



The Council
of State
Governments

WIC Special Project Innovation Grant RFA

Learn more about this new funding opportunity
July 15, 2020 | 1:00 p.m. EDT

For More Program Information



Program Website:
<https://web.csg.org/wic/>



Funding Opportunity Page:
<https://web.csg.org/wic/funding-opportunity/>



Contact email:
wic@csq.org

Agenda

- Introduction: CSG, GSCN and WSPI
- WSPI project overview
- Certification enhancement opportunities
- Technical assistance opportunities
- Application instructions
- Review process
- Q&A session

How does WSPI differ from past Special Project Grant opportunities?



Funds will be disbursed to grantees directly from The Council of State Governments (CSG).



The Gretchen Swanson Center for Nutrition (GSCN) has been contracted by CSG to lead evaluation efforts for the project.



Technical Assistance will be provided by CSG and GSCN to applicants and grantees during all phases of this funding opportunity including application and project idea development as well as project evaluation.



The application window provided by CSG gives WIC State agencies ample time to access this TA during proposal development.

The Council of State Governments

Founded in 1933, CSG is our nation's only organization serving all three branches of state government.

It is a region-based forum that fosters the exchange of insights and ideas to help state officials shape public policy. This offers unparalleled regional, national and international opportunities to network, develop leaders, collaborate and create problem-solving partnerships. CSG champions excellence in state governments to advance the common good.

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WSPI Evaluation Partner: GSCN

Gretchen Swanson Center for Nutrition

- Founded in 1973, GSCN is a national nonprofit research center based in Omaha, Nebraska
- It focuses on research, evaluation and measurement across the public health nutrition areas of healthy eating, active living, food insecurity and local food systems



Connect with us:

- ✦ Website:
www.centerfornutrition.org
- ✦ Facebook:
CenterforNutrition
- ✦ Twitter: GretchenSwanson

Role of Gretchen Swanson Center on this WSPI Opportunity

- GSCN has helped develop the evaluation inputs for the RFA
- Post-award, GSCN will assist each funded project in developing a detailed evaluation plan
- For example, GSCN may help grantees with:
 - Seeking IRB approval
 - Detailed evaluation plans, including timelines and processes/protocols
 - Measurement development
 - Identification of appropriate measurement, including surveys
 - Develop of survey items if needed
 - Assist teams in developing data collection plans



Project Purpose

The purpose of the 2019 WIC Special Project Innovation Grant (WSPI) is to fund projects led by State and/or local agencies that administer the Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children (WIC).

Projects will seek to develop, implement and evaluate interventions that should aim to improve customer service in WIC clinics and enhance the WIC certification process.



Eligibility

- WSPI applicants must be either a WIC State agency, WIC local agency or a consortium of WIC agencies
- Consortiums of agencies applying for this funding opportunity will need to include written agreements between all consortium members
- Interested local WIC agencies should acquire a letter of support from their WIC State agency



Funding Amount

- **Up to \$6 million** is available for Special Project Innovation Grant projects.
- WSPI applicants may request a **maximum of \$2 million per project**. There is no minimum award amount.
- WSPI intends to fund multiple projects.

Project Timeline

Nov. 30, 2020

Letter of Intent Deadline (5 p.m. ET)

Jan. 21, 2021

Application Deadline (5 p.m. ET)

March 1, 2021

Grant Awards Announced

June 31, 2022

End of Project Period

Certification Enhancement Opportunities

1. Adopt policies, practices and/or technologies that enable participants to initiate and complete
 - *Examples:* Online appointment request system, use of electronic documents
2. Enhance capacity to utilize digital technology for appointment reminders and notifications of incomplete certifications
 - *Examples:* WIC mobile app, targeted text messaging system

Certification Enhancement Opportunities (cont.)

3. Develop and implement an online WIC referral portal for programs that establish adjunctive income eligibility for WIC
 - *Examples:* Built-in management information system checks, direct use of Medicaid portals
4. WIC agency led innovative strategies to improve the WIC certification process that are not captured by Enhancement Opportunities 1-3

Proposals Not Captured by Enhancement Opportunities 1–3

WIC agencies may have ideas for innovative strategies or tools that do not fall into one of the previous categories. This RFA encourages innovative ideas, if applicants demonstrate how these might improve the WIC certification process and can be implemented under current federal requirements.



Projects in this category should still follow all RFA guidelines and criteria.

Considerations for Proposals Not Captured by Enhancement Opportunities 1–3

- How the project aims to improve customer service in the WIC certification process
- The proposed project has measurable results and fully transparent program operations so that successful project activities could be scaled or transferred to other WIC agencies
- How the project meets the definition of innovation, which includes:
 - A project that is new to the WIC State agency or a project that has never been funded by FNS
 - An existing project that has not yet been evaluated for impact on WIC certification and customer service measures
 - A project that will substantially improve upon an existing strategy or adapt it for a WIC agency of differing size, demographic context and clientele

Technical Assistance Opportunities

CSG and GSCN will provide interested WIC agencies with technical assistance opportunities to aid in application and project idea development as well as evaluation.



Grant applicants can request assistance around:

- Application instructions
- Application attachment requirements
- Staff training
- Data collection and analysis
- Other issues that arise throughout the course of the project

Pre-Award Technical Assistance



To help ensure that technical assistance provided to interested applicants is uniformly available to all, CSG will post a summary of all questions and answers provided on the project website at web.csq.org/WIC.

All posted questions will remain anonymous.



CSG aims to directly answer all RFA or project related questions and post a response on the website for other interested applicants in less than 10 business days.

Post-Award Technical Assistance

Date	Technical Assistance Opportunity
March 2021	Project kickoff meeting for grantees
March-April 2021	Individualized implementation/evaluation plan support
Quarterly	Quarterly conference calls with CSG, GSCN and other grantees

Required Grantee Activities



Over the duration of the project, WSPI grantees are required to:

- Attend a post-award project kickoff meeting with CSG, GSCN and FNS
- Participate in quarterly grantee conference calls
- Complete quarterly progress and financial reports
- Complete a final report within two months of the end of the project funding period
- Attend the closeout session at FNS headquarters in Alexandria, Virginia, to present final project outcomes

Grantee Evaluation Requirements

- Grantees will work with GSCN to collaboratively plan and conduct an evaluation of their project that includes development of measures and methods, as well as analysis and interpretation of findings.
- All projects involving human subjects research will require the approval of an Institutional Review Board.
- Additionally, all grantees must participate in an overarching evaluation led by GSCN that will consider implementation factors and lessons learned across all funded projects.
- Grantees will be responsible for their own individual reports at project completion.

Application Instructions

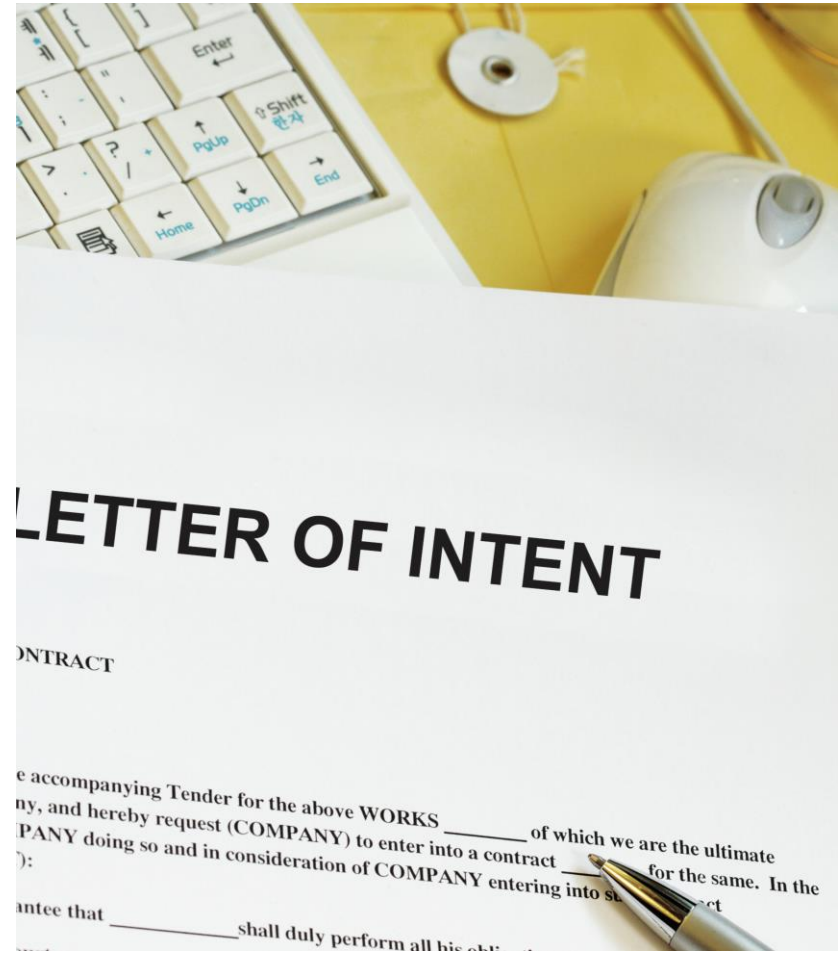
Interested applicants to this grant opportunity must **download and complete the application form.**

All applications should be prepared in the format requested and submitted **via email to WIC@csg.org** with the subject line **“WIC Special Project Innovation Application.”**

To be considered for review, applications must be submitted by **5:00 p.m. ET on Jan. 31, 2021**. No late applications will be accepted. Incomplete applications will not be considered for review.

Application Instructions – Letter of Intent

WSPI applicants are highly encouraged to submit a non-binding Letter of Intent to Submit an Application (LOI) before submission of a full application by **5:00 p.m. ET on Nov. 30, 2020.**



Application Form

The fillable application form is divided into the following sections

Section 1	Summary
Section 2	Project Plan
Section 3	Evaluation Requirements
Section 4	Project Management Plan
Section 5	Budget Narrative
Section 6	Attachments

Section 1: Summary

Section 1

Summary is comprised of:

- Selection of Enhancement Opportunity or other project proposed
- Total requested budget
- Applicant type
- Applicant contact information

NOTE: *Applicants Applying as a Consortium*

Please designate one staff member from your collective agencies to serve as a liaison between your consortium and CSG.

The name of the liaison should be listed as the primary staff contact on the application form under “Agency Contact Information” in the application form.

Section 2: Project Plan

Section 2

Project Plan is comprised of:

- Statement of need
- Project design
- Considerations for new technologies
- External coordination and partnerships
- Description of innovation
- Project transferability
- Project compliance

Section 3: Evaluation Requirements

Section 3

Evaluation Requirements is comprised of:

- Data collection and analysis capacity
- Outcome measures
- Potential challenges
- Institutional Review Board (IRB) requirements

***(Continued)* Section 3: Evaluation Requirements**

Data Collection and Analysis Capacity

- What has your agency/team done before in terms of evaluation?
- Who will be involved in carrying out your evaluation?
- Are you willing to work with GSCN and CSG on your evaluation and the overarching evaluation?

Outcome Measures

- What do you want to measure?
 - Process and short-term outcomes
 - Implementation/intermediate outcomes
 - Impacts/long-term outcomes

***(Continued)* Section 3: Evaluation Requirements**

Potential Challenges

- What challenges do you foresee or anticipate in carrying out an evaluation of your project? How could you best be assisted by CSG and GSCN?

Institutional Review Board

- Do you believe your project will require IRB? If so, will you be using your own IRB affiliate, or will you be using GSCN's IRB affiliate?

Section 4: Project Management Plan

Section 4

Project Management Plan is comprised of:

- Program management description
- Staffing needs
- Assurances

Section 5: Budget Narrative

Section 5

Budget Narrative is comprised of:

- Key consideration for allowability of costs
- Personnel
- Fringe benefits
- Travel
- Equipment
- Supplies
- Contractual
- Other
- Indirect Costs

Section 6: Attachments

Section 6

Attachments is comprised of:

1. Project Work Plan
2. Budget Form
3. State Agency Letter of Support
4. State Agency Consortium Letter of Support (*if applicable*)
5. Key Project Partners' Letter of Support (*if applicable*)
6. Key Staff Resumes
7. Current Memorandums of Understanding (MOUs) (*if applicable*)

Project Work Plan



CSG has provided a workplan template which can be accessed on the project website, web.csg.org/wic

Workplan should include:

- Each goal and activity proposed in **Section 2: Project Plan**
- The individual/entity responsible and the anticipated end date for completing each activity

(Continued) Project Work Plan

- Timing of technical and financial reporting as well as all major program milestones and project deliverables including:
 - Project kickoff meeting with CSG, GSCN, and FNS
 - Quarterly progress reports (see Section 8: Other Required Grantee Activities of the RFA
 - for complete reporting schedule)
 - Final report no later than 2 months after June 31, 2022, the end of the project period
 - Quarterly conference calls, to be scheduled following the submission of the quarterly
 - Reports

Budget Form

WSPI applicants are required to submit a budget form to detail all costs associated with the proposed project.

Expenses in the budget form should align to the expenses outlined in **Section 6: Budget Narrative**.

CSG has provided a fillable budget form which can be accessed on the project website.





State Agency Letter of Support

For applicants other than state WIC agencies, a letter of support from the appropriate state WIC Agency stating their support for the submitted application is required for the proposal to be considered. The letter must also include, when applicable, the state agency's agreement to provide any data needed for program implementation and/or evaluation.

CSG has provided a sample state agency letter of support which can be accessed on the project website.

State Agency Consortium Letter of Support

Applicants applying jointly as a state agency consortium should obtain a letter of support from each agency participating in the consortium.

The state agency consortium letter of support should outline each agency's role in the project plan and state commitment to collaborate with CSG and GSCN as well as the other members of the consortium.

CSG has provided a sample state agency consortium letter of support which can be accessed on the project website.

Key Project Partners' Letter of Support

If your project team includes external partners that are integral to the project's success, please obtain a letter of support from those respective organizations.

The key project partner letter of support should detail the external organization's role in the project and state commitment to work with applicant to achieve the WIC agency's project objectives.

CSG has provided a sample letter of support which can be accessed on the project website.



Key Staff Resumes

Attach the professional resumes of all key project staff, or a job description for any anticipated external hiring.



Current Memorandums of Understanding (MOUs)

If applicable, please attach any current Memorandums of Understanding (MOU) or written agreements that are critical to the success of your project. If you intend to secure those later, please provide your plan for obtaining those agreements.

Review Process

Applications will be reviewed and scored by a panel of reviewers. CSG will submit summaries of all submitted applications and discuss the top applications with FNS.

FNS will make the final selection decisions.

FNS reserves the right to accept the review panel's recommendation or to select an awardee out of order to meet agency priorities, geographical representation, or project diversity.



Questions?



Please ask your questions in the chat function.