

<b>II. ADMINISTRATIVE SECTION</b>
<b>500. Mini-grants</b>

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### **501. Purpose of Mini-grants**

All *Regional Network* Contractors are required to award mini-grants and to administer a mini-grant program (See SOW Community Collaborations & Empowerment Objective 4-mini-grants). Mini-grants awarded should broaden the reach of nutrition education and physical activity promotion efforts in the region, expand and strengthen partnerships, and advance and support nutrition education empowerment initiatives and consumer empowerment forums.

### **502. Mini-grant Application and Award Process**

The process used to award the required mini-grants must be pre-approved by the assigned PM. Approvals can be sought by sending an e-mail to the assigned PM detailing the process to be used to award the mini-grants.

The mini-grant application should be available for download at the Regional Collaborative website early enough to allow potential applicants adequate time to apply prior to the deadline. Once finalized, a summary of awardees should be posted online.

The proposed *Regional Network* mini-grant process must reflect the characteristics listed below:

- Adhere to USDA Guidance for FSNE activities.
- Provide mini-grants up to \$5,000 (per grant) for the purpose of responding to nutrition education and physical activity promotion needs of FSNE-eligible residents within the region.
  - (Historically the *Network* has suggested a total budget for this line item of 3%, however there is no contractual limit)
- Support State *Network* goals, Regional Collaborative nutrition education initiatives, and consumer forums.
- Establish a mini-grant review team that involves Regional Collaborative members, Local Incentive Awardees, and campaign, program, and physical activity integration staff, ensuring absence of conflict of interest (i.e. review team must not be comprised of individuals with close links to agencies that are applying for mini-grant funds).

- Ensure equitable distribution of funds within the region and topic areas, avoiding multiple year awards to the same agency and/or organization; prioritize funding for agencies and organizations not already receiving *Network* funds and those that are working towards sustainable programming.
- Disburse funds according to the priorities, criteria and process determined and approved by the State *Network* staff.

Completed Mini-Grant Project Summaries must be submitted to State *Network* staff for each project selected by the review committee as a finalist. Summaries will be submitted to USDA for review and approval mid-November of each contract year (date to vary depending on calendar year); timeframe for USDA approval varies and can take up to 3 months. To speed this process, it is recommended, although not required, that the Mini-Grant Project Summary form be a part of the application process.

### **503. Mini-grant Materials and Materials Review Process**

Mini-grant awardees are encouraged to utilize and/or adapt existing, and preferably *Network*, nutrition education materials. For those unique cases where such materials do not exist, all materials created with mini-grant funding must comply with USDA Guidance, be consistent with the US Dietary Guidelines for Americans, and conform to *Network* Branding Guidelines. All materials created become public domain, and therefore cannot be copyrighted or sold. Please note that it is the sole responsibility of the *Regional Network* to review any materials for allowability, and to ensure that they conform to the above mentioned guidelines, and are appropriate. However, should any mini-grant educational materials have potential to be utilized by LIAs or other *Network* funded projects or distributed more broadly and/or regionally, then these educational materials are to be submitted to the PM for final review and approval prior to disbursement of funds. Submit any of these materials utilizing the appropriate education materials review form. Contact your assigned PM if you have questions. (See Section 800 for Educational Materials requirements).

In addition, *Regional Networks* should maintain documentation of the name and source of nutrition education materials being used/and or purchased by each mini-grantee. This information is to be kept on file and submitted only upon request.

### **504. Required Documentation**

Each mini-grantee funded by the *Regional Network* contractors must provide target audience reach numbers and basic demographic information collected and reported through an **Activity Tracking Form (ATF)**. Each *Regional Network* must provide the appropriate mini-grant data into its ATF during the routine required reporting.

Following the completion of their activity, each mini-grant recipient will be required to submit a **"Mini-Grant Success Story"** detailing the intervention, its impact, and next steps for the project. Any materials created through this funding are public property and must adhere to the *Network* guidelines. Photos are encouraged.