



TEXAS

Health and Human Services

Cecile Young, Executive Commissioner

Request for Applications (RFA)

for

HHS0004932 Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program Education (SNAP-Ed) Priority Project

Date of Release: August 5, 2020

Responses Due: October 28, 2020 by 2:00 P.M. Central Time

NIGP Class/Item Codes:

948-43 Health Information Services

948-73 Physical Fitness Programs

952-19 Community Garden Program

952-95 Youth Care Services

952-84 Supplemental Food Services

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ARTICLE I. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY, DEFINITIONS, AND AUTHORITY

1.1 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Health and Human Services Commission (HHSC) seeks qualified applicants to provide Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program Education (SNAP-Ed) Services. The SNAP-Ed mission is to improve the likelihood that persons eligible for SNAP will make healthy food choices within a limited budget and choose physically active lifestyles consistent with current **Appendix B, Dietary Guidelines for Americans 2015-2020 8th Edition** and the USDA food guidance. The SNAP-Ed vision is to educate, connect, and support individuals as they attempt to live healthier lives on a budget through direct education, targeted social marketing efforts, environmental strategies to encourage healthy food selection, and use of technology to reach people and communities.

Services must be provided in accordance with the specifications contained in this Request for Application (RFA) and in compliance with **Appendix A, Contract Requirements**.

HHSC will make funds available to Awarded Respondents to deliver nutrition education and obesity prevention services throughout the State of Texas. It is expected that Awarded Respondents have the demonstrated experience, expertise, and infrastructure to perform the work outlined in this RFA.

To be considered for award, Respondents must execute **Exhibit A, Affirmations and Solicitation Acceptance** of this Solicitation and provide all other required information and documentation as set forth in this Solicitation.

1.2 DEFINITIONS

Refer to **Exhibit B, HHSC Grantee Uniform Terms and Conditions** for additional definitions. Additionally, as used in this Solicitation, unless the context clearly indicates otherwise, the following terms and conditions have the meanings assigned below.

“Addendum” means a written clarification or revision to this Solicitation issued by HHSC.

“Apparent Awardee” means an organization that has been selected to receive a grant award through a response to this RFA but has not yet executed a grant agreement or contract. May also be referred to as “Apparent Grant Recipient” or “Apparent Grantee.”

“Client” means a member of the target population to be served by the Respondent’s organization. For the purposes of this grant, a client is a person or group that uses the services listed within this RFA.

“FPL” means Federal Poverty Level.

“Health and Human Services Commission” or **“HHSC”** means the administrative agency established under Chapter 531, Texas Government Code or its designee.

“Key Personnel” means a Respondent organization's Project Contact, Fiscal Contact, and Executive Director and/or any other key stakeholders in the Proposed Project.

“Priority Project” means a discrete unit of nutrition education or obesity prevention intervention at the local level, which is distinguished by a specifically identified low-income target population, that includes a specific set of evidence-based, behaviorally-focused activities and/or actions to promote healthy eating and active lifestyles.

“Project” means the work and activities for which grant funding is awarded and information is provided as part of the response to this RFA. During the open application period and before selection of grant recipients are made, the Project will be known as the Proposed Project.

“Respondent” means the entity responding to this Solicitation. May also be referred to as **“Applicant.”**

“RFA” means this Request for Applications including Exhibits and Addenda, if any.

“Sector of Influence” means large-scale local, state, territorial, and tribal approaches that have the potential to transform conditions for a large segment of the population and be sustained over time. Examples of sectors of influence include food industry, government, public health and health care education, community design, public safety media, agriculture, and commercial marketing.

“SNAP” means the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program, formerly and commonly known as the Food Stamp Program, which provides food-purchasing assistance for low- and no-income people living in the United States.

“SNAP-Ed” means the program which teaches people to shop for and cook healthy meals. SNAP-Ed can help people learn how to make their SNAP dollars stretch. SNAP-Ed works with partners to make the healthy choice the easy choice.

“SNAP Nutrition Education and Obesity Prevention Services” means a combination of educational strategies, accompanied by supporting policy, systems, and environmental interventions, that have been shown to facilitate adoption of food and physical activity choices and other nutrition-related behaviors.

“Solicitation” means this Request for Application including any Exhibits and Addenda, if any and is further defined by the definition “Solicitation or RFA” outlined in **Exhibit B, HHSC Grantee Uniform Terms and Conditions.**

“State” means the State of Texas and its instrumentalities, including HHSC and any other state agency, its officers, employees, or authorized agents.

“Successful Respondent” means an organization that receives a grant award as a result of this RFA. May also be referred to as **“Grantee,”** **“Awarded Respondent,”** **“Subrecipient/Subcontractor”** or **“Grant Recipient.”**

“System Agency” means the Health and Human Services Commission, its officers, employees or authorized agents.

“TANF” means Temporary Assistance for Needy Families.

“Target Audience” means SNAP participants and low-income individuals eligible to receive SNAP benefits or other means-tested Federal assistance programs, such as Medicaid or Temporary Assistance for Needy Families, as well as individuals residing in communities with a significant low-income population.

“USDA Nutrition Programs” means the roughly six (6) program areas of the United States Department of Agriculture Nutrition Programs, although specifically referencing the SNAP - Ed program in this RFA.

1.3 AUTHORITY

HHSC and Grantee each agree this Contract is authorized by and in compliance with the provisions of 7 CFR 272.2 (d)(2) for which the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) provided Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program-Education funds.

Further, each Party agrees this Contract is fully intended to promote the legislative goals of HHSC as set forth in [Section 531.003 of the Texas Government Code](#) in the context of providing nutritional assistance as authorized by [Chapter 33 of the Texas Human Resources Code](#).

ARTICLE II. SCOPE OF GRANT AWARD

2.1 PROGRAM BACKGROUND

SNAP-Ed is funded by the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) with the mission to improve the likelihood that SNAP participants will make healthy food choices and choose physically active lifestyles.

The focus of this Solicitation is to facilitate FNS’ requirements through the following Texas SNAP-Ed State Goals:

- A. **State Goal I:** Implement health promotion activities to help the SNAP-Ed Target Audience establish healthy eating habits and a physically active lifestyle.

- B. **State Goal II:** Reduce risk factors for chronic diseases such as obesity, type 2 diabetes, and cardiovascular disease among the SNAP-Ed Target Audience.
- C. **State Goal III:** Increase partnership collaboration of nutrition, physical activity, and wellness education across the state.
- D. **State Goal IV:** Increase consumption of fruits, vegetables, and other foods that comprise a healthy diet among the SNAP-Ed Target Audience in accordance with **Appendix B, Dietary Guidelines for Americans 2015-2020 8th Edition.**
- E. **State Goal V:** Increase ongoing physical activity among the SNAP-Ed Target Audience in accordance with **Appendix C, Physical Activity Guidelines 2nd Edition.**
- F. **State Goal VI:** Increase Policy, Systems, and Environmental (PSE) projects consistent with **Appendix D, FY 2021 SNAP-Ed Plan Guidance.**

2.1.1 Target Audience

The SNAP-Ed services are designed for the following Target Audience:

- A. Individuals participating in Supplemental Nutritional Assistance Program (SNAP);
- B. Individuals who qualify to receive SNAP benefits or other means-tested Federal assistance programs, such as Medicaid or Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF); and
- C. Individuals residing in communities meeting the general low-income standard. The general low-income standard is defined as fifty (50) percent or more of a household's incomes that is less than or equal to 185 percent of the Federal Poverty Limit (FPL).

2.2 GRANT AWARD AND TERM

2.2.1 Available Funding

The total amount of funding anticipated for the SNAP-Ed Grant in Federal Fiscal Year (FFY) 2022 is **\$13,000,000.00**. It is HHSC's intention to make multiple award(s), based upon the most qualified Respondent(s) to this RFA. Large requests for funding may not be fully funded in order to ensure that funds are available for the broadest possible array of communities and programs.

Grants awarded as a result of this RFA will be funded on a cost reimbursement basis. Under the cost reimbursement method of funding, Grant Recipients are required to finance operations with their own working capital with grant payments made by HHSC to reimburse the Grant Recipients for actual cash disbursements to be supported by adequate documentation. HHSC will not provide start-up funding or issue advance payments.

2.2.2 Grant Term

The grant funding period for this Grant will be one (1) year. It is anticipated that the grant funding period for any Contract awarded under this Solicitation will begin **October 1, 2021** and continue through **September 30, 2022**. Reimbursement will only be made for those allowable expenses that occur within the term of the grant. No pre-award costs will be eligible for reimbursement.

Subject to the availability of funds, HHSC, at its sole discretion, may extend this grant for any period(s) of time, provided the grant term, including all extensions or renewals, does not exceed five (5) years. Notwithstanding the limitation in the preceding sentence, HHSC, at its sole discretion, also may extend the grant beyond five (5) years as necessary to ensure continuity of service, for purposes of transition, or as otherwise determined by HHSC to serve the best interest of the State.

2.3 ELIGIBLE RESPONDENTS

In order to be eligible for a grant award, all Respondents must be qualified to do business with the State of Texas for a grant award, and must:

1. Have a valid DUNS number;
2. Have a current SAM.gov account;
3. Not be on the Office of Federal Contract Compliance Debar List;
4. Not be on the Federal Transit Administration Excluded Parties List;
5. Not be on the U.S. General Services Administration, Excluded Parties List System;
6. Not be on the List of Excluded Individuals/Entities (LEIE) – Federal Exclusions; and
7. Be in Good Standing with the Texas Secretary of State, as applicable.

HHSC is seeking to comply with USDA Nutrition Program regulations by contracting with other agencies, companies, and foundations to meet the goals and objectives outlined in this RFA. SNAP-Ed Programs also collaborate with other USDA Nutrition Programs, such as, food distribution programs, Indian reservations, special supplemental nutrition program, etc.

2.4 PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS

To meet the mission and objectives of the SNAP-Ed Program, Respondents must be in compliance with the requirements of **Appendix A, Contract Requirements**.

2.5 SCOPE

2.5.1 Priority Projects

Respondents may choose one or more of the following Priority Projects according to **Appendix A, Contract Requirements**:

- A. **Schools and/or Communities Priority Project:** School and/or Communities Priority Projects include evidence-based projects/programs delivered in partnership with community-based organizations and/or low-income public schools.
- B. **Physical Activity Priority Project:** Physical Activity Priority Projects include evidence-based projects/programs that provide consistent physical activity opportunities and programs for adults or children in low-income communities. All programming such as workshops, conferences, and trainings for SNAP-Ed,

that encourages physical activity, must include promotion of nutrition education such as healthy eating patterns.

2.5.2 Required Intervention Approaches

Successful Respondents are required to implement interventions under Approach One (defined below) and at least one (1) additional approach as defined in **Appendix D, FY 2021 SNAP-Ed Plan Guidance**.

The Respondent must use evidence-based, behaviorally focused interventions and maximize its impact by concentrating on a small set of key population outcomes supported by evidence-based multi-level interventions. Evidence-based interventions based on the best available information must be used. FNS encourages States to concentrate their SNAP-Ed efforts on the program's key behavioral outcomes.

- A. **Approach One:** Individual or group-based direct nutrition education, health promotion, and intervention strategies.
 - i. Activities conducted at the individual level are a direct education delivery approach in SNAP-Ed.
 - ii. The direct nutrition education and physical activity interventions implemented should incorporate features that have shown to be effective, such as:
 - a. Behaviorally-focused strategies;
 - b. Culturally relevant/appropriate motivators and reinforcements;
 - c. Multiple channels of communication to convey messages;
 - d. Approaches that allow for active personal engagement; and
 - e. Intensity and duration that provide opportunities to reinforce behaviors.
 - iii. This intervention approach must be combined with interventions and strategies from Approaches Two and/or Three.

- B. **Approach Two:** Comprehensive, multi-level interventions at multiple complementary, organizational and institutional levels consistent with **Appendix D, FY 2021 SNAP-Ed Plan Guidance**.
 - i. Interventions may address several or all elements of the socioecological model (SEM) as found in **Appendix D, FY 2021 SNAP-Ed Plan Guidance**, and may target the individual, the interpersonal (family, friends, etc.), organizational (workplace, school, etc.), community (food retailers, food deserts, etc.), and public policy or societal (local laws, social norms, etc.) levels.
 - ii. A key tenet of multi-level interventions is that they reach the Target Audience at more than one (1) level of the SEM and that the interventions mutually reinforce each other. Multi-level interventions generally are thought of as having three (3) or more levels of influence.

- C. **Approach Three:** Community and public health approach to approve nutrition and obesity prevention consistent with **Appendix D, FY 2021 SNAP-Ed Plan Guidance**.
 - i. Efforts that impact a large segment of the population, rather than targeting the individual or a small group.

- ii. According to the Center for Disease Control (**CDC**), public health interventions are community-focused, population-based interventions aimed at preventing a disease/condition or limiting death/disability from a disease/condition.

2.5.3 Strategies

Successful Respondents will utilize specific strategies to complete the implementation of the Priority Project. Strategy options are below:

- A. **Direct Education Strategy:** The participant is actively engaged in the learning process with an educator and/or interactive media, such as a group nutrition lesson.
- B. **Indirect Education Strategy:** Distribution of nutrition education, materials, or resources; including mass communication and public events where no demographic information is captured about the participant(s) or audience. Examples of indirect education include pamphlets, posters, and promotional materials.
- C. **Social Marketing Strategy:** Using research-based commercial marketing technologies, such as a radio spot, website, email lists, billboards, Facebook, etc., to influence the Target Audience to improve dietary habits or increase physical activity.
- D. **Policy, Systems, and Environmental (PSE) Strategy:** Policy strategies are based on a policy, or a written statement of an organizational position, a decision, or a course of action. Ideally, policies describe the actions, resources, implementation, evaluation, and enforcement of a course of action. Policies are made in the public, non-profit, and business sectors. Policies will help to guide behavioral changes for audiences served through SNAP-Ed programming.

Systems strategies are unwritten, ongoing, organizational decisions or changes that result in new activities reaching large proportions of people the organization serves. Systems strategies alter how the organization or network of organizations conducts business. An organization may adopt a new intervention, reallocate other resources, or in significant ways modify its direction to benefit low-income consumers in qualifying sites and communities. Systems strategies may precede or follow a written policy.

Environmental strategies include the built or physical environments which are visual or observable, but also may include economic, social, normative or message strategies. Environmental strategies include modifications in settings where food is sold, served, or distributed with the intention of promoting healthy food choices. Economic strategies may include financial disincentives or incentives to encourage a desired behavior, such as purchasing more fruits and vegetables. Social strategies may include shaping attitudes among administrators, teachers, or service providers about time allotted for school meals or physical activity breaks.

2.6 KEY PERFORMANCE REQUIREMENTS

HHSC will monitor the performance of grants awarded under this RFA. All services and deliverables under the grant(s) must be provided at an acceptable quality level and in a manner consistent with acceptable standards, custom, and practice. The Successful Respondent must ensure services are provided at least at the level established for SNAP-Ed approved minimum goals and outcomes. The Successful Respondent must report on key performance requirements and outcomes in accordance to the quality and performance outlined within **Appendix E, Key Performance Requirements (KPR)**, and **Appendix F, Deliverables** and outlined below:

- A. All services and deliverables provided under any agreement must be provided in a manner consistent with the standards of quality and integrity as outlined in the agreement, the Solicitation, and the Successful Respondent's proposal.
- B. All services and deliverables must meet or exceed the required level of performance specified in or under any agreement, and must meet or exceed HHSC's mission and objectives, as set forth in the Solicitation.

2.6.1 Measures and Indicators of Implementation for Required Intervention Approaches

The Respondent must review the SNAP-Ed Evaluation Framework for Nutrition, Physical Activity, and Obesity Prevention Indicators. The SNAP-Ed Evaluation Framework can be found at the following link: <https://snapedtoolkit.org/framework/index/>. Performance measures must be based on the multi-level approach (individual, environment, and sectors of influence) as well as the short term, medium term and long-term outcomes.

Below is a list of measures and indicators of implementation for each primary approach.

Approach One: Individual or group-based direct nutrition education, health promotion, and intervention strategies.

1. Healthy Eating Behaviors: Changes in individual and family healthy eating behaviors on the pathway to achieving the current **Appendix B, Dietary Guidelines for Americans 2015-2020 8th Edition** recommendations.
 - a. The number or percentage of participants reporting a healthy eating behavior during the period assessed, the frequency of such behavior, the type of behavior(s), or cups of fruits and vegetables consumed.
2. Changed Behaviors: Changes in individual and family behaviors that reflect smarter shopping and food resource management strategies, enabling participants to stretch their food resource dollars to support a healthier diet.
 - a. The number or percentage of participants reporting a food resource management behavior during the period assessed, the frequency of such behavior, and the type of behavior(s).
3. Physical Activity and Reduced Sedentary Behaviors: This indicator focuses on progress toward meeting the Physical Activity Guidelines for Americans (see **Appendix C**,

Physical Activity Guidelines 2nd Edition), which is the physical activity counterpart to the Dietary Guidelines for Americans.

- a. Decreases in time spent in sedentary behavior (computers, desk sitting, television watching) during the period assessed.
- b. Increases in health-related physical fitness levels (aerobic or cardio fitness, muscular strength, muscular endurance and flexibility).
- c. Increases in duration, intensity, and frequency of exercise, physical activity, or leisure sport appropriate for the population of interest, and types of activities.

Approach Two: Comprehensive, multi-level Policy, Systems, and Environmental (PSE) projects consistent with **Appendix D, FY 2021 SNAP-Ed Plan Guidance**.

1. Nutrition Supports Adopted in Environmental Settings: Takes place when SNAP-Ed sites or organizations put into effect an evidence-based PSE change.
 - a. Number and population of sites or organizations that make at least one (1) change in writing or practice to expand access or improve appeal for healthy eating.
 - b. Total number of policy changes.
 - c. Total number of systems changes.
 - d. Total number of environmental changes.
 - e. Total number of promotional efforts for a PSE change.
2. Organizational Partnerships: Partnerships with service providers, organizational leaders, and SNAP-Ed representatives in settings where people eat, learn, live, play, shop, and work.
 - a. The number of active partnerships in SNAP-Ed qualified sites or organizations that regularly meet, exchange information, and identify and implement mutually reinforcing activities that will contribute to the adoption of one or more organizational changes or policies.
 - b. may target the individual, the interpersonal (family, friends, etc.), organizational (workplace, school, etc.), community (food retailers, food deserts, etc.), and public policy or societal (local laws, social norms, etc.) levels.

Approach Three: Community-based PSE projects consistent with **Appendix D, FY 2021 SNAP-Ed Plan Guidance**.

1. Multi-sector partnerships and planning: This indicator measures community capacity by assessing the readiness of multi-sector partnerships or coalitions to plan and achieve the changes in nutrition, physical activity, food security, and/or obesity prevention policies and practices that are evaluated as subsequent indicators in the Sectors of Influence level of the framework.
 - a. Types and number of organizations or individuals per sector represented.
 - b. Documented level of multi-sector representation of the partnership (as documented by partners).
 - c. Documented level of active engagement of the partnership (as documented by partners).
 - d. Level of influence of SNAP-Ed in the partnership (as documented by partners).
2. Health Care Cost Savings: Reduction in rates of selected chronic diseases and associated impacts on health care costs.

- a. Track rates of diseases and conditions among SNAP-Ed eligible persons; prioritize Medicaid recipients and other low-income health plans administered by states, counties, territories, or tribes.
 - i. Total prevalence and reductions in prevalence of persons told by a medical professional they have high blood pressure, or as reported in an electronic medical registry.
 - ii. Total prevalence and reductions in prevalence of persons told by a medical professional they have type 2 diabetes or pre-diabetes, or as reported in an electronic medical registry.
 - iii. Total prevalence and reductions in prevalence of persons told by a medical professional they have high blood cholesterol, or as reported in an electronic medical registry
- b. For SNAP-Ed agencies seeking to develop a more robust assessment on health care cost effectiveness of nutrition education and obesity prevention services, a good place to start is measuring quality-adjusted life year (**QALYs**), which is an outcome measure that considers both the quality and the quantity of life lived.
- c. Measuring the cost-benefit ratio of SNAP-Ed community-wide programs or the health care cost savings associated with community-wide SNAP-Ed interventions is an emerging area that practitioners will have the opportunity to develop over time.

2.7 FORMAL COMMUNICATION

HHSC's formal communication process will be utilized for the submission of all KPRs and deliverable reports. HHSC provides comments and approval of each report provided in support of this agreement via the formal communication process described in **Appendix A, Contract Requirements**.

2.8 PROHIBITIONS

The considerations regarding allowability of costs are based on [Code of Federal Regulations \(C.F.R.\) Title 2, Subtitle A, Chapter II-Part 200](#). Grant funds may not be used to support the following services, activities, and costs:

- A. Inherently religious activities such as prayer, worship, religious instruction, or proselytization;
- B. Lobbying;
- C. Any portion of the salary of, or any other compensation for, an elected or appointed government official;
- D. Vehicles or equipment for government agencies that are for general agency use and/or do not have a clear nexus to terrorism prevention, interdiction, and disruption (i.e. mobile data terminals, body cameras, in-car video systems, or radar units, etc. for officers assigned to routine patrol);
- E. Weapons, ammunition, tracked armored vehicles, weaponized vehicles or explosives (exceptions may be granted when explosives are used for bomb squad training);
- F. Admission fees or tickets to any amusement park, recreational activity or sporting event;
- G. Promotional gifts;

- H. Food, meals, beverages, or other refreshments, except for eligible per diem associated with grant-related travel or where pre-approved for working events;
- I. Membership dues for individuals;
- J. Any expense or service that is readily available at no cost to the grant project;
- K. Any use of grant funds to replace (supplant) funds that have been budgeted for the same purpose through non-grant sources;
- L. Fundraising;
- M. Any other prohibition imposed by federal, state, or local law; and
- N. The acquisition or construction of facilities.

2.9 STANDARDS

Grantees must comply with the requirements applicable to the funding source cited in the Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards (2 CFR 200); the Uniform Grant Management Standards (UGMS), and all statutes, requirements, and guidelines applicable to this funding.

Grantees are required to conduct Project activities in accordance with federal and state laws prohibiting discrimination. Guidance for adhering to non-discrimination requirements can be found on the Health and Human Services Commission (HHSC) Civil Rights Office website at: <https://hhs.texas.gov/about-hhs/your-rights/civil-rights-office>.

Upon request, a Grantee must provide HHSC Civil Rights Office with copies of all the Grantee's civil rights policies and procedures. Grantees must notify HHSC's Civil Rights Office of any civil rights complaints received relating to performance of the Project no more than 10 calendar days after receipt of the complaint. Notice must be directed to:

HHSC Civil Rights Office
701 W. 51st Street, Mail Code W206
Austin, TX 78751
Phone Toll Free (888) 388-6332
Phone: (512) 438-4313
TTY Toll Free (877) 432-7232
Fax: (512) 438-5885

A Grantee must ensure that its policies do not have the effect of excluding or limiting the participation of eligible persons in the Grantee's programs, benefits or activities on the basis of national origin, and must take reasonable steps to provide services and information, both orally and in writing, in appropriate languages other than English, in order to ensure that persons with limited English proficiency are effectively informed and can have meaningful access to programs, benefits, and activities.

Grantees must comply with [Executive Order 13279](#), and its implementing regulations at [45 CFR Part 87](#) or [7 CFR Part 16](#), which provide that any organization that participates in programs funded by direct financial assistance from the U.S. Dept. of Agriculture or U.S. Dept.

of Health and Human Services must not, in providing services, discriminate against a program beneficiary or prospective program beneficiary on the basis of religion or religious belief.

2.10 DATA USE AGREEMENT

By entering into a Grant Agreement with the System Agency as a result of this Solicitation, Respondent agrees to be bound by the terms of the Data Use Agreement (DUA) attached as **Exhibit C, Data Use Agreement (DUA)**, or **Exhibit C-1, Data Use Agreement (DUA) Version 8.5 Governmental Entity Version**, if applicable. Respondents must also complete **Exhibit C-2, Attachment 2 to DUA - Security and Privacy Inquiry (SPI)**.

2.11 NO GUARANTEE OF VOLUME, USAGE, OR COMPENSATION

HHSC makes no guarantee of volume, usage, or total compensation to be paid to any Applicant who becomes a Successful Respondent under any grant awarded by Contract as a result of this Solicitation. Any grant agreement is subject to appropriations and the continuing availability of funds.

HHSC reserves the right to cancel, make partial award, or decline to award a grant under this Solicitation at any time at its sole discretion.

There should be no expectation of additional or continued funding on the part of the Grant Recipient. Any additional funding or future funding may require submission of an application through a subsequent RFA.

ARTICLE III. ADMINISTRATIVE INFORMATION

3.1 SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

EVENT	DATE/TIME
Solicitation Release Date	August 5, 2020
Respondent Pre-Submittal Webinar (Optional)	August 19, 2020 at 10:00AM, CDT
Deadline for Submitting Questions	September 2, 2020 at 5:00PM, CDT
Estimated Date Answers to Questions Posted	September 8, 2020
Deadline for submission of Solicitation Responses [NOTE: Responses must be RECEIVED by HHSC by the deadline.]	October 28, 2020 at 2:00PM, CDT
Anticipated Notice of Award	January 2021
Anticipated Contract Start Date	October 1, 2021

Note: These dates are a tentative schedule of events. The System Agency reserves the right to modify these dates at any time upon notice posted to the [Texas eGrants website](#) and [HHS Grants website](#). Any dates listed after the Solicitation Response deadline will

occur at the discretion of the System Agency and may occur earlier or later than scheduled without notification on the [Texas eGrants website](#) and [HHS Grants website](#).

3.2 CHANGES, AMENDMENT OR MODIFICATION TO SOLICITATION

The System Agency reserves the right to change, amend or modify any provision of this Solicitation, or to withdraw this Solicitation, at any time prior to award, if it is in the best interest of the System Agency and will post on the [HHS Grants website](#). It is the responsibility of Respondent to periodically check the [HHS Grants website](#) to ensure full compliance with the requirements of this Solicitation.

3.3 IRREGULARITIES

Any irregularities or lack of clarity in this Solicitation should be brought to the attention of the Sole Point of Contact listed in **Section 3.4.1** as soon as possible so corrective Addenda may be furnished to prospective Respondents.

3.4 INQUIRIES

3.4.1 Sole Point of Contact

All requests, questions or other communication about this Solicitation shall be made in writing to the System Agency's Sole Point of Contact addressed to the person listed below (Sole Point of Contact). All communications between Respondents and other System Agency staff members concerning the Solicitation are strictly prohibited, unless noted elsewhere in this RFA. **Failure to comply with these requirements may result in disqualification of Respondent's Solicitation Response.**

Name: Kristen Thatcher
Title: Grants Specialist
Phone: 512-406-2596
Email: kristen.thatcher@hhsc.state.tx.us

However, if expressly directed in writing by the Sole Point of Contact, Respondent may communicate with another designated System Agency representative, e.g., during contract negotiations, if any.

3.4.2 Prohibited Communications

All communications between Respondents and other System Agency staff members concerning the Solicitation may not be relied upon and Respondent should send all questions or other communications to the Sole Point of Contact. This restriction does not preclude discussions between affected parties for the purposes of conducting business unrelated to this Solicitation. **Failure to comply with these requirements may result in disqualification of Respondent's Solicitation Response.**

3.4.3 Questions

The System Agency will allow written questions and requests for clarification of this Solicitation. Questions must be submitted in writing and sent by email to the Sole Point of Contact listed in **Section 3.4.1** above. Respondents' names will be removed from questions in any responses released. Questions shall be submitted in the following format. Submissions that deviate from this format may not be accepted:

- A. Identifying Solicitation number
- B. Section number
- C. Paragraph number
- D. Page number
- E. Text of passage being questioned; and
- F. Question

Note: Questions or other written requests for clarification must be received by the Sole Point of Contact by the deadline set forth in Section 3.1 above. However, the System Agency, at its sole discretion, may respond to questions or other written requests received after the deadline. Please provide entity name, address, phone number, fax number, e-mail address, and name of contact person when submitting questions.

3.4.4 Clarification Request Made by Respondent

Respondents must notify the Sole Point of Contact of any ambiguity, conflict, discrepancy, exclusionary specifications, omission or other error in the Solicitation in the manner and by the deadline for submitting questions.

3.4.5 Responses

Responses to questions or other written requests for clarification will be posted on the [HHS Grants website](#). The System Agency reserves the right to amend answers prior to the deadline of Solicitation Responses. Amended answers will be posted on the [HHS Grants website](#). It is Respondent's responsibility to check the [HHS Grants website](#) or contact the Sole Point of Contact for updated responses. The System Agency also reserves the right to decline to answer any question or questions or to provide a single consolidated response of all similar questions in any manner at the System Agency's sole discretion.

3.4.6 Respondent Pre-Submittal Webinar

HHSC will conduct an optional pre-submittal webinar August 19, 2020 at 10:00AM, CDT. Applicants may register for the webinar using the following link below. The Respondent webinar is **optional**.

<https://dashboard.gotowebinar.com/webinar/5480177467033681163>

3.5 SOLICITATION RESPONSE COMPOSITION

3.5.1 Generally

All applications must be:

- Clearly legible;
- Sequentially page-numbered and include the Respondent's name at the top of each page;
- Organized in the sequence outlined in **Article IX, Submission Checklist**;
- In Arial or Times New Roman font, size 12 or larger for normal text, no less than size 10 for tables, graphs, and appendices;
- Blank forms provided in the Attachments/Forms must be used (electronic reproduction of the forms is acceptable; however, all forms must be identical to the original form(s) provided); do not change the font used on forms provided;
- Correctly identified with the RFA number and submittal deadline;
- Responsive to all RFA requirements; and
- Signed by an authorized official in each place a signature is needed (copies must be signed but need not bear an original signature).

3.5.2 Submission in Separate Parts

1. Required Forms
2. Required Exhibits
3. Signed Addendums, if applicable

Electronic submissions must be separated by electronic medium used for submission (i.e. flash drive).

The entire Solicitation Response – all separated electronic copies – must then be submitted in one package to HHSC at the address listed in **Section 3.7.3, or through the Online Bid Room**. The number of copies and directions for submitting an "Original," "Copy," and "Public Information Copy" are outlined in **Article IX - Submission Checklist**.

3.5.3 Discrepancies

Discrepancies or disparities between the contents of the original RFA Response and copies will be interpreted in favor of HHSC. If Respondent fails to designate an "ORIGINAL," the HHSC may reject the RFA Response or select a copy to be used as the original.

3.5.4 Exceptions

HHSC will more favorably evaluate Applications that offer no or few exceptions, reservations, or limitation to the terms and conditions of the RFA.

Respondents are highly encouraged, in lieu of including exceptions in their RFA Responses, to address all issues that might be advanced by way of exception by submitting such issues

pursuant to **Section 3.4.1**. Any exception included in an RFA Response may result in an Respondent not being awarded a contract. If an Respondent includes exceptions in its RFA Response, the Respondent is required to use **Exhibit F, Exceptions** to this RFA and provide all information requested on the form. Any exception that does not provide all required information without qualification in the format set forth in **Exhibit F, Exceptions** may be rejected without consideration.

No exception, nor any other term, condition, or provision in an RFA Response that differs, varies from or contradicts this RFA will be considered to be part of any Contract resulting from this RFA unless expressly made a part of the Contract in writing by HHSC.

An RFA Response should be responsive to the RFA as worded, not with any assumption that any or all terms, conditions, or provisions of the RFA will be negotiated. Furthermore, all RFA Responses constitute binding offers. **Any RFA Response that includes any type of disclaimer or other statement indicating that the Application does not constitute a binding offer may be disqualified.**

3.5.5 Assumptions

Respondent must identify on the **Exhibit F-1, Assumptions Form** any business, economic, legal, programmatic, or practical assumptions that underlie the Respondent's response to the Solicitation. See **Section 7.1, Expenditure Proposals**. HHSC reserves the right to accept or reject any assumptions. All assumptions not expressly identified and incorporated into any Contract resulting from this RFA are deemed rejected by HHSC.

3.6 SOLICITATION RESPONSE SUBMISSION AND DELIVERY

3.6.1 Deadline

Solicitation Responses must be received at the address in **Section 3.6.3** time-stamped by the System Agency no later than the date and time specified in **Section 3.1**.

3.6.2 Labeling

Under Submission Option #2, Solicitation Responses shall be placed in a sealed envelope/box and clearly labeled as follows:

<u>SOLICITATION NO.:</u>	HHS0004932
<u>SOLICITATION NAME:</u>	Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program Education (SNAP-Ed) Priority Project
<u>SOLICITATION RESPONSE DEADLINE:</u>	October 28, 2020 at 2:00pm CDT
<u>PURCHASER'S NAME:</u>	Kristen Thatcher
<u>RESPONDENT'S NAME:</u>	<u>Respondent's Name</u>

The System Agency will not be held responsible for any Solicitation Response that is mishandled prior to receipt by the System Agency. It is Respondent's responsibility to mark

appropriately and deliver the Solicitation Response to the System Agency by the specified date and time. The System Agency will not be responsible for any technical issues that result in late delivery, inappropriately identified documents, or other submission error that may lead to disqualification (including substantive or administrative) or nonreceipt of the Respondent's application.

3.6.3 Delivery

Respondent must correctly deliver Solicitation Responses by one of the methods below. Solicitation Responses submitted by any other method (e.g. facsimile, telephone, email) will NOT be considered.

Submission Option #1: Respondent shall submit the following through the Online Bid Room utilizing the procedures in **Exhibit D, HHS Online Bid Room**:

- a. One file named "Original Proposal" that contains the Respondent's entire proposal in searchable portable document format (PDF).
- b. In accordance with **Section 8.1.3**, the "Public Information Copy" that contains the Respondent's entire proposal in searchable PDF, if applicable.

Submission Option #2: Respondent shall submit the following on three (3) USB drives – Each USB drive shall contain one (1) labeled "Original," one (1) labeled "Copy," and one (1) labeled "Public Information Copy" (if applicable) to the mailing address identified in this section:

- a. Each USB must contain one file named "Original Proposal" that contains the Respondent's entire proposal in searchable portable document format (PDF).
- b. In accordance with **Section 8.1.3**, the "Public Information Copy" that contains the Respondent's entire proposal in searchable PDF, if applicable.

To be delivered by U.S. Postal Service, overnight or express mail, or hand delivery to:

HHSC Procurement and Contracting Services (PCS)
Bid Room
Attn: Kristen Thatcher
1100 W. 49th Street, MC 2020
Service Building (Building S)
Austin, Texas 78756

Note: All Solicitation Responses become the property of HHSC after submission and will not be returned to Respondent.

3.6.4 Alterations, Modifications, and Withdrawals

Prior to the Solicitation submission deadline, a Respondent may: (1) withdraw its Solicitation Response by submitting a written request to the Sole Point of Contact identified in **Section 3.4.1**; or (2) modify its Solicitation Response by submitting a written amendment to the Sole Point of Contact identified in **Section 3.4.1**. The System Agency may request Solicitation Response Modifications at any time.

ARTICLE IV. SOLICITATION RESPONSE, EVALUATION, AND AWARD PROCESS

4.1 GENERALLY

A three-step selection process will be used:

- A. Eligibility screening;
- B. Evaluation based upon specific selection criteria; and
- C. Final selection based upon State goals and priorities.

4.2 ELIGIBILITY SCREENING

During the eligibility screening process, applications will be reviewed for minimum qualifications and completeness. All complete applications meeting the minimum qualifications will move to the evaluation stage.

4.2.1 Minimum Qualifications

Respondents must meet the minimum qualifications listed below.

- A. Respondents must be an acceptable entity as defined in **Section 2.3**;
- B. Respondents must reside and provide services within the State of Texas;
- C. Respondents shall have a minimum of three to five years of demonstrated experience in the proposed SNAP-ED Priority Projects
- D. Respondents must provide financial stability and capacity documentation as referenced in **Section 7.2**; and
- E. Respondents must submit a complete application according to **Article IX - Submission Checklist**.

Furthermore, RFA Responses that appear unrealistic in terms of technical commitment, that show a lack of technical competence, or that indicate a failure to comprehend the risk and complexity of a potential Respondent may be rejected, in the sole discretion of HHSC.

4.3 EVALUATION

Applications will be evaluated and scored in accordance with the factors required by **Appendix A, Contract Requirements** and other factors deemed relevant by HHSC.

4.3.1 Specific Selection Criteria

Grant applications shall be evaluated based upon the criteria below. Please see **Exhibit E, Evaluation Tool**.

	Criteria	Weight
1.	Qualifications/Experience	10%
2.	Performance Requirements/Deliverables	40%
3.	Cost	50%

4.4 FINAL SELECTION

HHSC intends on making multiple awards. After initial screening for eligibility, application completeness, and initial scoring of the elements listed above in **Section 4.3**, a selection committee will look at all eligible Respondents to determine which proposals should be awarded in order to most effectively accomplish state goals and priorities. The selection committee will recommend contract awards to be made to the HHSC Executive Commissioner, who will make the final award approval.

HHSC will make all final funding decisions based on eligibility, geographic distribution across the state, state priorities, reasonableness, availability of funding, and cost-effectiveness.

4.5 NEGOTIATION AND AWARD

The specific dollar amount awarded to each Successful Respondent will depend upon the merit and scope of the application, the recommendation of the selection committee, and the decision of the Executive Commissioner. Not all Respondents who are deemed eligible to receive funds are assured of receiving an award.

The negotiation phase will involve direct contact between the Successful Respondent and HHSC representatives via phone and/or email. During negotiations, Successful Respondents may expect:

- a) An in-depth discussion of the submitted application and budget; and
- b) Requests from HHSC for clarification or additional detail regarding submitted application.

The final funding amount and the provisions of the Contract will be determined in the sole discretion of HHSC staff.

HHSC may announce tentative or apparent grant recipients once the Executive Commissioner has given approval to initiate negotiation and execute contracts.

Any exceptions to the requirements, terms, conditions, or certifications in the RFA or attachments, addendums, or revisions to the RFA or General Provisions, sought by the Respondent must be specifically detailed in writing by the Respondent on Exhibit F, Exceptions in this proposal and submitted to HHSC for consideration. HHSC will accept or reject each proposed exception. HHSC will not consider exceptions submitted separately from the Respondent's proposal or at a later date.

HHSC will post to the [HHS Grants website](#) and may publicly announce a list of Respondents whose applications are selected for final award. This posting does not constitute HHSC's agreement with all the terms of any Respondent's proposal and does not bind HHSC to enter into a contract with any Respondent whose award is posted.

4.6 QUESTIONS OR REQUESTS FOR CLARIFICATION BY HHSC

HHSC reserves the right to ask questions or request clarification from any Respondent at any time during the application process.

ARTICLE V. NARRATIVE PROPOSAL

5.1 NARRATIVE PROPOSAL

Respondent must provide satisfactory evidence of its understanding of the goals and focus of the grant and provide their mission/purpose to support the goals and objectives outlined in Article II of this RFA. As a part of the RFA Response requested in **Article III, Administrative Information**, Respondent must provide the information outlined in paragraphs **5.1.1, 5.1.2,** and **5.1.3** below. The Respondent will submit the information requested in this section in **Form A, Narrative Proposal**.

5.1.1 Executive Summary

Provide a high-level overview of the Respondent's approach to meeting the SNAP-Ed RFA's business requirements. The summary must demonstrate an understanding of the goals and focus of the grant as described in **Article II, Scope of Grant Award**, of this RFA and in compliance with **Appendix A, Contract Requirements**. The Respondent must provide a project schedule to meet the requirements detailed in **Appendix F, Deliverables** and **Appendix E, Key Performance Requirements (KPR)**.

5.1.2 Project Description Work Plan(s)

Form B, Project Description Work Plan (as defined in this section) includes the format for describing the plan for service delivery to the population in the proposed Priority Project(s), as described in **Article II, Scope of Grant Award** of this RFA.

Respondents must provide a separate **Form B, Project Description Work Plan** for each proposed Priority Project. Each **Form B, Project Description Work Plan** must be submitted as an attachment to the Respondent's **Form A, Narrative Proposal**. The Respondent shall develop and submit a proposed Project Description Work Plan with associated timeframes for the grant funding period.

Form B, Project Description Work Plan must describe the Respondent's proposed processes and methodologies for implementing the proposed Priority Project, to include the following components:

1. **Needs Assessment Methodology:** Concisely describe and justify the needs assessment methodology used to assess the Target Audience's health-related nutrition and physical activity needs. Please provide the sources of data used in the needs assessment. Sources of data may include obesity and poverty rates, racial/ethnic differences, tribal status, fruit and vegetable consumption, and/or Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System data.
2. **Target Audience:** Select the Target Audience that will be served by the proposed Priority Project.
3. **Specific Segments of Population:** Select a market segment, or sub-population group, that will be targeted by the proposed Priority Project.
4. **Venues:** Select the venue(s) where services will be provided to the Target Audience for this proposed Priority Project.
5. **Venue Selection Rationale:** Describe how the venues selected will reach the Specific Segments of the Population selected.
6. **Total Number of Individuals to be Served:** Provide an estimate of the total number of individuals who will be served by this proposed Priority Project.
7. **Promotion:** Specify how the Respondent will notify, to the maximum extent possible, SNAP applicants, SNAP participants, and SNAP-Ed eligible individuals in local communities about the availability of the proposed Priority Project's SNAP-Ed activities.
8. **Eligibility Verification:** Describe how the Respondent will verify that the proposed Priority Project serves a group of individuals who are eligible for SNAP-Ed services.
9. **Food and Activity Environments:** Describe how the project will reflect Target Audience's awareness and access to healthy foods and beverages, and places to be physically active.
10. **Required Intervention Approaches:** Select which intervention approaches the Respondent will implement for the proposed Priority Project. The Respondent is required to select two (2) intervention approaches for each proposed Priority Project – one of which must be Approach One.

11. **Strategies:** Select the strategies that the proposed Priority Project will utilize: Direct Education Strategy, Indirect Education Strategy, Social Marketing Strategy, or a Policy, Systems, and Environmental (PSE) Strategy
12. **Key Educational Messages:** Select the key educational messages the proposed Priority Project will promote.
13. **Use of Existing Educational Materials:** The Respondent will detail the educational materials the Respondent already has and plans to use in the delivery of services in the proposed Priority Project.
14. **Development of New Educational Materials:** The Respondent will identify any new materials they plan to produce or purchase to use in the delivery of services in the proposed Priority Project.
15. **Related State Objective(s):** The Respondent must select the Texas SNAP-Ed State Goals that the proposed Priority Project will aim to achieve and describe how they plan to do so. Key measures and indicators of implementation must be provided for each Texas SNAP-Ed State Goal selected. The Respondent must detail how the SNAP-Ed Evaluation Framework Indicators will be measured for each State Goal selected.
16. **Tracking Objectives:** Describe how the Respondent will track their progress achieving the proposed Priority Project's objectives.
17. **Progression of Project Activities:** The Respondent must demonstrate how the project will progress. A multi-year plan must demonstrate a progression of project activities in a logical and sequential manner where each year's project activities build upon the preceding year's project activities.
18. **Subrecipient/Subcontractors and Roles of Subrecipient/Subcontractors:** List all of the subrecipient/subcontractor(s) the Respondent plans to involve in the proposed Priority Project. Describe each subrecipient/subcontractor's role in the proposed Priority Project. Identify the subrecipient/subcontractors that will provide nutrition education and obesity prevention direct education strategies.
19. **Partners and Roles of Partners:** List all of the partner(s) the Respondent plans to involve in the proposed Priority Project, whether their involvement is for advertising, consulting, development, evaluation, tracking, funding, human resources such as staff time and staff, program implementation, materials, planning, recruitment, space, and/or technical services.
20. **Evaluation Plans:** Describe every evaluation planned. For each evaluation planned, please indicate the name(s) of each project(s) that will be a part of this evaluation, type of evaluation (as primarily a formative, process, outcome or impact assessment), the scope of the evaluation, measures and data collection, provide the approaches to conducting the evaluation, focus of each measure, points at which data will be collected, planned use for each evaluation results, if the project has been evaluated previously (if yes, note the most recent year in which the evaluation was done), and identify the SNAP-Ed Evaluation Framework indicators that will be used as found in **Appendix D, FY 2021 SNAP-Ed Plan Guidance**.

5.1.3 Technical Plan

HHSC is required to collect and report annual uniform SNAP-Ed data and information from grantees to FNS through the Education Administration Reporting System (**EARS**). SNAP-Ed Grantees do not report on any confidential client information for SNAP-Ed programs. The data and information reported through EARS includes demographic characteristics of participants, number of participants, estimated reach, topics covered by educational interventions, education delivery sites, education strategies, and resource allocation. SNAP-Ed Grantees are required to use the Program Evaluation and Reporting System (**PEARS**) to collect, manage, and report EARS data.

The PEARS internet-based software specifically includes the following SNAP-Ed features:

1. Tracking program details, including survey response data.
2. Survey instrument template library and ability to customize surveys for programs.
3. Success stories.
4. Tracking and reporting indirect education, social marketing, and policy, systems, and environmental changes.
5. Automated reports including EARS data, unit snapshot, and other data exports.
6. Administrative and system management tools.

Respondent must provide a detailed description of the proposed Technical Plan for PEARS, which must support all business activities and requirements described in this RFA.

The Technical Plan must reflect a clear understanding of the nature of the work undertaken and must include a detailed description of the proposed system(s):

1. **Software and Hardware Components:** Provide details on the software and hardware components the Respondent proposes to use for PEARS. This includes, but is not limited to, the proposed server topology, specifications for the hardware components, and data storage components. The Respondent should also include details on the tools and utilities used to design, build, test, deploy, report, monitor, and operate the system and its components.
2. **System Integration:** Describe the Respondent's approach to integrating the PEARS with other information systems if applicable.
3. **System Administration, Support, and Maintenance:** Detail the Respondent's approach to administering the PEARS and system components. Detail the proposed approach to system support, including the levels of support offered and the process for requesting support. In addition, provide a summary of the Respondent's proposed strategy for maintaining and repairing the system.
4. **System Security and Disaster Recovery:** Detail the Respondent's approach to security architecture, including the development and implementation measures that will provide security and protection for the system. Describe the proposed backup and recovery processing approach, and proposed virus protection strategy. Describe the Respondent's general approach to reestablishing operations in the event of a catastrophe, as well as its approach to providing HHSC with a disaster recovery plan. Provide specifications on any

hardware and software components utilized by the proposed security and disaster recovery solutions.

5. **Performance Monitoring and Management:** Describe the Respondent's proposed methodology for monitoring and reporting system performance, as well as the Respondent's proposed approach to technology management. This includes the methods for centrally managing system resources such as servers, backup, archiving, and recovery equipment, databases and applications. Address methods for auditing, tracing and scanning the system. Provide details on the use of specialized tools the Respondent will use to automate and track monitoring and management activities.

ARTICLE VI. REQUIRED RESPONDENT INFORMATION

6.1 ADMINISTRATIVE ENTITY INFORMATION

Respondent must provide satisfactory evidence of its ability to manage and coordinate the types of activities described in this RFA. As a part of the RFA Response requested in **Article III, Administrative Information**, Respondent must provide the information outlined in paragraphs **6.1.1** through **6.6** below. The Respondent will submit the information requested in this section in **Form D, Administrative Entity Information**.

6.1.1 Company Narrative

Provide a detailed narrative explaining why Respondent is qualified to provide the services enumerated in **Article II, Scope of Grant Award**, focusing on its company's key strengths and competitive advantages. Respondent must describe their experience for each proposed Priority Project. This description must include the number of months and/or years the Respondent has experience providing services similar to the Respondent's proposed SNAP-Ed Priority Projects.

6.1.2 Company Profile

Provide a company profile to include:

- (a) The company ownership structure (corporation, partnership, LLC, or sole proprietorship), including any wholly-owned subsidiaries, affiliated companies, or joint ventures (*Please provide this information in a narrative and as a graphical representation*). If Respondent is an affiliate of, or has a joint venture or strategic alliance with, another company, Respondent must identify the percentage of ownership and the percentage of the parent's ownership. The entity providing most of the services defined by **Article II, Scope of Grant Award**, hereof and pursuant to a contract, throughout the duration of the contract, must be the primary bidder. Finally, please provide your proposed operating structure for the services requested under this RFA and which entities (i.e. parent company, affiliate, joint venture, subrecipient/subcontractor) will be performing them;

- (b) The year the company was founded and/or incorporated. If incorporated, please indicate the state where the company is incorporated and the date of incorporation;
- (c) The location of your company headquarters and any field office(s) that may provide services for any resulting contract under this RFA;
- (d) The number of employees in your company, both locally and nationally, and the location(s) from which employees may be assigned;
- (e) Company organization chart;
- (f) The name, address, and telephone number of Respondent's point of contact for any resulting contract under this RFA; and
- (g) Indicate whether your company has ever been engaged under a contract by any Texas state agency. If "Yes," specify when, for what duties, and for which agency.

Note: If Respondent is an out-of-state company, a Certificate of Authority from the Secretary of State to do business in Texas must be provided as well.

6.2 MAJOR SUBRECIPIENT/SUBCONTRACTOR INFORMATION

Respondent must identify any major subrecipient/subcontractors whom Respondent intends to utilize in performing fifteen percent (15%) or more of any grant. Respondent must also describe the proposed subcontracted services. Respondent must indicate whether or not Respondent holds any financial interest in any major subrecipient/subcontractor. It may be required as a condition of award that an authorized officer or agent of each proposed major subrecipient/subcontractor sign a statement to the effect that the subrecipient/subcontractor has read, and will agree to abide by, Respondent's obligations under any contract awarded pursuant to this RFA.

6.3 LITIGATION AND CONTRACT HISTORY

Respondent must include in its RFA Response a complete disclosure of any alleged or significant contractual failures.

In addition, Respondent must disclose any civil or criminal litigation or investigation pending over the last five (5) years that involves Respondent or in which Respondent has been judged guilty or liable. Failure to comply with the terms of this provision may disqualify Respondent.

The RFA Response may be rejected based upon Respondent's prior history with the State of Texas or with any other party that demonstrates, without limitation, unsatisfactory performance, adversarial or contentious demeanor, or significant failure(s) to meet contractual or grant obligations.

6.4 CONFLICTS

Respondent must certify that it does not have any personal or business interests that present a conflict of interest with respect to the RFA and any resulting contract. Additionally, if applicable, the Respondent must disclose all potential conflicts of interest. The Respondent must describe the measures it will take to ensure that there will be no actual conflict of interest and that its fairness, independence and objectivity will be maintained. HHSC will determine to what extent, if any, a potential conflict of interest can be mitigated and managed during the term of the grant. **Failure to identify actual and potential conflicts of interest may result in disqualification of a RFA Response or termination of a contract.**

Please include any activities of affiliated or parent organizations and individuals who may be assigned to this contract, if any.

Additionally, pursuant to Section 2252.908 of the Texas Government Code, a Successful Respondent awarded a contract with a value of \$1 million or more or awarded a grant that would require the Successful Respondent to register as a lobbyist under Texas Government Code Chapter 305 must submit a disclosure of interested parties to the System Agency at the time the business entity submits the signed grant. Rules and filing instructions may be found on the Texas Ethics Commissions public website and additional instructions will be given by HHSC to Successful Respondents.

6.5 GRANT APPLICATION DISCLOSURE

In an effort to maximize state resources and reduce duplication of effort, HHSC, at its discretion, may require the Respondent to disclose information regarding the application for or award of state, federal, and/or local grant funding by the Respondent or community collaborative member organization within the past two (2) years to provide SNAP-Ed services.

6.6 AFFIRMATIONS AND CERTIFICATIONS

Respondent must complete and return all of the following listed exhibits.

- a. Exhibit A, Affirmations and Solicitation Acceptance
- b. Exhibit F, Exceptions
- c. Exhibit F-1, Assumptions Form
- d. Exhibit G, Federal Funding Accountability and Transparency Act (FFATA)
- e. Exhibit H, Assurances – Non-Construction Programs
- f. Exhibit I, Certification Regarding Lobbying

6.7 HUB

If a successful Respondent chooses to contract for goods and services using the funding awarded in this grant, HHSC encourages the Respondent to use HUBs to provide those goods and services where possible.

ARTICLE VII. EXPENDITURE PROPOSALS

7.1 EXPENDITURE PROPOSALS

Cost information must not be included with the Respondent's Narrative Proposal. Attached **Form C, Expenditure Proposal** of this RFA includes the template for submitting the Expenditure Proposal. Instructions and examples for completing the Expenditure Proposal are included in **Form C, Expenditure Proposal**.

Respondents shall base their **Form C, Expenditure Proposal** on the Scope of Work described in **Article II, Scope of Grant Award**. This section should include any business, economic, legal, programmatic, or practical assumptions that underlie the Expenditure Proposal. HHSC reserves the right to accept or reject any assumptions. All assumptions not expressly identified and incorporated into the contract resulting from this RFA are deemed rejected by HHSC.

Respondents must demonstrate that project costs outlined in the Expenditure Proposal are reasonable, allowable, allocable, and developed in accordance with applicable state and federal grant requirements.

Respondents must submit a separate **Form C, Expenditure Proposal** for each proposed Priority Project as described in **Article II, Scope of Grant Award**.

For Respondents that select to work with major subrecipient/subcontractors for the provision of nutrition education and obesity prevention education services in their response to Question 20 of **Form B, Project Description Work Plan**, a separate **Form C, Expenditure Proposal**, must be submitted for each major subrecipient/subcontractor the Respondent plans to work with during the term of the agreement. The unique **Form C, Expenditure Proposal** would detail the costs associated with each major subrecipient/subcontractor the Respondent proposes to partner with to perform nutrition education and obesity prevention education services and the costs of all vendor(s) each major subrecipient/subcontractor plans to utilize to provide the proposed services under this grant funding.

Respondent shall utilize the HHSC template, **Form C, Expenditure Proposal**, provided and identify the Priority Project, the Target Audience, the Intervention Approach, and the associated costs to be requested from HHSC within **Form C, Expenditure Proposal, Budget Summary Tab**. Costs must be broken out to a degree that is sufficient to determine if costs are reasonable, allowable, necessary for the successful performance of the Project, and developed in accordance with applicable state and federal grant requirements. Please reference **Appendix D, FY2021 SNAP-Ed Plan Guidance, Section 3, Financial and Cost Policy**.

Costs will be reviewed for compliance with UGMS and federal grant guidance found in 2 CFR Part 200, as modified by UGMS, with effective given to whichever provision imposes the more stringent requirement in the event of a conflict.

Costs included in **Form C, Expenditure Proposal** will be entered into budget tables and supported by narrative descriptions describing the need for the requested cost and a calculation demonstrating how the cost was arrived at.

The value of donated materials, professional services, and volunteer time is to be calculated in accordance with Section .24, Subpart C, of UGMS.

The requested budget should include supporting documentation and a justification that describes the following allowable costs:

1. **Salary and Fringe Benefits:** Salaries are the actual cost of employee salaries devoted to working on activities directly related to the HHSC funded program. The Respondent shall provide the position title for each staff member that will support the SNAP-Ed services, certification or license for the position (if applicable), number of FTEs with this title, if the position is currently vacant or filled, justification for the position, percentage spent on management/administrative duties, percentage of time spent on service delivery, amount of annual salary, amount of monthly salary, and the number of months the position will be funded by this grant. Specify the costs of fringe benefits, including the amount budgeted for Federal Income Contributions Act (**FICA**), State Unemployment Tax Account (**SUTA**), health insurance, worker's compensation, retirement, leave, etc. The fringe benefit rate should be based on your organization's actual expenditures. The fringe benefit rate is typically calculated by dividing your organization's total fringe benefit costs by total wage/salary costs.
 - i. Provide specific calculations that show how these costs were derived. These costs are allowable to the extent that they are identified in the contract budget and conform to 2 CFR Part 200.

2. **Travel:** Travel expenses are the costs of transportation, lodging, meals and other related expenses incurred by employees of the organization while performing duties relevant to the SNAP-Ed program. In-state and out-of-state travel is allowed. Out-of-State travel is travel outside of the State of Texas to attend conferences and training. Out-of-State travel must have HHSC's prior approval at least thirty (30) calendar days in advance of the travel dates.
 - i. In-state and out-of-state travel costs must include travel purpose (justification of need for travel, including how attendance will benefit the SNAP-Ed Program Goals and Objectives), travel destination (city, town, or county or indicate local travel if travel is in the same county), number of days and number of staff traveling.
 - ii. Other travel costs are incurred in direct support of SNAP-Ed and includes items such as traveling to outlying counties at least once per month, tolls, parking fees, etc. HHSC will only reimburse travel costs up to the maximum travel rates as identified in HHSC Travel Policy and Rates. State of Texas Travel Policies

and Procedures are available at: <https://fmx.cpa.texas.gov/fmx/travel/texttravel/rates/current.php>. Do not enter costs for consultant's travel or consultant's local transportation.

3. **Educational Materials:** Educational materials include nutrition-based educational and promotional materials that address SNAP-Ed topics and are for use with, or distribution to, the SNAP-Ed audience. The production of State SNAP-Ed materials, for which no other comparable materials exist, that support the State's goals and objectives for SNAP-Ed and will be used with or distributed to the SNAP-Ed audience. States are encouraged to collaborate with other FNS programs on the messages conveyed in SNAP-Ed materials and in sharing the production costs. The line item details relate to the costs of activities directly associated with carrying out the statement of work that directly apply to the total rate and number of units to provide services for a client. For each educational material, list the following for each item: description, purpose and justification, number of units, cost per unit and total amount.
4. **Non-Capital Equipment/Office Supplies:** Supplies are defined as consumable items necessary to carry out the services under this HHSC program including office supplies, patient educational supplies, software and any items of tangible items other than those defined under equipment. The line items should relate to the costs of activities directly associated with carrying out the statement of work that directly apply to the total rate and number of units to provide services for a client. List the following for each item: description, purpose and justification, and total cost.
5. **Professional or Contractual Services:** For Respondents that have funds allocated to the Professional or Contractual Services budget category for the provision of nutrition education and obesity prevention services, the Respondent must provide a **Form C, Expenditure Proposal** for each subrecipient/subcontractor. **Form C, Expenditure Proposal**, must be completed for each Priority Project proposed by the Respondent for each individual subrecipient/subcontractor.
 - i. In the Expenditure Proposal for each requested professional or contractual service, list the name of the service, provide a description of the service(s), justification, method of payment, number of months, hours, units, etc., rate of payment and a total.
 - ii. If the name of the contractor, exact scope of work and estimated total costs are not available or have not been negotiated, enter something such as "Contractor A" as the contractor name, include the best estimate of the cost of the work, as well as the best available description of the nature of the work to be purchased.
 - iii. Any third-party contract that is equal to or exceeds \$100,000 over the life of the contract must obtain prior written approval from HHSC before entering into the contract.

6. **Building Cost or Cost of Publicly-Owned Building Space:** In the Expenditure Proposal, enter the description of the item, purpose and justification, and total cost.
7. **Other Costs - Maintenance and Repair:** In the Expenditure Proposal, enter the description of the item, purpose and justification, and total cost.
8. **Other Costs - Institutional Memberships and Subscriptions, if applicable:** In the Expenditure Proposal, enter the description of the item, purpose and justification, and total cost.
9. **Other Costs - Equipment and Other Capital Expenditures, if applicable:** Enter the description of the item, purpose and justification, and the cost of any equipment purchases into the Expenditure Proposal. Equipment is defined as an article of non-expendable, tangible property having a useful life of more than one (1) year and an acquisition cost of \$5,000 or more per unit. NOTE: If the item does not meet the \$5,000 threshold, include it in your budget under "Supplies."
10. **Indirect Costs, if applicable:** The Respondent may request indirect costs if it has a current indirect cost rate agreement and a central service cost allocation plan approved by the Health and Human Services agency or at a rate less than 10% of the direct charges. Enter the total amount of indirect costs, if any, into the Expenditure Proposal. If no indirect costs are requested, enter "none." If the Respondent requested indirect costs, please submit a copy of the indirect cost rate certificate with this budget.

7.2 FINANCIAL CAPACITY

Respondent must supply evidence of financial capacity sufficient to demonstrate reasonable stability and solvency appropriate to the requirements of this procurement. Respondents must submit the following:

- A. Current financial statements;
- B. Most current two (2) years of audited financial reports including:
 1. All supplements;
 2. Management discussion and analysis;
 3. Actuarial opinions;
 4. Notes to financial statements; and
 5. Audit opinions and any Audit findings.

At a minimum, such financial statements and reports include:

1. Balance sheet;
2. Statement of income and expense;
3. Statement of changes in financial position;
4. Cash flows; and
5. Capital expenditures.

These documents must be submitted in Form E, Financial Capacity and must include the name of the Respondent on each page of the supporting documents submitted.

ARTICLE VIII. GENERAL TERMS AND CONDITIONS

8.1 GENERAL CONDITIONS

8.1.1 Costs Incurred

Respondents understand that issuance of this RFA in no way constitutes a commitment by any HHSC to award a grant or to pay any costs incurred by an Respondent in the preparation of a response to this RFA. HHSC is not liable for any costs incurred by an Respondent prior to issuance of or entering into a formal agreement, contract, or purchase order. Costs of developing RFA Responses or any other similar expenses incurred by an Respondent are entirely the responsibility of the Respondent and will not be reimbursed in any manner by the State of Texas.

8.1.2 Contract Responsibility

HHSC will look solely to Respondent for the performance of all contractual obligations that may result from an award based on this RFA. Respondent shall not be relieved of its obligations for any nonperformance by its subrecipients/sub-contractors.

8.1.3 Public Information Act

Proposals and contracts are subject to the Texas Public Information Act (PIA), Texas Government Code Chapter 552, and may be disclosed to the public upon request. Other legal authority also requires System Agency to post contracts and proposals on its public website and to provide such information to the Legislative Budget Board for posting on its public website.

Under the PIA, certain information is protected from public release. If Respondent asserts that information provided in its Solicitation Response is exempt from disclosure under the PIA, Respondent must:

a. **Mark Original Proposal:**

1. Mark the Original Proposal, on the top of the front page, the words “CONTAINS CONFIDENTIAL INFORMATION” in large, bold, capitalized letters (the size of, or equivalent to, 12-point Times New Roman font or larger); and
2. Identify, adjacent to each portion of the Solicitation Response that Respondent claims is exempt from public disclosure, the claimed exemption from disclosure (NOTE: no redactions are to be made in the Original Proposal);

b. Certify in Original Proposal - Affirmations and Solicitation Acceptance (attached as Exhibit A to this Solicitation):

Certify, in the designated section of the Affirmations and Solicitation Acceptance, Respondent's confidential information assertion and the filing of its Public Information Act Copy; and

c. Submit Public Information Act Copy of Proposal:

Submit a separate "Public Information Act Copy" of the Original Proposal (in addition to the original and all copies otherwise required under the provisions of this Solicitation). The Public Information Act Copy must meet the following requirements:

1. The copy must be clearly marked as "Public Information Act Copy" on the front page in large, bold, capitalized letters (the size of, or equivalent to, 12-point Times New Roman font or larger);
2. Each portion Respondent claims is exempt from public disclosure must be redacted (blacked out); and
3. Respondent must identify, adjacent to each redaction, the claimed exemption from disclosure. Each identification provided as required in Subsection (c) of this section must be identical to those set forth in the Original Proposal as required in Subsection (a)(2), above. The only difference in required markings and information between the Original Proposal and the "Public Information Act Copy" of the proposal will be redactions - which can only be included in the "Public Information Act Copy." There must be no redactions in the Original Proposal.

By submitting a response to this Solicitation, Respondent agrees that, if Respondent does not mark the Original Proposal, provide the required certification in the Affirmations and Solicitation Acceptance, and submit the Public Information Act Copy, Respondent's proposal will be considered to be public information that may be released to the public in any manner including, but not limited to, in accordance with the Public Information Act, posted on the System Agency's public website, and posted on the Legislative Budget Board's public website.

If any or all Respondents submit partial, but not complete, information suggesting inclusion of confidential information and failure to comply with the requirements set forth in this section, System Agency, in its sole discretion and in any solicitation, reserves the right to (1) disqualify all Respondents that fail to fully comply with the requirements set forth in this section, or (2) to offer all Respondents that fail to fully comply with the requirements set forth in this section additional time to comply.

Respondent should not submit a Public Information Act Copy indicating that the entire proposal is exempt from disclosure. Merely making a blanket claim that the entire proposal is protected from disclosure because it contains any amount of confidential, proprietary, trade secret, or privileged information is not acceptable, and may make the entire proposal subject to release under the PIA.

Proposals should not be marked or asserted as copyrighted material. If Respondent asserts a copyright to any portion of its proposal, by submitting a proposal, Respondent agrees to reproduction and posting on public websites by the State of Texas, including the System Agency and all other state agencies, without cost or liability.

The System Agency will strictly adhere to the requirements of the PIA regarding the disclosure of public information. As a result, by participating in this solicitation process, Respondent acknowledges that all information, documentation, and other materials submitted in the proposal in response to this Solicitation may be subject to public disclosure under the PIA. The System Agency does not have authority to agree that any information submitted will not be subject to disclosure. Disclosure is governed by the PIA and by rulings of the Office of the Texas Attorney General. Respondents are advised to consult with their legal counsel concerning disclosure issues resulting from this process and to take precautions to safeguard trade secrets and proprietary or otherwise confidential information. The System Agency assumes no obligation or responsibility relating to the disclosure or nondisclosure of information submitted by Respondents.

For more information concerning the types of information that may be withheld under the PIA or questions about the PIA, please refer to the Public Information Act Handbook published by the Office of the Texas Attorney General or contact the attorney general's Open Government Hotline at (512) 478-OPEN (6736) or toll-free at (877) 673-6839 (877-OPEN TEX). To access the Public Information Act Handbook, please visit the attorney general's website at <http://www.texasattorneygeneral.gov>.

8.1.4 News Releases

Prior to final award an Respondent may not issue a press release or provide any information for public consumption regarding its participation in the procurement. Requests should be directed to HHSC Sole Point of Contact identified in **Article III, Administrative Information**.

8.1.5 Additional Information

By submitting a proposal, the Respondent grants HHSC the right to obtain information from any lawful source regarding the Respondent's and its directors', officers', and employees': (1) past business history, practices, and conduct; (2) ability to supply the goods and services; and (3) ability to comply with contract requirements. By submitting a proposal, a Respondent generally releases from liability and waives all claims against any party providing HHSC information about the Respondent. HHSC may take such information into consideration in evaluating proposals.

ARTICLE IX. SUBMISSION CHECKLIST

This checklist is provided for Respondent's convenience only and identifies documents that must be submitted with this Solicitation in order to be considered responsive. Any Solicitation Response received without these requisite documents may be deemed nonresponsive and may not be considered for contract award.

One USB drive will contain the Original Solicitation Response Package. A second USB drive will contain the Copies of the Solicitation Response Package. A third USB drive will contain the Public Information Copy of the Solicitation Response Package (if applicable).

1st USB: Original Solicitation Response Package

The Solicitation Package must include the "Original" Solicitation Response in **electronic-copy** consisting of the three parts described in detail below, each under separate cover and clearly labeled "Original" on each. Each submitted document must be a separate file on the submitted USB.

1. Required Forms

- a. Form F: Respondent Information _____
- b. Form A: Narrative Proposal _____
- c. Form B: Project Description Work Plan* _____
- d. Form D: Administrative Entity Information _____
- e. Form C: Expenditure Proposal* _____
- f. Form E: Financial Capacity _____

*Please submit Form C in Excel file format, NOT PDF _____

*Please submit a unique Form B for each proposed Priority Project _____

*Please submit a unique Form C for each proposed Priority Project _____

*Please submit a unique Form C for each subrecipient/subcontractor the Respondent plans to partner with for the provision of nutrition education and obesity prevention education services _____

2. Required Exhibits

- a. Exhibit A: Affirmations and Solicitation Acceptance _____
- b. Data Use Agreement (DUA) – Standard **or** Governmental Entity Version:
 - i. Exhibit C: Data Use Agreement (DUA) Standard _____
 - ii. Exhibit C-1, DUA Version 8.5 Governmental Entity Version _____
- c. Exhibit C-2: Attachment 2 to DUA- Security and Privacy Inquiry (SPI) _____
- d. Exhibit F: Exceptions _____
- e. Exhibit F-1: Assumptions Form _____
- f. Exhibit G: FFATA Certification _____
- g. Exhibit H: Assurances – Non-Construction Programs _____
- h. Exhibit I: Certification Regarding Lobbying _____

3. Signed Addendums, if applicable

2nd USB: Copy of Solicitation Response Package

Respondent will provide the following number of **electronic** copies (all clearly labeled as "copy") in addition to the electronic-copy "Original" Solicitation Response. Electronic copies must be submitted on a USB Drive and separated by folders. Each submitted document must be a separate file on the submitted USB Drive.

- 1 Electronic copy of **Required Forms**
- 1 Electronic copy of **Required Exhibits**
- 1 Electronic copy of **Signed Addendums (if applicable)**

3rd USB: Public Information Copy of Solicitation Response Package (if applicable)

If the Respondent asserts that information provided in its Solicitation Response is exempt from disclosure under the Public Information Act, as detailed in **Section 8.3.1**, please provide the following number of **electronic** copies (all clearly labeled as "Public Information Act Copy") in addition to the electronic-copy "Original" Solicitation Response and electronic-copy "Copy" Solicitation Response. Electronic copies must be submitted on a USB Drive and separated by folders.

- 1 Electronic copy of **Required Forms**
- 1 Electronic copy of **Required Exhibits**
- 1 Electronic copy of **Signed Addendums (if applicable)**

ARTICLE X. LIST OF ALL EXHIBITS, FORMS, AND APPENDICES

EXHIBITS

Exhibit A, Affirmations and Solicitation Acceptance
Exhibit B, HHSC Uniform Terms and Conditions (For information purposes, not to be returned)
Exhibit C **or** Exhibit C-1 (Return a signed copy of the applicable DUA only if using subrecipient/subcontractors under this award):

- i. Exhibit C: Data Use Agreement (DUA) Standard
- ii. Exhibit C-1, DUA Version 8.5 Governmental Entity Version

Exhibit C-2, Attachment 2 to DUA - Security and Privacy Inquiry (SPI)
Exhibit D, HHS Online Bid Room (For information purposes, not to be returned)
Exhibit E, Evaluation Tool (For information purposes, not to be returned)
Exhibit F, Exceptions
Exhibit F-1, Assumptions Form
Exhibit G, Federal Funding Accountability and Transparency Act (FFATA)
Exhibit H, Assurances – Non-Construction Programs
Exhibit I, Certification Regarding Lobbying
Exhibit J, HHSC Special Conditions (For information purposes, not to be returned)

FORMS

Form A, Narrative Proposal
Form B, Project Description Work Plan
Form C, Expenditure Proposal
Form D, Administrative Entity Information
Form E, Financial Capacity
Form F, Respondent Information

APPENDICES

Appendix A, Contract Requirements
Appendix B, Dietary Guidelines for Americans 2015-2020 8th Edition
Appendix C, Physical Activity Guidelines 2nd Edition
Appendix D, FY 2021 SNAP-Ed Plan Guidance
Appendix E, Key Performance Requirements (KPR)
Appendix F, Deliverables
Appendix G, Public Health Regions (PHR)