

2019 SPECIALTY CROP BLOCK GRANT PROGRAM

Grant Proposal Instructions

CATALOG OF FEDERAL DOMESTIC ASSISTANCE 10.170

Released:
January 8, 2019

Grant Proposals Due:
By 5:00 pm PST on February 11, 2019
No late submissions accepted.



California Department of Food and Agriculture
Office of Grants Administration
1220 N Street, Room 120
Sacramento, CA 95814
(916) 657-3231
grants@cdfa.ca.gov

Table of Contents

| | |
|--|----|
| About the Program..... | 1 |
| How to Apply | 3 |
| Grant Proposal Questions and Scoring | 4 |
| Supplemental Guidance | 10 |
| Requirements and Limitations | 11 |
| Review and Notification | 14 |
| Assistance and Questions..... | 16 |
| APPENDIX A: Project Objectives and Work Plan Example | 17 |
| APPENDIX B: Outcome Measures Example..... | 18 |
| APPENDIX C: Budget Narrative Example | 19 |
| APPENDIX D: Cost Sharing Example..... | 24 |
| APPENDIX E: Frequently Asked Questions..... | 25 |

About the Program

Purpose

The California Department of Food and Agriculture (CDFA) is pleased to invite successful concept proposal applicants to participate in Phase II of the 2019 Specialty Crop Block Grant Program (SCBGP) process, submittal of a grant proposal.

Grant proposal projects must *solely* enhance the competitiveness of California specialty crops. Specialty crops are fruits, vegetables, tree nuts, dried fruits, and horticulture and nursery crops (including floriculture). Visit the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA)'s Agricultural Marketing Service website <https://www.ams.usda.gov/services/grants/scbgp/specialty-crop> for a comprehensive list of eligible and ineligible commodities.

Funding and Duration

CDFA anticipates that up to \$22 million will be awarded to projects solely enhancing the competitiveness of California specialty crops. Grant amounts range from \$50,000 to \$450,000. The maximum grant duration is two (2) years, six (6) months. In the case of fixed amount awards, grant amounts range from \$50,000 to \$150,000 and the maximum grant duration is two (2) years. Grant funds cannot be expended before November 1, 2019 or after April 30, 2022. The SCBGP is not eligible for no-cost extensions. CDFA reserves the right to offer an award amount less than the amount requested.

Eligibility

Only applicants invited to submit a grant proposal are eligible to participate in this phase of the solicitation process. Non-profit and for-profit organizations; local, state, and federal government entities including tribal governments; and public or private colleges and universities are eligible to receive funding. Individuals are not eligible to receive funding.

Additional notes to help determine eligibility:

- Grant funds will not be awarded for projects that directly benefit or provide a profit to a single organization, institution, or individual. For example, the program will not fund a project to start or expand a farm or business venture.
- Recipients cannot use grant funds to compete unfairly with private companies that offer equivalent products or services.
- Projects must solely enhance the competitiveness of California specialty crops. Projects benefitting non-specialty crops will not be selected for funding.
- Grant funds will not be awarded to applicants with an active exclusion or delinquent federal debt according to the federal System for Award Management (SAM). Visit www.sam.gov for additional information and to verify the status of your organization.
- Grant funds cannot be used to duplicate activities funded by other federal or state grant programs.

Timeline

| Phase II: Grant Proposal <i>(by invitation only)</i> | |
|--|---------------------------------------|
| Invitation to submit grant proposals | January 8, 2019 |
| Webinars | January 16, 2019 and January 23, 2019 |
| Grant proposals due | February 11, 2019, 5:00 pm PST |
| Grant proposals to USDA for approval | May 2019 |
| Award | |
| Announce and award funding | Fall 2019 |

How to Apply

Financial Assistance Application Submittal Tool (FAAST)

Grant proposals must be submitted electronically using the FAAST system. FAAST can be accessed through the State Water Resources Control Board website at <https://faast.waterboards.ca.gov>.

The FAAST system is organized into various tabs and utilizes a question and answer format. Questions are answered in either a text box or as a document attachment.

Responses to all questions must be submitted in the manner and format required by the grant proposal [Application Questionnaire](#) and in FAAST without exception. Applications that do not follow the required format and/or incomplete submissions will be deemed ineligible.

The State Water Resources Control Board website contains a Frequently Asked Questions section and a User Manual for the FAAST system. For questions about the FAAST System, please contact FAAST customer service at (866) 434-1083, Monday through Friday, 8:00 am to 5:00 pm or via email, faast_admin@waterboards.ca.gov.

Computer System Recommendations

To ensure grant proposals and attachments are submitted successfully, CDFA strongly encourages all applicants to comply with the computer system recommendations provided by FAAST. CDFA cannot guarantee that the FAAST system or the required templates will be compatible with other browsers or operating systems. Use of other browsers or operating systems will limit the ability of CDFA and FAAST staff to provide applicants with technical assistance, should any issues arise.

CDFA and FAAST recommend that applicants:

- Use a Windows PC with Internet Explorer 6.0 or higher.
- Disable pop-up blocking software while using FAAST.
- Save work often – the system will time out after 90 minutes and any unsaved work will be lost.

Grant Proposal Questions and Scoring

Applicants are encouraged to review and update the General Information, Project Management, and Cooperating Entities sections in FAAST to ensure the information is current and reflects the grant proposal.

Project Description (abstract) summarizes the need for the project, describes the goals and outcomes, and presents a plan for evaluating and measuring the success of the project. The Project Description should be appropriate for dissemination to the public.

Project Budget amount listed in FAAST should be updated to reflect the grant proposal budget amount. Under "funds requested," enter the total amount of SCBGP funds requested for this project; this number must match the amount listed in the grant proposal's budget narrative. Under "local cost match," enter the total amount of cost sharing committed to this project from other sources, if applicable. Under "total budget," enter the sum of funds requested plus local cost match.

Applicants must respond to all of the following grant proposal questions on the Application Questionnaire tab as well as upload the required attachments on the Attachments tab in FAAST. Failure to answer one or more questions, including both scored and unscored questions, will result in disqualification:

1. Project Purpose (15 Points):

All of the following must be addressed within the text boxes provided:

- Identify the specific and existing issue, problem, or need the project will address.
- Explain why the proposal is important and timely for the specialty crop industry.
- Identify at least one of the 2019 SCBGP program priorities for the chosen funding category as described in the [Request for Concept Proposals](#) and explain how the project addresses this priority.

Scoring Criteria: Scoring will be based on how clearly the proposal explains the specific issue, problem, or need the project will address, the timeliness and relevance to the California specialty crop industry and the demonstrated link to the 2019 SCBGP program priorities.

2. Project Objectives and Work Plan (20 Points):

Download the required [Project Objectives and Work Plan template](#), complete it, and upload it to your application using the attachments tab in FAAST. The Project Objectives and Work Plan attachment must be submitted as a Microsoft Word Document (do not submit a PDF), must use the required Microsoft Word Document template (do not alter the template in any way, except to add or remove project objectives as needed), and must not exceed four pages. For a completed example of the Project Objectives and Work Plan template, reference [Appendix A on page 17](#).

All of the following must be addressed in the Project Objectives and Work Plan template:

- **PIN:** Provide the five-digit number assigned to the proposal in FAAST.

- **Project Start Date and Project End Date:** Enter the date project activities will begin and the date project activities will end. Projects may not start before November 1, 2019 or end after April 30, 2022.
- **Objective:** Identify the main goals the project is seeking to accomplish. All projects must have at least one objective. If more than six objectives will be achieved, copy and paste additional sections as needed.
- **Objective Activities:** In the tables provided, describe the tasks necessary to accomplish each of the identified project objective(s). If more than six activities will be required for any of the objectives, add additional rows as needed.
- **Performed by:** In the tables provided, identify which members of the project team will do the work for each activity listed (e.g., personnel, project participants, contractors and/or subrecipients, etc.). List individuals by their titles. All individuals for whom SCBGP funding is requested in the Budget Narrative attachment must be responsible for activities listed in the Project Objectives and Work Plan attachment.
- **Timeline:** In the tables provided, provide the estimated beginning and end dates for when each activity will be accomplished using the three-letter abbreviated month and the four-digit numerical year (e.g., May 2019 – Oct 2020, Jun 2021, etc.). Only include activities occurring within the grant period (November 1, 2019 through April 30, 2022).

Scoring Criteria: Scoring will be based on the relevance of the project objectives and activities to the project purpose, the importance of the objectives to California’s specialty crop industry, the clarity of the work plan, and the likelihood that the objectives will be successful.

3. Project Beneficiaries (10 points):

All of the following must be addressed within the text boxes provided:

- Estimate the number of project beneficiaries directly impacted by the project. The number cited should be a reasonable estimate of the number of individuals that could realistically be directly impacted by the results of the project. All estimates should be trackable and reportable within the duration of the grant.
- Identify and quantify the project beneficiaries and describe how they will benefit from the project objectives (list the specific specialty crops that will be affected, if possible).
- Address how the proposal benefits the specialty crop industry, rather than directly benefiting a single individual or organization, such as the applicant.

Scoring Criteria: Scoring will be based on how clearly the proposal identifies and quantifies the beneficiaries and explains how they will benefit, as well as the relevance and significance of the anticipated project benefit(s) to the specialty crop industry.

4. Specialty Crop Enhancement (unscored):

SCBGP funds must solely enhance the competitiveness of specialty crops as [defined by USDA](#). Therefore, projects that may have the potential to benefit ineligible products or commodities (e.g., farmers’ markets, ‘buy local’ campaigns, general nutrition projects such as those related to MyPlate, etc.) must address how SCBGP funding will be used to solely enhance the competitiveness of eligible specialty crops.

- If the project has the potential to enhance the competitiveness of non-specialty crops, describe in detail what tracking mechanisms and processes are in place or will be implemented to verify all SCBGP funds are expended on activities and costs that solely enhance the competitiveness of eligible California specialty crops. If cost sharing will be used to cover activities and/or costs that are unallowable under the program, describe the specific funds or contributions that will be used (including their source) and detail the activities and costs they will cover.
- If the project does not have the potential to enhance the competitiveness of non-specialty crops, indicate “This project does not enhance the competitiveness of non-specialty crops.”

5. Prior Year SCBGP Projects (unscored):

If the grant proposal project will build upon a previous SCBGP funded project, all of the following must be addressed within the text boxes provided:

- Provide the grant agreement number (e.g., 17-0275-001-SC, or SCB16001) for the previous SCBGP project(s) and a summary (three to five sentences) of the outcomes of the previous efforts.
- Describe how this project will differ from and build upon the previous project(s).
- Provide lessons learned from the previous project(s), including potential improvements and how they will be incorporated into the project so that it is more effective and successful at meeting goals and outcomes.

If the project does not build on a previously funded SCBGP project, indicate “This project does not build upon a previously funded SCBGP project.”

6. Project Sustainability (10 Points):

SCBGP projects should have a long-term impact without relying indefinitely on grant funding. In this section, describe:

- The likelihood of the project becoming self-sustaining and not indefinitely dependent on SCBGP funds, and/or;
- The benefit(s) to California’s specialty crop industry resulting from the project that will continue beyond the grant duration.

Scoring Criteria: Scoring will be based on the extent to which the proposal demonstrates the project will become self-sustaining and/or that the benefit of the project will continue beyond the grant duration without relying indefinitely on SCBGP funding.

7. Other Support from Federal or State Grant Programs (unscored):

Activities funded under the SCBGP cannot duplicate activities funded by another federal or state grant program. If the proposal has been or will be submitted to or funded by another federal or state grant program other than the SCBGP, all of the following must be addressed:

- Identify the federal or state grant program and the agency administering the program.
- List the amount of grant funds requested or awarded by the program.
- Describe how the proposed SCBGP project supplements rather than duplicates efforts funded by the other federal or state grant program.

If the proposal has not been submitted to or funded by another federal or state grant program, indicate “This project has not been submitted to or funded by another federal or state grant program.”

Note: SCBGP will not fund duplicative projects. Failure to disclose other support from federal or state grant programs, whether applied for or received, will result in the disqualification of a proposal. If at any time an applicant is awarded funds from another federal or state grant program, it is the responsibility of the applicant to notify CDFA immediately.

8. External Project Support (10 Points):

Proposals must demonstrate that the specialty crop industry approves of/endorse the project objectives. In this section, identify one specific specialty crop stakeholder and explain why they believe the project is important and timely. Stakeholders included in the external project support section should:

- Be individuals or organizations involved in the specialty crop industry (e.g., specific growers, companies, certified crop advisors (CCAs) and pest control advisors (PCAs), commodity boards or commissions, trade associations, etc.). Do not include members of the general public, legislators, or any organizations that are not affiliated with the specialty crop industry.
- Be supportive of what the project will accomplish.
- Not be directly involved in the project. The applicant, employees of the applicant, cooperators, contractors, or any other entity that will participate in the project or receive project funding should not be included. Similarly, organizations that will contribute cost share to the project should not be included under the external project support section, as their participation in the form of project support is apparent and addressed directly in the Cost Sharing summary; reference [question 11 on page 8](#).

In addition to the narrative response provided in FFAST, applicants may choose to attach optional letters of support (LOS) to their grant proposals. LOS should be written on official letterhead and should explain why the stakeholder supports the project. Applicants should attach LOS in PDF format using the following file naming convention: LOS1, LOS2, LOS3, etc. All letters of support must be attached to the grant proposal application in FFAST; letters received via mail or email will not be considered.

Scoring Criteria: Scoring will be based on the relevance and timeliness of the project as demonstrated by the support for and commitment to the project from California’s specialty crop industry.

9. Outcome Measures (15 Points):

Download the required **Outcome Measures template**, complete it, and upload it to your application using the attachments tab in FFAST. The Outcome Measures attachment must be submitted as a Microsoft Word Document (do not submit a PDF) and must use the required Microsoft Word Document template (do not alter the template in any way, except to add numbers and descriptions for the outcomes and indicators selected). For a completed example of the Outcome Measures template, reference [Appendix B on page 18](#).

All of the following must be addressed in the Outcome Measures template:

- **Outcome:** Using the check boxes provided, select at least one of the eight outcome measures.
- **Indicator:** Using the check boxes provided, identify at least one indicator for each selected outcome. Enter a number, only, in the fillable text fields for each indicator selected. If there are multiple sub-indicators under a selected indicator, enter a value for at least one.
- **Description:** Within the description section for each outcome selected, describe the data collection methods and activities that will be undertaken to monitor and report on the outcome(s) and indicator(s) selected.

Outcome measures and the associated indicators were developed by USDA and the Office of Management and Budget. At least one outcome measure and one related indicator must be achievable within the grant duration. Outcome measures cannot be altered or amended in any way. Altering the language of the outcomes or indicators, or providing responses in a format other than that described in the document, will result in disqualification of a proposal. Reference the [Outcome Measures supplement](#) for additional information on the required outcomes and indicators.

Note: All marketing and promotion projects as well as all proposals submitted to the California Grown Promotion funding category must identify and achieve, within the grant duration, Outcome 1: Enhance the competitiveness of specialty crops through increased sales.

Scoring Criteria: Scoring will be based on the significance of the anticipated project outcome, the relevance to the project activities, soundness of data collection methods, and likelihood of success.

10. Budget Narrative (20 Points):

Download the required [Budget Narrative template](#), complete it, and upload it to your application using the attachments tab in FAAST. The Budget Narrative attachment must be submitted as a Microsoft Word Document (do not submit a PDF) and must use the required Microsoft Word Document template (do not alter the template in any way, except to add or remove rows in the tables as needed). For a completed example, reference [Appendix C on page 19](#).

Instructions on required information for each budget section are provided in the Budget Narrative template. Reference the [Supplemental Guidance section on page 10](#) and the [Requirements and Limitations section on page 11](#) to ensure all costs requested comply with program requirements.

Scoring Criteria: Scoring will be based on the reasonableness of the budget and relevance to the project activities and goals.

11. Cost Sharing (unscored):

If matching funds and/or in-kind contributions have been secured, download the required [Cost Sharing template](#), complete it, and upload it to your application using the attachments tab in FAAST. The Cost Sharing attachment must be submitted as a Microsoft Word Document (do not submit a PDF) and must use the required Microsoft Word Document template (do not alter the template in any way, except to add or remove rows in the table as needed). For a completed example of the Cost Sharing template, reference [Appendix D on page 24](#).

If cost sharing has not been secured, indicate “This project will not utilize cost sharing” within the text box provided.

If cost sharing has been secured, all of the following must be addressed in the Cost Sharing template:

- **PIN:** Provide the five-digit number assigned to the proposal in FAAST.
- **Total Amount of Cost Share Committed to the Project:** Enter the grand total of all matching funds and in-kind contributions committed to the project.
- **Amount:** In each row of the table, list the amount of cost share committed from a contributing organization. Add or remove rows in the table, as needed.
- **Type of Cost Share:** Specify whether the cost share is in the form of matching funds or an in-kind contribution. Matching funds refers to a dollar amount committed to a project from a source other than the SCBGP. An in-kind contribution is the estimated dollar value of any time, property, or supplies donated to a project.
- **Source:** Specify the name of the organization that will be contributing the cost share.
- **Summary of Activities or Costs Covered with Matching Funds or In-kind Contributions:** Describe what costs or activities the cost share will cover.

Note: The Cost Sharing template is the only document necessary to evidence matching funds and/or in-kind contributions to a project. Letters of commitment or other evidence of cost sharing are not required.

12. Project Oversight (unscored):

Attach a current resume or curriculum vitae (CV) for the Project Director(s), Project Manager(s), Principal Investigator(s), and any collaborators who will receive a portion of the project funds. Attach resumes or CVs in PDF format and name each document: R1, R2, R3 or CV1, CV2, CV3, etc.

Supplemental Guidance

Outcome Measures

USDA and the Office of Management and Budget have developed SCBGP national outcomes measures mandatory to the program beginning in Federal Fiscal Year 2016. CDFA has developed an [Outcome Measures supplement](#) with additional information on these requirements and to assist applicants in complying with the SCBGP outcome measures.

Solely Enhancing the Competitiveness of Specialty Crops

SCBGP funds must be used solely to enhance the competitiveness of specialty crops. CDFA has developed [guidance](#) based on content from USDA to help applicants ensure compliance with this essential program requirement.

Fixed Amount Awards

CDFA has developed [guidance](#) for fixed amount award proposals. This document addresses common questions regarding fixed amount awards to assist applicants in completing the grant proposal and budget template.

Procuring Goods and Services Using Federal Funds

Federal regulations require all procurement transactions, including contracting for services, must be conducted in a manner that provides full and open competition and is consistent with the standards described in [2 CFR 200.317 – 200.326](#). CDFA has developed [guidance](#) to assist applicants in ensuring that proposals conform to the federal procurement requirements.

Guidance for Developing the Budget Narrative

In developing the grant proposal Budget Narrative, applicants should ensure that all costs are reasonable, necessary to meet the objectives of the project, allowable, and incurred in a manner consistent with the applicant organization's established practices. Both the Budget Narrative and the activities that the requested funds will support must conform to the appropriate cost principles for the applicant organization, USDA program requirements, and the requirements established by CDFA in the [Request for Concept Proposals](#). Unallowable costs and activities will be removed from a project as a condition of receiving an award. Excessive unallowable costs or activities will result in the disqualification of a grant proposal during the administrative review process.

Requirements and Limitations

2019 USDA Guidance

As of the date of this publication, USDA has not provided CDFA or any other state department of agriculture with a Request for Applications or Terms and Conditions for the 2019 SCBGP. If necessary, CDFA will prepare, and make available, a supplement to this document to advise applicants of any changes to the program upon receipt of USDA's Request for Applications. CDFA and all proposals will be subject to the terms of USDA's Request for Applications and Terms and Conditions.

Federal Funding Accountability and Transparency Act

Recipients of 2019 SCBGP funds must comply with the Federal Funding Accountability and Transparency Act of 2006 (FFATA). This includes registering in the [System for Award Management](#). Recipients must also obtain a [Dun and Bradstreet \(D&B\) Data Universal Numbering System \(DUNS\) Number](#). A DUNS Number is a unique, non-indicative nine-digit identifier issued and maintained by D&B that verifies the existence of a business entity globally.

Successful 2019 applicants will be required to provide the applicant organization's DUNS number before SCBGP funds are awarded. Applicants are highly encouraged to begin the registration process now.

Federal Cost Principles

Federal cost principles are regulations based on organization type used to determine allowable costs and ensure consistent treatment of costs. In addition to CDFA and USDA program requirements, applicants are responsible for identifying the federal cost principles appropriate to their organization, ensuring the consistent application of cost principles to the SCBGP grant funds, and ensuring contractors or consultants comply with federal cost principle requirements.

- State, local or Indian tribal governments, non-profit organizations, colleges and universities will be subject to [2 CFR 200](#).
- For-profit organizations will be subject to [48 CFR Subpart 31.2](#).

Unallowable Costs

CDFA has developed an [Allowable and Unallowable Costs and Activities Table](#) to assist applicants in preparing their proposal budget. The table provides overall guidance for handling of common costs and includes USDA and CDFA requirements specific to this program. Proposals with unallowable costs may be subject to disqualification as described on [page 14](#).

Indirect Costs

The maximum indirect cost rate is eight (8) percent of total personnel costs (budget category A. Salary and Wages plus category B. Fringe Benefits).

Applicants are responsible for presenting costs incurred for the same purpose in like circumstances consistently and must not include costs associated with an established indirect cost rate agreement as direct costs. In addition, applicants cannot allocate a cost as a direct cost if it is also incurred as an indirect cost for the same purpose and vice versa.

Direct costs are costs that can be identified specifically with a particular award, project, program, service, or other organizational activity or that can be directly assigned to such an activity relatively easily with a high degree of accuracy. Typically, direct costs include, but are not limited to, compensation of employees who work directly on the award to include salaries and fringe benefits, travel that is necessary for the project, and equipment and supplies used solely for the project to enhance the competitiveness of specialty crops.

Indirect costs (also known as “facilities and administrative costs”) are costs incurred for common or joint objectives that cannot be identified specifically with a particular project, program, or organizational activity. Below are typical indirect costs for specific types of organizations. The salaries of administrative and clerical staff should normally be treated as indirect costs. Direct charging of these costs may be appropriate where all of the following conditions are met:

- administrative or clerical services are integral to a project or activity;
- individuals involved can be specifically identified with the project or activity;
- such costs are explicitly included in the budget or have the prior written approval of the federal awarding agency; and
- the costs are not also recovered as indirect costs.

The following are considered indirect and should not be included in the Budget Template as direct costs:

- Information technology services
- Rent
- Utilities and internet service
- Telephone service (mobile and land-line)
- General office supplies
- Insurance
- Maintenance

*Note: The indirect cost rate for SCBGP is limited by federal statute. The rate published in this solicitation document ensures conformity to the federal statute. Applicants that might ordinarily be eligible to receive a higher indirect rate from other state or federal programs are responsible for ensuring that their organization/institution will allow an exception for this program **before** submitting an application.*

Travel

The maximum travel rates allowable are the lesser of the rates in effect at the time of travel as established by the United States (U.S.) [General Services Administration \(GSA\)](#), or the Recipient's established travel policy. Applicants should apply the current government mileage rate for personally owned vehicles used for travel related to the project: <http://www.irs.gov/Tax-Professionals/Standard-Mileage-Rates>.

In accordance with [California Assembly Bill 1887](#), state funded and state sponsored travel to states with discriminatory laws is prohibited. SCBGP funds cannot be used to support costs for travel to states with active discriminatory laws. As of the issuance of this document the following states are subject to California's ban on state funded and state sponsored travel: Alabama, Kansas, Kentucky, Mississippi, North Carolina, Oklahoma, South Dakota, Tennessee, and Texas.

Note: International travel must comply with the [Fly America Act, 49 U.S.C. 40118](#) and [C](#). Also, consideration should be given to the use of alternative technologies such as teleconferencing or videoconferencing if they are available, appropriate for the project, and less costly.

Review and Notification

Review Criteria

CDFA's intent is to fund projects that can produce the highest degree of measurable benefits to California specialty crop producers in relation to each dollar spent. Applicants' grant proposals will be evaluated on the criteria set forth in the [Grant Proposal Questions and Scoring](#) section.

Review Process

CDFA will conduct two levels of review during the grant proposal process. The first level is an administrative review to determine whether grant proposal requirements are met, the project activities and costs are allowable, and, if applicable, assess the applicant's past CDFA grant performance.

The second level is a technical review to evaluate the merits of the grant proposals. The CDFA SCBGP Technical Review Committee (TRC) will perform the technical review. The TRC is comprised of growers and representatives from industry, universities, public agencies, and non-profits with an interest and expertise in specialty crops and agricultural systems.

Notification and Feedback

Projects that are disqualified utilizing the criteria below will be notified within three weeks of the grant proposal due date. All other applicants will be notified regarding the status of their grant proposals in Fall 2019. Successful applicants will receive an award letter with further instructions on the grant agreement process. Applicants not awarded funds will receive administrative and technical review feedback on their grant proposals on the feedback tab in the FAAST system.

Disqualifications

The following will result in the disqualification of a project proposal:

- Incomplete proposals: proposals with one or more unanswered questions necessary to administrative or technical review.
- Incomplete proposals: proposals with missing, blank, unreadable, corrupt, or otherwise unusable attachments.
- Proposals that include activities outside the grant duration.
- Proposals that include additional content or documentation of any kind to circumvent the character limitations within the FAAST system.
- Proposals for less than the minimum award amount or more than the maximum award amount.
- Proposals with unallowable costs or activities necessary to complete the project objectives, including indirect costs that exceed the limit set forth in this document.
- Proposals in which the outcome measure and/or indicators and/or sub-indicators are altered.

- Applicants with an active exclusion or delinquent federal debt according to the federal System for Award Management (SAM).
- Proposals that fail to disclose other support from federal or state grant programs.

APPEAL RIGHTS: Any discretionary action taken by the Office of Grants Administration (OGA) may be appealed to CDFA's Office of Hearings and Appeals within ten (10) days of receiving this notification. The appeal must be in writing and signed by the responsible party named on the grant application or his/her authorized agent. It must state the grounds for the appeal and include any supporting documents and a copy of the OGA decision being challenged. The submission must be sent to the California Department of Food and Agriculture Office of Hearings and Appeals, 1220 N Street, Suite 315, Sacramento CA 95814 or emailed to CDFA.LegalOffice@cdfa.ca.gov. If submissions are not received within the time frame provided above, the appeal will be denied.

Assistance and Questions

Grant Proposal Webinars

CDFA will conduct two webinars for applicants invited to the grant proposal phase, as noted in the [timeline](#) on page two. The webinars will provide additional information on developing a grant proposal, allowable and unallowable costs, and participant questions will be addressed. All applicants are encouraged to participate in one of the two webinars. Email grants@cdfa.ca.gov to register.

Questions and Answers (Q&A)

CDFA will conduct three rounds of Q&A to address general questions about the grant proposal phase. Email all questions about the solicitation process to: grants@cdfa.ca.gov. Responses to all questions received during the webinars or by email will be posted to [CDFA's SCBGP website](#) according to the following schedule:

| Questions Received by: | Responses Posted by: |
|--|--|
| Tuesday, January 22, 2019 at 8:00 am PST | Friday, January 25, 2019 at 5:00 pm PST |
| Monday, January 28, 2019 at 8:00 am PST | Thursday, January 31, 2019 at 5:00 pm PST |
| Monday, February 4, 2019 at 8:00 am PST | Wednesday, February 6, 2019 at 5:00 pm PST |

Monday, February 4, 2019 at 8:00 am PST is the final deadline to submit questions for the grant proposal phase.

In order to maintain the integrity of the competitive grant process, CDFA is unable to advise and/or provide individuals with any information regarding specific proposals during the solicitation process.

Appendix A: Project Objectives and Work Plan Example

► Download the [Project Objectives and Work Plan template](#) here.

2019 Specialty Crop Block Grant Program PROJECT OBJECTIVES AND WORK PLAN

| | |
|---|------------------|
| Proposal Identification Number (PIN) <i>(five digit number assigned in FFAST)</i> | 12345 |
| Project Start Date <i>(projects cannot start before 11/1/2019)</i> | 11/1/2019 |
| Project End Date <i>(projects cannot end after 4/30/2022)</i> | 3/01/2022 |

Objective 1: Develop a California specialty crop nutrition campaign, "Cooking with Parents," aimed at encouraging children to try one new California specialty crop each month and cook with their parents.

| Objective 1 Activities | Performed by | Timeline |
|--|------------------|---------------------|
| Develop overall campaign goals and objectives. | Project Director | Nov 2019 – Dec 2019 |
| Create educational poster to be distributed to local schools. | Designer | Jan 2020 – Mar 2020 |
| Prepare take home kits for children to use with their parents. | Project Manager | Mar 2020 – May 2020 |

Objective 2: Identify local partnerships.

| Objective 2 Activities | Performed by | Timeline |
|---|-------------------|---------------------|
| Identify local schools that want to participate in campaign. | Education Manager | May 2020 – Jul 2020 |
| Identify a local chef willing to conduct cooking demonstrations. | Project Manager | May 2020 – Jul 2020 |
| Schedule classroom instruction time. | Project Manager | Jul 2020 – Aug 2020 |
| Conduct a pre-survey to determine children's knowledge and interest in consuming fruits and vegetables. | Project Evaluator | Aug 2020 – Oct 2020 |

Objective 3: Conduct "Cooking with Parents" demonstrations in local schools.

| Objective 3 Activities | Performed by | Timeline |
|---|-----------------------------|---------------------|
| Conduct "Cooking with Parents" demonstrations in local schools, once a month. | Chef, Nutrition Coordinator | Oct 2020 – Oct 2021 |
| Distribute take home kits and encourage students to cook with their parents. | Nutrition Coordinator | Oct 2020 – Oct 2021 |

Objective 4: Track and publish project results.

| Objective 4 Activities | Performed by | Timeline |
|--|-------------------|---------------------|
| Conduct a post-project survey and track project results. | Project Evaluator | Oct 2021 – Dec 2021 |
| Publish project results on company website and social media. | Web Designer | Dec 2021 – Mar 2022 |

Appendix B: Outcome Measures Example

► Download the [Outcome Measures template](#) here.

2019 Specialty Crop Block Grant Program OUTCOME MEASURES

PIN: 12345

Select at least one of the eight outcome measures and at least one indicator for each selected outcome. Complete the fillable text fields for the indicator(s) selected. (Note: If there are multiple sub-indicators under the selected indicator, applicants must enter a value for at least one.) Within the Description sections, describe the data collection methods and any activities that will be undertaken to monitor and report on the outcome(s) and indicator(s) selected. Applicants may delete or leave blank any outcomes not applicable to their proposal. Outcome measures and the associated indicators were developed by USDA and the Office of Management and Budget and cannot be altered or amended in any way. Altering the language of the outcomes or indicators, or providing responses in a format other than that described in the document will result in disqualification of a proposal.

| | |
|---|---|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | Outcome 1: Enhance the competitiveness of specialty crops through increased sales |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | Indicator 1: Sales increased from \$40 million to \$60 million and by 50 percent as a result of marketing and/or promotion activities. |
| Description of data collection methods: Sacramento county winegrape growers will report actual sales data resulting from project activities on an annual basis. | |
| Description of activities to monitor and report on outcomes: Historical sales data from participating growers will be collected in November 2019 to establish the baseline price that growers received for their winegrapes in 2018. Growers will report sales on an annual basis in November 2020 and 2021 to monitor the increase in winegrape sales that has occurred during the grant duration. Information provided by growers will include: price of winegrapes per ton, volume of cases sold, and jobs created since promotional effort began, among other questions. Data collected will be used to monitor the project activities' success in increasing sales. Outcomes will be reported at annual meeting, through two conference presentations, and in a report posted to organization website and sent in a mass email to registered beneficiaries. | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Outcome 2: Enhance the competitiveness of specialty crops through increased consumption |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Indicator 1: Of the Enter number children and youth reached, <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Enter number gained knowledge about eating more specialty crops b. Enter number reported an intention to eat more specialty crops c. Enter number reported eating more specialty crops |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Indicator 2: Of the Enter number adults reached, <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Enter number gained knowledge about eating more specialty crops b. Enter number reported an intention to eat more specialty crops c. Enter number reported eating more specialty crops |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Indicator 3: Enter number new and improved technologies and processes to enhance the nutritional value and consumer acceptance of specialty crops (excluding patents) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Indicator 4: Enter number new specialty crops and/or specialty crop products introduced to consumers |
| Description of data collection methods: Click here to enter text. | |
| Description of activities to monitor and report on outcomes: Click here to enter text. | |

Appendix C: Budget Narrative Example

► Download the [Budget Narrative template](#) here.

2019 Specialty Crop Block Grant Program BUDGET NARRATIVE

| | |
|---|------------------|
| Proposal Identification Number (PIN) <i>(five-digit number assigned in FAAST)</i> | 12345 |
| Total Amount of SCBGP Funds Requested <i>(must match Amount Requested in FAAST)</i> | \$175,060 |

A. SALARY AND WAGES

| # | Title, Name | Level of Effort (# of hours or % FTE) | Funds Requested |
|---------------------------|---|--|--------------------|
| 1 | Postdoctoral Researcher, Jane Scientist | 50% FTE | \$55,000.00 |
| 2 | Graduate Student Researcher, To Be Determined, | 25% FTE | \$16,750.00 |
| 3 | Undergraduate Student Assistant, To Be Determined | 500 hours | \$6,500.00 |
| Personnel Subtotal | | | \$78,250 |

Employee 1: Postdoctoral Researcher, Jane Scientist. The Postdoctoral Researcher will finalize development of the field monitoring design and coordinate with growers, oversee field work, manage curation and identification of specimens, analyze data and integrate data into the decision model, implement grower field days, prepare the grower newsletter, and conduct project outreach. (Objectives 1–7).

Employee 2: Graduate Student Researcher, To Be Determined. The Graduate Student Researcher will help collect field data, curate, and help to identify specimens and enter data, maintain test plots, and participate in project outreach. (Objectives 3, 4, and 7).

Employee 3: Undergraduate Student Assistant, To Be Determined. The Undergraduate Student Assistant will help with specimen curation and data entry and will work closely with the Postdoctoral Researcher and the Graduate Student Researcher and perform tasks as needed. (Objective 3).

B. FRINGE BENEFITS

| # | Title, Name | Fringe Benefit Rate (% of salary or wages) | Funds Requested |
|---------------------------------|---|---|--------------------|
| 1 | Postdoctoral Researcher, Jane Scientist | 19% | \$10,450.00 |
| 2 | Graduate Student Researcher, To Be Determined | 36% | \$6,030.00 |
| 3 | Undergraduate Student Assistant, To Be Determined | 2% | \$130.00 |
| Fringe Benefits Subtotal | | | \$16,610 |

FRINGE BENEFITS POLICY: The applicant confirms that the organization's established fringe benefits policy was used in determining the fringe benefits costs listed above.

**2019 Specialty Crop Block Grant Program
BUDGET NARRATIVE**

C. TRAVEL

| # | Trip Destination | Type of Expense | Unit of Measure | Number of Units | Cost per Unit | Number Claiming Expense | Funds Requested |
|------------------------|------------------|------------------------------|-----------------|-----------------|---------------|-------------------------|-----------------|
| 1 | Monterey, CA | Mileage | Miles | 360 | \$0.58 | 1 | \$208.80 |
| | | Lodging | Nights | 1 | \$154.00 | 2 | \$308.00 |
| | | Per Diem (First and Last) | Days | 2 | \$57.00 | 2 | \$228.00 |
| | | Per Diem | Days | 2 | \$76.00 | 2 | \$304.00 |
| 2 | Madera, CA | Rental Car | Days | 1 | \$50.00 | 1 | \$50.00 |
| | | Parking | Days | 1 | \$16.00 | 1 | \$16.00 |
| | | Fuel | Gallons | 10 | \$3.00 | 1 | \$30.00 |
| | | Train | Days | 1 | \$32.00 | 1 | \$32.00 |
| | | Per Diem (First and Last) | Days | 1 | \$53.25 | 2 | \$106.50 |
| 3 | Los Banos, CA | Mileage | Miles | 240 | \$0.58 | 1 | \$139.20 |
| | | Lodging | Nights | 1 | \$94.00 | 2 | \$188.00 |
| | | Per Diem (First and Last) | Days | 1 | \$41.25 | 2 | \$82.50 |
| 4 | Philadelphia, PA | Airfare | Roundtrip | 1 | \$344.00 | 1 | \$344.00 |
| | | Lodging | Nights | 3 | \$162.00 | 1 | \$486.00 |
| | | Per Diem (First and Last) | Days | 2 | \$45.75 | 1 | \$91.50 |
| | | Per Diem | Days | 1 | \$61.00 | 1 | \$61.00 |
| Travel Subtotal | | | | | | | \$2,685 |

Trip 1 (11/2020): The Postdoctoral Researcher and the Graduate Student Researcher will travel from Sacramento, CA to Monterey, CA to conduct a focus group. (Objective 1).

Trip 2 (12/2021): The Postdoctoral Researcher and the Graduate Student Researcher will travel from Sacramento, CA to Madera, CA for sample collection. (Objectives 1, 3-4).

Trip 3 (01/2021 – 03/2021): The Postdoctoral Researcher and the Graduate Student Researcher will travel from Sacramento, CA to Los Banos, CA to conduct a workshop. (Objective 7).

Trip 4 (03/2021): The Postdoctoral Researcher will travel from Sacramento, CA to Philadelphia, PA to present the project results at the Specialty Crop Research Conference. The conference cost does not include meals. (Objective 7).

SCBGP TRAVEL POLICY: The applicant confirms that the organization will adhere to the travel costs established by the Federal Travel Regulation issued by GSA when completing the above-mentioned trips, including the maximum per diem and subsistence rates prescribed in those regulations. This information is available at <http://www.gsa.gov>.

**2019 Specialty Crop Block Grant Program
BUDGET NARRATIVE**

D. SCIENTIFIC RESEARCH EQUIPMENT

| # | Item Description | Acquire When? | Funds Requested |
|---|---|---------------|-----------------|
| 1 | Thermo Scientific 8000 Aquamate Uv-Vis Spectrometer | Year 1 | \$5,995.00 |
| Scientific Research Equipment Subtotal | | | \$5,995 |

Item 1: Funds are requested to purchase a Thermo Scientific 8000 Aquamate Uv-Vis Spectrometer for processing water samples. (Objective 3).

E. SUPPLIES

| # | Item Description | Cost per Unit | Number of Units | Acquire When? | Funds Requested |
|--------------------------|-----------------------------|---------------|-----------------|---------------|-----------------|
| 1 | Sample containers (20/pack) | \$5.00 | 4 | Year 1-2 | \$20.00 |
| 2 | Pipettes (100/unit) | \$4.00 | 1 | Year 1 | \$4.00 |
| 3 | Gloves (100/box) | \$15.00 | 2 | Year 1 | \$30.00 |
| 4 | Glassware | \$100.00 | 1 | Year 1 | \$100.00 |
| 5 | Petri dishes (500/pack) | \$167.00 | 1 | Year 1 | \$167.00 |
| 6 | Notebooks | \$2.00 | 10 | Year 1-3 | \$20.00 |
| 7 | Binders | \$5.00 | 100 | Year 3 | \$500.00 |
| Supplies Subtotal | | | | | \$841 |

Supplies 1-6: Supplies needed for collecting and processing samples. (Objective 3).

Supply 7: Binders are needed to provide handouts, worksheets, and other materials to workshop attendees. (Objective 7).

F. CONTRACTUAL

| # | Contractor Name/Organization | Project Objectives | Fee Structure | Funds Requested |
|-----------------------------|-------------------------------|--------------------|------------------|-----------------|
| 1 | Information Management, Inc. | 3 | Salary and Wages | \$27,490.00 |
| 2 | Agricultural Imaging Services | 1-3 | Flat Rate | \$30,000.00 |
| Contractual Subtotal | | | | \$57,490 |

Contractor 1: Information Management, Inc. This project will contract with Information Management, Inc. to update the interactive web-based specialty crops decision support system. The hourly salary for John Programmer, Systems Analyst exceeds the GS 15 Step 10 rate for the Sacramento, CA area. This expense is justified due to the highly specialized nature of the work to be performed. Information Management, Inc. is the most qualified organization in the area to make updates to the system. In addition, the rate requested is reasonable and consistent with fees in the marketplace for similar services. (Objective 3).

**2019 Specialty Crop Block Grant Program
BUDGET NARRATIVE**

Contractor 1: A. Salary and Wages / Fees for Professional Services

| # | Title, Name | Level of Effort (# of hours or % FTE) | Funds Requested |
|---|----------------------------------|--|--------------------|
| 1 | Systems Analyst, Jane Programmer | 200 hours | \$18,000.00 |
| Salary and Wages / Fees for Professional Services Subtotal | | | \$18,000 |

Employee 1: Systems Analyst, Jane Programmer. The Systems Analyst will charge \$90/hour for a total of 200 hours to update the interactive web-based specialty crops decision support system. (Objective 3).

Contractor 1: B. Fringe Benefits

| # | Title, Name | Fringe Benefit Rate (% of salary or wages) | Funds Requested |
|---------------------------------|----------------------------------|---|--------------------|
| 1 | Systems Analyst, Jane Programmer | 40% | \$7,200.00 |
| Fringe Benefits Subtotal | | | \$7,200 |

Contractor 1: C. Travel

| # | Trip Destination | Type of Expense | Unit of Measure | Number of Units | Cost per Unit | Number Claiming Expense | Funds Requested |
|------------------------|------------------|------------------------------|--------------------|--------------------|---------------------|-------------------------------|--------------------|
| 1 | Los Banos, CA | Mileage | Miles | 240 | \$0.58 | 1 | \$139.20 |
| | | Lodging | Nights | 1 | \$94.00 | 1 | \$94.00 |
| | | Per Diem (First and Last) | Days | 1 | \$41.25 | 1 | \$41.25 |
| Travel Subtotal | | | | | | | \$274 |

Trip 1 (01/2021): The Systems Analyst will travel from Sacramento, CA to Los Banos, CA to conduct a workshop. (Objective 7).

Contractor 1: D. Scientific Research Equipment

No costs requested.

Contractor 1: E. Supplies

No costs requested.

Contractor 1: F. Contractual

No costs requested.

Contractor 1: G. Other

No costs requested.

**2019 Specialty Crop Block Grant Program
BUDGET NARRATIVE**

Contractor 1: H. Indirect Costs

| Total Personnel Costs (A. Salary and Wages + B. Fringe Benefits) | Indirect Cost Rate (8% maximum) | Funds Requested |
|--|---|------------------------|
| \$25,200 | 8% | \$2,016 |

Contractor 2: Agricultural Imaging Services. This project will contract with Agricultural Imaging Services to obtain airborne multispectral and thermal imagery over selected orchards during the first two growing seasons of the project duration. The purpose is to derive the orchard characteristics including tree density, leaf area index, flowering intensity and duration, and cultivar overlap to be coupled with bee activity and weather data for yield prediction. The intensive flight will be conducted to collect daily bloom imagery over two weeks in February over selected orchards to cover the right mix of factors from south to north. Given the complexity of the task, the contractor could not provide the cost of service on the basis of hourly rate and estimated number of hours. Instead, the cost was calculated based on 75,000 acres of aerial imagery with a flat rate of \$15,000 per year for grant years one and two. Quotes were obtained from three vendors. This rate is reasonable and consistent with fees in the marketplace for similar services. The project team has conducted similar work previously at a comparable cost. (Objectives 1-3).

PROCUREMENT STANDARDS: The applicant confirms that the organization followed the same policies and procedures used for procurements from non-federal sources, which reflect applicable state and local laws and regulations and conform to the federal laws and standards identified in [2 CFR Part 200.317 through 326](#), as applicable. If the contractors are not already selected, the organization will follow the same requirements.

G. OTHER

| # | Item Description | Cost per Unit | Number of Units | Acquire When? | Funds Requested |
|-----------------------|-------------------------------------|---------------|-----------------|---------------|-----------------|
| 1 | Conference registration fee | \$500.00 | 1 | Year 3 | \$500.00 |
| 2 | Graduate Student Researcher tuition | \$1,700.00 | 3 | Year 1-3 | \$5,100.00 |
| Other Subtotal | | | | | \$5,600 |

Expense 1: Conference registration fees are requested for the Postdoctoral Researcher to present the project results at the Specialty Crop Research Conference. (Objective 7).

Expense 2: A mandatory fee remission for the Graduate Student Researcher (to be hired) is a benefit of employment. Costs are estimated at \$6,800 per year, prorated for 25% FTE spent on this project = \$1,700 per year for three years = \$5,100 total. (Objective 1-7).

H. INDIRECT COSTS

| Total Personnel Costs (A. Salary and Wages + B. Fringe Benefits) | Indirect Cost Rate (8% maximum) | Funds Requested |
|--|---|------------------------|
| \$94,860 | 8% | \$7,589 |

Appendix D: Cost Sharing Example

► Download the [Cost Sharing template](#) here.

2019 Specialty Crop Block Grant Program COST SHARING SUMMARY

| | |
|---|----------|
| Proposal Identification Number (PIN) <i>(five-digit number assigned in FFAST)</i> | 12345 |
| Total Amount of Cost Share Committed to the Project | \$75,000 |

| Amount | Type of Cost Share* <i>(Matching Funds or In-kind Contribution)</i> | Source | Summary of Activities or Costs Covered with Matching Funds or In-kind Contributions |
|---------------|---|-----------------------|---|
| \$15,000 | In-Kind Contribution | California University | Lab Manager Jane Doe will donate 15 percent of her time for two years to supervise plant storage conditions and oversee plant analyses by the Student Assistants, valued at \$15,000. |
| \$15,000 | Matching Funds | California University | California University will also pay for travel costs incurred to carry out objectives two and three, valued at \$15,000. |
| \$20,000 | In-kind Contribution | Sprouts Nursery | Sprouts Nursery will donate greenhouse space to be utilized by Lab Manager Jane Doe to conduct plant analyses. Rental costs of greenhouse space is valued at \$20,000. |
| \$5,000 | Matching Funds | Sprouts Nursery | Sprouts Nursery will pay for 10 percent of salary for a nursery assistant to help with project objectives one and two, valued at \$5,000. |
| \$20,000 | Matching Funds | Plant Commission | The Plant Commission will purchase field equipment needed for Objectives 1-2 and will pay for publication costs for outreach materials. |

* *Matching funds refers to a dollar amount committed to your project from a source other than the SCBGP. An in-kind contribution is the estimated dollar value of any time, property, or supplies donated to your project.*

Appendix E: Frequently Asked Questions

GENERAL QUESTIONS

1. Q. When are grant proposals due?
 - A. Grant proposals must be submitted through the State Water Resources Control Board's [Financial Application Assistance Submittal Tool \(FAAST\)](#) by 5:00 pm PDT on February 11, 2019. Late submissions will not be accepted.
2. Q. Is a recording or PowerPoint of the 2019 Specialty Crop Block Grant Program (SCBGP) Grant Proposal webinar available?
 - A. A recording of the 2019 Grant Proposal webinar and PDF copies of the PowerPoint presentations will be posted to the California Department of Agriculture (CDFA) SCBGP website (www.cdfa.ca.gov/grants) by 5:00 PM on Friday, January 25, 2019. In addition, answers to questions received during both webinars will be incorporated into the weekly Questions & Answers (Q&A) posted to CDFA's website.
3. Q. Do any of the grant proposal attachments have a page limit?
 - A. The only grant proposal attachment with a page limit is the Project Objectives and Work Plan, which cannot exceed four pages. The Outcome Measures, Budget Narrative, and Cost Sharing attachments do not have a maximum number of pages. While these documents do not have a maximum number of pages, content contained therein should be appropriate, necessary, and responsive to the intended purpose of the form. Providing additional content in an attachment to circumvent the character limitation for a question in FAAST (e.g. providing additional information on project purpose within the Outcome Measures template) will result in disqualification.
4. Q. How can applicants access the Technical Review Committee and CDFA Administrative Review Feedback for their concept proposals in FAAST?
 - A. To view feedback for a concept proposal, log onto FAAST at <https://faast.waterboards.ca.gov/> with the username and password used to submit the concept proposal. Click on Processed Applications, select the project's title and click on the Feedback tab. If the concept proposal feedback is not viewable in FAAST for any reason, please contact CDFA via grants@cdfa.ca.gov for assistance. To maintain the integrity of the competitive process, CDFA is unable to provide applicants with clarification on feedback provided in FAAST.
5. Q. Can applicants include other attachments outside of the required or optional attachments mentioned in the 2019 Grant Proposal Instructions?
 - A. Attachments other than the required or optional attachments detailed in the Grant Proposal Instructions, including links embedded in the FAAST application or required attachments, are highly discouraged. Technical Review Committee members are not required to review extraneous attachments. Proposals that include additional documentation of any kind to circumvent the character limitations within the FAAST system will be disqualified.

6. Q. Will CDFA provide answers to specific questions regarding the eligibility of grant proposals or assist applicants in identifying program priorities, project beneficiaries, and/or outcome measures and indicators?
- A. To maintain the integrity of the competitive grant process, CDFA is unable to advise and/or provide individuals with feedback on specific proposals during the solicitation process. CDFA cannot assist applicants with identifying program priorities, project beneficiaries, and/or outcome measures and indicators.
7. Q. Can project activities occur before November 1, 2019 or after April 30, 2022? If so, can the costs of those activities be charged to the grant?
- A. Expenses for activities occurring before November 1, 2019 or after April 30, 2022 cannot be charged to the grant. Applicants may use cost sharing to fund activities prior to the start of the grant duration; however, activities occurring before grant awards are announced would be subject to the risk that grant funding is not subsequently received. Additionally, note that due to administrative requirements and federal program requirements, CDFA cannot offer no cost extensions beyond April 30, 2022.
8. Q. Can substantial changes be made to the project described in the concept proposal?
- A. Applicants may revise and refine their project during the grant proposal phase. Some degree of change is anticipated in response to grant proposal requirements and feedback provided; however, substantial changes are discouraged. CDFA cannot anticipate how changes to the scope of a project will be viewed by the Technical Review Committee.
9. Q. Can applicants be awarded funding for more than one SCBGP project?
- A. Applicants may be awarded funding for more than one SCBGP project; however, duplication of costs or activities is not permitted. In addition, applicants should ensure they have adequate capacity to effectively manage multiple SCBGP awards.
10. Q. Are applicants required to obtain a Data Universal Numbering System (DUNS) number and register with the System for Award Management (SAM) prior to submitting a grant proposal?
- A. A DUNS number and registration in the SAM are not required prior to submitting a grant proposal. However, successful 2019 applicants will be required to provide the applicant organization's DUNS number and be registered with the SAM before SCBGP funds are awarded. Applicants are highly encouraged to begin the registration process now.
11. Q. When are the 2019 SCBGP awards announced and can CDFA inform applicants of the status of their application(s) prior to the announcement?
- A. It is anticipated that USDA will announce 2019 SCBGP awards in Fall 2019. USDA has final approval of all proposals awarded funding; therefore, CDFA cannot advise applicants of their project status before awards are announced.

FIXED AMOUNT AWARDS

1. Q. Do fixed amount award applicants complete the same FAAST questionnaire and Budget Narrative template as other applicants to the program?
 - A. Fixed amount award applicants must complete the same FAAST questionnaire and Budget Narrative template as conventional applicants to allow CDFA to conduct an administrative review of the proposal and for the Technical Review Committee to complete a merit-based review. However, fixed amount award applicants are also required to complete the Fixed Amount Awards Objectives Schedule Table at the bottom of the Budget Narrative template. Completion of this table is necessary to determine the allowability and reasonableness of costs fixed amount award projects will incur to complete the project objectives. Fixed amount awards are based on outcomes achieved rather than actual costs incurred; however, costs associated with these awards must comply with the federal cost principles, USDA program requirements and CDFA program requirements.

FUNDING AREA AND FUNDING CATEGORY

1. Q. Can a grant proposal be submitted under a different funding category than the concept proposal?
 - A. No. A grant proposal cannot be submitted under a different funding category than the concept proposal.

FAAST APPLICATION

1. Q. How can applicants access the grant proposal application in FAAST?
 - A. To view the grant proposal application, log onto FAAST at <https://faast.waterboards.ca.gov> with the username and password used to submit the concept proposal. Click on Active Applications, select the project's title and click on the Questionnaire tab.
2. Q. Are there character limits for each section of the grant proposal application in FAAST?
 - A. FAAST imposes text box character limits, clearly marked in red text at the bottom of each text box. The character limits range from 100 to 1,000 characters including letters, numbers, spaces, punctuation, and hidden formatting code. Figures, images, tables, and hyperlinks are not allowed.

OTHER SUPPORT FROM FEDERAL OR STATE GRANT PROGRAMS

1. Q. Should an applicant inform CDFA if they applied to another agency to fund a project submitted to the 2019 SCBGP? What if both agencies agree to fund the project?
 - A. An applicant must inform CDFA if they apply and/or receive funding for a project that has been submitted to the 2019 SCBGP. SCBGP funds cannot duplicate activities supported by other state or federal programs. If awarded funding from another source, applicants must either demonstrate that funds from each program will go towards different activities or be prepared to decline funding from one program or the other. Failure to disclose other support from federal or state grant programs, whether applied for or received, will result in the disqualification of a proposal.

EXTERNAL PROJECT SUPPORT

1. Q. Who should be listed in the External Project Support response?
 - A. The External Project Support response should identify one specific specialty crop stakeholder and explain why they believe the project is important and timely for the specialty crop industry.

Specialty crop stakeholders include individuals/organizations involved in the specialty crop industry such as growers, companies, certified crop advisors (CCAs) and pest control advisors (PCAs), commodity boards or commissions, trade associations, etc. The External Project Support response should not reference the applicant, cooperators, contractors, or any other entity that will participate in project activities, receive project funding, or contribute cost share. In addition, members of the general public, legislators, or any organizations that are not affiliated with the specialty crop industry should not be included in the External Project Support response.

2. Q. Are letters of support required?

A. Letters of support are not a requirement of the SCBGP but are strongly encouraged to demonstrate industry support for a project. If applicable, letters of support should be provided in addition to (rather than in lieu of) a narrative response to the External Project Support question.

3. Q. Who should submit letters of support?

A. Letters of support may come from specialty crop stakeholders, individuals, and organizations that are supportive of what the project will accomplish but who are not directly involved in project activities. Do not include letters of support from the applicant, cooperators, contractors, or any other entity that will participate in project activities, receive project funding, or contribute cost share. Letters of support from project beneficiaries are appropriate, so long as the benefit received is not in the form of grant funding. For example, letters of support from specialty crop farmers who will receive training through the grant are appropriate; letters of support from the employees of the applicant or a contractor are not. In addition, do not include letters of support from members of the general public, legislators, elected officials, or any organizations that are not affiliated with the specialty crop industry.

4. Q. How should letters of support be submitted?

A. Letters of support should be written on the stakeholder's official letterhead, be addressed to CDFA Office of Grants Administration, and explain why the stakeholder supports the project. All letters of support must be attached to the grant proposal application in FFAST; letters sent directly to CDFA via mail or email will not be considered. Applicants should attach LOS in PDF format using the following file naming convention: LOS1, LOS2, LOS3, etc.

OUTCOME MEASURES

1. Q. Can the Outcome Measures template that was submitted for the concept proposal be submitted for the grant proposal?

A. Yes. However, applicants should review and consider any concept proposal feedback that was provided by CDFA and/or the Technical Review Committee regarding the Outcome Measures. In addition, if the project has changed from the concept proposal to the grant proposal, this may need to be reflected in the Outcome Measures.

2. Q. Can the grant proposal identify different outcome measures and indicators than those listed in the concept proposal?

A. Applicants may select different outcome measures and indicators from the concept proposal to the grant proposal phase. However, CDFA cannot anticipate how the TRC will view substantial

changes to the project. Note that at least one outcome measure must be achievable within the grant duration. Additionally, marketing and promotion proposals must retain and achieve outcome measure 1, even if other changes are made during the grant proposal phase.

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. Although there is no limit on the amount that the budget may change, CDFA cannot anticipate how changes will be viewed by the Technical Review Committee and substantial changes (+/- 20 percent) may be questioned. If the budget changes, ensure the revised amount is between \$50,000 and \$450,000 (\$50,000 and \$150,000 for fixed amount awards) and update the amount listed under Funds Requested on the Project Budget tab in FAAST.
2. Q. What is the limit for compensation for individual contractors/consultants?
 - A. Individual contractual fees should be reasonable and consistent with fees in the marketplace for similar services. Salary and wages or fees for professional services for contractors/consultants cannot exceed the GS-15 step 10 for your locality/area without justification. A justification for an individual contractor/consultant may include but is not limited to: a cost/price analysis; an explanation of unique qualifications, special expertise due to the complexity of the project/task or limited pool of available or qualified contractors/consultants; or historical data supporting the rate charged by contractors/consultants. Reference the Procuring Goods and Services Using Federal Funds supplement for additional guidance on contractual restrictions.
3. Q. Can institutions charge an indirect cost rate greater than eight percent of the total personnel costs?
 - A. The indirect cost rate for the Specialty Crop Block Grant Program is established in federal statute. Please reference Section 10010(4) of the Agricultural Act of 2014, Public Law 113-79 as well as 2 CFR 200.414 (c)(1). CDFA has established a maximum indirect cost rate of eight (8) percent of total personnel costs (salary and wages plus fringe benefits) for California Specialty Crop Block Grant Program projects. This cap is necessary for CDFA to be able to administer the program and adhere to all statutory requirements. Accordingly, CDFA will not accept requests for indirect costs greater than eight percent of total personnel costs and excessive indirect costs may result in disqualification.
4. Q. Can applicants use grant funds to give away specialty crop commodities?
 - A. No. The cost to purchase or grow the specialty crop commodities and the personnel costs associated with facilitating the donation are unallowable costs. Projects that focus primarily on donating or distributing donated food may want to consider alternative funding opportunities described in the RFCP and on the CDFA grants website or consider securing cost share to cover unallowable costs and activities.

5. Q. Can applicants use grant funds for giving away promotional items or making donations?
 - A. No. Selling and marketing costs associated with giving away promotional items such as swag, gifts, prizes, memorabilia, and souvenirs; or making donations of property, money, or services are unallowable.

COST SHARING

1. Q. What is the difference between matching funds and/or in-kind contributions?
 - A. Matching funds refers to real dollar contributions to a project from sources other than the SCBGP. In-kind contributions refer to the determined values of assets donated to the project (e.g., equipment, use of land, volunteered staff time, etc.). If matching funds and/or in-kind contributions have been secured for the project, applicants must complete and attach the Cost Sharing template.

PROJECT OVERSIGHT

1. Q. Who should provide resumes or curriculum vitae (CV)s?
 - A. Curriculum vitae or resumes (whichever is most applicable) should be provided for the Project Director, Project Manager, Project Investigator, and/or collaborators who will receive a portion of the grant funds. The preferred format for resumes or curriculum vitae is PDF.

GRANT MANAGEMENT

1. Q. How will an applicant be reimbursed for allowable costs incurred throughout the grant?
 - A. Generally, recipients submit invoices to CDFA for reimbursement of actual expenses. Invoices must be submitted at least quarterly, but no more frequently than monthly. In some circumstances, recipients may also request advance payments. Reference [pages 11-12 of the 2018 Grant Management Procedures Manual](#) for more information regarding payment of conventional and fixed amount awards.