



REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS:

TEST KITCHEN

Released: February 14, 2019  
Proposals Due: March 15, 2019



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- Purpose:** To identify and test promising ideas and practices designed to answer the question: *how might we ensure that more kids have access to meals in the summer.*
- Goals:** Participation in the Test Kitchen allows organizations to test their own ideas, contribute to ongoing research related to summer hunger, and develop expertise related to innovation and pilot design.
- Financial Support:** Selected organizations will receive grants up to \$10,000 to support pilot implementation based on need.
- Eligibility:** Organizations must be 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization currently in good standing or recognized by the IRS as eligible to receive tax-deductible contributions. Organizations that submit concepts allowable under current legislation should be approved SFSP or NSLP summer meal sponsors by the time proposals are due. To receive funding all proposals submitted should be for new concepts, rather than existing bodies of work.
- Proposals Due:** March 15, 2019, by 5:00 pm EST via email
- Contact:** Kirsten Craft  
Innovation Manager, Share Our Strength  
[kcraft@strength.org](mailto:kcraft@strength.org) or (202) 715-6676

## **No Kid Hungry**

No child should go hungry in America. But 1 in 6 kids will face hunger this year. No Kid Hungry is ending childhood hunger through effective programs that provide kids with the food they need. No Kid Hungry is a campaign of Share Our Strength, an organization working to end hunger and poverty.

## **The Test Kitchen**

The Test Kitchen is a concept accelerator designed to help nonprofits, schools, faith organizations, and local governments turn their best ideas into validated strategies and promising practices. The focus of each cohort is different, as selected innovation teams work concurrently to develop and test new ideas that may help reduce childhood hunger. This year's focus is on ending childhood hunger in the summer. Organizations selected for the first cohort will work in partnership with No Kid Hungry to pilot a new approach to increase children's access to summer meals. Selected teams will receive grant funds and technical assistance to support a pilot to test their idea.

## **Purpose**

Hunger is a complex social problem that lacks one easy solution. We know that organizations like yours are taking creative approaches to tackle this issue. We also know that sometimes trying something new can seem impossible. Last fall we launched a national survey on the state on innovation in our industry and learned that almost 90 percent of people think innovation is required to end hunger, but funding constraints and internal capacity often prevent great ideas from becoming a reality.

This is a problem. Progress requires understanding communities' needs, something local partners know best. When current approaches to providing children with access to meals fail to reach enough kids, experimentation at the local level helps push improvement forward. That is why we are launching the Test Kitchen, a concept accelerator designed to help organizations like yours turn their best ideas into validated strategies and promising practices.

Organizations selected for the first cohort will receive grants up to \$10,000 and technical assistance from No Kid Hungry (NKH) to test a new model, strategy, or program designed to provide more kids with meals in the summer. With this support, organizations will have the opportunity to test out ideas they have dreamed of and receive the support required to ensure that if successful, they are positioned for scale. While each organization will be responsible for managing their own pilot, they will join a cohort of like-minded individuals who are doing similar work. Through the cohort-based model, organizations will be able to get additional perspective on their work from other leaders in the industry and accelerate their own learning.

## **Summer Meals for Kids**

The first cohort will come together to test concepts that answer the question: **how might we ensure that more kids have access to meals in the summer**. Why summer? The national summer meals program is a lifeline for children in need, but it does not reach many of the kids who need help. But you already knew this. When we asked organizations where innovation was most needed in our 2019 Hunger Innovation Survey, the most common response was summer meals. To be accepted into the program, interested organizations should propose a concept that answers this question.

We are interested in ideas that could operate within existing federal guidelines, as well as ideas that may not be reimbursable under current law. While we are open to all ideas that help feed kids in the summer, our team is especially interested in concepts that impact rural and tribal populations. Summer can be an especially hard time of year in these communities, where lack of public transportation, the high cost of personal car ownership, and a limited number of summer meal sites all create unique hurdles for families who are unable to put food on the table.

## **Experience**

Organizations selected for the accelerator will work in partnership with NKH to finalize and test their idea. The process starts with an in-person project launch hosted onsite at the partner organization. At the launch, staff from NKH's Program Innovation team will work with partner organizations to discuss the pilot and the evaluation plan. Based on these conversations, NKH will provide support in the creation of required planning documents. This may include developing a project timeline, an estimated budget, an assessment plan, and identifying anticipated risks and intended outcomes.

Following the planning process, partner organizations will be responsible for implementing the pilot. While the pilot is running, NKH will be on standby to help as needed. During the last weeks of the pilot, NKH will conduct a second visit to assist with data collection and pilot evaluation. Based on conversations during the planning process, this may include helping to collect survey data, conducting interviews with program participants, or assisting with data analysis.

At the conclusion of the program, partners will submit a final report that details their work and experience with the program. The report will include a short summary of the model tested and lessons learned from the pilot, any relevant data from the pilot evaluation, and a narrative about the accelerator experience. NKH will compile a report on the results of all pilots and share with the cohort to facilitate further discussion and learning.

**Process:**

Organizations may only submit one proposal and proposals must be submitted by March 15, 2019, by 5:00 pm EST. Please assemble all materials into a single PDF and return proposals to Kirsten Craft via email at [kcrafft@strength.org](mailto:kcrafft@strength.org). Organizations selected for the Test Kitchen will be notified via email by March 27, 2019.

Interested organizations must be 501(c)(3) nonprofit organizations currently in good standing, or recognized by the IRS as eligible to receive tax-deductible contributions. To receive funding, all proposals submitted should be for new concepts, rather than existing bodies of work. The purpose of this program is to test and invest in new ideas. Proposals will be evaluated on ingenuity, viability, and completeness of response.

**Proposal Requirements:**

The proposal should be no more than five pages in its entirety and include the following:

**Cover Sheet (5 points):** Identify the organization and team leader, including his or her contact information.

**Statement of Interest (20 points):** Explain your interest in the program by answering the following questions. The statement of interest should be no more than one page.

- Why is your organization interested in being selected for this program?
- What do you hope your organization would learn from participation in this program?
- Who at your organizations will be leading this work? Do they have the capacity to implement a new strategy? What makes them qualified to lead this pilot?
- In order to implement this pilot, what supports would be most helpful?

**Concept Proposal (50 points):** Please explain the concept you would like to test. To the best of your ability, please ensure that your proposal provides answers to the below questions. The concept proposal should be no more than two pages.

- What is your idea?
- Why do you think this idea, model, program, or strategy will ensure that more kids in your community have access to meals in the summer?
- Why is your community the best place to test this idea?
- Best case scenario, what do you imagine will be the results of your pilot?
- Why is this concept innovative?
- What steps will your organization need to take to implement this pilot?
- What challenges might you face in implementation?

**Feedback Summary (10 points):** It is important to get feedback from others about your concept. Identify three people who could provide helpful feedback and have a conversation with each of these individuals. For example, program beneficiaries may be able to tell you whether they would participate and why or why not. Volunteers may be able to tell you whether they would volunteer to help with this project. Community leaders could point you toward possible partners for collaboration. After having these conversations, summarize what you learned in a response of no more than one page.

**Concept Budget (10 points):** Submit a budget that details expected costs associated with piloting your concept.

**Team Members (5 points):** List the name, organization, positions, phone number, and email address for each member of the team you will work with on the pilot and describe the role that each individual will play. Teams should consist of three to five individuals and may consist of individuals from one or multiple organizations.

**Expectations:**

Teams selected should expect the following:

**Grant Agreement:** Selected organizations will receive an intent to participate letter and grant agreement at the time of acceptance for review and signature.

**Pilot Planning Meeting:** Prior to the launch of each pilot, a representative from NKH will visit partner organizations to assist with pilot planning. Selected organizations are responsible for working with NKH to set up the pilot planning meeting and inviting required parties to participate.

**Pilot Site Visit:** Once pilots are in operation NKH will conduct a site visit to observe the pilot in action and assist with data collection. Selected organizations are responsible for working with NKH to ensure a successful site visit. Depending on the nature of the pilot, this may include setting up interviews with program participants and staff.

**Data Collection and Sharing:** Selected organizations are responsible for collecting appropriate data during the pilot to allow for successful measurement. Organizations should expect to share this data and any relevant baseline data with NKH to allow for a complete evaluation. In the event that an idea delivers exemplary results, NKH may wish to work with the organization to further test or socialize the concept.