



Regional Food System Partnership (RFSP) Grant Review

REMOTE REVIEW FACT SHEET

We are excited that you have agreed to serve as a peer reviewer for Regional Food System Partnerships (RFSP) and thank you for your time! Listed below is a brief outline of the review schedule, your duties, and expectations. We have organized the information in the context of important dates and deadlines, so please mark your calendars!

Who Is Involved and What Do They Do?

- **Reviewer** – Reads applications, writes comments detailing how responsive application is to each criterion found in the funding opportunity announcement, and provides scores. Discusses scores and comments with two other panelists and one chairperson to build consensus in the panel. Please see the Reviewer Responsibilities sheet for more information.
- **Chairperson** – Reviews panelist comments and scores, requests revisions/edits as needed, and consolidates individual comments into a single application Panel Summary Report. Leads panelists in setting review schedule, coming to consensus during panel discussions. Please see the Chairperson Responsibilities sheet for more information.
- **Review Director (RD)** – The federal program lead assigned to the subject matter within a funding opportunity announcement. Reads the Panel Summary Report prepared by Chairperson and can request changes as needed. The comments received back from a RD are generally not specific to content, rather to the format and appropriateness of the comments within a report.

How Does the Remote Review Work?

Chairpersons and panelists will all have access to the Application Review Module (ARM). The ARM is the online system where you will access the applications and log your scores and evaluative comments. You will receive training on how to use the system.

What Is the Schedule?

We have provided you with key dates and more information about what happens during the review process below. Email any questions you have in advance of the training and preparation day to USDAReview@grantreview.org.

August 5, 2025

ARM and Grant Review Orientation Training Webinar

- All confirmed panelists must participate in a grant review orientation webinar training to address key factors from the Regional Food System Partnerships (RFSP), Request for Application (RFA). Partial information needed to participate in the training is listed below:

ARM and Grant Review Training

Time: 1:00 PM – 3:00 PM (Eastern Time)

August 07, 2025 – August 27, 2025

Grant Review Performance Period

- **ARM will be open for application review, reviewer comments, and scoring.**
***Note:** At the time your session is available, the ARM system will send you an email with your ARM access information. **This message will come from “No_Reply@grantsolutions.gov”.** If you do not see this message in your “In-box” please check your “junk mail” or “spam mail”.

After entering your User Name, if you are a “returning” ARM User, you may enter your personalized ARM Password at this time. If you are new to the ARM system, click the “**forgot password**” icon and you will be directed to create your new password. If you do not receive an e-mail message with your ARM information, please notify us immediately.

- **Panel Discussions** may be conducted using a variety of communication tools available through recent technology, including GoToMeeting, Skype, Facetime, three-way calling features on cell phones, etc. Individual panels will determine their discussion and submission schedule under the direction of the panel Chairperson. The discussion and submission schedule must provide the Chairperson ample time to finalize panel summary reports in ARM by the end of the grant review. This will require your quick attention and response to any changes in comments or scores reached during panel discussions.

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Application Review and Panel Report Submission Schedule:

Panels must adhere to the following application review and Panel Report submission schedule. If your panel decides to create a different schedule it must be shared with the ARM GrantSolutions Team at USDAReview@grantreview.org. The schedule proposed by the panel must meet the broad parameters outlined in the chart below.

Submission Date	Time	Submit to	Number of Applications
August 7, 2025	6:00 PM (ET)		ARM Session Opens
August 13, 2025	3:00 PM (ET)	Review Director (RD)	1-3 Panel Summary Reports due All panels will review, discuss, and submit comments and scores in enough time that the chairperson can submit the first Panel Summary Report to the RD by 3:00 PM.
August 20, 2025	3:00 PM (ET)	RD	4-6 Panel Summary Reports due
August 23 – 27, 2025	8:00 AM (ET) Thru 3:00 PM (ET)	RD	Reviewers and Chairpersons Re-visit and Re-Submit all recommended edits
August 28, 2025	3:00 PM (ET)	RD	Review Director Approves All Panel Summary Reports
August 28, 2025	COB		ARM Session Closes

***Note:** Your Chairperson will work with you to schedule the first panel call. In general, you should anticipate that your Chairperson will want to confirm the application review schedule, immediately following the August 5, 2025 ARM and Grant Review Orientation training. The purpose of the first call is for panel members to develop the panel discussion schedule. Please be flexible when working to schedule panel calls and honor your commitment to the review. Any conflicts and/or difficulties within the panel should be communicated to USDAReview@grantreview.org immediately.

August 7 – 27, 2025

Final Review Director Review and Approval of Panel Summary Reports

- The chairperson must submit all final review reports to the federal RD **no later than 3:00 PM (ET) on August 27, 2025** for final approval. Review panels must remain available between **August 7 – 27, 2025** to respond to the call for clarity and/or edits from the federal program staff until all applications on the panel are approved.
- Once all Panel Summary Reports are approved by the RD, panelists **will receive full instructions for submitting all final documentation.**