FY 2018 SNAP PROCESS AND TECHNOLOGY IMPROVEMENT GRANTS (PTIG)

MAY 2018
THIS WEBINAR IS BEING RECORDED

Presented by Alice McKenney and Sarah Goldberg, SNAP Program Analysts

Webinar Agenda

- PTIG Basics

- Fiscal Year (FY) 18 Funding Priority Areas

- Review Criteria

- Application Submission

- Questions

Purpose

Develop and implement projects that improve the quality and efficiency of SNAP operations and processes

Eligible Entities

- 53 State agencies that administer SNAP
- State or local governments
- Agencies providing health or welfare services
- Public health or educational entities
- Private non-profit entities

Award Information

- Up to $5 million in FY 2018
- Grants awarded through competitive process
- No cost sharing or matching required
- Anticipated number of awards: 6 to 11
- Anticipated funding per award: $20,000 – $2,000,000
- Grant project period: September 30, 2018, through September 30, 2021

Funding Restrictions

- No pre-award cost
- New projects only
- No waiving SNAP regulations
- Funds for SNAP's share of project costs only
- No more than 25% of grant funds are for outreach activities

Key Dates

□ Application due: June 25, 2018, by 11:59pm EST

□ Grant awards announced: by September 30, 2018

□ Project Periods: September 30, 2018 through September 30, 2021

FY 2018 FUNDING PRIORITY AREAS

FY 2018 PTIG Priorities

1. Improve Customer Service

2. Increase Efficiencies in Case Management

3. Systems Improvements

Priority One:
Improve Customer Service

☐ Projects that improve the client's experience.

Examples:

- Decrease wait time through a more efficient call center
- Better way to schedule or reschedule interviews quickly
- Creation of a mobile app
- Enhancing or clarifying certification materials
- Accepting telephonic signatures

Priority Two:
Increase Efficiencies in Case Management

□ Projects that make it easier for caseworkers to process cases, assist clients, increase program integrity, and reduce churn.

Examples:

- Text message reminders to help clients remember deadlines
- Business Process Reengineering (BPR)
- Improvements to the application, verification, recertification, and reporting processes that reduce cost or administrative burden and improve outcomes for SNAP households

Priority Three:
System Improvements

- Projects that promote innovative, technological enhancements to State eligibility systems.

Examples:

  - Integrated digitization of files that allows for submission of verification documents electronically

  - Creation of worker dashboards or building additional reporting capability

  - Monitoring timeliness via a systems enhancement

Recap:
Purpose, Priorities, & Deadline

Purpose:

- ❑ Develop and implement projects that improve the quality and efficiency of SNAP operations and processes

Priorities:

1. Improve Customer Service
2. Increase Efficiencies in Case Management
3. Systems Improvements

Due Date:

- ❑ Application must be submitted to www.Grants.gov by **June 25, 2018**, by 11:59pm EST

REVIEW CRITERIA

Technical Evaluation Criteria

Review Criteria

- Project Design (35 points)
- Organizational Experience, Staff Capability and Management (10 points)
- Evaluation (20 points)
- Budget Appropriateness and Economic Efficiency (30 points)
- Presentation (5 points)

Note: Review criteria is based on application content as outlined in the RFA. For more information, please see the RFA posted on grants.gov.

Review Criteria:
Applied Example

- To better understand the review criteria, this section includes an example project.

- DO NOT copy this project verbatim for your State; however innovative, well researched projects of this type are welcome to enter the grant competition.

- Example Project: create a worker dashboard to better monitor applications.

Review Criteria:
Project Design

- The proposal clearly defines the problem, the solution, and provides evidence that the proposed project will solve the problem.

- The Project Design section should include:
  - Problem Analysis
  - Impact
  - Implementation
  - Sustainability
  - Letters of Commitment or Endorsement

Review Criteria:
Project Design Example

- Bad Example
  - Proposal identifies what will be created (worker dashboard), but does not include evidence of why it is needed
  - Effort is not made to show how dashboard will be implemented
  - Letters of commitment/endorsement are perfunctory and template
- Good Example
  - Proposal lays out how dashboard will improve application processing timeliness for project area/State, including measureable and attainable goals in problem/solution format
  - Full project timeline is included showing sufficient time is allotted for each activity
  - Letters of commitment/endorsement are personalized and show the foundation of a good, strong partnership

Special Instructions:
Letters of Commitment

A **Letter of Commitment** is required if the grant proposal is from a State agency working in partnership with another organization(s).

The letter(s) of commitment must describe:

- The organization's role in the project, and
- The amount of time the partner organization intends to commit to the project and an attestation that it will cooperate with the grant applicant in implementing the project.

Special Instructions:
Letter of Endorsement

A **Letter of Endorsement** is required if an applicant is not partnering with a State agency.

The State agency's letter of endorsement must:

☐ Explain that the State agency is aware of the projected impact on its eligibility system and is supportive of the project

☐ Acknowledge whether the project creates any additional work for the State agency and identify the State agency's capacity to address this work

☐ Describe how the project will support State's current or planned technology and/or business process improvement efforts and priorities

Review Criteria:
Organizational Experience, Staff Capability and Management

- Proposal describes a plan for effective and consistent oversight by qualified project managers

- Includes organizational chart for the project

- Internal communications plan is included, and external plan is included if necessary

- Resumes and proposed project job descriptions for all involved employees

- Identifies key project staff and outlines the amount of time they will commit to the project

Review Criteria:

Organizational Experience, Staff Capability and Management Example

- **Bad Example**
  - A list of employees that will work on the project is provided, without specific roles for each
  - No staff resumes or job descriptions are included
  - Communications plan just mentions that they will do regular check-ins; no other internal communication is mentioned

- **Good Example**
  - Proposal clearly identifies all parties to be involved, with short project job description for each and percentage of their time that they will devote to the project
  - Communications plan includes which team members will meet, how often, and what topics will generally be discussed (partner feedback, draft reviews, etc.)

Review Criteria:
Evaluation

All proposals must include a comprehensive evaluation process that is specific, data-driven, and measures whether the problem identified is addressed by the proposed project intervention.

Evaluations Plans should address:

- Who will measure the goals of the project?
- What criteria will be evaluated and how?
- At what intervals during the grant period will the evaluation be conducted?

Review Criteria:
Evaluation Example

- Bad Example
  - Evaluation plan is one paragraph, discussing that at the completion of the dashboard creation, caseworkers will be surveyed for feedback

- Good Example
  - Evaluation plan is detailed, including pre- and post-dashboard launch surveys from caseworkers, measured targets for triaging applications for expedite and those that have been waiting the longest, and comparison of pre- and post- timeliness rates (including target goals as appropriate)
  - Evaluation plan includes use of in-house or contracted out evaluation consultant for most rigorous analysis. All efforts must be made to conduct successful evaluation in order to gauge success and ways in which project could have been improved

Review Criteria:

Budget Appropriateness and Economic Efficiency

Budgets must include:

- All required budget forms
  - See page III of RFA, "Application Checklist"
- Budget narrative
  - How funds will be spent, by whom, and for what purpose?
  - Narrative should align with itemized budget, discuss how costs were determined and how they relate to project goals
  - Budget estimates should be justified
- Line item budget
  - Full checklist in RFA of what to include (page III)

Review Criteria:
Budget Appropriateness and Economic Efficiency *(continued)*

If applicable or desired, budgets may include:

- ☐ Approved Negotiated Indirect Cost Rate Agreement for indirect costs

- ☐ How costs are allocated among benefiting programs and demonstrate that this grant will only fund SNAP's share

- ☐ Tiered budgets and the corresponding narrative discussing different possible funding levels

- ☐ 501(c)(3) letter for non-profits

Review Criteria:

Budget Appropriateness and Economic Efficiency *(continued)*

Contractual and Consultant Costs:

Applicants who wish to hire a consultant or contract work out must provide the following information:

- Consultants name and description of service
- Itemized list of direct costs and fees
- Salaries with the number of personnel and position titles
- Specialized qualifications
- Number of estimated hours and hourly wage

Review Criteria:

Budget Appropriateness and Economic Efficiency Example

- Bad Example
  - Budget narrative is non-descriptive
  - Items from budget checklist in RFA are missing from line-item budget
  - Justification is not provided for cost estimates. Anticipated hours worked by staff seems random without explanation
- Good Example
  - Budget narrative addresses all substantial or notable portions of the line item budget, including reasoning for all consultants or employees involved, equipment and supply purchases, and explanation of how costs were estimated (industry standard, quotes from vendors, etc.)
  - Line item budget is clear, easy to understand, and includes all anticipated costs, and total aligns with the amount on the SF-424A
  - Travel costs are all inclusive and justification for travel is provided

Budget Checklist:
Things to Consider

- Does the project and budget meet the bona fide needs of the RFA?
- Is the budget summary included?
  - Does it agree with the calculations shown on the OMB budget form (SF-424A)?
  - Is the budget in line with the project description?
- Are budget figures consistent across displays and narratives?
- Did you use the Budget RFA Checklist found on pages III-V of the RFA?

Review Criteria:
Presentation

- Proposal is well written, well presented and void of grammatical errors

- Grant application should not exceed 25 pages (not including appendices and forms)

- Applications should include a cover sheet, table of contents, and executive summary at the beginning of proposal

APPLICATION SUBMISSION & ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Forms:
Required

- **Non-Construction Grant Projects Forms: SF-424 Family**

1. Application for Federal Assistance (SF-424)

2. Budget Information and Instruction Form (SF-424A)

3. Assurance for Non-Construction Programs (SF-424B)

- 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."

Forms can be found at:

https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/forms/sf-424-family.html#sortby=1

Grant Program Accounting System & Financial Capability Questionnaire

- Responses to this questionnaire are used to assist Food and Nutrition Service Agency's (FNS) in evaluation of your accounting system to ensure the adequate, appropriate, and transparent use of Federal funds.

- Complete the questionnaire on pages 27 – 29 of the RFA and submit with your application package

PLEASE BE AWARE

- Obtaining a Data Universal Numbering System (DUNS) number takes several days.

- To register in Systems for Award Management (SAM), the applicant's DUNS number, Tax ID Number (TIN), and taxpayer name are required.

- SAM registrants, and those updating or renewing their registration, must mail in a notarized letter identifying that you are the authorized Entity Administrator for the entity associated with the DUNS number. This letter must be received by SAM before the registration will be activated in the system.

- Verification takes at least 48 hours after registration is submitted to SAM.

- Applicants must have a valid SAM registration no later than 3 days prior to the application due date.

- If your organization is not a State agency, you are required to submit an AD-3030.

- Registration process for www.Grants.gov generally takes between 3-5 business days.

Special Characters **Not** Supported

- Follow the guidance provided in the grants.gov Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)
- File attachment names longer than approximately 50 characters can cause problems processing packages
- Limit file attachment names
- Do not use any special characters in naming the attachments
  - Special characters example: &,–,*,.,%,/,#,', -

Quick Reference Links

- For information regarding PTIG Grantees and Project Summaries – FY2018 SNAP Process and Technology Improvement Grants

- Questions regarding the RFA: Kimberly Shields, Grant Officer – Kimberly.Shields@fns.usda.gov

- To submit your completed application: www.Grants.gov by June 25, 2018, 11:59pm EST

FNS Homepage → Grants

Click on PTIG Link

PTIG Landing Page

QUESTIONS ?

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