

APPENDIX D
FY 2013 ART METHOD II
PLANNING GRANT PROPOSAL NARRATIVE INSTRUCTIONS

(NOTE: A Word Version of the document is available in the Resources and Guidance Section of the CND PartnerWeb at <https://www.partnerweb.usda.gov>)

**IMPORTANT - FY 2013 ART METHOD II PLANNING GRANT
PROPOSAL NARRATIVE**

- ✓ Applications must be submitted to www.grants.gov by 11:59 pm ET, on May 15, 2013. Applications received after this date and time will not be considered for funding.
- ✓ When submitted successfully, applicants must notify the FNS Grant Officer Kimberly Shields (see email address below) that the application has been accepted by the Grants.gov system.
- ✓ Electronic or paper applications sent via any other method will not be accepted.
- ✓ All questions regarding the application and notifications regarding electronic submission should be referred to the FNS Grant Officer Kimberly Shields via email at Kimberly.Shields@fns.usda.gov.

What to Include in an ART Method II Planning Grant Application Packet

The Planning grant application packet must include:

1. Fully completed Appendix D template (or other format), including the cover page with abstract and responses to questions 1-7;
2. All required Federal forms: SF-424, SF-424A, SF-424B, and SF-LLL;
3. Signed copy of the applicant agency's approved indirect cost rate agreement with a Federal agency, if indirect costs are included in budget estimates; and
4. Clear justification for any sole source contracts to be funded under the grant, including references/copies of applicable State statutes, regulations, and policies.

Proposal Narrative: For a Planning grant project proposal narrative to be considered complete, applicants must develop their proposal narrative by answering all questions and addressing all items listed in the *ART Method II Planning Grant Proposal Template* table that follows. Applicants may choose a different format, but must address all questions in the order they are listed. You may expand the template boxes as needed to provide a complete answer to each question. The instructions are intended to simplify both the narrative development for applicants and the evaluation process for reviewers.

Timeline: ART II Planning Grants may be awarded for up to one year. Be sure that the project timeline described in the narrative responses matches the proposed project start and end dates in Section 17 of the SF-424 application form.

Budget: Applicants may request funding up to \$75, 000 for an ART II Planning grant: Be sure that all budget estimates contained in the Appendix D narrative responses match the budget estimates entered on the Budget Information Form SF-424A, and the total grant funding requested in Section 18 on the Application for Federal Assistance Form SF-424. Refer to RFA Appendices C and E for detailed instructions and examples on budget calculations.

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Cover Page

Enter Applicant Contact Information

State Agency Name and Address:

Agency Administrator name: Title & Contact Information (Telephone, Email, Fax)

Application Contact Name: Title & Contact Information for NSLP agency staff person(s) responsible for the application.

PROJECT ABSTRACT

PROJECT ABSTRACT: Enter brief abstract (250 word limit) describing the State's proposed Planning grant project:

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1. Project Goals and Objectives: Explain what you want to accomplish with the Planning grant. What are the project objectives and what administrative review, training and oversight focus area(s) will you address? Explain how this project will help you reduce administrative errors, improve program performance and ensure NSLP program integrity. Describe the performance measures you will use to assess the success of your project in meeting your goals and objectives.

Enter Response to #1 *[expand as needed]*

2. Project Design and Organization. Describe the essential features of the project design, including how you will organize the project to accomplish your goals and objectives.

Enter Response to #2: *[expand as needed]*

3. Proposed Grant Activities: Provide a brief description of how you propose to use grant funds to (A) identify the reasons for your State's administrative error rate *and* (B) determine the most effective ways to improve that rate. Your description must be sufficient to provide a *specific* understanding of your proposed grant activities, and *must* include a high level gap analysis to identify briefly where your agency is now with where you want it to be at the end of your project. The analysis activities that you carry out during your Planning grant period may then include an intensive system or business process analysis to determine what it will take to get you to where you want to be and the most efficient way to get there (i.e., is online training the answer, do you need to develop a new automated process for data collection and monitoring, etc.).

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Examples of potential grant activities include, *but are not limited to*:

- Conducting an internal analysis of your administrative system(s) and processes for training, monitoring, reporting and analyzing LEA performance and operational data. Such an analysis might cover a variety of topics, such as Information Technology (IT) capabilities and deficiencies, ability to identify and target error-prone LEAs for improvement initiatives, policies and procedures governing administrative performance requirements, staffing levels and needs, and inter-agency operations and cooperation;
- Developing business cases by conducting feasibility studies, cost/benefit analyses and detailed gap analyses to support your agency's decision making for selecting technology solutions and proposing an implementation project.
- Hiring a contractor, consultant, or university to conduct such analyses or studies.
- Following completion of research, analyses, and/or studies described above, using the planning activity results to develop an implementation project plan and ART Method II Implementation Grant Application to be submitted for FY 2013 funding consideration.

Enter Response to #3: *[expand as needed]*

4. Timeline: Provide your proposed schedule for carrying out the Planning grant activities. At minimum, your timeline must identify significant project milestones, indicate when those milestones will be met, and indicate when the grant activities will be completed. Please note that Planning grants *must* be completed no later than one year after the Planning grant award date.

Enter Response to #4: *[expand as needed]*

5. Project Management and Quality Assurance. Describe your approach to managing the

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project to ensure that project activities are completed on time, within budget and with quality results.

Enter Response to #5: *[expand as needed]*

6. Staffing: Identify the staff who will manage the grant. At minimum, you must:

- Identify the employees you will assign to manage the grant. However, if such employees are not currently on your staff, indicate whether you have the resources to hire them and (if so) when you intend to do so.
- For current employees, describe relevant qualifications and experience, and projected roles and responsibilities. For employees not currently on your staff, describe the qualifications and/or experience you will use to identify potential hires.
- Include a discussion or plan on how activities will be fulfilled should key staff leave or be removed.
- Indicate what percentage of each identified employee's time will be spent managing the grant; and
- Indicate the total cost of these staffing levels.

Enter Response to #6: *[expand as needed]*

7. Budget: Provide a proposed budget describing appropriate use of Planning grant funds and justifying costs. Proposed costs must be reasonable, necessary and allocable to carry out the project's goals and objectives. The budget must include a line item description for every allowable cost and show how it supports the project goals.

Please use the Budget Checklist provided in **Appendix C** as a guide to ensure you have

addressed all budget items. See **Appendix A: OMB Cost Principles 2 CFR 225** to review OMB Circular A-87, which addresses allowable costs. Also, Appendix E (Implementation Grant Proposal Template) contains budget examples and tips that are applicable to cost estimations for Planning grants as well. Refer to Appendix E for further details.

Enter Response to #7: *[expand as needed]*