

CALL FOR EXTENSION RESEARCH PROPOSALS

Improving SNAP–Ed (Formerly Food Stamp Nutrition Education) Programs and Evaluations

Proposals Due: December 1, 2008

Announcement date: Sept. 8, 2008

Overview: The goal of this funding initiative is to support research projects that will provide direct benefit to the delivery or evaluation of SNAP-Ed (FSNE) programs. The projects will result in findings and recommendations that will be disseminated directly to SNAP-Ed program personnel, and to the larger scientific and policy communities through publication in peer-review journals. A secondary goal is to facilitate the development of pilot projects that can form the basis for larger projects to study effective SNAP-Ed programming, funded by USDA or other sources.

Project period: April 1, 2009—August 31, 2010

Desired focus areas for individual projects:

- Development of effective educational methodologies for programs serving low-income audiences. Possible examples might be: facilitated dialogue, social marketing techniques, motivational interviewing, multimedia programs, etc.
- Development or validation of specific measures or general measurement strategies, for the purpose of assessing behaviors or other outcomes related to diet and/or physical activity. These investigations can apply to specific audiences such as low-income families, youth from low-income families, etc.
- Improvements in the design of evaluations of SNAP-Ed programs. Examples of relevant evaluation questions might be:
 - What sampling strategies for individuals or families might best ensure that evaluation samples are representative of the larger SNAP-Ed audience?
 - Do retrospective pretests provide high-quality data when used with low-income audiences?

Required and/or preferred characteristics of research projects:

- The project research team must include SNAP-Ed program personnel from the relevant state. In most cases, the teams will also include researchers who are not in SNAP-Ed programs (though they may be in Extension).
- Projects must clearly show how their results will be useful and practical for the improvement of SNAP-Ed programs throughout the country.
- The project must show strong promise for producing publications in refereed, peer-review journals.
- Multi-state projects are preferred over single-state projects (as reflected in the scoring criteria).

Eligibility:

- Eligibility is limited to universities that contribute to the Extension Administrators/Directors SNAP-Ed assessment. Contact Sandy Jensen (605-688-4944) for further information about this assessment.
- The project research team must include Extension SNAP-Ed program personnel. It is expected that other personnel will also be included on the research team who are not working in Extension SNAP-Ed programs.
- A university is not eligible to apply for these funds if an individual from that university serves on the project selection committee.

Project funding: Projects may be funded up to a maximum of \$36,000. It is anticipated that two projects will be funded. All funding depends on appropriate budget justification and the availability of funds. All funds must be used to cover direct project costs; indirect costs will not be covered.

Timeline:

Proposals due	December 1, 2008
Proposal review period	Dec. 2, 2008 – Jan. 31, 2009
Funding decisions made:.....	February 1, 2009
Grant period:	April 1, 2009 – August 31, 2010
Reports due:	September 30, 2010

Proposal format:

Proposals should include the following sections (maximum lengths are indicated in parentheses where appropriate):

1. Application cover page including name of project, brief summary description, project team description, and other requested information.
2. Major aims of research project, with specific research questions to be addressed. (1 page)
3. Importance of topic, and why this will be useful to SNAP-Ed programs nationwide. (2 pages)
4. What we already know: background research, knowledge, and practice relevant to this project. (2 pages)
5. Research plan and timeline for this project. (4 pages)
6. Reference list for literature cited.
7. Three-page CV for project's Principal Investigator and other pertinent research personnel, including the following sections: (a) education and training, (b) positions and honors, (c) selected peer-reviewed publications, (d) previous grants, (e) other pertinent information.
8. Budget. (see below)
9. Appendices. (existing instruments, etc.)

Proposal budget:

The project budget can include the following categories (others can be suggested as well). Project funds cannot be used to pay indirect costs. Include a budget narrative with a clear and succinct explanation for each item:

- Salary and benefits for grant-paid personnel
- Materials and supplies
- Travel
- Communications, postage, technology
- Subcontracts
- Other budget categories

Project deliverables, due at end of project period:

The following items are due at the end of the project period, September 30, 2010:

- Non-technical overview and description of project's aims, conclusions, recommendations, and new products for improving SNAP-Ed programming, for dissemination to SNAP-Ed programs nationwide and posting online. (4 pages)
- Any questionnaires, instruments, guides, or other new materials developed. These materials will be in the public domain for general use.
- Comprehensive report of project including goals, methods, findings, recommendations, and new products.
- Executive summary describing the project and its findings. This document will be combined with the other funded project to produce a compilation summary of the funding initiative. (3 pages)

Selection process:

Review of proposals and funding decisions will be made by a selection committee, based on the following criteria. Each criterion is described by one or more components but will be assigned a single score, based on the maximum number of points displayed in the column on the right.

Selection criteria and their relative weight (100 points total):

Criterion	Description	Points
Importance of topic and anticipated usefulness to SNAP-Ed programs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The proposal shows the potential to significantly improve SNAP-Ed programs or evaluations, or SNAP-Ed programming capacity for specific target populations. • The proposed research topic is innovative with regard to current methods for SNAP-Ed programming. 	30
Quality of proposed research project	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The proposed research shows potential to produce findings or new knowledge that will be publishable in refereed, peer-review journals. • The proposed project is based on up-to-date research, knowledge, and practice in the relevant subject matter area. • The research plan is appropriate, rigorous, and feasible. 	25
Capability of research team to carry out project	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The project team is judged to be capable of conducting the research and communicating its usefulness. 	20
Quality of written proposal and budget	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The proposal is clear, well-written, and well-organized. • The research goals and objectives are clearly articulated. • The proposed budget is appropriate, realistic, and sufficiently detailed. 	15
Multi-state project	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The project is integrated across more than one state. 	10
TOTAL POINTS		100

To apply:

Submit proposals via e-mail to Sandy Jensen at: Sandra.Jensen@sdstate.edu.

Proposals are due December 1, 2008, 5 p.m., EST. A confirmation e-mail will be sent upon the arrival of the application, but it is the responsibility of each applicant to ensure that the complete proposal has been received.

IMPROVING SNAP-Ed PROGRAMS AND EVALUATIONS
Application Cover Page

Title of project: _____

Amount requested: _____ **Application date:** _____

Applicant institution: _____

Contact person (name, phone, e-mail): _____

Principal Investigator:

Name: _____

Position: _____

Department: _____

E-mail: _____

Address: _____

Phone & Fax: _____

Other members of project leadership team:

Name: _____

Name: _____

Position: _____

Position: _____

Address: _____

Address: _____

Brief summary description (Approximately 100 words; continue on next page as needed):