

**2021 SPECIALTY CROP BLOCK GRANT PROGRAM**  
**PHASE I, CONCEPT PROPOSAL**  
**QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS (Q&A)**  
**OCTOBER 9, 2020**

**GENERAL QUESTIONS**

1. Q. Can an individual participate in multiple proposals?  
A. Yes, individuals can participate in multiple proposals. While there is no limit on the number of proposal in which an individual can participate, they should ensure that they have adequate capacity to effectively participate in multiple Specialty Crop Block Grant Program (SCBGP) projects and that the combined time will not exceed 100 percent full time equivalent (FTE) if all proposals are awarded funds.
2. Q. What is a cooperating entity?  
A. Cooperating entities are individuals and/or organizations an applicant will work with to plan and/or implement the proposed project, and who may receive a portion of the SCBGP funds and/or contribute cost share. Cooperating entities that will receive grant funds if a proposal is awarded funding should also be listed as contractors in the budget template.
3. Q. Is there a limit to the number of active SCBGP grants that one organization can have at a given time? Can current SCBGP grant recipients apply for funding in multiple grant years?  
A. There is no limit on the number of active SCBGP grants that can be held by a single organization. However, before submitting multiple proposals, applicants should ensure their organization will have adequate capacity to effectively execute multiple SCBGP grants, if additional proposals are awarded funds.
4. Q. Can applicants submit additional attachments to the Concept Proposal phase like a letter of support?  
A. No, only the required attachments as specified in the [Request for Concept Proposals \(RFCP\)](#) should be included in the concept proposal application. Projects that advance to the Grant Proposal phase may provide letters of support with their concept proposal application.
5. Q. Will recordings of the solicitation webinars be available to applicants?  
A. Yes, links to the recordings of the webinar will be uploaded to [CDFA's SCBGP website](#) by Friday, October 9, 2020. PDF versions of the PowerPoint slides are also available upon request by sending an email to [grants@cdfa.ca.gov](mailto:grants@cdfa.ca.gov).

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**ELIGIBILITY**

1. Q. How can applicants determine whether a project is appropriate for the SCBGP?  
A. To be appropriate for the SCBGP, projects must enhance the competitiveness of California specialty crops, address at least one funding category priority identified in the [RFCP](#), and accomplish one outcome measure and indicator within the grant duration.
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**ADDITIONAL ASSISTANCE FOR HISTORICALLY UNDERREPRESENTED ORGANIZATIONS**

1. Q. Is a school district eligible to apply to the Additional Assistance for Historically Underrepresented Organizations (Additional Assistance) program?  
A. No, public school districts and individual public schools are typically considered local government agencies and are therefore not eligible to apply directly to the Additional Assistance program. However, an individual school could participate as a collaborator, partner, or contractor on an application from an eligible organization. A public middle school or school district would also be eligible to submit a conventional grant proposal.
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**FAAST APPLICATION**

1. Q. Are applicants required to enter the project latitude/longitude in FAAST?  
A. No, applicants are not required to enter the project latitude/longitude in FAAST. However, applicants must provide the county where the majority of project work will be done.
  2. Q. Can applicants add additional users to a proposal in FAAST?  
A. Yes, applicants can add users to a proposal by entering their username(s) in the box provided on the "Add User" tab. Individuals added via the "Add User" tab will only have access to that specific proposal.
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**FUNDING AREA AND FUNDING CATEGORY**

No questions at this time.

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**PROGRAM PRIORITIES**

No questions at this time.

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**PROJECT PURPOSE**

No questions at this time.

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**PRIOR-YEAR SCBGP PROJECTS**

1. Q. Do applicants need to indicate that their proposal builds upon a prior-year SCBGP project, even if that project was completed several years ago?  
A. Yes, if a proposal builds upon any previously funded SCBGP project, the applicant must reference the project number and include a description of how this project builds upon the previous project without duplicating costs or activities.

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2. Q. Where can applicants find information on previously awarded projects?  
A. Applicants can view previously awarded projects on the SCBGP website at:  
[http://www.cdfa.ca.gov/Specialty\\_Crop\\_Competitiveness\\_Grants/PastGrantAwards.html](http://www.cdfa.ca.gov/Specialty_Crop_Competitiveness_Grants/PastGrantAwards.html).
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**PROJECT SUSTAINABILITY**

1. Q. How can applicants demonstrate project sustainability?  
A. Proposals should adequately demonstrate that project activities can continue beyond the grant duration, or that the project will continue to benefit the specialty crop industry after the grant has ended. If a project will create a new program for example, explain how the program will continue to exist after the end of the grant period. Likewise, if a project will not continue beyond the grant duration, the proposal should explain how the results of the project will benefit the industry after the project is complete. For example, a research project may post findings on a website that will continue to be accessible after the grant duration.
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**PROJECT BENEFICIARIES**

1. Q. How should applicants estimate the number of beneficiaries that will be impacted by a project?  
A. The number of beneficiaries indicated in the Project Beneficiaries response should be a realistic, reasonable, trackable, and reportable estimate of the direct or primary beneficiaries of the project results that will be impacted within the grant duration. For example, stating that a project will benefit the entire specialty crop industry is likely not an appropriate response for this question.
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**OUTCOME MEASURES**

1. Q. Have there been updates to the Outcome Measures template this year?  
A. Yes, for the 2021 SCBGP grant cycle, there is only one description box required for each outcome measure instead of two. CDFA has removed the "Description of Activities to Monitor and Report on Outcomes" textbox. Any activity to monitor and report on outcomes can be included in the "Description of Data Collection Methods" section.
2. Q. Do applicants need to address all indicators and sub-indicators for a selected outcome measure?  
A. No, applicants must select at least one indicator and/or sub-indicator for each outcome selected but are not required to address all indicators and/or sub-indicators for each outcome.
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**WORK PLAN AND OUTREACH**

No questions at this time.

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**BUDGET TEMPLATE**

1. Q. Can equipment that is typically considered general purpose be purchased with grant funds if it will be used for research purposes?  
A. Generally, only equipment that is research, scientific, or technical in nature, with a cost per unit that equals or exceeds \$5,000 is considered scientific research equipment and considered an allowable cost. However, it may be possible to purchase general purpose equipment using grant funds if that equipment is used solely for research purposes. Eligibility will be determined on a case-by-case basis. Additionally, more than one single commercial organization, commercial product, or individual must benefit from the use of the equipment. Applicants are also able to rent general purpose equipment when costs are reasonable and necessary to the project. For more information regarding general purpose and scientific research equipment, please reference pages 3-5 of the [2021 Allowable and Unallowable Costs and Activities Table](#).
  
  2. Q. Is computer software considered scientific research equipment?  
A. No, computer software with a cost of \$5,000 or more per unit is considered general purpose equipment and is unallowable. Computer software with a cost of less than \$5,000 per unit is typically considered a supply and is allowable if costs are reasonable and the software is necessary for the completion of a project. Please reference pages 6-7 of the [2021 Allowable and Unallowable Cost and Activities Table](#) for more information.
  
  3. Q. What is considered program income?  
A. Program income is any income generated during the grant period by a supported project activity or as a direct result of the award. Program income cannot be used as income or net profit and program income generated during the grant period must be used toward allowable activities in accordance with the [Allowable and Unallowable Costs and Activities Table](#). As an example, program income can be used to supplement approved grant activities such as conducting additional workshops or training programs that were not budgeted in the grant.
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**COST SHARE**

No questions at this time.

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**REVIEW PROCESS**

1. Q. When will applicants find out if their proposal has been selected to move forward to the Grant Proposal phase?  
A. Applicants will be notified whether or not their proposal will advance to the Grant Proposal Phase in January 2021.
  
  2. Q. Is there a potential for the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) to release a new Request for Applications (RFA) with different requirements than that current program criteria?  
A. CDFA does not anticipate any major changes to the program with the release of the 2021 RFA by USDA, however, if necessary, CDFA will attempt to prepare, and make available a supplement to the RFCP to advise applicants of any changes to the program upon publication of the new RFA. CDFA and all applicants will be subject to the terms and conditions of the new RFA, and substantial changes could potentially affect the feasibility of proposals.
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**GRANT MANAGEMENT**

No questions at this time.

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