

FARMERS MARKET AND LOCAL FOOD PROMOTION PROGRAM

SCORING MATRIX

This matrix may be used by reviewers when assessing the applications for the Farmers Market Promotion Program (FMPP) and Local Food Promotion Program (LFPP). The matrix is based on the review criteria published in the program RFA.

This matrix is applicable to all FMPP and LFPP project types, except Turnkey applications (Turnkey Marketing and Promotion AND Turnkey Recruitment and Training).

CRITERIA	DESCRIPTOR				
	EXCELLENT	VERY GOOD	GOOD	SATISFACTORY	POOR
Score →	21 – 25	15 – 20	8 – 14	1 – 7	0
Alignment and Intent 25 Points	Clear description of the specific issue, problem, or need addressed by the project. Objectives are precise, attainable, and meet the purpose of the grant program. Geographic implementation area identified. Clear benefit for beneficiaries. Complies with all written instructions and requirements. No deficiencies.	Clear description of the specific issue, problem, or need addressed by the project. Objectives are clear, attainable, and meet the purpose of the grant program. Geographic implementation area identified. Clear impact for the beneficiaries. Complies with all written instructions and requirements. Minor deficiencies.	Clear description of the specific issue, problem, or need addressed by the project. Objectives generally align with the purpose of the grant program. Geographic implementation area identified. Potential to benefit the intended beneficiaries. May or may not comply with all written instructions and requirements. Few deficiencies.	Description of the issue, problem, or need addressed by the project. Objectives generally align with the purpose of the grant program but may not be feasible. Geographic implementation area identified. Questionable impact for beneficiaries. May or may not comply with all written instructions and requirements. Several deficiencies.	Fails to clearly describe the issue, problem, or need addressed by the project. Unclear objectives that do not fit the purpose of the grant program. Ambiguous geographic implementation area. Unclear benefit for beneficiaries. Does not comply with all written instructions and requirements. Major deficiencies.

Alignment and Intent Questions

- Does the application provide a clear and concise description of the specific issue, problem, or need addressed by the project, and the objectives for, the project?
 - Strength
 - Weakness
- Does the project helps develop, coordinate, and expand local and regional food businesses (including those that are not direct producer-to-consumer markets) that process, distribute, aggregate, or store locally or regionally produced food products and an agricultural local and regional food system infrastructure?
 - Strength
 - Weakness
- Does the proposed project identify and engage the intended beneficiaries, including the number of beneficiaries and how they will benefit?
 - Strength
 - Weakness
- Does the application demonstrate a commitment to engage potential project beneficiaries as active participants in partnership activities?
 - Strength
 - Weakness

- Does the application describe the project's proposed geographic focus area and why it is the most appropriate place to conduct project activities?
 - Strength
 - Weakness

- Does the application comply with all written instructions and requirements described within the RFA and Project Narrative Template? If the application does not comply with all written instructions and requirements, reduce the score for the criterion. The amount of point for reduction is at the discretion of the reviewer depending on how it affects the ability to evaluate the application.
 - Strength
 - Weakness

	DESCRIPTOR				
CRITERIA	EXCELLENT	VERY GOOD	GOOD	SATISFACTORY	POOR
Score →	21 – 25	15 – 20	8 – 14	1 – 7	0
Technical Merit 25 Points	<p>Clear, well-conceived, work plan. Work plan contains measurable or quantifiable activities that relate directly to the objectives of the proposed project. Implementation schedule is realistic. Effort attributed to personnel and contractual entities is reasonable.</p> <p>If previously funded, incorporates lessons learned. No deficiencies.</p>	<p>Work plan is clear and relates directly to the proposed project. Work plan contains measurable or quantifiable activities that relate directly to the objectives of the proposed project. Implementation schedule is realistic. Effort attributed to personnel and contractual entities is reasonable.</p> <p>If previously funded, incorporates lessons learned. Minor deficiencies.</p>	<p>The work plan generally outlines the applicant's goals and intent and contains measurable or quantifiable activities. However, the relation of some activities to the project's objectives could be clarified. Implementation schedule is feasible. Effort attributed to personnel and contractual entities is reasonable.</p> <p>If previously funded, incorporates lessons learned. Few deficiencies.</p>	<p>Work plan contains measurable or quantifiable activities, but the relation of several activities to the project's objectives is unclear. For the most part, implementation schedule is feasible. Effort attributed to personnel and contractual entities is reasonable.</p> <p>If previously funded, attempt made to incorporate lessons learned. Several deficiencies.</p>	<p>Work plan omits discussion of one or more objectives. Work plan is vague and/or confusing. Implementation schedule is difficult to understand, unrealistic or not discussed. Effort attributed to personnel and contractual entities is questionable or unreasonable.</p> <p>If previously funded, proposed project does little or nothing to incorporate lessons learned. Major deficiencies.</p>

Technical Merit Questions

- Does the application present a clear, well-conceived, and overall suitable work plan for fulfilling the goals and objectives of the proposed project?
 - Strength
 - Weakness
- Does the application present a realistic schedule for implementing the proposed project during the award project period?
 - Strength
 - Weakness
- If the project and/or entity was previously funded, to what extent were the previous lessons learned incorporated into the proposed project?
 - Strength
 - Weakness
- Is the level of effort attributed to personnel and contractual entities detailed in the application at a reasonable level to conduct the proposed project?
 - Strength
 - Weakness

- Does the application work plan contain measurable or quantifiable tasks that relate directly to the objectives of the proposed project?
 - Strength
 - Weakness

	DESCRIPTOR				
CRITERIA	EXCELLENT	VERY GOOD	GOOD	SATISFACTORY	POOR
Score →	12 – 15	8 – 11	4 – 7	1 – 3	0
Achievability 15 Points	<p>Outcomes and indicator(s) are appropriate for the scale and scope of the project. Application details how indicator numbers were derived with a clear means to collect feedback and evaluation. Challenges and mitigation strategies addressed. Demonstrates the project can be easily adapted to other regions, communities, or agricultural systems. Provides a comprehensive plan to distribute the project's results.</p> <p>No deficiencies.</p>	<p>Outcomes and indicator(s) are appropriate for the scale and scope of the project. Application details how indicator numbers were derived with a clear means to collect feedback and evaluation. Challenges and mitigation strategies addressed. Demonstrates the project can be easily adapted to other regions, communities, or agricultural systems. Provides a comprehensive plan to distribute the project's results.</p> <p>Minor deficiencies.</p>	<p>Outcomes and indicator(s) are appropriate for the scale and scope of the project. Application details how indicator numbers were derived with a plan to collect feedback and evaluation. Challenges and mitigation strategies addressed. Demonstrates the project can be adapted to other regions, communities, or agricultural systems. Provides a plan to distribute the project's results.</p> <p>Few deficiencies.</p>	<p>Outcomes and indicator(s) are appropriate for the scale and scope of the project. Application details how some indicator numbers were derived with a plan to collect feedback and evaluation. Challenges and mitigation strategies addressed, but not fully developed. Effort to demonstrate the project can be adapted to other regions, communities, or agricultural systems. Indicates intention to distribute the project's results.</p> <p>Several deficiencies.</p>	<p>Outcomes and indicator(s) are not appropriate for the scale and scope of the project. Application does not demonstrate how indicator numbers were derived. Plan to collect feedback and evaluation incomplete or missing. Challenges and mitigation strategies are not addressed. Unclear how the project can be adapted to other regions, communities, or agricultural systems. No plan to distribute the project's results.</p> <p>Major deficiencies.</p>

Achievability Questions

- Are the Outcomes and Indicators appropriate for the scale and scope of work proposed? Please consider:
 - a. How indicator numbers were derived with a clear means to collect feedback to evaluate and achieve each relevant outcome indicator; and
 - b. The anticipated key factors that are predicted to contribute to or restrict progress toward the applicable indicators, including action steps for addressing identified restricting factors.
 - Strength
 - Weakness
- Can the proposed project be easily adapted to other regions, communities, or agricultural systems?
 - Strength
 - Weakness
- Does the applicant provide a comprehensive plan to distribute the project's results (both positive and negative) electronically and in-person to target audiences, stakeholders, and interested parties?
 - Strength
 - Weakness

	DESCRIPTOR				
CRITERIA	EXCELLENT	VERY GOOD	GOOD	SATISFACTORY	POOR
Score →	16-20	11-15	6 - 10	1 - 5	0
Expertise and Partners 20 Points	<p>Application includes Letters of Commitment from all project partners and collaborators. Application details key staff and team members, including expertise and experience. Describes plans for coordination, communication, and data sharing and reporting. Clear commitment to collaboration and engagement ensuring high levels of participation. Describes how the project's work will be sustained beyond the period of performance.</p> <p>No deficiencies.</p>	<p>Application includes Letters of Commitment from all project partners and collaborators. Application details key staff and team members, including expertise and experience. Describes plans for coordination, communication, and data sharing and reporting. Clear commitment to collaboration and engagement ensuring high levels of participation. Describes how the project's work will be sustained beyond the period of performance.</p> <p>Minor deficiencies.</p>	<p>Application may not include all Letters of Commitment from all project partners and collaborators. Application details key staff and team members, including expertise and experience. Describes plans for coordination, communication, and data sharing and reporting. Commitment to collaboration and engagement, seeking participation. Describes how the project's work will be sustained beyond the period of performance.</p> <p>Few deficiencies.</p>	<p>Application includes some Letters of Commitment from project partners and collaborators. Application details key staff and team members, including expertise and experience. Describes plans for coordination, communication, and data sharing and reporting. Commitment to collaboration and engagement, seeking participation. Describes how the project's work will be sustained beyond the period of performance.</p> <p>Several deficiencies.</p>	<p>Application does not include Letters of Commitment from project partners and collaborators. Application lacks details on key staff and team members. Does not describe plans for coordination, communication, and data sharing and reporting. Minimal or no commitment to collaboration, engagement, or participation. Does not adequately describe how the project's work will be sustained beyond the period of performance.</p> <p>Major deficiencies.</p>

Expertise and Partners Questions

- Does the proposed project represent substantial, effective, diverse, and strong qualifications of the applicant (individual and team) and the relevant partnerships and collaborators to accomplish the project's goals and objectives and to meet the needs of the intended beneficiaries? Please consider:
 - a. Commitment from the key partner and/or collaborators demonstrated through Letters of Commitment from Partner and Collaborator Organizations; If the application does not provide Letters of Commitment for all partners and collaborators described in the project narrative, reduce the score for the criterion. The amount of point for reduction is at the discretion of the reviewer depending on how it affects the ability to evaluate the application.
 - b. The key staff who will be responsible for managing the projects and names and titles of the individuals who comprise the Project Team; and
 - c. The expertise and experience of the Project Team necessary to successfully manage and implement the proposed project.
 - Strength
 - Weakness
- Does the application describe plans for coordination, communication, and data sharing and reporting among members of the Project Team and stakeholder groups, including both internal applicant personnel and external partners and collaborators?
 - Strength
 - Weakness

- Does the application describe a commitment to collaboration and engagement among partners to ensure high levels of participation or provides a clear and concise plan for how such engagement will occur?
 - Strength
 - Weakness
- Does the application describe how the project, and its partnerships and collaborations, will be sustained beyond the project's period of performance (without grant funds)?
 - Strength
 - Weakness

CRITERIA	DESCRIPTOR				
	EXCELLENT	VERY GOOD	GOOD	SATISFACTORY	POOR
Score →	12 – 15	8 – 11	4 – 7	1 – 3	0
Fiscal Plan and Resources 15 Points	<p>Budget provides a clear, detailed, narrative description for each budget line item including how the budget is consistent with the size and scope of the project, and how it relates to the overall project narrative.</p> <p>If applicable, the application provides evidence that critical resources and infrastructure are in place.</p> <p>Application includes Letters of Matching Funds verifying sources and demonstrate how valuations were established. No deficiencies.</p>	<p>Budget provides a clear, detailed, narrative description for each budget line item including how the budget is consistent with the size and scope of the project, and how it relates to the overall project narrative.</p> <p>If applicable, the application provides evidence that critical resources and infrastructure are in place.</p> <p>Application includes Letters of Matching Funds verifying sources and demonstrate how valuations were established. Minor deficiencies.</p>	<p>Budget provides a description for each budget line item, including how the budget is consistent with the size and scope of the project, and how it relates to the overall project narrative.</p> <p>If applicable, the application provides evidence that critical resources and infrastructure are in place.</p> <p>Application includes Letters of Matching Funds verifying sources and demonstrate how valuations were established. Few deficiencies.</p>	<p>Budget provides a description for each budget line item. Line items relate to the overall project. Budget is generally consistent with the size and scope of the project.</p> <p>If applicable, the application provides evidence that critical resources and infrastructure are in place.</p> <p>Application includes Letters of Matching Funds verifying most sources and demonstrate how valuations were established. Several deficiencies.</p>	<p>Budget does not provide a clear description for each budget line item. Unclear how some line items relate to the overall project. Budget is inconsistent with the size and scope of the project.</p> <p>The application does not provide evidence that applicable critical resources or infrastructure is in place.</p> <p>Application does not include Letters of Matching Funds, or Letters do not verify funding sources or do not demonstrate how valuations were established. Major deficiencies.</p>

Fiscal Plan and Resources Questions

- Does the application budget narrative or justification provide a clear, detailed, narrative description for each budget line item? Please consider:
 - a. How the budget is consistent with the size and scope of the project; and
 - b. How the budget relates logically to the narrative describing the project.
 - Strength
 - Weakness
- Does the application provide evidence that critical resources and infrastructure that are necessary for the initiation and completion of the proposed project are currently in place? If applicable to the proposed project and the application does not provide evidence that critical resources and infrastructure necessary for the project are not in place, reduce the score for the criterion. The amount of point for reduction is at the discretion of the reviewer depending on how it affects the ability to evaluate the application.
 - Strength
 - Weakness
- Does the applicant demonstrate that its partners' or collaborators' contribution of non-Federal cash resources or in-kind contributions are available and obtainable for the project as evidenced through the submitted Matching Funds and Letters of Verification? If the application does not provide Letters Verifying Match to support all matching funds detailed in the project narrative budget, reduce the score for the criterion. The amount of point for reduction is at the discretion of the reviewer depending on how it affects the ability to evaluate the application.
 - Strength
 - Weakness