

Gus Schumacher Nutrition Incentive Program (GusNIP)

Frequently Asked Questions February 2022

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Eligibility Questions

1. Can a university/university extension apply as the primary applicant for GusNIP?

Eligibility to apply for a GusNIP Nutrition Incentive Program grant is limited to government agencies and non-profit organizations. *Institutions of higher education that are local, county, tribal, territory, or state government agencies must provide documentation in support of eligibility as a government agency. Please upload this documentation in Field 12.*

The definition of a non-profit organization in [2 CFR 200](#) as follows:

Nonprofit organization means any corporation, trust, association, cooperative, or other organization, not including Institution of Higher Education, that:

- (1) Is operated primarily for scientific, educational, service, charitable, or similar purposes in the public interest;
- (2) Is not organized primarily for profit; and
- (3) Uses net proceeds to maintain, improve, or expand the operations of the organization.

2. How does NIFA want healthcare providers to verify that a patient is enrolled in Medicaid for PPR eligibility?

The applicant and their partners are responsible for screening and verifying eligibility for eligible individuals for participation in a produce prescription project. Individuals can participate in a produce prescription project if they are eligible for the following: (1) Benefits under the Food and Nutrition Act of 2008 (7 USC 2011 et seq.); or (2) medical assistance under a State plan or a waiver of such a plan under title XIX of the Social Security Act (42 USC 1392 et seq.) and enrolled under such plan or waiver; and (3) a member of a low-income household that suffers from, or is at risk of developing, a diet-related health condition.

One way to verify that a patient enrolled in Medicaid is eligible to participate in a produce prescription project is proof of enrollment in the Medicaid medical assistance plan via Proof of Insurance and verify the patient is managing or is at risk of developing, a diet-related health condition.

Program Policy Questions

1. Do grocery stores participating in GusNIP/PPR programs have to source a percentage of produce locally or regionally?

No.

2. Do farmers markets have to be open 40 hours a week to participate in GusNIP/PPR programs?

No, farmers markets do not have to have extended hours.

3. Can PPR project proposals request to include canned/frozen F/V in addition to fresh?

Produce Prescription proposals must prescribe any variety of fresh whole or cut fruits and vegetables without added sugars, fats, or oils, and salt (i.e. sodium). NIFA recognizes that food supply and food system disruptions may hinder the ability to access fresh fruits and vegetables. If the community involved in the proposed project continues to face such disruptions as a result of the public health emergency include a thorough description and justification in the Project Goals and Intended Outcomes section of the project narrative.

4. Are incentives for evaluation allowed (e.g., participants completing surveys)? If so, should that be included in the evaluation budget, or the grantee's budget?

Proposed projects cannot provide cash or cash value items to incentivize the behavior of potential participants. Participants can, however, be reimbursed for their time and effort if they independently choose to complete an evaluation survey. Applicants may include compensation of participant time and effort under participant support costs, other direct costs, or the evaluation budget depending on who will administer the reimbursement.

5. Who are participant surveys directed towards?

Surveys are intended for any participant. However, the sample size is intended to be yearly.

Program Area Questions

1. Must State SNAP agencies sign off on any GusNIP Produce Prescription Project application?

SNAP State Agency support is not required for Produce Prescription proposals. However, Produce Prescription applications **with a project design that involves SNAP transactions** and SNAP authorized firms must submit a SNAP State Agency letter of support and follow the SNAP firm MOU process. Additional information about SNAP policy may be found in the SNAP Policy FAQs on the [GusNIP FAQs resource page](#).

Produce prescription grant applications must include documentation of a partnership agreement with a healthcare partner in one of the following four categories: hospital, Federally-qualified health center, hospital or clinic operated by the Secretary of Veterans Affairs, or healthcare provider group.

2. Is there technical assistance provided before and/or after the grant is awarded?

The Nutrition Incentive Program Training, Technical Assistance, Evaluation, and Information Center (NTAE) provides support at no charge to both potential applicants and grantees for produce prescription projects. The GusNIP Nutrition Incentive Training, Technical Assistance, Evaluation, and Information Center (NTAE) Center is led by the Gretchen Swanson Center for Nutrition. In partnership with Fair Food Network, they created the Nutrition Incentive Hub, a coalition of partners including the Farmer's Market Coalition, National Grocers Association Foundation, Michigan Farmers Market Association, and Ecology Center. The Nutrition Incentive Hub coalition of partners support produce prescription projects.

The GusNIP NTAE's Nutrition Incentive Hub provides free one-on-one support - including templates, checklists, webinars, and other resources -- to all GusNIP grantees and applicants. Applicants are highly encouraged to take advantage of these technical assistance resources and services. Please visit the resource page at:

<https://www.nutritionincentivehub.org/resources>.

The Nutrition Incentive Hub also offers several resources specifically developed to assist with the Request for Applications (RFA). These resources can be found here:

<https://www.nutritionincentivehub.org/resources-and-support/resources/gusnip-request-for-applications/2021-rfa-resources>

For specific questions related to proposal development or implementation, the technical assistance team may be reached at: ta@nutritionincentivehub.org.

For specific questions related to reporting and evaluation, please contact evaluation@nutritionincentivehub.org.

3. Who is the GusNIP NTAE Center? Is there more than one?

The GusNIP Nutrition Incentive Training, Technical Assistance, Evaluation, and Information Center (NTAE) Center is led by the Gretchen Swanson Center for Nutrition. In partnership with Fair Food Network, they created the Nutrition Incentive Hub, a coalition of partners including the Farmer's Market Coalition, National Grocers Association Foundation, Michigan Farmers Market Association, and Ecology Center. The Nutrition Incentive Hub coalition of partners support produce prescription projects. Currently there is only one GusNIP NTAE Center.

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4. What information needs to be included in a letter of support?

These letters should acknowledge the support and contributions of partner organizations, provide evidence of broad community involvement in both planning and decision-making. Additionally, letters of support for each key organization are limited to two (2) pages and should be uploaded to Field 12.

5. Do PPR proposals need to serve all residents in an entire county?

PPR projects may be proposed by groups developing program at less than the county level. A project in one healthcare facility is eligible. Applicants should request a budget and project period commensurate with the proposed project.

6. Do PPR smaller scope projects need to be under \$100,000 for up to 1-year in duration?

Project proposals submitted to the PPR program area may be for up to 3 years in duration and of \$500,000 or less. All PPR program area grantees are required to participate in the comprehensive GusNIP evaluation.

7. Must participants in PPR projects be receiving SNAP or eligible for SNAP?

Being eligible for SNAP is one part of determining eligibility to participate in a produce prescription project. It is not the only criterion for eligibility, and it is not required.

Individuals can participate in a Produce Prescription project if they are eligible for the following: (1) benefits under the Food and Nutrition Act of 2008 (7 U.S.C. 2011 et seq.); or (2) medical assistance under a State plan or a waiver of such a plan under title XIX of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1396 et seq.) and enrolled under such plan or waiver; and (3) a member of a low-income household that suffers from, or is at risk of developing, a diet-related health condition.

To be eligible to participate in a produce prescription project the individual may either meet items (1) and (3) or items (2) and (3) above.

Application Questions

1. Can organizations who apply to the GusNIP Nutrition Incentive Program submit a GusNIP Produce Prescription Program application?

Yes, the same organization may submit a Produce Prescription proposal and a Nutrition Incentive Program proposal. Applicants are encouraged to think critically about their organization's capacity to complete the work proposed.

2. When is the estimated start date for funded applicants?

The start date of the grant must be no later than September 30, 2022.

3. Do the 15-pages in the project narrative include charts and tables? Is there a page limit for charts and tables? Do charts and tables have to be at the end or can they be woven throughout?

Charts and tables are included in the 15-page project narrative. The project narrative must not exceed 15-pages, 1.5 spaced including written text, figures, and tables with 1-inch margins. The font size for text and tables should be no smaller than 12 points, Times New Roman. There is no limit to the number of pages an applicant may dedicate to figures, tables, or charts within the overall 15-page limit. Figures, tables, or charts may be woven throughout the narrative, it is not required for them to be at the end of the narrative following the text. We have established this maximum (15 pages) to ensure fair and equitable competition. Applications exceeding this limit may be administratively declined without review.

4. There used to be a recommendation that a table of activities to achieve the project goals be no more than 3 pages. Is this recommended for the 2022 RFA?

In 2022, it is recommended to include a table with implementation details in the Activities to Achieve the Goals section of the project narrative. A recommended length has been

removed. Applicants may determine the length appropriate to best communicate their proposed project.

5. Are Medicaid, Medicare, and VA health plans the only ones that qualify as State health plans?

State-run medical assistance health plans qualify participants as eligible for PPR programs. Medicaid, Medicare, Veterans Affairs Health Plans, and CHIP are some examples.

6. Is there a template partnership agreement for State Medicaid Agency?

A template Medicaid State Agency Agreement is available at:
<https://www.nutritionincentivehub.org/gusnip-app>

7. There used to be a requirement that at least 50% of the budget be dedicated to produce prescriptions. Is this required in the 2022 RFA?

No, there is no funding allocation guidance in the 2022 RFA. Applicants may divide their budget as it fits the work proposed. Anything to do with the budget information should be provided in the Budget and Budget Justification section.

8. Based on the information from the RFA, this sounds to us like we can submit our indirect cost rate that we have calculated from audits (but is not a federally negotiated rate yet), and if awarded we will go through the process of submitting the indirect rate package for review. Does this sound accurate?

You may estimate what you think your indirect cost rate is and the amount and put that on the budget pending negotiation. However, please note, it may take six to nine months to negotiate a rate if NIFA is your cognizant negotiating agency. The funds for the indirect costs will not be released for payment until the rate has been approved.

9. Is there any subaward restriction?

The RFA Sub-award Restrictions require no more than 33% of the budget be sub-awarded without prior NIFA approval from the National Program Leader.

For additional questions, please see contact information in the RFA