

NOTICE OF FUNDING OPPORTUNITY
America First Trade Promotion Program

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1. Basic Information

1.1 Executive Summary

The U.S. Department of Agriculture, Foreign Agricultural Service, Global Programs, announces this funding opportunity to support the America First Trade Promotion Program by issuing new awards. This opportunity is available to nonprofit U.S. agricultural trade organizations, nonprofit state regional trade groups (SRTGs), U.S. agricultural cooperatives, and U.S. state agencies. The intent is to foster expanded exports and sales of U.S. commodities by encouraging the development, maintenance, and expansion of diverse commercial export markets for United States agricultural commodities and products.

1.2 Federal Agency Name

United States Department of Agriculture, Foreign Agricultural Service (USDA/FAS)

1.3 Funding Opportunity Title

2026 America First Trade Promotion Program

1.4 Announcement Type

New Announcement

1.5 Funding Opportunity Number

USDA-FAS-AFTPP-2026

1.6 Assistance Listing Number

10.618 America First Trade Promotion Program

1.7 Funding Details

Total Available Federal Funding: \$285,000,000. Awards may be granted up to the maximum available program amount.

Anticipated Number of Awards: 60 awards.

USDA/FAS reserves the right to make additional awards under this opportunity if additional funding becomes available after the original selections are made, consistent with agency policy and guidance. Any additional selections for awards will be made no later than 6 months after the original selection decisions.

1.8 Key Dates

Deadline for Question Submission: January 2, 2026. All application questions and requests for UES access must be received by USDA/FAS by this date. No requests for UES access will be accepted after this date.

Application Submission Deadline: January 23, 2026 at 5:00 pm, Eastern Time.

1.9 Agency Contact Information

For all inquiries, contact:

Name: Curt Alt

Email Address: curt.alt@usda.gov

Phone Number: (202) 690-4784

Hours of Operation: M-F, 7:30 am - 4:00 pm Eastern Daylight Time (EDT)

2. Eligibility

2.1 Eligible Applicants

Applicants must be either a nonprofit U.S. agricultural trade organization that promotes the export and sale of one or more United States agricultural commodities, an SRTG, a U.S. agricultural cooperative, or a U.S. state agency.

Organizations that have not previously participated in a USDA market development program are encouraged to consider applying to this opportunity, and traditional USDA market development program recipients are encouraged to use this opportunity to propose new and innovative activities in non-traditional markets to generate increased export sales for U.S. farmers, ranchers, and producers. Organizations already operating trade promotion activities with USDA funding in the Target Market for the promoted commodity cannot receive all available points for “Innovation and Originality” in the Review Criteria.

All applicants must have an active registration in the U.S. Government System for Award Management (www.sam.gov) before the application submission deadline of the announcement. Applicants with inactive, expired, pending, or excluded listings will be deemed ineligible. Exceptions, waivers, or extensions will not be considered. More information about SAM.gov registration can be found in Section 9, Other Information.

2.2 Eligibility Threshold Criteria

Eligible Markets: Funding under the AFTPP is intended to support activities that promote the Administration’s America First agenda and offer the greatest opportunities for long-term market benefits for U.S. agricultural producers. As such, activities in certain markets of concern are ineligible for support, and proposed activities in those markets will not be approved under the program. For the 2026 AFTPP, China (including Hong Kong and Macau) has been identified as ineligible under the program.

2.3 Substantial Compliance

All applications will be reviewed for eligibility and must meet the eligibility requirements described above. Applicants deemed ineligible for funding consideration as a result of the threshold eligibility review will be notified within 15 calendar days of the ineligibility determination.

To be deemed eligible, applications must substantially comply with the application submission instructions and requirements set forth in Section 4, Application Contents and Format, of this solicitation.

2.4 Evidence of Eligibility

Applicants are responsible for including documentation, if necessary, establishing that they meet the stated eligibility requirements, when it is not immediately obvious. Applicants should not presume that USDA/FAS is sufficiently familiar with their organization, and USDA/FAS will not make assumptions as to the nature of an applicant's organization.

2.5 Funding Restrictions

Generally, funds may not be used in any manner that is prohibited by applicable regulations, including [7 CFR 1489](#), [2 CFR Part 200](#), and [2 CFR Part 400](#). Awards issued pursuant to this notice of funding opportunity may only be used for the purpose set forth in the award, consistent with the statutory authority for the award. Capital expenses, such as the purchase of equipment, not entirely attributable to this award, must be pro-rated.

For example, agreement funds and other support may not be used for matching contributions for other federal grants or cooperative agreements, lobbying, or intervention in federal regulatory or adjudicatory proceedings. Federal employees are prohibited from acting as an agent of the applicant in any capacity (paid or unpaid) on any proposal submitted under this program. Also, federal funds may not be used to sue the Federal Government or any other government entity.

Furthermore, in the event that a recipient of funding under the AFTPP includes any Chinese State-Owned Enterprises (SOEs) as part of their membership, USDA/FAS will not release any AFTPP funds for reimbursement to that recipient until the recipient can demonstrate to USDA/FAS that those Chinese SOEs have been removed from their membership rolls.

2.6 Multiple Applications

An individual applicant may not submit more than one application in response to this NOFO and may not be offered more than one award.

2.7 Cost Share/Match Requirement

Cost share is required for this program. For generic activities, the cost share must be at least 10 percent of the total amount reimbursed by the Commodity Credit Corporation (CCC) for all approved generic activities. For branded activities, the cost share must be at least equivalent to the total amount reimbursed by CCC for all approved branded activities. Cost share may be actual cash invested or in-kind contributions.

3. Program Description

Under AFTPP, USDA/FAS enters into agreements with Participants to share the cost of certain marketing and promotion activities to expand exports of U.S. agricultural commodities. Financial assistance under the AFTPP is made available on a competitive basis, and USDA/FAS endeavors to enter into agreements with eligible Participants to cover as broad an array of agricultural commodities as possible. All U.S. agricultural commodities, except tobacco, are eligible for consideration.

3.1 Authorizing Statutes and Regulations

CCC Charter Act, 15 U.S.C. 714c(f).

AFTPP program regulations are available at [7 CFR 1489](#).

3.2 Type of Assistance Instrument

USDA/FAS anticipates that Grant Agreements will be funded pursuant to this funding opportunity.

In this type of agreement, the recipient is expected to implement the project autonomously with little programmatic involvement from USDA/FAS. However, USDA/FAS maintains an oversight role, and the recipient must ensure that USDA/FAS is kept apprised of progress under the project.

3.3 Program Specific Unallowable Costs

Unallowable costs under AFTPP are detailed in [7 CFR 1489.17](#).

4. Application Contents and Format

4.1 Complete Application Package

A complete application package must include:

- A. A marketing plan that provides the information outlined in this notice.
- B. Proof of 501(c) status documentation to support nonprofit eligibility, if applicable and not already on file with USDA/FAS.

The marketing plan required by this announcement must include the following information:

A. Participant Profile:

- 1) The name, address, and Unique Entity Identifier (UEI) from SAM.gov for the applicant organization;
- 2) The name, telephone number, and email address of the applicant's primary contact person;
- 3) The name(s) of the person(s) responsible for managing the proposed program;
- 4) The type of organization (e.g., nonprofit trade association, agricultural cooperative, etc.);
- 5) The applicant's Federal tax identification number;
- 6) A description of the applicant organization, including its membership and membership criteria;
- 7) An executive summary of the applicant's overall market development strategy and how their proposed AFTPP activities fit into that overall strategy;
- 8) A discussion of how the applicant's proposed AFTPP activities support the Administration's America First agenda and will contribute to national prosperity and lead to a safer, stronger, and more prosperous future for American farmers, ranchers, and producers.
- 9) A description of the applicant organization's mission;
- 10) A discussion of the applicant's efforts at developing collaborative cross-commodity partnerships;
- 11) A description of the applicant's prior export promotion experience, including the applicant's management and administrative capability and an explanation of the organization's strategic planning process and how it identifies priority target markets;

- 12) A discussion of any organizations affiliated with the applicant, including parent organizations, subsidiaries, and partnerships;
- B. Industry Goal:
- 1) U.S. export goals and World Trade amounts for the commodities being promoted. Applicants should provide 5 years of historical data and 6 years of future target goals;
- C. Promoted Commodity:
- 1) A name for each promoted U.S. agricultural commodity, the applicable commodity aggregate code (from the UES), and the percentage of U.S. origin content by weight, exclusive of added water;
 - 2) A description of the domestic situation, outlook, and strengths and weaknesses for the promoted U.S. agricultural commodity;
 - 3) A description of the world market situation, outlook, and competitive threats from other exporters for the exported U.S. agricultural commodity;
 - 4) U.S. and world production and trade data for the promoted commodity;
- D. Targeted Market:
- 1) For each targeted market, provide a market assessment and strategy that discusses the market situation, constraint(s)/opportunity(ies), and the strategy proposed to overcome constraints or take advantage of the opportunities;
 - 2) A discussion of the past performance and results achieved from previous activities in the market, and the projected impact on U.S. exports of the proposed current program;
 - 3) For each targeted market, provide 5 years of the volume, value, and U.S. market share of historical exports of the promoted U.S. agricultural commodity(s) to the targeted market;
 - 4) For each targeted market, provide 3 years of projected U.S. export data and U.S. market share for the promoted U.S. agricultural commodity(s) to the targeted market;
- E. Constraint:
- 1) A description of the constraint impeding U.S. exports or the opportunities present in the market and the proposed strategy;
 - 2) A description of the performance metrics/indicators against which future success in addressing the constraint will be measured. Every constraint must include at least one outcome performance measure;
- F. Activity:
- 1) A description of each proposed activity and the requested budget;
 - 2) A description of the expected results and the overall long term strategic goals to be advanced by the proposed activity for the ensuing 3-5 years;
 - 3) A description of any demonstration projects, if applicable;
 - 4) Applicants proposing branded activities shall also include:
 - i. A description of how the brand promotion program will be publicized to the U.S. industry;
 - ii. The criteria that will be used to allocate funds to U.S. for-profit entities and U.S. agricultural cooperatives;
- G. Admin Activity:

- 1) A justification for any proposed overseas offices, including a staffing plan listing job titles, position descriptions, salary ranges, and an itemized administrative budget;

H. Promised Contribution:

- 1) Value, in U.S. dollars, of proposed contributions from the applicant or the applicant's proposed contribution stated as a percentage of the total dollar amount of CCC resources requested;
- 2) Value, in U.S. dollars, of proposed contributions from other sources;

4.2 Programmatic Capability and Past Performance

If your organization has not previously participated in a USDA/FAS market development program, you may submit a list of federally funded assistance agreements (assistance agreements include Federal grants and cooperative agreements but not Federal contracts) that your organization performed within the last three years (no more than 5 agreements, and preferably USDA or USDA/FAS agreements) and describe:

- A. Whether, and how, you were able to successfully complete and manage those agreements; and
- B. Your history of meeting the reporting requirements under those agreements including whether you adequately and timely reported on your progress towards achieving the expected outputs and outcomes of those agreements (and if not, explain why not) and whether you submitted acceptable final technical reports under the agreements; and
- C. Your organizational experience and plan for timely and successfully achieving the objectives of the proposed project, and your staff expertise/qualifications, staff knowledge, and resources or the ability to obtain them, to successfully achieve the goals of the proposed project.

In evaluating applicants under these factors in Section 6, USDA/FAS will consider the information provided by the applicant and may also consider relevant information from other sources, including information from USDA/FAS files and from current/prior grantors (e.g., to verify and/or supplement the information provided by the applicant). If you do not have any relevant or available past performance or past reporting information, please indicate this in the application and you will receive a neutral score for these factors (a neutral score is half of the total points available in a subset of possible points). If you do not provide any response for these items, you may receive a score of 0 for these factors.

4.3 Electronic Signatures

Consistent with the Electronic Signatures in Global and National Commerce Act (ESIGN Act), USDA/FAS uses and accepts electronic signatures for application and award documents. USDA/FAS will neither solicit nor send physical copies of documents.

4.4 Proprietary Information

Applicants should generally refrain from including the details of proprietary information in applications. In cases where, in the applicant's judgement, the inclusion of proprietary information is essential to application review and scoring, the applicant should clearly indicate information it wishes to designate as proprietary.

4.5 Other Application Information

Successful applicants must submit the following information after USDA/FAS notification of our intent to make a Federal award, but prior to a Federal award, if the applicant request for funding or the intended award amount is over \$100,000:

- A. [Grants.gov Lobbying Form](#)
- B. [Standard Form SF-LLL](#), Disclosure of Lobbying Activities, if applicable to the applicant

5. Submission Requirements and Deadlines

5.1 Address to Request Application Package

This Notice of Funding Opportunity contains all information required to submit a complete application package.

5.2 Unique Entity ID and System for Award Management (SAM)

Each applicant must:

- A. Be registered in SAM before submitting its application;
- B. Provide a valid unique entity ID in its application; and
- C. Continue to maintain an active registration in SAM with current information at all times during which it has an active Federal award or an application or plan under consideration by a Federal agency.

5.3 Submission Instructions

AFTTP applications must be submitted to USDA/FAS through the web-based Unified Export Strategy (UES) system. The UES system is accessible at <https://apps.fas.usda.gov/ues2>. Applications submitted outside of the UES will not be considered. Applicants needing help or access to the UES should email the UES team at uesadmin@usda.gov for assistance, but all requests for access must be received prior to the deadline noted in Section 1.8.

USDA-managed computer systems require applicants to have an identity-proofed account through the [login.gov](#) platform, and in some cases may require at least two persons. Identity-proofing and subsequent registration with any USDA-managed computer system may take several days, and applicants who do not already have system access should begin the registration process immediately, even if they are unsure they will apply to this funding opportunity.

Applicants who require assistance with any USDA-managed computer system must reach out to the agency contact listed in Section 1, Agency Contact Information, prior to the application submission deadline date in Section 5.4, Submission Dates and Times. USDA/FAS strongly encourages applicants to reach out at least 5 business days in advance of the application submission deadline. USDA/FAS will make a reasonable effort to resolve the issue, and in rare cases may offer alternative avenues for application submission.

5.4 Submission Dates and Times

Application Submission Deadline: January 23, 2026, at 5:00 pm EDT.

5.5 Intergovernmental Review

Executive Order 12372, Intergovernmental Review of Federal Programs, may be applicable to awards resulting from this announcement. USDA implemented the Executive Order in 2 CFR 415.5. USDA/FAS may require applicants selected for funding to provide a copy of their application to their State Point of Contact (SPOC) for review. These reviews are not required before submitting an application. Only applicants that USDA/FAS selects for funding under this announcement are subject to the Intergovernmental Review requirement. For more information about USDA's implementation for Intergovernmental Review, please visit [https://www.usda.gov/ocfo/federal-financial-assistance-policy/intergovernmental-review#:~:text=Executive%20Order%20\(EO\)%2012372%2C,of%20proposed%20Federal%20financial%20assistance](https://www.usda.gov/ocfo/federal-financial-assistance-policy/intergovernmental-review#:~:text=Executive%20Order%20(EO)%2012372%2C,of%20proposed%20Federal%20financial%20assistance).

6. Application Review Information

6.1 Eligibility Threshold Review

USDA/FAS will conduct an eligibility threshold review of all applications submitted to determine that:

- A. The applicant is eligible, as defined in Section 2, Eligibility; and
- B. The application was submitted by the application submission deadline date and time as specified in Section 5, Submission Requirements; and
- C. The applicant submitted a complete application, including all required forms and documents as defined in Section 5, Submission Requirements.

An application that does not include all documentation required by this notice of funding opportunity at the time of application will be deemed ineligible.

If an applicant is determined to be ineligible, USDA/FAS will notify the applicant prior to commencing with evaluation of applications, usually within 5 business days of the Application Submission Deadline. An applicant that feels such a determination was made in error may request reconsideration, highlighting evidence supporting their claim, by email to the program officer(s) listed in Section 1, Agency Contact Information, within 3 business days of notification.

6.2 Review Criteria

USDA/FAS will review all applications for eligibility and completeness. USDA/FAS will, subject to the availability of funds, approve those applications that it considers to best meet the objectives outlined in this announcement.

When determining funding recommendations, USDA/FAS will give priority to organizations that have the broadest producer representation and affiliated industry participation of the commodity being promoted and/or are nationwide in membership and scope. If USDA/FAS receives applications from multiple organizations representing the same commodity, USDA/FAS may require the organizations to work collaboratively under a joint coalition award, or may elect to only fund the organization USDA/FAS determines has the broadest producer representation and affiliated industry participation of the commodity being promoted. USDA/FAS may require that new applicants approved for funding participate in the AFTPP through another AFTPP Participant.

USDA/FAS conducts the following process in reviewing applications and allocating available AFTPP funds:

Eligibility Threshold Review (Phase 1): In Phase 1, USDA/FAS conducts the Eligibility Threshold Review outlined in Section 6.1 of this notice. Applications determined to be ineligible will receive no further consideration and will not be considered for funding. Applications that are deemed eligible and complete will be passed on to USDA/FAS' Cooperator Programs Division (CoPD) for the Phase 2 review.

Review of Proposed Activities and Requested Budgets (Phase 2): In this phase, a CoPD reviewer will be assigned to each application to review the proposed activities. Any activities proposed in the ineligible markets defined in Section 2.2 of this announcement will receive no further consideration and will not be funded.

The reviewer will review each proposed activity and rate them on a scale of 1 to 3, with 1 being the highest, using the following criteria:

• Anticipated return on investment
• Alignment with America First principals and priorities
• Growth potential of target market
• Reasonableness of implementation plan
• Whether the activity includes well-developed plans to measure impact
• Expected trade impact of activity
• Whether or not the activity includes quantifiable performance measures
• Level of FAS post and program area support
• Whether or not the applicant has sufficient administrative capacity to carry out the proposed activity
• Whether the activity is allowable within the guidelines of this NOFO announcement and the AFTPP regulations, and
• Whether the activity is contrary to the obligations of the United States by treaty or international obligation.

Finally, the reviewer will review each proposed activity's corresponding requested budget and determine whether or not the amount is reasonable, based upon the following considerations:

• The reviewer's professional expertise
• Past examples of similar market development activities
• Whether the proposed activity is practical and appropriate to undertake in the identified market(s) in the identified period of performance
• The applicant's administrative capabilities and, if applicable, market development program history of performance
• The level of innovation the activity demonstrates, and
• Any known costs of the proposed activity.

If the amount requested is determined to be unreasonable, the reviewer will propose a reasonable revised budget for the activity, based on the same considerations as above.

Application Review and Scoring (Phase 3): In this phase, a different reviewer from the one assigned in Phase 2 will be assigned to each application to perform the application review and score the application. The Phase 3 reviewer will first review the application and determine the application's review score by using the following criteria:

Program Strategic Planning (total of 40 possible points):

Criterion	Description	Total Possible Points
Overall Quality and Clarity	Applicants will be evaluated based on the overall quality and clarity of their marketing plan and the extent to which they present a clear and convincing vision of the project reflective of the identified needs and targeted geographic area.	10
Program Description and Objectives	Applicants will be evaluated based on the extent to which the proposed program identifies specific target markets, target audiences, and market share goals, and whether the program prioritizes markets with clear, differentiated, and appropriate marketing strategies.	10
Collaborations and Partnerships	Applicants will be evaluated based on the extent to which the long-term strategy includes input from a broad representation of industry and affiliated industries that meet regularly to update the strategic priorities, and any demonstrated partnerships or collaborations that enhance the program's potential success.	5
Innovation and Originality	Applicants will be evaluated based on the extent to which they showcase uniqueness or innovation in the proposed approach.	5
Significance and Impact	Applicants will be evaluated based on the extent to which they demonstrate the importance of the program within the relevant market(s) or region(s), and the potential positive impact of the program on the target market(s) or region(s).	5
Alignment with Program Goals	Applicants will be evaluated based on the extent to which the proposed activities align with the goals stated in this NOFO.	5

Program Management and Implementation (total of 60 possible points):

Criterion	Description	Total Possible Points
Qualifications and Expertise	Applicants will be evaluated based on the extent to which they demonstrate that they possess: (1) the	10

	qualifications, experience, and expertise relevant to the program, (2) adequate resources and capabilities to carry out the program, (3) adequate and appropriate staffing/organizational capacity to implement the program, and (4) collaboration and communication within their industry.	
Methodology and Approach	Applicants will be evaluated based on the extent to which they demonstrate a well-defined program methodology, an appropriate approach to achieve the stated objectives, and a clear timeline for program activities.	10
Quality of Constraints/Opportunities and Performance Measures	Applicants will be evaluated based on the percentage of constraint/opportunities that are appropriate, specific, actionable, and contain at least one outcome performance measure.	10
Evaluation and Metrics	Applicants will be evaluated based on the extent to which they demonstrate a clear plan for measuring the success and outcomes of the program and how well they use appropriate metrics to assess progress and impact.	10
Budget and Budget Justification	Applicants will be evaluated based on the extent to which their proposed budget is well-organized, detailed, and reasonable for the proposed activities and they provide a clear explanation of why Federal funding assistance is needed and why the applicant is unlikely to carry out the programs without assistance.	5
America First Focus	Applicants will be evaluated based on the extent to which their proposed activities support the Administration's America First agenda and will contribute to national prosperity and lead to a safer, stronger, and more prosperous future for American farmers, ranchers, and producers.	10
Program Sustainability and Long-Term Plans	Applicants will be evaluated based on the extent and quality to which they demonstrate a commitment to sustaining program outcomes beyond the program period of performance.	5

After the Phase 3 reviewer scores the application, they will provide a determination whether or not to fund the application based upon their evaluation of the application materials and the review score given and will provide their expertise and evaluation of the feasibility of project success in consideration of the total sum of the reasonable budgets established in Phase 2.

The Funding Recommendation (Phase 4): CoPD management will review the results of the Phase 2 and Phase 3 reviews. Working from those results, applications will be ranked based on the application scores, from highest to lowest, and the total amounts of the reasonable budgets established for the Phase 2 priority 1, 2, and 3 activities will be calculated.

CoPD management will then determine funding recommendations by working through the ranked applications in order and reviewing the total Phase 2 reasonable budgets in the following stages:

Stage 1: Priority 1 activities

Stage 2: Priority 2 activities

Stage 3: Priority 3 activities

If additional funding remains after reviewing all activities/budgets in each stage, CoPD management will move on to consider the activities in the next stage. Once all available funding is exhausted, the process will stop.

At each stage in the Phase 4 review process, CoPD management may elect to increase or decrease a particular application's total reasonable budget after consideration of factors including: the application's score from Phase 3 and position in the ranked list of applications, input from the Phase 2 and 3 application reviewers, Phase 2 activity priority rankings, and the applicant's market development program history and experience, if applicable.

Final Review and Allocation Decision Making (Phase 5): A summary of all applications and the recommended funding levels for each will be provided to the Office of the Deputy Administrator, Global Programs for the purpose of finalizing the AFTPP funding recommendations among the applicants. Once finalized, the recommendations will be presented to the FAS Administrator for final deliberation, determination, and approval. FAS leadership (including the Deputy Administrator, Associate Administrator, and Administrator) may elect to review and adjust the funding recommendations based on factors including, but not limited to: agency priorities, priority markets, program impact, the record of performance of the organization in managing past market development funds, and the organization's likelihood of success.

6.3 Programmatic Capability and Past Performance

Under this criterion, applicants will be evaluated based on their ability to successfully complete and manage the proposed project considering their:

- A. Past performance in successfully completing and managing the assistance agreements identified in response to Section 4 of the solicitation,
- B. History of meeting the reporting requirements under the assistance agreements identified in response to Section 4 of the solicitation including whether the applicant submitted acceptable final technical reports under those agreements and the extent to which the applicant adequately and timely reported on their progress towards achieving the expected outputs and outcomes under those agreements and if such progress was not being made whether the applicant adequately reported why not,
- C. Organizational experience and plan for timely and successfully achieving the objectives of the proposed project, and
- D. Staff expertise/qualifications, staff knowledge, and resources or the ability to obtain them, to successfully achieve the goals of the proposed project.

Note: In evaluating applicants under items i and ii of this criterion, USDA/FAS will consider the information provided by the applicant and may also consider relevant information from other

sources including agency files and prior/current grantors (e.g., to verify and/or supplement the information supplied by the applicant). If you do not have any relevant or available past performance or past reporting information, please indicate this in the application and you will receive a neutral score for these subfactors (items i and ii above—a neutral score is half of the total points available in a subset of possible points). If you do not provide any response for these items, you may receive a score of 0 for these factors.

6.4 Review and Selection Process

The agency will convene a review panel to review the eligible applications against the evaluation criteria described above. USDA/FAS documents that reviewers, whatever their affiliation, are free from a conflict of interest that would affect their assessment of an applicant, whether positively or negatively.

The reviewers will ensure that the applicant can deliver the programs/activities as described in the announcement based on the applicant's project narrative and assign a score and provide summary comments based on the evaluation criteria identified above. The review panel will make a recommendation list to the selecting official, who is not a member of the panel.

The selecting official may select applications out of rank order in consideration of strategic program priorities, such as geographical distribution or congressional directive. Selection determinations are final and cannot be appealed.

Prior to selection, the agency may contact the highest-ranking applicants to seek clarification and to negotiate technical and programmatic aspects of the application. If an application includes a subaward, USDA/FAS may request to speak with all parties included in the application to ensure sufficient planning and coordination has taken place prior to making an award.

6.5 Risk Review

Prior to making a Federal award, the Federal awarding agency is required by [2 CFR 200.206](#), [31 USC 3321](#) and [41 USC 2313](#) to review information available through any OMB-designated repositories of government-wide eligibility qualification or financial integrity information. Therefore, application evaluation criteria may include the following risk-based considerations of the applicant: (1) financial stability; (2) quality of management systems and ability to meet management standards; (3) history of performance in managing federal award; (4) reports and findings from audits; and (5) ability to effectively implement statutory, regulatory, or other requirements.

Prior to making a Federal award with a total amount of Federal share greater than the simplified acquisition threshold, currently \$250,000, the federal agency must review and consider any information about the applicant that is in the responsibility/qualification records available in SAM.gov (41 USC 2313).

- A. An applicant can review and comment on any information in the responsibility/qualification records available in SAM.gov.
- B. Before making decisions in the risk review required by 2 CFR 200.206, the Federal awarding agency will consider any comments by the applicant along with information available in the responsibility/qualification records in SAM.gov.

7. Award Notices

Applicants will be notified of the status of their application/award by email. Notification to successful applicants is not authorization to proceed, and such notification should be construed as provisional until an award document has been signed by authorized officials of USDA/FAS and the recipient.

Award documents will be transmitted by email to the individuals or offices who submitted them, or to those persons or offices that USDA/FAS believes, to the best of its information, are proper. The applicant is recommended to ensure that the agency is provided with the correct point(s) of contact.

8. Post-Award Requirements and Administration

8.1 Administrative and National Policy Requirements

All successful applicants are required to comply with the applicable General Terms and Conditions, which can be found at https://fas.usda.gov/grants/general_terms_and_conditions. The applicant is presumed to have read, understood, and accepted these terms when accepting a USDA/FAS award. Applicants with questions about the applicable terms should contact the program officer(s) listed in Section 1, Agency Contact Information.

Before accepting an award, the applicant should carefully read all award documents for instructions on administering the award and the terms and conditions associated with responsibilities under Federal Awards. Recipients must accept all conditions in this NOFO as well as any Special Terms and Conditions in the Notice of Award to receive an award under this program.

8.2 Reporting

Financial Reporting

AFTPP Participants are required to submit all expense claims and a report detailing actual contributions no later than six months after the end of the period of performance. All expense claims and contribution reports must be submitted via the UES system.

Performance Reporting

AFTPP Participants must submit quarterly performance reports, as practicable, that include, for each performance indicator, a comparison of actual results against the baseline and the targets established for the period. When actual results deviate significantly from targeted goals, the Participant must provide an explanation in the report as to why the goal was not achieved. This report should be submitted via the UES. Participants also must provide program success stories.

For awards in which the total lifetime value exceeds \$500,000, additional reporting may be required as described in [Appendix XII to 2 CFR 200](#).

Subaward and Executive Compensation Reporting

Applicants must ensure that they have the necessary processes and systems in place to comply with the subaward and executive total compensation reporting requirements established at [2 CFR 170](#), should they be selected for funding.

Closeout

Within six months after the end of the period of performance, or after an amendment has been issued to close out a grant, whichever comes first, USDA/FAS will confirm that the Participant has supplied all the required reports and will review the reports for completeness and content. Once the required reports are approved, USDA/FAS will prepare a closeout letter that advises the Participant that the agreement's period of performance has ended, specify that any remaining funds will be de-obligated, provide any additional necessary guidance, and indicate that the award has been closed out. The AFTPP Participant is responsible for returning any unused funds to CCC. Records must be retained for a minimum of five years after the final reports are submitted.

8.3 Monitoring

USDA/FAS, through its authorized representatives, has the right, at all reasonable times, to make site visits to review project accomplishments and management control systems and to provide such technical assistance as may be required. During site visits, USDA/FAS will review recipients' files related to the program.

As part of any monitoring and program evaluation activities, recipients must permit USDA/FAS, upon reasonable notice, to review assistance agreement-related records and to interview the organization's staff and other knowledgeable persons regarding the program, and to respond in a timely and accurate manner to agency requests for information relating to the program.

8.4 Conflict of Interest

The Applicant's Conflict of Interest (COI) Point of Contact as defined in USDA/FAS Conflict of Interest Policy must notify the USDA/FAS contact identified in Section 1, Agency Contact Information, of this solicitation of any actual or potential conflict of interest that they are aware of that may provide the Applicant with an unfair competitive advantage in competing for USDA/FAS financial assistance awards within 10 calendar days of becoming aware of the conflict of interest. Examples of an unfair competitive advantage include, but are not limited to, situations in which a USDA/FAS employee reviewed and commented on or drafted all or part of an applicant's application. Note that USDA/FAS does not generally consider receiving information from an USDA/FAS employee limited to whether the applicant or the applicant's proposed project is eligible to compete for funding to confer an unfair competitive advantage. In addition, assistance agreements made under this solicitation will include a term and condition notifying recipients of their COI disclosure obligations and responsibilities under the award including the need to have systems in place to address, resolve and disclose COIs to USDA/FAS.

8.5 Mandatory Disclosures

As required by [2 CFR 200.113](#), non-federal entities or applicants for a Federal award must disclose, in a timely manner, in writing to the Federal awarding agency or pass-through entity all violations of Federal criminal law involving fraud, bribery, or gratuity violations potentially

affecting the Federal award. Failure to make required disclosures can result in any of the remedies described in [2 CFR 200.339](#) including suspension and debarment.

9. Other Information

9.1 Extensions

Extensions to this program are not permitted.

9.2 No Awards

USDA/FAS reserves the right to make no awards under this competition.

9.3 SAM.gov Registration Instructions

Organizations applying to this funding opportunity must have an active SAM.gov registration. If you have never done business with the Federal Government, you will need to register your organization in SAM.gov. If you do not have a SAM.gov account, then you will create an account using [login.gov](#)¹ to complete your SAM.gov registration. SAM.gov registration is FREE. The process for entity registrations includes several steps and validations and is not complete until the registration is shown as Active. Please review the [Entity Registration Checklist](#) for details on this process.

If you have done business with the Federal Government previously, you can check your entity status using your government issued UEI to determine if your registration is active. SAM.gov requires you renew your registration every 365 days to keep it active.

Please note that SAM.gov registration is different than obtaining a UEI only. Obtaining an UEI only validates your organization's legal business name and address. Please review the [Frequently Asked Question](#) on the difference for additional details.

Organizations should ensure that their SAM.gov registration includes a current e-Business (EBiz) point of contact name and email address. The EBiz point of contact is critical for Grants.gov Registration and system functionality.

Contact the [Federal Service Desk](#) for help with your SAM.gov account, to resolve technical issues or chat with a help desk agent: (866) 606-8220. The Federal Service desk hours of operation are Monday - Friday 8am - 8pm ET.

9.4 Faith-Based Organizations

Faith-based organizations may apply for an award on the same basis as any other organization, as set forth at, and subject to the protections and requirements of, 7 CFR part 16 and any applicable constitutional and statutory requirements, including 42 U.S.C. 2000bb et seq. USDA/FAS will not, in the selection of recipients, discriminate for or against an organization on the basis of the organization's religious character, motives, or affiliation, or lack thereof, or on the basis of conduct that would not be considered grounds to favor or disfavor a similarly situated secular organization.

¹ Login.gov is a secure sign in service used by the public to sign into Federal Agency systems including SAM.gov and Grants.gov. For help with login.gov accounts you should visit <http://login.gov/help>.

A faith-based organization that participates in this program will retain its independence from the Government and may continue to carry out its mission consistent with religious freedom and conscience protections in Federal law. Religious accommodations may also be sought under many of these religious freedom and conscience protection laws.

A faith-based organization may not use direct Federal financial assistance from USDA/FAS to support or engage in any explicitly religious activities except when consistent with the Establishment Clause of the First Amendment and any other applicable requirements. An organization receiving Federal financial assistance also may not, in providing services funded by USDA/FAS, or in their outreach activities related to such services, discriminate against a program beneficiary or prospective program beneficiary on the basis of religion, a religious belief, a refusal to hold a religious belief, or a refusal to attend or participate in a religious practice.