



United States Department of Agriculture

Farmers Market and Local Food Promotion Program (FMLFPP)

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Program Information

Q: What is the Local Agriculture Market (LAMP) Program?

A: LAMP is authorized through the Agriculture Improvement Act of 2018 (Farm Bill) (Pub. L. No. 115—343), which joined local and regional food systems programs under the umbrella program: the Farmers Market and Local Food Promotion Program (FMLFPP), Regional Food System Partnerships (RFSP) Program and the Value-Added Producer Grant (VAPG). LAMP helps coordinate local and regional food systems funding across agencies, and also maintain the core mission, priorities, and activities of each program.

Q: What is the difference between the Farmers Market Promotion Program (FMPP) and the Local Food Promotion Program (LFPP)?

A: FMPP promotes direct-to-consumer activities (including direct producer-to-retail, direct producer-to-restaurant, and direct producer-to-institutional marketing). LFPP promotes intermediary supply chain activities (activities that move products from the producer to markets, but the activities do not involve selling directly to the consumer such as processing, aggregation, distribution, and storage of local and regional food products). Please refer to the corresponding RFA for more information about each program.

Q: What is the definition of a local or regional food business enterprise?

A: An organization or business entity that functions as an intermediary between producers (farmers or growers) and buyers by carrying out one or more of the following local or regional food supply chain activities—including aggregating, storing, processing, and/or distributing locally or regionally produced food products—to meet local and regional market demand.

Q: What is the project duration for FMPP and LFPP projects?

A: Project duration is determined by the program project type for each program component (FMPP or LFPP). Please refer to the corresponding RFA for more information.

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Eligibility Information

Q: Who can apply for an FMPP and LFPP grant?

A: All applicants must be domestic entities (organizations) owned, operated, and located within the 50 United States and U.S. territories. Individuals are not eligible to apply. A list of eligible entities with their definitions can be found in section 3.1 of the Request for Applications (RFA).

Q: Can a sole proprietorship apply for an FMLFPP grant?

A: Yes, the project must show evidence of existing community support and engagement and benefit more than one individual or two or more farmers, producers or farm vendors who sell their agricultural products or services. The applicant would use his/her Internal Revenue Service (IRS) registered Tax Identification Number to register with Unique Entity identifier (UEI)/ System for Award Management (SAM).

Q: Do I have to be a 501 (c)(3) nonprofit to be eligible?

A: No, you can still apply without being a 501 (c)(3) organization.

Q: What is a fiscal sponsor? How can I apply using a fiscal sponsor?

A: Fiscal sponsorship is a formal arrangement in which an organization (normally with 501 (c)(3) status) sponsor another organization (normally newly formed) that may lack exempt status or the capacity to perform administrative functions. Applicants may apply directly and establish a contract with a fiscal sponsor or use a fiscal sponsor to apply on behalf of the applicant. Please refer to section 3.3.1 in the corresponding RFAs for more information.

Note: An applicant organization cannot accept an award and later transfer the award to another organization (including a fiscal sponsor/agent).

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Application Process

Q: When is the deadline to apply?

A: Refer to the corresponding RFA to determine the application due date. You are encouraged to provide yourself ample time to complete all registrations as well as the required components mentioned in the RFA.

Q: Can I submit my application by fax, email, postal mail, or hand delivered?

A: No. AMS will NOT accept applications submitted by fax, paper, email, postal mail, or hand delivered. All applications must be submitted electronically through the Grants.gov. Please refer to the

corresponding RFA and AMS [Late and/or Nonresponsive Applications policy](#) for more information.

Q: Can I edit the FMLFPP Project Narrative Form?

A: No. The FMLFPP Project Narrative Form template cannot be changed (text, tables or pages cannot be deleted nor margins adjusted). Changes might result in the application being removed from consideration, or reviewers will deduct points.

Q: Does the supporting documentation count toward the FMLFPP Project Narrative page limit?

A: No. The supporting documentation does not count towards the 15-page limit. Examples of supporting documents are partner/collaborators letters, matching letters, critical infrastructure letters, etc. Exceeding the page limit may disqualify your application.

Q: Do proposed projects have to address all six outcomes/indicators as described in the RFA's project narrative?

A: Applicants are required to complete all outcomes and indicators that are relevant (apply) to the project with benchmark and/or estimated (target) numbers.

Q: Can I apply for both FMPP and LFPP grants?

A: Yes. Note that applicants are limited to receiving **one** FY2023 LFPP award and **one** FY2023 FMPP award. Applicants must demonstrate the capacity to manage and meet Federal grants management requirements to manage multiple awards. See section 3.3 in the RFA for more information.

Q: Can I apply if I already have another FMPP or LFPP grant?

A: In order to receive another award under the same program you must close any active grant award from a previous project.

Q: Can I receive an FMPP or LFPP grant and a grant from a different USDA agency (VAPG, Farm to School, RFSP, etc.)?

A: Yes, if the projects have specifically different objectives, you may receive both an FMPP or LFPP grant and a grant from a different federal agency. Please check with the other federal programs to ensure that you are not violating their terms and conditions.

Q: Can I submit the same proposal to both FMPP and LFPP?

A: You must submit different proposals to each program. Each proposal should be for different project activities and meet the specific program purposes.

Q: What is a Turnkey Marketing and Promotion Application?

A: It is a type of application that offers a streamline approach for the Project Narrative completion. Applicants are provided with pre-defined activities to select from.

- Identify and analyze new/improved market opportunities.
- Develop/revise a marketing plan.
- Design/purchase marketing and promotion media.
- Implement a marketing plan.
- Evaluate marketing and promotion activities.

Applicants applying to the Turnkey track agree to conduct a minimum of 3 specific activities defined by AMS.

Q: Can I submit a Turnkey Applications and add additional objectives and/or activities?

A: No. Applicants applying to the Turnkey project type should not propose any additional activities beyond the pre-defined list provided on the RFAs. Doing so may disqualify the application from consideration.

Q: Can I edit the Turnkey Project Narrative Form to make it applicable to other project categories that are not Marketing and Promotion related?

A: No. Turnkey Marketing and Promotion is exclusively designed for this categories. The Project Narrative Form template cannot be changed (text, tables or pages can not be deleted nor margins adjusted). This changes might results in the application being removed from consideration, or reviewers will deduct points.

Q: Does the supporting documentation count toward the Turnkey Project Narrative page limit?

A: No. The supporting documentation does not count towards the 5-page limit. Examples of supporting documents are partner/collaborators letters, matching letters, critical infrastructure letters, etc. Exceeding the page limit may disqualify your application.

Q: Can I submit an FMLFPP Application and an FMLFPP Turnkey Application?

A: Yes. You can submit both applications. However, section 3.3 Limit on the Number of Awards is applicable.

Q: Can AMS staff member review a draft of my application prior to submission?

A: AMS cannot review draft applications before they are submitted through Grants.gov. However, if you have specific questions about allowable costs and activities, you are welcome to reach out to us via email at FMLFPPgrants@usda.gov.

Q: Is it required that the critical resources and infrastructure be in place at the time of the application submission?

A: Yes, it is required if your project depends on critical resources and/or infrastructure for its start-up, implementation, and completion of the proposed project activities. For example, land, structures, share-used kitchen (with all permits) and/or other resources must be in place and committed prior to applying. Not having proof of critical resources may disqualify you for funding. Refer to section 5.2.8 of the RFA for more information

Q: If a lease is one year at a time. Is it acceptable to indicate Year 1 is secured in the Critical Infrastructure letter, with years 2 and 3 likely happening, or another equal space will be located?

A: If the success of the market is contingent upon the location of the market, then you must show that the market location is secured for the duration of the project.

Q: Are we required to partner with another organization or entity to apply and if so, are letters of commitment from partner organizations required?

A: Yes, applicants must have at least one partner and/or collaborator and letters of commitment must be provided for each partner/collaborator. Applicants must demonstrate that their project is benefiting more than one agricultural producer, individual, farm, or business and that they are not the solely beneficiary of the award. Applicants are required to show evidence of existing community support and engagement.

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Grants.gov Information

Q: What does AOR stand for?

A: AOR is the Authorized Organization Representative, which is the person who has the authority to sign and submit grant applications on behalf of the company, organization, institution, or government. AOR's are authorized by their EBiz POC (E-Business Point of Contact) so they can submit applications on behalf of their organization.

Q: How do you become or register to be an AOR?

A: You would first register as an applicant on Grants.gov. Once you have a UEI and your organization has an active SAM account, your EBiz POC will receive an email notifying them that you have registered and need to be authorized.

Q: What is EIN?

A: The EIN is the Employer Identification Number. This number is assigned by the IRS.

Q: How do I know if my application was submitted on time?

A: After you submit your application to [Grants.gov](https://www.grants.gov), you (the AOR) will receive an automatic notification of receipt from the system that contains a Grants.gov tracking number and official date/time stamp of application submission. This notification ONLY indicates receipt by Grants.gov and does not indicate receipt by AMS. Grants.gov may also send you an error message if your application was not submitted correctly. If application submission passes Grants.gov validation, AOR will receive a second electronic acknowledgment of receipt. Once USDA-AMS has retrieved application from Grants.gov, AOR will receive a third email notification. Lastly, if AMS assigns its own agency tracking number/notes a fourth email is sent to AOR.

Q: How are attachments uploaded in Grants.gov?

A: The FMLFPP project narrative template must be attached to the "Project Narrative Attachment Form" on the application package. All other attachments must be attached to the Grants.gov application package using the "Add Attachments" button under Form SF-424 item #15. When uploading attachments, click the "Add Attachments" button (do NOT use the "paperclip" icon in Adobe Reader). If you use the "paperclip" icon in Adobe Reader the attachments will not be received with the application package.

Q: Can we apply before having the Unique Entity Identifier (UEI) and SAM.gov registration?

A: No, you must first have your UEI number to register in SAM.gov. In order to apply as an organization you must have an active SAM account.

Q: Do I have to register before I can see the requirements of the grant application?

A: No, you do not have to register in Grants.gov to view the opportunity and download it. Also, you can access the Request for Application, and the required documents on the program website, under the "How to apply" tab. However, you must be registered in Grants.gov to apply.

Q: Is the EBiz POC someone in my organization or a federal employee?

A: The EBiz POC is a member of your organization and is often the person that oversees the business operations. The EBiz POC is the one that registers the organization in SAM. EBiz POC is responsible

affiliating and assigning roles to all applicants registered in Grants.gov on behalf of the organization.

Q: Can the EBiz POC and AOR be the same person?

A: Yes. In that case, you'd need two accounts/log-ins. One to serve in each capacity.

Q: Can an organization have multiple EBiz POC's?

A: No, you can only have one EBiz POC but may have multiple AOR's.

Q: How do I contact Grants.gov if there is an issue with my registration?

A: You may contact the Customer Contact center by either e-mail support@grants.gov or phone 1-800-518-4726. You can also use the Self Help link <https://grants-portal.psc.gov> to find answers to common questions.

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SAM Registration

Q: If we already have a UEI, can we go straight to SAM.gov?

A: Yes. SAM registration can take up to 2 weeks, and often longer, to complete so register early. Check the SAM.gov [website](#) for additional login procedures.

Q: If I have already had a SAM.gov account, do I have to do anything else?

A: Yes, you must be sure that your SAM.gov account is up to date. If the account expired, you must renew your account before applying.

Q: Do I have to pay to activate a SAM.gov account?

A: No, registering and renewing a SAM.gov account is completely free. If you received notification on having to pay to renew your account beware that it is likely a SCAM and should be reported to the appropriated authorities.

Q: Do I need to have an active SAM.gov registration to receive payments?

A: Yes. You must have an active SAM registration for the agency to process your claims/payments. If the UEI is showing inactive in the Payment Management System (PMS), the payment will not be processed. It is the responsibility of the organization to contact SAM.gov to renew the registration annually.

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Matching Information

Q: What is cost sharing or matching?

A: Cost sharing or matching is the portion of project costs not paid by the Federal funds, which could be cash and/or in-kind contributions. Cash can be a financial outlay, or cash donations from non-Federal third parties. In-kind can be the value of non-cash contributions typically in the form of value of

personnel, goods, and services, including direct and indirect costs. Other Federal funds cannot be used as match. (See 2 CFR §§ 200.1 and 200.306.)

Q: Do both programs (FMPP and LFPP) require cost sharing or matching?

A: Yes. Both programs require cost sharing or matching of 25% of the FEDERAL portion of the grant.

Q: Can unallowable costs be brought as an in-kind or cost share match?

A: No. Only costs allowable under Subpart E of the Cost Principles can be brought as a match. The basis for determining the value of cash and in-kind contributions must be in accordance with 2 CFR § 200.306.

Q: Can land, buildings or labor count as in-kind matches?

A: Donated land and/or buildings cannot be used as an in-kind match. However, labor/personnel may be used as a match as long as you are only bringing the percentage of time the person is working on the project. For example, if someone is only spending 15% of his/her time working on the project, then you can only bring that 15% to the project as a match. Also, you must ensure that what you would normally pay that individual is reasonable according to standard personnel rates for similar positions in your geographic locality.

Q: Can unrecovered indirect cost be used as part of the cost sharing or matching?

A: Yes, it is allowable to use unrecovered indirect costs as part of cost sharing or matching. Unrecovered indirect cost means the difference between the amount charged to the Federal award and the amount that could have been charged to the Federal award under the potential recipients approved negotiated indirect cost rate.

Q: Does the non-federal match have to be confirmed at the time of proposal submission or can it be lined up by the time of the award?

A: All matching contributions must be committed or in place when the proposal is submitted to AMS. Additional anticipated matching funds not in place by the time the project commences cannot be counted toward the matching requirement. Match verification letters are required to be submitted with the application.

Q: How many match verifications letters do I submit?

A: An applicant must submit one letter verifying the match for EACH cash and/or in-kind resource signed by the matching organization. Each application requires written verification of match commitment from the applicant and/or any third party who will contribute cash and/or in-kind matching non-Federal resources. Letters may be submitted in either PDF or MS Word formatting. Letters must be signed.

Q: Can I use pre-award costs to count towards the match requirement at time of application?

A: No, only costs that are incurred within the period of performance can be used as a match source.

Q: Can the match requirement be waived?

A: No. The matching requirement was established in the 2018 Farm Bill legislation, and USDA is not able to waive a statutory requirement.

Q: Can I provide more than the 25 percent match requirement?

A: Yes. You can provide more than the required 25% match. However, this will not provide any

advantage during the Technical Review of the applications. Any amount exceeding the required match will be considered “Voluntary Committed Cost Share” as defined in [2 CFR §200.1](#) and [2 CFR §200.306](#) . The excess amount will be considered **mandatory** and must be documented and provided to the project if awarded.

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Review Process and Applicant Notifications

Q: What is the likelihood my organization will be selected for funding?

A: FMLFPP is a very competitive grant program. For FY22 FMPP received 136 applications and funded 40%. LFPP received 202 applications and funded 46.5%. Applicants must develop high quality applications to have higher probability of being selected for funding.

Q: What are the evaluation criteria used to evaluate applications?

A: The RFAs outline the five evaluation criteria used by external reviewers to evaluate applications. (See section 6.0 of the RFA.)

Q: How and when should I hear back whether my application was funded?

A: All applicants will be notified via email if they were selected for funding or not. It can take up to six months from the application due date for applicants to be notified.

Q: How can I find out about awarded or completed FMPP and/or LFPP projects?

A: You may view the list of awarded projects and final reports on the FMPP and LFPP websites: www.ams.usda.gov/services/grants. Click on the applicable grant program website (FMPP or LFPP), then click on “Awarded Grants”.

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Allowable/Unallowable Costs

Q: Can funds be used for production related activities?

A: No, funds cannot be use for any type of production activities including purchase of farm equipment, tools, supplies, gardening, including production related training.

Q: Can funds be used to purchase food or produce?

A: No. Grant funds cannot be used to purchase produce nor food, including catering for events. Applicants and/or recipients must have or supply the produce or food for which the project will be helping to increase the access to and availability.

Q: Can funds be used to purchase food for voucher/reimbursement programs or for food pantry donations?

A: No, it is unallowable to use grant funds for costs of coupon/incentive redemptions or price discounts. Grant funds cannot be used to purchase food for voucher/reimbursement programs, to purchase food for donations or to purchase food for resale.

Q: Can funds be used for micro-loans or be re-granted?

A: No. Grant funds may not be used for awarding micro-loans or for re-granting.

Q: Can I use funds to purchase land or buildings?

A: No. It is unallowable to use grant funds for the acquisition of buildings, facilities, or land or to make additions, improvements, modifications, replacements, rearrangements, reinstallations, renovations or alterations of an existing building or facility (including site grading and improvement, and architecture fees). This includes construction and construction-related materials, which may include, but are not limited to the purchase of building materials such as wood, nails, concrete, asphalt, roofing, gravel, sand, paint, insulation, drywall, or plumbing. You may rent a land or a building with grant funds. However, lease-to-own agreements are not allowable.

Q: Can funds be used to purchase vehicles?

A: Vehicles may be leased, but not purchased. However, lease agreements to own (i.e., lease-to-own or rent-to-own) are not allowable. The lease or rental agreement must terminate at the end of the grant cycle. A signed copy of the lease agreement will be required prior to first payment approval.

In addition, it is unallowable to purchase trucks that are commercially available for rent. An example of an unallowable truck purchase includes a refrigerated truck that can be rented as-is (without making modifications or retrofitting). This truck is considered general purpose equipment and can be rented, but not purchased.

Q: Can funds be used to repair and/or upgrade existing equipment?

A: Yes. Funds may be used to modify equipment that is not already available and readily usable in its current format. Examples include specialized equipment for mobile markets, mobile slaughter unit components, and trailers to be retrofitted.

Q: Can funds be used to purchase Electronic Benefit Transfer (EBT) machines that provide access point for low-income residents?

A: No, FMLFPP funds cannot be used to purchase EBT machines. The USDA [Food and Nutrition Service \(FNS\)](#) offers funding to expand the availability of SNAP EBT equipment and services at farmers markets through the National Association of Farmers Market Nutrition Programs ([marketlink](#)) and State SNAP agencies. Additional information can be found at <https://www.fns.usda.gov/snap/farmer-producer/farmers-market-grant-program>.

Q: Can funds be used to educate and enroll customers into Food Assistance Program (Ex. SNAP, WIC, Senior programs, etc.)?

A: No. Grant funds cannot be used to register, train, and/or educate customers on Food Assistance Programs such as SNAP, WIC, etc.

Q: Can funds be used to educate and train vendors on the acceptance of Food Assistance Program (Ex. SNAP, WIC, Senior programs, etc.) at their market?

A: Yes. Grant fund can be used to educate vendors about the eligibility requirements and the process for participating in or applying to accept SNAP, WIC, Senior Farmers Market Nutrition program benefits, or other (state or local or nonprofit) benefit programs at farmers markets.

Q: Can I used grant funds for construction?

A. LAMP's authorizing statute ([7 U.S.C. 1627c](#)) does not allow grant funds to be used for any type of construction activities. This also includes construction and construction-related materials, which may include, but are not limited to, the purchase of building materials such as wood, nails, concrete, asphalt, roofing, gravel, sand, paint, insulation, drywall, or plumbing.

Q: What is an example of a "non-construction/infrastructure improvements" that fall under allowable costs and activities?

A: "Non-construction" would be renting a larger space and adding the equipment needed for the expansion (cold storage, kitchen equipment, pre-made shelves, pallets, pallet lifters).

Q: What is the 2018 Farm Bill Authority limiting expenses related to food safety costs?

A: The \$6,500 expense limitation is *specifically* for costs related to the purchase or upgrades to equipment to improve food safety. This limit does not apply to applicants that want to obtain food safety certification assistance. In other words, projects that are requesting expenses related for food safety certifications don't have this amount limit. Also, there is no limitation on food practices such as employee training on food safety, storage and handling, waste handling practices, pest control, facilities designed and others.

Q: In selecting a contractor, do we need to go through a procurement/bid process, or could we select one of the contractors we have used in the past?

A: This is entirely up to the applicant. However, each state has different procurement rules that you must follow. AMS highly recommends using a competitive bid process (with at least 3 bids) for any procurements under the FMLFPP award. If the applicant chooses to forego that process, they must still provide justification on the application for selecting that contractor through a noncompetitive process.

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Reviewers

Q: If my organization submits a proposal to LFPP, can I serve as a reviewer for FMPP or vice versa?

A: Yes, if your organization submits an LFPP or FMPP proposal you may serve as a reviewer for the program to which you have not applied.

Q: How can I become a reviewer for the programs?

A: To become a reviewer, you must register online during the active grant cycle. Refer to our [How to Become an Application Reviewer](#) website for more information.

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