

**SPECIAL SUPPLEMENTAL NUTRITION PROGRAM FOR  
WOMEN, INFANTS AND CHILDREN (WIC)**

**REQUEST FOR APPLICATIONS**

**LOVING SUPPORT: BUILDING BREASTFEEDING  
COMPETENCIES FOR LOCAL WIC STAFF**

**APPLICATIONS MUST BE RECEIVED BY  
AUGUST 16, 2007**

**SUBMIT APPLICATIONS TO:  
CHARLES OKAL  
GRANTS MANAGEMENT DIVISION  
FOOD AND NUTRITION SERVICE, USDA  
3101 PARK CENTER DRIVE, Rm 738  
ALEXANDRIA, VIRGINIA 22302**

**Released by:  
Supplemental Food Programs Division  
Food and Nutrition Service, USDA**

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**SPECIAL SUPPLEMENTAL NUTRITION PROGRAM FOR  
WOMEN, INFANTS AND CHILDREN (WIC)**

**LIMITED APPLICATION REQUEST**

*INVITATION TO APPLY*

**LOVING SUPPORT: BUILDING BREASTFEEDING  
COMPETENCIES FOR LOCAL WIC STAFF**

**I. INTRODUCTION**

The Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) will fund a limited competitive grant award in Fiscal Year 2007, in the amount of \$150,000, to a qualified applicant to develop a breastfeeding training curriculum guide. The purpose of the guide is to increase the knowledge base and skill set for Breastfeeding Coordinators, the Competent Professional Authority (CPA), or other WIC staff who provide community-based breastfeeding leadership, training and education at **the local agency level** in the WIC Program. Public Law (P.L.) 108-447, the Consolidated Appropriations Act 2005, provides that funds are available for the purposes specified in section 17(h)(10)(B) of the Child Nutrition Act as amended.

FNS will provide only one award under this solicitation. This application is available only to a limited number of venders who meet eligibility criteria. The awardee will be selected on a competitive basis, based on an objective review of all proposals according to the technical evaluation criteria outlined in this Request For Applications. FNS has structured this award as a cooperative agreement and plans to work closely with the awardee throughout the duration of this project.

**II. WHO IS ELIGIBLE TO APPLY**

This is a competitive, limited solicitation. Only non-profit organizations, currently involved in the provision of breastfeeding education, training, or curriculum development are eligible to apply. **FNS will not consider applications from entities that do not fit these eligibility criteria.**

### III. BACKGROUND

The Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants and Children (WIC) promotes breastfeeding as the optimal source of infant nutrition. Breastfeeding provides a range of benefits for an infant's growth, immunity and development, and provides benefits for the mother such as earlier recovery from childbirth. Breastfeeding enhances mother, infant and family bonding. Breastfeeding promotion and support in the WIC Program is bolstered by the unique characteristics of its multi-cultural participation. As a major public health nutrition and breastfeeding program, WIC considers the social challenges that many of its mothers face. Many of the barriers to breastfeeding were identified through formative research conducted through the *Loving Support Makes Breastfeeding Work* campaign. The WIC Program addresses these barriers through its breastfeeding promotion, education, outreach and support efforts.

WIC Reauthorization Act (Public Law 101-147) emphasized the importance of breastfeeding promotion and support in the WIC Program. Federal Regulations require:

- USDA to develop standards for State and local agencies to ensure adequate breastfeeding support has been established at the State and local levels;
- WIC to make yearly evaluations of breastfeeding promotion and support activities;
- WIC to collect data on the incidence and duration of breastfeeding among participants;
- Breastfeeding promotion and support to be incorporated into State Plans
- Designation of a breastfeeding coordinator to provide training and support to local agency staff responsible for breastfeeding promotion;
- WIC State agencies to provide training on breastfeeding promotion and support to local agency staff responsible for breastfeeding;
- WIC State agencies to provide nutrition education and breastfeeding materials in languages other than English as appropriate;

In 2003, Congress provided the WIC Program with funding to develop a peer counseling program. FNS developed a research-based peer counseling model for the purpose of implementing and expanding breastfeeding programs that provide mother-to-mother support, appropriate for the WIC clinic environment. This model program includes a peer counseling management training curriculum, "Using *Loving Support* to Manage Peer Counseling Programs." The model also includes a "train the trainer" curriculum: "Using *Loving Support* to Implement Best Practices in Peer Counseling."

### IV. PROJECT GOAL

There is currently no one standardized WIC training criteria that assures that breastfeeding coordinators or non peer counselors have attained a level of proficiency in the skills required to promote and support breastfeeding in the WIC local-agency, public

health setting. Therefore, the goal of this project is to develop one training curriculum, outlining competencies and skill sets appropriate for WIC local agency breastfeeding coordinators, WIC breastfeeding expert, competent professional authority (CPA) or other WIC health professionals who provide community-based breastfeeding leadership and education through the WIC Program.

The awardee will develop a criterion-based training curriculum to increase the skill level and competencies of those, who throughout the continuum of care provide breastfeeding education, training and program management in the WIC Program at the **local agency level**.

In developing the proposal, the following factors should be considered:

- This curriculum guide should outline the competencies that are required to attain the knowledge, administrative and management skills required to be successful in providing breastfeeding leadership at the WIC local agency level.
- This curriculum guide should be tailored to address breastfeeding in WIC as a public health program, in the community-based setting.
- This curriculum should be designed as the core basis, to allow further development for future breastfeeding training programs.
- This curriculum should be consistent with “Loving Support Makes Breastfeeding Work” goals and “Using *Loving Support* to Manage Peer Counseling Programs” training curricula.
- This curriculum should **not** be designed as an intense clinical program on lactation management of complex maternal or infant problems, nor should this curriculum be designed for peer counselors.

## **V. TECHNICAL PROPOSAL**

Consideration should be given to the many competencies that are required to promote and support breastfeeding at the WIC local agency level. The proposal should address, but not be limited to the following competencies:

- Knowledge of evidence-based breastfeeding management skills
- Knowledge of the WIC population and research that addresses the barriers that WIC mothers and families face
- Knowledge of WIC breastfeeding goals, policies and procedures and Nutrition Services Standards
- Knowledge of management of peer-counselor programs
- Knowledge of culturally competent breastfeeding practices
- Outreach skills and knowledge of community partnerships, role of coordination with other health care professionals, knowledge of community resources, health professional organizations and coalitions

- Knowledge of staff roles and responsibilities related to promoting and supporting breastfeeding in the WIC Program
- Knowledge of collecting and assessing biennial breastfeeding data, including familiarity with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Pediatric Nutrition Surveillance data and the WIC Participant and Program Characteristics Study
- Basic knowledge of how to seek grant opportunities and/or management of grants
- Skill in oral and written communication
- Skill in breastfeeding assessment and documentation
- Knowledge and skill in developing breastfeeding education classes

**VI. SELECTION CRITERIA**

**Technical Approach 60%**

The proposal demonstrates a clear understanding of the purpose of the project and the goals of breastfeeding promotion and support within the public health community-based setting such as the WIC program. The technical approach is appropriate to address the project goals.

The proposal demonstrates in-depth understanding of the WIC Program, its administration and management structure, and the community it serves.

The proposal considers the multi-cultural population that is served by the WIC Program.

**Budget Plan 30%**

The proposal includes a budget plan that is reasonable in relation to the scope and effort of the project. The budget plan demonstrates consistency with project objectives. A budget narrative provides details on how costs were derived and how and by whom funds will be spent.

**History of Past Performance 10%**

The proposal demonstrates evidence of completing comparable work on time and within cost; and includes references from past projects.

**Total 100%**

**The award of this requirement will be made to the Applicant whose proposal, when all criteria are considered, represents the best value to the Government.**

## **VII. APPLICATION FORMAT**

It is strongly suggested that applicants adhere to the following format. Use of this format will make it easier for the proposal reviewers to locate the requested information and to evaluate your proposal.

**The original proposal must be ready for copying.**

### 1. Technical Proposal:

- 8 pages maximum length, exclusive of resumes, letters of reference or materials from the application packet. FNS reserves the right to reject any application with a technical proposal exceeding 8 pages in length,
- single-sided,
- unstapled, unbound,
- on 8 ½" X 11" white paper,
- single-spaced text,
- at least 1" margins on top, bottom, and sides,
- 12-point font size,
- numbered pages,
- table of contents,
- one page proposal summary that describes proposal

2. Appendices – to include only required supporting documentation that addresses the applicant's capacity to carry out the proposed project. The maximum length is 8 pages.

- Resumes (limit to 2 pages per resume)
- Letters of reference
- Budget Plan and Narrative

## **VIII. APPLICATION DUE DATE**

The completed application package must be **received** by FNS at the address listed below **on** or before **5:00 PM Eastern Daylight Time (EDT) by August 16, 2007.**

## **IX. FUNDING AND DURATION OF COOPERATIVE AGREEMENT**

This cooperative agreement will be funded for the period September 30, 2007 through September 30, 2008. Funding will be provided through the Grant Award Document/ Letter of Credit process, upon receipt of a properly executed cooperative agreement. All

cooperative agreement funds must be obligated and all activities conducted under the cooperative agreement must be completed by September 30, 2008

## **X. SUBMIT APPLICATION**

1. Submit application by hand delivery or by mail.

We advise that you meet the deadline by delivering the application or by mailing it sufficiently in advance of the deadline to ensure its timely receipt. **One original and two copies** must be submitted. The original copy must be ready for copying (i.e. single-sided, unstapled, unbound and on 8 ½ x 11 paper). If you opt to mail your application we strongly suggest using a mail delivery service that guarantees delivery and allows you to track delivery to FNS. **Also, FNS will not accept faxed or e-mailed applications.**

2. Late applications will not be considered in this competition. FNS will not consider additions or revisions to the application once it has been received.
3. Applications should be mailed to:

Charles Okal  
Grants Management Division  
USDA, Food and Nutrition Service,  
3101 Park Center Drive, Room 738  
Alexandria, VA 22302