages;
 - i) table of contents;
 - j) one page proposal summary that describes proposal
 - k) An original packet bearing the original signature of the authorized representative;
 - l) Two copies of the original application (if mailing)

3. Appendices – to include only required supporting documentation that addresses the applicant's capacity to carry out the proposed project. The maximum length is 8 pages.
 - a) Resumes (limit to 2 pages per resume);
 - b) Letters of reference;
 - c) Budget Plan and Narrative.

XI. DUE DATES FOR LETTERS OF INTENT AND APPLICATIONS

Letters of Intent

Organizations interested in this competition should submit a Letter of Intent (Attachment B) on or before **July 23, 2010**. This letter does not commit an organization to apply; it will assist FNS in planning workload requirements for the selection, award and implementation of the cooperative agreement. Letters of Intent must include the date, the organization's name and address, and the name, title, and telephone number of the organization's authorized representative.

Letters of Intent must be mailed or delivered to:

Carla Garcia, Grant Officer
USDA, Food and Nutrition Service
Grants and Fiscal Policy Division
3101 Park Center Drive, Room 732
Alexandria, VA 22302

Applications

Fully completed application packages must be **received** by FNS **on or before 5:00 PM Eastern Daylight Time (EDT) August 20, 2010.**

Applications may be submitted by mail, hand delivered or electronically through www.grants.gov in sufficient time to ensure timely receipt by the deadline.

XII. SUBMIT APPLICATION

1. **Submit application by hand delivery or by mail.**

We advise that you meet the deadline by delivering the application or by mailing it sufficiently in advance of the deadline to ensure its timely receipt. **One original and two copies** must be submitted. The original copy must be ready for copying (i.e. single-sided, unstapled, unbound and on 8 ½ x 11 paper). If you opt to mail your application we strongly suggest using a mail delivery service that guarantees delivery and allows you to track delivery to FNS. No Faxed applications will be accepted.

2. **Submitting Your Application Electronically**

To submit your application electronically, please visit the www.grants.gov. Click on the “Apply for Grants” tab and read the instructions provided by grants.gov. Standard forms such as SF-424, SF-424A, SF-424B, SF-424C, and SF-424D are fillable forms on grants.gov. All other sections of your application (executive summary, narrative, letters of support, etc.) must be attachments in any of the following formats: Microsoft Word, Adobe PDF, or Microsoft Excel. All materials must be submitted with the grant application package. FNS will not accept grant documentation that is sent separately.

3. **To Submit Your Application**

The Government-Wide Standard Forms 424 (SF-424), FS424 Families Forms are located on the Grants.gov; Forms Repository, Active Forms website. To apply for a grant, you must download the application package using the compatible software identified on grants.gov. To obtain an Active Government wide SF424 application package you must access the following website

http://www07.grants.gov/agencies/aforms_repository_information.jsp. This website also has a link to the lists of Grants.gov compatible software that helps the applicant navigate, download software, and complete the grants.gov grant application package. There is no fee associated with any of the forms available on Grants.gov.

We advise that you allow ample time to familiarize yourself with the system's requirements. You will need both a Data Universal Number (DUNS) and a Contract Registry Number (CCR) to access the system. You can contact Dun and Bradstreet at 1-800-234-3867 to obtain a DUNS number if you do not have one already.

4. Late applications will not be considered in this competition. FNS will not consider additions or revisions to the application once it has been received. Applications submitted without the required forms, certifications, supporting documents and the authorized representative's signatures will not be considered in this competition.

5. Submit applications to:

Carla Garcia, Grant Officer
Grants and Fiscal Policy Division
USDA Food and Nutrition Service
3101 Park Center Drive, Room 732
Alexandria, VA 22302

Attachment A Budget Narrative Checklist – 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 must be in line with the proposed project description. FNS reserves the right to request information not clearly addressed.

| | YES | NO |
|---|-----|----|
| Personnel | | |
| Did you include all key employees covered by this grant? | | |
| Are employees of the applicant’s organization identified by name and position title? | | |
| Did you reflect the current yearly salary as a percentage of time to be devoted to the project? | | |
| | | |
| 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 an 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 | | |
| Are the product deliverables [or professional services] described in the budget? | | |
| Was a justification [or bona fide need] to contract included in the budget narrative? | | |
| For professional services, are the hours to be devoted to the project and the amounts to be charged to the project clearly stated? | | |
| Is the methodology on how the applicant determined the contractual costs included in the budget? | | |
| Are there sole-source contracts listed under this heading? If so, has sufficient information been provided in order to approve the use of a single source? | | |
| | | |
| Other | | |
| Consultant Svcs. – 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 X hourly wages, and all expenses and fees directly related to the proposed services to be rendered to the project. | | |

| | | |
|--|--|--|
| Consultant Svcs. – Is the bona fide need for consultant services justified in the budget? | | |
| For all other line items listed under the “Other” heading, list all items to be covered under this heading along with the methodology on how the applicant derived the costs to be charged to the program. | | |
| | | |
| Indirect Costs | | |
| Is the amount requested based upon a rate approved by the cognizant Federal Agency? If yes, is a copy of the negotiated rate agreement must be provided along with the application. Otherwise costs must be reflected as direct charges to the budget. | | |

Attachment B

Letters of Intent

(Organizations interested in this competition should submit a Letter of Intent on or before July 23, 2010. This letter does not commit an organization to apply; it will assist FNS in planning workload requirements for the selection, award and implementation of the cooperative agreement.)

Required Information:

DATE _____

(Organization Name)

(Organization Address)

(Organization's Authorized Representative)

Statement of Intent:

Letters of Intent must be mailed or delivered to:

Carla Garcia, Grant Officer
USDA, Food and Nutrition Service
Grants and Fiscal Policy Division
3101 Park Center Drive, Room 732
Alexandria, VA 22302