Funding for Arizona’s RFSI program was made possible by a grant/cooperative agreement from the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) Agricultural Marketing Service. Its contents are solely the responsibility of the authors and do not necessarily represent the official views of the USDA.
Welcome!

Please introduce yourself in the chat:
- Your name
- Farm/Organization
- Location

We love reactions!
Agenda

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As we begin...

This webinar is being recorded for future viewing and reference.

Weekly Office Hours will be available every Tuesday, starting Jan. 2.

Idea Bubble / Light bulb = helpful tips & information

patience, respect, kindness
Arizona’s RFSI program is a partnership between the Department of Agriculture and Pinnacle Prevention, as well as all of you—our farmers and supply chain partners!

**Arizona Department of Agriculture**
- Grant portal and applications
- Awards & program management

**Pinnacle Prevention**
- Outreach and community engagement
- Grant writing support and technical assistance

**Farmers and Food Supply Chain Partners**
- Inform program priorities and strategy
- Share your dreams for Arizona’s supply chain through project proposals
What is RFSI?

The Arizona Department of Agriculture (AZDA) has been awarded funding from USDA AMS through the Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program (RFSI). Through this program, approximately $3.2 million will be available for competitive subaward grants to support the development of the middle-of-the-supply-chain for Arizona-based food and farm businesses.

Through the RFSI Program, AZDA will issue the following types of grants:

- **Simplified Equipment-Only (SEO) Grants** (minimum of $10,000 and maximum of $100,000 for equipment only plus taxes and fees)

- **Infrastructure Grants (IG)** (minimum of $100,000 for personnel, equipment, supplies, construction, etc.) * 50% match requirement
The purpose of RFSI:

To build resilience across Arizona’s middle-of-the-food-supply-chain

(AFTER food has been harvested and BEFORE it reaches consumers)

Aggregation
Processing
Manufacturing
Storing
Transporting
Wholesale
Distribution
Eligible Applicants

- Agricultural producers or processors, or groups of agricultural producers and processors
- For-profit entities operating middle-of-the-supply-chain activities such as processing, aggregation, or distribution of targeted agricultural products, whose activities are primarily focused for the benefit of local and regional producers, and that meet the eligibility requirements of the SBA small business size standards
- Nonprofit organizations operating middle-of-the-supply-chain activities such as processing, aggregation, distribution of targeted agricultural products
- Local government entities operating middle-of-the-supply-chain activities such as processing, aggregation, distribution of targeted agricultural products
- Tribal governments operating middle-of-the-supply-chain activities such as processing, aggregation, distribution of targeted agricultural products.
- Institutions such as schools, universities, or hospitals bringing producers together to establish cooperative or shared infrastructure or invest in equipment that will benefit multiple producers middle-of-the-supply-chain activities such as processing, aggregation, distribution of targeted agricultural product.
Prioritization of Applicants

Grant applications are prioritizing key groups of food producers including

- underserved farmers and ranchers,
- new and beginning farmers and ranchers,
- veteran producers, and processors and
- other middle-of-the-supply businesses owned by socially disadvantaged individuals.
Allowable Commodities

Funds will support expanded capacity for the aggregation, processing, manufacturing, storing, transporting, wholesaling, and distribution of locally and regionally produced food products, including:

- specialty crops,
- dairy, eggs
- grains for human consumption,
- aquaculture, and
- other food products

* meat & poultry not eligible
Funding Priorities

Simplified Equipment-Only Grant (SEO)

- Rural/remote areas that have a particularly difficult time getting food to market channels and where collaborative food hub projects are challenging
- Projects with shared use and greater regional impacts
- Highest Needs: refrigerated vehicles (approx. $90k each), cold storage, and processing equipment

For more information, review the Community Input Summary.
Funding Priorities

Infrastructure Grant (IG)

• Collaborative projects that have wider regional and statewide impacts
• “Shovel Ready” projects, such as the modernization of existing facilities to maximize funding impacts and maintain realistic project implementation timelines (completion no later than 12/31/2026)
• Highest Needs: shared facilities for storage, washing/processing, aggregation, and distribution, and licensed kitchen/processing facilities

For more information, review the Community Input Summary.
Allowable Costs

Simplified Equipment-Only (SEO) Grant:
- equipment only plus taxes and fees

Infrastructure Grant (IG):
- **Processing** activities, such as
  - processing, packaging, or preserving crops
  - creating value-added products from crops
- **Aggregation & Distribution** activities, such as
  - storing, tracking, distributing, and/or delivering crops

Modernizing, developing, and expanding equipment or facilities used for processing, aggregation, or distribution

Worker safety and/or education

Costs MUST be related to middle-of-the-food-supply-chain
What is NOT Eligible?

Costs/activities related to production, such as:
- farm equipment,
- tools,
- seeds or starts,
- production-related labor, training, or infrastructure.

However, costs related to on-farm, post-harvest processing, preservation, and/or storage would be considered middle-of-the-supply-chain activities, making them eligible.

Costs MUST be related to middle-of-the-food-supply-chain.
What is NOT Eligible?

Costs/activities related to markets and consumers, such as:
- expanding sales staff for a farm store;
- renovation of retail space,
  - including additional refrigeration;
  - marketing and promotion

Acquisition of buildings, facilities, or land

“General Use” vehicles

...but “Special Use” vehicles relevant to the scope of work of RFSI projects could be eligible

Costs MUST be related to middle-of-the-food-supply-chain
Project Examples

- Expand capacity for processing, aggregation, and distribution of agricultural products
- Modernize manufacturing, tracking, storage, and information technology systems
- Improve the capacity of entities to comply with food safety requirements
- Support the construction of a new facility

- Modernize or expand an existing facility
- Modernize processing and manufacturing equipment
- Develop, customize, or install equipment that reduces greenhouse gas emissions, increases efficiency in water use, improves air and/or water quality, and other climate action solutions
Applications Open
December 11, 2023 - March 1, 2024

Virtual Office Hours
Tuesdays, 10-11 AM
1/2/2024 - 2/27/2024
bit.ly/azrfsiofficehours

Application Review
March-April 2024

Writing Workshops
1/18/2024 - Chandler
1/24/2024 - Sells
1/25/2024 - Tucson
2/01/2024 - Flagstaff
bit.ly/azrfsiworkshops

Project Completion
by 12/31/2026

Info Session
December 18, 2023
1:00-2:30 PM

Writing Workshops
(in-person)
* be sure to register

Funding Awarded
May 2024

Key Dates
Applications due 3/1/2024
*submitting early is strongly encouraged

Virtual Office Hours
every Tuesday 10-11 AM
starting 1/2/2024

Project Completion
by 12/31/2026
Period of Performance

RFSI grant funds will be awarded for projects of up to 2½ years (30 months) duration that must be completed by December 31, 2026.
Question: Can I apply for more than one grant?

Yes! You may apply for both types (SEO and IG) of grants, but can only be awarded one in total.

You can also be a part of multiple grant projects, but can only be the primary grantee of one in total.
To Begin: Visit the Arizona Department of Agriculture’s RFSI webpage & find the link to the grant portal bit.ly/azrfsi
Application Process

Step 1 - Download the Application Packet files

Double-check which grant files you’re downloading: SEO or IG
Download the dynamic PDF and Open with Adobe Acrobat Reader

Please wait...

If this message is not eventually replaced by the proper contents of the document, your PDF viewer may not be able to display this type of document.

You can upgrade to the latest version of Adobe Reader for Windows®, Mac, or Linux® by visiting http://www.adobe.com/go/reader_download.

For more assistance with Adobe Reader visit http://www.adobe.com/go/acrreader.

Windows is either a registered trademark or a trademark of Microsoft Corporation in the United States and/or other countries. Mac is a trade of Apple Inc., registered in the United States and other countries. Linus is the registered trademark of Linus Torvalds in the U.S. and other countries.
Grant Manuals

Be sure to download the Grant Manuals as they will be a helpful guide throughout the application process.

Double-check which grant files you’re downloading: SEO or IG
Application Process

Step 2 - Complete the Application Packet files

Save your progress often!

Need help? Virtual Office Hours & Workshops are available

Virtual Office Hours
Tuesdays, 10-11 AM
1/2/2024 - 2/27/2024
bit.ly/azrfsiofficehours

Writing Workshops
1/18/2024 - Chandler
1/24/2024 - Sells
1/25/2024 - Tucson
2/01/2024 - Flagstaff
bit.ly/azrfsiworkshops
**Simplified Equipment-Only Grant (SEO)**

- Simplified Equipment-Only (SEO) Proposal (Appendix B)
- Evidence of Critical Resources and Infrastructure Letter (Appendix C)
- Documentation to substantiate costs of each piece of equipment (combined in a single PDF file)

**Infrastructure Grant (IG)**

- Infrastructure Grant (IG) Proposal (Appendix B)
- Evidence of Critical Resources and Infrastructure Letter (Appendix C)
- Match Verification Letter (Appendix D)

All documents must be uploaded in PDF format.
Application Process

Step 3 - Submit the Application Packet files electronically: https://tinyurl.com/RFSI-SEO

Remember: applications must be submitted by March 1, 2024
To complete the SEO and/or IG applications, your computer system must have:

- Internet access
- Microsoft Word*
  - free online version available
- Adobe Acrobat Reader
  - free version available
Critical resources and infrastructure can be facilities, land, structure, use of city streets/parks, shared-used kitchens, and/or other resources that are essential for the proposed project activities.

A few examples...
Critical Resource and Infrastructure Examples

- A critical resource for a piece of equipment could be the need for a dedicated 50 amp electrical service.

- A critical resource for a construction/modernization project could be permission to make the changes from the landlord.
Match Requirement

Infrastructure grant (IG) recipients are required to contribute 50% of the total proposed project cost as a match to federal funding.

A reduced match of 25% is available for those that qualify.
### 50% Match Requirement

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Amount</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total Project Amount</td>
<td>$279,500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Federal Funds Requested</td>
<td>$139,750</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cost-sharing/Matching Amount</td>
<td>$139,750</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### 25% Match Requirement

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Amount</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total Project Amount</td>
<td>$279,500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Federal Funds Requested</td>
<td>$209,625</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cost-sharing/Matching Amount</td>
<td>$69,875</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Remember...

start with the project bid totals and then build the budget.
Reduced Match Eligibility

- Historically underserved* farmers and ranchers
  - Beginning; Socially Disadvantaged; Veterans; and Limited Resources
    https://www.nrcs.usda.gov/getting-assistance/underserved-farmers-ranchers

- Businesses qualify under SBA categories* of small disadvantaged business, women-owned small business, or veteran-owned small business
  https://www.sba.gov/federal-contracting/contracting-assistance-programs
What Counts as Match?

- Cash
- In-kind
  - Labor/Personnel time
    - only the time spent on the project
    - must be a pay rate reasonable for a similar position
  - Facility rental cost (at fair market value)
    - unrecovered indirect costs
    - acquired real property, including land, is NOT allowable as match
- Items/Activities (at fair market value)
Match Verification Letter

- Cash,
- In-kind,
- Items/Activities

At a minimum, documentation should be able to demonstrate the source and amount of the matching funds, as well as how those funds directly relate to overall project costs.

In-kind match costs must meet RFSI funding eligibility in order to count as match.
Question: Can donated rental space or land be considered an in-kind match?

Yes and No.

Acquired real property, including land, is an unallowable cost and therefore cannot be used to meet the match requirement.

Rental costs are an allowable cost and may be used to meet match requirements.
Funding Advances

Requests for funding advances will be considered on a case-by-case basis

- **Simplified Equipment-Only (SEO)** - up to 75% of the total grant award; must be expended within 60 days of receipt

- **Infrastructure (IG)** - up to 50% of the total grant award; must be expended within 60 days of receipt
Pulse Check Waterfall

- open the chat box
- enter a word, phrase, or emoji to describe how you’re feeling at this moment

**BUT don’t press “send” just yet**

- we’ll do a countdown and press send at the same time for a waterfall effect.
Applications are screened for the following:

- eligible applicant
- eligible activities
- application packet completion
- funding amount
- matching funds
- general compliance

All remaining application packets will be evaluated by the RFSI Evaluation Team to first assess to what extent the proposed project:

- is responsive to the program priorities
- demonstrates financial viability, technical feasibility and readiness;
- describes market impact and opportunities; and
- demonstrates community impact and support, including labor and workforce considerations.
## Evaluation Rubric

### Simplified Equipment-Only Grant (SEO)

- Distressed Communities Index (5 points max)
- Executive Summary (5 points max)
- Project Purpose (20 points max)
- Expected Performance Measures (5 points max)
- Budget Narrative & Budget Summary (15 points max)

- **50 points total possible**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Scoring</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Distressed Communities Index</td>
<td>5 points max</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Counties benefiting from project.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Score of 0-20 (prosperous) = 1 pt</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Score of 20.1 - 40 (comfortable) = 2 pts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Score of 40.1 - 60 (mid-tier) = 3 pts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Score of 60.1 - 80 (at-risk) = 4 pts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Score of 80.1 - 100 (distressed) = 5 pts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Executive Summary</td>
<td>5 points max</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Ability to speak to broad goal and scope of project</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Project Purpose</td>
<td>20 points max</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Is the specific issue, problem, or need clearly explained, and are they relevant to the funding purpose?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>5 points</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>The project demonstrates a clear link to the funding priorities (see section I.F. of the grant manual).</td>
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<td></td>
<td>5 points</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Is the impact realistic and related to the equipment being purchased?</td>
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<td></td>
<td>5 points</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>The proposed project will directly benefit the following:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Underserved farmers and ranchers;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- New and beginning farmers or ranchers;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Veteran producers;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Processors and other middle-of-the-supply businesses owned by socially disadvantaged individuals, as defined by the Small Business Administration (SBA).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>5 points</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Expected Performance Measures</td>
<td>5 points max</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Is the expected performance measure(s) relevant, reasonably achievable, and appropriate to the budget request?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>5 points</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Budget Narrative &amp; Budget Summary</td>
<td>15 points max</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Does the budget only contain necessary costs?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>5 points</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>The equipment justification is clearly explained and related to the objectives and outcomes of the project.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>10 points</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
<td>50 points total possible</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Simplified Equipment-Only (SEO) Grant

If collaborating on multiple projects, ensure Primary Contact is not duplicated on another proposal. Entities may only be awarded one grant total.
To receive an award and enter into a Grant Award Agreement with the AZDA, all applicants must provide a **Unique Entity Identifier (UEI)** number.

- A UEI number is a twelve-digit number established and assigned by SAM.gov to uniquely identify business entities.

- A UEI number may be obtained from SAM.gov [https://gsa.gov/entityid](https://gsa.gov/entityid)

**RFSI Grant Writing Resources**

- How to download dynamic PDF files (video)
- How to obtain a UEI on Sam.gov (video)
Info Session

DISTRESSED COMMUNITIES INDEX

Using the Distressed Communities Index Map, provide the community distress score for the county(ies) benefiting from your project. Note: U.S. Territories are not required to submit Distressed Communities Index data. Click the + or - button to add or remove items as needed.

FOR EXAMPLE:
County 1: Enter County name  Distress Score 1: Enter County Distress Score
County 2: Enter County name  Distress Score 2: Enter County Distress Score

Interactive Map

select “Arizona” on SEARCH drop-down menu, then click “County” on MAP VIEW
Simplified Equipment-Only Grant (SEO)

**OPERATIONS IDENTIFIER**
Provide where within the Middle of the Supply Chain the requested equipment will be used:
- Processing
- Aggregation
- Distribution
- Value Added Production
Other

**TYPE OF AGRICULTURAL FOOD PRODUCTS PROCESSED WITH THE EQUIPMENT?**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>#</th>
<th>Product Type</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**SCOPE OF WORK**

Please describe the current business operations including services being offered in the geographic focus area.

**PLEASE DESCRIBE THE SPECIFIC NEED THAT THE REQUESTED EQUIPMENT WILL ADDRESS.**

Scope of work Question 2

**PLEASE DESCRIBE THE IMPACT THIS EQUIPMENT WILL HAVE ON LOCAL AND REGIONAL PRODUCERS, MARKET OUTLETS, AND MORE.**

**ESTIMATE THE NUMBER OF LOCAL AND REGIONAL PRODUCERS IMPACTED.**

**DOES THIS PROJECT DIRECTLY BENEFIT:**

Check box for all that apply below
- Underserved farmers and ranchers?
- New and beginning farmers and ranchers?
- Veteran Producers?
- Processors or other middle-of-the-supply businesses owned by socially disadvantaged individuals?
**Evaluation Rubric**

**Simplified Equipment-Only Grant (SEO)**

**Section: Project Purpose (20 points)**

- **Specific needs** the equipment will address
- **Impact** the equipment will have on local and regional producers, market outlets, etc.
- # of local and regional producers impacted
- Prioritized groups impacted

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Criteria</th>
<th>Points</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Is the specific issue, problem, or need clearly explained, and are they relevant to the funding purpose?</td>
<td>5 points</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The project demonstrates a clear link to the funding priorities (see section I.F. of the grant manual).</td>
<td>5 points</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Is the impact realistic and related to the equipment being purchased?</td>
<td>5 points</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The proposed project will directly benefit the following:</td>
<td>5 points</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Underserved farmers and ranchers;</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>- New and beginning farmers or ranchers;</td>
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<td>- Veteran producers;</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Processors and other middle-of-the-supply businesses owned by socially disadvantaged individuals, as defined by the Small Business Administration (SBA).</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Simplified Equipment-Only Grant (SEO)

Please be sure to list and justify all expenses to be covered. If applicable, ensure that you have included Critical Resources and Infrastructure letter(s) to support the application information.

**EQUIPMENT**

Describe any special purpose equipment to be purchased under the grant. “Special purpose equipment” such as such as, canners, hulling processors, reverse osmosis systems, egg packing machines, flotation tanks, roasters, or other processing equipment, packing and labeling equipment, or delivery vehicles.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>+</th>
<th>#</th>
<th>Equipment Item</th>
<th>Purchase Price</th>
<th>Acquisition Date</th>
<th>Funds Requested</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>-</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>$0.00</td>
<td>$0.00</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Equipment Subtotal $0.00

**EQUIPMENT JUSTIFICATION**

For each Equipment Item listed in the above table describe how this equipment will be used to achieve the objectives and outcomes of the project. Add more equipment by copying and pasting the existing listing or delete equipment that isn’t necessary.

**FOR EXAMPLE:**

- Equipment 1: Description and justification
- Equipment 2: Description and justification

*Applicants must submit documentation to substantiate the costs of each piece of equipment, which can include contracts, catalog pricing, or binding quotes provided by license commercial entities.*
Evaluation Rubric

Infrastructure Grants (IG)

- Distressed Communities Index (10 points max)
- Duration of Project (5 points max)
- Executive Summary (5 points max)
- Project Purpose (35 points max)
- Expected Performance Measures (5 points max)
- Budget Narrative & Summary (40 points max)

- 100 points total possible
If collaborating on multiple projects, ensure Primary Contact is not duplicated on another proposal. Entities may only be awarded one grant total.

**INFRASTRUCTURE GRANT PROPOSAL TEMPLATE**

The RFSI Infrastructure Grant Proposal should include a series of project profiles that detail the necessary information to fulfill the goals and objectives of each Infrastructure Grant subaward project the State intends to award. The following information is required for each Infrastructure Grant subaward project profile.

**APPLICANT INFORMATION**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Applicant Organization Name:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Entity Type:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UEL:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Phone Number:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Email Address:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Physical Address</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Street:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>City:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>State:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Zip:</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Mailing Address** (If different from above)

| Street:                     |
| City:                       |
| State:                      |
| Zip:                        |

**PRIMARY POINT OF CONTACT**

List the person who will be the main contact for any correspondence and is responsible for signing any documentation should the grant be awarded.

| Name:                      |
| Title:                     |
| Phone Number:              |
| Email Address:             |
DISTRESSED COMMUNITIES INDEX

Using the Distressed Communities Index Map, provide the community distress score for the county(ies) benefiting from your project. Note: U.S. Territories are not required to submit Distressed Communities Index data. Click the + or - button to add or remove items as needed.

FOR EXAMPLE:
County 1: Enter County name
Distress Score 1: Enter County Distress Score
County 2: Enter County name
Distress Score 2: Enter County Distress Score

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<th>Distress Score</th>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

TYPE OF APPLICANT

Select applicant type:

- Agricultural producers or processors, or groups of agricultural producers and processors.
- For-profit entities operating middle-of-the-supply-chain activities such as processing, aggregation, or distribution of targeted agricultural products, whose activities are primarily focused on the benefit of local and regional producers, and that meet the eligibility requirements of the SBA small business size standards and are eligible. For more information on these size standards, please visit SBA’s Size Standards webpage. For a quick check on whether your business qualifies, please use the Size Standards Tool.
- Nonprofit organizations operating middle-of-the-supply-chain activities such as processing, aggregation, distribution of targeted agricultural products
- Local government entities operating middle-of-the-supply-chain activities such as processing, aggregation, distribution of targeted agricultural products
- Tribal governments operating middle-of-the-supply-chain activities such as processing, aggregation, distribution of targeted agricultural products
- Institutions such as schools, universities, or hospitals bringing producers together to establish cooperative or shared infrastructure or invest in equipment that will benefit multiple producers middle-of-the-supply-chain activities such as processing, aggregation, distribution of targeted agricultural product.
### PROJECT TITLE
Provide a descriptive project title in 15 words or less in the space below.

### DURATION OF PROJECT

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Project Start Date:</th>
<th>Project End Date:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

### EXECUTIVE SUMMARY
Include a project summary of 250 words or less suitable for dissemination to the public. A Project Summary provides a very brief (one sentence, if possible) description of your project. A Project Summary includes:
1. The name of the applicant organization that if awarded a grant will establish an agreement or contractual relationship with the State Applicant to lead and execute the project.
2. The project’s purpose, deliverables, and expected outcomes and a description of the general tasks/activities to be completed during the project period to fulfill this goal.

### PROJECT PURPOSE

- Expanding processing capacities, including adding product types, increasing production volumes, and supporting new wholesale/retail, product lines;
- Modernizing equipment or facilities through upgrades, repairs, or retooling (e.g., adapting product lines for institutional procurement or adding parallel processing capacity);
- Purchase and installation of specialized equipment, such as processing components, sorting equipment, packing and labeling equipment, or delivery vehicles;
- Modernizing manufacturing, tracking, storage, and information technology systems;
- Enhancing worker safety through adoption of new technologies or investment in equipment or facility improvements;
- Construction of a new facility;
- Increasing packaging and labeling capacities that meet compliance requirements under applicable laws (e.g., labeling, boxing, labeling, conveying, and product moving equipment);
- Increasing storage space, including cold storage;
- Develop, customize, or install climate-smart equipment that reduces greenhouse gas emissions, increases efficiency in water use, improves air and/or water quality, and/or meets one or more of USDA’s climate action goals;
- Modernize equipment or facilities to ensure food safety, including associated Hazard, Analysis, and Critical Control Points (HACCP) consultation, plan development, and employee training;
- Training on the use of all equipment purchased under the grant and associated new processes.

### Info Session
- Needs to be 250 words or less
- Select at least one, can include more than one

### RFSI ARIZONA
Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure
Info Session

Describe the project in 15 words or less

Projects must be completed by 12/31/2026
Refer to the Rubric and Funding Priorities as you draft your narrative responses

PROVIDE THE SPECIFIC ISSUE, PROBLEM OR NEED THAT THE PROJECT WILL ADDRESS

PROVIDE A LIST OF THE OBJECTIVES THAT THIS PROJECT HOPES TO ACHIEVE

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Objective #</th>
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Project beneficiaries are those who will directly benefit from the project, including:

- producers,
- markets,
- stakeholders, and
- communities,

includes the applicant organization

Numbers should be reasonable; not “entire industry, region, etc.”
Though not required, collaborative projects with expanded impacts and stakeholder support are named in the funding priorities.
Some Tips for a Well-Written Grant

• **Start early!** Equipment/construction quotes, budget-building, and stakeholder/partnership engagement can take time

• Plan for adequate time to **review and edit**
  - Check for **spelling/grammar** errors, and review for **clarity**

• If using **acronyms**, be sure to include the entire name first
  - Example: Maple Valley Food Cooperative (MVFP)

• Develop a **clear mission/objective** for the project’s role in the **middle-of-the-food-supply-chain** and use it as a guide to organize your narratives and goals

• Clearly and **concisely** describe your project- limit overly technical descriptions
Live Application Demo
Grant Portal Navigation
Grant Writing Supports
Virtual Office Hours

Tuesdays, 10-11 AM
1/2/2024 - 2/27/2024

bit.ly/azrfsiofficehours
Writing Workshops

1/18/2024 - Chandler
1/24/2024 - Sells
1/25/2024 - Tucson
2/01/2024 - Flagstaff

Sign Up bit.ly/azrfsiworkshops
Local First Arizona’s Economic Resource Center -
https://localfirstaz.com/economic-resource-center

grant writing assistance & resources
Volunteers Needed

Virtual Office Hours
Tuesdays, 10-11 AM
1/2/2024 - 2/27/2024
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2/01/2024 - Flagstaff
bit.ly/azrfsiworkshops

bit.ly/azrfsivolunteer
Questions & Next Steps

Info Session
Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

GENERAL QUESTIONS

Which activities are included in the “middle-of-the-supply-chain”?
The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) defines “middle-of-the-supply-chain” activities as activities in the Processing and/or Aggregation and Distribution stages of the food supply chain. As an example, Processing activities may include processing, packaging, or preserving crops; extracting products from crops; and/or creating value-added products from crops. Aggregation and Distribution activities may include storing, tracking, distributing, and/or delivering crops. Similar activities not listed here may also be included.

Enhancing worker safety and/or education and/or modernizing, developing, or expanding equipment or facilities used for Processing, Aggregation, and Distribution activities are also considered to be “middle-of-the-supply-chain” activities for the purposes of this program.

Which activities are NOT included in the “middle-of-the-supply-chain”?

Activities related to production or to markets and consumers are not part of the middle-of-the-supply-chain. Costs and/or activities related to farm production may include farm equipment, tools, seeds or starts, or production related labor, training, or infrastructure. However, costs related to on-farm, post-harvest processing, preservation, and/or storage would be considered middle-of-the-supply-chain activities. Costs and/or activities related to markets and consumers may include expanding sales staff for a farm store; renovation of retail space; including additional refrigeration; marketing and promotion, etc.

How does an applicant determine if a proposal is appropriate for the Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure (RFSI) Program?

All proposals must support the middle of the food supply chain, meet one or more of the program priorities as described in the Request for Proposals (RFP), and be able to achieve one or more performance measures during the grant duration to be eligible for this program. In addition, all applicant businesses and organizations must be domestically owned, and
Applications Open
December 11, 2023 - March 1, 2024

Virtual Office Hours
Tuesdays, 10-11 AM
1/2/2024 - 2/27/2024
bit.ly/azrsiofficehours

Application Review
March-April 2024

Project Completion
by 12/31/2026

Info Session
December 18, 2023
1:00-2:30 PM

Writing Workshops
1/18/2024 - Chandler
1/24/2024 - Sells
1/25/2024 - Tucson
2/01/2024 - Flagstaff
bit.ly/azrfsiworkshops

Funding Awarded
May 2024

Key Dates
Applications due 3/1/2024
*submitting early is strongly encouraged

Virtual Office Hours
every Tuesday
10-11 AM
starting 1/2/2024

Writing Workshops (in-person)
* be sure to register
Thank You!

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