



# Farm and Food Workers Relief Grant Program

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## **Fiscal Year 2022 Request for Applications**

**Funding Opportunity Number:** USDA-AMS-TM-FFWR-G-21-0013

**Publication Date:** November 10, 2021

**Application Due Date:** 11:59 PM Eastern Time on February 8, 2022

## Program Solicitation Information

**Funding Opportunity Title:** Farm and Food Workers Relief Grant Program

**Funding Opportunity Number:** USDA-AMS-TM-FFWR-G-21-0013

**Announcement Type:** Initial

**Assistance Listing (formerly CFDA) Number:** 10.181

**Dates:** Applications must be received on or before 11:59 pm Eastern Time on February 8, 2022, through [Grants.gov](https://www.grants.gov). Applications received after this deadline will not be considered for funding.

**Executive Summary:** The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA), Agricultural Marketing Service (AMS), requests applications for the fiscal year (FY) 2022 Farm and Food Workers Relief (FFWR) Grant Program. AMS will competitively award grants to eligible applicants for projects that meet the purpose of this grant program.

FFWR is authorized and funded under Division N, [Title VII, subtitle B, section 751 of the Consolidated Appropriations Act of 2021 \(Pub. L. No. 116—260\)](#) in response to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic. Approximately \$665 million in Consolidated Appropriations Act funding is available for applications under this solicitation. A maximum of \$20,000,000 will be for grocery store workers and the remainder of funds available, less administrative expenses, will be for farm and meat packing workers. Funds will be awarded through grants to eligible entities (i.e., State agencies, Tribal entities, and non-profit organizations) generally ranging from \$5,000,000 to \$50,000,000. Eligible entities must demonstrate the capacity to issue \$600 flat rate payments to eligible farmworkers and/or meatpacking workers for safety-related expenses (e.g., personal protective equipment (PPE) and other costs (such as pandemic related childcare and healthcare costs) that they incurred due to the novel coronavirus 2019 (COVID-19) pandemic.

AMS will also consider applications from eligible entities for one or more grants to issue \$600 flat rate payments to grocery store workers for similar expenses. A maximum amount of \$20,000,000 will be available for these grants.

AMS strongly encourages partnerships with smaller organizations with unique connectedness to hard-to-reach worker populations. Eligible entities should be able to describe how they will partner with smaller organizations to facilitate payments to such populations. Subawards that support the overall program objectives will be allowed under this grant program.

All applications will undergo review according to merit and customary evaluation procedures, and project funding will be determined based on aggregate ranking. This announcement provides information regarding eligibility criteria for applicants and projects, and provides the application forms and instructions needed to apply for an award. To be competitive, applications must meet all program requirements and demonstrate the capacity for strong fiscal controls.

**Frequently Asked Questions:** Applicants can find a set of ***Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)*** on the [Farm and Food Workers Relief Grant Program](#) website. We strongly encourage applicants to review the FAQ resource.

**Stakeholder Input:** AMS welcomes comments about this RFA, and we will consider them in developing future FFWR RFAs. Email written stakeholder comments within one year of the publication date of this RFA to: [AMSGrants@usda.gov](mailto:AMSGrants@usda.gov). This e-mail address is intended only for receiving comments regarding this RFA and not requesting information or forms. In your comments, please state that you are commenting on the **Farm and Food Workers Relief Grants RFA**.

## FY 2022 Highlights

- There are two project types under this RFA: one to provide support for farmworkers and meatpacking workers, and one to provide support to grocery store workers as a pilot project.
- Applicants should submit a separate application for each project type.
- Eligible entities seeking to apply for funding for both project types (i.e., farmworkers/meatpacking workers and grocery store workers) must submit a separate application for each project type (e.g., \$50,000,000 for farmworkers and/or meatpacking workers **and** \$20,000,000 for grocery store workers). The USDA set aside a total of \$20,000,000 to serve grocery workers through this funding announcement. (See [section 1.3](#))
- Application Checklist

AMS expects applicants to read the entire RFA prior to submitting their application to ensure that they understand the program requirements. This application checklist provides the required and conditionally required documents for an application package.

FFWR requires that **all application packages** include the following:

- SF-424 – Application for Federal Assistance (in Grants.gov)
- Project Narrative Form (including Fiscal Plan and Resources and Personnel Qualifications)
- Signed Letter(s) of Commitment from each partner at the time of application

If applicable, packages may also be required to include the following documents:

- Negotiated Indirect Cost Rate Agreement (NICRA) (PDF Attachment)

## Timing to Obtain and Submit Grants.gov Required Elements

Required Action	<i>Timing to Obtain/Submit</i>
AMS Deadline to receive final application and all supporting materials through Grants.Gov.	<i>February 8, 2022 – 11:59 p.m. Eastern Time</i>
Obtaining Your Organization’s DUNS Number (if you do not already have one)	1-2 business days
Establishing an <i>Active</i> SAM.gov Account (if you do not already have one)	7-10 business days
Obtaining a TIN/EIN (if you do not already have one)	Up to 2 weeks
Creating your Grants.gov profile and registering your Authorized Organizational Representative (AOR) authorization	Up to 2 weeks

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## 1.0 FUNDING OPPORTUNITY DESCRIPTION

### 1.1 LEGISLATIVE AUTHORITY

The Consolidated Appropriations Act of 2021, Division N, Title VII, subtitle B, Section 751 ([Pub. L. No. 116-260](#)) authorized the Farm and Food Workers Relief (FFWR) Grant Program. .

This authority provided at least \$1,500,000,000 to the USDA for grants and loans to small or mid-sized food processors or distributors, seafood processing facilities and processing vessels, farmers markets, producers, or other organizations to respond to coronavirus, including for measures to protect workers against the Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19). Eligible entities as provided in [section 3.1](#) are considered “other organizations” under this authority.

### 1.2 PURPOSE

FFWR provides financial support to eligible entities (i.e., State agencies, Tribal entities, and non-profit organizations) to deliver relief in the form of \$600 flat-rate payments to eligible farmworkers, meatpacking workers, and grocery store workers who incurred expenses preparing for preventing exposure to, and responding to, the COVID-19 pandemic. This relief is intended to defray costs for reasonable and necessary personal, family, or living expenses such as, but not limited to: costs for personal protective equipment (PPE), expenses associated with quarantines and testing, and dependent care.

### 1.3 PROJECT TYPES

FFWR offers two project types:

- **Farmworkers and/or Meatpacking Workers**
- **Grocery Store Workers**

Applicants must select one project type per application. Applicants seeking to apply for both project types must submit a separate application for each project. Applicants seeking funds to serve grocery store workers must also apply to serve farmworkers and/or meatpacking workers. See [section 2.3](#) for expected award size and duration.

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#### 1.3.1 FARMWORKERS AND/OR MEATPACKING WORKERS PROJECTS

Applicants must demonstrate the capacity to have strong communication with farmworkers and/or meatpacking workers, including those with low English proficiency, responsibly issue a significant amount of funding assistance, and implement appropriate fiscal controls to ensure that only eligible beneficiaries receive funds. Award size will vary based on the number of eligible workers each organization proposes to serve.

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### 1.3.2 GROCERY STORE WORKERS PROJECTS

Applicants must demonstrate the capacity to have strong communication with grocery store workers, responsibly issue a significant amount of funding assistance, and implement appropriate fiscal controls to ensure that only eligible beneficiaries receive funds. As stated above, applicants seeking funds to serve grocery store workers must also apply to serve farmworkers and/or meatpacking workers.

AMS expects to fund one or more grants for this project type through this funding opportunity for a total of \$20,000,000.

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### 1.3.3 PRIORITY AREAS

AMS will prioritize applications that:

- Demonstrate the capability to create and disseminate culturally-appropriate communication tools and resources.
- Coordinate with other local, regional, State, Tribal, or national farm and food worker relief efforts.
- Demonstrate multiple partnerships in one or more geographic regions.
- Exhibit financial management systems sufficient to distribute a high volume of payments to eligible beneficiaries with robust fiscal controls.

AMS will review and apply priority consideration, based on applicant narrative responses, during its administrative review process (see [section 5.2](#)).

## 2.0 AWARD INFORMATION

### 2.1 TYPE OF FEDERAL ASSISTANCE

AMS will use a Grant Agreement to provide a Federal award to successful applicants.

### 2.2 AVAILABLE FUNDING

Not including AMS administrative expenses, it is anticipated that approximately \$665,000,000 will be available to fund applications to FFWR in FY2022. AMS will set aside up to a total of \$20,000,000 of this amount for one or more grant agreements to benefit grocery store workers.

Enactment of additional continuing resolutions or an appropriations act may affect the availability or level of funding for this program. There is no commitment by USDA to fund any application or to make a specific number of awards.

### 2.3 FEDERAL AWARD PERIOD DURATION AND SIZE

FFWR projects are awarded for a period of 24 months (2 years), although it is acceptable to complete a project before the scheduled performance period end date. However, AMS encourages recipients to take the full grant period to allow ample time to complete projects. The applicant must indicate the start date and end date on Block 17 of the SF-424 “Application for Federal Assistance”.

Project Type	Duration (Months)	Start Date	Completion Date	Minimum Award	Maximum Award
<b>Farmworkers and/or Meatpacking Workers</b>	24	May 3, 2022*	May 3, 2024	\$5,000,000	\$50,000,000**
<b>Grocery Store Workers</b>	24	May 3, 2022*	May 3, 2024	\$5,000,000	\$20,000,000

\*Project start date is contingent upon the formal application review period. These dates may vary based on programmatic needs.

\*\*Applicants for farmworkers or meatpacking workers support **may request more than the maximum amount** when they demonstrate they are a national organization with capacity to deliver funds in excess of \$50,000,000 across multiple states and in partnership with smaller farmworker or meatpacking worker organizations. These applicants must justify the requested funding amounts within the Project Narrative, indicating the dollar amount requested, estimating the number of workers they expect to deliver relief payments to, and demonstrating their capacity to manage funds effectively. AMS reserves the right to negotiate budgets and final award amounts based on the number of applications received, available resources, and the need to equitably distribute funds across worker populations and Administration priorities.

AMS may adjust the award size for future announcements should funding be available and should there be an apparent need to reach organizations that can deliver different levels of support (e.g., lower minimum awards).

### 3.0 ELIGIBILITY INFORMATION

#### 3.1 ELIGIBLE ENTITIES

Eligible entities are State agencies, Tribal entities, or nonprofits with State or IRS 501 (c) status, where no part of the organization’s or institution’s net earnings inure to the benefit of any private shareholder or individual, that have experience in providing support or relief services to farmworkers, meatpacking workers, or grocery store workers.

Eligible entities must be domestic entities owned, operated, and located within the geographic area of the United States, including the District of Columbia, the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, the United States Virgin Islands, Guam, American Samoa, and the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands.

All eligible entities must demonstrate that they have experience in providing support or relief services to farmworkers, meatpacking workers, or grocery store workers. Examples include, but are not limited to:

- Providing personal protective equipment such as masks to such workers,

- Hosting a COVID-19 vaccine clinic or outreach campaign, or
- Providing financial support to such workers during the COVID-19 pandemic.

### 3.2 ELIGIBLE BENEFICIARIES

For the purpose of this RFA, eligible beneficiaries as hired workers in farming activities, meatpacking, and grocery store work.

**Farmworkers and/or Meatpacking Workers Projects:** Hired workers are defined by the National Agricultural Statistics Service (NASS) as anyone, other than an agricultural service worker<sup>1</sup>, who was paid for at least one hour of agricultural work on a farm or ranch, or in a meat processing facility.

Worker type is determined by what the employee was primarily hired to do, not necessarily what work was done during the pandemic. Types of workers include:

- **Field Workers:** Employees engaged in planting, tending, harvesting crops, and post-harvest activities as listed below, including operation of farm machinery on crop farms.
- **Livestock Workers:** Employees tending livestock, milking cows, or caring for poultry, including operation of farm machinery on livestock or poultry operations.
- **Meatpacking Workers:** Employees engaged in animal slaughtering and meat or poultry processing, including meat or poultry packaging.

To help eligible entities understand what worker occupations qualify as eligible beneficiaries, the table below provides the [Standard Occupation Classification \(SOC\)](#) codes and titles associated with field, livestock, and meatpacking workers. SOC codes are used by the Federal government to classify occupations (similar to how North American Industry Classification System (NAICS) codes are used for classifying business types). AMS expects beneficiaries across these worker types to be frontline workers, and not those working in management positions.

Type of Worker	SOC	Associated Titles
Field Workers	45-2041	Graders and Sorters, Agricultural Products
Field Workers	45-2091	Agricultural Equipment Operators
Field Workers	45-2092	Farmworkers and Laborers, Crop, Nursery and Greenhouse
Field Workers	45-2099	Agricultural Workers, All Other
Field Workers	53-7064	Packers and Packagers, Hand
Livestock Workers	45-2041	Graders and Sorters, Agricultural Products

<sup>1</sup> Agricultural Service is defined by NASS as any farm-related service performed on a farm or ranch on a contract or fee basis. This primarily includes activities performed by contract workers on fruit, vegetable, or berry operations. It also includes custom work, veterinarian work, artificial insemination, sheep shearing, milk testing, or any other farm-related activity performed on a farm or ranch on a “fee per service” basis.

<b>Livestock Workers</b>	45-2093	Farmworkers, Farm, Ranch, and Aquacultural Animals
<b>Livestock Workers</b>	45-2099	Agricultural Workers, All Other
<b>Livestock Workers</b>	53-7064	Packers and Packagers, Hand
<b>Meatpacking Workers</b>	51-3023	Slaughterers and Meat Packers
<b>Meatpacking Workers</b>	51-3022	Meat, Poultry, and Fish Cutters and Trimmers
<b>Meatpacking Workers</b>	51-3099	Food Processing Workers, All Other

**Grocery Store Workers Projects:** Individuals employed in front line service or first line supervisory roles in retail grocery establishments as outlined in [NAICS 445110](#) including cashiers, butchers and meat cutters, food preparation occupations, stocking grocery floors, and other food related activities. Further delineation of these occupations through SOC codes is not available, therefore eligible entities should rely on the NAICS code to make eligibility determinations.

**Employment Verification:** The following information applies to both project types. Workers will:

- 1) self-certify through sufficient verbal attestation or provide a copy of documentation proving employment at a food processing facility, meatpacking facility, farm, or grocery store such as a [W-2 tax form](#) or paycheck stubs, and
- 2) self-certify that they incurred expenses preparing for, preventing exposure to, and/or responding to the COVID-19 pandemic such as, but not limited to: costs for personal protective equipment (PPE), expenses associated with quarantines and testing, and dependent care, and
- 3) self-certify that they have not previously received a FFWR beneficiary payment through another entity.

## 4.0 APPLICATION AND SUBMISSION INFORMATION

### 4.1 ELECTRONIC APPLICATION PACKAGE

Only electronic applications for this RFA will be accepted and must be submitted via Grants.gov. We urge applicants to submit early to the Grants.gov system. For an overview of the Grants.gov application process, see the Grants.gov [Apply for Grants webpage](#). This RFA contains the information needed to obtain and complete required application forms and AMS-specific attachments. More information about applying through Grants.gov can be found in [section 4.7](#).

Applicants can find the opportunity under either the Assistance Listing number “10.181,” or the FFWR Funding Opportunity Number “USDA-AMS-TM-FFWR-G-21-0013”.

## 4.2 CONTENT AND FORM OF APPLICATION SUBMISSION

### 4.2.1 SF-424 APPLICATION FOR FEDERAL ASSISTANCE

**Required:** Form SF-424 is available via the opportunity at Grants.gov. Most information blocks on the required form are either self-explanatory or adequately explained in the instructions. However, applicants must use the following supplemental instructions associated with specific blocks on the SF-424.

Block	Instructions
#1 Type of Submission	Application
#2 Type of Application	New
#4 through #7	Not required
#8c Organizational DUNS	Applicant DUNS# for the organization submitting the application. See <a href="#">D&amp;B Request a DUNS Number</a>
#8d Address	Enter the organization street address as it appears in SAM.gov. P.O. Boxes will not be accepted. Enter a 9-digit zip code
#10 Name of Federal Agency	AMS, USDA
#11 Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance Number (Assistance Listing Number)	10.181
#12 Funding Opportunity Number	USDA-AMS-TM-FFWR-G-21-0013
#13 Competition Identification Number	Not applicable
#14 Areas Affected by Project	Enter cities, counties, States affected by project
#15 Descriptive Title of Applicant's Project	Provide a short description of the project
#16a Congressional Districts for Applicant	Enter the Congressional district where your main office is located
#16b Congressional Districts for Program/Project	Enter the Congressional district where your project will be implemented. Write "All" if the project will be implemented in more than one location
#17 Proposed Project Start Date and End Date	Start Date: May 3, 2022 End date: Enter the appropriate End Date for your project type
#18a Estimated Funding - Federal	Total Federal amount requested
#18b – 18f Estimated Funding – Applicant	Not applicable
#19 Is Applicant Subject to Review by State Under Executive Order 12372 Process?	See <a href="#">section 4.5</a>

### 4.2.2 PROJECT NARRATIVE

**Required.** Applicants are required to prepare and submit a narrative using the FFWR Project Narrative form. The form and instructions are available on the program's webpage. The Project Narrative must clearly describe the applicant's outreach and communications capacity, current contacts with networks of farmworkers, meatpackers, and/or grocery store workers, objectives and goals, types and sequence of project activities, monitoring and evaluation strategies associated with the proposed activities, and

how the applicant will manage the project, with an emphasis on financial controls, including compliance measures to ensure that beneficiaries receive only one payment.

The project narrative must be typed and single-spaced in an 11-point font and must not exceed fifteen (15) 8.5 x 11 pages (excluding pre-existing form content). For example, if the form is 15 pages before you begin entering your project narrative information, your form may be up to 30 pages in length when completed (15 original pages + 15 pages of applicant content). DO NOT modify the margins of the Project Narrative form. Applicants must submit the FFWR Project Narrative form as a PDF and attach it to the Grants.gov application package using the “Project Narrative Attachment Form” on the application package. Handwritten applications or applications submitted in MS Word will not be accepted.

Prior to submitting the application to Grants.gov, please make sure no tracked changes or mark-up edits and comments are visible.

**The supporting documents listed below do not count toward the 15-page limit.**

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#### 4.2.3 LETTERS OF COMMITMENT FROM PARTNER AND COLLABORATOR ORGANIZATIONS

**Required.** Applicants must provide letters of commitment (in MS Word or PDF) from all project partners and collaborators. The letter must state that the partner or collaborator agrees to the project management plan presented in the Project Narrative. Emails will not be accepted.

AMS highly encourages you to use the [Suggested Partner Organization Template Letter](#) on the grant program’s website. If you do not use this template, your Letter of Commitment must minimally include the following:

- Project Applicant
- Project Title
- A short introduction describing the partnering organization’s mission and its interest in supporting farmworkers, meatpackers, or grocery store workers
- What the organization commits to participating in and supporting
- The time period of the partnership
- Roles of the participating individuals, as applicable, and any individual time commitment
- A statement that these individuals and the organization agree to abide by the management plan contained in the application

Submit *Letters of Commitment* on letterhead and address them to the applicant (i.e., Project Director). Clearly indicate at the top of the documents that they are **LETTERS OF COMMITMENT**. Letters must accompany the proposal at the time of application. Unsigned letters will not be accepted.

Letter(s) must be attached to the Grants.gov application package using the “Add Attachments” button under SF-424 item #15.

**PLEASE NOTE:** This solicitation does not require Congressional letters of support and such letters do not carry any weight during the evaluation process.

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#### 4.2.4 NEGOTIATED INDIRECT COST RATE AGREEMENT

**Required if the applicant has a Negotiated Indirect Cost Rate Agreement (NICRA).** Refer to [section 4.6.1](#) for more information. The NICRA must be in PDF format and attached to the Grants.gov application package using the “Add Attachments” button under SF-424 item #15.

#### 4.3 SUBMITTED APPLICATION QUALIFICATION

Your application may **not be reviewed or considered for funding** if it is:

- Received by Grants.gov after the submission deadline, or
- Submitted via any method other than through Grants.gov, or
- Submitted to the wrong grant program, or
- Not responsive to the requirements of this RFA (eligibility, incomplete application, not providing all required documents, etc.).

See [AMS’ Late and/or Non-Responsive Applications Policy](#) for more information.

#### 4.4 SUBMISSION DATE AND TIME

Applications must be submitted electronically through Grants.gov. Ensure that all components of the application are complete before submission. Allow enough time for the application process, as it may take more than one attempt before your application is successfully submitted. AMS encourages you to submit your application at least two weeks prior to the application deadline to ensure all certifications and registrations are met.

Only applications submitted and validated by 11:59 pm Eastern Time on February 8, 2022 to Grants.gov will be accepted. See [AMS’ Late and/or Non-Responsive Applications Policy](#).

#### 4.5 INTERGOVERNMENTAL REVIEW

This program is not subject to [Executive Order 12372](#), which requires intergovernmental consultation with state and local officials.

#### 4.6 FUNDING RESTRICTIONS

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##### 4.6.1 INDIRECT COSTS

*Indirect costs* (also known as “facilities and administrative costs”—defined at [2 CFR § 200.1](#)) are those costs incurred for a common or joint purpose benefitting more than one cost objective, and not readily assignable to the cost objectives specifically benefitted, without effort disproportionate to the results achieved.

As stated in [2 CFR §§ 200.413](#) and [414](#), any non-Federal entity that does not have a current negotiated (including provisional) indirect cost rate, except State and Local Government and Indian Tribe Indirect Cost Proposals, may elect to charge a de minimis rate of 10 percent of modified total direct costs (MTDC) that may be used indefinitely. No documentation is required to justify the 10% de minimis indirect cost rate. As described in [2 CFR § 200.403](#), costs must be consistently charged as either indirect

or direct costs, but may not be double charged or inconsistently charged as both. If chosen, this methodology once elected must be used consistently for all Federal awards until such time as a recipient chooses to negotiate for a rate, which the recipient may apply to do at any time.

All applicants who elect to charge a de minimis rate of 10 percent must use the MTDC as the base. MTDC are defined in [2 CFR § 200.1](#) as all direct salaries and wages, applicable fringe benefits, materials and supplies, services, travel, and up to the first \$25,000 of each subaward (regardless of the period of performance of the subawards under the award). MTDCs exclude equipment, capital expenditures, charges for patient care, rental costs, tuition remission, scholarships and fellowships, participant support costs, and the portion of each subaward in excess of \$25,000. Other items may be excluded only when necessary to avoid a serious inequity in the distribution of indirect costs, and with the approval of the cognizant agency for indirect costs.

If an applicant has a negotiated indirect cost rate approved by its cognizant agency, the applicant must submit a copy of its approved NICRA with its application. Entities that would like to negotiate an indirect cost rate must contact their cognizant agency. For assignments of cognizant agencies, see [2 CFR § 200.1](#).

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#### 4.6.2 FARMWORKER, MEATPACKING WORKER, AND GROCERY STORE WORKER ALLOCATION

AMS expects that at least 80 percent of a grant issued through FFWR will be allocated to \$600 payments to farmworkers, meatpacking workers, and/or grocery store workers.

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#### 4.6.3 SUBAWARD RESTRICTION

The applicant is expected to perform the majority of the work portion of the project; however, subawards or subcontracts with partners, collaborators, or other parties that provide additional knowledge, expertise, or resources for the purposes of the proposed project (such as the ability for the application to partner with a smaller organization through a subaward and, in doing so, provide payments to “hard to reach” worker populations) that are not otherwise available within the applicant organization are allowable. Applicants may subaward to smaller organizations to support hard to reach workers, with the applicant maintaining the oversight and reporting responsibility as the Authorized Organization Representative (AOR).

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#### 4.6.4 ALLOWABLE AND UNALLOWABLE COSTS AND ACTIVITIES

All AMS awards are subject to the terms and conditions, cost principles, and other considerations described in the [AMS General Terms and Conditions](#).

Eligible entities may propose direct costs for outreach, education, application evaluation & processing, and system improvements to properly implement the program.

Applicants that have questions concerning the allowability of costs after reviewing this document should contact AMS staff using the contact information listed under [section 7.0](#).

### Pre-Award Cost Flexibility

AMS is allowing flexibility for those applicants who wish to incur pre-award costs for this RFA. An applicant may, at their own risk and without AMS prior approval, incur obligations and expenditures up to 180 days before the performance start date as long as such costs:

- are necessary to conduct the project; and
- would be allowable under the potential award and without AMS prior approval.

If specific costs would otherwise require prior approval (see the [AMS General Terms and Conditions](#)), the applicant may be required to provide additional documentation during the application review process before an award is made. The cost and associated activities must be included in the project narrative and budget justification.

Incurring a pre-award cost in anticipation of being selected by AMS for an award imposes no obligation on AMS either to make the award or to reimburse such costs if for any reason the applicant does not receive an award. Recipients must be fully aware that pre-award costs result in borrowing against the potential award and that such borrowing must not impair the recipient's ability to accomplish the project objectives in the approved time frame or in any way adversely affect the completion of the project.

## 4.7 GRANTS.GOV APPLICATION SUBMISSION AND RECEIPT PROCEDURES AND REQUIREMENTS

### 4.7.1 HOW TO REGISTER TO APPLY THROUGH GRANTS.GOV

The applicant **organization registration** process can take **up to four weeks** to complete. Therefore, complete your registration allowing enough time to ensure it does not impact your ability to meet required application submission deadlines.

If individual applicants are eligible to apply for this grant funding opportunity, refer to:

<https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/applicants/registration.html>.

Organization applicants can find complete instructions here:

<https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/applicants/organization-registration.html>.

- 1) *Obtain a DUNS Number:* All entities applying for funding, including renewal funding, must have a [Data Universal Numbering System \(DUNS\) number](#) from Dun & Bradstreet (D&B). Applicants must enter the DUNS number in the data entry field labeled "Organizational DUNS" on the SF-424 form.
- 2) *Register with SAM:* In addition to having a DUNS number, organizations applying online through Grants.gov must register with the [System for Award Management \(SAM\)](#). All organizations must register with SAM to apply online. Failure to register with SAM will prevent your organization from applying through Grants.gov. **SAM.gov accounts must be updated annually, and your organization must have an active SAM.gov account to submit your application to Grants.gov.**
- 3) *Create a Grants.gov Account:* The next step in the registration process is to [create an account with Grants.gov](#). Applicants must know their organization's DUNS number to complete this

process. Completing this process automatically triggers an email request for applicant roles to the organization's E-Business Point of Contact (EBiz POC) for review. The EBiz POC is a representative from your organization who is the contact listed for SAM. To apply for grants on behalf of your organization, you will need the AOR.

- 4) *Authorize Grants.gov Roles:* After creating an account on Grants.gov, the EBiz POC receives an email notifying him or her of your registration and request for roles. The EBiz POC will then log in to Grants.gov and [authorize the appropriate roles](#), including the AOR role, thereby giving you permission to complete and submit applications on behalf of the organization. You will be able to submit your application online any time after you have been approved as an AOR.
- 5) *Track Role Status:* After registering with Grants.gov and authorizing the applicant AOR, Grants.gov allows you [to track your status](#).
- 6) *Electronic Signature:* When applications are submitted through Grants.gov, the name of the organization's AOR who submitted the application is inserted into the signature line of the application, serving as the electronic signature. The EBiz POC **must** authorize individuals who are able to make legally binding commitments on behalf of the organization to act as an AOR; **this step is often missed, and it is crucial for valid and timely submissions.**

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#### 4.7.2 HOW TO SUBMIT AN APPLICATION TO AMS VIA GRANTS.GOV

Applicants may use the Grants.gov Workspace, a shared, online environment where members of a grant team may simultaneously access and edit different webforms within an application. For each funding opportunity announcement, an applicant creates individual instances of a workspace.

- 1) *Create a Workspace:* This allows you to complete your Workspace online and route it through your organization for review before submitting.
- 2) *Complete a Workspace:* Add participants to the workspace, complete all the required forms, and check for errors before submission.
  - a. *Adobe Reader:* If you decide not to apply by filling out the webforms, you can download individual PDF forms in Workspace so that they will appear similar to other Standard or AMS forms. The individual PDF forms can be downloaded and saved to your local storage device, network drive(s), or external drives, and then accessed through Adobe Reader.

NOTE: You may need to visit the [Adobe Software Compatibility page on Grants.gov](#) to download the appropriate version of the software. There is no cost for Adobe Reader Software.
  - b. *Mandatory Fields in Forms:* Fields marked with an asterisk and a different background color are mandatory fields you must complete to successfully submit your application.
  - c. *Complete SF-424 Fields First:* The forms are designed to fill in common required fields across other forms, such as the applicant name, address, and DUNS number. To trigger this feature, an applicant must complete the SF-424 information first. Once it is completed, the information will transfer to the other forms.

- 3) *Submit via a Workspace:* Submit your application through Workspace by clicking the Sign and Submit button on the Manage Workspace page, under the Forms tab. Grants.gov recommends submitting your application package **at least 24-48 hours prior to the close date** to provide you with time to correct any potential technical issues that may disrupt the application submission.

SPECIAL NOTE: Grants.gov **does not** check for AMS required attachments. It is the applicant's responsibility to ensure that all required attachments listed in [section 4.2](#).

- 4) *Track via a Workspace:* After successfully submitting a workspace package, Grants.gov automatically assigns a Tracking Number (GRANTXXXXXXXX) to the package, which will be listed on the Confirmation page generated after submission.

*Applicant Support:* Grants.gov provides additional [training resources, including video tutorials](#). Applicants may also call the 24/7 toll-free support number 1-800-518-4726, or email [support@grants.gov](mailto:support@grants.gov). Grants.gov will issue a ticket number to which you and Grants.gov can refer if the issue is not resolved. For questions related to the specific grant opportunity, use the contact information described in [section 7.0](#).

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#### 4.7.3 TIMELY RECEIPT REQUIREMENTS AND PROOF OF TIMELY SUBMISSION

All applications must be received by the due date established in [section 4.4](#). Proof of timely submission is automatically recorded by Grants.gov using an electronic date/time stamp generated when the application is successfully received by Grants.gov. The applicant AOR will then receive an acknowledgement of receipt and a tracking number (GRANTXXXXXXXX) from Grants.gov. Applicant AORs will also receive the official date/time stamp and Grants.gov tracking number in an email serving as proof of their timely submission.

When AMS successfully retrieves the application from Grants.gov and acknowledges the download of submissions, Grants.gov will electronically acknowledge receipt of the application to the applicant AOR's email address. Again, proof of timely submission shall be the acknowledgement email stating the official date and time that Grants.gov receives your application.

AMS will not accept applications packages by fax, email, or postal mail. Applications received by Grants.gov after the established due date for the program will be considered late and will not be considered for funding by AMS. See [AMS' Late and/or Non-Responsive Applications Policy](#).

*Special Note for Applicants with Slow Internet Connections.* Applicants using slow internet, such as dial-up connections, may experience significantly longer transmission times when submitting their application to Grants.gov, especially if there are large attachments contained in the upload. Again, Grants.gov will provide either an error message or a successfully received transmission notification via email to the applicant AOR.

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#### 4.7.4 TIPS FOR APPLICANTS

- Register and submit applications early. **DO NOT WAIT UNTIL THE DAY OF THE APPLICATION DEADLINE.**
- Thoroughly read this RFA and follow all the instructions provided by AMS.

- Thoroughly review the [AMS General Terms and Conditions](#) to understand allowable and unallowable costs.
- Apply to the correct grant program in Grants.gov:
  - Assistance Listing (formerly CFDA) number “**10.181**” and Funding Opportunity Number “**USDA-AMS-TM-FFWR-G-21-0013.**”
- Make sure you have the most recent copy of Adobe Reader installed on your computer and that it is compatible with [Grants.gov](#) software. Grants.gov supports Adobe Reader version 9.0.0 and higher.
- Limit Application File Name Characters (50 or less).
- When uploading attachments, click the “Add Attachments” button (do NOT use the “paperclip” icon in Adobe Reader).
- Do not password-protect your documents and make sure all tracked-changes are “accepted”.
- Avoid Special Characters in File Names (\$, %, &, \*, Spanish "ñ", etc.).
- Input the correct DUNS number on the SF-424 cover page.
- Review the Grants.gov Applicant User and Registration Guides:
  - <http://www.grants.gov/web/grants/applicants/applicant-faqs.html>
  - <https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/applicants/workspace-overview.html>.

## 5.0 APPLICATION REVIEW INFORMATION

### 5.1 PROJECT EVALUATION CRITERIA

Each application that meets the initial qualification screening requirements (see [section 5.2](#)) will be reviewed based on the extent to which it addresses the following criteria:

**Alignment and Intent** ..... **25 points**

- 1) The application describes a strong history of direct collaboration and engagement with farmworkers, meatpackers, and/or grocery store workers as applicable. In particular, the partnership includes historically underserved entities such as socially disadvantaged, beginning, and/or limited resource entities.<sup>2</sup>
- 2) The application identifies the intended beneficiaries of the project and specifies how it will reach them.
- 3) If the applicant proposes to build upon previous emergency assistance or relief delivery and support, the previous lessons learned are clearly incorporated into the proposed project.

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<sup>2</sup> Limited Resource Entity means an organization that provides technical assistance services to and engages historically underserved farmers and ranchers in addressing their needs. See USDA definition of [Historically Underserved Groups](#).

**Technical Merit**.....**25 points**

- 1) The application identifies specific networks of farmworkers, meatpackers, and/or grocery store workers, as applicable, and its outreach strategies to communicate with those populations.
- 2) The application identifies potential challenges to beneficiary communication and engagement, and describes possible strategies to address the challenges.
- 3) The application describes technical resources that partners will be contributing to the project’s development, implementation, and/or management.
- 4) The application presents a clear, well-conceived, and suitable Work Plan that describes how the eligible entity will set up beneficiary contact centers and review processes. Such processes should include culturally responsive steps to accommodate low-literacy and low-English-proficiency beneficiaries.
- 5) The application presents a realistic schedule for implementing and completing the proposed project during the award project period.

**Financial Controls**.....**30 points**

- 1) The application represents a substantial, effective, and sound fiscal management system to ensure funds are provided to the intended beneficiaries, including:
  - a. Commitment from the organizational leadership.
  - b. The key staff who will be responsible for managing the financial systems and the individuals (name and title) who comprise the Project Team; and
  - c. The expertise and experience of the Project Team necessary to successfully manage the funds and implement the project.
  - d. A plan for ensuring that beneficiaries only receive one payment.
- 2) The application demonstrates a successful financial audit history of the applicant.
- 3) The application describes plans for coordination, communication, appropriate data sharing, protection of beneficiary personally identifiable information (PII), and reporting on project outcomes to the Federal government and other stakeholder groups.

**Fiscal Plan and Resources**.....**20 points**

- 1) The Budget and Justification provides a clear description for each budget line item and is consistent with the size and scope of the project.
- 2) The Budget and Justification relates logically to the project narrative.
- 3) The fiscal plan clearly describes the intended use of organizational resources (outreach and financial).
- 4) Demonstrated ability to track outcomes, including beneficiary numbers and occupation types.

## 5.2 REVIEW AND SELECTION PROCESS

### *Step 1: Initial Qualification Screening*

Each application is initially reviewed for overall completeness, as well as compliance with eligibility and program requirements as set forth in this RFA. If an application does not meet these requirements, it is removed from consideration. Please see [section 4.3](#) and [AMS' Late and/or Non-Responsive Applications Policy](#) for more information.

### *Step 2: Technical Review*

Each application that passes initial screening (Step 1) is evaluated by a panel of independent peer reviewers. AMS makes every attempt to match reviewers with applications in their areas of expertise. Each reviewer signs a conflict of interest and confidentiality agreement regarding any assigned proposals. The peer review panels evaluate their assigned proposals using instructions prepared by AMS officials. Individual reviewers confer with other team members to derive a consensus score. The consensus review serves as the basis for awarding and allocating grant funds and focuses on strengths and weaknesses of each proposal.

### *Step 3: Administrative Review*

AMS will conduct a final administrative evaluation of each review panel's top rankings and recommendations. In addition to the rank and scores, AMS reviews each application to ensure that potential recommended projects align with the scope of the RFA, allowability of budget items, available funding, geographic diversity, and USDA priorities. AMS staff will work with top-ranked applicants to negotiate any revisions if necessary and possible. AMS will also assess an organization's ability to account for the use of Federal funds and monitor the performance associated with these monies using the guidance provided by [2 CFR § 200.206](#).

## 6.0 AWARD ADMINISTRATION INFORMATION

### 6.1 AWARD NOTICES

Upon announcement of the Federal awards, AMS will prepare and send a Notice of Award and Grant Agreement to each recipient for signature by the appropriate official. Grant Agreements consist of a 1-page Agreement Face Sheet (AMS-33) that will be signed by AMS and the AOR.

The Notice of Award and Grant Agreement will provide pertinent instructions and information including, at a minimum, the information described in [2 CFR § 200.211](#) and a reference to the [AMS General Terms and Conditions](#).

### 6.2 UNSUCCESSFUL APPLICANTS

Unsuccessful applicants will be contacted by AMS via email as soon as possible after the FFWR awards are announced. The unsuccessful applicants will be provided anonymous review panel consensus comments regarding their proposals as feedback.

## 6.3 ADMINISTRATIVE AND NATIONAL POLICY REQUIREMENTS

As part of the Notice of Award and Grant Agreement, all AMS recipients must abide by the [AMS General Terms and Conditions](#), which reference applicable *Administrative and National Policy Requirements*.

### 6.3.1 SINGLE AUDIT

Non-Federal entities (States, local governments, tribes, and non-profit organizations) with \$750,000 or more in federal expenditures are required by the Single Audit Act Amendments of 1996 (Single Audit) and [2 CFR 200 Subpart F](#) to have an annual audit of their Federal awards (e.g., grant and loan programs). AMS expects that recipients of grants through this program will exceed this threshold and will be required to have an annual audit of their Federal award(s).

## 6.4 REPORTING REQUIREMENTS

Reporting and award closeout requirements are included in the [AMS General Terms and Conditions](#). If there are any program or award-specific award terms, those will be identified in the award.

## 7.0 AGENCY CONTACTS

### 7.1 PROGRAMMATIC QUESTIONS

After closely reviewing this RFA in its entirety, applicants and other interested parties are encouraged to contact the FFWR staff by e-mail with questions about the grant program at [FFWRGrants@usda.gov](mailto:FFWRGrants@usda.gov).

**For additional information, please visit the FFWR Website:**

<https://www.ams.usda.gov/services/grants/ffwr>.

### 7.2 AVAILABLE RESOURCES

AMS provides resources and information on the FFWR website (<https://www.ams.usda.gov/services/grants/ffwr>) that may be helpful to applicants, including Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ's), and required application forms. AMS staff is available to provide timely technical assistance.

### 7.3 ADDRESS

#### **Farm and Food Workers Relief Grant Program**

USDA, Agricultural Marketing Service

1400 Independence Avenue, SW

Room 2055 South Building

Stop 0201

Washington, DC 20250-0264

<https://www.ams.usda.gov/services/grants/ffwr>

## 7.4 GRANTS.GOV QUESTIONS

All questions regarding Grants.gov technical assistance must be directed to Grants.gov's [Applicant Support](#).

## 8.0 OTHER INFORMATION

### 8.1 EQUAL OPPORTUNITY STATEMENT

USDA is an equal opportunity provider, employer, and lender.

### 8.2 FREEDOM OF INFORMATION ACT REQUESTS

The Freedom of Information Act of 1966 ([5 U.S.C. § 552](#)) (FOIA) and the Privacy Act of 1974 ([5 U.S.C. § 552a](#)), as implemented by USDA's regulations ([7 CFR § 1, Subpart A](#)) govern the release or withholding of information to the public in connection with this Federal award. The release of information under these laws and regulations applies only to records held by AMS and imposes no requirement on the recipient or any subrecipient to permit or deny public access to their records.

FOIA requests for records relating to this Federal award may be directed to USDA, Agricultural Marketing Service, FOIA/PA Officer, Room 1671-S, 1400 Independence Ave., SW, Washington, DC 20250-0273, Telephone: (202) 302-0650; or email: [AMS.FOIA@usda.gov](mailto:AMS.FOIA@usda.gov).

### 8.3 PAPERWORK REDUCTION

According to the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995 ([44 U.S.C. 3501](#)), an agency may not conduct or sponsor, and a person is not 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 0581-0331. The time required to complete this information collection is estimated to average 4 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.