**Request for** **Applications**

**FY2021 National School Lunch Program**

**Equipment Assistance Grants for School Food Authorities**

The Fiscal Year (FY) 2021 Agriculture Appropriations Act awarded the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) $30 million to distribute to State Agencies for the purpose of awarding equipment assistance grants (EAG). Nebraska received $168,070 for equipment assistance to eligible school food authorities (SFA) participating in the National School Lunch Program (NSLP). Funds will be distributed through a competitive grant process.

The funds will allow SFAs to purchase equipment to serve healthier meals that meet the updated meal patterns, with emphasis on offering more fruits and vegetables in school meals, improving food safety and expanding access to the program.

# **Eligibility Requirements:**

* The SFA must currently be participating in the NSLP
* SFAs that apply for this grant will be considered based on the below priority order:

Priority 1:

School buildings that have not received previous equipment grant funding through the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) of 2009 or the FY 2010, FY 2013 –FY 2020 Agricultural Appropriations Act.

Priority 2:

School buildings that were previous recipients to equipment grant funding through the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) of 2009 or the FY 2010, FY 2013- FY 2020 Agricultural Appropriations Act.

(\*Note: Free and reduced percentages are based on October 2019 eligibility data because state-wide October 2020 data is not available because SFAs were operating the Summer Food Service Program in SY20-21.)

**Equipment:**

For purposes of this grant, equipment is defined as an article of nonexpendable, tangible personal property with a useful life of more than one year and a per unit acquisition cost equal to or greater than

the lesser of the capitalization level established by the SFA’s School Board for financial statement purposes, or $5,000. For the FY 2021 Equipment Assistance Grant, Congress has specified that the threshold for the purchase of equipment cannot be lower than $1,000.

Items like school lunch trays, utensils, etc. would not be approved as it is unlikely these fit your SFA’s definition of capital equipment.

* In the grant application, SFAs must report their equipment capitalization threshold formally set by the action of its School Board (see [page 8](#Check1)) and submit supporting documentation with the application packet.
* Equipment requests may include new equipment, renovation of equipment or replacement of equipment. Only one piece or unit of equipment may be requested. Allowable capital equipment costs include added parts to make the equipment more functional for its purpose, costs directly related to removal of old equipment and installation of the new equipment; these costs must be included in the grant amount requested. If the SFA does the installation, employee(s) hours must be time certified as part of the required documentation submitted to NDE for payment.
* If replacing equipment, the SFA must describe the current condition of the equipment, report the age of the equipment, and what will be done with the existing equipment.
* The equipment requested must primarily be used in the NSLP. However, may also be used in the School Breakfast Program (SBP), Afterschool Snack Program, Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Program and the Summer Food Service Program.
* As with all Federal grant funds, equipment procured with these grant funds must be necessary, reasonable and allocable. For example, purchasing a freezer or a salad bar would be an allowable cost; however, renovating the food service area would be a capital expense which must be paid with SFA general funds.

# **Funding:**

* Equipment attachments and accessory pieces may be considered as part of the grant request (if they are required for the equipment to function appropriately (e.g., stand mixer plus attachments (slicers, grinders, graters, etc.) would be one unit).
* A centralized kitchen which serves multiple schools may request equipment.
* Installation, shipping, and labor costs associated with capital equipment are allowed. If the SFA does the installation, employee(s) hours must be time certified as part of the required documentation submitted to NDE for payment. If the funding for these costs are needed by an external vendor, the installation and labor costs must be included in the equipment specifications.
* Grant funds cannot be used for equipment that is currently in the process of being purchased or for previously purchased equipment. This grant awards are only applicable to equipment that is procured and purchased during the grant award period.
* SFAs will receive reimbursement for the equipment by submitting a completed NDE 28-003 Report of Expenditures Form, accompanied by a copy of the paid invoice and additional documentation indicated on the award notification letter. The expended amount must be at minimum the amount of the indicated capitalization threshold to meet the Federal definition of “equipment”.
* SFAs will be expected to **fully expend their grant funds by September 30, 2022**. However, once awarded and proper procurement has been completed, SFAs are encouraged to submit documentation for payment as soon as possible.

**Focus Areas:**

To make the most effective use of the funding, the SFA must address how the equipment purchase will enable the school to meet one or more of the following key areas:

1. **Improved Nutritional and Food Quality:** Equipment that lends itself to improving the quality of school foodservice meals (e.g. purchasing equipment to replace a deep fat fryer).
2. **Improved Food Safety:** Equipment that improves the safety of food served in the school meal programs (e.g. hot/cold holding equipment, dish washing equipment, refrigeration, milk coolers, freezers, blast chillers).
3. **Improved or Expanded Participation in the School Breakfast Program:** Equipment that allows the school to support expanded participation in the School Breakfast Program (e.g. equipment for serving meals in a non-traditional setting such as Breakfast in the classroom or to better utilize cafeteria space).

# **Procurement:**

* SFAs are required to competitively procure equipment by following all Federal procurement rules, except where State and/or local procurement policies are more restrictive.
* Informal purchase methods may be used for any purchase less than the federal small purchase threshold of $250,000 (or your local threshold if more restrictive). Informal purchase methods require obtaining three bids and does not require a formal request for proposals.
* *The equipment specifications and three (3) bid/price quotes* must be submitted with the grant application. *Applications without specifications and bids will not be considered for funding.*
* Bids/price quotes are generally only valid for a certain length of time; request the bid to be valid for **six months**.
* Equipment purchase obligations made prior to the grant award are not eligible for payment

**Evaluation Criteria:**

Applications will be scored based on the following criteria:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **SCORING CRITERA:** | **POINTS:** |
| Completed application packet | Required for consideration |
| Eligibility priority as indicated on [Page 1](#EligibilityRequirement) (determined by NDE). | 15 |
| Equipment request specifically addresses one or more of the four focus areas and narrative addresses the positive impact the purchase will have on the school meals program. | 40 |
| The application clearly and concisely explains why the SFA needs the equipment and why the equipment is appropriate for the site. | 15 |
| The application reflects effort to get the best possible value for the money including written specification and equipment selection; bid research, and bid reliability. All costs associated with purchase, installation, and a timeline for expending the funds have been included. | 20 |
| TOTAL | 90 |

# **Timeline:**

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| --- | --- |
| November 4, 2021 by 5:00pm (CST) | Applications must be postmarked on this date to be reviewed and considered for this funding opportunity. |
| November 8 – 12, 2021 | NDE reviews and scores all submitted applications. |
| November 19, 2021 | Notification of grant awards sent to SFAs. SFAs not awarded will be notified. |
| September 30, 2022 | All grant funds must be fully expended. |

**State Reporting Requirements:**

NDE Nutrition Services is required to submit quarterly and annual progress reports to the FNS Regional Program Office that includes the following information:

* Progress/Challenges made in solicitation, obligation and expenditure of funds by the State agency;
* Progress/Challenges experienced by the SFA/LEA in expenditure of funds;
* Number of Equipment Assistance Grant applicants and number approved;
* Report on the total amount and percentage of administrative costs expended as compared to the total amount allowable for administrative costs.
* School name and free/reduced priced rate (Annually)
* Total award amount (Annually)
* The type and cost of each piece of equipment funded (Annually)

**Distribution of Funds:**

Grant awards will be for a dollar amount *not to exceed* that specified in the Grant Award document. **Actual funds will be distributed through a reimbursement process, with final grant payment determined by submission of actual invoices for equipment and applicable related costs**. The related costs may include those that are reasonably required to procure new equipment and place it in service (including delivery, installation, testing, disposition of old equipment, etc.). Funds may not be used for administrative costs associated with the grant application process or costs related to the procurement and installation processes. FY 2021 equipment assistance grant funds may *not* be used for kitchen renovations.

***Please note:*** Old equipment must be disposed of in accordance with applicable Federal regulations. See 2 CFR 200.313 for information on equipment disposal.

SFAs will be financially responsible for any expenditure in excess of that specified in the Grant Award.

Funds not fully obligated or expended by June 30, 2022, are subject to withdrawal by the State agency.

**Additional Information:**

This application packet also includes the following attachments for SFA review:

* Attachment A: Regulations, Principals, and Assurances

Please refer to Nutrition Services web site for more information regarding the Equipment Assistance Grant: <https://www.education.ne.gov/ns/nslp/equipment-grants/>

**Contact Information:**

Questions may be directed to the Nebraska Department of Education, Nutrition Services at [nde.nsweb@nebraska.gov](mailto:nde.nsweb@nebraska.gov) or by contacting Jessica Furmanski: [jessica.furmanski@nebraska.gov](mailto:jessica.furmanski@nebraska.gov),

308-660-8755.

# **Checklist for Submitting the**

**FY2021 National School Lunch Program**

**Equipment Assistance Grants for School Food Authorities**

1. Complete the *four* *parts* of the grant application. If any question is left unanswered, the application will be considered incomplete and will be excluded from grant award consideration.
2. If the SFA is submitting an application for more than one school building, even though some information may be common to all, a separate Equipment Assistance Grant Application must be submitted for each school building.
3. A complete application packet includes:

* Part 1: SFA/School Building Profile
* Part 2: Grant Criterion Justification
* Part 3b: Equipment Specification
* Part 3b: All obtained bids or quotes
* Part 4: Certification and Signatures > This form must be signed by the district’s Authorized Representative and the district’s Food Service Manager/Director

1. Be sure to keep a copy of the application for your records.
2. Verify the application is complete and all components in #3 are included. Any application that is not complete or fails to include the necessary application components will be disqualified.
3. Mail the completed application packet to:

FY 2021 Equipment Assistance Grant

c/o Jessica Furmanski

NDE –Nutrition Services

PO Box 94987

Lincoln, NE 68509-9487

**OR**

Send application packet via email to:

jessica.furmanski@nebraska.gov

1. Applications must be postmarked or emailed by **November 4, 2021**.
   1. Faxed applications will not be accepted.
2. Recipients of the FY2021 Equipment Assistance Grants will be notified by email on   
   November 19, 2021.

**Application for FY2021 National School Lunch Program**

# **Equipment Assistance Grants for School Food Authorities**

*A fillable, electronic version of the Equipment Assistance Grant Application is also available online at* <https://www.education.ne.gov/ns/nslp/equipment-grants/>

**Part 1: SFA/School Building Profile**

**School Information:**

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| 1. **School District Name:** | | | | |
| 1. **School District Agreement Number and Building Site Number:**   (9 digit: 6 digit agreement number + 3 digit building number) | | | | |
| 1. **School Building Name:**   (where equipment will be located) | | | | |
| **Physical Address of School Building:** | | **City** | **State**  NE | **Zip** |
| **School Building Grades:** | | **School Building Enrollment:** | | |
| 1. **Type of Kitchen in this Building - check all that apply:** | | | | |
|  | **On-Site Kitchen – meals are prepared and served in this location.** | | | |
|  | **Satellite or Partial-Prep Kitchen – all or some food items may be prepared at a base or central kitchen and transported to this location.** | | | |
|  | **Base or Central Kitchen - meals are prepared and transported to other school buildings.** | | | |
|  | **How many locations receive meals from this kitchen? \_\_\_\_\_\_** | | | |
|  | **How many meals are prepared daily in this kitchen? \_\_\_\_\_\_** | | | |

**Contact Information:**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| 1. **Name of Authorized Representative** *(person designated by the SFA as ultimately responsible for all aspects of the National School Lunch Program)***:** | | | |
| 1. **Title:** | | | |
| 1. **Email Address:** | | | |
| 1. **Telephone Number:** | | | |
| 1. **School District Mailing Address:** | **City** | **State**  NE | **Zip** |

**Part 2: Grant Criterion Justification**

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| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Criteria 1** | **Equipment request meets one or more of the six focus areas.** | | **Points**  **40** |
|  |  | |  |
| Describe how the equipment purchase will enable the school to specifically meet one or more of the following focus areas and have a positive impact on the school meals program. Select all that apply. Maximum of five points are awarded per focus area that are selected. | | | |
|  | |  | |
| Improve Nutritional and Food Quality  Improve Food Safety | | Improve Energy Efficiency  Improve or Expand Participation | |

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| **Criteria 2** | **The application clearly and concisely explains why the school building needs this piece of equipment and why the equipment is appropriate for the site.** | **Points 15** |

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| Describe the site location and provide justification as to why this equipment is needed. Describe the estimated life of the equipment, the programs that will use it, and how frequently it will be used. |
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**Part 3. Equipment Specification and Bids**

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| **Criteria 3a** | **Specifications** **must be written for the equipment you are applying for prior to asking for bids/quotes.** | **Points 5** |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| The SFA’s capitalization threshold for reporting equipment as a fixed asset\*\*: | $ |
| *The equipment capitalization threshold is the dollar figure used by your district to distinguish between “equipment” and “small supplies” for inventory purposes. If your district has a capitalization threshold less than $1,000, include a copy of the policy or school board meeting minutes that indicates the established value. As a reminder, for the FY2021 Equipment Assistance Grant, Congress has specified that the threshold for the purchase of equipment cannot be lower than $1,000. If your district does not have a defined threshold amount, report no less than $1,000 in the box.*  *For example, if a district has a defined threshold of $5,000, then the piece of equipment requested must cost $5,000 or more to meet the definition of “equipment.” However, if this same district requests a piece of equipment that costs $3,500, the district’s grant application will not be considered; it does not meet the district’s definition of “equipment.”*  *(See page 1 – “Equipment” for additional information.)*  *\*\*The value in this box cannot be the cost of the equipment. It must be the capitalization threshold amount set by the district or the federal government.* | |

**Part 3. Equipment Specification and Bids (continued)**

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| --- | --- | --- |
| **Criteria 3b** | **Specifications** **must be written for the equipment you are applying for prior to asking for bids/quotes.** | **Points 5** |

List the equipment specifications in the box below. The specifications should include a general description of the equipment; size or capacity, freight and delivery details and requirements for installation including utilities, plumbing, and mechanical needs.

Brand names can be included, but “or equivalent” must also be included to ensure competition is not limited or restricted.

Note: All bids and quotes must be attached to the application packet to be considered for award.

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**Part 3. Equipment Specification and Bids (continued)**

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| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | | **Criteria 3c** | **The application reflects effort to get the best possible value for the money including a written specification and equipment selection criteria, bid research, and bid reliability (the lowest price is not always indicative of the best value). All costs associated with purchase, installation, and a timeline for expending the funds have been included.** | **Points**  **10** |   From the three bids obtained, complete the following for the bid preferred by the SFA. | | | | | | | | |
| Equipment:  New, first time purchased  Replacement  If equipment is being replaced, describe the condition, age of equipment, and what will be done with the old equipment:  Age of existing equipment: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ | | | | | | | | |
| Equipment Name: | |  | | | | | | |
| Vendor: |  | | | | Make and Model: |  | | |
| Estimate of Energy Savings:  (if applicable) | | | |  | | | | |
|  | | | | | | | | |
| Equipment Costs: | | | |  | | | | $ |
|  | | | | | | |  | |
| Installation Costs: | | | |  | | | | $ |
| (If work is completed by SFA see page 2, third bullet under “Funding”) | | | | | | |  | |
| Labor Costs: | | |  | | | | $ | |
|  | | | | | | | | |
| **Total Dollar Amount Requested:\*** | | | | | | | $ | |

**\***SFA will only be reimbursed for actual costs incurred not to exceed total dollar amount requested.

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| **Part 3. Equipment Specification and Bids (continued)**  Briefly describe an estimated timeline for the purchase and installation of the proposed equipment. (The grant amount must be expended by September 30, 2022) |
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**Part 4: Certification/Signatures**

I certify that the information in this application is true and correct to the best of my knowledge; that the document has been duly authorized by the governing body of the named applicant; that the equipment purchased with these funds will be used as part of the National School Lunch Program; and that the applicant will fully expend the funds by September 30, 2022.

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| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | |  |  |  |
| School Building Name | |  |  |  |
| SFA’s Authorized Representative (Print Name) | |  |  |  |
|  | |  |  |  |
| SFA’s Authorized Representative (Signature) |  |  |  | Date |
|  | |  |  |  |
| SFA’s Food Service Manager/Director (Print Name) | |  |  |  |
|  | |  |  |  |
| SFA’s Food Service Manager/Director (Signature) | |  |  | Date |

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1. Mail: U.S. Department of Agriculture

Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights

1400 Independence Avenue, SW

Washington, D.C. 20250-9410;

1. Fax: (202) 690-7442; or
2. Email: [program.intake@usda.gov](mailto:program.intake@usda.gov)

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