

Micro-Grants for Food Security Program

Fiscal Year 2024 Request for Applications

Funding Opportunity Number: USDA-AMS-TM-MGFSP-G-24-0028

Publication Date: March 19, 2024

Application Due Date: May 28, 2024 – 11:59 PM Eastern Time

Modification: The application deadline has been extended to Monday, May 28th due to Grants.gov maintenance. Applications deadlines dates were changed on pages 1, 2, 4, and 20.

Effective: 5/7/2024

PROGRAM SOLICITATION INFORMATION

Funding Opportunity Title: Micro-Grants for Food Security Program

Funding Opportunity Number: USDA-AMS-TM-MGFSP-G-24-0028

Announcement Type: Initial

Assistance Listing (formerly CFDA) Number: [10.179](#)

Dates: Applications must be received by 11:59 p.m. Eastern Time on May 28, 2024, through [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) 2024 Micro-Grants for Food Security Program (MGFSP). The MGFSP will award grants to eligible agencies or departments of agriculture for the competitive distribution of subawards that increase the quantity and quality of locally grown food through small-scale gardening, herding, and livestock operations in areas of the United States that have significant levels of food insecurity and import a significant quantity of food.

Approximately up to \$5 million will be available to fund applications under this solicitation. The final amount available is subject to Congressional action.

This announcement provides information about eligibility criteria for applicants, subaward applicants, and subaward projects, and the application forms and associated instructions needed to apply for an award. In the Joint Explanatory Statement that accompanied the Consolidated Appropriations Act of 2023, Congress authorized AMS to waive or amend how it applies the regulatory requirements regarding simplifying the information submitted on progress reports ([2 C.F.R. § 200.239](#)), the use of simplified documentation such as photos and receipts to process financial claims from subgrantees ([2 C.F.R. § 200.328](#)), and clarifying to the states and territories that they may manage and dispose of equipment acquired under a Federal award based on their own laws and procedures ([2 C.F.R. §200.313](#)). AMS may also use fixed amount subawards to reduce administrative burden, monitoring, and recordkeeping.

AMS encourages applications intended to serve, smaller farms and ranches, new and beginning farmers and ranchers, [historically underserved](#) producers, veteran producers, and/or underserved communities. For projects intending to serve these entities, subrecipients should engage and involve those beneficiaries when developing projects and applications.

The USDA promotes climate-resilient landscapes and rural economic systems, including tools to support agriculture, forests, grazing lands, and rural communities. AMS encourages applicants to consider including goals and activities related to mitigating or adapting to climate change in their project's design and implementation.

Stakeholder Input: AMS seeks comments about this Request for Applications (RFA). We will consider the comments when we develop the next RFA for the program. Email written stakeholder comments within six months of the publication date of this RFA to: 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 responding to the **Micro-Grants RFA**.

2024 HIGHLIGHTS AND CHANGES

Below are highlights of major changes to the program since last year.

- The [AMS General Terms and Conditions](#) have been updated to reflect recent changes to the Uniform Guidance (2 CFR Part 200) and the [Build America, Buy America Act](#) for infrastructure projects.

APPLICATION CHECKLIST

AMS requests applicants to read the entire RFA prior to submitting their application to ensure they understand the program's requirements. The application checklist below provides the required documents for an application package.

This program requires that **all application packages** must include the following:

- SF-424 – Application for Federal Assistance (in Grants.gov)
- SF-424A – Budget Summary (in Grants.gov)
- Project Abstract Summary (in Grants.gov)
- Agency or Department of Agriculture's Grant Administration Project Narrative

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

- Negotiated Indirect Cost Rate Agreement (NICRA)

TIPS FOR APPLICANTS

- To do business with the Federal Government and to submit your application electronically using Grants.gov, you must—
 - Have a Unique Entity Identifier (UEI) and a Taxpayer Identification Number (TIN);
 - Provide your UEI number and TIN on your application;
 - Be registered in SAM.gov, the Government's primary registrant database; and
 - Maintain an active SAM registration with current information throughout the application review period and, if you are awarded a grant, during the project period.
- Register in Grants.gov and submit applications early. **DO NOT WAIT UNTIL THE DAY OF THE APPLICATION DEADLINE.** AMS encourages application submission at least two weeks before the application deadline to ensure all certifications are met.
- The applicant organization registration process can take **more than four weeks** to complete. You must complete your organization registration to allow enough to meet the required application submission deadlines. See [section 5.3.1](#) for information.
- Thoroughly read this RFA and follow all the instructions.
- Thoroughly review the applicable [AMS General Terms and Conditions](#) to understand allowable and unallowable costs.
- Apply to the correct grant program in Grants.gov using the correct Assistance Listing Number “**10.179**” and Funding Opportunity Number “**USDA-AMS-TM-MGFSP-G-24-0028.**”
- Ensure you have the most recent copy of Adobe Reader is installed on your computer and that it is compatible with [Grants.gov software](#). Review Adobe Software Compatibility under Applicants.

- Limit Application File Size/ File Name Characters (50 or less).
- Avoid Special Characters in File Names (\$, %, &, *, Spanish "ñ", etc.).
- 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”.
- Review the Grants.gov Applicant User and Registration Guides:
<https://www.grants.gov/applicants/applicant-faqs.html>
<https://www.grants.gov/applicants/workspace-overview.html>

TIMING TO OBTAIN AND SUBMIT GRANTS.GOV REQUIRED ELEMENTS

Required Action	Timing to Obtain/Submit
AMS Deadline to receive final application and all supporting materials through Grants.Gov	May 28, 2024 – 11:59 p.m. Eastern Time
Obtaining Your Organization’s UEI Number (if you do not already have one)	7-10 business days
Establishing an Active 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

TABLE OF CONTENTS

1.0	Funding Opportunity Description	6
1.1	Legislative Authority	6
1.2	Purpose	6
1.3	Establishing the Subaward Competitive program	6
2.0	Award Information	8
2.1	Type of Federal Assistance.....	8
2.2	Type of Applications.....	8
2.3	Available Funding and Amount Available to Each Applicant	8
2.4	Federal Award Period Duration	9
3.0	Eligibility Information	9
3.1	Eligible Applicants	9
3.2	Subaward Eligible Entities	10
4.0	Funding Considerations	10
4.1	Cost Sharing and Matching	10
4.2	Indirect Costs	11
4.3	Allowable and Unallowable Costs and Activities	12
4.4	Coordinator Meeting Travel.....	13
5.0	Application and Submission Information	13
5.1	Electronic Application Package	13
5.2	Content and Form of Application Submission	13
5.3	Application Submission and Receipt Procedures and Requirements	15
5.4	Application Submission Requirements for Eligible Entities	18
5.5	Submission Date and Time.....	18
5.6	Intergovernmental Review	18
6.0	Application Review Information	18
6.1	Award Notices	19
6.2	Administrative and National Policy Requirements	19
6.3	Reporting Requirements.....	19
6.4	Acknowledgement of USDA support	19
7.0	Agency Contacts	19
7.1	Programmatic Questions	19
7.2	Available Resources	19
7.3	Address.....	20
7.4	Grants.gov questions	20
8.0	Other Information	20
8.1	Non-discrimination and Equal Opportunity Statement	20
8.2	Freedom of Information Act Requests.....	21
8.3	Paperwork Reduction.....	21

1.0 FUNDING OPPORTUNITY DESCRIPTION

1.1 LEGISLATIVE AUTHORITY

The Micro-Grants for Food Security Program (MGFSP) was initially authorized by section 4206 of the Agriculture Improvement Act of 2018 (Public Law 115—343) and is codified in [7 U.S.C. § 7518](#).

1.2 PURPOSE

MGFSP assists agricultural agencies or departments in Alaska, Hawaii, American Samoa, the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, the Federated States of Micronesia, Guam, the Republic of the Marshall Islands, the Republic of Palau, and the U.S. Virgin Islands to increase the quantity and quality of locally grown food through small-scale gardening, herding, and livestock operations in food insecure communities in areas of the United States that have significant levels of food insecurity and import a significant quantity of foods. The agricultural agencies or departments competitively distribute the funds through subawards to eligible entities, as defined in [section 3.2](#).

1.3 ESTABLISHING THE SUBAWARD COMPETITIVE PROGRAM

1.3.1 APPLICANT RESPONSIBILITIES

Agricultural agencies or state departments are responsible for conducting a subaward competition, defining specific details of their subaward programs, and ensuring projects are appropriate for the MGFSP. This includes announcing the availability of funding, conducting public outreach, recruiting reviewers, and administering the subaward competition.

In addition, Agricultural agencies or state departments are responsible for administratively overseeing awarded subrecipients. This includes ensuring subrecipients maintain appropriate records, monitoring subaward projects for compliance with applicable Federal statutes and regulations and applicable [AMS General Terms and Conditions](#), collecting project data, reporting on program outcomes, and submitting reports to AMS (see [section 6.3](#)).

1.3.2 COMPETITIVE GRANT APPLICATION REVIEW PROCESS

Agricultural agencies or state departments are encouraged to competitively distribute subawards to eligible entities (see [section 3.2](#)) within the first year of the award. The recipient's solicitation (Request for Applications (RFA) or Request for Proposals (RFP)) must have all the information necessary for eligible entities to develop proposals for the competitive selection process that meet the MGFSP purpose. The recipient may use this subrecipient [Project Narrative Form](#) template to collect required information from potential subrecipients. The subrecipient narrative must include all the requested information for each recommended subaward project.

Agricultural agencies or state departments may contact their Grants Management Specialist with questions about drafting their solicitation or qualification of a project.

The competitive review process should follow state policies and procedures and include the use of an independent review panel of experts or qualified individuals overseen by state officials. All documentation affecting the decision to approve, disapprove, defer, or otherwise not fund an application should be maintained in an accessible, centralized program file. The review process must be free of conflicts and be conducted in a fair and impartial way. All sub applicants must be notified about the outcome of the competitive process as it relates to their application.

Agricultural agencies or state departments may provide subawards to two or more eligible entities to carry out a project.

The period of performance for each subaward shall not exceed three (3) years. Individual applicants may not receive more than \$5,000 per year, while all other eligible entities may not receive more than \$10,000 per year. An eligible entity must apply every year it would like to be considered for funding.

Agricultural agencies or state departments will be required to provide a **State Plan** to AMS regarding their recommended subaward projects once the subaward competition is completed and all subaward applications have undergone a merit review. The State Plan must include information regarding all recommended subaward projects to include project type, project narrative, applicant name, and funding requested. It can be compiled and submitted by email as a single PDF, MS Word, or MS Excel document.

The State Plan must be reviewed and approved by AMS **before** the agricultural agencies or state departments can inform the selected subrecipients of their subawards or make any public announcements. Once reviewed, AMS will provide feedback on the subrecipient applications for final approval.

1.3.3 OUTREACH ACTIVITIES

Agricultural agencies or state departments are encouraged to perform outreach and engage with low-income, historically underserved communities, disadvantaged, and minority individuals to apply and receive funding for projects that would increase the amount and quality of locally produced foods.

1.3.4 SUBAWARD ELIGIBLE ACTIVITIES

Eligible entities must engage in activities that will increase the quantity and quality of locally grown food for [food insecure](#) individuals, families, neighborhoods, and communities. Activities may include:

- *Small-Scale Gardening*
 - Purchase gardening tools or equipment, soil, soil amendments, seeds, plants, canning equipment, refrigeration, or other items necessary to grow and store food.
 - Purchase or assembly of composting units and towers designed to grow leafy greens.
 - Extend the growing season, as well as start or expand hydroponic and aeroponic farming.
 - Expand an area under cultivation or engage in other activities necessary to be eligible to apply for the funding under the USDA's Natural Resources and Conservation Service's [Environmental Quality Incentives Program \(EQIP\)](#) for a high tunnel.

- *Small-Scale Herding and Livestock Operations*
 - Purchase animals
 - Buy, erect, or repair fencing for livestock, poultry, or reindeer.
 - Setting up or equipping a slaughter and processing facility approved by the Secretary, including purchasing mobile slaughterhouses.
- *Expanding Access to Food and Knowledge of Food Security*
 - Create or expand avenues for the sale of food commodities, specialty crops, and meats that are grown by the eligible entity for sale in the local community, or increase the availability of fresh, locally grown, and nutritious food.
 - Shipping of purchased items related to growing or raising food for local consumption or purchase.
 - Travel to participate in agricultural education provided by a state cooperative extension service, land-grant college or university, tribal college or university, Alaska Native serving institution, or a Native Hawaiian-serving institution, or federal or state agency.
- *Engage in other activities relating to increasing food security (including subsistence), as determined by the Secretary.*

1.3.5 SUBAWARD PRIORITY CONSIDERATION

Agricultural agencies or state departments may prioritize subawards to eligible entities that:

- Have not previously received a subaward under this program; or
- Are in a community or region in that state with the highest degree of food insecurity, as determined by the agricultural department or agency of the eligible state.

When defining *food insecurity*, eligible applicants may use their state definition. For those states or territories for which food insecurity is not defined, applicants should follow the [USDA Economic Research Service \(ERS\)](#) definition. More information on the [measurement of food security](#) is available on the ERS website.

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 TYPE OF APPLICATIONS

New application. New applications will be reviewed for conformity using the criteria described in [section 6.0](#).

2.3 AVAILABLE FUNDING AND AMOUNT AVAILABLE TO EACH APPLICANT

AMS anticipates up to \$5 million will be available to fund applications in FY 2024.

Enactment of a continuing resolution, appropriations act, or other authorizing legislation may affect the availability or level of funding for this program. USDA does not commit to make a specific number of awards.

The approximate grant allocation for each eligible state or territory (see [section 3.1](#)) is indicated below.

Agency or Department of Agriculture	Percentage of Allocation	Approximate Grant Allocation
Alaska	40 percent	\$2,000,000.00
American Samoa	2.5 percent	\$125,000.00
Federated States of Micronesia	2.5 percent	\$125,000.00
Guam	2.5 percent	\$125,000.00
Hawaii	40 percent	\$2,000,000.00
Northern Mariana Islands	2.5 percent	\$125,000.00
Puerto Rico	2.5 percent	\$125,000.00
Republic of the Marshall Islands	2.5 percent	\$125,000.00
Republic of Palau	2.5 percent	\$125,000.00
U.S. Virgin Islands	2.5 percent	\$125,000.00

Unclaimed funds will be redistributed to participating entities according to the formula laid out in the authorizing statute.

2.4 FEDERAL AWARD PERIOD DURATION

The grant period of performance for agreements between AMS and the eligible applicant is 4 years. Eligible applicants are encouraged to competitively distribute the funds through subawards to eligible entities within the first year of the award. The grant period of performance must begin no later than September 30, 2024, and end no later than September 29, 2028.

AMS expects applicants to complete their projects within the required period of performance. However, it is acceptable to complete a project before the scheduled performance period end date. The applicant must indicate the start and end dates on the SF-424, “Application for Federal Assistance” in block 17.

3.0 ELIGIBILITY INFORMATION

3.1 ELIGIBLE APPLICANTS

Eligible applicants are state or territory departments, division, or agencies of agriculture in Alaska, Hawaii, American Samoa, the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, the Federated States of Micronesia, Guam, the Republic of the Marshall Islands, the Republic of Palau, and the United States Virgin Islands.

3.2 SUBAWARD ELIGIBLE ENTITIES

Eligible entities for subawards must be physically located in an eligible state or territory listed in [section 3.1](#) and must apply directly to the eligible applicant (state or territory departments, division, or agencies) in order to be considered for a subaward. Eligible entities are:

- Individuals;
- Indian tribes or Tribal organizations as defined in [25 U.S.C. § 5304](#);
- Nonprofit organizations that are engaged in increasing food security, including—
 - Religious organizations;
 - Food banks; or
 - Food pantries;
- Federally funded educational facilities, including—
 - Head Start programs or an Early Head Start programs;
 - Public elementary schools or public secondary schools;
 - Public institutions of higher education;
 - Tribal Colleges or Universities;
 - Job training programs; or
- Local or Tribal governments that may not levy local taxes under State or Federal law.

4.0 FUNDING CONSIDERATIONS

4.1 COST SHARING AND MATCHING

4.1.1 COST SHARING AND MATCHING FOR ELIGIBLE APPLICANTS

Eligible applicants are not required to provide a cost share or match for the grant agreement.

4.1.2 COST SHARING AND MATCHING FOR ELIGIBLE ENTITIES

When establishing subawards, the applicant must ensure that the *eligible entities* provide funds in the form of cash equal to **10 percent** of the total federal amount received under the subaward. In-kind contributions, while encouraged, do not count toward the fulfillment of this requirement. The eligible applicants must follow their own policies and procedures for ensuring the cash match.

An applicant may waive the matching requirement for an individual sub-applicant who otherwise meets the requirements to receive a subaward by the eligible state or territory. The process for waiving this requirement should align with the state or territory's existing policies and procedures and account for real or potential conflicts of interest. In addition to a state or territory's existing policies, or if a state or territory does not have existing policies in place, AMS encourages the consideration of the following criteria when waiving an individual's matching requirement:

- The project's alignment with the program's purpose, activities, and outcomes;
- The project's budget being reasonable, allowable, and necessary for associated activities; and

- External reviewer feedback resulting from the competitive process.

Cost sharing for the required match must be in the form of allowable direct costs. Refer to [2 CFR § 200.306](#) for additional Federal requirements and definitions, including the basis for determining the value of cash and in-kind contributions.

Cash match contributions are generally defined as an actual cash contribution (not the ‘value’ of someone’s time/effort) from the applicant’s general revenue/reserves/savings/line of credit, or 3rd-party partner(s), or other non-Federal grants. The applicant must be able to track and show the source of the match funding and that the funding source was dedicated entirely to the grant project and produce records to that effect (for example, taking the cash match in your accounting system, or from your partner, and placing it into a special ‘grant project’ account).

In-kind match contributions are generally defined as the value of goods or services provided by the contributor for the benefit of the grant project, where no funds transferred hands. For example, a partner, such as a tribal community member, may volunteer their professional expertise as an in-kind match contribution to the project as described in [2 CFR § 200.306\(e\)](#).

All matching contributions **must be committed or in place** when the proposal is submitted to the eligible applicant. Additional anticipated matching funds not in place by the time the project commences cannot be counted toward the matching requirement.

Subapplicants cannot use program income (as defined in [2 CFR § 200.80](#)) or any other Federal funds as a match or cost share.

4.2 INDIRECT COSTS

4.2.1 LIMIT ON ADMINISTRATIVE COSTS

Administrative costs are defined as direct costs under MGFSP and are limited to **3 percent** of the total Federal funds provided under the award per section 4206(d)(3) of the Agriculture Improvement Act of 2018 (Public Law 115—343), ([7 U.S.C. § 7518\(d\)\(3\)](#)). An eligible applicant that receives funds **may not use more than 3 percent** of those funds to:

- Administer the competition for providing subawards to eligible entities;
- Provide oversight of the subaward recipients; and
- Collect data and submit annual and final financial and performance reports.

4.2.2 INDIRECT COSTS FOR SUBAPPLICANTS

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.

In accordance with [2 CFR § 200.414 \(f\)](#), 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). The applicant is authorized to determine the appropriate rate up to this limit. The de minimis rate does not require documentation to justify its use and may be used indefinitely. As described in [2 CFR § 200.403](#), costs must be consistently charged as either direct or indirect costs, and may not be double charged or inconsistently charged as both. Once elected, this methodology must be used consistently for all Federal awards until as a recipient chooses to receive a negotiated rate, which the recipient may apply at any time.

All subapplicants who elect to charge a de minimis rate of 10 percent must use the MTDC as the base. MTDCs 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 by an applicant's cognizant agency for indirect costs.

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

NOTE: Subapplicants who are individuals applying for funds separate from a business or non-profit organization they may operate are not eligible to charge indirect costs to their subaward. Individuals applying for subaward funding, do not include any indirect costs in your proposed budget.

4.3 ALLOWABLE AND UNALLOWABLE COSTS AND ACTIVITIES

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

4.3.1 FIXED AMOUNT SUBAWARDS

Per [2 CFR § 200.1](#), fixed amount subawards are a type of award that provides a specific level of support without regard for actual costs incurred under the award. For MGFSP, fixed amount subawards may only be used for individuals and not for other eligible entities. This type of award is particularly appropriate when activities performed under an award can be segregated into achievable milestones with an associated fixed-dollar amount that can be established within a reasonable degree of certainty. Fixed amount awards are typically easier to administer as it reduces some of the administrative burden and record-keeping requirements (e.g., no receipts required) for both the recipient and USDA. For example, the completion of a task and deliverable can be verified by a simple onsite analysis, photos, videos, or any other means to ensure that activities are satisfactorily completed.

Eligible applicants choosing to use fixed amount awards must specify the use of these award methods in the solicitation announcement (RFA). Entities must waive the cash match requirement for individuals. The same competitive selection criteria and selection process must be used for both fixed and non-fixed amount awards.

All fixed amount awards must comply with the regulations outlined in [2 CFR § 200.333](#) and [2 CFR § 200.201](#).

4.4 HYPERLINK "HTTPS://WWW.ECFR.GOV/CURRENT/TITLE-2/SUBTITLE-A/CHAPTER-II/PART-200/SUBPART-C/SECTION-200.201"COORDINATOR MEETING TRAVEL

Recipients are expected to attend an AMS-sponsored grants management meeting during the project’s period of performance. The proposed budget must include travel funds for the Project Coordinator and any additional key personnel as reasonably determined by their agency and AMS.

To estimate these costs in the budget section, please account for flight, hotel, per diem, and ground transportation expenses for a 3-day, 2-night stay. Location and dates are to be determined with a possibility of a virtual conference. If the conference is virtual, recipients will be able to reallocate those funds to another allowable item.

5.0 APPLICATION AND SUBMISSION INFORMATION

5.1 ELECTRONIC APPLICATION PACKAGE

Applicants MUST apply to this RFA via Grants.gov. No other submission method is accepted. AMS urges applicants to submit early to the Grants.gov system. For an overview of the Grants.gov application process, see Grants.gov’s [How to 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 5.3.1](#).

Applicants can find the opportunity under either the Assistance Listing number “10.179” or the Funding Opportunity Number “USDA-AMS-TM-MGFSP-G-24-0028.”

5.2 CONTENT AND FORM OF APPLICATION SUBMISSION

5.2.1 SF-424 APPLICATION FOR FEDERAL ASSISTANCE

Required: Form SF-424 is available via the Funding Opportunity at Grants.gov. Applicants may use the following supplemental instructions associated with specific blocks on the SF-424.

Box	Instruction
1 - Type of Submission	Select Application.
2 - Type of Application	Select New.
8.c - Organizational Unique Entity Identifier (UEI)	Enter applicant UEI for the organization submitting the application. NOTE: Applicants that apply for a grant must be capable of managing and monitoring Federal funds and project activities and outcomes. Recipients <u>cannot</u> transfer the award to another recipient organization once a grant is awarded (you may not apply under one UEI number and switch to another later).
8.d – 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.

Box	Instruction
10 - Name of Federal Agency	AMS, USDA
11 - Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance (Assistance Listing) Number	Enter 10.179
12 - Funding Opportunity Number	Enter USDA-AMS-TM-MGFSP-G-24-0028 Ensure you are applying for the correct grant program.
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	Enter Micro-Grants for Food Security Program Application for [State Agency].
16.a - Congressional Districts for Applicant	Enter the Congressional district where your main office is located.
16.b - Congressional Districts for Program/Project	Enter the Congressional district where your project will be implemented. Write "All" if the projects will be implemented in more than one location.
17 - Project Start Date and End Date	Enter Start Date: September 30, 2024 Enter End date: September 29, 2028
18 - Estimated Funding – Federal	Enter the total Federal amount requested
19 - Is Applicant Subject to Review by State Under Executive Order 12372 Process?	See section 5.6 .

5.2.2 SF 424A BUDGET INFORMATION

Required. SF-424A is available via the application package in Grants.gov. Most information blocks on the required form are either self-explanatory or adequately explained in the form instructions. However, for MGFSP applications the following supplemental instructions must be used for specific boxes on the form. **Do not use instructions found on Grants.gov or elsewhere on the internet for the boxes below.**

On SF-424A, please complete **only** Sections A and B. Do **not** complete Sections C - F.

Section A – Budget Summary

Box	Instructions
1.a – Grant Program Function or Activity	Enter "MGFSP – Federal"
1.b – Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance Number	Enter "10.179"
1.e – Federal	Enter the amount of Federal funding requested for the project

Section B – Budget Categories

Box	Instructions
6.a – 6.j – Object Class Categories	In Column 1, enter the amount of Federal funds requested for each Object Class Category. Do not include match funding. For example, if you are requesting \$2,000 in Federal funds for "Travel", enter 2000 in Column 1, box 6.c

5.2.3 PROJECT ABSTRACT SUMMARY

Required. The [Project Abstract Summary](#) form will be used as the award description for the overarching Federal award. This is separate from the MGFSP [Grant Administration Narrative](#). The Project Abstract box must include:

- Project purpose
- Activities that will be competitively announced by the applicant who is focusing on specific needs of their state or territory.
- Deliverables and expected outcomes
- Intended beneficiary(ies): Who will the subaward recipients be? How will they benefit from this program?

5.2.4 GRANT ADMINISTRATION NARRATIVE

Required. Applicants MUST prepare and submit a narrative using the [Grant Administration Narrative](#) form. The narrative must describe the competition and selection method, outreach plans, reviewer selection, and how the applicant will collect results and manage the subaward projects.

The Grant Administration Narrative must be typed and single-spaced in an 11- or 12-point font, with 1-inch margins, and on 8.5" x 11" paper. Applicants must submit the Grant Administration Narrative as a PDF and attached to the application package in Grants.gov using the "Add Attachments" button under SF-424 item #15. Handwritten applications or applications in MS Word will not be accepted. In the Budget section of the Narrative, add a general line item for "subawards" to include the amount to be used in funding subawards.

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

5.2.5 NEGOTIATED INDIRECT COST RATE AGREEMENT (NICRA)

Required if the eligible applicant has a NICRA. Refer to [section 4.2](#) 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.

5.3 APPLICATION SUBMISSION AND RECEIPT PROCEDURES AND REQUIREMENTS

5.3.1 HOW TO REGISTER TO APPLY

Applicants MUST have a Unique Entity Identifier (UEI), an active SAM.gov account, and a Grants.gov account to submit an application. AMS recommends that applicants start the registration process in these systems immediately to allow enough time to meet application submission deadlines. Registration in these systems collectively may in some cases take **more than four weeks** to complete. The steps below provide details on how to complete each registration.

Individual applicants eligible to apply for this grant funding opportunity can find complete instructions here: <https://www.grants.gov/applicants/applicant-registration>.

Organization applicants can find complete instructions here:

<https://apply07.grants.gov/help/html/help/Register/OrganizationRegistration.htm>

- 1) [Obtain a Unique Entity Identifier \(UEI\)](#): Entities applying for funding, including renewal funding, must have a UEI from SAM.gov. Applicants must enter the UEI number in the data entry field labeled "Organizational UEI" on the SF-424. Getting a UEI requires validation steps in SAM.gov. Applicants are encouraged to start this process as early as possible, and, if applicable, this includes providing guidance to subapplicants on getting their own UEI.
- 2) [Register with the System for Award Management \(SAM\)](#): In addition to having a UEI number, organizations applying online through Grants.gov must register with SAM. Current SAM.gov registrants have already been assigned their Unique Entity Identifier (UEI) and can view it within SAM.gov. 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. Organizations must maintain an active SAM registration with current information throughout the application review period and, if you are awarded a grant, during the project period.**
- 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 UEI 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 Authorized Organization Role (AOR). Watch the video on how to [Register in Grants.gov](#) and create an institutional profile. Applicants are required to use [Login.gov](#) to sign into [Grants.gov](#). See the [Grants.gov help article](#) for more information on logging in with Login.gov credentials. The Grants.gov validation process also includes a check for an active SAM.gov registration. Applicants without a current SAM.gov registration will be rejected.
- 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 required for valid and timely submissions.**

5.3.2 HOW TO SUBMIT AN APPLICATION TO AMS VIA GRANTS.GOV

Applicants can apply using [Grants.gov Workspace](#). Workspace is a shared, online environment where members of a grant team may simultaneously access and edit different web forms within an application. For each funding opportunity announcement (FOA), 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's name, address, and UEI 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 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 the application package **at least 24 to 48 hours prior to the due 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 5.2](#) are included.

- -
 -
 - 4) *Track 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 (except Federal holidays) toll-free support number 1-800-518-4726, or email 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](#).

5.4 APPLICATION SUBMISSION REQUIREMENTS FOR ELIGIBLE ENTITIES

AMS will not consider any applications received after the deadline, any applications submitted by fax, email, or postal mail and any applications not responsive to the requirements of this RFA (eligibility, incomplete application, missing required attachments documents, etc.). See [AMS' Late Applications, Denials and/or Appeal Procedures Policy](#).

Ensure that all components 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 before the application deadline to ensure all certifications and registrations are met.

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 (GRANTXXXXXXX) 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.

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.

5.5 SUBMISSION DATE AND TIME

Applicants must submit applications via [Grants.gov](#) by 11:59 p.m. Eastern Time on May 28, 2024. AMS cannot consider applications received after this deadline. See [AMS' Late Applications, Denials and/or Appeal Procedures Policy](#).

5.6 INTERGOVERNMENTAL REVIEW

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

6.0 APPLICATION REVIEW INFORMATION

AMS will review grant applications to ensure that the application meets the statutory purpose of the program, all application criteria are fulfilled in accordance with [section 5.0](#), and that all costs are allowable. 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](#).

AMS will notify the individual listed on the SF-424 "Application for Federal Assistance" in block 8f. If additional information is required after the initial review of the application. An applicant should ensure that all subapplicants are aware that additional information may be required from them because of the

review of their grant proposal. Failure to provide requested information in a timely manner may result in a project not receiving funding.

6.1 AWARD NOTICES

Upon announcement of the Federal awards, AMS will prepare and send a Notice of Award (NOA) to each recipient for signature by the appropriate official. The NOA will be signed by AMS and the AOR.

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

6.2 ADMINISTRATIVE AND NATIONAL POLICY REQUIREMENTS

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

6.3 REPORTING REQUIREMENTS

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

6.4 ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF USDA SUPPORT

Proper acknowledgement of your USDA-AMS funding in published solicitations (e.g., for state competitions), presentations, press releases, and other communications is critical for the success of our agency's programs. Grantees must meet the acknowledgement requirements outlined in the applicable [AMS General Terms and Conditions](#).

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 MGFSP staff by e-mail with questions about the grant program at IPPGrants@usda.gov.

For additional information, please visit the MGFSP Website:

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

7.2 AVAILABLE RESOURCES

AMS provides resources and information on the MGFSP website (<https://www.ams.usda.gov/mgfsp>) that may be helpful to applicants, including webinar information, [Frequently Asked Questions \(FAQ's\)](#), descriptions of funded projects, and required application forms. AMS staff is available to provide timely technical assistance.

7.3 ADDRESS

Micro-Grants for Food Security

USDA, Agricultural Marketing Service
1400 Independence Avenue, SW
Room 1510- South Building Stop 0264
Washington, DC 20250-0264

7.4 GRANTS.GOV QUESTIONS

All questions regarding Grants.gov technical assistance must be directed to Grants.gov's [Applicant Support](#). Applicants may also call the 24/7 (except Federal holidays) toll-free support number 1-800-518-4726 or email support@grants.gov. Grants.gov will issue a ticket number to which the applicant and Grants.gov can refer if the issue is not immediately resolved.

Grants.gov Registration: <https://www.grants.gov/applicants/applicant-registration>.

Applicant Support: Grants.gov provides additional [training resources, including video tutorials](#).

8.0 OTHER INFORMATION

8.1 NON-DISCRIMINATION AND EQUAL OPPORTUNITY STATEMENT

In accordance with Federal civil rights laws and U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) civil rights regulations and policies, the USDA, its Mission Areas, agencies, staff offices, employees, and institutions participating in or administering USDA programs are prohibited from discriminating based on race, color, national origin, religion, sex, gender identity (including gender expression), sexual orientation, disability, age, marital status, family/parental status, income derived from a public assistance program, political beliefs, or reprisal or retaliation for prior civil rights activity, in any program or activity conducted or funded by USDA (not all bases apply to all programs). Remedies and complaint filing deadlines vary by program or incident.

Program information may be made available in languages other than English. Persons with disabilities who require alternative means of communication to obtain program information (e.g., Braille, large print, audiotape, American Sign Language) should contact the responsible Mission Area, agency, or staff office; the USDA TARGET Center at (202) 720-2600 (voice and TTY); or the Federal Relay Service at (800) 877-8339.

To file a program discrimination complaint, a complainant should complete a Form AD-3027, USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form, which can be obtained online at [How to File a Program Discrimination Complaint](#), at any USDA office, by calling (866) 632-9992, or by writing a letter addressed to USDA. The letter must contain the complainant's name, address, telephone number, and a written description of the alleged discriminatory action in sufficient detail to inform the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights (ASCR) about the nature and date of an alleged civil rights violation.

The completed AD-3027 form or letter must be submitted to USDA by: **1) Mail:** U.S. Department of Agriculture, Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights, 1400 Independence Avenue, SW, Washington, D.C. 20250-9410 **2) Fax:** (833) 256-1665 or (202) 690-7442 **or 3) Email:** program.intake@usda.gov.

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

8.2 FREEDOM OF INFORMATION ACT REQUESTS

The Freedom of Information Act ([FOIA](#)) of 1966 ([5 U.S.C. § 552](#)) 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 2055-S, Stop 0201, 1400 Independence Ave., SW, Washington, DC 20250-0201, Telephone: (202) 302-0650; or email: AMS.FOIA@usda.gov.

8.3 PAPERWORK REDUCTION

According to the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995 ([44 U.S.C. § 3501 et seq](#)), 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 0581-0240. 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.