

JSY lessons

Q: Is the curriculum hard and fast or can you add your own information?

Q: On Page 3-4: the RFP states that JSY principles include “Planned nutrition education programs intended for SNAP participants and individuals eligible for the SNAP and use of a set of standard lessons designed to improve” and on page 4 9 lesson plans are listed as is the Loving Your Family, Feeding Their Future plan. We have several questions related to this: Are these lesson plans the only ones that can be used?

Q: Are nutritionists required to use JSY curriculum?

Q: Can I use JSY lessons for the whole family – adults and their children?

Q: The RFA in Paragraph B, indicates that the programs are intended for SNAP participants and individuals eligible for the SNAP. Is there any minimum age of a SNAP Participant. Can the program be targeted at children and of what age?

Q: The RFA in Section II refers to a variety of settings in which Nutrition Education can be provided. Is a school-based setting appropriate for the program?

A: There is an established JSY curriculum that applicants are expected to use in providing nutrition education. This curriculum can be customized to best meet the needs of the clients. USDA SNAP-Ed prefers that whenever possible, projects use and/or adapt existing materials rather than develop new materials. Any additional materials that the program would like to use must receive approval from the contract manager.

Q: How many JSY lesson plans are there?

A: On page 5 of the RFA, the nine JSY lesson plan topics are listed.

Q: Do participants need to be enrolled, such as the Cornell model?

A: Each applicant can develop their own systems to provide a series of workshops to participants. Enrollment is not required.

Q: Do nutrition education workshops need to be conducted at food pantries?

A: Nutrition education can be provided in a variety of settings and does not need to take place in a food pantry.

Q: How long are the JSY nutrition education workshops?

A: The JSY curriculum includes nutrition education activities and recipe demonstration. Lessons are for up to one hour in length. They can be modified in length however, should be for a minimum of 30 minutes and include a food demonstration.

Q: Do you view this like a course so it should be set-up that way or is each lesson stand alone; that is, do the lessons build on one another so they should be offered to the same audience sequentially or is there no specific order that a participant needs to attend them? Do you view the best way to provide the educational services – and hence prefer to see in any proposal - as a 9 or 10 class course or more as stand alone lessons?

Q: Can sites for the grantee to perform the educational workshops include hospitals, faith-based organizations and other CBOs or do you want all the workshops to be done at one site and/or be on-site at the grantee’s location?

Q: Can WIC sites/parents that have presently no outreach be counted as the sites to deliver the program?

A: Each program must determine the most appropriate way in which the delivery of the lessons will meet the needs of the individuals it serves. The lessons may be used as stand-alone lessons, there is no specific order in which they must be used and they may be used in various settings.

Q: Will we be asked to hire a Nutritionist/Registered Dietitian or are we expected to use a consultant?

Q: Do staff providing nutrition education have to be RD’s?

Q: Are we required to have a nutritionist deliver the nutrition education?

Q: Content referenced:

Part III, paragraph 3 states, "The proposed staff should be well qualified individuals with key project responsibilities and should also include nutritionists/dietitians to deliver nutrition education sessions." This guideline is reiterated under the Application Content section (Part V, Section A, No. 4, Bullet 4), which instructs applicants to identify "a well-qualified staff, including nutrition professionals, to deliver nutrition education sessions."

Must the nutrition education sessions be delivered directly by a certified nutritionist or dietitian, or can the organization consult with a nutritionist/dietitian on program development and delivery, and have the actual child instruction executed by a trained and experienced educator?

Q: The JSY is to be delivered by an RD or can trained paraprofessional such as those trained by Extension be used?

A: Salaries and administrative costs associated with hiring nutritionists/dietitians are permitted expenses.

The proposed staff should be well qualified individuals with key project responsibilities. Nutritionists/dietitians are expected to deliver nutrition education sessions. Nutrition educators may be consultants.

Q: Are a series of lessons required?

A: Whenever possible, a series of classes is preferred over a single exposure. Multiple lessons help to reinforce nutrition education messages.

Q: Can we see the JSY curriculum?

A: The curriculum has been posted on the Department of Health website as an attachment to the RFA. Please visit <http://www.health.state.ny.us/funding/rfa/0902170844/index.htm>.

Evaluation and reporting program data

Q: Do you have a specific evaluation approach that you want grantees to use to determine a "measurable effect."

Q: Can we download evaluation material from the USDA website or are we to develop our own evaluation?

A: Materials necessary to report SNAP-Ed evaluations using the USDA Education and Administrative Reporting System (EARS) will be provided to grant recipients. Additional evaluation materials must be developed by the recipient, which will be used to report on the programs activities, outputs, short-term outcomes and overall impact.

Q: On Page 6 the RFA states that "Funded organizations are responsible for all aspects of electronic record keeping and data collection for reporting to the NYSDOH. Electronic records must contain information necessary for the USDA's Education and Administrative Reporting System (EARS), including demographic characteristics of participants who received nutrition education, topics covered, strategies used to deliver education, locations in which education was delivered and resources allocated to nutrition education." Does this mean that our agency would need the reporting system EARS or can we record the data on excel spreadsheets with the required information.

A: Yes, agencies may use excel spreadsheets to record information necessary for EARS.

Q: What kind of information is collected for the USDA's Education and Administrative Reporting System (EARS)? Can I see an example of an EARS database?

A: *From the Request for Applications_(p. 6): Funded organizations are responsible for all aspects of electronic record keeping and data collection for reporting to the NYSDOH. Electronic records must contain information necessary for the USDA's Education and Administrative Reporting System (EARS), including demographic characteristics of participants who received nutrition education, topics covered, strategies used to deliver education, locations in which education was delivered and resources allocated to nutrition education.*

More information about EARS is available through the USDA's SNAP-Ed website. Contractors will receive training on what information must be submitted for EARS.

Workplan

Q: Is the workplan format provided in Attachment 6 required with the submission of my application?

Q: Should the Just Say Yes To Fruits & Vegetables Workplan Format on page 39 of the RFA be double or single-spaced?

Q: Is the Just Say Yes To Fruits & Vegetables Workplan Format on page 39 counted in the 16 double-spaced pages of the application?

Q: Can the Just Say Yes To Fruits & Vegetables Workplan Format on page 39 be modified to include Project goal(s) and objectives, number the different objectives for clarity, etc.?

Q: Should the Just Say Yes To Fruits & Vegetables Workplan Format on page 39 be developed for a 12-month period

A: The “Work Plan and Technical Proposal” section of an application should be written in a narrative form and **MUST** include all parts outlined in the “Completing the application” section of the RFA (Section V, Part A (Application Content), Number 4 (Work Plan and Technical Proposal) on page 12. This should reflect a 12-month period. The workplan format provided in Attachment 6 is not required when submitting an application. The format may be used to develop a workplan with an applicant who has been awarded a grant.

Grant Logistics

Q: Is this a 5 year grant?

A: It is expected that contracts will be for a total grant period of up to five years. One year contract renewals will be dependent upon contractor performance and availability of funds.

Q: Is the funding amount of \$100,000-\$300,000 an annual figure or for the five year period?

Q: Should the budget be constructed for a 12-month period?

A: Funding amounts are for an annual budget timeframe.

Q: Regarding reach of program increase, if a contract is granted for 5 years for \$300,000, does the funding increase to meet increased reach of individuals in consecutive years?

A: From the Request for Applications:

(p.3) It is expected that 5-10 projects will be funded for up to five years at a range of \$100,000 to \$300,000 per contract year, pending continued availability of funds and satisfactory contractor performance. Awards will be given to the highest scoring applicants until all the funding has been disbursed. A total of \$904,956 is available for awards.

The total funds available will be awarded to grantees at the beginning of the 5-year contract. Each year, the recipients will be reimbursed up to the amount of funding approved in their application budget using a voucher system. Proposed budgets will be evaluated for reasonableness and allowability. Unreasonable and unallowable expenses will not be approved or reimbursed. The maximum funding for any applicant is \$300,000 per contract year. Expansion will not be considered prior to demonstrated successful implementation of JSY for at least one contract year.

Budget Forms

Q: Where should I get copies of the forms listed as a part of the Budget Package in Attachment 5?

A: The listed forms are not required for the initial application. However, a proposed budget summary is required along with a justification of the budget items, as stated in the Application Format; section V.B of the RFA. Appendix B of the Standard Grant Contract, Attachment 1, may be used as a template to construct the proposed budget.

Q: Does the budget include the salary for a nutrition educator?

A: Appendix B shows a sample budget format which includes salary for staff. The proposed staff should be well qualified and include nutritionists/dietitians to deliver nutrition education sessions. Proposed salaries will be evaluated for reasonableness.

Eligibility for Grant

Q: Is my Summer Food site eligible for the grant? How do we know if we are eligible to apply?

A: From the RFA (p. 4):

This RFA will seek to fund not-for-profit organizations that have experience working with the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) or low-income clients. Applicant organizations should also have experience in providing nutrition education to low-income clients. Applicants could include statewide or regional not-for-profit umbrella organizations that provide services for food insecure and SNAP-eligible populations. Examples of organizations might include: hunger relief organizations, summer food sponsoring agencies, and community based organizations providing other services to SNAP participants. Nutrition education can be provided in a variety of settings, including summer feeding locations and grocery stores that are able to demonstrate an average monthly SNAP redemption of \$50,000 or more.

Q: Are government agencies able to apply?

If my organization already receives NYS DOH HPNAP funding for emergency food, are we eligible to apply for this RFA?

Are faith-based organizations permitted to apply?

A: All non-for-profit organizations (including government agencies) may apply, as long as they meet the requirements specified in the RFA. There are not restrictions that would disqualify faith-based organizations.

Documenting SNAP eligibility and meeting unmet need

Q: If not all campers are eligible for SNAP, will I only be reimbursed for activities delivered to those that are eligible? Is there a minimum number of SNAP eligible individuals reached required for funding?

A: Funds awarded to applicants are expected to be used to deliver nutrition education to eligible populations. Applicants must be able to demonstrate their ability to reach at least 100 SNAP eligible individuals each month. Funds used for these activities will be reimbursed to the contractor.

Q: On Page 6 the RFA states the narrative needs to ensure that "Information is provided on the projected number of clients to receive nutrition education, how SNAP eligibility is determined, and any procedures in place to help ensure adequate reach." Is self-reporting sufficient for determination or does the Funder have a preferred method?

A: Programs receiving funds should be operating in locations where individuals served are participating or eligible to participate in SNAP. SNAP-eligible populations are defined by the basic guiding principles of all Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program Nutrition Education (SNAP-Ed) programs. However, if SNAP participation or eligibility is in question, self-report of SNAP participation and/or eligibility is acceptable.

Q: Page 3; Section A.; paragraph 2

"This RFA will expand the JSY education program into additional SNAP-eligible population settings. Priority populations will include clients of Emergency Food Organizations (EFRO's) not presently covered by JSY education projects...."

Please clarify which EFRO's in New York City are currently "not covered" by JSY education programs. My understanding is that the JSY educational programs (e.g. a series of classes providing nutrition education) are available upon request to all EFRO's in the City.

Q: How can I determine if there is an "unmet need" in my community?

A: Applicants are required to demonstrate that the program they will administer will cover an area of unmet need. From the Request for Applications (p. 11):

Statement of Need: Describe the extent to which the proposed project will address the unmet need. Provide detailed information on the methods and types of data used to identify the target population(s). Include information on the number of SNAP households in the target area.

If the nutrition education resources available in your target area, including the current JSY program, are not sufficient to cover the needs of the population, describe the extent to which the needs of the target population are not being met in your statement of

need. The response should address the adequacy and limitations of the existing resources in meeting the needs of the target area while describing the unmet needs of the target population.

Q: Page 3; Section B; first bullet

"[JSY programs are intended for] SNAP participants and individuals eligible for the SNAP"

Will participating programs be asked to verify/document the income levels of all participants to demonstrate SNAP participation or eligibility?

Q: Do we have to show that the participants are using SNAP services or can they just be low-income individuals?

Q: Is there any required documentation to demonstrate SNAP eligibility of program participants?

Q: We are a community based organization providing nutrition education to school based youth of low income as well as middle and higher income levels. What documentation is needed to demonstrate experience in working specifically with youth from low-income families?

A: You are not required to verify/document the income levels of all participants to demonstrate SNAP participation or eligibility. Information on individual SNAP eligibility and/or participation is not always required. However, applicants must be able to demonstrate their ability to reach 100 SNAP eligible individuals each month. SNAP-eligible populations are defined by the basic guiding principles of all Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program Nutrition Education (SNAP-Ed) programs. To review these principles go to <http://www.nal.usda.gov/fsn/Guidance/2009.1SNAP-Ed%20Guidance.pdf>

Secondary data sources that cover the applicant's targeted area, such as poverty data or participation rates in programs with similar eligibility requirements as SNAP, may be used to identify SNAP-eligible populations.

Duplicated counts and minimum delivery and reach of program

Q: On page 5 and throughout: the RFP: we are unclear how the RFP defines a client. Does the required minimum of 100 clients per month include duplicated clients? That is, if we offer all 9 lesson plans in the same month and a single individual takes all 9 lesson plans is that counted as one client or 9 clients? Similarly, if an individual takes all 9 lessons over the entire year is that counted as 1 client or 9 clients? Finally, if a single individual takes the same lesson plan 3 times in, for example, 1 month is that counted as 1 client or 3 clients; and if an individual takes the same lesson plan 3 times over the grant year is that counted as 1 client or 3 clients.

Q: In the application is state you must reach 100 SNAP eligible individuals each month. Does this number include duplicate counts?

Q: The criteria for the RFA requests a reach of at least 100 eligible individuals. Is this 100 unduplicated individuals per month or per contract year? e.g. if the goal is to reach at least 100 individuals per month, can the same individuals count towards that goal each and any month?

Q: What percentage of recurrent clients is acceptable to meet the requirement of "multiple exposures...sufficient to produce a measurable effect?"

A: In the first month of operation, the program must reach at least 100 **unduplicated** SNAP eligible participants. Programs should provide multiple lessons to these individuals to reinforce the nutrition education lesson messages; thus, participants from one month should attend lessons in subsequent months. However, every effort must be made to include as many eligible participants as possible, expanding the reach of the program each month. Recipients of funding must determine whether a participant is a duplicated or unduplicated count (e.g, ask participants about previous attendance) and must report separately counts on both duplicated and unduplicated participants.

Q: The minimum of 10 sessions must happen within the month or at any time within the contract year? If the individual does not complete 10 sessions, can they still be counted towards meeting the service goal?

Q: p.5 "Consideration will only be given to those organizations that propose to reach 100 clients a month, through a minimum of 10 educational sessions

... when it says 10 educational sessions, does this mean:

a) 10 educational sessions a month, with the same people, such as an enrolled class (10 classes with 10 students = 100 people)

10 educational sessions a quarter, with the same people, such as an enrolled class (10 classes with 10 students = 100 people)

10 educational sessions a year, with the same people, such as an enrolled class (10 classes with 10 students = 100 people)

OR

b) 10 educational sessions a month, with different people, totaling 100 people

10 educational sessions a quarter, with different people, totaling 100 people

10 educational sessions a year, with different people, totaling 100 people

Q: The lesson, are they counted as a series of ten lessons in one month or one lesson to 100 participants in one month?

A: It is not required that each participant attend 10 lessons. Evaluations of nutrition education using JSY lessons have found that sessions with fewer than 10 participants were significantly more effective at reaching the lesson objectives (e.g., increasing intentions to eat fruits and vegetables, etc.) than lessons with more than 10 participants. Thus, in an effort to keep nutrition education sessions to a reasonable size and still reach at least 100 participants each month, grant recipients are encouraged to hold a minimum of 10 nutrition education sessions each month.

Q: By “adequate reach” is the funder looking for the number of clients reached, the diversity of population or the breadth of the geographic area. Or would any of those be sufficient to meet the standard of adequate reach?

A: Programs receiving SNAP-Ed funding will be asked to report the clients reached, the demographic diversity of the population and the geographic area covered. All are required and “adequate reach” will be determined by the funder.

Q: Does the 100 clients per month requirement have to be at one setting or can one meet the 100 clients requirement in the aggregate from all the settings proposed as part of the program?

A: Counts can be aggregated from all settings.

Voucher/Reimbursement/Budget

Q: If my budget is \$100,000, what would be paid to me through my vouchers?

A: Expenses related to SNAP-Ed activities will be reimbursed to contractors using a voucher system, as described in Appendix C of the application (p. 29). Applicants must justify a minimum of \$100,000 budget per year for SNAP-Ed activities.

Q: Can the budget include funds for incentives such as metro cards, gift cards and/or food sample of whatever is the focus of cooking demonstration?

A: Program reinforcement materials for nutrition education should have a clear relevance and useful connection to particular SNAP nutrition education messages, have value as nutrition education aids and be of nominal value of \$4.00 or less per item. Food samples for cooking demonstrations are an allowable expense. Metro cards and gift cards are not allowable incentives.

Q: Can funds be used to pay for meals?

A: Funds awarded to applicants are expected to be used to deliver nutrition education to eligible populations. Only SNAP-Ed approved activities will be reimbursed. Meals are not reimbursable. Food samples provided in nutrition education are acceptable.

Q: Are matching funds required?

A: Applicants are encouraged to find matching funds. State funds, if available and approved as USDA match, can be used for applicants

as needed.

Q: On Page 12, the budget only allows 5% administrative overhead. Can you please define administrative overhead for purpose of this grant and confirm that it excludes program expenses incurred by program staff such as space rental, utilities, telephone and photocopying, etc that are direct program expenses (and frequently based on a FTE allocation) and other similar direct program expenses.

A: Administrative costs are the costs of operating, but not easily assigned to a specific program within the organization. In the context of the RFA, these are the overhead costs that are necessary for the continued operation of the business, but are not directly attributable to carrying out SNAP-Ed program objectives. Examples include, but are not limited to, janitorial and other maintenance fees, human resources, accounting and technical support. These indirect costs are not to exceed 5% of the grant amount.

Q: Is there a restriction on how much can be transferred from one section of the budget to another? For example, if only 90% of OTPS is used, can we move the remaining 10% into another section?

A: The budget structure that we propose has two major sections, Total Personnel & Fringe and Total OTPS, and no more than 10% of the smaller of the two sections can be transferred between the two per year without a contract amendment. However, money can be transferred within each section, with approval from the Bureau of Nutrition Risk Reduction.

Miscellaneous

Q: Is this an extension of the JSY project that is in existence?

A: The JSY RFA is not an extension or replacement of the JSY project that is currently administered through the Regional Food Bank of North Eastern New York (RFBNENY). It will expand JSY services to areas where there are populations that are not currently receiving nutrition education services. The current JSY program will continue to provide services as have been previously established.

Q: Will applicants to this RFA be competing with the existing JSY programs for funding?

A: From the Request for Applications (p. 3) *In New York State, SNAP-Ed is administered through the New York State Office of Temporary and Disability Assistance (OTDA). Through collaboration between the NYSDOH Bureau of Nutrition Risk Reduction and the Food Bank of Northeastern New York, JSY provides education programs in select settings in all counties of New York and the boroughs of New York City. This RFA will expand the JSY education program into additional SNAP-eligible population settings.*

The RFA is open to all qualified non-profit organizations. The primary goal of the RFA is to expand the JSY program.

Q: The application explains that clients of “transitional emergency shelters” are considered priority populations. Can you define “transitional” shelters?

A: Transitional shelters refer to those shelters that work with populations transitioning back into a home. Since SNAP-Ed is intended to encourage planning, purchasing and preparing healthy meals, the audience must have the capacity to do so. An example of a transitional shelter may be a domestic violence shelter.

Q: What kind of approval is necessary for marketing the program?

A: Marketing activities for the JSY program must follow the basic guiding principles of all Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program Nutrition Education (SNAP-Ed) programs. To review these principles go to <http://www.nal.usda.gov/fsn/Guidance/2009.1SNAP-Ed%20Guidance.pdf>.

Q: For the Cover Page of this application, can an applicant list more than one target community?

Q: For the Cover Page of this application, can the geographic location and county be the same?

A: Yes, more than one target can be listed and the geographic location and county can be the same.

Q: Will we be penalized if our start up is delayed in order to hire staff?

A: No, you will not be penalized for not providing services while hiring staff. However, after the first month, the contractor must show

sufficient progress towards hiring staff and beginning nutrition education. Only incurred expenses will be reimbursed.

Q: For the Vendor Responsibility Questionnaire, who is the "vendor?" Can I use a vendor that has already been working with our hospital through a bid?

A: The "vendor" is the legal entity with whom DOH will contract. DOH reserves the right to approve subcontracts.

Q: On page 12 of the RFA under the Application Format section, which "attachments" are being referred to in the following statement? "Applications should not exceed 16 double-spaced typed pages (not including the cover page, budget, and attachments) ..." Please clarify if this statement is referring to the attachments in the JSY To Fruits & Vegetables RFA or any attachment that the applicant chooses to include as a part of the application?

A: The attachments from the JSY RFA will not be counted towards the 16 page limit. No additional attachments are required with the application.

Q: If there have been no changes to an organization's Vendor Responsibility Questionnaire (VQ) (which was signed and notarized within the last six months), can a copy of this VQ (which is the most recent) be submitted with this application to satisfy the VQ requirement?

A: Yes, a copy of an existing VRQ signed and notarized within the last six months may be submitted with the application to satisfy the VQ requirement, if there have been no changes.

X:\HPNAP\JSY\JSY RFA\Q_and_A_V3_oct09.doc