



2023 HFFI Local & Regional Healthy Food Financing Partnerships Program

RFA Information Session

Thursday, September 7, 2023

America's
HEALTHY FOOD
FINANCING INITIATIVE
 REINVESTMENT FUND



Molly Hartman
Senior Program Director,
Healthy Food Financing
Initiative



Anne Misak
Senior Program Manager,
Healthy Food Financing
Initiative



Olivia Chatman
Senior Program
Associate, Food Initiatives



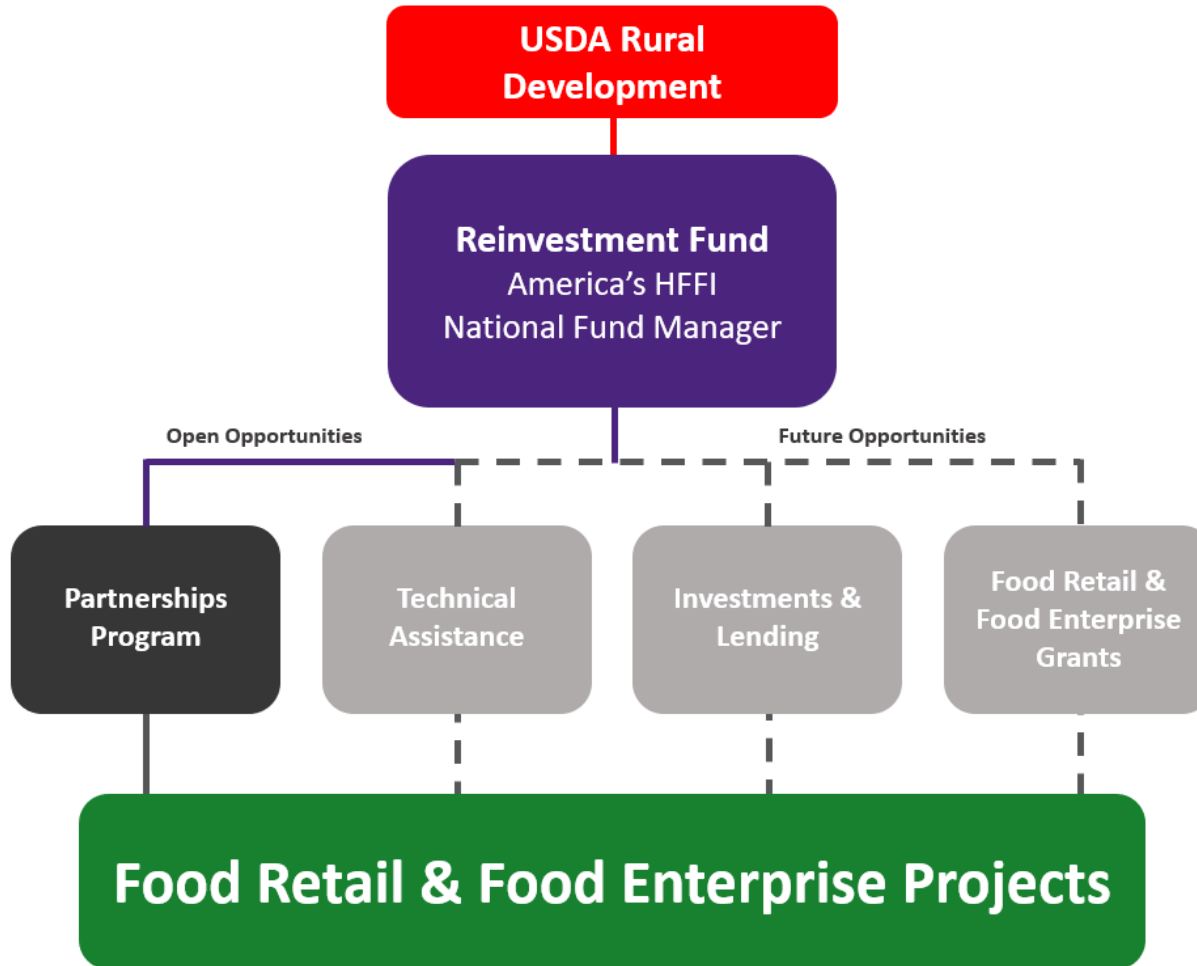
Healthy Food Financing Initiative

The purpose of the Healthy Food Financing Initiative (HFFI) is to improve access to healthy foods in underserved areas, to create and preserve quality jobs, and to revitalize low-income communities.

HFFI Goals and Authority

- The Healthy Food Financing Initiative (HFFI) was authorized under the Agriculture Act of 2014 and reauthorized in 2018.
- HFFI is a program of USDA Rural Development.
- In 2017, Reinvestment Fund was selected as the National Fund Manager through a competitive process to implement HFFI and provide financial and technical assistance to eligible healthy food retail partnerships and projects. Reinvestment Fund manages the HFFI program for USDA.
- Funding for this announcement is made available in part through the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) of 2021.

HFFI Program Management





HFFI Local & Regional Food Financing Partnerships Program

The HFFI Partnerships Program supports local, state, or regional Food Financing Programs (FFP) in underserved communities throughout the United States. HFFI Partnerships Program grants are available to public-private Partnerships to support the establishment, expansion, or implementation of FFPs. These FFPs should currently provide, or be planning to provide, financial assistance to Food Retail or Food Enterprise projects in Underserved Areas.

2023 HFFI Partnerships Program

- Up to \$30 million available
- Grant awards will be \$200,000 to \$3 million per Partnership
- Grants will fund Capacity Building activities and/or Credit Enhancement activities

HFFI Partnerships Grant	Capacity Building Activities	Credit Enhancement Activities
Grant Awards	\$200,000 - \$1,000,000	\$500,000 - \$3,000,000
Grant Period	Up to 3 years	Deployment of financial products up to 5 years. Grant period dependent on financing activity servicing timeline.

What We Will Fund

- Eligible Partnerships that are working to improve access to fresh, healthy food in underserved communities through providing technical and financial assistance to food retailers and food enterprises
- Grants can be used to establish a new food financing program or to expand or deepen the reach of an existing food financing program
- Food Financing Programs (FFP) should provide loans, grants, and/or technical assistance to food retailers and food enterprises in underserved areas
- Grant funding may be used to increase the capacity of current partnerships to go deeper in their communities or expand to new communities.
- Grant funding may be used to assist the development or launch of a new Partnership and FFP in an underserved area where resources have not previously existed.

Capacity Building Activities

- Expenses to administer the program including staff, marketing, outreach, site visits, creation of program materials, outside expertise like legal and accounting, etc.
- Providing technical assistance to food retailers and food enterprises
- Seeking additional partners for the initiative, including a qualified lender
- Analyzing data to identify food access gaps and underserved areas, and develop financial products (e.g., loans, grants, tax credits) to serve Food Retail and Food Enterprises in Underserved Areas

Credit Enhancement Activities

- Enabling the establishment and use of flexible credit requirements for lending activity to Eligible Projects, such as loaning funds for a greater percentage of the project's cost than typical
- Buying down interest rates from applicant's existing loan policies and products to better meet market demand
- Waiving or changing typical lending policies and requirements, such as waiving origination fees
- Establishing a dedicated loan loss reserve or guarantee pool to offset increased risk of lending to Eligible Projects
- Providing grants to Eligible Projects

Priorities

To Partnerships that will:

- Serve communities and regions that have been underserved by HFFI (USDA, CDFI Fund/US Treasury, or state/local) investment
- Serve Rural Areas
- Serve women-owned businesses
- Serve Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC)-owned businesses
- Support regional food systems and locally grown foods
- Include or involve diverse participants representing the relevant demographics (race, income, ethnicity, gender, etc.), sectors, geographies, and communities being served by the Partnership
- Provide funding and technical assistance to projects that create or retain quality jobs for low-income residents in the community

Strong Applications Will Demonstrate

- A **viable market** for proposed financial assistance (grants, loans, other) to Food Retail and Food Enterprise projects in Underserved Areas.
- The **ability to reach underserved markets/demographics/communities** not currently served by HFFI.
- The Partnerships' ability to provide **increased financing**.
- A **track record** of successfully supporting healthy food projects, either financially or through technical assistance.
- **Leveraged funds** (additional federal and private capital beyond the HFFI Partnerships Program grant) to create a robust Food Financing Program.
- The inclusion of **diverse partners** representing the relevant demographics (race, income, ethnicity, gender, etc.), sectors, industries, geographies, and communities being served by the Partnership and the Food Financing Program.
- Strong and consistent **community involvement** in project design and operation.
- **Ability to sustain** the food financing program beyond the grant period.

FAMILY MARKET

Eligibility

America's
HEALTHY FOOD
FINANCING INITIATIVE
REINVESTMENT FUND



Partnerships

Eligible Partnerships:

- Are organized to improve access to healthy foods.
- Expand or preserve the availability of staple and perishable foods by maintaining or increasing the number of retail outlets in underserved and low or moderate-income areas.
- Demonstrate ability to provide grants, loans, or technical assistance (TA) to eligible projects, now or in the future (as a result of HFFI Partnerships Program capacity building grant support), and evaluate progress.
- Engage local partners from across sectors in promoting or delivering healthy food financial and technical resources.
- Demonstrate ability to leverage Federal HFFI resources locally.

Who Is Eligible to Apply

- Public-private partnerships operating at the state, local, or regional level
- At least two entities make up the partnership, one of which must be a public entity
- Agreement between the partners like an MOU or contract
- Partnerships can be new or existing
- If applying for Credit Enhancement activities, the partnership must include a Qualified Lender

The HFFI Partnerships Program is not for food retailers or food enterprises seeking funding for a capital project.

Eligible Entities

- State, regional, and local governments and governmental agencies, authorities, commissions, and councils (Public entity)
- Tribal governments and tribal governmental agencies, authorities, and councils (Public entity)
- Public universities or hospitals (Public entity)
- Tax-exempt nonprofit corporations
- Qualified lenders such as Community Development Financial Institutions, Credit Unions, or Community Banks
- Cooperatively-owned businesses
- For-profit business enterprises (including a corporation, limited liability company, or public benefit corporation)
- Economic development corporations

Eligible Projects Served

Food Retail and Food Enterprise projects in Underserved Areas that:

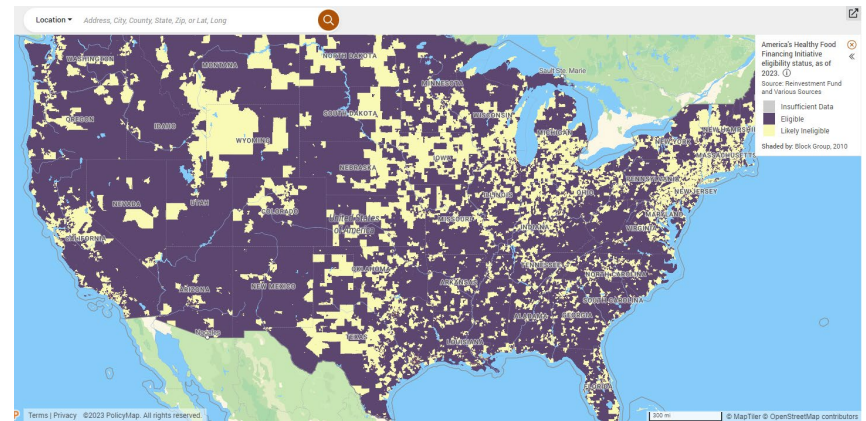
- Plans to expand or preserve the availability of staple and perishable foods in Underserved Areas with low and moderate-income populations; and
- If the project involves retail sales, accepts benefits under the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP)
- Plans to maintain and improve Food Supply Chain Resilience.

Underserved Areas are defined in the RFA

You can use the HFFI Eligibility map at

<https://www.investinginfood.com/eligibility>

Or your state/city/region's adopted methodology



What We Will Not Fund

- Applications for grant funding for individual Food Retail or Food Enterprise projects such as grocery stores, mobile markets, food hubs, etc.
- Applications from a single organization without partners in their initiative.
- Partnerships that primarily fund or finance projects that are not Eligible Food Retail or Food Enterprises in the retail supply chain, including restaurants, consumer packaged goods, agriculture (farming, ranching, hydroponics, aquaponics, gardening), meat and poultry processors, fisheries or aquaculture, charitable food (free food distribution such as food pantries, food banks, meals programs, and food donations), and/or public health nutrition or culinary initiatives.
- Applications focused solely on research or education.
- Applications for funding for SNAP enrollment or SNAP education.
- Partnerships that **only** offer technical assistance or programming to food retail or food enterprises, such as trainings, workshops, or coaching (i.e., the Partnership plans to continue only offering technical assistance to food retail projects going forward).
- Construction, acquisition, or improvement of real property (by Grantee or partners). Grantee may lend or grant funds to Eligible Projects that use grant/loan funding for construction and acquisition.

Application Requirements and Process

Application Requirements

- Information collected through the application includes program narrative, timeline, budget, and proposed outcomes
- If applying for Credit Enhancement activities, a financing narrative, track record, and pipeline are also required
- This program does not require matching funds.

Lead Applicant & Partnership Entities

- The application is submitted by a lead applicant on behalf of the partnership. Other partner entities may be subawardees.
- The lead applicant will fill out the application in the SmartSimple grants portal and will be responsible for collecting and submitting all necessary information for the partnership and additional partners.
- Partnerships can only submit one application. Lead applicants may only lead one application. Partner entities may be listed as partners to multiple submissions.

Application Requirements

- The **lead applicant** will need to submit the following:
 - Documents to show the legal status of the entity, including an EIN and non-profit certification (if applicable)
 - A current System for Award Management (SAM) registration and Unique Entity Identifier (UEI). This can take a few weeks to process, so we suggest doing it early <https://sam.gov/SAM/>
 - Financial statements for the three most recent fiscal years
 - Year to date financial statements

Application Requirements

- **All entities** in the partnership will need to submit the following:
 - Resumes for key personnel
 - Demographics for the Board or owners of the entity, as applicable
 - Signed letters of commitment from each partner entity receiving grant funds

Application Requirements

- **The Qualified Lender** in the partnership will need to submit the following:
 - Financial statements for the three most recent fiscal years
 - Year to date financial statements
 - Authorization to Lend. This can be submitted with the application or after being awarded the grant.

**This only applies if applying for Credit Enhancement activities*

Application Requirements

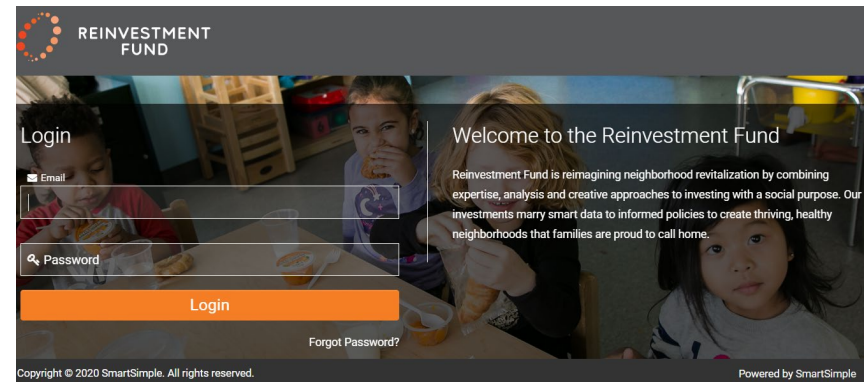
Target Service Area

- The target service area for the food financing program will need to be specified in the application
- This will be the area (city, state, region, Tribal areas, etc.) where HFFI Partnership Program grant funds will be utilized to increase the number of healthy food retail and food enterprise projects
- The target service area should include Underserved Areas that are eligible for HFFI
- This area does not have to be contiguous
- The grant program is open to all levels of service areas

How to Apply

- Applications are now open
- **Applications are due November 3 at 11:59 PM ET**
- Applications will be submitted through Reinvestment Fund's SmartSimple grants portal
- To download the Request for Applications and to apply visit

[www.investinginfood.com/
partnerships-program](http://www.investinginfood.com/partnerships-program)



www.reinvestmentfund.smartsimple.com

Review Process

- Applications will be screened for eligibility
- Eligible applications will be scored by reviewers based on the criteria in the RFA
- These criteria include:
 - Applicant and Partner Qualifications (0 to 15 points)
 - Stakeholder Involvement (0 to 10 Points)
 - Food Access Goals (0 to 10 Points)
 - Impact of the Proposed Activities (0 to 20 Points)
 - Use of Credit Enhancement Funds (0 to 20 points)
 - Proposed Metrics and Outcomes (0 to 5 points)
 - Budget and Timeline (0 to 10 points)
 - Priority Points (up to 28 points)
- Applications will be selected based on a consensus ranking taking into account the application score, geographic diversity (including urban and rural), program diversity, and ability to advance the HFFI goals.

Federal Award Requirements

- This is Federal money and grantees must remain in compliance with all applicable laws, regulations, etc.
- Some of those include:
 - Federal Financial Management and Internal Controls Requirements
 - Program Income
 - Procurement and Property Standards
 - Cost Principles
 - Audits
 - Record Retention and Access
- Most of these come from *2 CFR Part 200 - Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, And Audit Requirements For Federal Awards*

Subrecipient Monitoring and Management

- Grantees must monitor and manage any subrecipients in accordance with federal regulations. A subrecipient is any entity that receives grant or subaward funding from the Grantee. This includes partners that are subawardees of the Grantee, as well as any eligible projects that receive grant funding from the Grantee. Borrowers are not subrecipients because they will repay the funds.
- Grantees must conduct reviews of proposed projects to be funded with HFFI grant funds to determine whether the project is classified as a categorical exclusion under 7 CFR Part 1970 (environmental policies and procedures) and follow appropriate procedures for documenting this review.
- Grantees must review any proposed infrastructure projects to ensure compliance with the Build America, Buy America Act within the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (Public Law 117-58).
- Reinvestment Fund will work with Grantees to understand and be prepared to manage all subrecipients and Federal requirements for funded projects.

Important Dates



Applications are due
November 3rd, 2023
by 11:59pm ET



We can answer
questions until 6pm ET
November 2nd, 2023

Contact Us

Email: help@investinginfood.com

Phone: 215-574-5862

Website: <https://www.investinginfood.com>

