New and Emerging Solutions that Improve Access to Healthier Food

Request for letter of intent

Purpose of request: We are seeking letters of intent (LOIs) for community-based projects that use a new approach for increasing access to healthier foods in regions\(^1\) and/or for populations\(^2\) that experience disproportionate rates of food insecurity. Your submission should give us a basic understanding of what your project idea is and a demonstration of your ability to achieve it. If you are selected to submit a proposal, you will have an opportunity to outline the details of your project.

Eligible proposals must demonstrate how the proposed project will:

- **Increase access to healthier foods** as aligned with USDA’s [MyPlate](https://www.choosemyplate.gov) guidance. Priority will be placed on proposals that focus on fresh foods.

- **Reach a region or population that has a food insecurity rate above 15% or other relevant data points.** Our hope is for your project to reach a region or population that experiences higher than average food insecurity. Based on national data trends, there are regions or populations that experience disproportionate levels of food insecurity. For example:
  - Of the counties that record the highest levels of food insecurity, 78% are rural.
  - Regionally, the highest average rates of county food insecurity are found in the South, which includes 87% of counties with the highest rates of food insecurity and has the widest variation in county food insecurity.\(^3\)
  - The prevalence of food insecurity is higher among households headed by Black, non-Hispanics (21.8%) or Hispanics (18%).\(^4\)
  - While less than 1% of counties (26 counties) in the United States have a majority American Indian and Alaska Native population, nearly 60% of these counties (15 counties) are among those with the highest food-insecurity rates in the nation (defined as overall food insecurity rates among the top 10%).\(^5\)

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\(^1\) Regions can vary but must be defined in a proposal and have formal boundary lines, such as a city, county, state, school district, zip code tabulation areas, census block/tract, neighborhood etc.

\(^2\) May be defined by a specific demographic or household characteristic

\(^3\) [https://www.feedingamerica.org/sites/default/files/2019-05/2017-map-the-meal-gap-executive-summary_0.pdf](https://www.feedingamerica.org/sites/default/files/2019-05/2017-map-the-meal-gap-executive-summary_0.pdf)


We understand that food insecurity data is not always available for certain defined geographic regions or demographic characteristics, but please use the best available data or use multiple data points related to food insecurity to identify a region and/or population with a higher risk of food insecurity that you will be focusing on with this grant funded project. The following resources may help you identify these gaps:

- USDA’s Economic Research Service
- Feeding America’s Map the Meal Gap
- Data points and statistics that are known to correlate with food insecurity, such as median income, unemployment rates, race and ethnicity, housing, etc.
- Local studies on food access, food insecurity, poverty, etc.

- **Use a new approach that needs to be tested or has had some level of success on a small scale but is not widely adopted.** While improving and strengthening traditional food access programs is important and we fund these efforts through other grant opportunities, this is not the focus of this specific request. The following are examples of what will NOT be considered for this funding opportunity:

  - Traditional approaches in emergency food assistance
  - Child nutrition meal programming
  - Benefits outreach

With this RFP, we seek to better understand new trends, opportunities and breakthrough ideas at the community level. The focus of this opportunity is to

- Reach beyond incremental change within traditional food access programs
- To explore ideas and projects that influence the future trajectory of improving healthier food access for households experiencing disproportionate rates of food insecurity
- Not limit thinking with strict criteria

However, we do want to give you as a sense of what we hope to see, so you can best assess whether submitting an idea is the right next step for you. Use the following statements to help determine if this is the right funding opportunity for your program/organization.
Does your proposed program do one or more of the following:

- Use an approach or insight another organization or field that is being applied to this problem
- Challenge the conventional ways of operating programs
- Address a common barrier to program access with a new, unique approach
- Address a gap in service that other programs do not address or have not solved
- Engage new partners or sectors that have not traditionally focused on healthier food access or food insecurity

While we expect this to be innovative to your region of focus, we also expect this to be a model that is applicable to nonprofits outside of your region. We suggest you consider what you would like food access programs to look like in the next 4-5 years and what type of projects could help propel the field of organizations and stakeholders working in this area to reach that vision.

While there may be variety in the approach, all projects considered in this opportunity must:

- **Have the potential to scale in the future.** The intent of this request is to identify pioneering solutions in local communities, but with a future goal of scaling successful solutions to other regions and organizations. While there will be unique elements of all placed based efforts and potentially higher costs to reach regions and populations with gaps, the core elements of the model need to be replicable and cost-effective. Applicants must demonstrate a commitment to program design choices that would not inhibit the projects ability to scale in the future. Applicants also must commit to sharing information about solutions externally and to working with entities and networks that have the capacity to scale the work in the future.

- **Focus on diversity, equity and/or inclusion in project design and implementation.** Proposed projects must present a solution that accounts for the structural differences in opportunities among groups and individuals. Additionally, priority will be given to projects that demonstrate how marginalized groups of people are engaged and participate in decision-making processes about program design and implementation.
• **Capture core metrics to measure success of the project.** Applicants do not need to hire an independent evaluator for the project but should demonstrate some basic internal capacity to collect and analyze key program data (e.g., number of people served and demographics) to measure success and effectiveness of program delivery. Additionally, Walmart.org may fund an external evaluator to look across programs and capture learnings. If awarded, grantees will be expected to participate in any external evaluations.

**Awards:**

• Grants will be awarded to organizations whose project budgets range between $300,000 - $750,000 for the **2-year** project period. We expect to provide approximately **$5 million** in funding for all projects under this RFP.

**Length of Grant:**

• Up to 2 years (grants will tentatively start mid-January 2020)

**Eligibility and Application Guidance:**

• While national organizations are eligible to apply, priority will be given to applicants that are community-based organizations.

• Eligible applicant organizations include public entities or nonprofit organizations that are recognized as tax-exempt under Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code and are not private foundations or Type III supporting organizations.

• Applicant organizations must be based in the United States or its territories. All work and funds used must be in the United States or its territories.

• Overhead/indirect costs (non-program-related expenses) may not exceed 10% of the total program budget.

• Requested project budget amounts will be examined in relation to an organization’s public support test on the most recently filed 990. Please ensure that requested amount does not negatively affect the organization’s public support test. To learn more about public support tests, please visit the [IRS website](https://www.irs.gov).
Organizational sustainability is important to us. Requested project budgets will be examined in relation to the organization’s overall budget. The project budget for the first year should not exceed more than 30% of the organization’s revenue for the most recent fiscal year.

Collaborative proposals with two or more eligible organizations will be considered; however, one organization must serve as the grantee applicant and take accountability for the overall project. Collaborative proposals should clearly define roles of each organization and any amounts to be transferred by the grantee applicant to the collaborator.

Funding provided by the Walmart Foundation cannot be used for any activities that exclusively benefit or involve Walmart stores or business.

**Funding Exclusions**

- Association/chamber memberships
- Athletic sponsorships (teams, events)
- Capital campaigns and endowments (defined as any plans to raise funds for a significant purchase or expense, such as new construction, major renovations or to help fund normal budgetary items)
- Faith-based organizations when the proposed grant will only benefit the organization or its members
- General operating expenses
- Political causes, candidates, organizations or campaigns
- Scholarships (tuition, room and board or any other expense related to college, university or vocational school attendance)
- Sponsorship of fundraising events (galas, walks, races, tournaments)
- Ongoing funding and program support

**Evaluation Criteria**

- **Proposed plan for design and execution** (40%). Applications will be assessed on the strength of proposed plans to execute on the deliverables listed under the purpose of this request section.
- **Experience and track record of the organization** (25%). Applications will be assessed on the expertise that staff and the organization have demonstrated previously in driving innovation and impact in a community that they were trying to
reach. Please note, applicants’ previous work does not need to relate to food insecurity or food access. Priority will be given to organizations with experience designing, implementing new and innovative programs, as well as working with and reaching the identified region or population.

- **Diversity, equity and inclusion (20%)**. Applications will be assessed on commitment to diversity, equity and inclusion as discussed in proposed design and implementation plans.

- **Budget (15%)**. Applications will be assessed on use of funds, clarity of descriptions for use of funds and cost effectiveness, as well as adherence to guidance on sustainability and public support test listed above.

**Review and Selection Process**
Selections will be made through a two-step process. Organizations interested in this opportunity are invited to submit an LOI. LOIs will then be reviewed and finalists will be invited to submit a full proposal. Please note that due to anticipated volume of LOIs, feedback will not be provided to organizations that are not selected to submit a full proposal.

If your proposal is selected as a finalist, the proposal will go through legal review, including conducting necessary diligence, before finalizing the approval and grant agreement. Finalists may also be asked to modify their proposals to strengthen methodologies, adjust budgets, or answer questions about their proposed program before the Walmart Foundation decides on funding.

**Submission Format, Procedures and Timeline**
All submissions will be made using the CyberGrants online system. To begin, visit: [http://www.cybergrants.com/walmart/national_loi](http://www.cybergrants.com/walmart/national_loi)

- Use invitation code: **foodacc19**
- Click on “Start a New Application” under the National Giving Program LOI.
- Select “Hunger Relief and Healthy Eating: as your focus area and “Healthier Food Access RFP” as your sub-category

Please note that you will need to enter this invitation code each time you log in. If you do not use the invitation code, your application will not be considered for review.

If you are a first-time user, you will be prompted to create a CyberGrants account. Please allow for 1-2 business days for setting up a new account. Additionally, technical support related to the CyberGrants system takes 1-2 business days to resolve. Please account for
this in your submission timeline in case any unforeseen issues arise with the CyberGrants platform. For technical questions related to the CyberGrants system, please email cgsupport@cybergrants.com

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>August 23</td>
<td>System is open for LOIs</td>
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<tr>
<td>August 29 at 3 PM CDT</td>
<td>This webinar will be an opportunity to ask questions related to this RFP.</td>
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<td>Meeting ID: 335 921 510</td>
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<td>September 17</td>
<td>LOIs due. All LOIs must be submitted by 11:59PM PDT/PST</td>
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<td>September 30</td>
<td>All applicants notified with decision regarding full proposals. If selected, the applicant will be invited to submit a full proposal.</td>
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<td>October 31</td>
<td>Proposals due. All proposals must be submitted by 11:59PM PDT/PST</td>
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<td>Early December</td>
<td>If selected, proposals will be submitted for full review and internal approval, including negotiation of a grant agreement. Grant funds will be disbursed only upon full execution of a grant agreement. Please plan on a tentative start date for the proposed project in January 2020.</td>
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Statement of Non-Commitment
Issuance of this RFP does not commit the Walmart Foundation to award a grant or to pay any costs incurred in preparation of the proposals to respond to this request. Those responding to this RFP must follow its procedures and requirements. Failure to comply with or complete any part of this RFP may result in rejection of the proposal. The Walmart Foundation reserves the right to reject any or all proposals, or to negotiate separately with competing applicants for funds described in this RFP.

Additionally, receipt of funds through this request does not guarantee future funding and organizations should proactively raise funds to sustain efforts after the end of this two-year grant.

Walmart.org Overview: Walmart.org, through the combined philanthropic efforts of Walmart and the Walmart Foundation, helps create opportunities for people to live better every day. Along with the unique expertise of Walmart’s business, Walmart.org aspires to build healthier, resilient systems that are good for society. Walmart.org is helping people live better by supporting programs that work to accelerate upward job mobility for frontline workers, address hunger and make healthier, more sustainably-grown food a reality, and build strong communities where Walmart operates. Walmart.org works not only to tackle key social issues, we also collaborate with others to inspire solutions for long-lasting systemic change. To learn more, visit www.walmart.org or find us on Twitter @Walmartorg

To learn more about Walmart.org’s historical commitment and broader strategy on improving healthier food access and eating, please visit: https://walmart.org/what-we-do/strengthening-communities/healthier-food-access

Please submit questions about core eligibility, expectations and requirements listed in this document via WMFDRFP@walmart.com. Please use foodacc19 in your subject line.

For technical questions related to the CyberGrants system, please email cgsupport@cybergrants.com

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