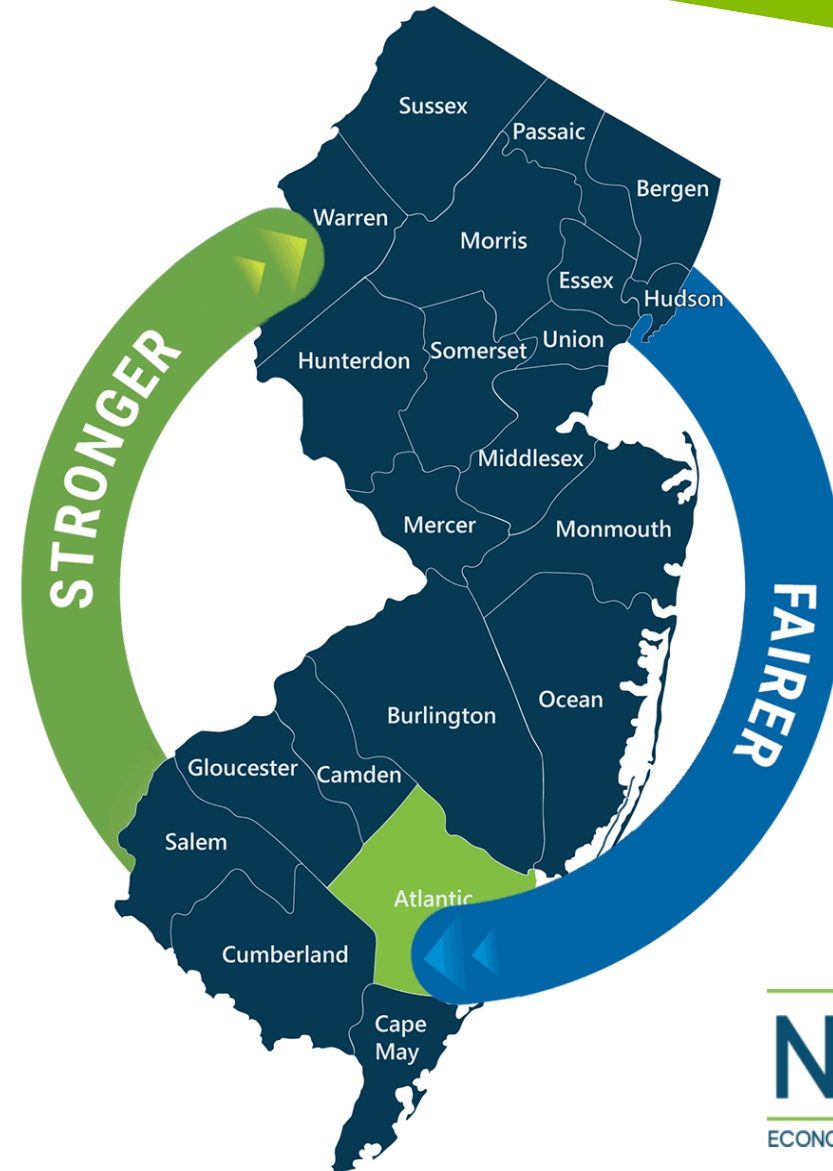


FEED NJ

Food Equity and Economic Development in New Jersey

January 2025



Meet the NJEDA Food Security Team



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Email the team!

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About NJEDA

The New Jersey Economic Development Authority (NJEDA) serves as the State's principal agency for driving economic growth.

The NJEDA is committed to making New Jersey a national model for **inclusive and sustainable economic development** by focusing on key strategies to help build **strong and dynamic communities, create good jobs for New Jersey residents, and provide pathways to a stronger and fairer economy**. Through partnerships with a diverse range of stakeholders, the NJEDA creates and implements initiatives to **enhance the economic vitality and quality of life** in the State and **strengthen New Jersey's long-term economic competitiveness**.



HELPING TO BUILD A
STRONGER AND FAIRER
NEW JERSEY ECONOMY

Why NJEDA?

- ▶ The **New Jersey Economic Development Authority (NJEDA)** has a long history of supporting businesses of all sizes to grow and invest in New Jersey with the aim of building a **stronger, fairer New Jersey economy**
- ▶ The Authority offers a broad portfolio of economic and community development tools, such as
 - Tax credits to incentivize job creation and capital investment;
 - Investment tools to support and strengthen New Jersey's communities;
 - Financial resources for small businesses, including those impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic;
 - Support for new supermarkets and healthy food access options in food desert communities

NJEDA's Focus on Food Security

The Food Desert Relief Act

Several of NJEDA's food security programs were established through the **Food Desert Relief Act (FDRA)**, part of the **New Jersey Economic Recovery Act of 2020 (ERA)**. The goals of the FDRA are to:



Facilitate development, construction, and sustainable operations of new supermarkets and grocery stores



Strengthen existing community assets by equipping them with the necessary equipment and infrastructure to provide healthier food options



Help food retailers respond to the shift to e-commerce, including for the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) and the Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children (WIC)



Identify and foster innovative solutions to alleviate food insecurity

Governor Phil Murphy and our partners in the legislature have equipped NJEDA with more than \$300 million to strengthen food security in NJ

Over the past three years, NJEDA has significantly expanded its food security programs to build on Governor Murphy's commitment to a stronger, fairer New Jersey.



Sustain & Serve NJ (program closed)

\$57.5M grant program for nonprofits to purchase meals from restaurants and distribute those meals at no cost in their community



Food Security Planning Grant Program

\$1.5M grant program for local governments to plan for leveraging a distressed asset in a Food Desert Community (FDC) to improve food access and security
(Applications closed)



Food Desert Relief Supermarket Tax Credit Program

\$240M in financing gap and initial operating cost tax credits to develop and sustain new supermarkets and grocery stores in FDCs



Food Retail Innovation in Delivery Grant (FRIDG)

\$1.25M grant program to assist New Jersey food retailers to purchase refrigerated lockers to expand access to grocery delivery within FDCs



CSIT Food & Agriculture R&D Pilot Seed Grant Program

\$750K program making grants for early-stage start-ups focused on developing new innovations and solutions that address food insecurity
(Applications closed)



Atlantic City Food Security Grants Pilot Program

\$5.25M pilot grant program funding projects that can positively impact Atlantic City residents' ability to access fresh, affordable, and healthy food
(Applications closed)



Food Equity and Economic Development in New Jersey (FEED NJ)

\$30M pilot grant program to fund innovative projects that strengthen food access and food security in New Jersey's most acute FDCs

Learn more at www.njeda.gov/food-security-programs

Food Desert Communities

- ▶ The FDRA directed NJEDA to designate up to **50 Food Desert Communities (FDCs)** across the state
- ▶ Designations were informed by a combination of community input and rigorous, data-driven analysis
 - ▶ **20+ variables** considered spanning food retail environment, demographics, any economic/health/community factors
- ▶ More than **1.5 million** NJ residents live in an FDC, which are found in all **21 counties**

Please visit www.njeda.gov/food-security-programs for a complete list and detailed methodology



Interactive map available at
www.njeda.gov/feednj

FEED NJ

Applications open soon
www.njeda.gov/feednj

What is FEED NJ?

Food Equity and Economic Development in New Jersey (FEED NJ) is a **\$30 million** pilot program awarding grants between **\$50,000 and \$500,000** for innovative projects that **strengthen food access and food security** in New Jersey's most acute **Food Desert Communities** (FDCs).

FEED NJ aims to catalyze **innovative, sustainable, and scalable** food security and food access initiatives with high potential to **maximize community-level impact**. Examples include, but are not limited to:

Establishing or enhancing a mobile market, food pantry, or food co-op

Purchasing cold storage or other equipment

Technical assistance to help residents to use nutrition benefits

Increasing access to local produce (e.g. via a farmers' market, CSA, delivery)

Expanding free food provision services for residents in need

Accelerating existing planning + implementation efforts

And many, many more!

Background:

Atlantic City Food Security Grants Pilot Program

The framework for FEED NJ was successfully piloted in Atlantic City through NJEDA's ongoing **Atlantic City Food Security Grants Pilot Program**:

Over \$5.1 million

in total funding

11

grantee organizations

\$464,100

average grant amount

NJEDA grant funding is being used to:

- Sustain a mobile market and food pantry
- Turn vacant buildings into new food co-ops and food pantries
- Introduce senior meal delivery services
- Create an online CSA program
- Upgrade infrastructure at a local grocery store, and at a farm
- And much, much more!



What do we mean by food security?

In evaluating applications, NJEDA will use the definition of food security offered by the New Jersey Office of the Food Security Advocate:

“Food security exists when all people, at all times, have physical, social, and economic access to sufficient, safe, and nutritious food which meets their dietary needs and food preferences for an active and healthy life.”

Source: [New Jersey Office of the Food Security Advocate](#)

Grant Overview



Up to **\$30 million** in total funding

Source of funding: proceeds of NJEDA Food Desert Relief Tax Credit Auctions



Grants between **\$50,000 and \$500,000**

May cover up to 100% of proposed project costs; can be used with other funding (if specified in application budget)

Projects must:



- Strengthen **food access and food security**
- Primarily serve residents of one or more of the **14 Primary Focus FDCs**

May be a new initiative or a continuation/addition to existing services



Grant can cover **minor renovation, equipment, installation, salaries, rent, operations**

- FEED NJ funding request CANNOT include land acquisition, property purchase, ground-up construction, or major renovations (e.g. construction of additional floor or addition to building footprint)
 - Prevailing wage applies to all construction activities over \$1,999, which can include installation, repair, etc.
-

Disbursement



- 30% upon execution of grant agreement
 - Up to 50% on quarterly reimbursement basis upon NJEDA approval of quarterly expenditure reports
 - Up to 20% upon NJEDA review and approval of final report
-



Applicants can propose to complete their projects within either **12 or 24 months**

Up to one six-month extension, subject to NJEDA approval

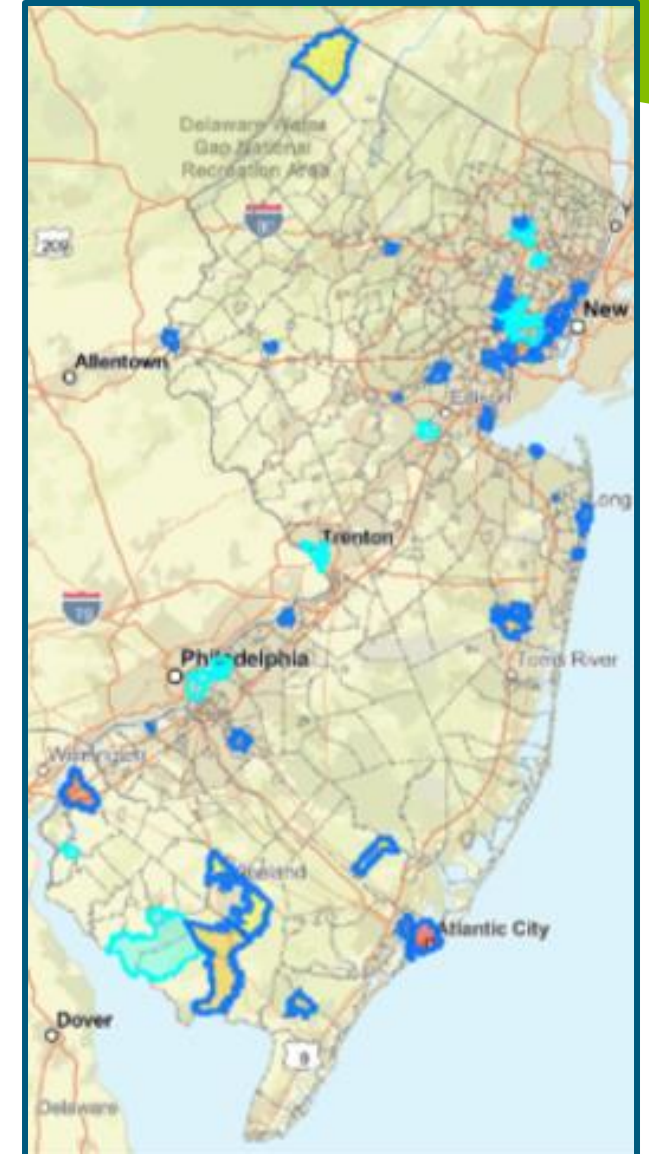
Applicant Eligibility

- ▶ **For-profit or nonprofit entity** that has been in existence for **at least two years** at the time of application
- ▶ **Registered to do business** in New Jersey and **in good standing** with NJ Dept. of Labor, Dept. of Environmental Protection, and Division of Taxation
- ▶ Must provide **evidence of site control** or a path to site control (*if project involves construction*)
- ▶ **One application per EIN**; may propose collaborations with one lead applicant and defined roles for each collaborator (*evidence of collaboration must be included*)

Geographic Eligibility

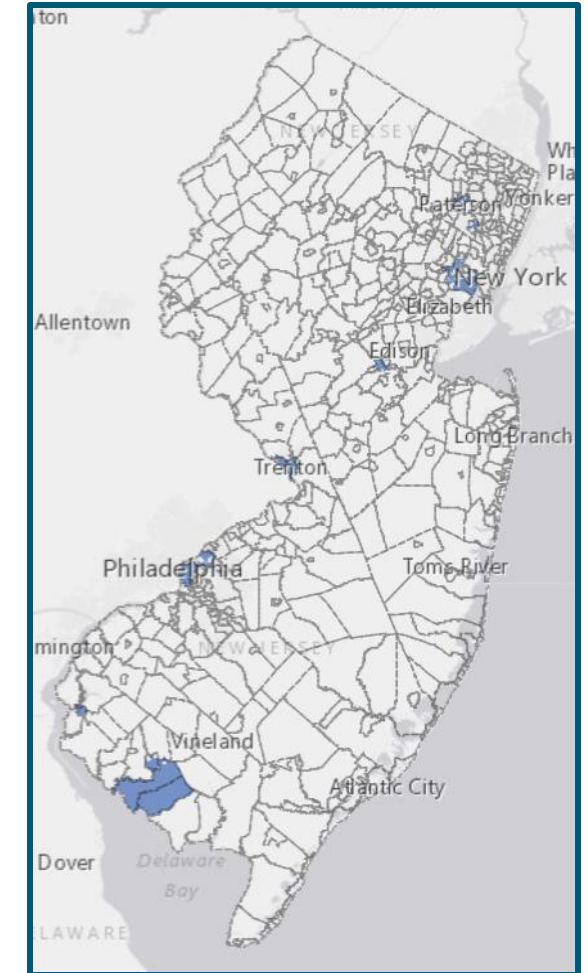
- ▶ FEED NJ focuses on 14 of NJ's top 15 Food Desert Communities (FDCs)
 - Comprise portions of 8 counties + 11 municipalities; home to 567,349 residents
- ▶ To target resources to the most acute FDCs in New Jersey, FEED NJ will only support projects that propose to **primarily serve residents of one or more of the 14 Primary Focus FDCs**
 - #2 ranked Atlantic City/Ventnor FDC excluded from Primary Focus list since it was the sole focus of the Atlantic City Food Security Grants Pilot Program
- ▶ Applicants may also elect to serve additional NJEDA-designated top 50 FDCs, provided the primary focus remains on at least one of the 14

FDC mapping tools are available at www.njeda.gov/feednj



Primary Focus FDCs

Rank	Food Desert Name	County	FDC Population
1	North, Central and South Camden/Woodlynne*	Camden	44,702
3	Newark South	Essex	42,713
4	Newark West	Essex	49,065
5	Camden East/Pennsauken	Camden	49,689
6	Trenton West	Mercer	27,151
7	Newark North and Central	Essex	50,855
8	Newark East	Essex	40,427
9	Salem City*	Salem	5,296
10	Passaic City	Passaic	39,336
11	Trenton East	Mercer	57,113
12	Bridgeton/Fairfield Twp/Lawrence Twp*	Cumberland	29,167
13	Paterson South	Passaic	35,825
14	New Brunswick City	Middlesex	49,408
15	Paterson North	Passaic	46,602
Total Population in Primary Focus FDCs			567,349



*Asterisks indicate that the entirety of that municipality is included in the food desert community. Otherwise the FDC only covers a portion of the municipality.



Defining Construction Work

FEED NJ grant funding can be used for certain types of construction work, including but *not* limited to:

- ✓ Minor renovation
- ✓ Repairs
- ✓ Equipment installation
- ✓ Painting and maintenance
- ✓ Custom fabrication

FEED NJ grant funding CANNOT be used for:

- ✗ Ground-up construction
- ✗ Major renovations (e.g. construction of additional floor or addition to building footprint)



Keep in Mind

Certain requirements apply to all contractors and subcontractors undertaking construction work for your project with a cost over \$1999. These requirements do not apply to work done by volunteers.



Contractor Requirements



These requirements apply to any construction work undertaken as part of the proposed project, even if it is not funded by NJEDA.

At the time of the application and throughout the project, Contractor(s) working on the project **must be a NJ Department of Labor (DOL) Public Works Registered Contractor** and abide by New Jersey **prevailing wage and affirmative action** requirements.

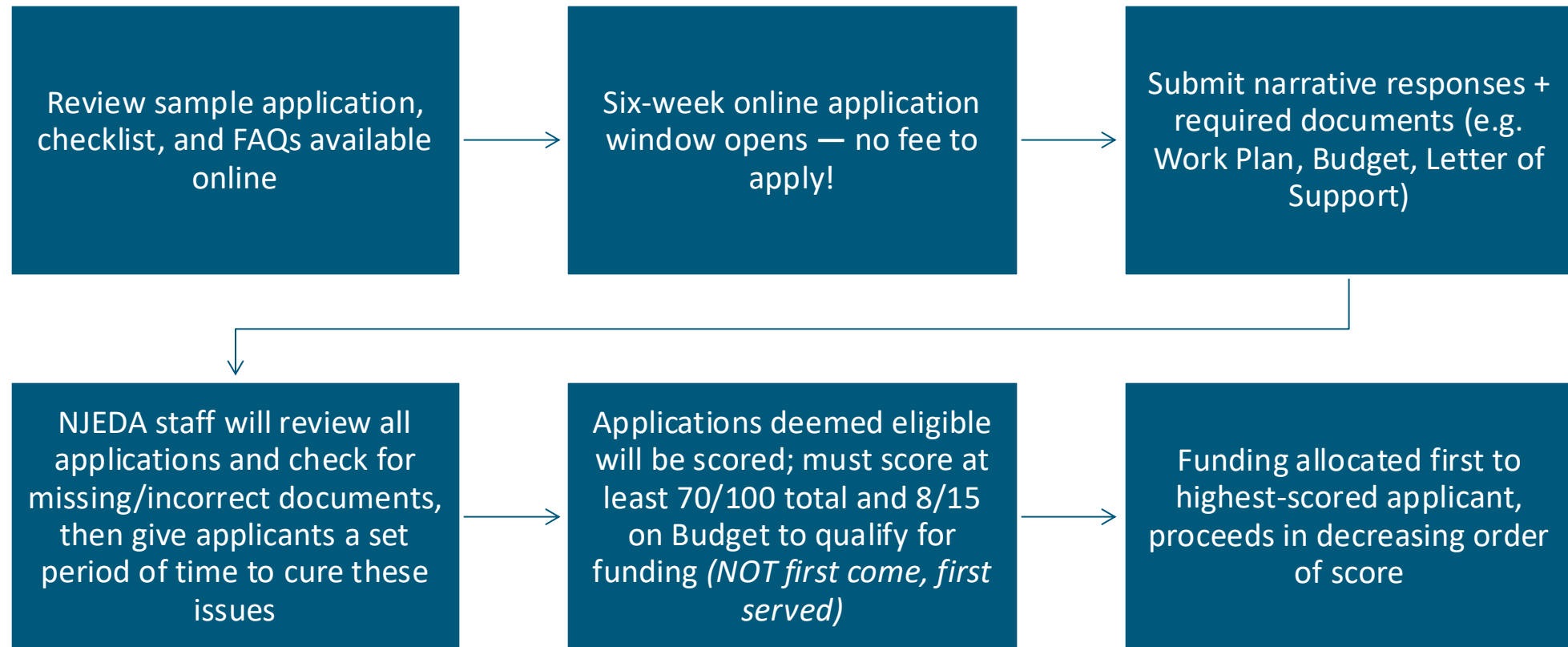
- ▶ Contractor(s) must agree to **pay prevailing wage**, which is set by county and by construction trade
 - Prevailing wage is required for any other construction contracts at this facility **for the two years after an agreement** is signed with NJEDA
- ▶ Contractor(s) must abide by **affirmative action requirements** if they have 4 or more total employees
- ▶ **Subcontractors** must also be Public Works Registered Contractors
- ▶ Contractors and their subcontractors must **register at SAM.GOV** and are **subject to a debarment check**
- ▶ **Eligibility Verification Form** required for each contractor and for any **Professional Services** (e.g. architects, engineers)



RESOURCE: Contractor Pre-Construction Packet

A guide to help Public Works registered contractors maintain compliance throughout the life of the project can be found at <https://www.njeda.com/wp-content/uploads/2022/09/Pre-Construction-Packet-2022.06.24.pdf>

Application Process



Application Overview

Applicants will be scored on responses provided about their organization and their proposed project, including but not limited to:

- Description of the applicant's mission and **capacity** to undertake the proposed project, including current and past **experience**
- Description of the proposed project, including its **expected impact** on food access and/or food security for residents of the selected FDC(s)
- Justification of the proposed project's **viability and long-term sustainability**
- Description of ongoing and planned **community engagement** efforts
- A **Work Plan** and **Budget** to support the proposed project (using templates provided)



The application review process will take several months, and the timeline for signing grant agreements and making disbursements is not yet known. This depends in part on the volume of applications received.

Costs incurred prior to signing the grant agreement are not eligible for reimbursement. Please plan accordingly!

A full sample application will be available at www.njeda.gov/feednj

Required Documents

1. **Organization Formation Documents**
2. **Current Tax Clearance Certificate**
3. **Work Plan** *(use template provided)*
4. **Budget** *(use template provided)*
5. **Letter of Support** *(from an entity serving at least one of your Primary Focus FDCs)*
6. **NJEDA Required Certifications** (e.g. NJEDA Legal Questionnaire) *(must be completed by Applicant representative with appropriate legal authority)*

If applicable:

- ✓ Evidence of engagement with key stakeholders needed to execute specific components of your proposed project
- ✓ Evidence of ongoing or previous project planning
- ✓ Evidence of collaboration from each project collaborator *(only required for projects involving collaborators)*
- ✓ Evidence of site control or path to site control (e.g. deed, lease) *(only required for projects involving construction)*
- ✓ Professional services/contractor/subcontractor documentation *(only required for projects involving construction)*
- ✓ Religious Affiliation Form *(only for religiously-affiliated applicants)*
- ✓ Certificate of Alternate Name *(if Applicant operates under a name different than their legal entity name)*

A full application checklist will be available at www.njeda.gov/feednj

Plan Ahead!

Applicants selected to receive a grant award must meet closing requirements **within 90 business days** of receiving the grant agreement. Otherwise, your agreement will expire.

- ✓ **All projects:** A valid tax clearance certificate and proof of insurance
- ✓ **Projects involving construction:** evidence of site control for the duration of the grant term; signed construction contract; proof of contractor's insurance
- ✓ **Projects that identified outside funding sources in their Budget:** evidence of commitment/availability of such funding

Scoring Criteria

Organizational Capacity *up to 20 points*

Applicant's ability to complete project • Experience offering food access programs/services • Experience executing projects similar in scale + budget • Experience serving target population in selected FDC(s)

Project Impact *up to 20 points*

Breadth/depth of potential impact on food access/food security for residents of selected FDC(s) • Project's connection to existing food access needs and challenges • Clarity, specificity, cogency of project description/goals

Work Plan Quality *up to 15 points*

Comprehensiveness, clarity, detail, feasibility, reasonableness of work plan • Evidence of thorough planning

Project Viability and Sustainability *up to 15 points*

Potential for project to remain viable/sustainable upon conclusion of grant • Alignment of proposal with existing financial and admin capabilities • Evidence applicant has considered potential risks • Evidence of ongoing/previous planning

Community Engagement *up to 15 points*

Applicant's track record seeking + responding to stakeholder feedback • Depth of experience serving residents of selected FDC(s) • Proposed outreach + engagement activities • Evidence of community support

Strength of Budget *up to 15 points*

Comprehensiveness, clarity, detail of budget + budget narrative • Strength of justification and reasonableness of expenses • Alignment with work plan • Evidence + status of outside funding

70-point minimum overall score AND 8-point minimum score on Strength of Budget required to be eligible; highest scores recommended for approval

**Note: this slide highlights some of the factors considered for each criterion; see website for full scoring details*



A PDF of the sample application will be shared soon via email and made available on www.njeda.gov/feednj.

Application Tips

Take note of the character response limits!

Share how your organization will measure impact for your particular project.

Consider sustainability: how will your project persist after NJEDA funding ends?

Answer the question being asked — it's there for a reason!

Be as detailed as possible in your Work Plan and Budget.

Be aware that timelines may be subject to change/delay.

Use the resources available on our website, including a sample application.

Ensure you submit all required documents.

Give yourself time! We anticipate it will take 2-5 hours to complete the application.

Remember to save your application! You will receive a custom link you can use to return at any time.

Caution! The application platform can only support one user at a time per application.

Double-check your work before submitting your application. Some mistakes cannot be fixed after submission!

In addition to this presentation, there are several ways to learn more about the program:



Visit <https://www.njeda.gov/feednj>

- For detailed program information, including FAQs and scoring criteria
 - Additional resources including a sample application and application checklist will be shared soon
 - Sign up for our email list (*all webinar attendees will be added automatically*)
-



Email foodsecuritygrants@njeda.gov with questions



Today's webinar recording will be shared at <https://www.njeda.gov/feednj>



These slides will be posted at <https://www.njeda.gov/feednj>



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