



SCALES

Supporting Community Agriculture & Local Education Systems

Application Template

We encourage you to write the answers to your application in a word processing program such as Word or Google Docs, and save it in that format. Then, when you have all of the application materials ready, log on to the portal. From your written document, copy and paste each section into the portal. Be sure to save as you go.

Below is the information that you will need for the application:

Organization and Individual Contact Information
Name of School Food Authority/School District
Address
Telephone
Website
Local Education Agency number (locate at https://nces.ed.gov/ccd/districtsearch/)
Information for Submitter of Application (name, email address)
Child Nutrition Director Contact Information (name, email address, phone number)
Superintendent Contact Information (name, email address, phone number)
Are there any potential conflicts of interest with members of the Project SCALES team and/or USDA FNS? If so, please describe. If not, please note that here.
Answer here, no word limit...
Executive Summary
Summarize the project in plain language which would be understandable for someone in your local community. Summarize the goals, activities, and objectives of the project, as well as the innovation and significance of the project for improving school food system resiliency.
Answer here, not to exceed 300 words...
Programmatic Point of Contact (SFA Director) credentials and professional experience.
Please briefly describe the credentials (e.g., RD, SNS) and the child nutrition background of the director of your SFA. If this person will not be the programmatic point of contact for your project, please also provide information about the project director.



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Answer here, no word limit...

Project Team

Describe key personnel who will work on this project and the percentage of time they will commit to the project. Describe new or existing partnerships or agreements with external partners and summarize the roles and responsibilities of each team member throughout the project. Purchasing from socially disadvantaged farmers and ranchers is not required, but it is encouraged, and applications can receive additional points in the review process for these elements. Include information about the characteristics of potential suppliers such as farmers/ranchers and other partners (i.e., size of the business in terms of revenue and distance from your SFA), as well as the socio-demographic characteristics of owners (i.e., whether owners meet USDA’s definition of socially disadvantaged farmers and ranchers).

Answer here, not to exceed 500 words...

Brief Description of the Community Served

Please tell us—in your own words—what your community is like. What are the challenges and strengths of your local community and, in particular, who are the students served by your child nutrition programs? How many students do you feed daily (average daily participation for breakfast and lunch)? What are the issues those students and families face? We encourage you to use publicly-available demographic information to describe your community (i.e., US Census Bureau’s [American Community Survey](#), whether your community is considered an [Opportunity Zone](#), current and past information about the percentage of students eligible for free/reduced-priced meals or your school’s Identified Student Percentage, or other indicators of disadvantage and/or lack of resources). Please tell us about the agricultural businesses in your area and what you see as potential partnerships that could address supply chain issues and improve the availability of nutritious foods and beverages for K-12 systems.

Answer here, not to exceed 1,000 words...

Description of Recent and Ongoing Challenges for Your School Meal Programs

The pandemic caused many supply chain issues and, as a result, rapid innovation occurred in school meal programs to meet the urgent needs of students, families, and communities. We know that some of those issues have changed, while some continue to be problematic. Please describe your current purchasing arrangements and what, if any, type of local



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procurement has been possible in your community or region. What challenges have you faced when procuring local foods for your meal programs, if any, and what opportunities are there to procure more foods locally? What is the local food landscape in your community or region?

Answer here, not to exceed 1,000 words...

Description of the Project

Please describe the project plan. What are the key performance indicators that will be used to evaluate outcomes? Discuss the design, procedures, and activities to be completed. Describe partners and what types of activities will occur to enhance those partnerships. Identify members of the team who will lead specific aspects of the project. Provide a timeline that includes major project activities and milestones (this can be uploaded separately in the application portal as a one-page PDF, with a chart or figure to illustrate the timeline). State how the activities will consider equity, and how the project will be monitored to ensure that it does not exacerbate existing inequities. Please specify project goals and activities that are SMART (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, and Time-bound).

Answer here, not to exceed 1,500 words...

Innovation and Significance

Please address the broader impacts of this project, and how it may shift current paradigms through novel concepts, approaches, or interventions. Describe the potential impact of the proposed project locally, and how it can yield knowledge about resilient local food systems. How might you and the Project SCALES team be able to translate your work to the larger community? Please describe what it would mean if this project were successful, and what next steps might build upon, scale up, or translate the lessons of this project to new contexts as well as potential to create permanent procedures and systems to sustain the work.

Answer here, not to exceed 1,000 words...

Change Management

Systems change can be invigorating and fun, but also slow and challenging. When an initiative does not go as planned, how will you address barriers? Describe any prior experience with local procurement efforts, including prior external funding such as farm to school grants, and discuss what has worked and what has not.



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Answer here, not to exceed 500 words...

Sustainability

How will you sustain the positive changes made during your project so they endure after the grant term has ended? Describe the future of this project and how will you support it beyond the grant.

Answer here, not to exceed 500 words...

Collaborative Technical Assistance and Professional Learning Community

We are seeking applicants who will actively participate in activities to support implementation, which includes: 1) proactive virtual engagement with LunchAssist’s TA specialist, including regular support calls; 2) monthly group learning sessions on relevant topics, followed by team problem-solving; and 3) password-protected access to LunchAssist’s online learning management system with resources relevant to local procurement. Describe your team's commitment to participating in these learning activities and willingness/readiness to make systematic changes to your meal programs.

Answer here, not to exceed 500 words...

On a scale of 1-10, how likely are you to take an active role in the virtual technical assistance and group learning sessions provided by LunchAssist?”

Enter a number from 1 to 10 where 1 = *not very likely* to 10 = *very likely*



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Application Checklist

Before uploading materials to the portal, please check to confirm that you also have the following ready, in addition to the answers above.

- ✓ **Answers to all of the questions above.** Carefully proofread for spelling errors and clarity of responses, and confirm the correct word count. The portal will not allow responses that exceed the specified word count. Proper punctuation and spacing must be used when composing your answers (i.e., do not combine words or use hypens to reduce word count).
- ✓ **Timeline.** You may choose to upload a separate one-page document that illustrates major project activities and milestones (this can be uploaded separately as a chart or figure, saved as a PDF).
- ✓ **Budget Worksheet and Budget Narrative (no page limit).** Use the templates provided on the Project SCALES website. Save both as a PDF file, and combine into one PDF. Upload only one document.
- ✓ **District Administrator Letter of Support (required; no word limit).** Provide a letter (on official letterhead) from the superintendent of the district/school system associated with your SFA. This letter can be brief and should indicate understanding and agreement that the application is being submitted, and indicate support for the project being proposed. Save as a PDF.
- ✓ **Partner Letters of Support (at least one is required; no word limit).** Provide a letter (on official letterhead) from each of the organizations that are being included as partners in the application. This letter should indicate understanding and agreement that the application is being submitted, and indicate how the partner will be engaged in the project being proposed. Save as a PDF. If there are multiple letters, combine into one PDF and upload only one document.