

RFSI ARIZONA

RESILIENT FOOD SYSTEMS INFRASTRUCTURE

Info Session

RFSI Info Session

December 18, 2024

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.

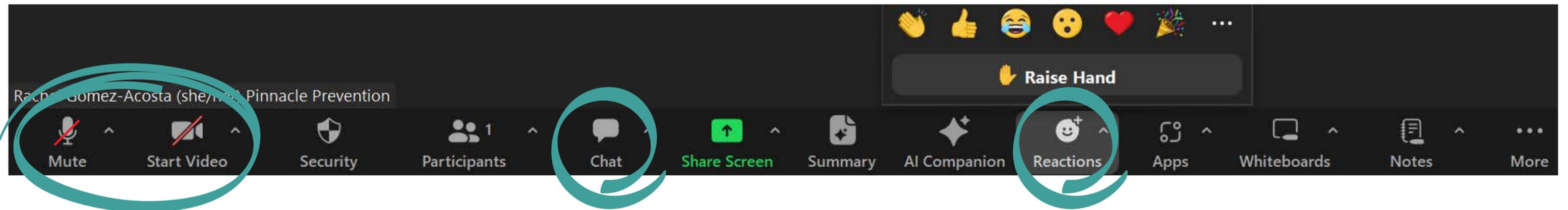
Welcome!

Please introduce yourself in the chat:

- Your name
- Farm/Organization
- Location

we

reactions!





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Agenda

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- 1 RFSI Overview
- 2 Application Orientation
- 3 Grant Portal Navigation
- 4 Grant Writing Supports
- 5 Questions & Next Steps

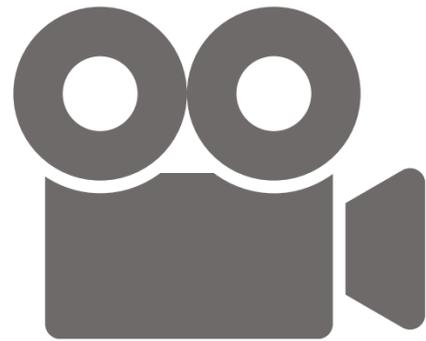


RFSI ARIZONA

RESILIENT FOOD SYSTEMS INFRASTRUCTURE

Info Session

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

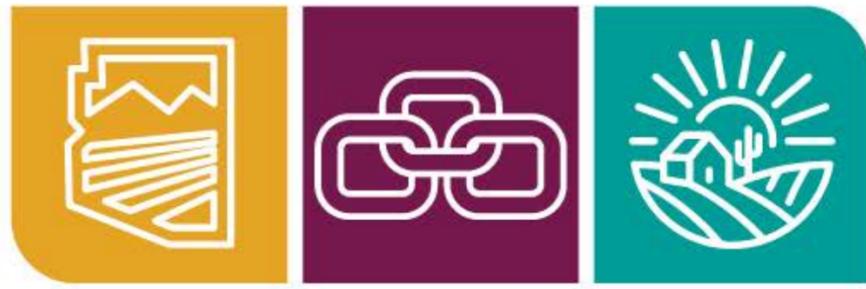
Pinnacle Prevention

- 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





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RESILIENT FOOD SYSTEMS INFRASTRUCTURE

Info Session



RFSI Overview



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Info Session

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



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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.



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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.



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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*



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Funding Priorities



For more information,
review the Community
Input Summary.

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



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Info Session

Funding Priorities



For more information,
review the Community
Input Summary.

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



Allowable Costs

Simplified Equipment-Only (SEO) Grant:

- equipment only plus taxes and fees



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

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



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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**



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Key Dates



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



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



**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*



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



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Application Orientation



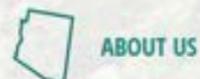
Search this site



Select Language

Apply/Renew Animals Plants/Produce Pests/Pest Control Weights & Measures Training/Assistance Provide Feedback

Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure (RFSI)



- ABOUT US
- DOWNLOAD FORMS
- NEWSLETTER
- NEWS & ALERTS
- FOOD SAFETY +
- ABOUT US +
 - Department of Agriculture Reports
 - Food Access
 - Divisions +
 - Agricultural Consultation & Training +
 - Livestock Operator Fire and Flood Assistance Program (LOFFAP)
 - Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure (RFSI) Program**
 - Specialty Crop Block Grant Program (SCBGP)
 - Specialty Crop Multi-State Program (SCMP)
 - Agricultural Laboratory +
 - Certified Laboratories
 - Animal Services
 - Citrus, Fruit & Vegetable Division
 - Environmental Services Section
 - Pest Management Division
 - Plant Services
 - Weights & Measures Services

RESILIENT FOOD SYSTEMS INFRASTRUCTURE (RFSI) PROGRAM



The Arizona Department of Agriculture (AZDA) was recently 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 Grants (minimum of \$10,000 and maximum of \$100,000 for equipment only plus taxes and fees).
- Infrastructure Grants (minimum of \$100,000 for personnel, equipment, supplies, construction, etc.).

These funds support expanding capacity for the aggregation, processing, manufacturing, storing, transporting, wholesaling, and distribution of local food products including specialty crops, dairy, grains for human consumption, aquaculture, and other food products, excluding meat and poultry.

AZDA is now accepting RFSI applications, please visit our [grants page](#) for more information.



AZDA is also partnering with Pinnacle Prevention to provide technical assistance to RFSI applicants. Please visit the [partner page](#) to find out more about the support they are offering.

For more information on the funding source, please visit the [USDA's Agricultural Marketing Service program webpage](#).



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Application Process

To Begin: Visit the Arizona Department of Agriculture's RFSI webpage & find the link to the grant portal

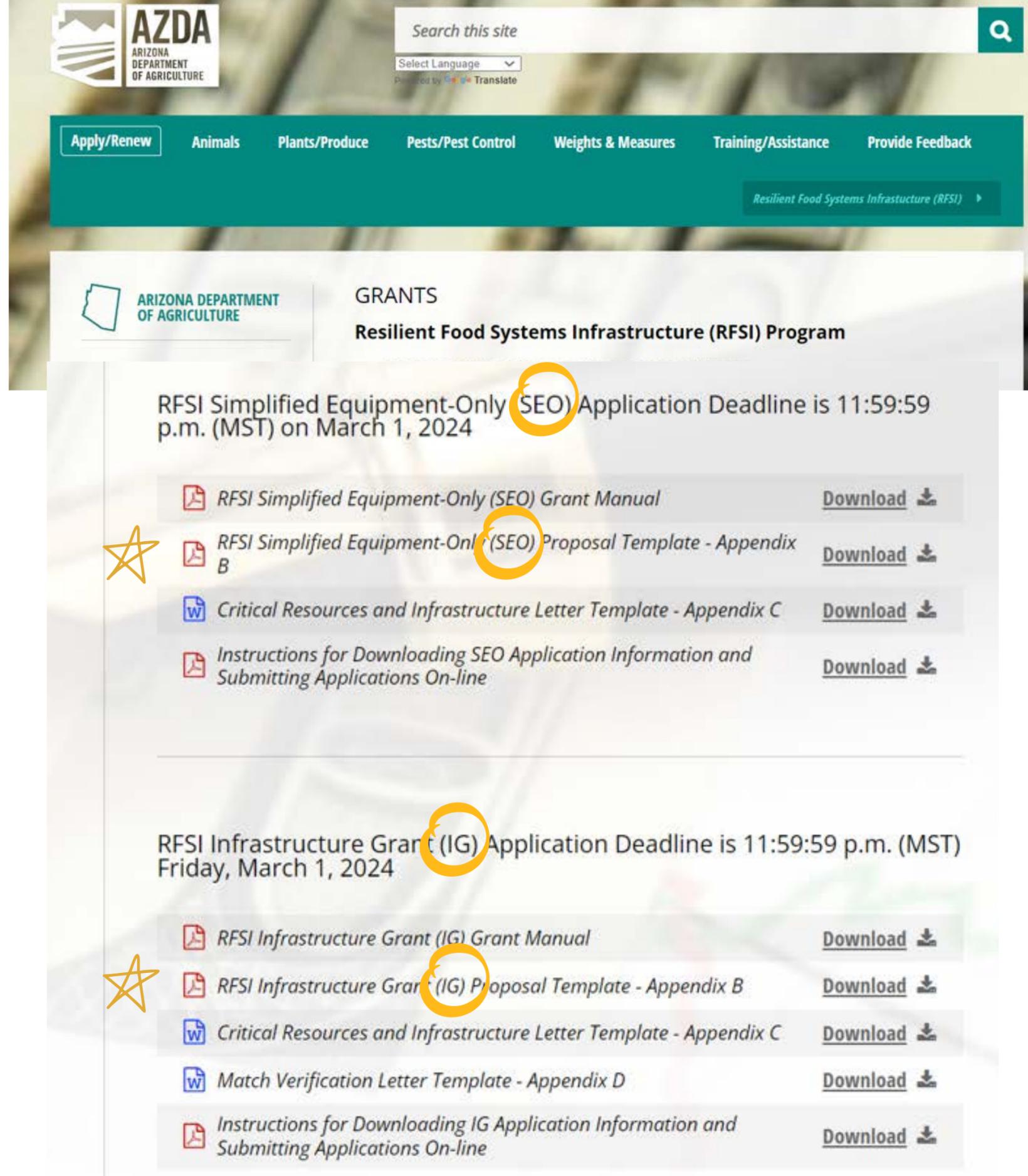


bit.ly/azrfsi

Application Process

Step 1 - Download the Application Packet files

Double-check which grant files you're downloading: **SEO or IG**

AZDA
ARIZONA DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Search this site
Select Language
Powered by Translate

Apply/Renew Animals Plants/Produce Pests/Pest Control Weights & Measures Training/Assistance Provide Feedback

Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure (RFSI)

ARIZONA DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

GRANTS
Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure (RFSI) Program

RFSI Simplified Equipment-Only (SEO) Application Deadline is 11:59:59 p.m. (MST) on March 1, 2024

- RFSI Simplified Equipment-Only (SEO) Grant Manual [Download](#)
- RFSI Simplified Equipment-Only (SEO) Proposal Template - Appendix B [Download](#)
- Critical Resources and Infrastructure Letter Template - Appendix C [Download](#)
- Instructions for Downloading SEO Application Information and Submitting Applications On-line [Download](#)

RFSI Infrastructure Grant (IG) Application Deadline is 11:59:59 p.m. (MST) Friday, March 1, 2024

- RFSI Infrastructure Grant (IG) Grant Manual [Download](#)
- RFSI Infrastructure Grant (IG) Proposal Template - Appendix B [Download](#)
- Critical Resources and Infrastructure Letter Template - Appendix C [Download](#)
- Match Verification Letter Template - Appendix D [Download](#)
- Instructions for Downloading IG Application Information and Submitting Applications On-line [Download](#)



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RESILIENT FOOD SYSTEMS INFRASTRUCTURE

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Download the dynamic PDF and **Open** with Adobe Acrobat Reader

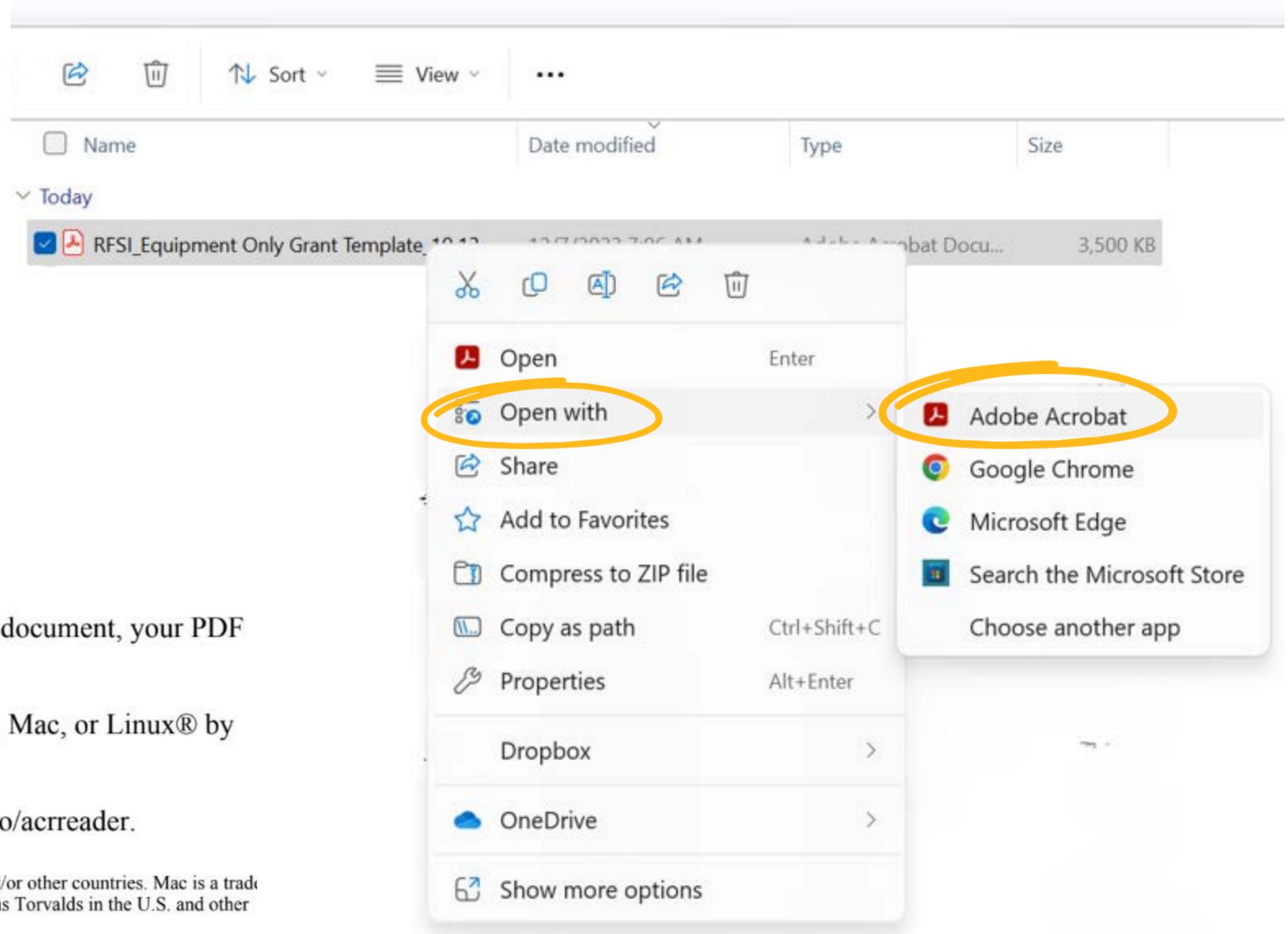
Please wait...

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/acreader>.

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



Grant Manuals



Double-check which grant files you're downloading: **SEO** or **IG**

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

The screenshot shows the AZDA website with a search bar and navigation menu. The main content area is titled 'GRANTS' and 'Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure (RFSI) Program'. It lists two grant programs with their respective application deadlines and a list of downloadable manuals for each. The 'SEO' and 'IG' labels in the deadlines and the manual titles are circled in yellow.

Grant Program	Application Deadline	Manuals Available for Download
RFSI Simplified Equipment-Only (SEO)	11:59:59 p.m. (MST) on March 1, 2024	<ul style="list-style-type: none">RFSI Simplified Equipment-Only (SEO) Grant ManualRFSI Simplified Equipment-Only (SEO) Proposal Template - Appendix BCritical Resources and Infrastructure Letter Template - Appendix CInstructions for Downloading SEO Application Information and Submitting Applications On-line
RFSI Infrastructure Grant (IG)	11:59:59 p.m. (MST) Friday, March 1, 2024	<ul style="list-style-type: none">RFSI Infrastructure Grant (IG) Grant ManualRFSI Infrastructure Grant (IG) Proposal Template - Appendix BCritical Resources and Infrastructure Letter Template - Appendix CMatch Verification Letter Template - Appendix DInstructions for Downloading IG Application Information and Submitting Applications On-line



RESILIENT FOOD SYSTEMS INFRASTRUCTURE PROGRAM (RFSI)

GRANT MANUAL

SIMPLIFIED EQUIPMENT-ONLY GRANTS (SEO)

PUBLICATION DATE: DECEMBER 11, 2023

GRANT APPLICATION PACKET DUE DATE: MARCH 1, 2024

APPLICATION PACKET FEES AND ADDITIONAL COPIES OF THIS PUBLICATION MAY BE OBTAINED FROM OUR WEBSITE AT: <https://agriculture.az.gov/grants>



RESILIENT FOOD SYSTEMS INFRASTRUCTURE PROGRAM (RFSI)

GRANT MANUAL

INFRASTRUCTURE GRANTS (IG)

PUBLICATION DATE: DECEMBER 11, 2023

GRANT APPLICATION PACKET DUE DATE: MARCH 1, 2024

APPLICATION PACKET FEES AND ADDITIONAL COPIES OF THIS PUBLICATION MAY BE OBTAINED FROM OUR WEBSITE AT: <https://agriculture.az.gov/grants>





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Application Process

Step 2 - Complete the Application Packet files



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



Save your progress often!





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





Start early and submit application at least 3 days prior to due date

Application Process

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

Remember: applications must be submitted by
March 1, 2024



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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 Resource and Infrastructure Letter

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...

Appendix C

[On Letterhead of Organization Providing the Critical Resource or Infrastructure]

EVIDENCE OF CRITICAL RESOURCES AND INFRASTRUCTURE

[Name of Applicant's Authorized Organization Representative/Project Director]
[Applicant Organization]
[City, State]

Date: [Enter date]

Dear [Applicant's Project Director]:

We [include a statement about committing/approving/granting permission, etc. of the critical resource or infrastructure] to the Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure (RFSI) Program [Project Title], for the time period of [include dates of commitment within proposed project period] in the following way:

[Describe the approved use of the critical resource or infrastructure approved for the project, any costs associated with its use, and any qualifying circumstances for its use.]

By checking this box, I confirm that the critical resource(s) and infrastructure¹ listed above are in place and usable for the start-up, implementation and completion of the proposed project activities. If requested by AMS, I will submit supporting documentation (e.g. copy of lease agreement, licenses, permits, picture(s) of facilities, etc.) as evidence.

Sincerely,

[Signature of Partnering Organization's Authorized Representative (AR)]

Printed Name of AR
AR's Title (e.g., Executive Director)
Address and telephone number if that information is not already on the letterhead

¹ Critical resources and infrastructure can be facilities, land, structure, use of city street/parks, shared-used kitchen, and/or other resources that are essential for the proposed project activities.

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

applies to IG only 

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

Match Calculation Examples

RFSI Match Calculator 50% Match Requirement	
	Amount
Total Project Amount	\$200,000.00
Federal Funds Requested	\$100,000.00
Cost-sharing/Matching Amount	\$100,000.00

RFSI Match Calculator 25% Match Requirement	
	Amount
Total Project Amount	\$200,000.00
Federal Funds Requested	\$150,000.00
Cost-sharing/Matching Amount	\$50,000.00

50% Match Requirement

Total Project Amount	\$279,500
Federal Funds Requested	\$139,750
Cost-sharing/Matching Amount	\$139,750

25% Match Requirement

Total Project Amount	\$279,500
Federal Funds Requested	\$209,625
Cost-sharing/Matching Amount	\$69,875

Remember...



start with the project
bid totals and then
build the budget

Reduced Match Eligibility



Infrastructure
Grants (IG) only

- 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)



Costs/activities MUST be allowable under the program to be used as match



“In-kind”= value of goods or services provided for the benefit of the grant program, where no funds transferred hands.

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

[Use Letterhead of Organization Providing the Match]

MATCH VERIFICATION LETTER

[Application Authorized Organizational Representative]
[Applicant Organization Address]

Dear [Application Authorized Organizational Representative]:

We commit to providing the following matching funds to the Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure (RFSI) Program application: [Project title]

- Cash in the total amount of \$XXX, which we will provide during the grant period [insert date project begins] through [insert date project will terminate not to exceed December 31, 2026].
 - Funds will be used for [provide particular item(s) corresponding to the budget narrative or describe how the applicant will otherwise use the funds].
 - We will provide the following amounts per year:
 - Year 1:
 - Year 2:
 - Year 3:
- In-kind contributions in the total amount of \$XXX, will be contributed as follows:
 - Salaries and wages of staff time for the following employees:

Employee Name (add additional lines as needed)	Title	Description of Duties	Base Rate (\$)/hr or % FTE	Year 1: # of Hours or \$ Equivalent	Year 2: # of Hours or \$ Equivalent	Year 3: # of Hours or \$ Equivalent
 - The following items/activities with a total fair market value of \$XXX:

Item/Activity (add additional lines as needed)	Fair Market Value per Unit:	How Fair Market Value Determined (must provide documentation):	Amount Donated Year 1:	Amount Donated Year 2:	Amount Donated Year 3:

Sincerely,

[Signature of Matching Organization Representative]
[Printed Name of Matching Organization Representative]
[Title]
[Email, address and phone number if not already included on letterhead.]

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.

Screening & Review

1

Applications are screened for the following:

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

2

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**

SECTION	SCORING
Distressed Communities Index 5 points max	Counties benefiting from project: Score of 0-20 (prosperous) = 1 pt Score of 20.1 - 40 (comfortable) = 2 pts Score of 40.1 - 60 (mid-tier) = 3 pts Score of 60.1 - 80 (at-risk) = 4 pts Score of 80.1 - 100 (distressed) = 5 pts
Executive Summary 5 points max	Ability to speak to broad goal and scope of project 5 points
Project Purpose 20 points max	Is the specific issue, problem, or need clearly explained, and are they relevant to the funding purpose? 5 points The project demonstrates a clear link to the funding priorities (see section I.F. of the grant manual). 5 points Is the impact realistic and related to the equipment being purchased? 5 points The proposed project will directly benefit the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Underserved farmers and ranchers; • New and beginning farmers or ranchers; • Veteran producers; • Processors and other middle-of-the-supply businesses owned by socially disadvantaged individuals, as defined by the Small Business Administration (SBA). 5 points
Expected Performance Measures 5 points max	Is the expected performance measure(s) relevant, reasonably achievable, and appropriate to the budget request? 5 points
Budget Narrative & Budget Summary 15 points max	Does the budget only contain necessary costs? 5 points The equipment justification is clearly explained and related to the objectives and outcomes of the project. 10 points
TOTAL	50 points total possible

RFSI EQUIPMENT-ONLY GRANT PROPOSAL

The RFSI Equipment-Only Grant Proposal should include a project narrative that describes the overall scope of the project and how it aligns with the program goals and priorities. Applicants must attach documentation to substantiate the costs of each piece of equipment, which can include contracts, catalog pricing, or binding quotes provided by license commercial entities.

APPLICANT INFORMATION

Applicant Organization Name:

UEI:

Phone Number:

Email Address:

Physical Address

Street:

City:

State:

Zip:

Mailing Address (If different from above)

Street:

City:

State:

Zip:

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

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:

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>



check out the video resources on pinnacleprevention.org/rfsi

RFSI Grant Writing Resources

[How to download dynamic PDF files \(video\)](#)

[How to obtain a UEI on Sam.gov \(video\)](#)



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 Score1: Enter County Distress Score

County 2: Enter County name

Distress Score2: Enter County Distress Score

+	County	Distress Score
-		
-		

Interactive Map

Explore how your community performs on the Distressed Communities Index. Users can visualize how well-being varies across zip codes, counties, and congressional districts. Click on a geography to activate the tool. Scroll below the map to dig deeper into the factors that make up the index and the demographic composition of each community.



SEARCH STATE, DISTRICT, COUNTY, ZIP CODE

National

National

Alabama

Alaska

Arizona

Arkansas

MAP BOUNDARIES

State District

MAP VIEW

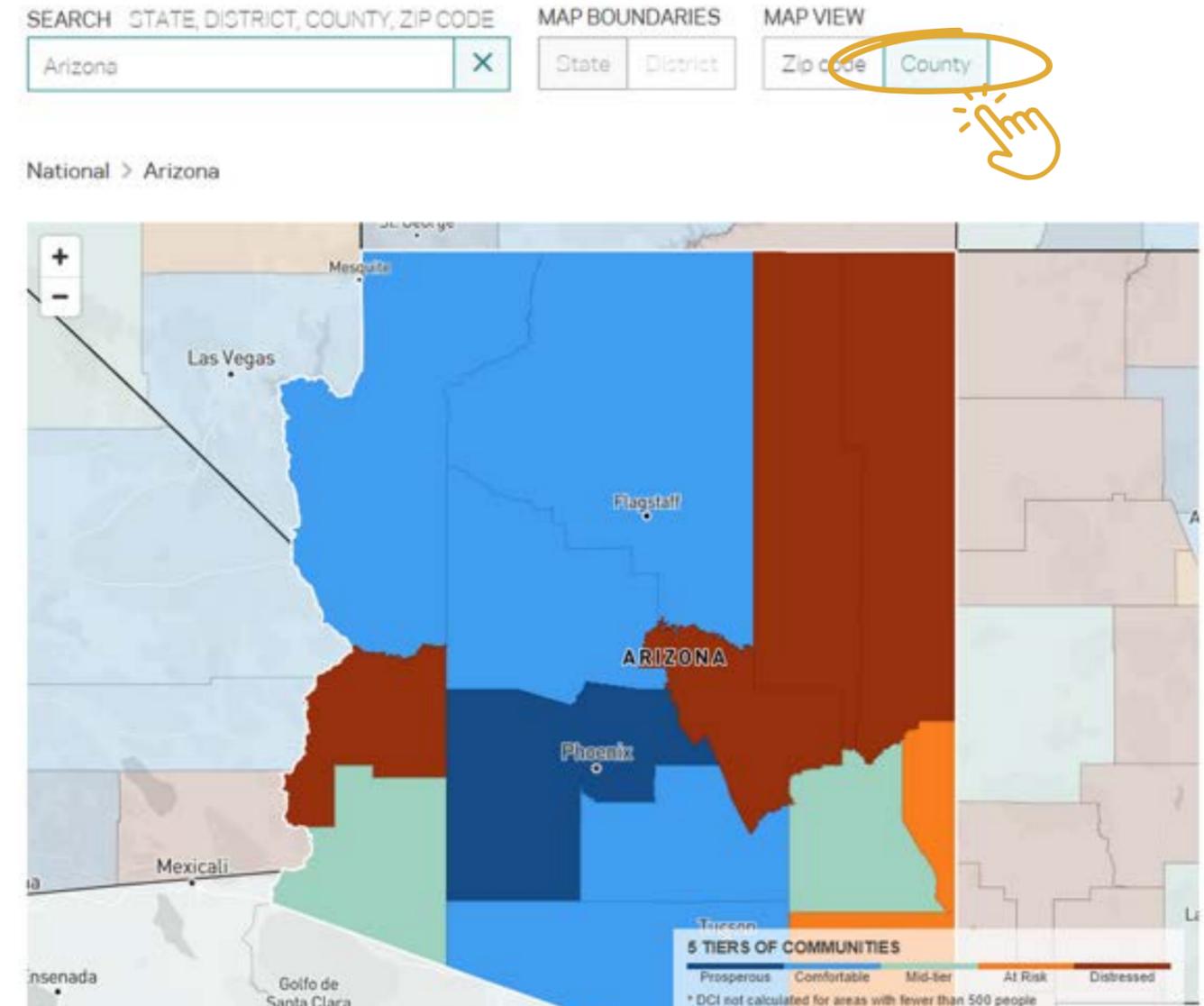
Zip code County



select "Arizona" on SEARCH drop-down menu, then click "County" on MAP VIEW

Interactive Map

Explore how your community performs on the Distressed Communities Index. Users can visualize how well-being varies across zip codes, counties, and congressional districts. Click on a geography to activate the tool. Scroll below the map to dig deeper into the factors that make up the index and the demographic composition of each community.



SEARCH STATE, DISTRICT, COUNTY, ZIP CODE

Arizona

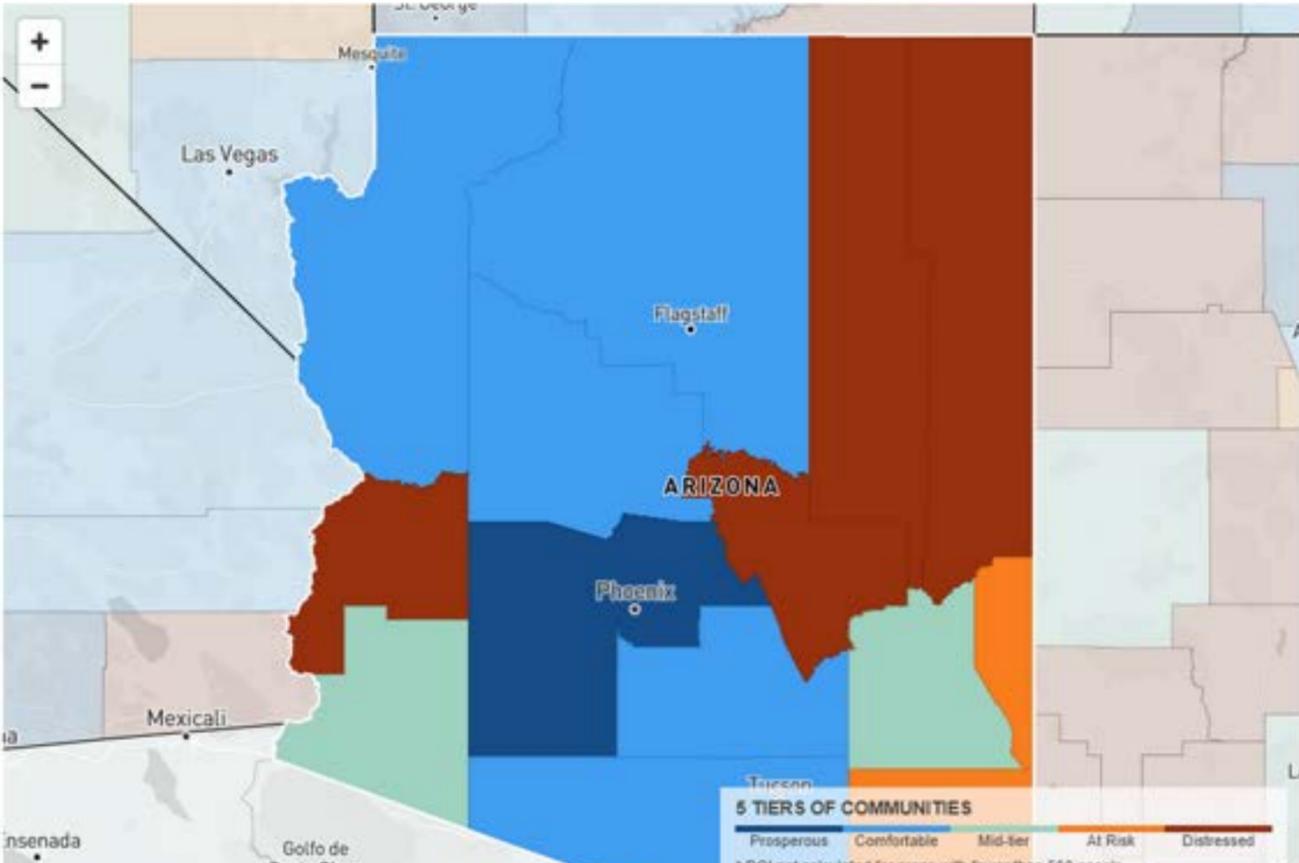
MAP BOUNDARIES

State District

MAP VIEW

Zip code **County**

National > Arizona



Las Vegas

Mesquite

Flagstaff

ARIZONA

Phoenix

Mexicali

Tucson

5 TIERS OF COMMUNITIES

Prosperous Comfortable Mid-tier At Risk Distressed

* DCI not calculated for areas with fewer than 500 people



Simplified Equipment-Only Grant (SEO)



Refer to the Rubric as you draft your narrative responses

PROJECT PURPOSE

OPERATIONS IDENTIFIER

Provide where within the Middle of the Supply Chain the requested equipment be used:

- Processing
- Aggregation
- Distribution
- Value Added Production

Other

TYPE OF AGRICULTUREAL FOOD PRODUCTS PROCESSED WITH THE EQUIPMENT?

Remove Product Row

Add Product Row

#	Product Type

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?



Refer to the Rubric as you draft your narrative responses

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

Is the specific issue, problem, or need clearly explained, and are they relevant to the funding purpose?
5 points

The project demonstrates a clear link to the funding priorities (see section I.F. of the grant manual).
5 points

Is the impact realistic and related to the equipment being purchased?
5 points

The proposed project will directly benefit the following:

- Underserved farmers and ranchers;
- New and beginning farmers or ranchers;
- Veteran producers;
- Processors and other middle-of-the-supply businesses owned by socially disadvantaged individuals, as defined by the Small Business Administration (SBA).

5 points

Simplified Equipment-Only Grant (SEO)

BUDGET NARRATIVE

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.

+	#	Equipment Item	Purchase Price	Acquisition Date	Funds Requested
-			\$0.00		\$0.00
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.**

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you will need quotes, bids, etc. for each equipment item listed



combine all equipment documents into a single PDF document

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**

Distressed Communities Index 10 points max	Counties benefiting from project: Score of 0-20 (prosperous) = 2 pt Score of 20.1 - 40 (comfortable) = 4 pts Score of 40.1 - 60 (mid-tier) = 6 pts Score of 60.1 - 80 (at-risk) = 8 pts Score of 80.1 - 100 (distressed) = 10 pts
Duration of Project 5 points max	5 = high probability of completion by December 31, 2026 (shovel-ready projects) 1 = low probability of completion by December 31, 2026 (projects starting from scratch)
Executive Summary 5 points max	Ability to speak to broad goal and scope of project 5 points
Project Purpose 35 points max	Is the specific issue, problem, or need clearly explained, and are they relevant to the funding purpose? 5 points The project demonstrates a clear link to the funding priorities (see section I.F. of the grant manual). 5 points
	Are the project objectives clear, relevant to the program, and reasonably achievable within the grant duration? 5 points The proposed project will directly benefit the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Underserved farmers and ranchers; • New and beginning farmers or ranchers; • Veteran producers; • Processors and other middle-of-the-supply businesses owned by socially disadvantaged individuals, as defined by the Small Business Administration (SBA). 10 points The project involves more than one food producer/aggregator and/or proposes a shared use of infrastructure. 5 points Does the project demonstrate meaningful external support for the project? 5 points
Expected Performance Measures 5 points max	Is the expected performance measure(s) relevant, reasonably achievable, and appropriate to the budget request? 5 points
Budget Narrative & Budget Summary 40 points max	Proposals submitted by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Beginning Farmer or Rancher • Veteran Farmer or Rancher • Limited Resource Farmer or Rancher • Socially Disadvantaged Farmer or Rancher • Small Disadvantaged Business • Women-Owned Small Business • Historically Underserved Farmers and Ranchers 10 points Does the budget align with the activities of the project? 10 points Does the budget only contain necessary costs? 10 points Are the costs realistic and/or supported? 10 points
TOTAL	100 points total possible

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

Applicant Organization Name:

Entity Type:

UEI:

Phone Number:

Email Address:

Physical Address

Street:

City:

State:

Zip:

Mailing Address (If different from above)

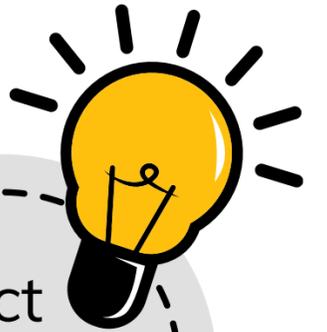
Street:

City:

State:

Zip:

Infrastructure Grants (IG)



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

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 Score1: Enter County Distress Score

County 2: Enter County name

Distress Score2: Enter County Distress Score

+	County	Distress Score
-		
-		



Same process as SEO grant question

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 for the benefit of local and regional producers, and that meet the eligibility requirements of the SBA small business size standards 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.



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RESILIENT FOOD SYSTEMS INFRASTRUCTURE

Info Session



PROJECT TITLE

Provide a descriptive project title in 15 words or less in the space below.

Describe the project in 15 words or less

DURATION OF PROJECT

Project Start Date:

Project End Date:

Projects must be completed by 12/31/2026

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
3. A description of the general tasks/activities to be completed during the project period to fulfill this goal

needs to be 250 words or less

Select at least one, can include more than one

PROJECT PURPOSE

APPLICANT PROJECT TYPE (EACH PROJECT MAY INCLUDE MORE THAN ONE)

- 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. sealing, bagging, 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.

Other:



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



Refer to the Rubric and Funding Priorities as you draft your narrative responses

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

Remove Objective

Add Objective

Objective #	Objective Description



PROJECT BENEFICIARIES (AS DEFINED IN THE PROGRAM SCOPE AND REQUIREMENTS)

Estimate the number of project beneficiaries:

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?

OTHER SUPPORT FROM FEDERAL OR STATE GRANT PROGRAMS

Has this project been submitted for funding to a Federal or State grant program other than the RFSI and/or is a Federal or State grant program other than the RFSI funding the project currently? If yes, please explain below:

- Yes No

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

EXTERNAL PROJECT SUPPORT

Describe the stakeholders who support the need for this project and why (other than the applicant and organizations involved in the project).



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Info Session



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



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RESILIENT FOOD SYSTEMS INFRASTRUCTURE

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Live Application Deomo Grant Portal Navigation

Grants



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Grant Writing Supports



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Virtual Office Hours

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

bit.ly/azrfsiofficehours





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Writing Workshops



1/18/2024 - Chandler

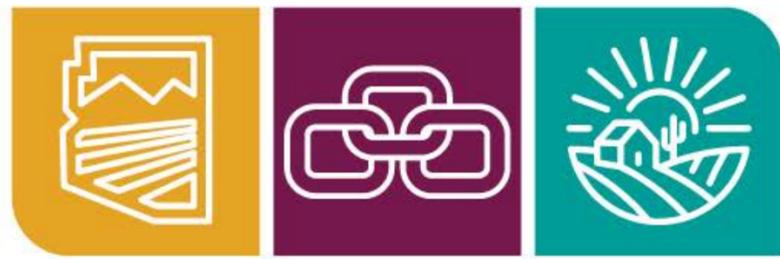
1/25/2024 - Tucson

1/24/2024 - Sells

2/01/2024 - Flagstaff



bit.ly/azrfsiworkshops



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Resources



Local First Arizona's
Economic Resource Center-
<https://localfirstaz.com/economic-resource-center>

grant writing assistance &
resources

The Arizona Economic Resource Center (AZERC) aims to enable eligible Arizona cities, towns, counties, tribal communities, and nonprofits to win and implement competitive federal, state, municipal, or foundation grants.

An initiative of Local First Arizona, the Arizona Economic Resource Center provides the following services, free of charge, to qualifying entities:

- Grant Writing, Reviewing & Editing**
Our team of grant professionals provides guidance that helps to quantify the need, develop a budget, and formulate clear objectives for the project that will ensure your grant is competitive.
- Project Management**
Our team can assist in outlining a project management process, milestones, and deadlines that can keep your project on track and your organization in compliance with all grant requirements.
- Budget Guidance**
Developing budgets and managing finances can be one of the biggest challenges of grant management. From developing a budget that meets your grant application needs...
- Economic Impact Analysis**
Defining the need for your proposed work through an examination of its potential economic impact can be a determining factor for grants. Our team can assist in establishing...



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RESILIENT FOOD SYSTEMS INFRASTRUCTURE
Info Session



Volunteers Needed

bit.ly/azrfsivolunteer



Virtual Office Hours

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

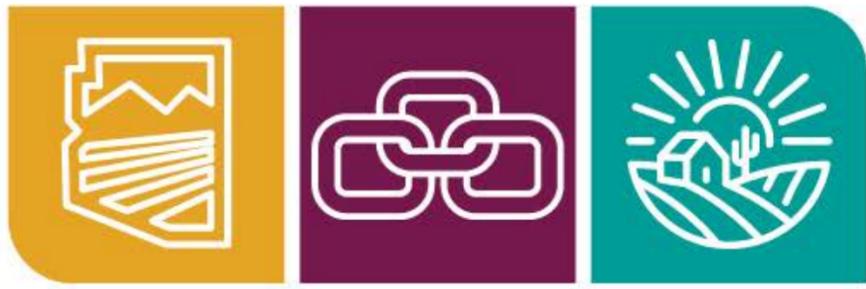
bit.ly/azrfsiofficehours



Writing Workshops

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

bit.ly/azrfsiworkshops



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Questions & Next Steps

RFSI AZ Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) ☆ 📁 🌐

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←

Summary +

Outline

Frequently Asked Questions (...)

GENERAL QUESTIONS

- Which activities are included...
- Which activities are NOT included...
- How does an applicant determine...
- What grant writing supports...
- How can applicants ask questions...
- How does USDA define underutilized...
- What is a Unique Entity Identifier...
- What is the difference between...
- What are the award limits for...

ELIGIBILITY

- Who is eligible to apply for R...
- Are applicants allowed to submit...
- Are applicants allowed to submit...
- Which commodities are eligible...
- Is a project eligible if it includes...
- Are individual producers and...
- How are project beneficiaries...
- Are there any criteria for when...
- Are projects required to last...
- Are examples available of previous...

GRANT PORTAL

RFSI ARIZONA
RESILIENT FOOD SYSTEMS INFRASTRUCTURE

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, or 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

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

bit.ly/azrfsifaqs





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RESILIENT FOOD SYSTEMS INFRASTRUCTURE

Info Session

Key Dates



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



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



**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*



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RESILIENT FOOD SYSTEMS INFRASTRUCTURE

Info Session

Thank You!



*Pulse
check*

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pinnacleprevention.org/rfsi

