



APPLICATION QUESTIONS

Q: Can applicants apply any other way than through the online form, such as a Word document, or mail in an application?

A: The online form is the only way we can accept applications. Applications submitted in other forms will not be considered.

Q: Do I have to provide multiple quotes for the project to be considered?

A: Applicants must submit two (2) quotes for each expenditure/line item in the budget that costs \$50,000 or more. Applicants must submit one (1) quote for each expenditure/line item in the budget that costs less than \$50,000. Quotes should be from qualified vendors or contractors and reflect accurate cost estimates. Failure to submit quotes will result in the application being ineligible.

Q: Do I have to use the Budget Form available on the FSIG website?

A: A Budget Form template (Attachment B. Budget Template) is available under 'File Attachments' on the COMMBUYS, however applicants are not required to use this specific form. Please note that a budget is required for all submissions to be eligible, and we recommend either using either the form provided, or providing a budget in a similar format.

Q: What is the word count limits for the online application questions?

A: There is no word count limit. However, some questions only ask for 2-3 sentence answers. Others will require more detailed responses.

Q: Can I include tables or images in the online application questions?

A: No, the online application platform we are using does not allow tables or images to be included in the answer boxes.

Q: Do I have to complete all the answers through the on-line application? For example, if I wanted to email the timeline as a separate document, is that allowed?

A: Answers should be completed through the online application. Please do not send separate documents for questions that can be completed through the online application.

Q: Can you please clarify for me the role that Commbuys plays in this application process?

A: COMMBUYS is the Commonwealth's e-procurement system. All Agencies are required to post Grant opportunities on COMMBUYS to allow for the widest visibility to potential applicants. The posting contains all the information about the Grant and is where interested applicants can view



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Q: is it possible to see the application questions in a word doc or PDF ahead of actually applying? And, is there a way to save the application while you are applying and go back to it hours or days later?

A: You can download a copy of the application, (found in Attachment A) from the [COMBUYS Page](#) directly and view the questions. When you click “save and continue,” you are brought to a page with a link that prompts for your email address. You can then use the link to return and complete the form from any computer. You may also work on the document separately and copy and paste the replies in one sitting.

Q: Please confirm: registration on Commbuys is not required to complete this application.

A: No, it is not required to submit an application.

Q: Last year when I asked: As a public school district applying for a FSIG grant, does the application requirement for submission of a *Supplier Diversity Program Plan form* apply. MDAR answered: "No, we do not need that for the purposes of this RFR. All the required documentation is listed in the RFR." Is that still correct?

A: Yes, that is still correct for the FY27 RFR.

Q: Can you send me the questions that have to be answered for the food security grant. I would like to answer them all before I start the application process.

A: You can download a copy of the application, (found in Attachment A) from the [COMBUYS Page](#) directly and view the questions.

ELIGIBILITY QUESTIONS

Q: This is my first year in operation, am I eligible to apply to FSIG? What if my operation has been in business for multiple years, but this is a new venture for my business?

A: To be eligible applicants must be in operation for a minimum of three years to the date of the application.

Q: If I don't have a written lease agreement, am I eligible to apply?

A: Yes, you are eligible to apply. However, if your proposed project is selected for funding, some type of written documentation will be required that shows the legal relationship between the parties to ensure the correct entity/individual who legally owns the property is allowing the proposed project to be completed on their land. The lease should include things like a description



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of the property, type of use(s) allowed, duration, and signatures of the parties involved, including the landowner.

Q: Are we able to apply for this new round of FSIG even though we were awarded in a previous round?

A: Proposals from applicants or entities previously funded through the Food Security Infrastructure Grant (FSIG) Program are eligible to apply, **provided that all prior FSIG funded projects have been fully completed and all required reporting has been submitted and approved by the Department.** The Department may require returning applicants to submit documentation demonstrating completion, outcomes, and benefits of any previously funded FSIG project.

Q: If two owners have two separate companies with independent tax ID numbers. May they apply for both companies individually? Or do they have to choose what company to apply for?

A: Entities and/or individuals that own multiple businesses cannot submit applications for each business.

Q: Is the FSIG subject to prevailing wage law?

A: It is the responsibility of any contractor to ensure compliance with Prevailing Wage Requirements, when applicable. [Prevailing Wage Program | Mass.gov](https://www.mass.gov/info-details/prevailing-wage-program)

Q: I wanted to reach out to you to see if a purchase of a truck would be a qualified expense under the infrastructure grant. We would be looking to purchase a vehicle to make trips to Greater Boston as well as Cleaners and local farms to pick up items for the Community Pantry.

A: MDAR cannot assist in the preparation of grant applications. In order to maintain integrity of the competitive grant process, MDAR is unable to advise and/or provide individuals with any information regarding specific applications during the solicitation process. The goals of the FSIG program, along with all applicant and project eligibility requirements, can be found in the RFR.

Q: Hello, I'd like to establish a microgreens ecosystem in and around Boston. I don't own any land or greenhouse. I need your help regarding land or fields available for rent from the government, either free or at low cost. Could you guide me on how to proceed with this process?

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Q: I was interested in possibly applying to this grant. Milton had been awarded a few years back and wanted to know if that posed any issues if applying for this year. I believe it was FY 22 that Milton had been awarded

A: There is currently no restriction on how many times an organization can apply for FSIG.



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Q: This question is regarding section A2. Ineligible Applicants. The last bullet point states as ineligible:

- "Applications for projects that are currently being funded through another state or federal grant program, whether in whole or in part."

How is 'project' defined for purposes of this exclusion? For example, if a program or organization is received a capital grant for construction related to food insecurity, but wants to request funding for a completely different purpose, such as equipment (e.g. cold storage, vehicle, or back-up power source), is that project ineligible?

A: If an applicant is receiving funding from another source they should clearly disclose this in the application as we are unable to pre-determine whether another funding source may impact the ability to receive funding under this program.

Q: Hello, two questions about FSIG 27: Can the two quotes for line items above \$151,000 be from two different dealers of the same equipment (for example, two different John Deere dealerships) or must they be for the generic item, for example, two 100hp tractors with comparable features. Second, if submitting a market analysis to prove project need, can this be done by another party, for instance, a milk cooperative to which an applying dairy farm belongs?

A: The quotes can be from two different John Deere dealerships if they are independently owned. You may submit any documents that you feel would bolster your demonstration of project need and feasibility and/or demonstration of project benefit to underserved/under-resourced communities.

Q: I got a grant in 2025 FSIG FY25. I want to apply for this year's grant FY27. I am applying under commercial food access and availability. My grant request is under \$200,000. Can I apply for this grant? If not, what grant can I apply for?

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Q: I wanted to check our eligibility for the upcoming FSIG round. We currently have an active FSIG contract that ends on June 30, 2026. I noticed in the program guidance that entities with a current FSIG contract that will not be completed before the application submission date are ineligible to apply. I'm assuming that since the new application is due in May 2026, that means we're not eligible for this cycle. Is that correct?

A: Awarded entities with active contracts who have not completed their current project by the application submission date are not eligible to apply for additional funding.

Q: Our organization is considering a single project that would involve coordinated kitchen equipment upgrades across four program sites, all serving underserved populations. The project



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would be structured with shared goals and outcomes across sites. Can you confirm whether a multi-site project structured this way would be considered eligible under the RFR?

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Q: I am looking to get clarification and guidance about if further aspects of my enormous farm store construction project could be eligible for further funding under the new round of FSIG? As this project progressed over time, and as regulators imposed their strict rules, and contractors made updated inflation boosted quotes, the costs of this project have increased over time. We have completed the basic building construction using the original FSIG grant and the insurance money and some fundraising, and we have financing in the works to complete final phase steps to get the building ready to open which are underway currently, and include install of the electrical service and wiring, building the driveway and parking area, completing the water works (well and line are already drilled and in place) and purchasing some retail merchandising coolers and display equipment.

But we have had to delay several major aspects of the original plan and vision into phase two. These include install of the septic system, construction of the two bathrooms, construction of the café kitchen space inside the building, and furnishing the café kitchen with appropriate cooking equipment. (Until these aspects happen, the building will rely on portable toilets for customers and staff, and the kitchen prepared food aspects of our business plan is on hold.) Would it be possible for Red Fire Farm to apply to the new round of FSIG for all or any aspects of this phase 2 work? Our current budget based on contractor estimates is about \$250,000 to complete these phase two aspects. Please let me know if these are potentially eligible.

Meanwhile we also have other major needs for infrastructure improvements on our Montague property, including especially to replace the roofs on two barn buildings in order to prevent those roofs from collapsing and destroying those barns. We have unsuccessfully applied to FSIG for these roof repairs previously. If phase two of the Granby Store barn projects are eligible, is it potentially viable to also include Montague barn roof repairs as part of the same application, or is that type of combining of projects into the same application frowned upon?

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Q: I hope this email finds you well. I am reviewing the application which was recently released and I just needed clarification. Is the purchase of a building, to be used for a food hub, an eligible project? Or is it just the renovation of such a property?



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Q: We are in need of replacing an aging evaporator located in the area where our ice is stored. Given our limited resources and the short turnaround time for this application (due April 20), I wanted to ask for your professional opinion on our likelihood of being awarded funding for this critical component of our cold storage system under this grant.

A: MDAR cannot assist in the preparation of grant applications. In order to maintain integrity of the competitive grant process, MDAR is unable to advise and/or provide individuals with any information regarding specific applications during the solicitation process. The goals of the FSIG program, along with all applicant and project eligibility requirements, can be found in the RFR.

Q: I am a little stuck in the process because we are a Municipality that serves 60 Commercial Fishers that are the Provincetown Fleet plus another 60 Transients. The Grant keeps asking how much fish we sell, we don't sell it we supply all the needs for the Fishermen including ice. Unless FSIG wants the Provincetown stats?

Do you have any suggestions? And last question can we apply for multiple Grants?

A: Yes, municipalities are eligible. Since the vast majority of FSIG applicants are involved with selling or buying/sourcing food, providing data about food products is a requirement. If are not involved with those activities and are still applying for the grant, you can enter 0 for the buying/sourcing questions asking for a breakdown of food products and how many people are provided food for annually.

Applicants may submit proposals to more than one Department grant program within the same fiscal year; however, the Department will not issue funding from multiple programs for the same or substantially similar project activities. If an applicant applies to multiple department programs for the same project, the Department reserves the right, at its sole discretion, to determine under which program, if any, the project will be funded. The Department's determination shall be final and binding. The Department cannot, however, take an application from one program and fund it through a different program to which the applicant did not already separately apply. Applicants should carefully consider whether their proposed project is best aligned with FSIG or another MDAR grant program. Projects focused primarily on farm business viability, on-farm improvements, or on-farm energy and climate-related investments may be more appropriately suited to other MDAR programs, including the Farm Viability Enhancement Program (FVEP), APR Improvement Program (AIP), Stewardship Assistance and Restoration on APRs (SARA), the Matching Enterprise Grants for Agriculture (MEGA) Program, and the Climate Smart Agriculture Program (CSAP).



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BUDGET AND MATCH QUESTIONS

Q: Can the match be in-kind? Can I use other grant funding towards it?

A: The match must be a cash match and cannot be in-kind. Additional grant funding can be used towards the match as long as it is not other state grant funds.

Q: Can the costs of shipping, and installation be included in the request?

A: Yes, the costs of shipping and installation can be included in the total project costs.

Q: We are wondering what types of expenses can be used as a cash match (i.e., staff salaries, supplies, rent, etc.)

A: The match must be a cash match, meaning the applicant must contribute a certain percentage of their own money based on the total project cost. In-kind matches are not eligible.

Q: Please confirm that line items that can't be funded by the grant, can we list them in the budget and state that it will be funded by other sources?

A: The budget submitted should be for the FSIG project only.

FUNDING PROCESS AND TIMELINE QUESTIONS

Q: When to you estimate awards will be released?

A: We estimate that awards will be announced in Summer 2026.

Q: Will the award amounts be taxable?

A: Applicants may receive a 1099-G for funding received under the FSIG Program. MDAR cannot give any tax advice and applicants should reach out to a tax professional for questions regarding the implications of receiving this funding.

Q: How will MDAR distribute the funding?

A: Applicants who are receiving funding will be required to enter into a contract with the Department before receiving funding. This includes documentation such as a Standard

Contract form, a W-9, and an Electronic Funds Transfer (EFT) Form. More information about the required documentation is outlined in the RFR.

Q: Can I start the project before awards are made?



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A: No, applicants that start a project or incur costs outside of a contract with the Department are not eligible for reimbursement under the FSIG Program.

Q: Will there be any extensions if I am unable to complete the project by June 30th, 2027?

A: Projects are required to be completed by June 30th, 2027.

Q: Hello I am a Farmer Fisherman curious on the process of the grant and what exactly it means by a reimbursement grant.

A: The Department shall reimburse the Contractor for the cost of approved equipment, materials, and associated labor necessary to complete the Project, as described in this Contract. The Contractor shall be responsible for any costs not approved or beyond the Department's maximum obligation or for any costs not approved under the terms of this Contract. The Contractor shall be reimbursed for funds expended on this project. To receive reimbursement, the Contractor shall submit a written request ("Invoice") to the Department using the schedule below. If a project has not begun or no costs were incurred, the Contractor shall notify the Department in writing.