

# Gus Schumacher Nutrition Incentive Program (GusNIP)

## Frequently Asked Questions

1. Do grocery stores participating in GusNIP/PPR programs have to source a percentage of produce locally or regionally?

No, there is a funding preference for local and regional sourcing, but it is not required.

2. Do farmers markets have to be open 40 hours a week to participate in GusNIP/PPR programs?

No, farmers markets do not have to have extended hours. There is a funding preference for projects that involve firms with extended hours and days of operation, but it is not required.

3. Do GusNIP programs have to have a produce-for-produce design? Meaning that a SNAP shopper must buy produce to earn an incentive benefit to buy more produce?

Under the GusNIP grant program there are three (3) allowable models for incentive disbursement and redemption. These three allowable models are:

- i. *Any SNAP eligible food for GusNIP qualifying F/V:* Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) households purchase any SNAP eligible food using their SNAP benefits and then these households receive incentives that are redeemable only for the purchase of GusNIP qualifying fruits or vegetables.
- ii. *GusNIP qualifying F/V for any SNAP eligible food:* SNAP households purchase GusNIP qualifying fruits or vegetables using their SNAP benefits and then these households receive incentives that are redeemable for the purchase of any SNAP eligible food.
- iii. *GusNIP qualifying F/V for GusNIP qualifying F/V:* SNAP households purchase GusNIP qualifying fruits or vegetables using their SNAP benefits and then these households receive incentives that are redeemable only for the purchase of GusNIP qualifying fruits or vegetables. This model is preferred.

Incentive models that require no purchase with SNAP benefits are not allowable under GusNIP. SNAP households must spend SNAP benefits in order to earn incentives under GusNIP.

4. Must State SNAP agencies sign off on any GusNIP grant application?

Yes, applicants must obtain and submit a SNAP State Agency letter of support as part of their application.

5. Do midsized PPR and GusNIP grant projects need to test new technologies?

No, but it is expected that they will take advantage of available technology and some may participate in the testing/piloting of new systems

6. Do PPR grant projects need to serve all residents in an entire county?

No, a pilot project in one healthcare facility is eligible.

7. Must participants in PPR grant projects be receiving SNAP or eligible for SNAP?

No.

8. Are Medicaid, Medicare and VA health plans the only ones that qualify as State health plans?

Yes.

9. Is there a template partnership agreement for State Medicaid Agency?

No.

10. For PPR grant applications, what needs to be included in an MOU with the State health plan?

An acknowledgement from the State plan that they know about the proposed program and that they do not object to it. The goal is to encourage applicants/grantees to develop a strong relationship with the State plan.

11. If our organization would like to subcontract for more than 33% or 50% of the grant total, should we request a waiver in advance or include a request with our application?

Email a request in advance and if granted, include the email from USDA with your application.

12. Is it allowable to use a pro-rated amount for office space as a form of qualifying match?

Yes. Rental costs may be pro-rated and the portion of use charged to the award, either under the Federal funds or matching, if that is the normal procedure for that organization. The Uniform Guidance 2 CFR Part 200.403 states that all costs should be accorded consistent treatment. Therefore if other funding is provided the organization, or they participate in other projects which use their facility, those projects should also be charged their fair share of the rent. If the organization receives funding from other sources for projects, and those projects are not charged rent fees, then this grant project should not be charged. They should be sure to document how the pro-ration was determined, and to keep records accordingly for audit

purposes. Please refer to the Uniform Guidance 2 CFR Part 200.465 for specific information on rental costs.

13. Should the names, addresses and FNS numbers of all participating firms be included in the application and counted towards the 15-page limit?

Provide the information in an appendix; this will not count towards the 15 page limit and please do not make the font size any smaller than 10.

14. Exactly what match verification is to be included with a GusNIP grant application?

While you should obtain matching commitment letters from each of your third parties which explain the dollar amount of the match, the period of time the matching will be provided, and how it can/will be spent on the project, these do not need to be included in the application. You must keep these on file for audit purposes. You should include in the application a listing of matching sources to include the name of the organization, the dollar amount of the matching, and provide a budget breakout on how these funds will be spent.

15. Should match verification be submitted as appendix to the application?

No, it should be provided with the budget information.

16. What information must be included in an MOU with a participating firm?

See Page 19-20 of the RFA (<https://nifa.usda.gov/sites/default/files/rfa/fy-2019-gus-schumacher-incentive-program-rfa-revised-20190509.pdf>).

17. Does the FNS July 2018 notice regarding retailer approval still apply? (<https://fns-prod.azureedge.net/sites/default/files/snap/FINI-Equal-Treatment-Reporting-Notice.pdf>)

No. The process for allowable participation of firms in GusNIP grant projects is outlined in the RFA at Page 18-19. Before a firm can participate in a GusNIP grant project, the following steps must occur in this order (this process may take 60 calendar days):

- i. If the firm is not already SNAP authorized, the firm applies for and obtains SNAP Authorization;
- ii. The grantee and firm sign a MOU;
- iii. The firm submits the signed MOU to the SNAP Retailer Service Center;
- iv. The grantee submits to FNS the firm's information (i.e., FNS number, firm name, firm address); and,
- v. FNS responds within 30 calendar days to approve or deny the participation of the firm.

18. Should projects document the new budget category requirements within the Budget Justification document, or is there another place?

Anything to do with the budget information should be provided in the Budget Justification section.

19. May a non-profit organization apply to be a reporting and evaluation center?

See Eligibility section (page 25-26) of RFA

20. Will the cooperative agreement(s) for NTAE be rebid every year?

No

21. Should applicants for NTAE include proposed plans for years beyond FY 2020 based on potential continued funding?

Per RFA, these are 4-year projects

22. May an organization apply to coordinate reporting and evaluation functions and subcontract with other groups to perform training and technical assistance functions? Yes (see subcontract information in RFA)

23. Do indirect costs count within the <25% admin costs?

No, indirect costs are separate from the administrative costs referenced in the RFA.

24. Based on the information from the RFP, this sounds to us like we can submit our indirect cost rate that we have calculated from audits (but is not a federally negotiated rate yet), and if awarded we will go through the process of submitting the indirect rate package for review. Does this sound accurate?

You may estimate what you think your indirect cost rate is and the amount and put that on the budget pending negotiation. However, please note, it may take six to nine months to negotiate a rate if NIFA is your cognizant negotiating agency. The funds for the indirect costs will not be released for payment until the rate has been approved.

25. Can there be a sub-award within a sub-award structure? (i.e., if X organization is the primary, and Y organization is a sub-award, can they sub-award portions for MIFMA and other TA partners?)

Yes.

26. Are incentives for evaluation allowed (e.g., farmers market consumers completing surveys)? If so, should that be included in the evaluation budget, or the grantees budget?

Incentives for completing surveys are not an allowable cost.

**For addition questions, please see contact information in the RFA**