



**The Council
of State
Governments**

Final Report to the U.S. Department of Agriculture Food and Nutrition Service

2019–2022 WIC Special Project Innovation Grant

The Council of State Governments

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Executive Summary

The Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children (WIC) is one of the [most critical, and successful, federal assistance programs](#)¹ of the United States. Serving thousands of women and children across the country, the program connects families to food and nutrition education to help ensure better health outcomes for low-income families. In 2019, the need to streamline WIC certification processes was identified, as fewer families utilized the program and benefits they were qualified to access. In response, The Council of State Governments (CSG), in partnership with the Gretchen Swanson Center for Nutrition (GSCN), and through funding provided by the United States Department of Agriculture Food and Nutrition Service (USDA, FNS), identified opportunities to streamline certification and administered six subgrants to state and local WIC agencies across the country. These subgrant projects tested new and innovative approaches to enhancing WIC certification, and formally evaluated them to determine impact and scalability. This report provides an overview of the 2019 WIC Special Project Innovation (WSPI) grant project, summaries of the six subgrantee projects and valuable lessons learned from this initiative.

¹ USDA Food and Nutrition Service, <https://www.fns.usda.gov/wic/about-wic-how-wic-helps>



Introduction

Since its launch as a pilot program in the 1970s, WIC has blossomed into one of the most sweeping federal assistance nutrition programs in the United States. The program provides food packages and nutrition education to approximately six million pregnant, post-partum and breastfeeding women and about half of all infants in the U.S. It is well-documented that WIC has improved a wide array of health outcomes for its participants and delivers crucial services to millions of families. Despite these benefits, barriers to program enrollment continue to hinder participation for many families in need.

To be eligible for WIC, applicants must have an income at or below an income level or standard set by the state agency, be determined adjunctively or automatically income eligible based on participation in certain programs or meet the traditional income assessment set by annual Income Eligibility Guidelines. They must fall under one of the following categories:

- Pregnant women.
- Breastfeeding women.
- Non-breastfeeding postpartum women.
- Infants.
- Children up to age 5.

In addition to meeting these eligibility requirements, a qualified competent professional authority must deem program applicants as nutritionally at-risk. Applicants may apply within their geographic region of residence.

Research evaluating WIC program underutilization [previously identified barriers that stem from the program's eligibility determination and participant certification processes.](#)² Before the onset of COVID-19, the enrollment process could often be daunting to potential participants due to requirements such as physical presence, income documentation and nutritional risk assessments. Clinic locations and environments can also present barriers to applicants completing necessary steps, such as lack of transportation and difficulty managing one or more child while present in the clinic. The need to streamline the WIC enrollment and certification processes was identified to allow the Program to reach more eligible families and make a larger impact on the health and nutrition indicators for low-income families.

In late 2019, CSG, in partnership with GSCN, entered a three-year, \$8 million cooperative agreement, referred to as the WIC Special Project Innovation Grant, with the USDA Food and Nutrition Service to improve the WIC certification and eligibility determination process. By awarding just under \$6 million in sub-grants to state and local WIC agencies, the project's aim was to utilize innovative ideas and replicable tools that are rooted in evidence to support streamlining the WIC program's enrollment process.

² USDA Economic Research Service, <https://www.ers.usda.gov/publications/pub-details/?pubid=43927>



Through a competitive Request for Applications process, sub-grants were awarded to four state and three local WIC agencies:

- Colorado WIC.
- Michigan WIC.
- Pennsylvania WIC & West Virginia WIC as a consortium.
- Long Island Jewish Medical Center WIC Program in New York.
- Family Service Lincoln WIC Program in Nebraska.
- Public Health Foundation Enterprises WIC Program in California.

These subgrantees developed comprehensive pilot projects aimed at streamlining WIC certification and meeting the unique needs of their communities and participants, including robust program evaluations with the support of GSCN. The projects included innovative new uses for technology to support the certification process, few of which had been used before by WIC agencies, and none that had been formally evaluated by USDA. These projects were an opportunity to formally monitor and evaluate these new approaches so successes could be replicated and scaled. The grant program also served as an opportunity to evaluate the entirety of these efforts, as GSCN conducted an additional project evaluation for each subgrantee project.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, almost all WIC agencies across the U.S. elected to utilize the physical presence waivers offered by USDA to prevent disruption of WIC appointments and services when meeting in-person was not safe. The use of these waivers made it crucial for many agencies to update their technological infrastructure, and some agencies chose to implement several solutions identified at the beginning of this project, such as electronic document uploading options and utilizing existing health information systems to acquire anthropometric data when in-person assessments could not be conducted. While some of these efforts have become more standard since the pandemic, there are many lessons to be learned from these projects and their outcomes.

Project Kickoff and RFA Process

Project efforts began in earnest in fall of 2019, as CSG and GSCN developed the Request for Applications and Application Scoring Rubric for future subgrantees. To aid in these efforts, the project team established an advisory committee comprised of WIC subject matter experts from across the country:

- Geraldine Henchy, Food Research and Action Center.
- Dr. Wendi Gosliner, Nutrition Policy Institute, University of California Berkeley School of Public Health.
- Deborah Keyes, Dkeyingredient Consulting and former Georgia State WIC Director.
- Antonia Violante, ideas42.
- Linnea Sallack, Altarum.
- Georgia Machell, National WIC Association.



- Elisabet Eppes, National WIC Association.
- Robert Ferguson, Jewish Healthcare Foundation.
- Zoë Neuberger, Center on Budget and Policy Priorities.

The committee met multiple times at the beginning of the project to help set the scope of the subgrant projects, assist with developing three potential project models for applicants to consider and share insights on the application process itself to avoid creating unnecessary burden on agencies wishing to apply.

Through these meetings, and in close collaboration with FNS, three potential project models were developed for applicants to consider as they began their proposals. These models, or Certification Enhancement Opportunities, were designed to provide applicants with direction on what kinds of projects are allowable under WIC regulations and to ease the burden on applicants, as WIC agencies at both the state and local level can lack the capacity and resources needed to respond to grant opportunities. Applicants were asked to propose their own projects or select one or a combination of the following:

- Enhancement Opportunity 1: Adopt a combination of policies, practices or technologies that enable participants to initiate and complete allowable portions of certification procedures online.
- Enhancement Opportunity 2: Enhance organization capacity to utilize digital technology for appointment reminders and notifications of incomplete certifications.
- Enhancement Opportunity 3: Develop and implement an online WIC referral portal for programs that establish adjunctive income eligibility for WIC.

Once the RFA was released to the public, applicants had access to robust technical assistance while developing their proposals. A dedicated project website hosted the application materials, as well as a FAQ page where all applicant questions received by CSG were shared with answers and relevant context. CSG and GSCN hosted a public webinar to highlight the opportunity and answer questions in July 2020.

On March 8, 2021, CSG announced the award of funds to seven state and local WIC agencies for six pilot programs as part of the WIC Special Project Innovation (WSPI) Grant program. As part of the grant, all six programs received extensive support and technical assistance on their project evaluations from GSCN. Subgrantees were selected based on criteria outlined in the Request for Applications and Scoring Rubrics, including how well applicants identified the needs of their program, the barriers or opportunities for implementing their proposed project, and how well their project could be replicated or scaled for other communities facing similar needs. Regional parity was also considered while making final awardee determinations.

Once awardees were determined, a virtual project kick-off meeting was held with all subgrantees and relevant staff from CSG, GSCN and FNS. Throughout the life of the



project, subgrantees continued to have access to technical assistance on project implementation and evaluation from CSG and GSCN.

Summaries of Subgrantee Projects

Seven WIC agencies — four at the state level and three at the local level — were selected to receive funds as part of the WSPI Grant program. The initial timeline for each subgrantee contract extended from approximately March 2021 to September 2022. The onset of COVID-19 during the grant period impacted each project in various ways, which is described extensively in each subgrantee report. Because of the various hardships experienced by state and local agencies, such as the formula recall, all contracts, with the exception of Colorado, were extended to April 30, 2023. The Colorado WIC Program's contract was extended to June 2023. However, project implementation varied for each subgrantee, as outlined in their individual reports. Overviews of each project are provided below.

Modernizing the Colorado WIC Experience — Colorado WIC Program

Denver, Colorado

Grant Type: State WIC Agency

PROPOSAL: The Colorado WIC Program will enhance the certification process through a thorough update of all existing WIC digital tools and creating new digital tools to increase WIC enrollees' access to information and facilitate scheduling certification appointments. Digital tools created include a client portal, an integrated texting and chatbot feature, a WIC staff intranet, and a customer relationship management system. Colorado WIC also will incorporate updates that would strengthen communication between state agency staff and authorized WIC vendors.

Colorado's project intended to discover how to increase the value of WIC client experience by adopting a more agile approach and digital interoperability. The aim was to build sustainable business operations at the state and local levels as well as interactive customer tools for greater engagement. The target populations were (1) adult participants in the Colorado WIC Program responsible for the administrative tasks associated with participation for themselves and the children in their care and (2) the approximately 400 local agency staff providing direct services statewide.

The goals of the project included enhancing customer experience, focusing particularly on steps for certification and recertification, as well as creating strategies and tools to increase automation and efficiency, freeing up staff resources for direct customer service. This would be accomplished through (1) implementation of a Customer Relationship Management system to interface with the existing databases, (2) building a client portal to collect digital signatures and create a way for clients to upload certification documents remotely, and (3) improving communication between clinic staff and clients with two-way messaging. The original timeline was March 2021 to September 2022, but was extended to April 2023.



Due to various barriers faced by the agency throughout the duration of the grant period, which were exacerbated by the impact of COVID-19, there are no key findings related to project outcomes. However, the Colorado WIC program had several takeaways and lessons learned from the experience that will bolster future efforts they may undertake to enhance the program. Those are described in the subgrantee's individual report and highlighted near the end of this report.

Virtual Integration of WIC Participant Health Information and Certification Required Materials to Decrease Certification Appointment Duration — Pennsylvania WIC Program (Lead) and West Virginia WIC Program

Harrisburg, Pennsylvania

Grant Type: State WIC Agency Consortium

PROPOSAL: The Pennsylvania State WIC Program, in collaboration with the West Virginia State WIC Program, propose that local WIC agencies gain access to state Health Information Exchange (HIE) and establish Medical Liaison position to provide outreach to primary care providers. These efforts would increase the amount of health information available to WIC staff prior to certification appointments, allowing staff to provide more tailored nutritional information during the initial certification appointment and reducing the length of appointment times. The consortium also proposes the creation of a document sharing portal to allow potential participants or referring physicians to upload required documentation prior to certification appointments.

Pennsylvania Department of Health Special Supplemental Program for Women, Infants and Children and West Virginia Department of Health and Human Resources proposed implementing technology to administer participant support more expeditiously by accessing participant medical data electronically and utilizing a participant portal for receipt of certification documentation. Although the organizations applied as a consortium, each agency provided a separate and distinct final report. Overviews of both projects are provided below.

Pennsylvania

Pennsylvania's project focused on certification appointments for pregnant and breastfeeding participants, increasing the efficiency of the certification process, and increasing applicant referral/certification satisfaction. Pennsylvania WIC's goal was to improve relationships between WIC and primary care providers. This goal was accomplished by utilizing Medical Liaisons to enhance program outreach to primary care providers. The certification process was enhanced by utilizing referral data from primary care providers to streamline the certification process and decrease the frequency of which anthropometric and hemoglobin measurements would need to be completed in the WIC clinic. The project timeline began with medical liaison training on Dec. 2, 2021, which lead into the project and data collection activities spanning from Jan. 3, 2022, through Sept. 30, 2022.

West Virginia



West Virginia's project focused on streamlining the certification process and assessing the relevance of health information for required WIC data. West Virginia also sought to reduce task redundancy for WIC staff and barriers to program participation for patients. The aim was to provide WIC staff with access to medical record data to decrease the frequency with which anthropometrics and hemoglobin values are completed and obtained in the clinic. This goal was to be achieved by hiring medical liaison staff for each participating agency. The theory was that by minimizing the tasks to be completed for a WIC appointment in the clinic appointment times would be shortened for participants. Lastly, the team implemented a document portal to incorporate telehealth into WIC service provision. This project spanned from November 2021 to September 2022.

Michigan Certification Enhancement Project — Michigan WIC Program

Lansing, Michigan

Grant Type: State WIC Agency

PROPOSAL: To better understand the current supports in and barriers to the WIC certification process in Michigan, the Michigan State WIC Program will first conduct a thorough business analysis of this process. Based on their findings, a pre-certification questionnaire will be integrated into the existing WIC Client Connect Web Portal and Mobile App to reduce the amount of time spent in certification appointments. Given the significant number of Arabic-speaking clients served by Michigan WIC, WSPI funds will incorporate Arabic language functionality into the existing web portal and mobile app.

Michigan WIC applied to the WIC Special Projects Innovation Grant to streamline the client certification process via staff training, client training, and enhancements to Michigan's MIS and the WIC Connect Mobile Application, such as inclusion of pre-certification questions into the existing technology platforms. The project was named Certification Enhancement Project to reflect this main purpose. The overarching goal was to improve client and staff satisfaction with the certification process, decrease certification appointment times and increase the completion of certification appointments, as well as the use of the mobile app in six select pilot agencies in Michigan. The Certification Enhancement Project spanned March 2021 to April 2023. Anticipated impacts of the Certification Enhancement Project included increased client and staff satisfaction with the certification process and improvements to the certification process tracked via the newly created ability to capture duration in the MI-WIC system.

Several of the enhancements put into effect were based on feedback received from local agencies. A continuous feedback loop from local agencies on their experience with WSPI enhancements and a rolling process of continually refining the enhancements going forward is how Michigan WIC plans to continue the work initiated under this grant. Funding opportunities promoting similar innovations are another way Michigan plans to build upon these enhancements developed under WSPI. Some priorities in the product backlog that could not be implemented under WSPI funding remain on the table and Michigan intends to use future funding opportunities to see these through to completion.



All enhancements made under the aegis of the WSPI grant will remain in place post-funding. This provides an opportunity to naturally scale up the impact of the Certification Enhancement Project by bringing on board other local agencies all over Michigan. As with all interventions, however, there is always scope for further improvement. The WSPI grant made capturing of referrals more streamlined, but a gap remains in terms of completing the loop for referral mechanisms in existence presently. Another area of improvement is figuring out how best to avoid duplicate collection of data on screens within MI-WIC. This will ensure that the client check-in process becomes even more streamlined and efficient as staff experience and comfort with the enhancements increases over time.

Utilizing the CinnaMoms Model to Increase Engagement, Enrollment and Certification of Black Participants at PHFE WIC — Public Health Foundation Enterprises WIC

Pomona, California

Grant Type: Local WIC Agency

PROPOSAL: In response to identified gaps in reach and WIC benefit redemption between Black mothers and all other ethnic groups, the Public Health Foundation Enterprises WIC Program will increase outreach to and certification among Black mothers. This project will formalize the evidence base for the CinnaMoms model — a local breastfeeding support program — to be scaled and transferable to other WIC agencies to support successful certification of Black participants and build the Black workforce at WIC. The proposed program will include culturally tailored education, interaction with Black WIC staff about the certification process, and appointment reminders and support messages for participants, among other things. These efforts are expected to increase enrollment and certification rates, program satisfaction and utilization of benefits by Black families.

Prior to receipt of this funding, the CinnaMoms model emerged as a pilot project at five Public Health Foundation Enterprises WIC sites, with a focus on creating a safe space for Black participants to engage with WIC staff to discuss life, health and breastfeeding and form a village of support. It started with monthly support circles in WIC sites and annual community events designed to shine a light on disparities in breastfeeding rates and evolved to include the broader landscape of the lived experiences of Black women during pregnancy and postpartum. CinnaMoms gather to form a village of support to share lived experiences, advocate for infant feeding and offer vital community resources to improve the health and birthing outcomes of Black families.

The specific innovative aims of this project were to formalize the evidence for the CinnaMoms model to be scaled and made transferable to other WIC agencies to support successful certification of Black participants and to build the Black workforce at Public Health Foundation Enterprises WIC, which translates into increased support for Black participants accessing the WIC program and utilizing benefits. To achieve these specific



aims, four goals were developed and included: 1) hiring and training, 2) CinnaMoms Support for the Certification Experience, 3) community support & outreach, and 4) evaluation of the CinnaMoms Model. The project officially began with hiring in April 2021 and integrated the other project goals through the end of the project Dec. 2022.

The CinnaMoms Model is a culmination of specific hiring, training, support activities and targeted outreach that can be used as a tool to create momentum for a WIC Systems change to move the needle on improving the certification rates and engagement of Black families participating in WIC. Components of the CinnaMoms model were developed within the goals of this project and have remained sustainable, as evidenced by Public Health Foundation Enterprises WIC maintaining all staff hired for the project and drawing down local funding to hire more CinnaMoms staff. One component of CinnaMoms support activities that will slightly change is how the organization engages with families beyond the virtual setting, as Public Health Foundation Enterprises plans to re-initiate providing in-person support. Prior to the pandemic and offering virtual support circles, CinnaMoms held support circles in person at WIC Centers. To resume offerings of in-person support, Public Health Foundation Enterprises plans to transform a segment of their Obama WIC Center to create a non-traditional WIC Center, where they can advance maternal health, provide blood pressure screenings, daily lactation support, cooking demonstrations, nurse partnerships, doula connections and more.

WIC Referral Improvement Streamline Enrollment (RISE) – Long Island Jewish Medical Center WIC Program

New Hyde Park, New York

Grant Type: Local WIC Agency

PROPOSAL: The Long Island Jewish (LIJ) Medical Center WIC Program will enhance certification among pregnant women in their first trimester through attaching certification to existing prenatal visits by tagging – an online referral process –in Electronic Medical Record (EMR) charts. This will streamline the current referral system by eliminating staff reliance on phone calls and email and the need for mothers to make a second trip to the clinic for their certification appointment. The Long Island Jewish WIC Program will incorporate the REDCap software platform into existing systems to administer pre-appointment surveys, streamline consent documents and allow for electronic document uploads, among other things.

The aim of Long Island Jewish Medical Center WIC Program was to (1) streamline the referral of Northwell Health low-income prenatal and post-partum applicants of the Long Island Jewish WIC program, and (2) simplify the WIC certification process. Strategies for increasing referrals for prenatal applicants in the first trimester of their pregnancy to WIC and streamlining the referral process were developed, and interventions were implemented with support from WIC staff, Northwell Health OB/GYN and Cohen Children's Medical Center General Pediatric health care providers. These new



interventions provide better customer service and increase referrals to families in all WIC certification categories.

The populations targeted in this project were low-income applicants including Cohen Children's Medical Center General Pediatrics, Long Island Jewish Ambulatory Care Unit and North Shore ACU which have mostly high-risk WIC eligible prenatal applicants. The overall timeline for this project was April 2021 to April 2023.

Project interventions impacted the certification process; certification appointments were more efficient, and the overall process was streamlined. The name, phone number, date of birth, email, referring healthcare provider and preferred language was received from the electronic medical record before appointments and only needed to be verified during the certification appointment, which saved time for both the applicant and WIC staff. Providing community resource referrals through NowPow via email facilitated a smoother certification process. The team provided personalized community resource referrals to certified applicants in their preferred language, also improving customer service.

An opportunity exists to better refine this innovation or similar innovations by expanding tasking in the electronic medical record by other hospital departments. Several hospital departments provide service to infants and children with serious medical problems and will benefit from early enrollment in WIC.

Next steps for this innovation project include (1) having the healthcare providers continue to educate clients about WIC and to be tasked and referred to Long Island Jewish WIC in the electronic medical record, (2) continued piloting of the RedCap surveys to learn of participants needs prior to appointment and provide targeted counseling at certification appointments in all WIC categories and (3) receiving referrals to WIC through tasking in the electronic medical record of other hospital departments.

Using Technology to Improve Services and Enhance Customer Service in Nebraska — Family Service Lincoln WIC Program

Lincoln, Nebraska

Grant Type: Local WIC Agency

PROPOSAL: The Family Service Lincoln WIC Program will shorten the length of WIC certification appointments by reducing barriers prior to the appointment, as well as reducing the burden on staff and interpreters during appointments. A technology partner will be contracted to incorporate document upload, chat or text, and appointment request features into their existing website. To overcome language barriers experienced by local WIC participants and increase convenience, Family Service Lincoln WIC also will translate the program website into four additional languages — Spanish, Arabic, Vietnamese and Kurdish. Additional features will be added to allow potential clients to request an interpreter for their appointment as well as access WIC program information via audio file in all five languages.



Family Service Lincoln is located in Lincoln, Nebraska, which is home to refugees from over 40 countries speaking a variety of different languages including, but not limited to, English, Spanish, Arabic, Vietnamese and Kurdish. Because Family Service WIC primarily functions in English, being able to provide data in languages the Lincoln community needs was a major barrier to increasing WIC certifications and providing clients and potential new clients with excellent service. Family Service WIC wanted to not only increase communication and customer service with non-English speaking individuals in the community, but also strived to enhance communication with English speaking individuals and current WIC clients.

Family Service WIC contracted with Elevate Advertising to enhance features of the Family Service WIC website to:

- 1) Provide opportunity for clients to upload documents online prior to appointment to enhance the WIC certification process.
- 2) Provide opportunity for clients to chat and request appointments online through the current website to improve customer service in WIC clinics.
- 3) Tailor the FS WIC website to increase communication with new and existing non-English speaking clients to improve customer service in WIC clinics and to enhance the WIC certification process.

The original timeline, March 1, 2021-Sept. 30, 2022, was extended utilizing a no-cost extension that was approved. The final project was completed by Dec. 30, 2022. The anticipated impacts of the project were to provide families in the Lincoln community with a way to complete WIC certification appointments in an efficient way and to enhance customer service by increasing communication.

While staff felt the new features were easy for them to use, they might not have impacted the efficiency with which they conducted their duties and satisfaction was only moderate. The lack of impact on efficiency was also shown in the time audit data, which indicated no difference in administrative time during appointments. The project aimed to make the administrative time more efficient, and the difference in change was not significant.

Another focus of the project was to provide convenience. Although the project does have potential to provide convenience for clients, it may not necessarily provide convenience for staff. The ability to upload documents prior to appointments, to be able to chat with staff via text, and the ability to request an appointment online, potentially during or outside of business hours, does provide convenience for clients yet increases workload for staff. Staff continue to find ways to organize the requests, while also striving to make enhancements convenient for staff.

Conclusions and Lessons Learned



Each subgrantee formulated their top three lessons learned. These are highlighted below and described in each respective report. Promising practices that other organizations may want to adopt are also listed below. Our hope is that the sharing of such information can bolster WIC-related efforts across the nation.

Colorado Learned:

- Additional project time and technical expertise is required if developing a product from scratch versus purchasing an “off the shelf” product to ensure that business requirements are detailed enough for implementation.
- Stability of project management and leadership is crucial; if turnover is unavoidable, it is important to ensure that new team members are supported and brought up to speed with detailed documentation to avoid repeated decisions or steps being missed.
- Substantial time is needed in the project timeline to allow for technical contract review and approval by all parties, as well as stronger lines of communication for awareness about new internal review processes and contract requirements.

Pennsylvania Learned:

- From the start, all required subject matter experts should be part of the team to help develop the application.
- Teams should procure, and familiarize staff with the use of, a secure document portal before the start of the grant period.
- Teams should hire existing WIC staff to serve as medical liaisons.

West Virginia Learned:

- Any group wishing to undertake a project like this needs to start planning very early and understand the process, players involved and signoffs needed.
- To train to use a health information system, staff need to have permission to find data from real people. The state’s system stores sensitive information and without access to real data, test cases are incredibly difficult to understand.
- The most important lesson learned was making sure the WIC management information system was compatible with entering data that would be available in the health information network. West Virginia had to work with their MIS team to find a system that would allow them to use the health information within the existing system, as they do not have the ability to change many functionalities in-house.

Michigan Learned:

- Budgeting for a lengthy time frame to assess evaluation measures such as certification duration and staff satisfaction is necessary. Introducing changes to



an ongoing process has implications for staff. Staff need additional time and training before new processes become integrated into existing modes of functioning at the clinic level. If the time between introduction of enhancements and assessment of key metrics is compressed, it may be more challenging for agencies to demonstrate adoption and efficacy of the intervention.

- Build incentives into the survey data collection process from inception. Michigan's experience with survey data collection for the project demonstrates that incentives can help boost lagging survey response rates.
- Put into practice a 'train-the-trainer' model by encouraging local agencies and clinics to identify one staff member in the role of training supervisor who can serve as the point person for training clinic staff at the local level. These trainers can help ensure that new staff are onboarded efficiently when there is staff turnover in clinics. In the eventuality that some staff are unable to attend the state-scheduled trainings, they can reach out to their training supervisor and schedule time to review the missed trainings.

Public Health Foundation Enterprises Learned :

- Hiring and training new paraprofessional staff takes 9–12 months from the point of posting a job description to having a fully independently working WNA. It is critical that future investments in WIC innovative strategies that require the hiring of new staff recognize that the first 9–12 months of a funding period will be devoted to hiring and training. Funding periods of *at least* 2.5 years will likely to yield the greatest impact for newly hired and trained staff to engage in innovative strategies.
- Outreach activities were not easy to accomplish because staff were only able to dedicate 8–16 hours per week on targeted outreach to the Black and African American Community. It is challenging for staff to support the certification experience in addition to going out and conducting outreach. More overtime is needed for that, and it's challenging to find coverage as many staff have young children. A separate full-time CinnaMoms Community Outreach Specialist position should be created.
- Quantitative data sets are important, but not sufficient when addressing systems change targeted at marginalized or unique groups. Caution is needed when evaluating administrative data because quantitative findings may not be aligned with qualitative findings. In a short grant period like this one, often the most information is learned from qualitative data collection, while changes in quantitative outcomes take longer to document.

Long Island Jewish Learned:



- Both employee engagement and relationships with staff in other departments are critical to the success of new processes. Praise and recognition of successes are also important.
- Sending personalized community referrals to participants can bolster satisfaction.
- Training of WIC staff and healthcare providers surrounding implementation of new processes and responsibilities is essential.

Family Service Lincoln Learned:

- The chat function was a major part of the grant application. It proved too big of an enhancement for the WIC staff to manage. That type of function is more purposeful and better managed by larger corporate companies who may be able to hire several full-time employees to manage a chat service. Because the website is shared with other programs, Family Service WIC staff found it difficult to communicate with individuals in the community asking questions about other programs.
- Research on partners, such as advertising companies, to be included in the work should be conducted.
- Leadership should ensure sufficient staff time can be devoted to the work.

Subgrantees provided three promising practices that may be replicated. Each respective report provides those practices commonly found in that program, but those practices pertinent across various projects are listed below:

1. Designate a staff person at each local agency to be the point person who will ensure all other agency staff are up to date on their training and feel comfortable with the new enhancements.
2. Collaboratively integrate feedback from local agencies from project inception to the completion. This approach will ensure buy-in from agencies at the local level and the state agency will have a stronger and more locally responsive intervention implemented.
3. From the start, all required subject matter experts should be part of the team to help develop the application. In addition to State Agency WIC staff, it is important to include IT, the Office of Legal Counsel, Procurement and local agencies for vital input. This ensures the project includes the necessary components to be successful.

Section 5: Appendices

- RFA
- Scoring Rubric



WIC SPECIAL PROJECT INNOVATION GRANT

WIC Special Project Innovation Grant
Request for Applications
June 15, 2020

Deadline to Apply: January 31, 2021

For questions or request for assistance regarding the RFA instructions, application criteria, and deadlines, please contact WIC@csg.org or (859) 244-8224. Responses to questions sent before the application deadline will be posted on the project website at web.csg.org/WIC

REQUEST FOR APPLICATIONS

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Section 1: RFA Summary

Purpose

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) is partnering with The Council of State Governments (CSG) to administer and support grant awards to WIC State and local agencies.

The purpose of the WIC Special Project Innovation Grant (WSPI) is to fund projects led by State and/or local agencies that administer the Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children (WIC). Projects will seek to develop, implement, and evaluate interventions that should aim to improve customer service in WIC clinics, and enhance the WIC certification process.

How does WSPI differ from past Special Project Grant opportunities?

- Funds will be disbursed to grantees directly from The Council of State Governments.
- The Gretchen Swanson Center for Nutrition (GSCN) has been contracted by CSG to lead evaluation efforts for the project.
- Technical Assistance (TA) will be provided by CSG and GSCN to applicants and grantees during all phases of this funding opportunity including proposal development, project implementation, and project evaluation. The application window provided by CSG gives WIC State agencies ample time to access this TA during proposal development.

Funding

- Up to \$6 million is available for Special Project Innovation Grant projects.
- WSPI applicants may request a maximum of \$2 million per project. There is no minimum award amount.
- WSPI intends to fund multiple projects.

Eligible Applicants

- WSPI applicants must be either a WIC State agency, WIC local agency, or a consortium of WIC agencies. (Note: Consortia of agencies applying for this funding opportunity will need to include written agreements between all consortium members. In addition, interested local WIC agencies should acquire a letter of support from their WIC State agency.)

Certification Enhancement Opportunities

To be eligible for WSPI funding, projects should seek to improve the WIC certification process by adopting one or more of the following certification enhancement opportunities:

1. Adopt policies, practices, and/or technologies that enable participants to initiate and complete allowable portions of certification procedures online.
2. Enhance capacity to utilize digital technology for appointment reminders and notifications of incomplete certifications.
3. Develop and implement an online WIC referral portal for programs that establish adjunctive income eligibility for WIC
4. WIC agency led innovative strategies to improve the WIC certification process that are not captured by Enhancement Opportunities 1-3.

Application Requirements

1. Complete and submit fillable application form, including:
 - Propose a project with one or more of the certification enhancement opportunities outlined above, or one that tests other innovative ideas that aim to improve the certification process
 - Propose a project that has measurable results and fully transparent program operations so that successful project activities could be scaled or transferred to other WIC agencies
 - Articulate the project's goals, activities, and implementation strategy
 - Demonstrate compliance with [Federal Program regulations](#) for all proposed strategies and/or solutions
 - Agree to share project related data and work collaboratively with CSG and GSCN on an evaluation plan
 - Propose a plan for how the project will be properly managed and staffed.
 - Include a budget and budget narrative
2. Submit required attachments:
 - Project work plan
 - Budget form
 - Key staff resumes
 - A letter of support from the relevant WIC State agency (if submitted by a local agency)
 - Current written agreements, if applicable, to the proposed project
 - A letter of support between applicant consortium members, if applicable
 - A letter of support between applicant and key project partners

Select Deadlines/Milestones¹

- **Letter of Intent deadline:** November 30, 2020 (5:00 p.m. ET)
- **Application deadline:** January 31, 2021 (5:00 p.m. ET)
- **Grant awards announced:** March 1, 2021
- **End of project period:** June 31, 2022

¹ Additional key dates (i.e., technical assistance, in-state meetings, and etc.) are provided in later sections of this RFA.

Section 2: Introduction

In September 2019, The Council of State Governments (CSG) entered into a cooperative agreement with the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) to administer the WIC Special Project Innovation Grant (WSPI). WSPI is a three-year cooperative agreement, during which CSG will work with FNS to solicit, review, and award grants to WIC state agencies, local WIC agencies, or a consortium of WIC agencies. CSG will manage WSPI projects and work directly with WIC agencies as they develop, implement, and evaluate their projects. CSG has contracted with the Gretchen Swanson Center for Nutrition (GSCN) to lead evaluation efforts for the project.

The WSPI award will fund and support multiple State and/or local WIC agencies to develop, implement, and evaluate innovative projects that aim to improve the WIC certification process. Proposed project ideas should include the adoption of new practices or technology that seek to improve the customer service experience and certification process.

The certification process is defined as the implementation of criteria and procedures to assess and document each applicant's eligibility for the program, as reflected in 7 CFR § 246.7.

Innovation

Innovation, for the purpose of this grant, is defined as being at least one of the following:

- A project that is new to the WIC State agency, or a project that has never been funded by FNS;
- A project that has not yet been evaluated for impact on WIC certification and customer service measures; or
- A project that will substantially improve upon an existing strategy or adapt it for a WIC agency of differing size, demographic context, and clientele.

Innovative projects might include interactive tools and/or technology resources; the modernization or redesign of current certification processes; or the development of other innovative solutions and enhancements to the certification process.

Funded projects will be evaluated for their impact on outcomes related to improving the certification process, such as: reduced no-show rates, shortened certification appointments, shortened clinic wait time, increased participant satisfaction, reduced temporary or shortened certifications that are completed, and other customer service-related measures.

Section 3: Award Details

The WIC Special Project Innovation Grant will award and support multiple WIC State and/or local agencies to develop, implement, and evaluate projects that aim to improve the WIC certification process.

The total funds available for this initiative are up to \$6,000,000, subject to the availability of funds. Multiple projects will be awarded funding on a competitive basis, and CSG encourages agencies with proposals of any size and scope to apply. State, regional, and local diversity will be considered when awarding funds. No more than \$2,000,000 will be awarded for a single application. The project period will be 16 months, which includes the planning, implementation, and evaluation phases.

Application and Project Timeline

June 15, 2020	Request for applications opens
July 15, 2020	Webinar for interested applicants
November 30, 2020	Letter of Intent due (interested applicants may still apply without submitting a Letter of Intent)
June 2020 – January 2021	Ongoing proposal development technical assistance for applicants
January 31, 2021	Grant applications due to CSG
March 1, 2021	Grantees notified of award by CSG
March 2021	Kickoff meeting with FNS, CSG, and GSCN (meeting to take place at CSG’s Washington, DC offices)
April 2021 – June 2022	Grantee in-state meetings (as requested by grantee)
April 2021 – June 2022	Ongoing implementation, evaluation technical assistance for grantees
June 30, 2022	End of grant period of performance
September 2022	Closeout session at FNS headquarters

Eligibility Information

- Applicants must be a WIC State agency, WIC local agency, or consortium of WIC agencies
- WIC local agencies must obtain a letter of support from their State agency to be eligible for funding
- Agencies must also meet all assurances outlined in Section 4: Project Management Plan on the application form, which can be accessed [here](#)
- Applicants should propose a project that contains one or more of the provided certification enhancement opportunities (see Section 5: WSPI Certification)

Enhancement Opportunities), or another innovative project that tests new and innovative ideas intend to improve the certification process

- The proposed project must have measurable results and fully transparent program operations so that successful project activities could be scaled or transferred to other WIC agencies

Successful project proposals will have the following features:

- A goal of improving customer service in the WIC certification process
- Be innovative (see Section 2: Introduction for a definition of innovation)
- A description of measurable results
- Contain fully transparent program operations so that successful project activities could be scaled or transferred to other WIC agencies

All proposed projects must operate within [existing WIC regulations](#). FNS cannot approve policy waivers for projects submitted in response to this solicitation.

Section 4: Background

The WIC Program provides low-income women, infants, and children individualized nutrition counseling, breastfeeding promotion and support, referrals, and food packages. WIC currently reaches over 6 million participants annually.

Barriers to Participation

Multiple factors contribute to nonparticipation in WIC. The WIC Special Project Innovation Grant is focused on improving the certification process and the WIC participant experience. [In a review of recent reports and research](#), CSG identified several recurring themes that play a role in eligible families choosing not to participate in WIC. Some of the more common barriers related to the certification process include:

- Unfamiliarity with the program and eligibility criteria
- Lack of transportation to the clinic
- Length of WIC appointments (wait times)
- General lack of time and busy lifestyles
- Difficulty scheduling appointments

Section 5: WSPI Certification Enhancement Opportunities

Opportunities exist for innovative work to improve the WIC certification process, making it easier for eligible families to participate in the program while also freeing up staff time to focus more on core services and less on paperwork.

CSG has identified three WIC certification enhancement opportunities for these grants. Applicants may propose their own projects or select one, or a combination, of the opportunities outlined below.

Enhancement Opportunity 1: Adopt policies, practices, and/or technologies that enable participants to initiate and complete allowable portions of certification procedures online.

While [federal WIC regulations](#) require certification appointments to take place in-person, WIC State agencies can consider policies that allow for initiating the certification process online, prior to the in-person certification appointment. Some States have developed mechanisms to accept documents electronically, particularly in light of COVID-19 impacts. Such mechanisms could be used to simplify the certification process and shorten in-person appointments. For example, WIC State agencies can use technology and secure online tools that allow for electronic document submission. With the use of technology, documentation of income and residency could be submitted in advance and processed by WIC clinic staff prior to the appointment. Electronic documents can be utilized:

- As a part of a pre-screening process, to complete allowable portions of the certification process before the applicant's appointment
- As a way to provide documentation that was not available at an in-person appointment to complete a certification

Agencies interested in Enhancement Opportunity 1 are encouraged to consider the following when developing projects:

- Use of the [WIC Prescreening Tool](#). FNS has developed a prescreening tool that grant applicants are encouraged to integrate into new and/or existing certification processes
- How the data from electronic documents is entered into the agency's Management Information Systems (MIS)
- Development of digital tools for the submission of documents
- Internal agency processes to handle documents provided electronically, communicate with WIC applicants who provide electronic documents, and train staff on these processes
- The need for new technology contracts or updating existing contracts
- Modifications to existing technology systems
- Testing new systems prior to implementation
- Capacity of existing systems, including MIS, to handle any updates or additions needed for implementation
- How interventions might reduce burdens for staff and WIC applicants
- Data privacy and participant confidentiality concerns
- System maintenance and sustainability
- Participant access and familiarity with technology
- Any new staff required to implement the project
- Promotion of the new system to both new and existing program participants

Enhancement Opportunity 2: Enhance capacity to utilize digital technology for appointment reminders and notifications of incomplete certifications

Given that appointment reminders are increasingly common among WIC agencies, applications under this category should aim for customizable systems that personalize reminders to the applicant. WIC agencies should consider enhancing digital reminders by tailoring the reminder to reflect appointment date and time, the necessary documentation the WIC applicant must bring, directions to the clinic, and what to expect during the appointment. Digital reminders can take the form of text messages, notifications from WIC apps, or other digital communication strategies used by WIC clinics to communicate with program participants. In addition to reminders regarding scheduled appointments, reminders can also be used to assist those applicants who were provided with a provisional or temporary certification, to ensure they meet their certification requirements within 30 days.

Agencies interested in Enhancement Opportunity 2 are encouraged to consider the following when developing projects:

- How reminders can be tailored. For example, if a document is needed to verify 30 days' worth of income, reminders would include the range of eligible dates
- How reminders make it clear which eligibility requirements are outstanding (residency, identity, income) and which documents can be used to fulfill them (driver's license, pay stub, etc.)
- How participant data is utilized to construct personalized appointment reminders
- Length and frequency of reminders, including other existing outreach initiatives, as to not overwhelm recipients
- Options for information on alternative documents that can be provided (for example, if you do not have X document available to you, these are the other documents or steps you need to take to complete certification)
- Training for staff on the digital tools and any related updates to policies or practices
- How the agency will procure new communication technology systems or revise existing contracts, if needed
- Modifications to existing technology systems
- Testing new messages for clarity and effectiveness prior to implementation
- Capacity of existing systems, including WIC Management Information Systems (MIS), to handle any updates or additions needed for implementation
- How interventions might reduce burdens for staff and WIC applicants
- Data privacy and confidentiality concerns
- System maintenance and sustainability
- Participant access and familiarity with technology
- Any new staff required to implement the project
- Promotion of the new system to both new and existing program participants

Enhancement Opportunity 3: Develop and implement an online WIC referral portal for programs that establish adjunctive income eligibility for WIC

WIC agencies may explore the development of an online WIC referral portal that facilitates referrals to and from WIC by connecting staff to adjunctive eligibility programs (e.g. Medicaid, Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), and Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF)).

A referral portal is an integrated web tool that allows individual/participant data to be shared between WIC and other programs. WIC State agencies interested in a referral portal will likely need to establish data sharing agreements, a technology platform to send or receive confidential information, and policies and procedures for how to use and document this information in the certification process.

Establishing a referral process with adjunct eligibility programs to notify WIC agencies of likely eligible nonparticipants (and vice versa) will facilitate timely sharing of data needed for contacting the individuals and documenting WIC eligibility (such as name, birth date, address, and phone number). The primary goals of a portal would be to increase referrals into the WIC program and facilitate the referral of WIC participants to other programs.

Agencies interested in Enhancement Opportunity 3 are encouraged to consider the following when developing projects:

- What participant information the portal should collect
- Who will have access to the portal
- Existing data sharing agreements (e.g., Medicaid, SNAP, TANF) that may already be in place
- WIC staff processes and procedures to monitor referrals
- Written confidentiality agreements with the adjunctive programs to ensure the protection of referral data, if needed
- Methods to obtain client permissions to share WIC data
- Modifications to existing technology systems
- Testing new systems prior to implementation
- Staff training
- Capacity of existing systems, including WIC Management Information Systems (MIS), to handle any updates or additions needed for implementation
- How interventions might reduce burdens for staff and WIC applicants
- Data privacy and participant confidentiality requirements
- System maintenance and sustainability
- Memorandums of Understanding (MOUs), or written agreements, with the organizations the WIC agency would like to work with on their portal

- Any new staff required to implement the project
- Promotion of the new system to adjunctive programs
- How the referral data will be accessed by WIC staff and used for pre-screening and certification

WIC agency led innovative strategies to improve the WIC certification process that are not captured by Enhancement Opportunities 1-3.

WIC agencies may have ideas for innovative strategies or tools that do not fall into one of the previous categories. This RFA encourages innovative ideas, as long as applicants demonstrate how these might improve the WIC certification process and can be implemented under current federal requirements. Projects in this category should still follow the RFA guidelines and criteria below.

Agencies interested in proposing a new project are encouraged to consider the following when developing projects:

- How the project aims to improve customer service in the WIC certification process
- How the project meets the definition of innovation, which includes:
 - A project that is new to the WIC State agency or a project that has never been funded by FNS;
 - An existing project that has not yet been evaluated for impact on WIC certification and customer service measures; or
 - A project that will substantially improve upon an existing strategy or adapt it for a WIC agency of differing size, demographic context, and clientele).
- The proposed project has measurable results and fully transparent program operations so that successful project activities could be scaled or transferred to other WIC agencies

Section 6: Evaluation Requirements

As a recipient of WSPI funds, grantees will be expected to plan and execute an evaluation of their proposed project. Grantees should consider pragmatic evaluation approaches that take into consideration the context of the local, state, or consortium of WIC agencies that will implement and sustain the proposed project. Evaluation considerations should give equal weight to effectiveness (e.g., does the innovation improve the targeted outcome?) and implementation (e.g., what are the proposed strategies needed to implement the innovation and which strategies lead to successful implementation, improved outcomes, and are likely to be sustained?).

The Gretchen Swanson Center for Nutrition (GSCN), a research and evaluation firm, will provide technical assistance to each funded grantee to fully develop detailed evaluation plans. This includes support to identify measures or metrics specific to the

grantee project, creating data collection procedures, timelines and analytic support. Grantees will also participate in an overarching evaluation conducted by GSCN of the outcomes and lessons learned across agencies funded by this grant.

Institutional Review Board

Any evaluation activities for your projects that involve human subjects (e.g., WIC participants and WIC staff), must adhere to regulations and policies that govern human subject research. For the protection of human subjects, all research and evaluation involving human subjects must be reviewed, approved, and overseen by an Institutional Review Board (IRB).

GSCN will facilitate the IRB approval process and will submit all relevant protocols to GSCN's IRB at the University of Nebraska Medical Center. If grantees have their own required IRBs and/or review processes, please share these details with GSCN and CSG in Section 3: Evaluation Requirements of the application form so that GSCN can work within these processes to ensure all review and approval processes are completed prior to the commencement of any evaluation activities.

Section 7: Technical Assistance

CSG and GSCN will provide interested WIC agencies with technical assistance (TA) opportunities to aid in application development, project implementation, and evaluation. For example, grant applicants can request assistance around application instructions, application attachment requirements, staff training, data collection and analysis, and other issues that arise throughout the course of the project. A tentative schedule is provided in the tables below.

To help ensure that TA provided to interested applicants is uniformly available to all, CSG will post a summary of all questions and answers provided on the project website at web.csg.org/WIC. All posted questions will remain anonymous. CSG aims to directly answer all RFA or project related questions, and post a response on the website for other interested applicants in less than 10 business days.

Upon award, CSG will host a kickoff meeting for all grantees in Washington, D.C.* This kickoff meeting will serve as an opportunity to build relationships between grantees, CSG and GSCN, and further develop plans for project implementation and evaluation.

CSG will continue to provide support to grantees as they implement their projects. This includes individualized assistance to develop and strengthen implementation and evaluation plans, including data collection assistance. CSG will provide ongoing

* This trip will take place if travel is deemed to be safe per U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention guidelines for COVID-19.

opportunities for grantees to interact and learn from one another through quarterly conference calls.

CSG is available to host meetings at grantees' offices, as requested and determined necessary. These meetings are an opportunity for CSG and GSCN to convene in-person with the grantees and additional project partners to deliver targeted technical assistance on the projects during implementation and evaluation.

Grantees will present project findings and a final report at a Closeout Session at FNS headquarters in Alexandria, Virginia. The final report written by grantees should include a section on transferability that clearly outlines detailed program operations and lessons learned, so that project activities can be scaled or transferred to other WIC agencies. CSG will present a collective presentation on the individual projects and corresponding lessons learned.

Pre-Award Technical Assistance:

Date	TA Opportunity	Description
July 15, 2020	RFA webinar	Live webinar providing an overview of the WSPI grant opportunity, grantee expectations, and application requirements; recording posted to project website.
Ongoing	Additional technical assistance	Additional technical assistance will be available upon request by potential applicants. Technical assistance requests can be made by emailing WIC@CSG.org .

Post-Award Technical Assistance:

Date	TA Opportunity
March 2021	Project kickoff meeting for grantees
March – April 2021	Individualized implementation/evaluation plan support
Quarterly	Quarterly conference calls with CSG, GSCN, and other grantees

Section 8: Other Required Grantee Activities

Over the duration of the project, WSPI grantees are required to:

- Attend a post-award project kickoff meeting with CSG, GSCN, and FNS;
- Participate in quarterly grantee conference calls;
- Complete quarterly progress and financial reports;

- Complete a final report within two months of the end of the project funding period; and
- Attend the closeout session at FNS headquarters in Alexandria, Virginia, to present final project outcomes.

CSG will coordinate reporting efforts with additional details and templates being provided to grantees at time of award and are also available to the grantees as requested. Progress reports must be sent to CSG within 20 days following the end of each quarterly period. These reports should cover the preceding quarterly period of activity. The reporting schedule for this project is as followed:

Quarterly Report	Due Date
Y1Q2 Report²	April 20, 2021
Y1Q3 Report	July 20, 2021
Y1 Q4 Report	Oct. 20, 2021
Y2 Q1 Report	Jan. 20, 2022
Y2 Q2 Report	April 20, 2022
Y2 Q3 Report	July 20, 2022

Section 9: Application Instructions

Interested applicants to this grant opportunity must download and complete the application form that can be accessed [here](#). All applications should be prepared in the format requested and submitted via email to WIC@csg.org with the subject line, “WIC Special Project Innovation Application.” To be considered for review, applications must be submitted by 5:00 p.m. ET on Jan. 31, 2021. No late applications will be accepted. Incomplete applications will not be considered for review. Required components for the RFA are outlined within the application form.

The application form is divided into the following sections:

- Section 1: Summary
- Section 2: Project Plan
- Section 3: Evaluation Requirements
- Section 4: Project Management Plan
- Section 5: Budget Narrative
- Section 6: Attachments

For questions or to request assistance regarding the RFA instructions, application criteria, and deadlines, please contact Matt Shafer at WIC@csg.org or (859) 244-8224. Responses to questions sent before the application deadline will be posted on the project website at web.csg.org/WIC.

² Q2 2021 will be a condensed quarter due to awards being made on March 1, 2021. Grantee will submit report for the period of 3/1/21-3/31/21

Applicants Applying as a Consortium

WIC agencies who are interested in jointly applying as a consortium need to include a written agreement between all consortium members. Please designate one staff member from your collective agencies to serve as a liaison between your consortium and CSG. The name of the liaison should be listed as the primary staff contact on the application form under “Agency Contact Information” in the application form.

Section 10: Application Review Criteria

Applications will be reviewed and scored by a panel of reviewers. CSG will submit summaries of all submitted applications and discuss the top applications with FNS. FNS will make the final selection decisions. FNS reserves the right to accept the review panel’s recommendation or to select an awardee out of order to meet agency priorities, geographical representation, or project diversity. The sections and numbering below are congruent with the corresponding sections and questions in the fillable application form.

Point Value (100 points total)	Corresponding Section from the Application Form	Description
60 Points	Section 2: Project Plan	<i>Statement of Need</i> Q1. Clearly describes the agency context including populations served by your agency, certification appointment process, certification and customer service opportunities for improvement.(10 points) <i>Project Design</i> Q2. Clearly describes the project and includes how project will improve certification process (10 points) Q3. Clearly defines project goals and describes how goals will improve their WIC certification process. (10 points) Q4. Clearly describes the activities that will be performed to accomplish the project goals. (5 points) Q5. Clearly describes plan for project implementation. (10 points) <i>External Coordination and Partnerships</i> Q7. Lists all intended partnerships and describes plan for coordinating these partnerships. Describes all existing relationships with partners and describes how they will assist with project design and implementation (5 points)

- Provides existing MOUs or written agreements, if applicable, as support for partnerships documented in the fillable application form.

Description of Innovation

Q8. Clearly demonstrates how the project fits the definition of Innovative (see Section 2: Introduction for a definition of innovation) (5 points)

Project Transferability

Q10. Clearly outlines steps the applicant will take to ensure that they will be able to provide detailed program operations and lessons learned so that project activities can be scaled or transferred to other WIC agencies. (5 points)

<p>10 Points</p>	<p>Section 3: Evaluation Requirements</p>	<p><i>Data Collection and Analysis Capacity</i> Q1. Provides a description of agency capacity and/or experience with data collection and evaluation. (2 points)</p> <p><i>Outcome Measures</i> Q3. Clearly describes process and short-term outcomes. (2 points) Q4. Clearly describes implementation/intermediate outcomes. (2 points) Q5. Clearly describes impacts/long-term outcomes. (2 points)</p> <p><i>Institutional Review Board</i> Q7.-Q9. Indicates consideration of Institutional Review Board (IRB) requirements and clearly describes all applicable State Agency IRB processes. (2 points)</p>
<p>10 Points</p>	<p>Section 4: Program Management</p>	<p><i>Program Management</i> Q1. Articulates project management activities that will assist in the project being completed on time, within budget, and with desired outcomes. (10 points)</p>
<p>10 Points</p>	<p>Section 4: Staffing Needs</p>	<p><i>Staffing Needs</i> Q2. Identifies and outlines roles/responsibilities of key project personnel. Documents key personnel's qualifications and relevant experience to effectively carry out activities outlined in Section 2 of the fillable application form. (10 points)</p>

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provides professional resumes for all key project staff as support for expertise documented in the fillable application form
10 points	Section 5: Budget Narrative	<p>Q1. – Q8. Clearly explains expenses required to achieve project goals and objectives. (5 points)</p> <p>Q1. – Q8. Demonstrates feasibility of budget within project scope and activities. (5 points)</p>

Section 11: Letter of Intent

WSPI applicants are highly encouraged to submit a non-binding Letter of Intent to Submit an Application (LOI) before submission of a full application by 5:00 p.m. ET on Nov. 30, 2020. This document will not be considered in the review process, but it provides useful information to the CSG in preparing for providing technical assistance to WSPI applicants. WSPI applicants who do not submit a letter of intent by the specified deadline may still submit an application by the application due date of Jan. 31, 2021.

A letter of intent template is provided by CSG which you can access [here](#). This letter should be submitted via email to WIC@CSG.org.

Section 12: Letters of Support

State Agency Letter of Support

For interested local WIC agencies, a letter of support from the appropriate WIC State agency stating their support for the submitted application is required for the proposal to be considered. When applicable, the letter should also include the State agency's agreement to provide any data needed for program implementation and/or evaluation. A sample State agency letter of support can be found [here](#).

State Agency Consortium Letter of Support

Applicants applying jointly as a State agency consortium should obtain a letter of support from each agency participating in the consortium. The State agency consortium letter of support should outline their agency's role in the project plan and state commitment to collaborate with CSG as well as the other members of the consortium. A sample State agency consortium letter of support can be found [here](#).

Key Project Partner or Contractor Letter of Support

If your project team includes external partners that are integral to the project's success, please obtain a letter of support from those respective organizations. The key project partner letter of support should detail the external organization's role in the project and

state commitment to work with applicant to achieve the WIC agency's project objectives. A sample letter of support can be found [here](#).

Section 13: Project Direction

Funding for this opportunity is provided by the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Food and Nutrition Service. Direction and technical support for this opportunity is provided by The Council of State Governments. Please direct all inquiries to:

Matt Shafer, MPA
Project Manager, Center of Innovation
The Council of State Governments
(859) 244-8224
web.csg.org/WIC
wic@CSG.org

Please visit the WIC Special Project Innovation project website at web.csg.org/WIC for background information and resources related to WIC certification, frequently asked questions related to this RFA, and general updates on the project.

Review Procedures - Summary

Below is a summary of the review procedures and processes contained in the Proposal Review Training Powerpoint. For more detailed information, please reference the aforementioned slide deck. Please evaluate how well each proposal meets the criteria in the scoring rubric. Assign a score for each question using the rating standards described below and the indicated weighting factor. Please justify the score by describing in writing the strengths and weaknesses for how well the proposal addresses each question.

Score Weights

Scores should be assigned as follows:

Out of 2:

0 = Unsatisfactory
1 = Fair
2 = Satisfactory

Out of 5:

0-1 = Unsatisfactory
2-3 = Fair
4 = Good
5 = Excellent

Out of 10:

0-2 = Unsatisfactory
3-4 = Fair
5-6 = Satisfactory
7-8 = Good
9-10 = Excellent

WSPI RFA - Evaluation of Funded Projects

Funded projects will be evaluated for their impact on outcomes related to improving the certification process, such as:

- Reduced no-show rates
- Shortened certification appointments
- Shortened clinic wait time
- Increased participant satisfaction
- Reduced temporary or shortened certifications that are completed

Features of Successful Proposals

Successful project proposals will have the following features:

- A goal of improving customer service in the WIC certification process
- Be innovative
- A description of measurable results
- Contain fully transparent program operations so that successful project activities could be scaled or transferred to other WIC agencies
- Operates within existing WIC regulations

Overview of Scoring Rubric

Proposals will be scored using the "WSPI Scoring Review Matrix"

- 100 points in total are possible per proposal
- 5 sections based on the "Application Form"
 - **Every question on the application form will not be scored. Only questions that appear in both the "Application Form" and "WSPI Scoring Review Matrix" will receive scores.**
 - After completing each section provide an overall recommendation, summary and areas for improvement. Sum scores will be automatically calculated.
- The proposal's total score will automatically populate at the top of the spreadsheet

Overview of Scoring Rubric Cont.

- Point Values – 100 points total possible
- The point breakdown is as follows:
 - 60 Points – Section 2: Project Plan
 - 10 Points - Section 3: Evaluation Requirements
 - 10 Points – Section 4: Program Management
 - 10 Points – Section 4: Staffing Needs
 - 10 Points – Section 5: Budget Narrative

Overview of Scoring Rubric Cont.

For **each** section you will

- Provide a score for each question/group of questions in the “Insert Score Below” column
- Provide overall recommendations
- Provide a summary of the review
- Indicate areas the applicant could have improved

Please note:

- Upon entering scores for each question/group of questions in a cell, the score total will automatically generate for each section. Do not manually enter a total score

Reviewer Name	Jane Smith		
WIC Agency	New England WIC		
Certification Enhancement Opportunity	Certification Enhancement Opportunity 2		
Total Score out of 100	81		
Reviewer Notes			
Scoring Rubric			
Section 2: Project Plan			
<i>Attributes of high scoring proposals</i>			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The significance of the problem to be addressed is demonstrated and specific gaps or weaknesses in customer service have been identified and will be addressed through the proposed project. - Project goals and activities are clearly identified and appropriate to address the problem. - Project implementation plan flows directly from the project's goals and activities and is achievable in the 18 month project timeline. - Demonstrates transferability of the project and its results for adaptation and implementation by other WIC agencies. 			
Statement of Need		Insert Score Below	
	Q1. Clearly describes the agency context including populations served by your agency, certification appointment process, certification and customer service opportunities for improvement. (10 points)	10	Out of 10
Project Design		Insert Score Below	
	Q2. Clearly describes the project and includes how project will improve certification process (10 points)	10	Out of 10
	Q3. Clearly defines project goals and describes how goals will improve their WIC certification process. (10 points)	9	Out of 10
	Q4. Clearly describes the activities that will be performed to accomplish the project goals. (5 points)	4	Out of 5
	Q5. Clearly describes plan for project implementation. (10 points)	7	Out of 10
External Coordination and Partnerships		Insert Score Below	
	Q7. Lists all intended partnerships and describes plan for coordinating these partnerships. Describes all existing relationships with partners and describes how they will assist with project design and implementation (5 points) • Provides existing MOUs or written agreements, if applicable, as support for partnerships documented in the fillable application form.	2	Out of 5
Description of Innovation		Insert Score Below	
	Q8. Clearly demonstrates how the project fits the definition of innovative (see Section 2: Introduction for a definition of innovation) (5 points)	4	Out of 5
Project Transferability		Insert Score Below	
	Q10. Clearly outlines steps the applicant will take to ensure that they will be able to provide detailed program operations and lessons learned so that project activities can be scaled or transferred to other WIC agencies. (5 points)	3	Out of 5
Score Total		49	Out of 60
Section Strengths	Proposal not only identifies the populations served by their WIC agency but also clearly describes the certification and customer service barriers experienced by this population. Applicant provides in-depth explanation of how their project proposal will allow enrollees to overcome identified barriers. Project activities described are comprehensive and address most, if not all, identified barriers. Applicant sufficiently demonstrated how their project meets the definition of innovation		
Section Weaknesses	Project activities are well-thought out, however, based on the qualifications of proposed personnel, additional partnerships should have been sought out in order to effectively implement proposal activities. Proposal provides in depth plan for project rollout, however, details regarding ongoing delivery of key project deliverables are underdeveloped. In a similar manner, the applicant provided satisfactory details of how they would ensure transferrability to other WIC agencies, however, it may be necessary for GSCN to work with the applicant to enhance these details.		

Scores should be assigned as follows:
Out of 2:
0 = Unsatisfactory
1 = Fair
2 = Satisfactory
Out of 5:
0-1 = Unsatisfactory
2-3 = Fair
4 = Good
5 = Excellent
Out of 10:
0-2 = Unsatisfactory
3-4 = Fair
5-6 = Satisfactory
7-8 = Good
9-10 = Excellent

Other Optional Notes	
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Section 3: Evaluation Requirements			
<i>Attributes of high scoring proposals:</i>			
- Short-term, intermediate term, and long-term outcomes are feasible and appropriately linked to the project's goals and activities			
Data Collection and Analysis Capacity		Insert Score Below	
	Q1. Provides a description of agency capacity and/or experience with data collection and evaluation. (2 points)	1	Out of 2
Outcome Measures		Insert Score Below	
	Q3. Clearly describes process and short-term outcomes. (2 points)	2	Out of 2
	Q4. Clearly describes implementation/intermediate outcomes. (2 points)	2	Out of 2
	Q5. Clearly describes impacts/long-term outcomes. (2 points)	1	Out of 2
Institutional Review Board		Insert Score Below	
	Q7-Q9. Indicates consideration of Institutional Review Board (IRB) requirements and clearly describes all applicable State Agency IRB processes. (2 points)	2	Out of 2
Score Total		8 Out of 10	
Section Strengths	Both short term and intermediate term outcomes are clearly described. Applicant provides a clear picture of staff training necessary to properly employ the digital appointment reminder platform. Proposal adequately sustains the staffing necessary to utilize and troubleshoot the platform. Proposal stands out in regards to how the agency will solicit and consider participant feedback.		
Section Weaknesses	Agency's experience working with data collection is clearly demonstrated, however, this experience does not seem sufficient to carry out necessary efforts to effectively evaluate their project proposal. Significant technical assistance may need to be provided by GSCN if proposal is selected to be awarded. As with the ongoing delivery of project deliverables, the applicant's proposal provides an unsatisfactory amount of detail pertaining to the long-term outcomes of the proposal.		
Other Optional Notes	Applicant proposes using an IRB protocol separate from that of GSCN and the University of Nebraska Medical Center. It may be necessary for CSG to reach out to the applicant to receive further details on these protocols.		

Section 4: Program Management			
<i>Attributes of high scoring proposals:</i>			
- The management plan displays an understanding of the tasks, timeline, and staffing needed to complete the project successfully.			
- The management plan provides the oversight necessary to ensure high quality products, services, or outcomes, and to keep the project on time and within budget (including appropriate plans for managing partners and outside personnel).			
- The management plan includes all required grantee activities listed in Section 8: Other Required Grantee Activities of the RFA			
Program Management		Insert Score Below	
	Q1. Articulates project management activities that will assist in the project being completed on time, within budget, and with desired outcomes. (10 points)	9	Out of 10
Score Total		9 Out of 10	
Section Strengths	Applicant provides excellent level of detail regarding how the project will be managed so that all activities are completed on time, within budget and with desired outcomes. No key project management activities appear to be missing.		
Section Weaknesses			
Other Optional Notes			

Section 4: Staffing Needs
Attributes of high scoring proposals:
 - Key personnel have the necessary education, skills, and experience for their proposed roles on the project. Supporting documentation (e.g., resume/position descriptions, if hiring) is included for all key personnel.
 - The time commitment, duties, staffing mix, and concurrent staff responsibilities within and outside the grant (i.e. staff responsibilities with other projects, job positions, consultant work, etc.) are reasonable and demonstrate that all activities outlined in Section 2 of the fillable application form are able to be completed in a timely and efficient manner.

Staffing Needs		Insert Score Below
	Q2. Identifies and outlines roles/responsibilities of key project personnel. Documents key personnel's qualifications and relevant experience to effectively carry out activities outlined in Section 2 of the fillable application form. (10 points) • Provides professional resumes for all key project staff as support for expertise documented in the fillable application form	6 Out of 10
Score Total		6 Out of 10
Section Strengths	Title, key responsibilities, planned FTE commitments and relevant experience/expertise of proposed staffing are clearly outlined.	
Section Weaknesses	The application lacks a detailed explanation of how these staff will contribute to the success of the project.	
Other Optional Notes	Key personnel experience satisfactorily outlined, however, to reiterate, these personnel possess minimal experience collecting data. Applicant may require significant support from GSCN to carry out the data collection necessary to adequately evaluate their project proposal.	

Section 5: Budget Narrative
Attributes of high scoring proposals:
 - The budget request is adequate to support the project.
 - Appropriate budget justifications are provided, including descriptions of how categorical costs were derived, discussions of necessity, reasonableness of costs, and links between expenditures and activities/tasks. If applicable, justifications for contract selection methods are provided.
 - Expenses comply with the allowable costs listed on page 15 of the Fillable Application Form

		Insert Score Below
	Q1. – Q8. Clearly explains expenses required to achieve project goals and objectives. (5 points)	5 Out of 5
	Q1. – Q8. Demonstrates feasibility of budget within project scope and activities. (5 points)	4 Out of 5
Score Total		9 Out of 10
Section Strengths	All staff to be paid by project funds listed with all necessary details provided as indicated on the application form. Professional resumes of these staff are provided. Costs pertaining to fringe benefits, travel, equipment, supplies etc. all clearly listed.	
Section Weaknesses	Further details could have been provided surrounding the costs of necessary equipment, however, budget appears feasible with regard to all other expenses.	
Other Optional Notes		

Score Weights			
Reviewer Name			
WIC Agency			
Certification Enhancement Opportunity			
Total Score out of 100			0
Reviewer Notes			
Scoring Rubric			
Section 2: Project Plan			
<i>Attributes of high scoring proposals</i>			
- The significance of the problem to be addressed is demonstrated and specific gaps or weaknesses in customer service have been identified and will be addressed through the proposed project.			
- Project goals and activities are clearly identified and appropriate to address the problem.			
- Project implementation plan flows directly from the project's goals and activities and is achievable in the 18 month project timeline.			
- Demonstrates transferability of the project and its results for adaptation and implementation by other WIC agencies.			
Statement of Need		Insert Score Below	
	Q1. Clearly describes the agency context including populations served by your agency, certification appointment process, certification and customer service opportunities for improvement.(10 points)		Out of 10
Project Design		Insert Score Below	
	Q2. Clearly describes the project and includes how project will improve certification process (10 points)		Out of 10
	Q3. Clearly defines project goals and describes how goals will improve their WIC certification process. (10 points)		Out of 10
	Q4. Clearly describes the activities that will be performed to accomplish the project goals. (5 points)		Out of 5
	Q5. Clearly describes plan for project implementation. (10 points)		Out of 10
External Coordination and Partnerships		Insert Score Below	
	Q7. Lists all intended partnerships and describes plan for coordinating these partnerships. Describes all existing relationships with partners and describes how they will assist with project design and implementation (5 points) • Provides existing MOUs or written agreements, if applicable, as support for partnerships documented in the fillable application form.		Out of 5
Description of Innovation		Insert Score Below	
	Q8. Clearly demonstrates how the project fits the definition of Innovative (see Section 2: Introduction for a definition of innovation) (5 points)		Out of 5
Project Transferability		Insert Score Below	
	Q10. Clearly outlines steps the applicant will take to ensure that they will be able to provide detailed program operations and lessons learned so that project activities can be scaled or transferred to other WIC agencies. (5 points)		Out of 5
Score Total		0	Out of 60
Section Strengths			
Section Weaknesses			
Other Optional Notes			

Scores should be assigned as follows:

Out of 2:
0 = Unsatisfactory
1 = Fair
2 = Satisfactory

Out of 5:
0-1 = Unsatisfactory
2-3 = Fair
4 = Good
5 = Excellent

Out of 10:
0-2 = Unsatisfactory
3-4 = Fair
5-6 = Satisfactory
7-8 = Good
9-10 = Excellent

Section 3: Evaluation Requirements			
<i>Attributes of high scoring proposals:</i>			
- Short-term, intermediate term, and long-term outcomes are feasible and appropriately linked to the project's goals and activities			
Data Collection and Analysis Capacity		Insert Score Below	
	Q1. Provides a description of agency capacity and/or experience with data collection and evaluation. (2 points)		Out of 2
Outcome Measures		Insert Score Below	
	Q3. Clearly describes process and short-term outcomes. (2 points)		Out of 2
	Q4. Clearly describes implementation/intermediate outcomes. (2 points)		Out of 2
	Q5. Clearly describes impacts/long-term outcomes. (2 points)		Out of 2
Institutional Review Board		Insert Score Below	
	Q7-Q9. Indicates consideration of Institutional Review Board (IRB) requirements and clearly describes all applicable State Agency IRB processes. (2 points)		Out of 2
Score Total		0	Out of 10
Section Strengths			
Section Weaknesses			
Other Optional Notes			

Section 4: Program Management			
<i>Attributes of high scoring proposals:</i>			
- The management plan displays an understanding of the tasks, timeline, and staffing needed to complete the project successfully.			
- The management plan provides the oversight necessary to ensure high quality products, services, or outcomes, and to keep the project on time and within budget (including appropriate plans for managing partners and outside personnel).			
- The management plan includes all required grantee activities listed in Section 8: Other Required Grantee Activities of the RFA			
Program Management		Insert Score Below	
	Q1. Articulates project management activities that will assist in the project being completed on time, within budget, and with desired outcomes. (10 points)		Out of 10
Score Total		0	Out of 10
Section Strengths			
Section Weaknesses			
Other Optional Notes			

Section 4: Staffing Needs			
<i>Attributes of high scoring proposals:</i>			
- Key personnel have the necessary education, skills, and experience for their proposed roles on the project. Supporting documentation (e.g., resume/position descriptions, if hiring) is included for all key personnel.			
- The time commitment, duties, staffing mix, and concurrent staff responsibilities within and outside the grant (i.e. staff responsibilities with other projects, job positions, consultant work, etc.) are reasonable and demonstrate that all activities outlined in Section 2 of the fillable application form are able to be completed in a timely and efficient manner.			
Staffing Needs		Insert Score Below	

	Q2. Identifies and outlines roles/responsibilities of key project personnel. Documents key personnel's qualifications and relevant experience to effectively carry out activities outlined in Section 2 of the fillable application form. (10 points) • Provides professional resumes for all key project staff as support for expertise documented in the fillable application form		
Score Total		0	Out of 10
Section Strengths			
Section Weaknesses			
Other Optional Notes			

Section 5: Budget Narrative			
<i>Attributes of high scoring proposals:</i>			
- The budget request is adequate to support the project.			
- Appropriate budget justifications are provided, including descriptions of how categorical costs were derived, discussions of necessity, reasonableness of costs, and links between expenditures and activities/tasks. If applicable, justifications for contract selection methods are provided.			
- Expenses comply with the allowable costs listed on page 15 of the Fillable Application Form			
		Insert Score Below	
	Q1. – Q8. Clearly explains expenses required to achieve project goals and objectives. (5 points)		Out of 5
	Q1. – Q8. Demonstrates feasibility of budget within project scope and activities. (5 points)		Out of 5
Score Total		0	Out of 10
Section Strengths			
Section Weaknesses			
Other Optional Notes			

Score Weights			
Reviewer Name			
WIC Agency			
Certification Enhancement Opportunity			
Total Score out of 100			0
Reviewer Notes			
Scoring Rubric			
Section 2: Project Plan			
<i>Attributes of high scoring proposals</i>			
- The significance of the problem to be addressed is demonstrated and specific gaps or weaknesses in customer service have been identified and will be addressed through the proposed project.			
- Project goals and activities are clearly identified and appropriate to address the problem.			
- Project implementation plan flows directly from the project's goals and activities and is achievable in the 18 month project timeline.			
- Demonstrates transferability of the project and its results for adaptation and implementation by other WIC agencies.			
Statement of Need		Insert Score Below	
	Q1. Clearly describes the agency context including populations served by your agency, certification appointment process, certification and customer service opportunities for improvement.(10 points)		Out of 10
Project Design		Insert Score Below	
	Q2. Clearly describes the project and includes how project will improve certification process (10 points)		Out of 10
	Q3. Clearly defines project goals and describes how goals will improve their WIC certification process. (10 points)		Out of 10
	Q4. Clearly describes the activities that will be performed to accomplish the project goals. (5 points)		Out of 5
	Q5. Clearly describes plan for project implementation. (10 points)		Out of 10
External Coordination and Partnerships		Insert Score Below	
	Q7. Lists all intended partnerships and describes plan for coordinating these partnerships. Describes all existing relationships with partners and describes how they will assist with project design and implementation (5 points) • Provides existing MOUs or written agreements, if applicable, as support for partnerships documented in the fillable application form.		Out of 5
Description of Innovation		Insert Score Below	
	Q8. Clearly demonstrates how the project fits the definition of Innovative (see Section 2: Introduction for a definition of innovation) (5 points)		Out of 5
Project Transferability		Insert Score Below	
	Q10. Clearly outlines steps the applicant will take to ensure that they will be able to provide detailed program operations and lessons learned so that project activities can be scaled or transferred to other WIC agencies. (5 points)		Out of 5
Score Total			0 Out of 60
Section Strengths			
Section Weaknesses			
Other Optional Notes			

Scores should be assigned as follows:

Out of 2:
0 = Unsatisfactory
1 = Fair
2 = Satisfactory

Out of 5:
0-1 = Unsatisfactory
2-3 = Fair
4 = Good
5 = Excellent

Out of 10:
0-2 = Unsatisfactory
3-4 = Fair
5-6 = Satisfactory
7-8 = Good
9-10 = Excellent

Section 3: Evaluation Requirements			
<i>Attributes of high scoring proposals:</i> - Short-term, intermediate term, and long-term outcomes are feasible and appropriately linked to the project's goals and activities			
Data Collection and Analysis Capacity		Insert Score Below	
	Q1. Provides a description of agency capacity and/or experience with data collection and evaluation. (2 points)		Out of 2
Outcome Measures		Insert Score Below	
	Q3. Clearly describes process and short-term outcomes. (2 points)		Out of 2
	Q4. Clearly describes implementation/intermediate outcomes. (2 points)		Out of 2
	Q5. Clearly describes impacts/long-term outcomes. (2 points)		Out of 2
Institutional Review Board		Insert Score Below	
	Q7-Q9. Indicates consideration of Institutional Review Board (IRB) requirements and clearly describes all applicable State Agency IRB processes. (2 points)		Out of 2
Score Total		0	Out of 10
Section Strengths			
Section Weaknesses			
Other Optional Notes			

Section 4: Program Management			
<i>Attributes of high scoring proposals:</i> - The management plan displays an understanding of the tasks, timeline, and staffing needed to complete the project successfully. - The management plan provides the oversight necessary to ensure high quality products, services, or outcomes, and to keep the project on time and within budget (including appropriate plans for managing partners and outside personnel). - The management plan includes all required grantee activities listed in Section 8: Other Required Grantee Activities of the RFA			
Program Management		Insert Score Below	
	Q1. Articulates project management activities that will assist in the project being completed on time, within budget, and with desired outcomes. (10 points)		Out of 10
Score Total		0	Out of 10
Section Strengths			
Section Weaknesses			
Other Optional Notes			

Section 4: Staffing Needs			
<i>Attributes of high scoring proposals:</i> - Key personnel have the necessary education, skills, and experience for their proposed roles on the project. Supporting documentation (e.g., resume/position descriptions, if hiring) is included for all key personnel. - The time commitment, duties, staffing mix, and concurrent staff responsibilities within and outside the grant (i.e. staff responsibilities with other projects, job positions, consultant work, etc.) are reasonable and demonstrate that all activities outlined in Section 2 of the fillable application form are able to be completed in a timely and efficient manner.			
Staffing Needs		Insert Score Below	

	Q2. Identifies and outlines roles/responsibilities of key project personnel. Documents key personnel's qualifications and relevant experience to effectively carry out activities outlined in Section 2 of the fillable application form. (10 points) • Provides professional resumes for all key project staff as support for expertise documented in the fillable application form		Out of 10
Score Total		0	Out of 10
Section Strengths			
Section Weaknesses			
Other Optional Notes			

Section 5: Budget Narrative			
<i>Attributes of high scoring proposals:</i>			
- The budget request is adequate to support the project.			
- Appropriate budget justifications are provided, including descriptions of how categorical costs were derived, discussions of necessity, reasonableness of costs, and links between expenditures and activities/tasks. If applicable, justifications for contract selection methods are provided.			
- Expenses comply with the allowable costs listed on page 15 of the Fillable Application Form			
		Insert Score Below	
	Q1. – Q8. Clearly explains expenses required to achieve project goals and objectives. (5 points)		Out of 5
	Q1. – Q8. Demonstrates feasibility of budget within project scope and activities. (5 points)		Out of 5
Score Total		0	Out of 10
Section Strengths			
Section Weaknesses			
Other Optional Notes			

Score Weights			
Reviewer Name			
WIC Agency			
Certification Enhancement Opportunity			
Total Score out of 100			0
Reviewer Notes			
Scoring Rubric			
Section 2: Project Plan			
<i>Attributes of high scoring proposals</i>			
- The significance of the problem to be addressed is demonstrated and specific gaps or weaknesses in customer service have been identified and will be addressed through the proposed project.			
- Project goals and activities are clearly identified and appropriate to address the problem.			
- Project implementation plan flows directly from the project's goals and activities and is achievable in the 18 month project timeline.			
- Demonstrates transferability of the project and its results for adaptation and implementation by other WIC agencies.			
Statement of Need		Insert Score Below	
	Q1. Clearly describes the agency context including populations served by your agency, certification appointment process, certification and customer service opportunities for improvement.(10 points)		Out of 10
Project Design		Insert Score Below	
	Q2. Clearly describes the project and includes how project will improve certification process (10 points)		Out of 10
	Q3. Clearly defines project goals and describes how goals will improve their WIC certification process. (10 points)		Out of 10
	Q4. Clearly describes the activities that will be performed to accomplish the project goals. (5 points)		Out of 5
	Q5. Clearly describes plan for project implementation. (10 points)		Out of 10
External Coordination and Partnerships		Insert Score Below	
	Q7. Lists all intended partnerships and describes plan for coordinating these partnerships. Describes all existing relationships with partners and describes how they will assist with project design and implementation (5 points) • Provides existing MOUs or written agreements, if applicable, as support for partnerships documented in the fillable application form.		Out of 5
Description of Innovation		Insert Score Below	
	Q8. Clearly demonstrates how the project fits the definition of Innovative (see Section 2: Introduction for a definition of innovation) (5 points)		Out of 5
Project Transferability		Insert Score Below	
	Q10. Clearly outlines steps the applicant will take to ensure that they will be able to provide detailed program operations and lessons learned so that project activities can be scaled or transferred to other WIC agencies. (5 points)		Out of 5
Score Total			0 Out of 60
Section Strengths			
Section Weaknesses			
Other Optional Notes			

Scores should be assigned as follows:

Out of 2:
0 = Unsatisfactory
1 = Fair
2 = Satisfactory

Out of 5:
0-1 = Unsatisfactory
2-3 = Fair
4 = Good
5 = Excellent

Out of 10:
0-2 = Unsatisfactory
3-4 = Fair
5-6 = Satisfactory
7-8 = Good
9-10 = Excellent

Section 3: Evaluation Requirements			
<i>Attributes of high scoring proposals:</i> - Short-term, intermediate term, and long-term outcomes are feasible and appropriately linked to the project's goals and activities			
Data Collection and Analysis Capacity		Insert Score Below	
	Q1. Provides a description of agency capacity and/or experience with data collection and evaluation. (2 points)		Out of 2
Outcome Measures		Insert Score Below	
	Q3. Clearly describes process and short-term outcomes. (2 points)		Out of 2
	Q4. Clearly describes implementation/intermediate outcomes. (2 points)		Out of 2
	Q5. Clearly describes impacts/long-term outcomes. (2 points)		Out of 2
Institutional Review Board		Insert Score Below	
	Q7-Q9. Indicates consideration of Institutional Review Board (IRB) requirements and clearly describes all applicable State Agency IRB processes. (2 points)		Out of 2
Score Total		0	Out of 10
Section Strengths			
Section Weaknesses			
Other Optional Notes			

Section 4: Program Management			
<i>Attributes of high scoring proposals:</i> - The management plan displays an understanding of the tasks, timeline, and staffing needed to complete the project successfully. - The management plan provides the oversight necessary to ensure high quality products, services, or outcomes, and to keep the project on time and within budget (including appropriate plans for managing partners and outside personnel). - The management plan includes all required grantee activities listed in Section 8: Other Required Grantee Activities of the RFA			
Program Management		Insert Score Below	
	Q1. Articulates project management activities that will assist in the project being completed on time, within budget, and with desired outcomes. (10 points)		Out of 10
Score Total		0	Out of 10
Section Strengths			
Section Weaknesses			
Other Optional Notes			

Section 4: Staffing Needs			
<i>Attributes of high scoring proposals:</i> - Key personnel have the necessary education, skills, and experience for their proposed roles on the project. Supporting documentation (e.g., resume/position descriptions, if hiring) is included for all key personnel. - The time commitment, duties, staffing mix, and concurrent staff responsibilities within and outside the grant (i.e. staff responsibilities with other projects, job positions, consultant work, etc.) are reasonable and demonstrate that all activities outlined in Section 2 of the fillable application form are able to be completed in a timely and efficient manner.			
Staffing Needs		Insert Score Below	

	Q2. Identifies and outlines roles/responsibilities of key project personnel. Documents key personnel's qualifications and relevant experience to effectively carry out activities outlined in Section 2 of the fillable application form. (10 points) • Provides professional resumes for all key project staff as support for expertise documented in the fillable application form		
Score Total		0	Out of 10
Section Strengths			
Section Weaknesses			
Other Optional Notes			

Section 5: Budget Narrative			
<i>Attributes of high scoring proposals:</i>			
- The budget request is adequate to support the project.			
- Appropriate budget justifications are provided, including descriptions of how categorical costs were derived, discussions of necessity, reasonableness of costs, and links between expenditures and activities/tasks. If applicable, justifications for contract selection methods are provided.			
- Expenses comply with the allowable costs listed on page 15 of the Fillable Application Form			
		Insert Score Below	
	Q1. – Q8. Clearly explains expenses required to achieve project goals and objectives. (5 points)		Out of 5
	Q1. – Q8. Demonstrates feasibility of budget within project scope and activities. (5 points)		Out of 5
Score Total		0	Out of 10
Section Strengths			
Section Weaknesses			
Other Optional Notes			

Score Weights			
Reviewer Name			
WIC Agency			
Certification Enhancement Opportunity			
Total Score out of 100			0
Reviewer Notes			
Scoring Rubric			
Section 2: Project Plan			
<i>Attributes of high scoring proposals</i>			
- The significance of the problem to be addressed is demonstrated and specific gaps or weaknesses in customer service have been identified and will be addressed through the proposed project.			
- Project goals and activities are clearly identified and appropriate to address the problem.			
- Project implementation plan flows directly from the project's goals and activities and is achievable in the 18 month project timeline.			
- Demonstrates transferability of the project and its results for adaptation and implementation by other WIC agencies.			
Statement of Need		Insert Score Below	
	Q1. Clearly describes the agency context including populations served by your agency, certification appointment process, certification and customer service opportunities for improvement.(10 points)		Out of 10
Project Design		Insert Score Below	
	Q2. Clearly describes the project and includes how project will improve certification process (10 points)		Out of 10
	Q3. Clearly defines project goals and describes how goals will improve their WIC certification process. (10 points)		Out of 10
	Q4. Clearly describes the activities that will be performed to accomplish the project goals. (5 points)		Out of 5
	Q5. Clearly describes plan for project implementation. (10 points)		Out of 10
External Coordination and Partnerships		Insert Score Below	
	Q7. Lists all intended partnerships and describes plan for coordinating these partnerships. Describes all existing relationships with partners and describes how they will assist with project design and implementation (5 points) • Provides existing MOUs or written agreements, if applicable, as support for partnerships documented in the fillable application form.		Out of 5
Description of Innovation		Insert Score Below	
	Q8. Clearly demonstrates how the project fits the definition of Innovative (see Section 2: Introduction for a definition of innovation) (5 points)		Out of 5
Project Transferability		Insert Score Below	
	Q10. Clearly outlines steps the applicant will take to ensure that they will be able to provide detailed program operations and lessons learned so that project activities can be scaled or transferred to other WIC agencies. (5 points)		Out of 5
Score Total			0 Out of 60
Section Strengths			
Section Weaknesses			
Other Optional Notes			

Scores should be assigned as follows:

Out of 2:
0 = Unsatisfactory
1 = Fair
2 = Satisfactory

Out of 5:
0-1 = Unsatisfactory
2-3 = Fair
4 = Good
5 = Excellent

Out of 10:
0-2 = Unsatisfactory
3-4 = Fair
5-6 = Satisfactory
7-8 = Good
9-10 = Excellent

Section 3: Evaluation Requirements			
<i>Attributes of high scoring proposals:</i> - Short-term, intermediate term, and long-term outcomes are feasible and appropriately linked to the project's goals and activities			
Data Collection and Analysis Capacity		Insert Score Below	
	Q1. Provides a description of agency capacity and/or experience with data collection and evaluation. (2 points)		Out of 2
Outcome Measures		Insert Score Below	
	Q3. Clearly describes process and short-term outcomes. (2 points)		Out of 2
	Q4. Clearly describes implementation/intermediate outcomes. (2 points)		Out of 2
	Q5. Clearly describes impacts/long-term outcomes. (2 points)		Out of 2
Institutional Review Board		Insert Score Below	
	Q7-Q9. Indicates consideration of Institutional Review Board (IRB) requirements and clearly describes all applicable State Agency IRB processes. (2 points)		Out of 2
Score Total		0	Out of 10
Section Strengths			
Section Weaknesses			
Other Optional Notes			

Section 4: Program Management			
<i>Attributes of high scoring proposals:</i> - The management plan displays an understanding of the tasks, timeline, and staffing needed to complete the project successfully. - The management plan provides the oversight necessary to ensure high quality products, services, or outcomes, and to keep the project on time and within budget (including appropriate plans for managing partners and outside personnel). - The management plan includes all required grantee activities listed in Section 8: Other Required Grantee Activities of the RFA			
Program Management		Insert Score Below	
	Q1. Articulates project management activities that will assist in the project being completed on time, within budget, and with desired outcomes. (10 points)		Out of 10
Score Total		0	Out of 10
Section Strengths			
Section Weaknesses			
Other Optional Notes			

Section 4: Staffing Needs			
<i>Attributes of high scoring proposals:</i> - Key personnel have the necessary education, skills, and experience for their proposed roles on the project. Supporting documentation (e.g., resume/position descriptions, if hiring) is included for all key personnel. - The time commitment, duties, staffing mix, and concurrent staff responsibilities within and outside the grant (i.e. staff responsibilities with other projects, job positions, consultant work, etc.) are reasonable and demonstrate that all activities outlined in Section 2 of the fillable application form are able to be completed in a timely and efficient manner.			
Staffing Needs		Insert Score Below	

	Q2. Identifies and outlines roles/responsibilities of key project personnel. Documents key personnel's qualifications and relevant experience to effectively carry out activities outlined in Section 2 of the fillable application form. (10 points) • Provides professional resumes for all key project staff as support for expertise documented in the fillable application form		
Score Total		0	Out of 10
Section Strengths			
Section Weaknesses			
Other Optional Notes			

Section 5: Budget Narrative			
<i>Attributes of high scoring proposals:</i>			
- The budget request is adequate to support the project.			
- Appropriate budget justifications are provided, including descriptions of how categorical costs were derived, discussions of necessity, reasonableness of costs, and links between expenditures and activities/tasks. If applicable, justifications for contract selection methods are provided.			
- Expenses comply with the allowable costs listed on page 15 of the Fillable Application Form			
		Insert Score Below	
	Q1. – Q8. Clearly explains expenses required to achieve project goals and objectives. (5 points)		Out of 5
	Q1. – Q8. Demonstrates feasibility of budget within project scope and activities. (5 points)		Out of 5
Score Total		0	Out of 10
Section Strengths			
Section Weaknesses			
Other Optional Notes			

Score Weights			
Reviewer Name			
WIC Agency			
Certification Enhancement Opportunity			
Total Score out of 100			0
Reviewer Notes			
Scoring Rubric			
Section 2: Project Plan			
<i>Attributes of high scoring proposals</i>			
- The significance of the problem to be addressed is demonstrated and specific gaps or weaknesses in customer service have been identified and will be addressed through the proposed project.			
- Project goals and activities are clearly identified and appropriate to address the problem.			
- Project implementation plan flows directly from the project's goals and activities and is achievable in the 18 month project timeline.			
- Demonstrates transferability of the project and its results for adaptation and implementation by other WIC agencies.			
Statement of Need		Insert Score Below	
	Q1. Clearly describes the agency context including populations served by your agency, certification appointment process, certification and customer service opportunities for improvement.(10 points)		Out of 10
Project Design		Insert Score Below	
	Q2. Clearly describes the project and includes how project will improve certification process (10 points)		Out of 10
	Q3. Clearly defines project goals and describes how goals will improve their WIC certification process. (10 points)		Out of 10
	Q4. Clearly describes the activities that will be performed to accomplish the project goals. (5 points)		Out of 5
	Q5. Clearly describes plan for project implementation. (10 points)		Out of 10
External Coordination and Partnerships		Insert Score Below	
	Q7. Lists all intended partnerships and describes plan for coordinating these partnerships. Describes all existing relationships with partners and describes how they will assist with project design and implementation (5 points) • Provides existing MOUs or written agreements, if applicable, as support for partnerships documented in the fillable application form.		Out of 5
Description of Innovation		Insert Score Below	
	Q8. Clearly demonstrates how the project fits the definition of Innovative (see Section 2: Introduction for a definition of innovation) (5 points)		Out of 5
Project Transferability		Insert Score Below	
	Q10. Clearly outlines steps the applicant will take to ensure that they will be able to provide detailed program operations and lessons learned so that project activities can be scaled or transferred to other WIC agencies. (5 points)		Out of 5
Score Total			0 Out of 60
Section Strengths			
Section Weaknesses			
Other Optional Notes			

Scores should be assigned as follows:

Out of 2:
0 = Unsatisfactory
1 = Fair
2 = Satisfactory

Out of 5:
0-1 = Unsatisfactory
2-3 = Fair
4 = Good
5 = Excellent

Out of 10:
0-2 = Unsatisfactory
3-4 = Fair
5-6 = Satisfactory
7-8 = Good
9-10 = Excellent

Section 3: Evaluation Requirements			
<i>Attributes of high scoring proposals:</i>			
- Short-term, intermediate term, and long-term outcomes are feasible and appropriately linked to the project's goals and activities			
Data Collection and Analysis Capacity		Insert Score Below	
	Q1. Provides a description of agency capacity and/or experience with data collection and evaluation. (2 points)		Out of 2
Outcome Measures		Insert Score Below	
	Q3. Clearly describes process and short-term outcomes. (2 points)		Out of 2
	Q4. Clearly describes implementation/intermediate outcomes. (2 points)		Out of 2
	Q5. Clearly describes impacts/long-term outcomes. (2 points)		Out of 2
Institutional Review Board		Insert Score Below	
	Q7-Q9. Indicates consideration of Institutional Review Board (IRB) requirements and clearly describes all applicable State Agency IRB processes. (2 points)		Out of 2
Score Total		0	Out of 10
Section Strengths			
Section Weaknesses			
Other Optional Notes			

Section 4: Program Management			
<i>Attributes of high scoring proposals:</i>			
- The management plan displays an understanding of the tasks, timeline, and staffing needed to complete the project successfully.			
- The management plan provides the oversight necessary to ensure high quality products, services, or outcomes, and to keep the project on time and within budget (including appropriate plans for managing partners and outside personnel).			
- The management plan includes all required grantee activities listed in Section 8: Other Required Grantee Activities of the RFA			
Program Management		Insert Score Below	
	Q1. Articulates project management activities that will assist in the project being completed on time, within budget, and with desired outcomes. (10 points)		Out of 10
Score Total		0	Out of 10
Section Strengths			
Section Weaknesses			
Other Optional Notes			

Section 4: Staffing Needs			
<i>Attributes of high scoring proposals:</i>			
- Key personnel have the necessary education, skills, and experience for their proposed roles on the project. Supporting documentation (e.g., resume/position descriptions, if hiring) is included for all key personnel.			
- The time commitment, duties, staffing mix, and concurrent staff responsibilities within and outside the grant (i.e. staff responsibilities with other projects, job positions, consultant work, etc.) are reasonable and demonstrate that all activities outlined in Section 2 of the fillable application form are able to be completed in a timely and efficient manner.			
Staffing Needs		Insert Score Below	

	Q2. Identifies and outlines roles/responsibilities of key project personnel. Documents key personnel's qualifications and relevant experience to effectively carry out activities outlined in Section 2 of the fillable application form. (10 points) • Provides professional resumes for all key project staff as support for expertise documented in the fillable application form		
Score Total		0	Out of 10
Section Strengths			
Section Weaknesses			
Other Optional Notes			

Section 5: Budget Narrative			
<i>Attributes of high scoring proposals:</i>			
- The budget request is adequate to support the project.			
- Appropriate budget justifications are provided, including descriptions of how categorical costs were derived, discussions of necessity, reasonableness of costs, and links between expenditures and activities/tasks. If applicable, justifications for contract selection methods are provided.			
- Expenses comply with the allowable costs listed on page 15 of the Fillable Application Form			
		Insert Score Below	
	Q1. – Q8. Clearly explains expenses required to achieve project goals and objectives. (5 points)		Out of 5
	Q1. – Q8. Demonstrates feasibility of budget within project scope and activities. (5 points)		Out of 5
Score Total		0	Out of 10
Section Strengths			
Section Weaknesses			
Other Optional Notes			