



FEED NJ

Frequently Asked Questions

Updated 3/27/2025

This Food Equity and Economic Development in New Jersey (FEED NJ) Frequently Asked Questions resource is intended to help anyone interested in this program to better understand how the program works. This includes, but is not limited to potential applicants, state and local government officials, community members, community organizations, and other interested members of the public.

The questions and answers included here reflect the major features of the program, as well as questions NJEDA program staff commonly receive from the public.

This FAQ resource will be updated over time as additional questions emerge. Your contributions will help make this resource more useful. Please send any additional questions or comments to NJEDA staff at foodsecuritygrants@njeda.gov.

Program Basics

1. What is the New Jersey Economic Development Authority (NJEDA or the Authority)?

The NJEDA is the State's principal agency for driving economic growth, working to carry out Governor Phil Murphy's vision for a stronger and fairer economy. 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 foster innovation.

2. What is the Food Equity and Economic Development in New Jersey (FEED NJ) Pilot Program?

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). Additional information is available at www.njeda.gov/feednj.

3. What locations are eligible for this program?

FEED NJ focuses on 14 of New Jersey's top 15 FDCs, excluding Atlantic City/Ventnor (which was the sole focus of NJEDA's [Atlantic City Food Security Grants Pilot Program](#)). To target resources to the most acute FDCs in New Jersey, this program will only support projects that propose to primarily serve residents of one or more of these 14 Primary Focus FDCs. These FDCs are:

Rank	Food Desert Name
1	North, Central and South Camden/Woodlynne
3	Newark South
4	Newark West
5	Camden East/Pennsauken

6	Trenton West
7	Newark North and Central
8	Newark East
9	Salem city
10	Passaic city
11	Trenton East
12	Bridgeton/Fairfield Twp/Lawrence Twp
13	Paterson South
14	New Brunswick city
15	Paterson North

Applicants may also elect to serve [additional FDCs](#), provided the primary focus remains on at least one of these 14 FDCs.

Because FDCs are designated at the block-group level, the boundaries of an FDC generally do not include an entire municipality. The boundaries of Primary Focus FDCs can be seen in [this interactive map](#) available on EDA's website. Click the checkbox marked "FEED NJ - Food Desert Communities."

4. How and why were these locations selected for this pilot program?

The Food Desert Relief Act directed NJEDA to work with the Departments of Community Affairs and Agriculture to develop a methodology to designate up to [50 Food Desert Communities](#) (FDCs) across New Jersey. NJEDA's Board approved the methodology and the 50 designated FDCs in February 2022. The 14 Primary Focus FDCs have composite food desert factor scores of 63.9 and above, indicating significant need.

5. How much funding is available as part of the FEED NJ Program?

Up to \$30 million in total funding is available. Applicants may request a grant amount from a minimum of \$50,000 to a maximum of \$500,000.

6. Where is the funding coming from?

Funding for FEED NJ comes from proceeds of NJEDA's [Food Desert Relief Tax Credit Auction](#), which sold tax credits to eligible New Jersey corporations. This auction was authorized by the Food Desert Relief Act of 2021, which stated that proceeds must be used to fund programs to alleviate food deserts and support food security initiatives in FDCs.

7. How many grants will be awarded?

Up to \$30 million in funding is available and will be awarded on a competitive, individual-project basis. We anticipate that the total number of grants could be between 60 and 100.

8. Is this a grant or a tax credit?

This is a grant program, not a tax credit. NJEDA also offers the [Food Desert Relief Supermarket Tax Credit Program](#), aimed at supporting the development and operations of supermarkets across all 50 designated Food Desert Communities.

Project Eligibility

9. What types of projects are eligible to receive grant funding?

Grant funding will be awarded only to applicants that indicate that they will use the grant funds for projects to improve food access and/or food security that primarily serve residents in one or more of the 14 Primary Focus FDCs.

This may be accomplished in a number of ways. The below is a non-exhaustive list of potential projects to inspire creativity among potential applicants. Applicants may propose projects not captured by this list of examples.

- Establishing, enhancing and/or operating a mobile market, food pantry, or food co-op
- Purchasing equipment, such as cold storage equipment or other kitchen appliances, for small retailers, community-based organizations, food banks, health care providers and/or emergency food providers
- Technical assistance and/or equipment to increase opportunities for residents to utilize nutrition benefits (e.g. Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program, Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children, Senior Farmers Market Nutrition Program, etc.), such as at farmers markets, small or mid-sized food retailers, or through digital literacy training, case management, and/or assistance with online grocery ordering; this may also include the cost of purchasing and installing a refrigerated delivery locker, excluding any such costs covered via the NJEDA FRIDG program
- Increasing access to locally grown produce, including but not limited to expanding operation of a farmers' market, establishing a Community Supported Agriculture program, establishing or strengthening relationships between farmers and retailers, or establishing or expanding produce delivery
- Expanding services that provide food at no cost to residents in need, such as meal delivery to homebound residents, including increased operating costs associated with that expansion
- Accelerating existing planning and implementation efforts, such as the next steps of an NJEDA Food Security Planning Grant, to broaden food access opportunities

10. Can applicants propose projects not listed above?

Yes. Applicants may propose projects not captured by the above list of examples. The proposed project must strengthen food access and food security for residents of the selected FDC(s).

11. What does it mean to “primarily serve” an FDC?

Applicants must propose projects that focus on alleviating hunger for residents of at least one of the 14 Primary Focus FDCs. Applicants may elect to also serve residents of other [NJEDA-designated FDCs](#).

Applicants must provide specifics of the project in detail, including how the project primarily serves residents of the selected Primary Focus FDC(s) and when/where/how often services are provided.

12. What does NJEDA mean by “food security”?

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.”

13. If the project involves providing food, are there minimum nutrition requirements that must be met?

No. Applicants should make reasonable best efforts to provide nutritious, fresh, and affordable food when possible.

14. If the project involves providing food, are there any requirements regarding where food must be sourced from?

No. There are no requirements or scoring considerations related to food sourcing.

15. Are revenue-generating projects eligible for this program, for example, a corner store, farmers’ market, or workshop series with paid entry?

Yes. Revenue-generating projects are eligible, so long as the budget submitted as part of the application indicates that income as one of the other funding sources for the project.

16. Does the Applicant and/or proposed project have to be physically located in a Food Desert Community?

Applicants and/or proposed projects are not required to be physically located in a Food Desert Community. However, all projects must improve food access and/or food security and primarily serve residents of one or more of the 14 Primary Focus FDCs. Proposals will be scored based on criteria including the applicant’s depth of experience serving the target population in the selected FDC(s) and the project’s expected impact on food access/food security for residents of the selected Primary Focus FDC(s).

17. Can proposed projects also serve people from outside the eligible FDCs?

Proposed projects must primarily serve residents of one or more of the 14 Primary Focus FDCs. Applicants may also elect to serve [additional NJEDA-designated FDCs](#), provided the primary focus remains on at least one of these 14 FDCs.

18. Can proposed projects “primarily serve” residents of multiple Primary Focus FDCs?

Yes. Proposed projects can “primarily serve” residents of multiple Primary Focus FDCs. That includes Primary Focus FDCs located in the same city and Primary Focus FDCs located in different cities.

19. Am I required to collect the addresses or verify the residency of people served by my project?

No. Applicants will not be asked or expected to provide the specific addresses of people served either during the application process and/or if selected to receive a grant.

20. Must proposed projects be open to the general public, or can they solely serve a specific population (e.g. students at a specific school, unhoused individuals)?

A project may serve a specific population in one or more of the 14 Primary Focus FDCs. It does not need to serve the general population. FEED NJ is a competitively scored program, and the extent to which proposed projects will engage with/serve residents of the selected Primary Focus FDC(s) more broadly will be considered in scoring applications. However, this is not an eligibility criterion in and of itself.

21. How can I determine the boundaries of the Primary Focus FDCs?

The boundaries of Primary Focus FDCs can be seen in [this interactive map](#) available on the FEED NJ website. Click the checkbox marked “FEED NJ - Food Desert Communities.”

22. How can I determine the boundaries of all 50 NJEDA-designated FDCs?

The boundaries of all 50 NJEDA-designated FDCs can be seen in [this interactive map](#) available on the FEED NJ website.

23. Do proposed projects have to be new, or can grant funding be used to sustain pre-existing initiatives/operations?

Grant funding can be used to sustain both new and pre-existing initiatives, provided all other criteria are met.

24. Can grant funds be used to support existing project planning, or projects currently in development?

Yes. Funding may be used to accelerate existing planning and implementation efforts to strengthen food access opportunities.

Please note, the grant award can only be used to cover costs incurred after the execution of the grant agreement. Costs incurred prior to execution of the grant agreement may not be included in the project budget.

25. Are projects required to be completed by a certain date?

Applicants must propose to complete their projects within either 12 or 24 months of execution of the grant agreement. The proposed funding use(s) must be accomplished within the selected grant term. Grantees may be granted a one time 6-month extension by NJEDA staff if the grantee is diligently pursuing completion of the project and the delay was unforeseeable and not in the grantee’s control.

26. Are ongoing projects eligible?

Yes. Grant funding may be used to support a continuation/addition to current services. However, costs incurred prior to the execution of a grant agreement are not eligible to be reimbursed by FEED NJ grant funds.

The Budget and Work Plan submitted as part of the application will need to demonstrate how FEED NJ grant funding will be used during the duration of the grant term. Applicants will also be asked to describe if/how the proposed project will be sustained beyond the conclusion of the NJEDA grant term, which will be considered as part of the Project Viability and Sustainability scoring criterion.

27. Are projects eligible that will be solely paid for by FEED NJ grant funding?

Yes. Grant funds may be used to pay for up to 100 percent of proposed project costs. Applicants will also be asked to describe if/how the proposed project will be sustained beyond the conclusion of the NJEDA grant term, which will be considered as part of the Project Viability and Sustainability scoring criterion.

28. Can grant funding be used to cover costs associated with equipment, installation, salaries, and fringe, and/or rent?

Yes. Equipment, installation, salaries, and fringe, and/or rent are all eligible uses of funding, subject to the Authority's approval of the project, project budget, and supporting documentation.

29. Can grant funding be used to cover costs associated with construction or renovation?

There are limits on the use of grant funding for construction or renovation. Minor renovation is an eligible use of funding, subject to the Authority's approval of the project budget and supporting documentation.

Ground-up construction and major renovations (e.g. construction of an additional floor or an addition to the building footprint) are *not* permitted. Grant funding also cannot be used toward fines incurred because of code or zoning violations.

30. What types of construction can grant funding be used for?

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, and custom fabrication.

FEED NJ grant funding *cannot* be used for ground-up construction or major renovations (e.g. construction of an additional floor or an addition to the building footprint).

31. Will prevailing wage requirements apply for construction?

Yes. By law, all contractors used for any construction costs more than \$1999 must be registered as a New Jersey Department of Labor and Workforce Development (DOL) Public Works Contractor Registered Contractor and must abide by NJ prevailing wage and affirmative action requirements.

At a high level, this law guarantees that all workers who provide hands-on labor for a public works project will be paid prevailing wage. As a result, even if you have worked with a different

contractor in the past, they must be a public works contractor/subcontractor, or you will be unable to work with them on this project.

If the construction costs part of your project will be paid for by outside (i.e. non-NJEDA) funds, prevailing wage still applies if said cost exceeds \$1999. Applicants will still need to submit all related contractor/subcontractor documentation (e.g. Public Works Certificate).

32. What requirements is my contractor(s) subject to on this project?

Contractors must be registered as a New Jersey Department of Labor and Workforce Development (DOL) Public Works Contractor. More about Public Works Registered Contractors can be found [here](#).

- ~~• Contractors and their subcontractors must register at SAM.GOV and are subject to a debarment check (Updated 2/27/2025. Contractors/subcontractors for FEED NJ are no longer required to register at SAM.GOV.)~~
- Contractors must agree to pay prevailing wage, which is set by county and by construction trade
- Contractors with 4 or more total employees must abide by affirmative action requirements
- Contractors must only hire subcontractors that are also Public Works Registered Contractors

NJEDA reserves the right to also conduct site visits during construction to confirm that work is being completed in accordance with eligible uses for the Program, federal guidelines, and all prevailing wage and affirmative action requirements.

33. Do these contractor requirements apply to work performed by volunteers?

No, these contractor requirements (and related documentation) do not apply to unpaid work performed by volunteers.

34. Do these contractor requirements apply to work performed by an organization's own employees?

No, these contractor requirements (and related documentation) do not apply to work performed by an organization's own employees.

35. Where can I find a list of Public Works Registered Contractors?

The New Jersey Department of Labor maintains a database [available here](#) of New Jersey Public Works Registered Contractors (for informational purposes only).

36. Can grant funding be used to acquire land or buildings?

No. Acquisition of land or buildings is not an eligible cost.

37. Can grant funding be used to lease a new and/or existing facility?

Yes. Leasing a facility is an eligible cost.

38. Can grant funding be used to purchase or lease a vehicle?

Yes. Purchasing or leasing a vehicle is an eligible cost.

39. Can grant funding be used for staff salaries?

Yes. Salaries and fringe are eligible costs.

40. Can grant funding be used to purchase food for distribution?

Yes. Purchasing food for distribution is an eligible cost.

41. Do I have to pay back any of the grant?

No. Grant funding does not have to be repaid, unless the grantee defaults on the grant agreement.

Applicant Eligibility

42. Who is eligible to apply for the grant program?

Grants will be awarded only to entities that meet the following criteria:

- Applicant is a for-profit or nonprofit entity that has been in existence for at least two years at the time of application
- Applicant is in good standing with the NJ Department of Labor and Workforce Development and the NJ Department of Environmental Protection
- Applicant is registered to do business in New Jersey and in substantial good standing with the NJ Division of Taxation, as evidenced by a current Tax Clearance Certificate
- For projects involving construction, applicant must provide evidence of site control or a path to site control at the time of application

43. Does the applicant have to be headquartered/incorporated in a Food Desert Community?

No. However, the proposed project must primarily serve residents of one or more of the 14 Primary Focus FDCs.

44. My organization has been in existence for less than two years. Are we eligible to apply?

No. Applicants must have been in existence for at least two years at the time of application submission, as evidenced by formation documents.

45. My organization has been in existence for at least two years but has not been operating in a Primary Focus FDC for at least two years. Are we eligible to apply?

Yes, your organization is eligible to apply. As part of the application, applicants will be asked to describe their history of serving residents of the FDC(s) they are applying for, their experience providing services related to food access/food security (not necessarily in the same FDC they are applying for), and their experience working with populations similar to those the proposed project will serve. Responses to these questions will be scored as part of the Organizational Capacity and Community Engagement scoring criteria.

46. Must collaborators also be in existence for at least two years at the time of application submission?

No. Collaborators do not need to be in existence for at least two years at the time of application submission. This requirement only applies to the lead applicant.

47. My organization is the recipient of another NJEDA grant. Are we eligible to apply?

Yes. Applicants can apply to FEED NJ even if they are a recipient of another NJEDA grant. A space is provided in the application to share additional details about previous NJEDA assistance received by the applicant.

48. Can applicants collaborate with other entities?

Applicants may propose collaborating with other entities to execute the proposed project. If any other entity will incur expenses as part of the proposed project, those expenses and that entity's role must be described in the application. NJEDA will disburse grant funds only to the lead applicant entity directly and will not permit a joint venture. NJEDA encourages collaborations as part of FEED NJ.

49. Can applicants both apply as a standalone lead applicant and be part of another submission as a collaborator?

Yes, this is allowed. Applicants can apply as a standalone lead applicant and be part of another submission as a collaborator. NJEDA encourages collaborations as part of FEED NJ.

50. If my project includes wraparound services, would these organizations be considered collaborators?

Yes. The organizations providing wraparound services should be listed in the application as collaborators.

51. Must vendors and suppliers be listed as collaborators?

Vendors and suppliers are not required to be listed as collaborators. However, applicants must outline all related expenses in the Budget. The application also contains an optional file upload for "Evidence of engagement with key stakeholders needed to execute specific components of your project (e.g. suppliers, local permitting authorities, USDA)."

52. Can private individuals apply for FEED NJ?

No. Applicants must be a for-profit or nonprofit that has been in existence for at least two years at the time of application.

53. Can government entities apply for FEED NJ?

No. Municipalities and other government agencies are not eligible for this grant opportunity. Applicants must be a for-profit or nonprofit that has been in existence for at least two years at the time of application.

54. Can joint ventures apply for FEED NJ?

No. Joint ventures are not eligible for this grant opportunity.

55. Can coalitions or working groups apply for FEED NJ?

Yes, coalitions or working groups can apply for FEED NJ. The lead applicant for FEED NJ must be a registered for-profit or non-profit entity in existence for at least two years. Applicants must be able to provide an EIN and Tax Clearance Certificate as part of the application. Other collaborators may be listed/described in the application.

56. Can restaurants, corner stores, and/or grocery stores apply for FEED NJ?

Yes. Entities engaged in food retail or distribution are eligible for the program, provided they meet all other criteria. Projects involving food retail will be evaluated in part on the applicant's experience serving recipients of federal and state nutrition benefits, including SNAP and WIC.

57. Can religiously affiliated organizations apply for FEED NJ?

Yes. Any applicant that is involved in religious activities or is religiously affiliated will be required to complete a [Religious Affiliation Form](#) and submit additional documentation, including bylaws (must include a nondiscrimination policy), a mission statement, and promotional materials and press releases.

58. Can public colleges or universities apply for FEED NJ?

Applicants for FEED NJ must be for-profit or nonprofit entities. Public colleges and universities are advised to apply through their foundation arm.

Application Process

59. When will the application open?

The FEED NJ application opened on February 20, 2025 at 10:00 AM. The online application will be available at www.njeda.gov/feednj and remain open for six weeks, until April 3, 2025 at 5:00 PM EDT.

60. What is the deadline for applications?

The FEED NJ application opened on February 20, 2025 at 10:00 AM. The online application will be available at www.njeda.gov/feednj and remain open for six weeks, until April 3, 2025 at 5:00 PM EDT.

61. Is this a first-come, first-served program?

No, this is not a first-come, first-served program. All applications submitted by the deadline will be reviewed after the application period has ended.

62. Is there an application fee?

No. There are no fees for this program.

63. What information is required in the application?

Entities must provide to NJEDA information about their organization and their proposed project, including but not limited to:

- A description of the applicant's mission and capacity to undertake the proposed project, including current and past experience:

- Serving residents of the selected FDC(s)
 - Providing programming or services related to food access and food security
 - Successfully executing projects similar in scale and budget
 - Serving the target population or other populations with similar attributes
 - As applicable, serving recipients of federal and state nutrition benefits and/or working on multi-stakeholder projects
- Identification of specific Primary Focus FDC(s) the proposed project will primarily serve, as well as any additional FDCs
- Compelling, detailed description of the proposed project, including its expected impact on food access and/or food security for residents of the selected FDC(s)
 - Overall project goals
 - Connection between project and existing food access needs and challenges in selected FDC(s)
 - Demonstration that the project's primary focus and impact will be for residents of the selected FDC(s)
 - Description of the role of each proposed collaborator, including the scope of their contribution and a justification for their participation
- A work plan, which must include at minimum:
 - Specific Measurable Achievable Relevant Time-bound (SMART) objectives
 - Description of each project activity, including estimates of resources needed and allocated
 - A project timeline, including milestones and the length of time needed to implement each activity within the grant period
 - Identification of appropriate staff responsible for each project activity
 - If collaborating or partnering with other entities to achieve the goals and objectives proposed in the application: name, scope of work and justification for any planned collaborators
- A justification of the proposed project's viability and long-term sustainability, including details about ongoing/previous planning, existing applicant capabilities, potential risks/contingencies, and how the proposed project will continue to achieve the desired outcomes during and after the end of the grant term.
 - For projects involving construction, evidence of site control or a path to site control must be provided at the time of application
 - If applicable, evidence of commitment from project collaborators and/or key stakeholders must also be submitted
- A description of ongoing and planned community engagement efforts, including details about efforts to seek and respond to feedback from stakeholders, as well as to consider and mitigate past obstacles to community food security
 - At least one letter of support from an entity that serves at least one of the selected Primary Focus FDC(s) is required. If an applicant proposes serving multiple FDCs, multiple letters may be submitted to demonstrate engagement with entities serving those communities.
- A line-item budget, which must include at minimum:
 - The requested level of funding broken down by line item and clearly explained

- Description, evidence, and status of outside funds, if the total project cost exceeds the requested grant amount
- Amount, description, and rationale for funding allocated to any planned collaborator entities

A sample application is available at www.njeda.gov/feednj.

64. Can I submit my own Budget and/or Work Plan, or must I use the templates provided?

All applicants must download, complete, and submit the NJEDA-provided Budget and Work Plan templates that are linked in the application and available on www.njeda.gov/feednj.

65. My project includes construction. What information will I need to provide in the application?

For each contractor/subcontractor used, applicants will be asked to provide the following information:

- Name of contractor
- Contractor quote
- Public Works Certificate
- NJ Business Registration Certificate
- Contractor Eligibility Verification Form
- NJ Small/Women/Minority/Veteran Business Enterprise (SWMBE) certification, if applicable
- Square footage of proposed construction site
- A detailed explanation of the proposed construction and any specialized equipment or materials required, if applicable

All contractors used for any construction costs more than \$1,999 must be registered as a New Jersey Department of Labor and Workforce Development (DOL) Public Works Contractor Registered Contractor and must abide by NJ prevailing wage and affirmative action requirements.

For each professional service used, including, but not limited to, architectural, engineering, and construction management services, applicants will be asked to provide the following information.

- Name of professional service company
- NJ Business Registration Certificate
- Professional Services Eligibility Verification Form
- NJ Small/Women/Minority/Veteran Business Enterprise (SWMBE) certification, if applicable

66. What documents are needed at the time of application?

Applicants must submit a project Work Plan and Budget using the templates provided at www.njeda.gov/feednj. Applicants must also submit their formation documents and a current New Jersey Tax Clearance Certificate. At least one Letter of Support from an entity that serves at least one of the selected Primary Focus FDC(s) is also required.

Additional project-specific documents include evidence of collaboration from project collaborators (if applicable) and evidence of site control or a path to site control (e.g. deed or lease). Evidence of engagement with key stakeholders needed to execute specific components of your project (e.g. suppliers, local permitting authorities, USDA) and evidence of ongoing or previous project planning may also be submitted if applicable.

If the project involves construction, the applicant must provide a NJ Business Registration Certificate, Public Works Certificate, Contractor Eligibility Verification Form, and NJ SWMBE certification (if applicable) for each contractor used, as well as a NJ Business Registration Form, Professional Services Eligibility Verification Form, and NJ SWMBE certification (if applicable) for each professional service used.

A full application document checklist is available on www.njeda.gov/feednj.

67. How do I obtain a Tax Clearance Certificate?

Step-by-step instructions for how to obtain your New Jersey Tax Clearance Certificate are available [here](#). Please email businessassistancetc.taxation@treas.nj.gov with any questions or concerns.

68. How can I/my contractor/my professional service company obtain a Business Registration Certificate?

Please use [this online tool](#) from the New Jersey Division of Revenue to obtain a Business Registration Certificate.

69. If I am purchasing equipment that does not require construction or installation, do I still need to provide documentation related to prevailing wage?

These documents are required for projects where prevailing wage requirements would apply, which depends on the specifics of the project, the work being done, and who will perform the work.

All contractors used for any construction costs more than \$1999 must be registered as a New Jersey Department of Labor and Workforce Development (DOL) Public Works Contractor Registered Contractor and must abide by NJ prevailing wage and affirmative action requirements.

70. What is a Letter of Support?

All applications must include a Letter of Support from an entity that serves at least one of the applicant's selected Primary Focus Food Desert Communities. For example, letters may come from local nonprofit or for-profit organizations, local government officials, etc.

Applicants may submit multiple letters to demonstrate engagement with entities serving either the same FDC or other FDCs you propose to serve. If you are uploading multiple letters, please ensure it is clear which letter(s) corresponds to which FDC(s). If you indicate in the

Organizational Capacity section of the application that you will collaborate with an organization that serves one or more of your selected Primary Focus FDCs, you may provide that same letter.

71. Who should Letters of Support be addressed to?

There are no set requirements. If need be, applicants can feel free to address the Letter of Support to “NJEDA Food Security Team” or “To whom it may concern,” 36 West State Street, Trenton, NJ 08625.

72. Is there a maximum number of Letters of Support that may be submitted?

There is no maximum number of Letters of Support that may be submitted. If you are uploading multiple letters from entities that serve different FDCs, please ensure it is clear which letter(s) corresponds to which FDC(s). All applications must include at least one Letter of Support from an entity that serves at least one of the applicant’s selected Primary Focus Food Desert Communities.

73. What constitutes evidence of site control or a path to site control?

If the applicant owns the site, a deed constitutes evidence of site control. If the applicant does not own the site, evidence of site control can include a lease, sublease, or license with the site owner. If the applicant is pursuing a path to site control, evidence can include a purchase and sale agreement, term sheet, or a letter of intent from the current property owner.

74. Is the Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion section of the application mandatory?

The Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion section of the application is optional and used for data tracking purposes only. Answers in this section have no impact on eligibility or scoring, and applicants may choose to select “Question is not applicable” or “Prefer not to answer” for any question.

75. I speak a language other than English; can I receive a translated version of the application?

For language assistance, please send your name, spoken language, and telephone number to NJEDA at languagehelp@njeda.gov to receive assistance completing the application.

76. Some questions don’t seem applicable to government entities or not-for-profit local economic and community development entities. Do I still have to respond to those questions?

Part of our application is a Common Application that NJEDA uses for various programs and funding opportunities. NJEDA provides funding to many applicants including small businesses, real estate developers, governmental entities, not for profit organizations and financial institutions. Applicant/Company/Organization are used interchangeably throughout the application. Please answer all required questions on the application.

77. Does the application platform allow for applications to be saved as a draft and returned to for final submission?

Yes. Please remember to save your application. Applicants will receive a custom link that can be used to return to the saved application at any time.

78. Does the application platform allow for multiple users to collaborate simultaneously?

No. The application platform can only support one user at a time per application.

79. Are there word or character limits for the application question responses?

Yes. Each question in the application has a specified character limit. Any portion of a response that exceeds the listed character limit will not be saved. There is no specific character or page limit for uploaded documents, such as Letters of Support.

80. How long will it take for applications to be reviewed? When can I expect a decision?

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. Grants will be disbursed on a competitive basis, and all scoring must be complete before awards can be announced. NJEDA will reach out to applicants to share an updated timeline.

81. Can my organization submit multiple applications?

No. Applicants are limited to one application per EIN.

82. Can one application include multiple proposed projects for funding?

One FEED NJ application can include various proposed components/sub-projects. However, applicants must only submit one Budget and one Work Plan, and all application responses should encompass the entirety of the project.

83. What happens if I forgot to submit a document or submitted something wrong? Will I have a chance to fix it?

Applicants should make their best efforts to ensure that their submitted application includes all required information. Applications will first be evaluated for completeness and eligibility. Applicants that are missing required information related to program eligibility will be formally contacted via email and provided instructions and a clear deadline to cure those deficiencies before a final completeness and eligibility review. Any applications still incomplete after the cure period will be rejected, with no opportunity to appeal. Applicants will *not* have an opportunity to cure scored components of the application (e.g. open-ended narrative responses).

84. Will there be an opportunity to update estimates provided in contractor quotes?

Yes. Contractor quotes submitted at the time of application can be estimated costs. If an applicant is selected to receive a grant, there will be an opportunity to modify the budget to reflect updated construction quotes. However, the requested grant amount cannot be increased.

85. What resources are available to support applicants?

Beyond this FAQ document, applicants can visit www.njeda.gov/feednj to find additional resources including a sample application, application checklist, scoring rubric, and program specifications.

Grant Awards and Usage

86. How will grantees be selected?

All complete applications will be scored by an internal NJEDA scoring committee based on the rubric identified in the program specifications approved by the Authority's board, available at www.njeda.gov/feednj. Applications must score at least 70 points out of 100 points, including a minimum of 8 points in the Strength of Budget criterion, to be considered for an award.

Funding will be allocated first to fulfill the highest-scored applicant's grant request, proceeding in decreasing order of score to other applicants that meet the minimum score requirements, until insufficient funds remain to fully fund the next eligible application.

87. What criteria will be used to score applicants?

Applications will be evaluated on the following criteria:

- Organizational Capacity (up to 20 points)
- Project Impact (up to 20 points)
- Work Plan Quality (up to 15 points)
- Project Viability and Sustainability (up to 15 points)
- Community Engagement (up to 15 points)
- Strength of Budget (up to 15 points, 8 point minimum required to be eligible to be awarded funding)

The complete scoring criteria are available [here](#). The highest scoring applications (above 70 points) will be recommended for award until all funds are exhausted.

88. Who will be scoring the applications?

Applications will be scored by a committee of NJEDA staff. Staff will use the scoring criteria/rubric available at www.njeda.gov/feednj.

89. Will scoring priority be given to applicants based on the ranking of the Primary Focus FDC they propose to serve?

No. There is no priority given based on the acuity or ranking of the Primary Focus FDCs.

90. Will scoring priority be given to applicants that propose serving multiple FDCs?

No. There is no priority given for proposing to serve multiple FDCs. Proposals will be scored based on criteria including the applicant's depth of experience serving the target population in the selected FDC(s) and the project's expected impact on food access/food security for residents of the selected Primary Focus FDC(s).

91. Will scoring priority be given to certain types of projects?

No. FEED NJ is a competitively scored program. There is no priority given for certain types of projects.

92. Will for-profit and nonprofit entities be scored/evaluated differently?

No. For-profit and nonprofit entities will be scored/evaluated exactly the same. A full scoring rubric is available [here](#).

93. Is there a maximum number or cap on the number of grants that will be awarded for each Primary Focus FDC?

No. There is no maximum number or cap on the number of grants that will be awarded for each Primary Focus FDC. Funding will be allocated first to fulfill the highest-scored applicant's grant request, proceeding in decreasing order of score to other applicants that meet the minimum score requirements, until insufficient funds remain to fully fund the next eligible application.

94. If I am selected to receive a grant, are there requirements that must be met in order to close the grant agreement?

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

- 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

95. Can grant funding be used to cover costs incurred *after* the date of grant agreement execution?

Yes. All other costs that are incurred after the date of grant agreement execution are eligible, subject to the Authority's approval of the project budget and supporting documentation. For example, costs can include minor renovation, equipment, installation, salaries and fringe, and rent.

96. Can grant funding be used to cover costs incurred *before* the date of grant agreement execution?

No. Costs incurred prior to signing a grant agreement are not eligible for reimbursement.

97. Can grants be used to cover the entirety of project costs?

Yes. Grant funds may cover up to 100 percent of the proposed project costs, provided these costs are described in the budget submitted at the time of application.

98. Can funds be sub-granted to other entities?

Yes. Grant funds can be sub-granted to other entities. The amount, recipient, and use of these funds must be described in the budget submitted as part of the application. *(Please note, the response to this question has been updated from an earlier version of the FAQs.)*

99. Can FEED NJ grants be used in conjunction with additional funding?

Yes. If the total cost of the proposed project exceeds the grant amount requested from NJEDA, additional funding sources must be described in the budget submitted for approval.

Project Implementation

100. How will grant funding be disbursed?

Selected applicants will enter into a grant agreement with NJEDA, and funds will be disbursed according to the following schedule:

- 30% of the grant will be disbursed upon execution of a grant agreement between NJEDA and the selected applicant;
- Once the applicant's quarterly expenditure reports demonstrate that the initial disbursement has been spent on eligible costs, further expenditures on eligible costs will be reimbursed on a quarterly basis, up to a maximum of 50% of the grant amount, upon the Authority's review and approval of the applicant's quarterly expenditure reports; and
- Up to 20% of the grant amount will be disbursed upon the Authority's review and approval of the applicant's final progress and expenditure reports.

101. When will initial grant funds be disbursed?

30% of the grant will be disbursed upon execution of a grant agreement between NJEDA and the selected applicant. 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 a grant agreement are not eligible for reimbursement.

102. Will additional funding be made available to support projects?

No. This is a one-time grant. However, the results of this pilot program may inform future NJEDA program development. NJEDA currently offers a variety of other grant and tax credit programs aimed at supporting food security in New Jersey. Learn more [here](#).

103. What reporting will be required and at what frequency?

Grantees will be required to provide progress and expenditure reports to NJEDA quarterly, starting at grant execution and extending through the end of the grant term of either 12 or 24 months. At the end of the grant term, these quarterly reports will be replaced by final progress and expenditure reports. These reports must provide updates on grantees' progress against their proposed project timeline, data on the project's outcomes and impact (e.g. number of people served), and project costs since the last report.

Other Questions

104. Will NJEDA offer this program in other food desert communities?

FEED NJ is a pilot program that aims to support projects in 14 of New Jersey's most acute FDCs. FEED NJ aims to build on the success of the [Atlantic City Food Security Grants Pilot Program](#),

which [awarded 11 grants](#) to support food security and food access projects that serve the Atlantic City/Ventnor FDC.

NJEDA currently offers other programs available to all 50 designated Food Desert Communities, including the [Food Desert Relief Supermarket Tax Credit Program](#), aimed at supporting the development and operations of supermarkets in FDCs, and the [Food Retail Innovation in Delivery Grant \(FRIDG\) Program](#), which provides grant funding to New Jersey food retailers to purchase self-contained, temperature-controlled lockers located in FDCs.

105. My project does not primarily serve residents of one or more Primary Focus FDCs and/or I am ineligible to apply for FEED NJ. Are any other NJEDA programs available to support my organization?

Yes! NJEDA offers [several grant and loan programs](#) to support eligible small businesses and nonprofits. Please visit www.njeda.gov for more information.

106. Who do I contact for additional questions?

Potential applicants may reach out to CustomerCare@njeda.gov, call (844) 965-1125, or use the Customer Care chat feature found on the NJEDA website. Additional questions, comments, and inquiries can also be directed to foodsecuritygrants@njeda.gov.

107. How can I stay updated about FEED NJ?

Please visit www.njeda.gov/feednj to sign up to join our email list and receive the latest program announcements and updates.

108. Will there be any information sessions or webinars for FEED NJ?

An information and application webinar was held on January 27, 2025. A recording and slides are available at www.njeda.gov/feednj.