

**2020 SPECIALTY CROP BLOCK GRANT PROGRAM**  
**PHASE II, GRANT PROPOSAL**  
**QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS (Q&A)**  
**February 12, 2020**

**GENERAL QUESTIONS**

1. Q. Can applicants make changes to key personnel originally identified in the Concept Proposal.  
A. There is no prohibition against changes to key personnel between the Concept and Grant Proposal phases. However, the applicant should demonstrate that any new personnel are qualified to conduct project activities and are likely to achieve the outcome and objectives originally identified in the project.
2. Q. Can applicants make changes to any of the required templates?  
A. Applicants are asked to complete each template per the instructions provided. Within the Budget Narrative, Project Objectives and Work Plan, and Cost Sharing templates, applicants may add rows as needed. For the Outcome Measures template, applicants may delete or leave blank any outcomes not applicable to their proposal and enter content into the text fields specified. While there is no prohibition against altering column widths, margins, etc., applicants are discouraged from doing so as any changes will be restored to the original format for projects selected for funding.
3. Q. Are letters of commitment from the applicant organization required for the SCBGP?  
A. Letters of commitment are not required for SCBGP Grant Proposals; however, all applicants should ensure that their institution or organization will accept the terms and conditions of the program, including the federally mandated limitations on indirect.
4. Q. How should employees and contractors be identified in the Project Objectives and Work Plan and the Budget Narrative?  
A. Employees and contractors should be identified by title within the Project Objectives and Work Plan and by name and title in the Budget Narrative. Any personnel or contractors that have not yet been selected or hired may be identified as "TBD." Persons with identical titles should be identified by title and last name (e.g., Co-PI Jones, Co-PI Smith, etc.).
5. Q. Can applicants promote a group of specialty crops by developing and promoting a new logo or identity for the specialty crops?  
A. While applicants are not allowed to promote a specific brand, logo, business, or any non-specialty crops under the SCBGP, developing a logo or identity specifically to represent and promote a group of specialty crops would be considered allowable as referenced in the [2020 Allowable and Unallowable Costs and Activities table](https://www.cdfa.ca.gov/Specialty_Crop_Competitiveness_Grants/docs/2020SCBGP_AllowableUnallowableCostsTable.pdf) ([https://www.cdfa.ca.gov/Specialty\\_Crop\\_Competitiveness\\_Grants/docs/2020SCBGP\\_AllowableUnallowableCostsTable.pdf](https://www.cdfa.ca.gov/Specialty_Crop_Competitiveness_Grants/docs/2020SCBGP_AllowableUnallowableCostsTable.pdf)).
6. Q. If an applicant did not receive feedback for a specific section in the Concept Proposal, is it acceptable to provide the same answer in the Grant Proposal phase?  
A. For questions that carry over from the concept proposal, responses should be expanded to reflect the fully developed grant proposal. In many cases, the grant proposal questions are slightly different and character limits are larger to accommodate additional detail; for this

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reason, it may not be appropriate for the language used in the grant proposal to be identical to the concept proposal.

7. Q. Where should outreach activities be included in the Grant Proposal?  
A. Outreach activities can be included in the Project Objectives and Work Plan template as either a separate project objective or as activities that contribute to broader project objectives. Alternatively, outreach activities may be included as part of the activities to collect data or monitor and report on outcomes in the Outcome Measures template, if appropriate.
8. Q. Can references and/or citations be included in the Grant Proposal?  
A. References and/or citations may be provided as long as they are responsive to the question and, if applicable, fit within the character limits provided in FFAST. Applicants may not upload a supplemental document, supersede template page limits, or take advantage of templates without character or page limits to provide references. This would be considered circumventing character and page limits and may result in disqualification of a proposal. Note that TRC are not required to review references or citations and that links provided in FFAST will appear as text.
9. Q. Can promotional projects include partners such as specific retailers on an online directory of businesses?  
A. Applicants may partner with a specific retailer or group of retailers to promote specialty crops; however, the promotional materials must be focused on the specialty crops rather than the store(s). Note that promoting a specialty crop while including an organization's logo in the promotion is acceptable while generally promoting an organization's logo is not.
10. Q. What is the difference between Project Beneficiaries and participants involved in activities related to Outcome Measures?  
A. Participants in activities related to Outcome Measures are directly involved in the project. Their involvement, including any changes in knowledge, behaviors, practices, etc. must be collected and reported on during the project duration. Project beneficiaries can include Outcome Measure participants but also includes other specialty crop stakeholders, including individual growers, producers, groups, commodities, etc. that directly benefit from a project but are not necessarily involved in project activities.

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## ELIGIBILITY

1. Q. Are processed specialty crops eligible for the SCBGP?  
A. Processed specialty crops, including canned, dried, frozen, and other products that constitute greater than 50 percent specialty crops by weight, exclusive of added water, are eligible for the SCBGP.
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**FAAST APPLICATION**

1. Q. How should applicants respond to feedback received from the Technical Review Committee (TRC)?  
A. Answers to the questions in the Grant Proposal questionnaire and/or the required attachments should be responsive to the feedback received. For example, questions regarding the allowability or necessity of proposed costs should be addressed in the justification(s) within the budget narrative. Note that applicants may not upload a supplemental document to directly respond to administrative or technical feedback. Similarly, including responses to feedback within attachments without a page limit (such as the Outcome Measures template) when the content is otherwise unnecessary is inappropriate. Such efforts would be considered circumventing character and page limits and may result in disqualification of a proposal.
  2. Q. Can applicants review their attachments in FAAST to ensure they are correct, readable, etc.?  
A. Applicants are strongly encouraged to review their attachments before submitting their proposal in FAAST. Attachments can be viewed in the "Attachments" tab once they have been uploaded. Note that attachments are not accessible once an application has been submitted.
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**FUNDING AREA AND FUNDING CATEGORY**

1. Q. If a proposal will address Healthy Specialty Crops for All Californians Program Priority 4, "Increasing the availability of specialty crops in homes, schools, the workplace, hospitals, prisons, and in other underserved communities," is it necessary to increase access in all locations noted?  
A. It is not necessary, and may not be feasible, for a project to increase access to all the locations cited in this program priority. Applicants should ensure that their proposal will improve access in one or more of these locations.
2. Q. How can applicants define the "California Grown Identity?"  
A. The California Grown Identity is the concept that specialty crops grown in California are special; that they have unique qualities that make them stand out due to California's terrain and climate, stringent food safety regulations, organic production, etc.

***New Questions: February 12, 2020***

3. Q. Within Project Purpose, are applicants required to cite the program priorities verbatim?  
A. Applicants are not required to cite the full program priority verbatim in the grant proposal phase; however, the applicant's response to this question should adequately identify the specific priority or priorities their proposal will address.
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**PROJECT PURPOSE**

No questions at this time.

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**PROJECT OBJECTIVES AND WORK PLAN**

1. Q. Should timelines be provided for each activity in the Project Objective and Work Plan template?  
A. Each activity listed in the project objectives and workplan template must include the estimated beginning and end dates for when each activity will be accomplished.
2. Q. Can the Project Objectives and Work Plan template include Cost Sharing activities?  
A. Although not required, applicants may include activities covered by cost share in the Project Objectives and Work Plan template to help clarify how the listed project objective activities will be accomplished. However, the Cost Sharing template must be completed and included as part of the Grant Proposal for any activities funded by cost share.

***New Questions: February 12, 2020***

3. Q. Can applicants identify multiple individuals for each activity within the Project Objectives and Work Plan?  
A. Multiple individuals may be included for each activity. Note that any individuals or entities who will receive grant funds must be included within the Project Objectives and Work Plan.
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**PROJECT BENEFICIARIES**

1. Q. How are project beneficiaries defined?  
A. Project beneficiaries are the specialty crop stakeholders, including individual growers, producers, groups, commodities, etc. that will directly benefit from a project. Employees of the applicant, cooperators, contractors and/or individuals who may receive an ancillary benefit from the project are not considered project beneficiaries. The number cited in the Project Beneficiaries response should be a reasonable estimate that can be documented and reported upon during the duration of the grant, if selected for funding. For these reasons, stating that a project will benefit the entire specialty crop industry is not an appropriate response for this question.

***New Questions: February 12, 2020***

2. Q. Can applicants have more than 49,999 beneficiaries?  
A. Due to current FFAST limitations, applicants are unable to input a number greater than 49,999 within Project Beneficiaries. If a project has the potential to reach more than 49,999 beneficiaries, please include the actual number within the Project Beneficiaries description. In developing a response to the Project Beneficiaries question, applicants should ensure

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that the number provided is reasonable and can be tracked and reported upon within the grant duration.

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**SPECIALTY CROP ENHANCEMENT**

1. Q. Can SCBGP funds support a project that involves a non-specialty crop commodity, such as a project that involves crop rotation of a specialty crop and another commodity?  
A. SCBGP funds can support projects that include non-specialty crop commodities; however, the applicant must demonstrate that the primary beneficiary of the project is the eligible specialty crop.
  2. Q. Is cotton considered a specialty crop?  
A. Cotton is not a specialty crop. For a comprehensive list of eligible commodities please visit [USDA's website](https://www.ams.usda.gov/sites/default/files/media/USDASpecialtyCropDefinition.pdf) (<https://www.ams.usda.gov/sites/default/files/media/USDASpecialtyCropDefinition.pdf>).
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**PRIOR YEAR SCBGP PROJECTS**

1. Q. If a proposal will build upon a previously funded SCBGP project by a collaborator or cooperating entity, should the applicant include the collaborator or cooperating entity's project in response to Question 5, Prior Year SCBGP Projects?  
A. Applicants are strongly encouraged to include information on a cooperator or collaborator's previously funded SCBGP project to give the TRC a better understanding of the background or progress made toward the previous project.
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**PROJECT SUSTAINABILITY**

No questions at this time.

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**OTHER SUPPORT FROM FEDERAL OR STATE GRANT PROGRAMS**

1. Q. Are applicants required to disclose support from other state or federal grant programs in response to Question 7, "Other Support from Federal or State Grant Programs," if the other grant was awarded to a collaborator or cooperating entity?  
A. SCBGP funds cannot duplicate costs funded by other state or federal grant programs, even if the grant is awarded to a cooperator or collaborator, rather than directly to the applicant. Accordingly, applicants must disclose any other state or federal grant awards or applications for similar work, including awards made to cooperators or collaborators.
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**EXTERNAL PROJECT SUPPORT**

1. Q. Are school districts, educational organizations and institutional buyers considered specialty crop industry stakeholders for the purpose of external project support?  
A. Organizations that do not directly participate in the specialty crop industry but engage in a close business relationship with specialty crop growers and producers such as institutional buyers, educational organizations, wholesalers, and retailers can be considered stakeholders for the purpose of external project support.
  2. Q. Can Outcome Measure participants be considered as external stakeholders?  
A. Individuals or organizations such as growers/producers that are included in the Outcome Measures template, and will thus participate in an Outcome Measure activity, cannot be considered as external stakeholders.
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**OUTCOME MEASURES**

1. Q. Are applicants required to achieve all outcome measures and workplan activities within the grant duration?  
A. All selected outcome measures and all workplan activities must be achieved within the grant duration.
2. Q. Can applicants change the outcome measures and indicators originally identified in the Concept Proposal phase?  
A. Applicants can make changes to outcomes and indicators, including adding or removing outcomes and indicators. Note that all projects must include at least one outcome and one associated indicator that can be achieved within the grant duration. Additionally, all proposals that include marketing and promotional activities must select Outcome Measure 1: Enhance the competitiveness of specialty crops through increased sales.
3. Q. If an indicator for an outcome measure has multiple sub-indicators, are applicants required to address each of the sub-indicators?  
A. Applicants are only required to select one outcome measure, indicator, and sub-indicator. However, in developing outcome measures for the Grant Proposal, applicants should consider administrative and technical feedback in determining whether a sole indicator and/or sub-indicator are adequate and appropriate to the scope of the proposal.
4. Q. Is it acceptable to use a representative sample to establish statistical significance within Outcome Measures?  
A. Applicants may use a representative sample size. However, methodology should be appropriate to the nature of the project and comparable to similar work. Applicants cannot use a methodology that is less stringent for work on the SCBGP than would be acceptable otherwise.

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5. Q. What is the difference between Outcome Measure 2, Indicator 2, and Outcome Measure 3, Indicator 1?
- A. Outcome Measure 2 is to increase the number of people eating more specialty crops. Outcome measure 3 is to increase access to, and awareness of, specialty crops. Increasing access to specialty crops means either expanding the varieties of specialty crops offered at existing locations (stores, etc.) or increasing the number of locations that offer specialty crops. Increasing awareness of specialty crops requires documenting how many people gained knowledge about specialty crops, reported an intention to access more specialty crops, or reported eating more specialty crops.
6. Q. For Outcome 3, Indicator 2 can applicants include educational entities such as public-school classroom teachers that are not specifically addressed in the indicator?
- A. Outcome Measure 3, Indicator 2 refers to the number of culinary professionals, institutional kitchens and specialty crop entrepreneurs such as kitchen incubators/shared use kitchens, etc. that will be reached. Therefore, it would not be appropriate to include public school classroom teachers in this Outcome Measure.

***New Questions: February 12, 2020***

7. Q. Can applicants achieve Outcome Measure 1 without access to sales data? Are estimates of sales increases acceptable?
- A. Applicants are required to measure actual sales figures resulting from marketing efforts against an established baseline to evidence an increase in sales. If current sales data is not available, applicants should establish adequate partnerships to obtain actual sales data, within the grant duration. Estimates of sales increases are not acceptable.

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**BUDGET NARRATIVE**

1. Q. Can the amount of SCBGP funding requested change from the Concept Proposal phase to the Grant Proposal phase?
- A. The amount of SCBGP funding requested in the Grant Proposal phase may increase or decrease from the Concept Proposal phase so long as the revised amount requested is not less than the minimum award amount or more than the maximum award amount. Changes from one budget line item to another are also permissible. Any changes requested should be documented on the Budget Narrative template. Applicants should not change the budget template submitted in the Concept Proposal phase.
2. Q. If a proposal will include travel to locations that have not yet been determined, how should applicants document travel costs in the Budget Narrative?
- A. Travel to a location or locations that have not yet been determined should be identified as "TBD." Travel costs should be a reasonable estimate and follow the standard rate for Lodging and Meals & Incidentals set by the U.S. General Services Administration (GSA rates <https://www.gsa.gov/travel/plan-book/per-diem-rates>). In addition, multiple trips for a common purpose may be listed as a single line item within the Budget Narrative.



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3. Q. How can an applicant determine whether a piece of equipment is considered scientific research equipment?  
A. Scientific research equipment is defined as equipment which is used only for research, scientific, or other technical activities and has an acquisition cost of \$5,000 or more per unit. Applicants must be able to explain how the equipment qualifies as scientific research equipment and why it is necessary to their proposal. Applicants should utilize the RFCP and the [Allowable and Unallowable Costs and Activities Table](https://www.cdfa.ca.gov/Specialty_Crop_Competitiveness_Grants/docs/2020SCBGP_AllowableUnallowableCostsTable.pdf) ([https://www.cdfa.ca.gov/Specialty\\_Crop\\_Competitiveness\\_Grants/docs/2020SCBGP\\_AllowableUnallowableCostsTable.pdf](https://www.cdfa.ca.gov/Specialty_Crop_Competitiveness_Grants/docs/2020SCBGP_AllowableUnallowableCostsTable.pdf)) to determine whether equipment meets the definition of scientific research equipment.
4. Q. Are there federal limits on fringe benefit rates?  
A. There are no specific limits on fringe benefit rates when using federal funds. However, applicants must use their established fringe benefit rate and cannot charge a higher rate when utilizing federal funds. Additionally, applicants cannot increase fringe benefit rates for the purpose of recovering indirect costs in excess of the limits of the SCBGP.
5. Q. How should applicants report the fringe benefit rate if the rate will change over the grant duration?  
A. Applicants should calculate the total cost of fringe benefits and report the average fringe benefit rate that will be applicable for the grant time duration. Applicants should ensure that their fringe benefit rate complies with their applicant organization's established fringe benefits policy.
6. Q. Should applicants indicate when costs will not be requested for an entire budget category?  
A. Applicants should indicate in some way that no funds will be requested for a budget category (e.g., entering N/A or a zero in the Funds Requested Subtotal box for that category). Tables should not be removed.
7. Q. How should applicants include tax and shipping in the Budget Narrative?  
A. Applicants should include a reasonable estimate of shipping and tax costs for each separate item or supply to be purchased when requesting funds. Do not include shipping and/or tax costs as a separate line item or attempt to estimate an overall percentage or amount of shipping/tax costs for supplies/items to be purchased.

#### ***New Questions: February 12, 2020***

8. Q. How can applicants document expenses for ride-sharing platforms such as Uber or Lyft?  
A. Ride-share costs necessary for project objectives, should be documented in the Budget Narrative under Category C. Travel. Applicants should list the type of expense as "ground transportation" or "ride share" with the unit of measure, cost per unit, etc. reported accordingly and based on a reasonable estimate of expected costs.
9. Q. Where should travel by people who are neither employees of the applicant nor contractors be listed?



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- A. Generally, travel for people who are neither employees of the applicant nor contractors, such as project participants, should be listed in the Budget Narrative, under Category C. Travel. Applicants are required to include a break-down of travel costs for each participant. Multiple trips for the same purpose may be grouped together rather than providing separate, duplicative justifications. Ensure all domestic travel complies with GSA rates (<https://www.gsa.gov/travel/plan-book/per-diem-rates>) and California Assembly Bill 1887 (<https://oag.ca.gov/ab1887>).
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**PROCUREMENT OF GOODS AND SERVICES**

1. Q. Can applicants procure contractors through single source or noncompetitive bid?  
A. Procurement by single source bidding is appropriate in very limited circumstances and must fulfill one of the requirements described in 2 CFR 200.320 (f) ([https://www.ecfr.gov/cgi-bin/text-idx?SID=898fdaa0b947dd0bf8c962a137d230dd&node=pt2.1.200&rgn=div5#se2.1.200\\_1320](https://www.ecfr.gov/cgi-bin/text-idx?SID=898fdaa0b947dd0bf8c962a137d230dd&node=pt2.1.200&rgn=div5#se2.1.200_1320)). Selection of a single source contract with adequate justification will require the approval of CDFA and USDA. Note that past work with a contractor is not sufficient justification for single source contracting. Additionally, neither CDFA nor USDA will expressly authorize procurement using noncompetitive proposals described under 2 CFR 200.320 (f)(3).
2. Q. How can applicants demonstrate that they engaged in a competitive process when selecting a contractor?  
A. Applicants must establish and follow their own procurement policy which must conform to applicable federal, state, and local laws. In addition, applicants must select a solicitation method appropriate to the amount of the contract. For contracts over \$10,000, this includes developing a cost or price analysis, including an estimate of costs prior to soliciting bids. Finally, all records related to these efforts must be maintained for a period of three years after the end of the federal award. For additional information on procurement, reference 2 CFR 200.317-326 (<https://www.ecfr.gov/cgi-bin/text-idx?node=2:1.1.2.2.1.4.31&rgn=div7>). For additional information on Record Retention and Access, Reference 2 CFR 200.333-337 ([https://www.ecfr.gov/cgi-bin/text-idx?SID=c832743b1a25d5bd987deabb65813198&mc=true&node=sg2.1.200\\_1332.sg6&rgn=div7](https://www.ecfr.gov/cgi-bin/text-idx?SID=c832743b1a25d5bd987deabb65813198&mc=true&node=sg2.1.200_1332.sg6&rgn=div7)).
3. Q. How should applicants identify contractors that haven't yet been selected?  
A. Applicants may identify such contractors as "To Be Determined" or "TBD." Applicants should still identify the tasks the contractor is expected to undertake and provide a justification for anticipated costs. Additionally, if selected for funding, applicants will be required to obtain approval from CDFA and USDA for their contractors prior to entering into an agreement.

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4. Q. What is the general difference between a cooperating entity and a contractor?  
A. The term “cooperating entity” is standard to the FFAST application. Generally, cooperating entities or cooperators have a substantial role in a proposal and may or may not receive grant funding. Contractors provide a necessary service to a proposed project and are compensated for their time. Organizations identified as cooperating entities that will receive compensation using grant funds must be identified as contractors in the Budget Narrative and are subject to the same procurement requirements as all other contractors.
5. Q. What is considered a micro-purchase?  
A. Micro-purchase refers to the procurement of goods or services under \$10,000. Micro-purchases do not require a competitive bid process; however, applicants should ensure that costs are reasonable and necessary to project activities.
6. Q. Can contractors or cooperators purchase scientific research equipment?  
A. There is no prohibition against contractors or cooperators purchasing scientific research equipment when reasonable and necessary to the project. In determining reasonableness, the applicant should consider whether alternatives are available, such as a temporary rental of equipment. In addition, the equipment must be used only for project related activities to enhance the competitiveness of specialty crops. Such equipment is subject to the procurement rules in 2 CFR 200.317-326 (<https://www.ecfr.gov/cgi-bin/text-idx?node=2:1.1.2.2.1.4.31&rgn=div7>) and the disposition requirements in 2 CFR 200.313 ([https://www.ecfr.gov/cgi-bin/retrieveECFR?gp=&SID=6bb46d881f24966be0e4752ed2264359&mc=true&n=sp2.1.200.d&r=SUBPART&ty=HTML#se2.1.200\\_1313](https://www.ecfr.gov/cgi-bin/retrieveECFR?gp=&SID=6bb46d881f24966be0e4752ed2264359&mc=true&n=sp2.1.200.d&r=SUBPART&ty=HTML#se2.1.200_1313)).
7. Q. Can applicants change contractors or collaborators after their Grant Proposal is submitted?  
A. If selected for funding, applicants can make changes to their contractors or collaborators; however, such changes will require prior approval from CDFA and USDA.
8. Q. Are cooperators, collaborators, co-applicants, etc. exempt from the competitive procurement process?  
A. SCBGP projects are limited to one applicant and if awarded funds, only one entity may enter into an agreement for the project. All other project partners are considered contractors and subject to the procurement requirements in 2 CFR 200.317-326 (<https://www.ecfr.gov/cgi-bin/text-idx?node=2:1.1.2.2.1.4.31&rgn=div7>).

***New Questions: February 12, 2020***

9. Q. If contractual work will occur in a location other than the applicant’s physical location (e.g. contractual activities occurring in another state) which GSA rates are applicable?  
A. Generally, the GSA rates for the locality of the contractor are most applicable/appropriate. A contractor based in a lower cost locality may not charge a higher rate because all or part of the work for the agreement will occur in a higher cost locality. Note that GS-15, Step 10 is guidance for the maximum rate within a locality, not a standard for how much a contractor may charge. Applicants must ensure rates are reasonable and consistent with

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fees in the marketplace for similar services and provide adequate justification for fees in excess of the GS-15 Step 10.

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## **COST SHARING**

1. Q. Is cost share required for SCBGP Grant Proposals?  
A. Cost share is not required; however, the TRC may view cost share as an indicator of industry support for a project.
  2. Q. Can applicants make changes to the amount of cost share originally stated in the Concept Proposal?  
A. Applicants may make changes to the amount of cost share as needed. In developing a full Grant Proposal, and completing the Cost Sharing template, proposals that will utilize cost share should only include cost share that has been secured, which may change between the Concept and Grant Proposal phases.
  3. Q. If Cost Sharing is unscored, how is it evaluated in the review process?  
A. Cost Sharing is not a scored question because cost share is not a requirement of the SCBGP. However, cost sharing committed to a project may be viewed as demonstrating that the work proposed has value to the specialty crop industry.
  4. Q. Can applicants include letters of support in the cost share section to demonstrate industry support?  
A. Letters of Support (LOS) are statements of support written by external stakeholders specifying why they believe a certain proposal is timely and/or important to the specialty crop industry. LOS should be included as an attachment in the Attachments tab in FFAST. Cost share refers to commitments made by the applicant organization itself, or by external organizations, to pay for or contribute to any costs and activities of a project, in the form of matching funds or in-kind contributions. Matching funds refers to dollar amounts committed to a project from a source other than the SCBGP. In-kind contributions refers to the estimated dollar or fair market values of time, property, or supplies donated to a project.
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## **PROJECT OVERSIGHT**

1. Q. Can applicants submit a bio sketch for key personnel in lieu of a full Curriculum Vitae (CV)?  
A. Bio sketches in lieu of a full CV are acceptable; however, information on the bio sketch should be sufficient to demonstrate the qualifications of the key personnel.
2. Q. Who should provide resumes or curriculum vitae (CV)s?  
A. Curriculum vitae's or resumes (whichever is most appropriate) should be provided for the Project Director, Project Manager, Principal Investigator, and any collaborators or contractors responsible for development or execution of the project. The preferred format for resumes or curriculum vitae is PDF.

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3. Q. What is the difference between the Project Director, Project Manager, and Principal Investigator?
- A. The terms Project Director and Project Manager are standard to the FFAST application. Generally, the Project Director is the applicant organization's authorized representative who can execute the grant agreement. The Project Manager is the day-to-day contact on the project from the applicant organization. The Principal Investigator is typically the lead scientist or researcher for the project.

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**REVIEW PROCESS**

1. Q. Will TRC members review the same proposals in the Grant Proposal phase as the Concept Proposal phase?
- A. Generally, TRC members review the same proposals in the Concept and the Grant Proposal phases.
2. Q. How many Concept Proposals were advanced to the Grant Proposal phase? How many Grant Proposals are expected to be awarded funds?
- A. 134 Concept Proposals were invited to submit a full Grant Proposal. CDFA anticipates that 40 to 50 percent of those Grant Proposals will receive funding.
3. Q. How is the TRC comprised?
- A. CDFA solicits a broad range of volunteers comprised of growers and representatives from industry, universities, public agencies, commodity boards, and non-profits with an interest and expertise in specialty crops and agricultural systems.
4. Q. Does the number of program priorities a project will address affect the score a proposal will receive?
- A. The number of program priorities a project will address is not a factor in the scoring criteria.
5. Q. The Grant Proposal Instructions state that there are factors beyond the TRC scores that may affect which proposals are submitted to USDA for funding, including distributing funds across California's specialty crop industry by region and commodity. How can applicants ensure they are competitive within these additional factors?
- A. The purpose of the additional factors described in the Grant Proposal Instructions is to address factors that cannot readily or easily be addressed within the TRC scoring criteria. Accordingly, it may not be possible for applicants to better ensure their proposal will be funded based on those factors. The best method for developing a competitive Grant Proposal is to ensure the proposal is responsive to the scoring criteria described in the Grant Proposal Instructions.

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**GRANT MANAGEMENT**

1. Q. If awarded funds, can a contractor make changes to the contractual portion of their budget?  
A. If a change to the contractual budget is necessary, the applicant must notify their assigned CDFA grant analyst and submit a Scope of Work (SOW) revision. A Line Item Shift Request is not required. A SOW revision must be made in writing and provide sufficient information to explain the need and how the change affects the project. Approval for the SOW must be obtained from CDFA prior to incurring costs under the revised budget. Additional information on circumstances requiring prior approval can be found in the [2019 Grant Management Procedures Manual](https://www.cdfa.ca.gov/Specialty_Crop_Competitiveness_Grants/pdfs/2019_Grant_Management_Procedure_Manual.pdf) ([https://www.cdfa.ca.gov/Specialty\\_Crop\\_Competitiveness\\_Grants/pdfs/2019\\_Grant\\_Management\\_Procedure\\_Manual.pdf](https://www.cdfa.ca.gov/Specialty_Crop_Competitiveness_Grants/pdfs/2019_Grant_Management_Procedure_Manual.pdf)).