NEHA-FDA RFFM Grant Program Q&A Webinar
Questions & Answers

1. For a Track 2 Development Base Grant, can we just work one Standard as the required Outcome (which focuses on Standards 1 - 8)?

   Efforts under the Required Outcome for a Track 2 Development Base Grant can be focused on any number of Standards you choose, for your one-year project plan. For each Standard chosen, you can request funds to EITHER Partially Achieve OR Meet and Audit that Standard.

2. Is it okay to have one program lead? The application question allows for a lot of characters, but we've pretty much got one person running this project.

   Yes, it is okay to have one program lead.

3. If we have an open Track 3 Maintenance and Advancement Base Grant, outside of the normal required Progress and Reimbursement Report, is there anything that needs to be submitted for Year 2, to let you know we have a qualifying base grant? Especially if we are submitting applications for Optional Add-On Grants?

   No, nothing further is needed for your existing Track 3 base grant at this time.

4. Is mileage acceptable if we have a close(ish) mentor and want to visit more than once?

   Mileage is an allowable cost for mentorship grants.

5. How do we estimate costs for attendance at the NEHA AEC--registration, lodging?

   Estimates should be made to the best of your ability based on the information you have available at the time of the application. Estimates can be made based on registration costs from previous years, GSA rates for hotels and per diem for the location of the training, airfare estimates from current available pricing. We recommend a slight overestimation of travel costs to ensure enough funds are available to cover the requested training.

6. Will there be a registration fee for the virtual Self-Assessment and Verification Audit Workshop option for CY 2023?

   There will not be a registration fee for the virtual SAVA workshops in CY2023, so you do not need to apply to use grant funds to attend the virtual course.

7. Where can I find a copy of the CSIP Template?

   https://www.neha.org/retailgrants/CSIP

8. If our SA9 is due October 2023, we can apply for Track 1, correct? I am not the staff member who completed the SA9 the first year, so how do we budget for this?

   Depending on your specific scenario and whether or not you have completed a CSIP, you could apply for a Track 1 grant, or you could apply for a track 2 grant and complete an updated SA9 as a part of that project.

9. I have a few of questions regarding applications for the for Track 1 Development Base Grant, Optional Outcome 2, and attendance at an SA VA Workshop. 1) If we apply for funding but something happens and we can't go (loss of staff, etc.) - what happens? 2) Can we substitute attendees for the SA VA Workshop - if, for example, we have staff changes, or the manager can't go but an EHS can. 3) Do we get reimbursement after travel and is all the funding for the workshop? Can we do both in-person and/or virtual? 4) Does this option cover our staff's hourly rate to attend the workshop?

   1) If you are unable to attend the workshop, you will simply forfeit the funding for the SA VA Workshop Outcome, but the other Outcomes for your Track 1 Grant will still be funded. Your agency will not be penalized in any way. 2) You can substitute alternate employees to attend the workshop, you will just need to notify the grants team of this change. 3) You can receive funding in advance for the workshop, or you can receive it as reimbursement. If you choose to receive an advance, please be conservative in your estimate to avoid having to return funds to NEHA. Funding will cover all travel-related costs as well as any registration fees. 4) Staff time to attend the workshop is not an allowable cost.

10. What is the deadline for progress reports for the current year?

    Final reports for one-year CY2022 grants are due by 2/15/2023, however we encourage you to submit your reimbursement request and final report for your projects as you complete them. The first annual progress reports for the three-year grants are due 2/15/2023.

11. For a Track 2 Development Base Grant, if we are working on Standard 1: If we are unable to predict a completion date, what date do we put? Is "ongoing" an acceptable date or does it have to be a predicted date?

    If you are unsure of an end date for your project, go ahead and give yourself the full granting year making the end-date 12/31/2023.

12. What if you do not spend the budgeted money in the year?

    If you do not spend all the funds for any of your 1-Year grants, the unused funds will be rolled into funding for awards in the next granting year. Unused funds from Year 1 of a 3-Year award can be rolled into Year 2.

13. When we submit our budget, do we need to attach supporting documents for equipment? For example, do we need to send in screenshots of the exact equipment prices listed on the website we would purchase it from? Or does simply writing the prices into our budget provide sufficient detail?

    You do not need to attach supporting documents for equipment with your application. A detailed budget justification is all that is required.

14. Our current SA9 was completed in August 2017. I assumed we can apply for Track 1 base grant to re-do/update the SA9 and also complete a CSIP?

    If your last SA9 was completed in August 2017, you can certainly apply for a Track 1 Development Base Grant and completed both an updated SA9 and a CSIP. But you also just make the date cutoff that would allow you to apply for a Track 2 Development Base Grant, if you are ready to make more progress through the Standards. Please see the Grant Guidance for more details on the Track 2 option.

15. Our SA9 was completed in the past but is due again in 2023 (for the required 5-year update). Our CSIP is being worked on right now for 2022 grant. Can we apply for the Track 1 grant for 2023 to complete our SA9?

    Depending on your specific scenario, you can likely apply for a Track 2 grant and complete an updated SA9 as part of your Track 2 grant.

16. Is using a consultant to help with our SA9 an approved cost?

    Yes, consultants are an allowable cost.

17. We will be conducting the follow-up on our Risk Factor Study from 4 years ago. Are we able to apply for funding under Track 2 towards that? (We will be working on getting 3 other Standards audited as well.)

    As long as you have a current SA9 and a CSIP you can apply for Track 2 funding. You will have four different options to choose from for your work on Standard 9, with will allow you to pick up on your past work.

18. What is the registration fee for the In-Person SA/VA workshop?

    Registration Fee: $150 for the June session at the AFDO AEC; $140 for the July session at the NEHA AEC. Please see the NEHA Retail Grants website for additional details: https://www.neha.org/node/62517.

19. If we have multiple staff members helping with a project, do we need to list out each individual staff member's salary in the budget?

    It is not required to provide salary information for each staff member in your budget, though it may assist in the reviewers' interpretation of your budget needs.

20. In the Project Information section of each application, we are asked for team qualifications - how in-depth should this be?

    Please provide the employee's name, position, and any relevant qualifications for the project. For most personnel in most applications, this will likely be a paragraph or two of description, per person.

21. How detailed should a budget be for the Track 1 Development Base Grant, Required Outcome?

    Budgets and budget justifications should be as detailed as possible at the time of submission. You should briefly list the work you plan to complete in the Budget Justification, and the costs needed to complete that work (which for a Track 1 Base Grant, Required Outcome, will likely be salary or contract costs).

22. When submitting documentation for time spent by staff, does this time need to be coded to a different expense code on time records, or can it be tracked separately on a spreadsheet?

    If possible, it is preferred that you provide coded documentation of staff time. However, if you are unable to provide this, an external tracking document can also be provided. Generally, for staff time charges, you will need to provide documentation for staff/hours worked on the project (often a spreadsheet) and proof of pay rate for the employees (often payroll documentation, or other documentation from your finance department).

23. Is there guidance on reimbursement or requesting funds in advance for attending workshops?

   Reimbursement and Advance Payment guidance is available on the NEHA-FDA RFFM homepage select the "Reporting and Payments" page: https://www.neha.org/retailgrants/payment.

24. Do you need to apply for the Training Optional Add-On grant each year?

   Yes, the Training Optional Add-On Grant is a one-year awards and you will need to apply for a new one each year. Unlike other grant types, funds from these grants cannot be rolled over for use in the next year.

25. Is there anything we should consider in the budget if we are working on Standard 3?

   Any allowable costs that would be helpful for meeting the goals of your project to meet Standard 3 can be included. Your FDA Retail Food Specialist may be able to provide additional ideas.

Mentorship Questions

1. How are you pairing mentor/mentees? Do you need info from us to help (i.e., town size, # of establishments etc.)

   The information requested in the Mentorship Optional Add-On application (or the mentee section of a Track 1 Development Base application) will help FDA, NACCHO and NEHA pair mentees and mentors. Final assignments, however, will depend on the numbers and qualifications of both mentor and mentee applications. And yes, information on jurisdiction size, # of establishments, etc. is requested in both the Mentor and Mentee applications.

2. For the Mentorship Optional Add-On Grant, when applying to be a mentor, would that cover personnel costs for people going to the end-of-year mentorship conference in addition to the travel expenses?

   Personnel costs are an allowable expense for mentorship grants.

3. Is the NACCHO End-of-Year Meeting for mentors and mentees a 3-day conference?

   The meeting will be a 4-day event, including travel. Day 1 will be a travel day, with two full days of meetings on Days 2 and 3. Day 4 will have meetings until noon, with travel home in the afternoon.

4. How would you know when your mentor will be mentoring? Is this an internal conversation with the mentor once approved?

   Yes, you will work with your mentor to coordinate times for site visits etc. once the award has been made. As part of that conversation, both the mentor and the mentee will have the opportunity to provide NEHA with an Updated Workplan, which includes an updated Project Budget (which cannot be higher than the original request).

5. Where are the Mentee questions in a Track 1 Development Base Grant? It is not clear in the application.

   In the Track 1 Development Base Grant, if you answer Yes to the Option 1 Outcome / Mentorship Mentee, all the mentee questions will be exposed.