Micro-Grants for Food Security Program

Fiscal Year 2022 Request for Applications

Funding Opportunity Number: USDA-AMS-TM-MGFSP-G-22-0010

Publication Date: April 5, 2022

Application Due Date: June 6, 2022 – 11:59 PM Eastern Time
**Funding Opportunity Title:** Micro-Grants for Food Security Program

**Funding Opportunity Number:** USDA-AMS-TM-MGFSP-G-22-0010

**Announcement Type:** Initial

**Assistance Listing (formerly CFDA) Number:** 10.179

**Dates:** Applications must be received by 11:59 p.m. Eastern Time on June 6, 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 Micro-Grants for Food Security Program (MGFSP). The MGFSP will award grants to eligible agencies, commissions, or departments of agriculture for the competitive distribution of subgrants 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 $5 million will be available to fund applications under this solicitation.

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.

AMS encourages applications that benefit smaller farms and ranches, new and beginning farmers and ranchers, underserved producers, veteran producers, and/or underserved communities. For projects intending to serve these entities, applicants 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 reducing and stabilizing the levels of heat-trapping greenhouse gases in the atmosphere or adapting to the already occurring 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: AMSGlobalFinance@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.
**2022 HIGHLIGHTS AND CHANGES**

- The [AMS General Terms and Conditions](#) have been updated to reflect changes to the AMS grants management and payment management systems.
- The form SF-424A - Budget Summary and Project Abstract Summary forms have been added to the required documents for application packages.

**APPLICATION CHECKLIST**

AMS requests that applicants read the entire RFA prior to submitting their application to ensure they understand the program’s requirements. The application checklist below lists the required and conditionally required documents for an application package.

**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 Narrative (PDF Attachment)

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

- [ ] Negotiated Indirect Cost Rate Agreement (NICRA) (PDF Attachment)
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1.0 FUNDING OPPORTUNITY DESCRIPTION

1.1 LEGISLATIVE AUTHORITY

The Micro-Grants for Food Security Program (MGFSP) is authorized by section 4206 of the Agriculture Improvement Act of 2018 (Public Law 115—343), (7 U.S.C. § 7518).

1.2 PURPOSE

MGFSP assists agricultural agencies or departments in eligible states and territories, as provided in section 3.1 Eligible Applicants, to increase the quantity and quality of locally grown food in food insecure communities through small-scale gardening, herding, and livestock operations by competitively distributing subawards to eligible entities, as provided in section 3.2 Eligible Entities.

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 reducing and stabilizing the levels of heat-trapping greenhouse gases in the atmosphere or adapting to the already occurring climate change in their project’s design and implementation.

1.2.1 FOOD SECURITY SUBAWARDS

Subawards will be made available to eligible entities (see section 3.2 Eligible Entities) and shall not exceed 3 years in length. 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, regardless of the subaward’s period of performance. An eligible applicant may provide subawards to two or more eligible entities to carry out the same project.

The competition should follow an eligible State’s policies and procedures and include the use of an independent review panel of experts or qualified individuals. Eligible States must use guidelines and procedures to prevent any conflict of interest or the appearance of a conflict of interest as required by 2 CFR § 400.2(b) while providing subawards to eligible entities.

Subaward recipients are expected to provide matching funds equal to 10 percent of the subaward amount. An eligible State may waive the matching requirement for an individual who otherwise meets the requirements of the subaward. 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 (see section 3.3 Cost Sharing and Matching).

Eligible States must administratively oversee their subrecipients, collect data, and submit reports to AMS (see section 6.3 Reporting).

1.2.2 SUBAWARD 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**
  An eligible entity may use funds to purchase gardening tools or equipment, soil, soil amendments, seeds, plants, canning equipment, refrigeration, or other items necessary to grow and store food.
Additionally, funds may be used for the purchase or assembly of composting units and towers designed to grow leafy greens. This includes activities associated with extending the growing season, as well as starting or expanding hydroponic and aeroponic farming.

An eligible entity may also use funds to expand an area under cultivation or engage in other activities necessary to be eligible to apply for 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**
  An eligible entity may use funds to purchase animals as well as buy, erect, or repair fencing for livestock, poultry, or reindeer. It may also fund activities or supplies associated with 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**
  An eligible entity may use funds to 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. This includes paying for shipping of purchased items related to growing or raising food for local consumption or purchase.

  It may also fund 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.

1.2.3 **PRIORITY CONSIDERATION**

Eligible applicants 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.

When defining *food insecurity*, eligible applicants may use their state definition. For those states or territories for which food insecurity is not defined, follow the USDA Economic Research Service (ERS) definition. More information on the [measurement of food security](https://www.ers.usda.gov/topics/food-nutrition-assistance/food-security-poverty-and-assistance/measurements-of-poverty-and-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 support to successful applicants.

2.2 **TYPE OF APPLICATIONS**

*New application.* AMS will review all new applications for conformity with the criteria in section 5.0 Application Review Information and may require the applicant to provide additional information or clarification by a specified date.

2.3 **AVAILABLE FUNDING AND AMOUNT AVAILABLE TO EACH APPLICANT**

It is anticipated that $5 million will be available to fund applications in FY 2022. Enactment of additional Federal continuing resolutions or appropriations may affect the availability or level of funding for this program.
Each eligible state or territory (see section 3.1 Eligible Applicants) is eligible to receive the available grant allocation as indicated below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Agency or Department of Agriculture</th>
<th>Percentage of Allocation</th>
<th>Available Grant Allocation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Alaska</td>
<td>40 percent</td>
<td>$2,000,000.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>American Samoa</td>
<td>2.5 percent</td>
<td>$125,000.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Federated States of Micronesia</td>
<td>2.5 percent</td>
<td>$125,000.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Guam</td>
<td>2.5 percent</td>
<td>$125,000.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hawaii</td>
<td>40 percent</td>
<td>$2,000,000.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Northern Mariana Islands</td>
<td>2.5 percent</td>
<td>$125,000.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Puerto Rico</td>
<td>2.5 percent</td>
<td>$125,000.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Republic of the Marshall Islands</td>
<td>2.5 percent</td>
<td>$125,000.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Republic of Palau</td>
<td>2.5 percent</td>
<td>$125,000.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>U.S. Virgin Islands</td>
<td>2.5 percent</td>
<td>$125,000.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2.4 FEDERAL AWARD PERIOD DURATION

The grant period for agreements between the eligible applicant and AMS is 4 years. The period of performance must begin no later than September 30, 2022 and end no later than September 29, 2026. AMS expects applicants to complete their projects within the required timeframe. It is acceptable to complete a project before the scheduled performance period end date. However, AMS encourages applicants to take the full grant period to allow ample time to complete projects. 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 agricultural agencies or departments in Alaska, American Samoa, the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, the Federated States of Micronesia, Guam, Hawaii, the Republic of the Marshall Islands, the Republic of Palau, and the United States Virgin Islands. A State department of agriculture is the agency, commission, or department of the government responsible for agriculture within the State, Territory, or Insular area.

3.2 ELIGIBLE ENTITIES

Eligible entities must be physically located in an eligible state or territory listed in section 3.1 Eligible Applicants and must apply directly to an eligible applicant. 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—
3.3 COST SHARING AND MATCHING

Eligible applicants are not required to provide a cost share or match for the grant agreement. When establishing subawards, the eligible applicant must ensure that the eligible entities provide funds equal to 10 percent of the 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 eligible 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.

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.

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

4.0 APPLICATION AND SUBMISSION INFORMATION

4.1 OBTAINING AN APPLICATION PACKAGE

Only electronic applications may be submitted via Grants.gov in response to this RFA. We urge applicants to submit early through the Grants.gov system. For an overview of the Grants.gov application process, see Grants.gov’s 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 4.6.1 How to Register to Apply Through Grants.gov.

Applicants can find the opportunity under either the CFDA number “10.179” or the Funding Opportunity Number “USDA-AMS-TM-MGFSP-G-22-0010.”
4.2 CONTENT AND FORM OF APPLICATION SUBMISSION

4.2.1 SF-424 APPLICATION FOR FEDERAL ASSISTANCE

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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Box</th>
<th>Instruction</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 - Type of Submission</td>
<td>Select Application.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 - Type of Application</td>
<td>Select New.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8.c - Organizational DUNS or new Unique Entity Identifier (UEI)</td>
<td>Enter applicant DUNS/UEI # for the organization submitting the application. See <a href="https://www.dataqualityworld.com/duns-number">D&amp;B Request a DUNS Number</a>. <strong>Note:</strong> On April 4, 2022, the federal government will stop using DUNS and start using a Unique Entity Identifier created in SAM.gov. For more information, please visit <a href="https://www.gsa.gov/entityid">gsa.gov/entityid</a>.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8.d – Address</td>
<td>Enter the State department of agriculture street address as it appears in SAM.gov. P.O. Boxes will not be accepted. Enter a 9-digit zip code.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10 - Name of Federal Agency</td>
<td>AMS, USDA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11 - Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance (Assistance Listing) Number</td>
<td>Enter 10.179</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12 - Funding Opportunity Number</td>
<td>Enter USDA-AMS-TM-MGFSP-G-22-0010 Ensure you are applying for the correct grant program.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14 - Areas Affected by Project</td>
<td>Enter cities, counties, States affected by project.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15 - Descriptive Title of Applicant’s Project</td>
<td>Enter Micro-Grants for Food Security Program Application for [State Agency].</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16.a - Congressional Districts for Applicant</td>
<td>Enter the Congressional district where your main office is located.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16.b - Congressional Districts for Program/Project</td>
<td>Enter the Congressional district where your project will be implemented. Write “All” if the projects will be implemented in more than one location.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17 - Project Start Date and End Date</td>
<td>Enter Start Date: September 30, 2022 Enter End date: September 29, 2026</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18 - Estimated Funding</td>
<td>Enter the total Federal amount requested</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4.2.2 SF 424A BUDGET INFORMATION

**Required:** SF-424A is available via the MGFSP 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**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Box</th>
<th>Instructions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.a – Grant Program Function or Activity</td>
<td>Enter “MGFSP – Federal”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.b – Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance Number</td>
<td>Enter “10.179”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.e – Federal</td>
<td>Enter the amount of Federal funding requested for the project</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Section B – Budget Categories**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Box</th>
<th>Instructions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>6.a – 6.j – Object Class Categories</td>
<td>In Column 1, enter the amount of Federal funds requested for each Object Class Category. For example, if you are requesting $2,000 in Federal funds for “Supplies”, enter 2000 in Column 1, box 6.e.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4.2.3 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 to be performed
- Deliverables and expected outcomes
- Intended beneficiary(ies): Who will benefit from this beyond the applicant organization? Subrecipient activities. Will the award result in subawards? If yes, who are the sub-awardees and how does the subaward support the applicant organization?

4.2.4 GRANT ADMINISTRATION NARRATIVE

**Required.** The Grant Administration Narrative must be submitted as a PDF and attached to the Grants.gov application package using the “Add Attachments” button under SF-424 item #15. Handwritten applications or applications in MS Word will not be accepted. The Narrative must be typed, single-spaced, in an 11- or 12-point font, with 1-inch margins, and on 8.5” x 11” paper.

Prior to submitting an application to Grants.gov, make sure that it is in final form (e.g., if you used the “track changes” function, accept all changes before submitting so that the mark-up is not visible).

The eligible applicant must submit the content required in the Grant Administration Narrative. The Grant Administration Narrative must be provided with the application package in Grants.gov. A general line item for subawards should be provided under Contracts in the Budget section of the Grant Administration Narrative.

The individual subaward project details are not expected to be included with the submission of this application; however, the Project Narratives following the Project Narrative Form must be submitted within one (1) year of the award to the eligible applicant. These can be compiled and submitted as a single PDF or MS Word document. The Project Narratives will provide a comprehensive plan detailing each subaward project, associated outcomes, and applicable budget information in order to draw down on the funds associated with this line item.
4.2.5 NEGOTIATED INDIRECT COST RATE AGREEMENT (NICRA)

Required if the eligible applicant has a NICRA. Refer to section 4.5.2 Indirect Costs 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 SUBMISSION DATE AND TIME

Applicants must submit applications via Grants.gov by 11:59 p.m. Eastern Time on June 6, 2022. AMS cannot consider applications received after this deadline. See AMS’ Policy on Late Applications.

4.4 INTERGOVERNMENTAL REVIEW

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

4.5 FUNDING RESTRICTIONS

4.5.1 LIMIT ON ADMINISTRATION COSTS

Administration 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.

4.5.2 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 the regulations (2 CFR §§ 200.413 and 414), any non-Federal grant applicant or recipient 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 grant 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. 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 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. 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.

Applicants 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 award. If you are an individual applying for funding, do not include any indirect costs in your proposed budget.

4.5.3 ALLOWABLE AND UNALLOWABLE COSTS AND ACTIVITIES

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

4.5.4 FIXED AMOUNT SUBAWARDS

Fixed amount awards may be used so long as the State chooses to waive the matching requirement for individual subrecipients, and a competitive selection process is maintained for all subrecipients. The competitive selection process used by the State must be applied across all eligible entity types. Once subrecipients have been identified through the competitive selection process, the State may choose to waive the matching requirement for individual subrecipients and offer them a fixed amount award. All fixed amount awards must comply with the regulations outlined in 2 CFR § 200.201(b). Please specify in the application whether the State will use fixed amount awards and if the matching requirement will be waived for individual subrecipients.

4.5.5 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 the recipient 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.

4.6 GRANTS.GOV APPLICATION SUBMISSION AND RECEIPT PROCEDURES AND REQUIREMENTS

4.6.1 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 sufficient time to ensure it does not impact your ability to meet required application submission deadlines.

Individual applicants 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

Prior to registering in Grants.gov:
1) **Obtain a DUNS or Unique Entity Identifier (UEI) Number:** All entities applying for funding, including renewal funding, must have a Data Universal Numbering System (DUNS) number from Dun & Bradstreet (D&B) or a Unique Entity Identifier from SAM.gov. Applicants must enter the DUNS or UEI number in the data entry field labeled "Organizational DUNS/UEI" on the SF-424 form.

2) **Register with SAM:** In addition to having a DUNS/UEI number, organizations applying online through Grants.gov must register with the System for Award Management (SAM). Failure to register with SAM.gov will prevent your organization from being able to apply 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.**

**Register with Grants.gov:**

1) **Create an account with Grants.gov:** Applicants must know their organization's DUNS/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 to assign an individual to the Authorized Organization Representative (AOR) role.

2) **Authorize Grants.gov Roles:** After creating an account on Grants.gov, the EBiz POC receives an email notification 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 the individual assigned the AOR role has been approved as an AOR.

3) **Track Role Status:** After registering with Grants.gov and authorizing the applicant AOR, Grants.gov allows you to track your status.

4) **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 as an AOR; **this step is often missed, and it is crucial for valid and timely submissions.**

### 4.6.2 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, you can create 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 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 4.2 Content and Form of Application Submission 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 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 Agency Contacts.

4.6.3 TIMELY RECEIPT REQUIREMENTS AND PROOF OF TIMELY SUBMISSION

All applications must be received by the due date established in section 4.3 Submission Date and Time. 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 an email with the official date/time stamp and Grants.gov tracking number that Grants.gov assigns to your application.

AMS will not accept application 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’ Policy on Late Applications.

Special Note for Applicants with Slow Internet Connections. Applicants using slow internet connections, 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.

### 4.6.4 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 Terms and Conditions](#) to understand allowable and unallowable costs.
- Apply for the correct grant program
  - Assistance Listing (formerly CFDA) number “10.179” and Funding Opportunity Number “USDA-AMS-TM-MGFSP-G-22-0010”.
- 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 Size/ 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/UEI number on the SF-424 cover page.
- Review the Grants.gov Applicant User and Registration Guides:

### 5.0 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 **4.0 Application and Submission Information**, and that all costs are allowable.

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 sub-applicants 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 subaward project not receiving funding.

### 6.0 AWARD ADMINISTRATION INFORMATION

#### 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 [AMS General Terms and Conditions](#).
6.2 UNSUCCESSFUL APPLICANTS

Unsuccessful applicants will be contacted by AMS via email as soon as possible after the awards are announced to inform them of the results.

6.3 ADMINISTRATIVE AND NATIONAL POLICY REQUIREMENTS

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

6.4 REPORTING

Reporting and award closeout requirements are included in the AMS General Terms and Conditions. If there are any program or award-specific award terms, they 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 MGFSP staff by e-mail with questions about the grant program at IPPGrants@usda.gov.

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.

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 (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 1671-S, 1400 Independence Ave., SW, Washington, DC 20250-0273, 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 seg), 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.