

OMB BURDEN STATEMENT: According to the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, no persons are 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 0584-0512. The time required to complete this information collection is estimated to average 60 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.

Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program Participation Grants

Request For Applications

Critical Dates

March 25, 2010 **Request for Applications announced by FNS**

June 23, 2010 **Proposals are due by 5:00 p.m. EST**

An electronic version of this Request for Applications is available at
<http://fns.usda.gov/>

FNS 729
0584-0512

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Authorization	3
Purpose	3
Who May Apply	4
Eligible Entities	4
Fiscal Year 2010 Priorities	4
Number of Applications	5
Letters of Commitment or Endorsement	5
Funding and Duration	6
Uses of Funds	7
Allowable Uses of Funds	7
Application Review and Grant Award Process	7
Screening and Review Process	7
Technical Evaluation Criteria and Weights	7
Selection of Grant Applications	10
Determination of Award Amounts	10
Award Notification and Issuance of Funds	10
Terms and Conditions	10
Record Keeping and Reporting Requirements	12
Application Procedures	12
Due Dates	12
Mailing Address	13
Checklist for the Application Package	13
Tips for Proposal Writers	15
Attachments	
Attachment 1 - Application for Federal Assistance	
Attachment 2 - Certifications	
Attachment 3 - Authorizing legislation, excerpt from Public Law 107-171	
Attachment D - Budget Narrative Checklist	

AUTHORIZATION

The Food and Nutrition Act of 2008 authorized the Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) to award \$5 million dollars in grants to State agencies*, public health or educational entities, or private nonprofit entities such as community-based or faith-based organizations, food banks, or other emergency feeding organizations, for projects aimed at simplifying the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) application and eligibility determination systems or improving access to SNAP benefits by eligible households.

** Throughout this RFA the term "State agencies" refers to the agencies of the 50 States, the District of Columbia, the Virgin Islands, and Guam that administer SNAP.*

PURPOSE

The purpose of this grant competition is to support efforts by State agencies and their community-based and faith-based partners to develop and implement:

- Simple SNAP application and eligibility determination systems; or
- Measures to improve access to SNAP benefits by eligible applicants.

This RFA seeks diverse proposals that would make the entire process, from certification to recertification, easier and more efficient for applicants and participants. The proposals should include innovative development of new or revised State or County SNAP systems that do not rely solely on outreach. While this innovation does not have to be a completely new idea or concept, the proposal needs to demonstrate that the idea is new and innovative to that specific State or County office. The proposed process can incorporate outreach activities **as long as they do not exceed 25% of the project cost**. The proposal needs to demonstrate direct evidence that the proposed procedural or systemic changes would make the SNAP application and certification process easier for the participant.

We encourage potential applicants to read carefully the review criteria on pages 7-10.

These criteria show potential applicants the qualities FNS expects successful proposals to have; they will also guide the reviewers' evaluation of proposals.

Difference between the Program Participation Grants and the Outreach Grants

The purposes stated above are in sharp contrast with those of the Food and Nutrition Service's (FNS) Outreach Grants Program, which strives to increase SNAP participation by marketing the program, helping applicants complete the application forms, and expanding the range and number of places people can go to get information and assistance with their SNAP applications. Where the Outreach Grants are primarily concerned with getting applicants into the SNAP office or advertising the Program in the community, the SNAP Participation Grants are primarily concerned with improving the quality and efficiency of operations **within** the SNAP office, such as streamlining office procedures or using technology. For example, participation could include,

but is not limited to: web-based application systems, online benefit tools, telephones or call centers or remote enrollment or application sites to improve the application process. For this reason, Program Participation Grants do not support projects that devote more than 25 percent of the requested grant funds to outreach activities--such as advertising, application assistance, screening or pre-qualifying applicants, or out-stationing eligibility workers--whose purpose is to attract or recruit SNAP applicants.

WHO MAY APPLY

Eligible Entities

The entities eligible to receive grants under this competition are:

- The 53 State agencies that administer the SNAP¹;
- State or local governments¹;
- Agencies providing health or welfare services²;
- Public health or educational entities²; and
- Private non-profit entities² such as community-based or faith-based organizations, food banks, or other emergency feeding organizations.

¹ State agencies and State and local governments should have the necessary approvals of state officials (such as councils or legislatures) of funding **prior to submitting the application**. Applicants should also acknowledge in their application that all necessary approvals for funding have been obtained.

² Non-profit organizations are required to submit a copy of the IRS Determination Letter, form 501(c)(3) or proof of application for exempt status under section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code, a list of their Board of Directors if applicable, and their most recent audited financial statements signed by the Treasurer or the Treasurer of the board. Educational entities are also required to submit their most recent financial statements signed by the Treasurer or Treasurer of the board. Applications submitted without these will be considered non-responsive and eliminated from consideration.

FISCAL YEAR 2010 PRIORITIES

The grant competition described in this RFA specifically encourages applications that respond to the priorities described below.

1. Application of Process Improvement Procedures (PIP) to State Procedures

State and local offices today are challenged to serve ever larger caseloads with fewer staff and resources available to them. These offices need to eliminate waste and inefficiencies in office processes to enable them to provide quality customer service. The Department is interested in funding projects that apply a process improvement procedure (PIP) to the State agency's application, certification and recertification procedures to make them more efficient and effective. A PIP, in its most generic form, analyzes processes, identifies weaknesses and strengths, pilots improvements and continuously monitors these changes tweaking them along the way. There are many PIP techniques that could be used. PIP techniques include business process re-engineering, Lean process, total quality management, and Six Sigma. FNS is not requiring that a particular technique be used. The State may do the PIP in-house or hire a contractor. It can include CBOs in the process since they do a lot of application assistance, or not. The proposal should focus on one or more local offices as opposed to the State agency. The proposal should include the extent of the problem, the proposed methodology to address the problem, the expected impact on office procedures and how efficiencies will be measured.

2. Partnerships

The Department is keenly interested in encouraging and supporting partnerships between State agencies administering the SNAP and private non-profit organizations, including faith-based and community-based organizations. Toward that end, FNS is interested in funding projects that involve a partnership between a State agency and one or more private non-profit organizations. The intent is to encourage relationships with private non-profit organizations with strong community ties and thereby enhance the State agencies' communication with the communities they serve. Improvements in public agency practices should be more effective if they are coordinated with community-based initiatives. FNS intends to award grants to applicants who would then award sub-grants to their partners as applicable. Either a State agency or a private, non-profit group can be an applicant.

Number of Applications

As mentioned above, FNS has designed this grant competition to give State agencies control over the submission of applications involving their operations via the mechanism of "Letters of Commitment or Endorsement." If State agencies decide to submit more than one application each, or to enter into more than one partnership each, FNS encourages them to make explicit in each application its relationship to any others. State agencies that decide to submit more than one application should consider carefully the allocation of time stated in each application. State agencies with more than one partner organization may want to consider submitting a single application designed to make sub-grants to the partner organizations. Proposals forwarded by any given State agency should request funding for distinct, non-overlapping activities.

Letters of Commitment or Endorsement

FNS recognizes that the grant proposals responding to this RFA will directly affect State agency operations. Therefore, if the grant proposal is from an entity other than a State agency, it must

show that a State agency strongly endorses or is intimately involved in the proposed project in order to be considered. Please refer to the two types of letters described below to determine which is appropriate to submit with the proposal. Please note that State agencies are able to submit an application on their own as well as partner with another organization. Please refer to the section above on Number of Applications. **Applications submitted without a letter of commitment or a letter of endorsement will be considered non-responsive and eliminated from consideration.** We will not consider additions or revisions to applications once they are received. Therefore, applicants must include the letter of commitment or letter of endorsement with their application package to be considered for funding. Such letters may be addressed to the FNS Grant Officer.

A Letter of Commitment is required if an applicant is **partnering** with a State agency in its proposed project. The State agency's letter of commitment must

- describe the State agency's role in the project,
- identify the amount of time it intends to commit to the project,
- include an attestation that it was involved in the planning of the project, that it will cooperate with the grant applicant in implementing the project, and that it will use the results of the project to improve the State agency practices, and
- be on the respective State agency's letterhead and be signed by an authorizing official.

A **Letter of Commitment** is also required if the grant proposal is from a State agency working in partnership with another organization(s). The letter(s) of commitment must describe

- the organization's role in the project,
- the amount of time it intends to commit to the project and an attestation that it will cooperate with the grant applicant in implementing the project, and
- must be provided on the respective organization's letter head and be signed by an authorizing individual.

A Letter of Endorsement is required if an applicant is not partnering with a State agency. The State agency's letter of endorsement must

- explain that the State agency is aware of the projected impact on its system and is supportive of the proposed project, and
- be on the respective State agency's letterhead and be signed by an authorizing official.

FUNDING AND DURATION

Up to \$5 million is available in FY 2010 for the SNAP Participation Grants. FNS will award the grants through a competitive process. FNS plans to announce the grant awards to the selected grantees in August 2010. Grantees will be allowed to use the grant funds for the duration of the project period. The grants will be funded for the period Fiscal Year 2010 through August 2013; however, we will entertain projects of shorter duration. We awarded seven separate grants in FY 2009 and anticipate awarding approximately five grants in FY 2010; however this number could be larger or smaller depending on the quality and nature of the grants. FNS reminds applicants

that the submission of a proposal does not guarantee funding. Funding for approved grants will be provided through the Grant Award/Letter of Credit process, in the same manner as other funds, upon receipt of a properly executed Grant Agreement and subject to the availability of funding. All Program Participation Grants funds must be obligated and all activities under the Grant must be completed by August 31, 2013.

USES OF FUNDS

Allowable Uses of Funds

Projects predicated on demonstrating the effectiveness of waiving SNAP regulations in order to conform to other programs are not allowable and will not be considered for funding. However, if during the grant period, a State agency determines it needs a waiver, it may apply for one, though there is no guarantee it would be approved.

APPLICATION REVIEW PROCESS

Screening and Review Process

FNS will screen all applications that meet the published deadline for submission to ensure their completeness and conformity to the requirements of this announcement. **FNS will not consider additions or revisions to applications under any circumstances. Application packages are required to be complete upon submission.** Applications that are fully responsive to the screening requirements will be reviewed competitively and scored against the criteria listed on pages 7-10. One or more review panels may be comprised of United States Department of Agriculture staff, other federal agency staff, and other individuals committed to furthering the goals of the SNAP. The resulting scores will provide a ranking of applications according to technical merit for use by selecting officials. (Please see *Selection of Grant Awards* on page 10.)

Technical Evaluation Criteria and Weights

The panels will use the same criteria for all applications, including those that address the FY 2010 priorities.

1. Soundness or Merit of Project Design (50 points)

Problem analysis: The proposal clearly describes the access or participation problems to be solved and provides evidence that they are worth solving.

Impact:

- The proposal demonstrates a direct effect on the application, certification, case maintenance or recertification processes and provides evidence that the changes would make the SNAP process easier for the applicant/recipient.
- It shows a clear progression from idea to practice in a State agency or County office.

- It describes the impact the project is expected to make. Impact can be described in terms of the degree of improvement applicants/participants are expected to experience while going through the application certification process, the percentage of a State agency's or County office's participant caseload that is expected to benefit, or the size of positive impact on a specific population such as elderly applicants (As long as an impact is demonstrated, the effect does not have to be demonstrated to have occurred on a statewide level.).

Quality: The proposal shows:

- thought, analysis, clarity, and the use of relevant facts and knowledge,
- that the project has the potential to be transferred successfully to other State agencies,
- that the project has the potential to be sustained after the grant period ends,
- that partners cooperated in planning the project and clearly delineates the roles and responsibilities of the partners, and
- the letters of commitment or endorsement clearly outline either the State's endorsement or partnership by following the guidelines found on page 6.

Innovation: The application proposes innovative development of new or revised State or County SNAP application processing or certification systems, or portions thereof.

Time period: The proposal includes a project timeline which demonstrates that sufficient time is allotted for proposed tasks.

Feasibility: The project can be implemented without a waiver of SNAP regulations and within the rubric of SNAP law, policy, and practice.

2. Budget Appropriateness and Economic Efficiency (15 points)

Budget: The proposal includes:

- a standard form 424A,
- a line item budget narrative which demonstrates how funds will be spent, by whom and for what purpose, including funds intended to support outreach activities (budgets should not designate more than 25 percent of the overall funds to outreach activities). **See Attachment D budget checklist to assure each question is addressed in the narrative.** Applicants must also describe how those costs relate to the proposed goals and objectives of the project. The narrative should provide enough detail for reviewers to easily understand how costs were determined and how they related to the goals and objectives of the project. There should be adequate justification for budget costs based on current industry costs/standards. If necessary, information on costs should be obtained from applicable organizations or from online sources. Additionally, a copy of the approved negotiated indirect cost rate agreement must be attached if indirect costs are shown as a budget expense to the project.

- if desired, a tiered budget and narrative that describes adjustments the applicant would make if it were awarded funding at different levels (only the primary budget will be analyzed against this criterion).

Efficiency: The proposal is cost effective – it demonstrates that the anticipated results are commensurate with the cost of the project.

NOTE: Proposal submissions which omit the required budget forms, budget narratives and/or line item descriptions will not receive the full point value for this criterion. Therefore, applicants should recognize that a well-written budget narrative which justifies the proposed project expenditures assists the reviewers during the review process.

3. Organizational Experience and Management /Staff Capability (15 points)

Credibility: The proposal establishes the applying organization's credibility and capabilities.

Communication: The proposal demonstrates that effective communication will exist among staff and or partnering organizations. The proposal includes an organizational chart of the proposed project.

Staff: The proposal identifies the director and other key staff. The proposal includes resumes that demonstrate that the proposed staff has the appropriate technical and experiential backgrounds for their proposed roles. If the applicant is unable to identify the director and key staff, it must include with the application package job descriptions for positions that must be advertised. Applicants should address their contingency or back-up plans in the event of key staff departures.

Letters of Commitment: The proposal includes letters of commitment from the project director, key staff, and, if applicable, partnering organizations, delineating duties and amount of effort that each will contribute to the project. These letters are in addition to the letter of commitment from a partnering State agency.

4. Project Oversight and Evaluation (15 points)

Oversight: The proposal demonstrates

- effective and consistent oversight by qualified project managers,
- the time commitment the project managers will dedicate to the project, and
- includes an organizational chart or narrative for the project.

Evaluation: The proposal describes a well-thought-out, organized review and evaluation process that will measure whether the goals of the project have been met. The evaluation should focus on measuring the impact the project seeks to make.

5. Presentation (5 points)

Executive Summary: If page limitations allow, the proposal should include an executive summary of the project of not more than one page.

Quality: The application is well-presented, well-organized, well-written and complete.

Format: The application is single-sided, on 8½ by 11 inch paper. Type size is at least 12 point and margins are at least one inch. The application is limited to 30 pages including attachments. If page limitations allow, the proposal should include a table of contents and an executive summary.

Selection of Grant Applications

After the panel evaluates and scores the grant applications, it will rank them by score, starting with the highest score and make recommendations to the selecting official. The selecting official will consider the panel recommendations. In general, awards will be based on rank funding order. However, **FNS reserves the right to fund out of rank order to achieve agency priorities (such as to grant an award to an entity that includes a joint effort between a State agency and a community-based or faith-based organization, demographic, or socioeconomic diversity, etc.).** If the panel review indicates that FNS has received few or no technically acceptable proposals, the selecting official may determine that FNS will make no awards, or commit less than the \$5 million set aside for this purpose.

As mentioned above, FNS is interested in funding projects that apply a process improvement process (PIP) to the State agency's application, certification and recertification procedures to make them more efficient and effective and projects that involve a partnership between a State agency and one or more private non-profit organizations. However, FNS reserves the right to award grants to several such entities, or not to award any grants to such entities if it does not receive acceptable applications.

Determination of Award Amounts

If an application has been selected for funding and the budget submission is realistic and well-supported, the application will be funded at the level requested. However, FNS reserves the right to fund applications at a lesser amount if it judges that the application can be implemented with less, or if Federal funding is not sufficient to fully fund all applications that merit awards.

Award Notification and Issuance of Funds

FNS will notify selected State agencies or organizations in writing in July or August 2010. Funds will be made available in September 2010.

Terms and Conditions

For each project selected for funding, the applicant must sign a grant agreement, which will contain the terms and conditions of the grant. The grant program will be awarded and administered in accordance with the following Federal regulations. These include but are not limited to:

7 CFR Part 175: Trafficking in Persons, Grants and Cooperative Agreements; 7 CFR Part 3015: Uniform Federal Assistance Requirements; implementing OMB directives (OMB Circular A-87, Cost Principles for State, Local and Indian Tribal Governments now codified at 2 CFR Part 225, OMB Circular A-21, Cost Principles for Educational Institutions now codified at 2 CFR Parts 215 and 220 and OMB Circular A-122, Cost Principles for Non-Profit Organizations now codified at 2 CFR Part 230;

7 CFR Part 3016: Uniform Federal Assistance Requirements for State and Local Governments;

7 CFR Part 3017: Government-wide Debarment and Suspension (Non-procurement);

7 CFR Part 3018: Restrictions on Lobbying;

7 CFR Part 3021: Government-wide Requirements for Drug-Free Workplace (Grants);

7 CFR Part 3052: (OMB Circular A-133) "Audits of States, Local Governments, and Non-Profit Organizations.

7 CFR Part 15: Nondiscrimination

USDA 7 CFR can be referenced at this web site: <http://ecfr.gpoaccess.gov>

If chosen, the applicant must agree to make a good faith effort, on a continuing basis, to maintain a drug-free workplace (including taking specific actions described at 7 CFR Sec. 3021.200 through 3021.230; and (B) identify all workplace locations where work under Federal award will be performed (7 CFR sec. 3021.200). Since Federal entities will no longer collect a paper certification, this may include the following:

- notifying all sub-grantees and contractors of the Drug Free Workplace rules,
- making conforming changes to your internal procedures, directives, training materials, etc., and/or
- incorporating the new rules into your sub-grantee monitoring practices.

FNS will obtain assurance that applicants are neither suspended nor debarred prior to making an award. Applicants chosen for award will also be required to ensure that all sub-contractors and sub-grantees are neither excluded nor disqualified under the suspension and debarment rules found at 7 CFR sec. 3017.300 by doing any **one** of the following:

- reviewing the Excluded Parties List System (EPLS) found at www.epls.gov, or

- collecting a certification that the entity is neither excluded nor disqualified. Since a Federal certification form is no longer available, the grantee or sub-grantee electing this method must devise its own, including a clause to this effect in the sub-grant agreement and in any procurement.

RECORD KEEPING AND REPORTING REQUIREMENTS

Grantees selected in connection with this Request for Applications will be required to submit quarterly Financial Status Reports (SF-269A), quarterly progress reports, and final reports. Grantees will be required to submit an original and two copies of each report. FNS will provide a reporting schedule and the address to which grantees may send reports at the time of award.

The selected agencies or organizations must operate a financial management system that provides accurate, current and complete disclosure of the financial status of the project. The progress reports must provide a brief description of the project activities conducted during the reporting period, major accomplishments with completion dates and budget deviations from the proposed plan, difficulties encountered and solutions developed, and major planned activities for the next quarter. The final report should be a project summary that includes lessons learned, future implications within the State, and transferability to other States.

Materials developed with funding from this grant must be submitted in MS Word format and a hard copy must also be submitted at the end of the grant period. The Federal awarding agency reserves a royalty-free, non-exclusive, and irrevocable license to reproduce, publish or otherwise use, and to authorize others to use, for Federal Government purposes, the copyright in any work developed under a grant, sub-grant, or contract under a grant or sub-grant or any rights of copyright to which a grantee, sub-grantee, or a contractor purchases ownership with grant support.

APPLICATION PROCEDURES

Due Date for the Application Package

The completed application package must **be received** by FNS at the following address on or before **June 23, 2010 at 5:00 p.m. Eastern Standard Time**. FNS will not consider additions or revisions to applications once they have been received.

Applicants must meet this deadline by delivering the application or by mailing it sufficiently in advance of the deadline to ensure its timely receipt, or by submitting it electronically by accessing www.grants.gov. If you opt to submit your application/proposal electronically through the grants.gov portal, **please allow ample time to familiarize yourself with the system's requirements**. Users of this system will need to register to obtain both a Data Universal Number (DUNS) and a Contract Registry Number (CCR) which may take several days. Therefore, we suggest you visit the site sometime prior to attempting to submit your application electronically to review the instructions on how to obtain a DUNS assignment as well as a CCR. While both numbers are required to submit the application electronically via grants.gov, the DUNS number is a requirement even if the application is submitted in hardcopy format. You

can contact Dun and Bradstreet at 1-800-234-3867 to obtain a DUNS number. We suggest you submit the online application at least two (2) weeks in advance of the due date just in case there are problems with the government-wide website, and you want to submit your application via a mail delivery service. All applicants opting to submit their application/proposal via www.grants.gov must also send an email to Lisa Johnson, Grant Officer, at Lisa.Johnson@fns.usda.gov advising that the application was submitted through the grants.gov portal. This email must be received no later than 5:00 p.m. Eastern Standard Time on the due date as well. Users should also be aware that the grants.gov system provides several confirmation notices and that the initial confirmation is strictly to advise that an attempt was made to apply electronically rather than confirmation that the application was accepted.

- For mailed or delivered applications, one original and two copies must be submitted. If you opt to mail your application we strongly suggest using a mail delivery service that guarantees delivery and allows you to track delivery to FNS. Also, FNS will not accept faxed or direct e-mailed applications.
- Late applications will not be considered in this competition.
- Applications submitted without the required forms, certifications, supporting documents and the authorized representative's signatures will not be considered in this competition.

Mailing Address and Contact Information

- Application packages, mailed or hand-delivered, must be sent to:
Lisa Johnson, Grant Officer
Food and Nutrition Service
Grants Management Division
3101 Park Center Drive, Room 738
Alexandria, VA 22302
- Applicants may contact Lisa Johnson to ask any questions about the grant application and questions seeking clarification of technical or procedural aspects of the grant competition via e-mail at Lisa.Johnson@fns.usda.gov or telephone at (703) 305-2848.

Checklist for the Application Package

The application package must include:

The Application for Federal Assistance

- Cover Letter – A cover letter should be the first page of the grant application. The cover letter must indicate whether the FY 2010 priorities are being addressed. (The FY 2010 priorities are Application of Process Improvement Procedures (PIP) to State Procedures and State/Non-Profit Partnerships. If no indication is provided the application will not be considered for the State/Non-Profit Partnership priority. If the application addresses the State/Non-Profit Partnership priority, the cover letter must include an attestation to that effect.
- Grant proposal responds to the criteria and includes all of the proposal components discussed herein;

Mandatory Forms and Certifications:

(Applications submitted without mandatory forms and certifications will be considered non-responsive and eliminated from consideration.)

- The Government-wide Standard Forms 424 (SF-424) Form Families are located on the Grants.gov Forms Repository, Active Forms website. Applicants that choose not to submit their application through grant.gov must apply for a grant by downloading the application package using the compatible software identified on grants.gov. To obtain an Active Government-wide SF-424 application package, you must access the following website: http://www07.grants.gov/agencies/aforms_repository_information.jsp. This website also has a link to the lists of Grants.gov compatible software that helps the applicant navigate, download software, and complete the grants.gov grant application package. There is no fee associated with any of the forms available on Grants.gov.
- We advise that you allow ample time to familiarize yourself with the system's requirements. You will need both a Data Universal Number (DUNS) and a Contract Registry Number (CCR) to access the system. You can contract Dun and Bradstreet at 1-800-234-3867 to obtain a DUNS number if you do not have one already.
- An Anti-Lobbying Certification (<http://www.whitehouse.gov/omb/grants/sfillin.pdf>). If the entity or applicant does not conduct lobbying activities, please indicate "not applicable" on the form;
- Certification Regarding Debarment: Applicants chosen for award will be required to attest that they are not suspended or debarred and will be required to verify that all sub-awardees and contracts are not suspended or debarred.
- Optional Survey on Ensuring Equal Opportunity for Applicants. This survey is a tool to allow the Federal government to better understand the population of applicants for Federal funds. The survey, which is voluntary, seeks input from nonprofit private organizations (not including private universities).
- **Non-profit organizations are required to submit a copy of the IRS Determination Letter, form 501(c)(3) or proof of application for exempt status under section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code, a list of their Board of Directors if applicable, and their most recent audited financial statements signed by the Treasurer or the Treasurer of the board. Educational entities are required to submit their most recent financial statements signed by the Treasurer or Treasurer of the board. Applications submitted without this information will be considered non-responsive and eliminated from consideration.**

The Correct Number of Copies

- An original bearing the original signature of the authorized representative.
- Two copies of the original application.

The Correct Format

- The original must be ready for copying, i.e., single-sided, unstapled, unbound, and on 8 ½ by 11 inch white paper;
- Type size must be at least 12 point;

- Margins must be at least one inch;
- Original and copies must be on white paper;
- The application may be no more than **thirty pages** long, including attachments such as letter of commitment and resumes. The Federal application forms, i.e., SF-424, SF-424(A) and SF-424(B) and Anti-Lobbying certifications do not count toward the thirty-page limit. The application and attachments cannot include videotapes, brochures, binders, folders, or sleeves.

Tips for Proposal Writers

- 1. Read the RFA carefully, more than once.**
- 2. Use the review criteria on pages 7-10 to structure your proposal.**
- 3. State clearly in your cover letter if your application addresses the FY 2010 priorities.**
- 4. Make sure budget figures are consistent across displays.**
- 5. Don't assume that reviewers know anything about your organization or its work.**
- 6. Don't leave out required components such as budgets, resumes, or letters of commitment.**
- 7. Have one or more persons who were not involved in writing the proposal read it and give your suggestions for improving it.**

Attachment D: Budget Narrative Checklist – This checklist will assist you in completing the budget narrative portion of the application. Please review the checklist to ensure the items below are addressed in the budget narrative. **NOTE:** The project description (statement of work) must capture the bona fide need. The budget and budget narrative must be in line with the project description. FNS reserves the right to request information not clearly addressed.

	YES	NO
Personnel		
Did you include all key employees paid for by this grant under this heading?		
Are employees of the applicant’s organization identified by name and position title?		
Did you reflect the current yearly salary as a percentage of time to be devoted to the project?		
Fringe Benefits		
Did you include your organization’s fringe benefit amount along with the basis for the computation?		
Did you list the type of fringe benefits to be covered with Federal funds?		
Travel		
Are travel expenses itemized? For example origination/destination points, number and purpose of trips, number of staff traveling, mode of transportation and cost of each trip.		
Are the Attendee Objectives and travel justifications included in the narrative?		
Is the basis for the lodging estimates identified in the budget? For example include excerpt from travel regulations.		
Equipment		
Is the need for the equipment justified in the narrative?		
Are the types of equipment, unit costs, and the number of items to be purchased listed in the budget?		
Is the basis for the cost per item or other basis of computation stated in the budget?		
Supplies		
Are the types of supplies, unit costs, and the number of items to be purchased reflected in the budget?		
Is the basis for the costs per item or other basis of computation stated?		
Contractual: (FNS reserves the right to request information on all contractual awards and costs after the award of contract.)		
Has the bona fide need been clearly identified in the project description to justify the cost for a contract or sub-grant expense(s) shown in the budget?		
A justification for all sole-source contracts must be provided in the budget narrative prior to approving this identified cost.		
Other		
Consultant Services: Has the bona fide need been clearly identified in the project description to justify the cost shown on the budget? The following information must be provided in the justification: description of service, the consultant’s name, and itemized list of all direct costs and fees. The cost of salaries and wages must have the number of personnel including the position title (specialty and specialized qualifications as appropriate to costs), number of estimated hours times hourly wages, and all expenses and fees directly related to the proposed services to be rendered to the project.		
For all other line items listed under the “Other” heading, list all items to be covered under this heading along with the methodology on how the applicant derived the costs to be charged to the program.		

Indirect Costs		
Is the amount requested based upon a rate approved by a Federal Agency? If yes, is a copy of the negotiated rate agreement must be provided along with the application?		
If no negotiated indirect cost agreement exists to determine the base rate of this cost; the application should show this cost as a direct cost to the budget.		