



Office of P-20 Education Policy
Child Nutrition Program Administration
89 Washington Avenue Room 375 EBA Albany, NY 12234
www.cn.nysed.gov

**RFP# 97: FY2024 National School Lunch Program Equipment Assistance Grant
for School Food Authorities**

Questions & Answers Summary

General

1. The way we read the paperwork is that there should only be one contact with the SharePoint link, (*only one duly authorized user*) to upload all the submissions. We understand that you don't want multiple submissions from one district, but if it is allowable for our district to have another email on file, my email would make more sense, as I will be writing and submitting the grant applications.

Answer: It is recommended that each SFA interested in applying appoint one individual to submit information to SharePoint. All food service directors, business officials, and Child Nutrition fiscal contacts entered in the Child Nutrition Management System (CNMS) as a contact for an NSLP-participating eligible SFA have been sent an email invitation to gain access to the SharePoint site.

If an SFA would like an additional person to have access to SharePoint other than the one(s) who received the invitation, a request can be sent to RFP97@nysed.gov. The email request must contain the SFA name, SFA LEA code, the individual's name, title, and the email address that should be granted access to the SharePoint site. Invitation requests for SharePoint will be accepted and approved until 4:00 p.m. June 16, 2025. Requests to access SharePoint after this time will not be granted.

2. Can you clarify what is meant by "SFAs must obligate their full grant funding by no later than 9/30/2025" in the RFP?

Answer: USDA guidance requires all awarded SFAs to fully obligate their grant award by September 30, 2025. To meet this requirement, SFAs must commit to purchasing the awarded item from a properly procured vendor. All procurement, installation, and expenditure activities must be completed by the projected end date of 6/30/26.

3. The only number we do not have access to here is the OSC Vendor ID – would you be able to provide me a contact or information so I could obtain such number to continue through the process?

Answer: OSC Vendor IDs can be located by logging into the Child Nutrition Management System (CNMS) and navigating to the School Food Authority General Information page.

Application

4. Where is the actual application for this grant?

Answer: The grant application has been posted as a fillable PDF attachment with the RFP and can be found [here](#). Please scroll down to the bottom of the page.

5. We have two ideas for proposals. Can we submit more than one proposal? Will only one proposal per applicant be awarded?

Answer: Eligible applicants can submit more than one application if they would like. When considering this, please keep in mind that an RA may be awarded more than one application request; however, total combined awards to an SFA for an individual RA cannot exceed \$20,000. Please see the Method of Award section of the RFP for more information.

6. Is this something that you can help me write or is there another grant writer I should use?

Answer: The Office of Child Nutrition administers this grant funding but is not able to provide any information that would give an advantage to one applicant over another. Applicants may use the assistance of grant writers if they would like; however, this is not required, and the office does not make recommendations for specific writers or organizations.

7. Can you please clarify if the RFP must be signed by the District Superintendent or by the FSA?

Answer: The 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.

The following administrators are authorized to sign the certification: in cases of public schools – the Superintendent of the school district or their duly authorized designee; in cases of not-for-profit corporations operating recognized non-public schools or in cases of public or private non-profit residential childcare institutions – the officer of the corporation (e.g. Executive Director or their duly authorized designee); and in cases of charter schools – the chief school officer, administrator, or their duly authorized designee.

8. Is it a \$20k maximum for the district or \$20k per building if I apply for each building separately?

Answer: The \$20,000 maximum applies to each eligible RA under an SFA. The total award an SFA receives may add up to more than \$20,000; however, no individual RA will receive an award greater than \$20,000.

9. While trying to compile quotes for the Equipment Assistance Grant, I am getting some feedback from the vendors about the “potential price changes to pricing”, due to any tariffs that may come down at the last minute. They are trying to speculate the prices. What happens if they bid lower than the actual price at the time of the purchase? Will the school need to pay the difference?

Answer: Quotes submitted as part of the application process are used to substantiate the cost of the item applied for. Awards will be made for specific equipment items for specific award amounts based on the application request. When making purchases of awarded equipment items, SFAs must follow proper procurement. Reimbursement will be paid to the SFA for the cost of the awarded item up to the amount awarded; however, any expense greater than the awarded amount will need to be covered by the SFA.

10. Last year, mandatory requirements were included in the RFP for non-public schools (which stated non-public schools were required to submit a copy of their certificate of occupancy, as well as a current fire inspection with no violations), but I don't see those in this year's RFP. I wanted to confirm that we **do not need to upload** these for this year's RFP.

Answer: Correct. There is no mandatory requirement for non-public RAs to submit a certificate of occupancy or a building fire inspection showing no violations, when applying for the RFP 97 FY24 NSLP Equipment Assistance Grant for SFAs. Please see the RFP for more detail on eligibility and application requirements.

Eligibility

11. If we receive an invitation, does it mean that we can apply?

Answer: Receiving an invitation to the SharePoint submission site does not guarantee eligibility. Individuals who request an invitation to apply for this grant during the listed application period will be provided one. Please refer to the posted RFP and [Previous Food Service Equipment Grant Recipients](#) list prior to completing an application submission, as applications for ineligible SFAs/RAs will not be considered for review or award.

12. I am reaching out because we were a recipient of the equipment grant last year and I was wondering how long we have to wait to apply for another one? Our walk-in cooler/freezer is slowly showing signs of needing replacing and I wasn't sure if we could apply again for next year.

Answer: The availability of funding and the eligibility requirements to apply for this grant differ from year to year. It cannot be guaranteed at this time if funding will continue to be available in future years, or how schools will be determined eligible to apply. Please review the RFP for information on the year it pertains to.

13. I would like to inquire, if the SFA received this grant in FY 2020, would the RA be eligible to apply for it again this year?

Answer: No. SFAs that were awarded this grant in Fiscal Years 2020, 2021, 2022, or 2023 are not eligible to apply for funding. A list of SFAs that previously received an equipment grant in these years is available here: [Previous Food Service Equipment Grant Recipients](#). SFAs on this list are not eligible to apply for this grant opportunity for any of their participating RAs.

14. Are we eligible to apply for an equipment grant this year? I was told there is a list of schools that are not eligible if they received a grant within the last 3 years but I cannot find this list.

Answer: A list of SFAs that previously received an equipment grant in Fiscal Years 2020, 2021, 2022, or 2023 is available here: [Previous Food Service Equipment Grant Recipients](#). This link appears in the first page of the RFP. SFAs on this list are not eligible to apply for this grant opportunity.

15. I've read through the RFP #97 and noticed SFAs that previously received awards in years 2020-2023 are not eligible. Do these include the RA's as well?

Answer: Yes. For the purpose of this grant, eligible SFAs apply on behalf of their eligible RAs. If an SFA is included on the list of SFAs that previously received an equipment grant in FY 2020, 2021, 2022, or 2023, the SFA is not eligible to apply for any of their participating RAs. A list of SFAs that previously received an equipment grant in these years is available here: [Previous Food Service Equipment Grant Recipients](#).

16. If we are not in the National School Lunch Program (NSLP) are we eligible? We are in the Milk program.

Answer: No, eligible SFAs may apply for funding for their Recipient Agencies that participate in the NSLP. SFAs or RAs who do not participate in the NSLP are not eligible to apply.

17. I'm not sure if we are eligible because we had gotten an equipment grant a couple of years ago. Our grant was RFP#GC23-010 FY 2022. Does that make us ineligible to apply for RFP 97? For that grant, we had applied with our satellite BEDS code. We also have other satellite BEDS codes, so I'm not sure if they might be eligible.

Answer: SFAs that were awarded this grant in Fiscal Years 2020, 2021, 2022, or 2023 are not eligible to apply for funding. The list of previously awarded SFAs can be found here: [Previous Food Service Equipment Grant Recipients](#). If any RA under an SFA received an award in the Fiscal Years 2020, 2021, 2022, or 2023, the SFA is not eligible to apply for any of their RAs during this equipment grant.

18. My district was approved to run an approved 4410 preschool program this past year and is in desperate need for new equipment for food. While we received the grant as a school district, we did not have this program which is considered separate from the school district. Can we apply for the preschool?

Answer: School Food Authorities (SFA) in New York State (NYS) that were not awarded this grant in Fiscal Years (FY) 2020, 2021, 2022, or 2023 are eligible to apply for funding. A list of SFAs that previously received an equipment grant in FY 2020, 2021, 2022, or 2023 is available here: [Previous Food Service Equipment Grant Recipients](#). SFAs on this list are not eligible to apply for this grant opportunity even if an individual RA under the SFA has not received an award in one of the list years.

19. I noticed my SFA is not eligible for the equipment grant because they were awarded in FY 2023. I thought in previous years it was by building and not by district. Are we able to apply for other buildings in the district?

Answer: For RFP 97 FY24 NSLP Equipment Assistance Grant, School Food Authorities (SFA) in New York State (NYS) that were not awarded this grant in Fiscal Years (FY) 2020, 2021, 2022, or 2023 are eligible to apply for funding. This eligibility requirement is different than previous grant years.

If an SFA is listed on the [Previous Food Service Equipment Grant Recipients](#) list, they are not eligible for this grant opportunity, and the application will not be considered for review or award.

20. We are currently operating under Community Eligibility Provision (CEP). In addition, we have fund balance. Are we still eligible for this grant?

Answer: Eligibility is not based on CEP status or fund balance.

For RFP 97 FY24 NSLP Equipment Assistance Grant, School Food Authorities (SFA) in New York State (NYS) that were not awarded this grant in Fiscal Years (FY) 2020, 2021, 2022, or 2023 are eligible to apply for funding. Eligible SFAs may apply for funding for their Recipient Agencies (RA) that participate in the NSLP (including public schools, nonpublic schools, charter schools and residential childcare institutions). This eligibility requirement is different than previous grant years.

21. I am just seeking clarification on the language around this grant. We did receive a grant in a previous year (2022) but we currently receive free lunches due to the community eligibility provision. Would this preclude us from applying for this grant?

Answer: Yes. Eligibility is not based on CEP status. School Food Authorities (SFA) in New York State that were not awarded an equipment grant in Fiscal Years (FY) 2020, 2021, 2022, or 2023 are eligible to apply for funding. Eligible SFAs may apply for funding for their Recipient Agencies (RA) that participate in the NSLP (including public schools, nonpublic schools, charter schools and residential childcare institutions).

If an SFA is listed on the Previous Food Service Equipment Grant Recipients list, they are not eligible for this grant opportunity, and the application will not be considered for review or award.

Equipment

22. Would the replacement of a freezer door be an acceptable use of funds?

Answer: Yes, replacement of a freezer door could be an acceptable use of funds. Equipment requests may include new equipment, used equipment, and replacement of equipment with a per item acquisition cost greater than \$1,000.

23. If we were awarded the equipment grant funds, could those grant funds be used for a prior purchase? For example, if we installed a walk-in freezer over the summer (after July 1), can the grant money be applied to equipment previously purchased?

Answer: This grant does not apply to equipment that has already been purchased. Please see the "Project Period" and "Equipment Requests" sections of the RFP.

24. We need a new walk-in freezer. Can we use grant funds towards equipment to reduce cost or does the grant have to cover the total cost of the equipment?

Answer: Yes, SFAs may be awarded up to a maximum of \$20,000 in equipment for each eligible RA. In the case an equipment item is needed that exceeds the \$20,000 limit, the SFA

may apply for up to \$20,000 to be put toward the purchase of this item, so long as the SFA is willing to cover the difference in cost from their own funds.

25. Can you put in for something like a walk-in freezer? I know the grant would not cover the total cost of the freezer but is it possible to get a partial amount to put towards a new freezer?

Answer: Yes, SFAs may be awarded up to a maximum of \$20,000 in equipment for each eligible RA. In the case an equipment item is needed that exceeds the \$20,000 limit, the SFA may apply for up to \$20,000 to be put toward the purchase of this item, so long as the SFA is willing to cover the difference in cost from their own funds.

26. When looking at bids, if an estimate is over the \$20,000 threshold and we have secured funding beyond that, can we still apply, or does the amount and application have to be under \$20,000?

Question: Yes, SFAs may be awarded up to a maximum of \$20,000 in equipment for each eligible RA. In the case an equipment item exceeds the \$20,000 limit, the SFA may apply for up to \$20,000 to be put toward the purchase of this item, so long as the SFA is willing to cover the difference in cost.

27. If an SFA wants to purchase a new Point of Sale (POS) terminal with this grant, would new POS software be an acceptable use of additional grants funds? The software my district is looking at combines a front of house POS system with back of house nutrition system which would allow us to better plan nutrition and drive more participation.

Answer: Yes, both the school food service POS terminal/computer and school food service POS software are allowable requests. 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 NYSED to determine if each item has a value greater than \$1,000, as required.

Please review the "Application Form" and "Equipment Requests" section of the RFP.

28. What constitutes General Equipment? For instance, we're looking to get temp probes for all of our refrigerated spaces to ensure proper temperature monitoring. It's a tangible piece of equipment, but not like an oven or stove in size. Also, is there a way to order for the district since it's all coming from one source? IE we have a quote for the entire district as a bundle instead of school by school for the bulk discount.

Answer: Regulations at 2 CFR Part 200.1 define equipment as tangible personal property, having a useful life of more than one year and a per-unit acquisition cost that equals or exceeds the lesser of the capitalization level established by the non-Federal entity for financial statement purposes, or \$10,000 per unit. **However, for the FY 2024 NSLP Equipment Assistance Grant, Congress has specified that the threshold for the purchase of equipment has been lowered to \$1,000. Multiple items whose per-unit acquisition cost is less than**

\$1,000 may not be combined to meet the minimum value of greater than \$1,000. Under no circumstance will a grant be awarded for an item that does not have an acquisition cost greater than \$1,000.

SFAs may apply for food service equipment, with a value of greater than \$1,000, needed to serve healthier meals; support scratch cooking; improve the overall quality of meals; improve food safety; and expand access and help to support the establishment, maintenance, or expansion of the School Breakfast Program (SBP).

Awarded SFAs must follow proper procurement when procuring awarded items. Review the “Equipment Requests” and “Procurement” sections of the RFP.