

Rural Food Hub Grant Request for Applications

Division of Food and Nutrition



Background

The Nevada Department of Agriculture (NDA) is releasing a Request for Applications (RFA) for the Rural Food Hub (RFH) grant. The goal of the RFH grant is to increase food storage and food distribution capacity in Nevada. With the majority of Nevada's food distribution resources concentrated in western Nevada and the greater Las Vegas area, rural communities face food access barriers due to their distance from the urban centers. The NDA is looking to partner with one community organization or public entity engaged in food assistance activities in Nevada to establish a food storage and distribution center, located in rural Nevada, that can store and distribute food to communities facing food access barriers due to their proximity to the urban areas.

The RFH grant utilizes funding provided to the State through the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) - Coronavirus State and Local Fiscal Recovery Funds (SLFRF). The ARPA-SLFRF provides \$350 billion nationwide to State, local, and Tribal governments to support their response/recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic. This program ensures governments have the resources needed to fight the pandemic and support families and businesses struggling with public health and economic impacts. The NDA will be leveraging these funds, through the RFH grant, to ensure that the most at-risk rural and Tribal communities have sufficient food storage and distribution resources to fight food insecurity and recover from the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic.

The RFH grant will have a performance period from the date of project award through December 31, 2024. There is no required match for this grant, but the applicant must demonstrate the ability to manage all aspects of the proposed project and cover project costs prior to being reimbursed on a monthly basis.

Allowable uses of funds include, but are not limited to:

- Warehouse construction, purchase and/or lease*
- Food storage infrastructure (coolers, freezers, racking, etc.)
- Food distribution infrastructure (trucks, pallet jacks, forklifts, etc.)
- Personnel costs associated with grant implementation

**Note: If you intend to lease a warehouse space, you must include in the project description and the budget narrative of your application a description of how you will continue the lease after the ARPA funds expires.*

Applications must be submitted via email to a.white@agri.nv.gov using the attached Application Template. Applications are due by August 30, 2022.

For questions related to this funding opportunity, please email Ashley White or Devin Wilcox at mail to: a.white@agri.nv.gov or dwilcox@agri.nv.gov.

IMPORTANT INFORMATION

Project Goal

The Coronavirus State and Local Fiscal Recovery Funds (SLFRF) program provides substantial flexibility for each jurisdiction to meet local needs within separate eligible use categories. The eligible use category this funding covers is to provide support to COVID-19 public health and economic response by addressing COVID-19 and its impact to public health, as well as addressing economic harms to households, small businesses, nonprofits, impacted industries, and the public sector. Each category includes assistance from “impacted” and “disproportionately impacted” classes: impacted classes experienced the general, broad-based impacts of the pandemic, while disproportionately impacted classes faced meaningfully more severe impacts, often due to preexisting disparities.

The goal of the Rural Food Hub (RFH) grant is to establish a food storage and distribution center in rural Nevada that can store and distribute food to communities facing food access barriers due to their distance from the urban areas.

Timeline

June 30, 2022 – Request for Applications released by the NDA

August 30, 2022 – Full Application due to the NDA by 5:00 pm PDT

August 31 – September 14, 2022 – Applications reviewed and scored by NDA staff

September 15 – 23, 2022 – Successful applicants notified, subgrants awarded

September 2022 – Anticipated award start date

Application Due Date

August 30, 2022, by 5:00 p.m. PDT

Funding Available

Available funding is \$3,000,000 and one entity will be awarded the full requested amount necessary to complete the project, not to exceed \$3,000,000.

Eligibility

Any non-profit organization or public entity that can meet the objectives of the grant described in Section II below is eligible to apply.

Contact

Ashley White, Program Officer, a.white@agri.nv.gov

SECTION I – Grant Description

DESIRED OUTCOMES

The goal of the RFH grant is to increase food storage and food distribution capacity in rural Nevada to better serve remote communities. Per the 2021 US Census, rural and Tribal Nevada communities make up less than 20% of the state’s population. These communities face unique food access challenges, including long distances to food assistance sources and a less robust food storage and distribution infrastructure than Nevada’s urban areas. This grant aims to target the full \$3,000,000 to address the challenges of providing food to Nevadans in rural and Tribal communities. The targeted outcome will be to improve food access in rural Nevada by creating a food distribution center that can store and distribute food to communities facing food access barriers. Successful applicants for funding will clearly articulate how proposed projects and actions will contribute to the desired outcomes.

SECTION II: GRANT INFORMATION

Project Structure

Funds from this grant award must be used to support approved project goals. Grant awards may be used to fund a variety of different projects and activities, including:

- Warehouse construction, purchase, and/or lease*
- Food storage infrastructure (coolers, freezers, racking, etc.)
- Food distribution infrastructure (trucks, pallet jacks, forklifts, etc.)
- Personnel costs associated with grant implementation

**Note: If you intend to lease a warehouse space, you must include in the project description and the budget narrative of your application a description of how you will continue the lease after the ARPA funds expires.*

Eligibility Information

Current Nevada non-profit organizations and public entities are eligible to apply. Applicants should have maintained an established operation for two years involving the provision of food and/or social services as an integral part of the organization’s activities. Applicants with less than two years of operation can apply but may be subject to a pre-award review. Organizations and public entities will need to self-certify that they have not received ARPA funds for similar activities or purchases. To self-certify place the wording provided in Appendix A on your organization’s letterhead, sign & date, and submit with application.

The NDA’s website will contain information regarding the RFA. It is the responsibility of each applicant to monitor the NDA website and comply with any instructions or requirements relating to the RFA. Agencies awarded funds through this grant must have or obtain a computer that meets the following minimum specifications for the purpose of receiving electronic program and fiscal information.

- Internet access
- Email capability
- Microsoft Excel
- Microsoft Word
- Adobe Reader

Allowable Uses of Funding

Payments to the selected grantee may not exceed approved expenditures. Isolation and documentation of all expenditures for these grant funds is required. Expenditures shall be recorded in such a manner as to establish an audit trail for future verification of appropriate use of funds. Below is a list of allowable administrative expenditures.

- Personnel
- Travel
- Supplies
- Contracts
- Equipment
- Indirect Costs

Unallowable Uses of Funds

While the recipient has considerable flexibility to use funds to address the diverse needs of their communities, some restrictions apply. RFH grant funds may not be used to:

- Offset a reduction in net tax revenue
- Direct deposits into a pension fund (excluding routine indirect cost allocations)
- Service debt or replenish financial reserves
- Satisfy settlements and/or judgments

SECTION III: AWARD INFORMATION

Award Process

The NDA will award funds based on an application evaluation. The NDA may request additional information through clarifying questions after receiving applications and prior to award.

Award Amounts

Maximum award amount of \$3,000,000.

Spending Timeframes

The term of the grant will be from the date of project award through December 31, 2024.

SECTION IV: APPLICATION PROCESS AND SUBMISSION INFORMATION

Applications must be received on or before 5:00 pm PDT on August 30, 2022. The NDA will only accept applications via email and will not accept applications submitted by mail, in-person, on disk, flash drive or by fax. Email completed applications to a.white@agri.nv.gov.

Format Requirements

- The application must be submitted using the Rural Food Hub Grant Application Template provided. Applicants must submit one clearly identified, signed application. Signatures may be either digital or clearly signed in blue ink.
- Applications submitted in a format other than in the manner prescribed in this announcement will not be considered for funding.
 1. Applicant Information Required
 - a. Organization name
 - b. Full mailing and physical addresses

- c. State Vendor ID Number
 - d. Name of contact person and title
 - e. Email
 - f. Phone number
2. Organization/Background
 - a. Eligibility Requirements
 - b. Experience / Services Provided
 - c. Food Storage / Food Distribution Experience
 3. Project Description
 - a. The project title, requested dollar amount, and location of project implementation
 - b. Brief summary of project
 - c. Project impact (measurable goals and expected results or outcomes)
 4. Budget Narrative
 - a. The budget narrative must demonstrate a clear and strong relationship between (1) the project's expenses, (2) the project's goals and activities, and (3) the targeted outcome. The budget narrative should be detailed, cost efficient, and should align with the project's goals.
 - b. The narrative should focus on explaining expenses, not simply listing or summarizing them. From the budget narrative, the reviewer should be able to assess how the budget expenditures relate directly to the targeted outcomes and how the successful project will reach those outcomes.
 5. Audit Submission Requirements

All organizations applying for state funds must submit one (1) copy of their most recent audited financial statements as part of the application. The NDA will use the audit to ascertain the fiscal viability of applicants. The audited financial statements should be included as Appendix A: Audited Financial Statements. The audited financial statements only need to be submitted one time. While the audit will not be scored as part of the review, the NDA reserves the right to use information in the audit to assist in the final recommendation for funding. Applicants are expected to demonstrate, through their audits, a strong financial position, and an ability to obtain funding outside of the public sector. Units of government (such as cities and counties, schools, health departments, etc.) do not need to submit an audit.

Grant review and selection process

A comprehensive, well-written application provides all the information necessary for a complete evaluation. The review committee will use the criteria summarized above to evaluate applications. A complete application will include the four (4) components listed below, along with the audit submission requirement, and will be scored as follows:

1. Applicant Information; Pass/Fail
2. Organization/Background
 - a. Eligibility Requirements; 5 points possible
 - b. Experience/Services Provided; 5 points possible
 - c. Food Storage / Food Distribution Experience; 10 points possible
3. Project Description
 - a. Project title, requested dollar amount, and location of project implementation; 10 points possible
 - b. Brief summary of project; 40 points possible

- c. Anticipated Project Impact; 10 points possible
- 4. Budget Narrative
 - a. Budget Narrative; 20 points possible

SECTION V: AWARD ADMINISTRATION INFORMATION

Funding - Reimbursement and Advance

The RFH grant is a reimbursement grant, thus funding will be sub granted to awarded grantees, and project costs will be paid on a monthly reimbursement basis. The grantee may request an advance of some grant funding at the start of the project; these payments to an awarded entity must be limited to the minimum amounts needed and be timed to be in accordance with the actual, immediate cash requirements of the awarded entity in carrying out the purpose of the approved project. NDA will have a process in place to request an advance if necessary.

Fiscal Responsibilities

The recipient of funding is required to identify a fiscal agent if the grantee is not its own fiscal agent. The recipient of funding is required to establish and maintain accounting systems and financial records to accurately account for awarded funds. The grant award is subject to audits during and within three years following the end of the grant award period.

Reporting Requirements

The grantee will be required to provide quarterly reports on the progress of the project. The required information being reported must be reported by the county or Tribal community the project is taking place in. The NDA will provide the monthly report template.

Additional Information

Financial obligations of the State payable after the current fiscal year are contingent upon funds for that purpose being appropriated, budgeted, and otherwise made available. In the event funds are not appropriated, any resulting contracts (subgrant awards) will become null and void, without penalty to the State. All materials submitted regarding this application for NDA funds become the property of the State.

SECTION VI: TERMS AND CONDITIONS

Federal/State Suspension & Debarment

Organizations or individuals that are suspended or debarred from any state or federal agency cannot apply for or be paid from NDA grants during the period of the suspension or debarment. In the event that an organization or individual is debarred, another entity from within the county, an adjoining county or regional provider can compete for the program dollars. As a result, the entity awarded the grant, cannot contract and/or hire the debarred agency in any capacity. Any expenditure charged to this grant for such individuals or agencies will be disallowed.

Applicants are required to disclose to the NDA if any of the following conditions apply to the agency or agency personnel:

- Applicant has been convicted of or had a civil judgment rendered against them within the three (3) year period preceding the application for NDA funding for any of the following:

- Fraud or a criminal offense in connection with obtaining, attempting to obtain, or performing a public transaction or contract under a public transaction.
- Violation of a federal or state antitrust statute.
- Embezzlement, theft, forgery, bribery, falsification or destruction of records, or false statements or receipt of stolen property.
- Applicant is presently indicted or otherwise criminally or civilly charged by a governmental entity (federal, state, or local) with the commission of any of the offenses enumerated above.
- Applicant has had any public transaction (federal, state, or local) terminated for cause or default within the three (3) year period preceding the application for NDA funding.

Fraud, Waste and Abuse

Anyone who becomes aware of the existence (or apparent existence) of fraud, waste or abuse related to the sub grants or use of grant funds should immediately report this information to the NDA. Fraud, waste, and abuse include, but are not limited to, embezzlement, misuse or misappropriation of grant funds or property and false statements, whether by organizations or individuals. Examples:

- Theft of grant funds for personal use
- Using funds for non-grant related purposes
- Theft of federally owned property or property acquired or leased under a grant
- Charging inflated building rental fees for a building owned by the recipient
- Submitting false financial reports
- Submitting false financial data in bids submitted to the

NDA Conflict of Interest

Grantee agencies shall avoid any action that might result in or create the appearance of:

- Giving preferential treatment to any person.
- Losing complete independence or impartiality.
- Adversely affecting the public confidence in the integrity of the program. No grantee agency employees may participate in the process of contracting or sub granting out funds if any real or apparent conflict of interest would be involved. Sub recipient employees are to neither solicit nor accept gratuities, favors or anything of value from contractors or parties to sub agreement.

Losses

The grantee is responsible for safekeeping of all food and equipment purchases. The grantee will be financially responsible for all food and equipment losses due to improper storage, care, neglect, and/or handling.

Records Management

Financial records, statistical records, supporting documents and other records pertinent to this award shall be retained for a period of five years from submission of the Final Project Report. Records that relate to audits, appeals, litigation, or settlement of claims arising out of the performance of the project shall be retained until such audits, appeals, litigation, or claims have been disposed of, but not earlier than three years from submission of the Final Project Report. The Program Manager, Food and Nutrition staff of the NDA, or any of their duly authorized

representatives shall have access to any pertinent documents, books, papers, and records of the recipient organization to make audits, examinations, excerpts, and transcripts.