RFP# GC23-10 FY22 National School Lunch Program (NSLP) Equipment Assistance Grant for School Food Authorities (SFAs)
Questions & Answers Summary

General

1. I just started here at the school, and we have two old combi ovens. Both are the same age, and we are having them fixed on a regular basis at this point in time, and after speaking with our awesome technician about the units, he says that he can not replace some parts on them (computer components) and we should think about replacing them sooner than later. The units are used EVERY day for multiple uses, and we are talking about replacing them, is there a limit in $$ we can receive from this equipment grant?

    -   Yes, total combined awards to an SFA for an individual Recipient Agency (RA) cannot exceed $20,000. SFAs are not limited in the number of applications submitted or the value of equipment requested**.** However, the SFA will need to be prepared to use another appropriate funding source (such as the general fund) to cover the difference between the amount awarded and the actual cost of the equipment.

2. Is there a set amount awarded to the district for the new grant? Is there an amount earmarked for a district, or a limit we can ask for?

    -   There is no amount earmarked per SFA or RA. SFAs may receive an award for up to $20,000 in equipment for each eligible RA. This is a competitive grant opportunity in which eligible SFAs may submit application(s) on behalf of their eligible RAs to request the type and cost of equipment needed. Each application will be separately reviewed and scored by two reviewers. The scores of the two reviewers will be averaged to obtain the final average score. Awards will be made for applications in rank order of average final score until funds are exhausted or there are no fundable applications remaining. Please see the Method of Awarding Grants section of the RFP for more details.

3. As a public school district, would we need to be prequalified in the Grants Gateway system?

    -   Non-public and charter school SFA applicants must be prequalified in the Grants Gateway by the application deadline of 5:00 p.m. on March 31, 2023. Public school district SFAs are not required to prequalify in the Grants Gateway system.

4. On the application, it looks like I don't need to submit the fire report or to prequalify since we are a BOCES. Am I correct that only non-publics have to submit these two items?

- BOCES are considered public by the New York State Education Department (NYSED) and do not need to prequalify or submit a fire inspection report. However, please review the information below:

  Prequalification Requirement:
  The prequalification requirement is applicable to the SFA. Non-public SFA and charter school SFA applicants must be prequalified in the Grants Gateway by the application deadline of 5:00 p.m. on March 31, 2023. Applications received from nonpublic SFAs and Charter School SFAs that are not Prequalified in the Grants Gateway by 5:00 PM Eastern Time on the proposal due date of March 31, 2023, will be disqualified from further consideration.

  Mandatory Requirements for non-public RAs:
  The mandatory requirements for non-public RAs are applicable to each specific RA that the SFA is applying for. A current building Fire Inspection indicating no violations from the local government authority having jurisdiction for determining compliance with applicable Fire Codes of New York State is required for **non-public schools (RAs) only**.

  RAs that are recognized as a public school by NYSED are not required to submit a fire inspection. Please note, that a public SFA may be responsible for and apply on behalf of a non-public RA. In this case, since the requirement applies to the RA, the fire inspection and certificate of occupancy would be required for any non-public RAs being applied for.

5. We applied for this grant two years ago and were not approved. Would we be able to use the equipment we purchased then for this year's grant? The proper procurement was done.

   - No. This grant does not apply to equipment that has already been purchased. SFAs must complete all activities (including expending the awarded funding and installation of awarded equipment etc.) within the project period begin and end dates. The project period for this grant is 7/1/2023 - 6/30/2024. Any equipment previously purchased or purchased outside of the award of this specific project period is not eligible for reimbursement under this grant year.

6. If a grant writer is submitting applications for multiple school districts (SFAs), can the same email address be used for SharePoint access to upload those applications?

   - Yes. An individual that has been granted access to the FY22 Equipment Grant SharePoint site may submit applications for more than one SFA and/or RA under the same login. However, **each application must be submitted separately** to the SharePoint site and each submission must clearly identify the eligible SFA and RA

names and corresponding LEA codes in the provided fields. This is crucial to ensure each individual application can be identified as belonging to the appropriate SFA/RA.

7. Due to programmatic needs related to physical transitions, are funds available for use if the students do not eat in a cafeteria?

    -   Yes. Eligible SFAs/RAs that do not serve all students in a cafeteria space are still able to apply for grant funding. As stated in the RFP, the equipment request and grant application submission must address how the equipment improves the quality of school meals and must also address **one** focus area from the following: Focus 1: Food Safety, Focus 2: Serving Healthier School Meals, Focus 3: Expanded Participation in NSLP and/or SBP. Please refer to the RFP for more details.

8. Although FS-10 is not required for the application, in preparation for the future if awarded, which tab will awardees use for reimbursement and requests for funds distribution? (tab 45 supplies and materials or tab 20 equipment).

    -   The FS-10 form does not need to be submitted as part of the application; however, awarded SFAs will be expected to submit an FS-10 Budget form with an original signature at the time of award. When completing the FS-10 form "Equipment: Code 20" should be used to reflect the awarded equipment including all acquisition costs. This is the only code that will be used and reimbursable under this grant.

9. Can I use the same "invite" to submit applications for different districts? Or do I need different invitations for each district application?

    -   An individual that has been granted access to the FY22 Equipment Grant SharePoint site may submit applications for more than one SFA and/or RA under the same login. Each SFA does not require their own invite. However, **each application must be submitted separately** to the SharePoint site and each submission must clearly identify the eligible SFA and RA names and corresponding LEA codes in the provided fields. This is crucial to ensure each individual application can be identified as belonging to the appropriate SFA/RA.

10. What is our SFA LEA code? RA code?
    -   A School Food Authority LEA code (SFA LEA code) is the 12digit number associated with your SFA. The Recipient Agency LEA code (RA LEA code) is the 12-digit number associated with each individual school that participates under that SFA. This information is available on the Child Nutrition Management System (CNMS) and interested applicants may also reach out to foodequip@nysed.gov for further assistance.

11. Is the district the School Food Authority and each school would be the recipient agency?

- The SFA is the entity that has an agreement with SED Child Nutrition Program to administer the federal Child Nutrition Programs for their Recipient Agencies. For public schools, the SFA is typically the "district" and each school is an RA. However, there are many different SFA/RA scenarios. SFA information is available on the [Child Nutrition Management System (CNMS)](#) and interested applicants may reach out to foodequip@nysed.gov for further assistance.

12. How do we get started to apply for this grant?

    - Please refer to the RFP posted for this grant year for directions and information on how to apply, eligibility, SharePoint access, and more. [The RFP can be found here](#).

13. Is there a limit as to the number of applications we can submit with a total not exceeding $20,000?

    - No, there is no limit to the number of applications that may be submitted. An eligible SFA may apply on behalf of one or more eligible RAs and submit multiple applications. Please keep in mind, an individual RA may not be awarded for an equipment item that costs less than $1,000, and will not be awarded more than $20,000. If the applicant SFA applies for a total dollar amount exceeding $20,000 for an individual RA, the SFA will need to be prepared to use another appropriate funding source (such as the general fund) to cover the difference between the amount awarded and the actual cost of the equipment.

Application

14. We're puzzled by the distinction between "New Equipment" and "Replacement Equipment." Which box should we check when asking for funds to purchase **new** equipment to **replace** old (failing) equipment?

    - Equipment requests may include new equipment, used equipment, and replacement of equipment with a per item acquisition cost greater than $1,000. If funding is being requested to purchase a piece of equipment for use in Child Nutrition programs that is not currently possessed by the RA, the "new equipment" box should be selected to indicate this. If the item being applied for is meant to replace an old, broken, or existing piece of equipment already possessed by the RA, the "replacement equipment" box should be chosen.

15. Would we be able to use quotes from the prior year's submission? All the quotes exceed the maximum allocation.

    - Part 5, Section 4 of the application requests supporting documentation such as price

quotes, equipment specification sheets and other supporting documentation to substantiate the equipment and cost requested. Applicants will be scored based on the information and documentation provided as described in the RFP. Due to the ever-changing market and increased prices, it is recommended that up-to-date and accurate price quotes are submitted with the application. Price quotes from prior years may no longer be an accurate representation of what current market prices and availability are.

16. I have a question about p. 4 of the application for the NSLP Equipment Assistance Grant for School Food Authorities:
The cost breakdown for the requested equipment includes lines for "Installation Cost" and "Disposition of Old Equipment Cost." However, vendor quotes typically say that such costs are "included" in the totals, rather than identifying them separately. I've tried putting zeroes or "N/A" in these cells, but the cells won't accept either. I'm concerned that this may become a problem when it's time to for the application to be uploaded in SharePoint. Please advise.

    - If the quote from a vendor includes a breakdown of any additional acquisition costs such as installation or disposition of old equipment, these costs should be listed on the corresponding lines in Part 4 equipment request section of the application.

      If the acquisition costs are all included in the total cost of the equipment and not specified separately, the total cost can be noted in Part 4 without reporting each individual cost on the provided lines. The fillable application will not allow a value of zero or "N/A" to be entered, however, you are able to submit the application without these fields filled in.

17. Our superintendent is leaving in about a month, so who should I have on the paper work under the primary contact, and fiscal contact? I am the one putting together the information for this grant so I would assume I am the primary contact as well, or maybe my business manager? Also under part 3 on page 3 who do I have sign? The old superintendent or the new superintendent?

    - The contacts listed on the application are to be filled out at the school's discretion. These will be the individuals who will be contacted throughout the grant project period, if necessary. It is prudent to list the individuals who are involved and informed about the grant.

      The primary contact will be SED's main contact for all communication regarding the grant activities.

      The fiscal contact should be the person responsible for the fiscal aspects of the grant. This may or may not be the same person as the primary contact.

The Part 3-Certification must be signed by the SFA's Chief School/Administrative Officer for the application to be considered. The Food Service Director may not sign the written certification. In the case where the Superintendent is changing, whoever is in the position of Superintendent at the time the application is completed may be the one to sign.

18. Do I put both units in this grant application? I would just hate to be over looked due to what we were asking for or because we "aimed to high", but would also hate to not get every piece of help as we could.

    - The "Application Instructions" section of the [RFP](RFP) provides detailed instructions on how to complete the application form based on the equipment type requested.

      SFAs may apply for either general equipment, point of service (POS) equipment or an entire serving line.

      When applying for general equipment, SFAs must complete a separate application for each piece of equipment requested for each eligible RA. If a requested piece of equipment is unusable without additional pieces, the SFA may include the accessories on the same application (e.g., a walk-in freezer that requires a compressor to operate) and identify each item in the Equipment Request Chart (Part 4). However, if the requested piece of equipment can operate alone, then separate applications must be completed for each requested item (e.g., stand-alone milk cooler, salad bar).

      Requests for multiples of the same piece of equipment may be contained within one application for an RA, but requests for different pieces of equipment at the same RA must be submitted separately.

      Detailed instructions are provided in the RFP for how SFAs can apply for an entire serving line or POS system.

19. The fillable Application PDF limits the number of characters that may be entered into the question boxes. We do not see a limit in the RFP. Is there a limit or is this an error in the pdf?

    - The instructions at the top of the fillable application state "Please limit responses to the space provided." When filling out the application, applicants are limited to the character number in each response box.

20. On page 8 of the RFP, there is mention of 10 bonus points for POS equipment if none of the RAs listed on the application received a previous grant in FY 2019, 2020 or 2021. Does this mean the applicant could receive 20 bonus points (10 points for the POS equipment request and another 10 points if all RAs listed in the application did not receiving funding in the last three grant cycles)? Similarly, could applicants receive 30 bonus points if they

are also a central kitchen and also meet the qualifications described in the previous sentence?

- There is a maximum of 10 bonus points available for each application. RAs that did **not** receive a previous grant award through the FY 2019, FY 2020, or FY 2021 National School Lunch Program Equipment Assistance Grant for School Food Authorities will receive an extra 10 points toward their overall score.

   When applying for POS equipment, multiple RAs may be listed on one application. In order for the application to be eligible for the 10 bonus points, all RAs on the application must **not** have received a previous award in the FY 2019, FY 2020, or FY 2021. If any of the RAs listed on the application were previously awarded in one of these fiscal years, the application will not be eligible for these 10 bonus points.

   Similarly, for central kitchens, if **none** of the RAs served by the central kitchen received a previous equipment grant award in FY2019, FY2020 or FY2021, the application will receive an additional 10 points toward their overall score.

21. If an SFA would like to purchase a POS system for multiple RAs, can it submit multiple applications to take advantage of the POS bonus points? For example, one application would be submitted for an RA or multiple RAs that have not won awards in FY 2019, 2020 or 2021 (which would qualify for bonus points) and a separate application would be submitted for an RA that is not eligible for the bonus points.

   - Due to the nature of this request, the POS Equipment request selection allows the SFA to apply for POS equipment at multiple RAs on the same application. However, the SFA may choose to apply for POS equipment for individual RAs separately using the selection general equipment requests. Regardless of how the SFA chooses to apply, each application form is reviewed and scored separately as described in the "Application Scoring" section of the RFP. The way an SFA chooses to apply for a POS system at multiple RAs is up to their discretion.

22. If an SFA would like different POS systems for different RAs, would the SFA need to submit multiple applications (one for each type of POS system)? If so, would the SFA use the POS application or the general equipment request application?

   - Due to the nature of this request, the POS Equipment request selection allows the SFA to apply for POS equipment at multiple RAs on the same application. However, the SFA may choose to apply for POS equipment for individual RAs separately using the selection general equipment requests, as described above. Regardless of how the SFA chooses to apply, each application form is reviewed and scored separately as described in the "Application Scoring" section of the RFP. When filling out part 4 of the application for a POS system, SFAs will have the ability to specify each RA being

applied for, as well as the POS equipment being requested. If applying for different components of a POS system for different RAs on one application (for example, POS software with pin pad at one RA and only the software at a different RA), the applicant should address the need or reasoning in the application responses on the same application.

23. Question 4(c) asks applicants to "Identify the supporting documentation included with this application to substantiate the cost requested." However, there is no space to include this information in the answer area. Should we add in text after the existing chart to identify the documentation?

- Question 4(c) provides 3 lines that should be used to list vendor name and total equipment acquisition cost. Documentation including price quotes, equipment specification sheets and other supporting documentation to substantiate the equipment request should be submitted in SharePoint as separate attachments along with the application attachment.

24. Can you expand the definition / description requirements of Part 5 Section 2: Quality Improvement grant application? How long or detailed should this section be?

- Part 5 – Section 2: Quality Improvement on the application should provide a detailed and credible justification of how the equipment will improve the overall quality of meals and include a detailed description of specific improvements (cooking methods, appearance, taste, new items/recipes, nutritional quality). Responses are limited to the space provided by the fillable application; however, there is not a required minimum response length.

25. I am wondering if extended warranties for school cafeteria equipment can be included in the cost/quote? I understand that delivery costs can be included, but I did not see anywhere in the RFP any guidance regarding costs for extended warranties.

- Yes. Extended warranties for equipment may be included. SFAs may list this cost under "Other Costs" on the fillable application along with an explanation of what this amount is for. Per item acquisition cost must be greater than $1,000 and may not exceed a total $20,000 per awarded RA. As with all federal funds, the equipment purchases must be necessary, reasonable, and allocable.

26. We understand the cap is $20,000 per school food authority. We need to replace failing refrigeration units. Should we submit a single application for two identical units or one application per unit?

- Requests for multiples of the same piece of equipment may be contained within one

application for an RA, but requests for different pieces of equipment at the same RA must be submitted separately. Additionally, separate applications must be submitted for each RA. Please review the "Application Instructions" section of the RFP.

27. I am attempting to upload an application for my district and I hit the "save" button in an attempt to save my progress on the upload. But then I received an email saying the application has been submitted. I did not actually attach the application yet, so I don't want the application to be considered final. How can I change this? And, for the next application, can I save as I go along?

    - When submitting your completed application and supporting documents to SharePoint, you will have the ability to upload documents, edit information, and save changes from the time you are granted SharePoint access until the due date of 5:00 p.m. on March 31, 2023. Submissions will not be reviewed or considered final until this date and time, at which point you will no longer be able to make changes.

28. I am applying for replacement POS hardware to upgrade our current system. I see the application has columns for separate RA locations. However, I am wondering how to include all pieces that are required for the POS system. For example, the POS Tablekiosk (which is the terminal), the Tabletkiosk stand and the Pinpad/Scanner. Would all items be added together?

    - When applying for a POS system, the applicant should select Point of Sale (POS) Equipment, and use Part 4 to fill in the details of the equipment, make/model, costs, etc. All pieces that make up the POS can be listed under the "Equipment Item" row.

      Please note, the individual equipment requests must have a value greater than $1,000 as described in the "Equipment Requests" section of the RFP. If the SFA will consider the entire POS system (all components together instead of individual pieces) to be equipment for financial statement purposes rather than supplies and materials, the SFA should submit a written statement on letterhead indicating this. If the SFA does not indicate in writing with the application that the individual components of the POS system will be combined and considered equipment, the cost of the individual POS components will be evaluated by SED to determine if each item has a value greater than $1,000, as required.

29. In using the live link from the NYSED website to the auto fill application, I have experienced issues with the autofill. We intend to file for General Equipment Only. The section does not allow you to fill the Recipient agency or address. Also note that when selecting the appropriate radio buttons, they appear as selected while the form is open, but they do not appear when you print the document. Is there a glitch with this form? Or is the issue on my end?

- When using the application link from the NYSED website, please download and save the application form in PDF to your computer prior to completing it. Please note that while printing an application for SFA/RA documentation records may be done, completed applications must be uploaded to SharePoint prior to the deadline to be considered.

Eligibility

30. Is a community center, who serves meals to students K-8 grade prior to an after-school program and also runs 2 community day care centers eligible?

   - No. Equipment assistance grants will be awarded to eligible SFAs participating in the NSLP. SFAs are eligible to apply for funding for their RAs that participate in the NSLP, including public school districts, non-profit nonpublic schools, charter schools and residential childcare institutions in New York State. Schools that do not participate in the NSLP are not eligible to apply to this grant.

31. I am wondering if a NYS OCFS licensed Daycare facility who serves UPK children is eligible to apply? We are a licensed daycare with the Office of Children and Family Services, and we serve UPK (Universal Pre-Kindergarten) children in our facility through a contract with our local school district. We provide all the meals to the children that are prepared in-house. We are a CACFP (Child and Adult Care Food Program) facility, with a current and in good standing CCFP contract with NYS.

   - No. Equipment assistance grants will be awarded to eligible SFAs participating in the NSLP. SFAs are eligible to apply for funding for their RAs that participate in the NSLP, including public school districts, non-profit nonpublic schools, charter schools and residential childcare institutions in New York State. Schools that do not participate in the NSLP are not eligible to apply to this grant.

32. Please let us know if our school is eligible for RFP#GC23-010 FY 2022 National School Lunch Program Equipment Assistance Grant for School Food Authorities. We are a non-profit organization providing childcare for children aged two and up. We do not have SFA#. What should we do to be eligible to apply for this grant?

   - No. Equipment assistance grants will be awarded to eligible SFAs participating in the NSLP. SFAs are eligible to apply for funding for their RAs that participate in the NSLP, including public school districts, non-profit nonpublic schools, charter schools and residential childcare institutions in New York State. Schools that do not participate in the NSLP are not eligible to apply to this grant.

     A NYSED recognized school may become eligible in the future if approved to operate in the NSLP. However, new SFAs and new RAs must receive formal approval by the NYSED Child Nutrition Program Office to participate in the NSLP by the submission

deadline of March 31, 2023, at 5:00 p.m. for the FY 2022 NSLP Equipment Assistance Grant Application to be eligible to apply for funding. The new SFA application enrollment period does not begin until April 1, 2023, for participation beginning in the 2023-2024 School Year.

33. Are each of our schools eligible to receive the grant? (5 in our school district) Maximum-$20,000.00 per school.

    - SFAs are eligible to apply for funding for each of their RAs that participate in the NSLP. SFAs may receive up to $20,000 in equipment for each eligible RA.

34. How would we check our eligibility for each school?

    - SFAs are eligible to apply for funding for their RAs that participate in the NSLP, including public school districts, non-profit nonpublic schools, charter schools and residential childcare institutions in New York State. SFA and RA information is available in the Child Nutrition Management System (CNMS) or you may email foodequip@nysed.gov. Eligibility requirements also differ between public and non-public SFA and RAs, please refer to the RFP for further information on this.

35. We want to apply for the grant because in the 23-24 school year we are building a new school building. When we move into this building (July 1, 2024) we will be our own SFA with a private chef serving our own food. The equipment we want to request in this grant is for our new building and will be used under our own SFA. It has nothing to do with the current district. The district is currently our SFA as we currently use these school foods to service our kids. We will cease using them June 30, 2024. The equipment we're going to request in this grant has nothing to do with the current district and their food service and they will never use it. We're hoping you can help us figure out how to apply - thanks!

    - For the purposes of this grant, an SFA will apply on behalf of its eligible RAs. If you currently participate as an RA under an SFA, the SFA would be the entity applying, and the RA would not have the ability to apply for itself or on behalf of another RA. If awarded, the current SFA will remain as the entity awarded and the equipment must be used in the building in which it was awarded to. Future equipment grant opportunities may become available.

Equipment

36. Would a school district be able to use this funding for the purchase and installation of potable water source in their cafeteria?

    - Equipment that is eligible for award through this grant must be used to support the federally assisted school meals programs. SFAs participating in the School Breakfast

Program and/or NSLP must make potable water available and accessible without restriction to children at no charge in the place(s) where lunches/breakfast are served during the meal service. Therefore, this would be an allowable item to apply for, so long as the item meets the definition of equipment with a per item acquisition cost greater than $1,000 and will be used for the school meals programs in the location that students receive their breakfast and lunch meals. Installation costs that do not fall under construction or renovation may be eligible to be funded. Construction or renovation of the cafeteria or school nutrition area would fall under the category of construction costs, which must be charged to the school general fund or capital outlay fund.

37. Do you know if the grants would include using them for vending machines for smart snacks selling.

    - No. Equipment grant funds must be used to support the federally assisted school meals programs. Equipment may not be purchased exclusively for programs outside of the federally assisted school meals programs, and grant funding may also not be used to purchase items that are used solely for the sale of a la carte products such as snack vending machines.

38. We currently participate in the Breakfast and Lunch programs with an "offer only" choice from within our school district. I am interested in finding another option for food service. We do not have a full-service cafeteria. This funding opportunity might be the solution to our problems. Please provide information on how to write this proposal to include adding a full kitchen to our building.

    - SFAs may apply for their eligible RAs for equipment that will be used to support the federally assisted school meals programs. SFAs may apply for general equipment, an entire serving line or a POS system as stated in the RFP. Construction or renovation costs are not allowable and must be charged to the school general fund or capital outlay fund. When applying for funding for equipment as part of a larger project, such as the addition of a full kitchen to an existing building, documentation will need to be maintained to show the expense and payment of the awarded equipment when requesting reimbursement. Grant funding may not exceed $20,000 per Recipient Agency and may not be put toward renovation or construction costs of the kitchen.

39. Is an exhaust fan for a dishwasher something that could be considered with the Equipment Grants?
    - An exhaust fan for a dishwasher that is used to support the federally assisted school meals programs is an allowable item to request provided the item meets the definition of equipment in the RFP and has an acquisition cost greater than $1,000.