



COMMISSIONER SID MILLER

**TEXAS DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
ESTABLISHING THE 3E’S GRANT PROGRAM (E3E)
REQUEST FOR APPLICATION**

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Please read all materials before preparing and submitting the application. Failure to follow the instructions and requirements described in this Request for Application may result in the disqualification of the application.

**NOTICE REGARDING THE INCLUSION OF CONFIDENTIAL, PROPRIETARY,
TRADE SECRET, OR PRIVILEGED INFORMATION IN AN APPLICATION**

Please take notice of the following:

If it is necessary for Respondent to include proprietary or otherwise confidential information in its application or other submitted information, Respondent must clearly mark and label all confidential, proprietary, trade secret or privileged material in bold 14 point or higher font on each page as it appears, and identify the specific exception to disclosure in the Texas Public Information Act (PIA) for each specific piece of confidential, proprietary, trade secret or privileged information. Additionally, all confidential, proprietary, trade secret or privileged information must be segregated in a separate and discrete section of the application, which must be able to be conveniently separated and detached from the other sections of the application. Failure to properly label, identify, and segregate any confidential, proprietary, trade secret or other privileged information in the application may result in all such information or material being disclosed as public information. Merely making a blanket claim that the entire application is protected from disclosure because it contains any amount of confidential, proprietary, trade secret or privileged information is not acceptable, and shall make the entire application subject to release under the PIA. In order to initiate the process of seeking an Attorney General opinion on the release of confidential, proprietary, trade secret or privileged information, the specific provisions of the application that are considered by Respondent to be confidential, proprietary, trade secret or privileged and confidential must be clearly labeled and segregated as described above. Any information which is not clearly identified as confidential, proprietary, trade secret or privileged shall be deemed to be subject to disclosure pursuant to the PIA.

STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

The Texas Department of Agriculture (TDA) is authorized by §12.0027 of the Texas Agriculture Code and §38.026 of the Education Code to administer the 3E's Grant Program (3E's) to promote better health and nutrition programs and prevent obesity among children in this state. Additionally, through §33.028 of the Texas Human Resources Code, the Texas legislature has appropriated funding to TDA to provide grants for organizations that are in good standing with the Texas Comptroller of Public Accounts and TDA to incorporate nutrition education into programs for children. The objective of the program is to increase awareness of the importance of good nutrition, especially for children, and to encourage children's health and well-being through education, exercise and eating right. TDA's 3E's Grant Program consists of two program categories:

1. **Establishing the 3E's Grant Program (E3E)** – a program that incentivizes the creation of new nutrition education programs in any childcare institution or community organization; and
2. **Expanding the 3E's Grant Program (X3E)** – a program that rewards nutrition education programs in public schools only.

Total funding for these grant programs during the 2019 funding cycle is approximately \$390,000 combined for the two programs.

ELIGIBILITY

To be eligible for E3E funds, an applying organization must be in good standing with the Texas Comptroller's Office and TDA and must:

1. Be an organization that:
 - A. participates in the CACFP as administered by TDA; or,
 - B. operates a Head Start Program, pursuant to the program rules in 45 CFR Parts 1301-1311; or,
 - C. Is another early childhood education program; AND
 - D. certifies that it will use awarded funds to provide nutrition education to children between the ages of three and five years old,

or,

2. Be a community or faith-based initiative that:
 - A. provides recreational, social, volunteer, leadership, mentoring, or developmental programs; and
 - B. certifies that it will use awarded funds to provide nutrition education to children younger than 19 years of age.

If an organization has previously received and accepted an E3E award, it is ineligible to receive another E3E grant for four years from the date of the previous award.

REQUEST FOR APPLICATION (RFA)

The Texas Department of Agriculture (TDA) is accepting applications for the **Establishing the 3E's Grant Program (E3E)** from organizations that are in good standing with the Texas Comptroller's Office and TDA to incorporate nutrition education into their programs for children.

Grant funds may be used to establish, implement or extend a comprehensive wellness efforts to achieve:

PROGRAM 1 - the Healthier CACFP Gold Award * or

PROGRAM 2 - the 3E's Award.

Which may include activities to improve:

- (a) menus; and
- (b) the environment through garden or experiential learning activities that teach students about Texas agriculture, and either:
- (c) nutrition education or
- (d) physical activity.

**Only organizations with a current contract with TDA Food and Nutrition Division to administer the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) are eligible to apply for the Healthier CACFP Gold Award Program. Please refer to Attachment A for award criteria.*

GENERAL INFORMATION AND AWARD PROGRAM CRITERIA

HEALTHIER CACFP RECOGNITION GOLD AWARD

WHAT IS IT?

The Healthier Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) Recognition Gold Award is a system that supports the wellness efforts of childcare centers participating in CACFP in the areas of menu improvement, the Farm Fresh environment and/or physical activity or nutrition education.

WHY IS IT IMPORTANT?

With one in five children being overweight or obese by the age of six, childcare centers play an essential role in the prevention of childhood obesity. Child caregivers have an opportunity to have a positive impact on children's development by encouraging healthy habits at a young age, improving the quality of food served, and instilling pride in their work as a CACFP provider and food service professional.

AM I ELIGIBLE TO APPLY?

Participation in the CACFP and compliance with CACFP regulations is required to select the Healthier CACFP Recognition Gold Award Program option when applying for a TDA 3E's grant. Meeting the award criteria and reaching an award level does not replace current CACFP requirements. Applicants are required to be in good standing with the CACFP, defined as having completed and implemented all corrective actions from the previous compliance review and having not been seriously deficient in the past two years at the time of application.

3Es AWARD

WHAT IS IT?

The 3Es Award is a system that supports the wellness efforts of early childhood education or community or faith-based initiatives in the areas of menu improvement, Farm Fresh environment and/or physical activity or nutrition education.

WHY IS IT IMPORTANT?

With one in five children being overweight or obese by the age of six, early childhood education settings play an essential role in the prevention of childhood obesity. Early childhood educators and community and faith-based initiatives have an opportunity to have a positive impact on children's development by encouraging healthy habits at a young age, improving the quality of food served, and instilling pride in their work as childcare educators and professionals.

PROJECTED TIMELINE

Application Deadline	May 20, 2020 at 5:00 pm CT
Anticipated Grant Term	August 1, 2020 – July 31, 2021

GRANTEE RESPONSIBILITIES AND ACCOUNTABILITY

Selected applicants (grantees) will be responsible for the conduct of the project supported by the E3E Grant Program and for the results achieved. Each grantee shall monitor the day-to-day performance of the grant project to assure adherence to statutes, regulations, and grant terms and conditions. The grantee must carry out the activities described in the approved scope of work.

The grantee will be accountable for documenting the use of grant funds and must ensure funds are used solely for authorized purposes. The grantee must ensure:

- Funds are used only for activities covered by the approved project;
- Funds are not used in violation of the restrictions and prohibitions of applicable statutes; and
- All budget and performance reports are completed in a timely manner.

Each grantee must ensure it has an adequate accounting system in place and good internal controls to ensure expenditures and reimbursements are reported and maintained for three (3) years after the conclusion of the project, or longer if required by TDA.

FUNDING PARAMETERS

Selected projects will receive funding on a cost reimbursement basis. **Funds will not be advanced to grantees.** Selected applicants must have the financial capacity to pay all costs up-front.

Awards are subject to the availability of funds. If no funds are appropriated or collected for this program, applicants will be informed accordingly.

Applicants may seek up to \$10,000 per site for expenses related to implementation of the nutrition education program proposed in the application. CACFP Sponsor Organizations that have more than one site or location should submit a single, combined application, and may seek up to \$50,000. The maximum award to any selected grantee shall not exceed \$10,000 per location or \$50,000, whichever is less. Other restrictions or funding limitations may also be considered during the award process.

TERM OF FUNDING OR DURATION OF PROJECTS

A Notice of Grant Award is *anticipated* to be made by July 2020. All approved projects have an *anticipated* term of August 2020 to July 2021.

APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS

Form Requirements:

To be considered, applications must be complete and include all of the information described in this section. Application and information can be downloaded from TDA's website at: www.texasagriculture.gov under the Grants & Services Tab.

1. Application Form GTBD-120

Section A. Organization Information. This is the applicant organization that will be the recipient of funds and held accountable for reporting and project performance.

Section B. Contact Personnel.

1. *Primary Program Contact.* Identify the individual who can answer questions about the project's activities and performance.
2. *Secondary Program Contact.* Identify an alternate individual who can answer questions about the project's activities and performance.
3. *Authorized official.* This is the person legally able to bind the organization in contracts or agreements.

Section C. Eligibility.

Section D. Certifications. Authorized Official's Signature: Signature of an individual authorized to execute contracts and/or agreements on behalf of the applicant. Applicant should submit a PDF of the signed signature page.

2. Project Narrative

Provide detailed responses to each section. The form is designed to be completed electronically and boxes will expand. A maximum of six pages may be used to fully answer the project narrative questions.

BUDGET INFORMATION

1. Payment. *Grant funds will be paid on a cost reimbursement basis.* Grantees will be required to submit payment requests at least quarterly, but no more frequently than monthly, in order to show significant financial and programmatic progress. Payment requests must include sufficient documentation that details each expense. Acceptable documentation may include, but is not limited to, invoices, receipts, or detailed information regarding personnel costs, as determined by TDA, in its sole discretion. No in-kind donations or matching funds are required. *Payment requests shall only be submitted by the grantee to TDA for reimbursement after the grantee purchases the approved budget item.*

2. Payment Schedule. Upon timely receipt of payment requests and documentation, approved reimbursement of up to 90% of the total grant award will be paid prior to submission of the Final Performance Report.

The remaining 10% will only be disbursed once all reporting requirements have been met, including, but not limited to, the final periodic report (if applicable) and the Final Performance Report.

3. Eligible Expenses. Generally, expenses that are necessary and reasonable for proper and efficient performance and administration directly related to the project are eligible. Grant funds may not be used to supplant normal business costs but instead must be used to cover the costs incurred for the approved proposed activities. Examples of eligible expenditures are:

- a) Personnel costs – both salary and benefits directly related to project implementation;
- b) Supplies and direct operating expenses – items that cost less than \$5,000 per unit with a useful life of less than one year, office supplies, postage, telecommunications, printing, etc. that are directly related to the project activities;
- c) Contracts – agreements made with educational institutions or private parties to perform a portion of the award;
- d) Other direct expenses – any expenses that do not fall into the above categories directly related to the proposed activities.
- e) Controlled assets are defined as certain items valued \$500.00 - \$4,999.99 which must also be inventoried, link to [Controlled Property Listing](#).

4. Ineligible Expenses. Expenses may be prohibited by state or federal law or determined to be ineligible by program guidelines. Examples of these expenditures include, but are not limited to the following:

- a) Alcoholic beverages;
- b) Entertainment;
- c) Tips;
- d) Contributions, charitable or political;
- e) Indirect Costs (including routine maintenance);
- f) Expenses falling outside of the contract period;
- g) Expenses for items not listed in the project budget or that fail to meet the intent of the program;

- h) Equipment – Tangible personal property costing over \$5,000 per unit and having a useful life over one year (freezers, kitchen equipment, etc.);
- i) Travel – NO transportation, lodging, meals, or any food items related to travel; and
- j) Expenses that are not adequately documented or that do not meet the intent of the grant program.

EVALUATION AND SELECTION INFORMATION

An administrative review will be conducted by agency staff to determine whether the applicant was adequately responsive to the requirements of this Request for Application.

Based on the requirements set forth above, a panel will evaluate applications and make funding recommendations. The panel will consist of representatives including, but not limited to the following: the Texas Department of Agriculture, nutrition education specialists, and childhood education professionals.

TDA may also consider the following evaluation criteria in its review of each application:

- ability for the proposed project/activity to incorporate sustainability or otherwise support continuation of the project/activity long-term or beyond the grant award period;
- whether nutrition education conveyed by the program is acceptable to TDA nutrition experts;
- percentage of the population to be reached by the program is comprised of children/families of lower socio-economic status;
- number of children overall impacted by the project;
- amount of exposure students have to proposed activities and/or information;
- inclusion of other components such as physical activity and/or education;
- geographic distribution of funds across Texas; and
- whether the applicant is in good standing and has a clean administrative review report with TDA as a contractor in Food and Nutrition Division programs.

REPORTING REQUIREMENTS

Approved applicants will be required to submit periodic performance reports. Reporting timelines are incorporated into the grant agreement. As part of TDA's ongoing monitoring of grant funds, grantees must demonstrate progress toward achieving project goals. Failure to comply with reporting requirements may result in the withholding of requests for reimbursement and/or termination of the award.

Periodic Performance Reports must be in a narrative format, no more than three (3) pages in length, and detail the accomplishments of the project objectives for a specified period of time.

The *Final Performance Report* is due thirty (30) days after project completion, or termination of the Grant Agreement, whichever occurs first. This report must be in a narrative format prescribed by TDA.

DEADLINE FOR SUBMISSION OF APPLICATIONS

Applicants must submit one complete, signed grant application package. The complete electronic, hand-delivered or mailed application packet including the application with signatures must be **RECEIVED** by close of business (5:00 p.m. CT) on Wednesday, May 20, 2020.

It is the applicant's responsibility to submit all materials necessary for evaluation early enough to ensure timely delivery. *Applicants may not supplement or amend the application after the deadline.*

There are 2 options for submission: email and hard copy (mail or hand delivery). Please only use ONE method. (Please note that faxed applications are not accepted.)

1. Preferred. Email submission of complete application packet:

Grants@TexasAgriculture.gov

Subject line: E3E2020 – ABC Organization

The e-mail subject line must reference the RFA title and applicant (Ex: 2020 E3E -ABC Organization), and the email must be received by TDA before close of business (5:00 p.m. CT) on Wednesday, May 20, 2020. The applicant is solely responsible for ensuring that their complete application, regardless of method of delivery, is sent to, and actually received by, TDA in a timely manner and at the proper destination server, including all attachments. TDA will send a confirmation email after the application has been received.

IMPORTANT NOTE: TDA recommends a limit on the attachments to 10MB each. This may require applicants to submit one application in multiple e-mails so that all required attachments may be to ensure receipt without exceeding TDA's 10 MB attachment limit. Applicants must make sure that each email subject line references the RFA title and applicant. Unreadable submissions may be deemed unresponsive and will not be reviewed for funding consideration.

If you are submitting multiple emails be sure to label your email:

E3E 2020 – ABC Organization email 1 of X, 2 of X

E3E 2020 – ABC Organization email 2 of X, etc.

TDA takes no responsibility for electronic submissions that are captured, blocked, filtered, quarantined or otherwise prevented from reaching the proper destination server by any TDA anti-virus or other security software.

TDA program staff will send an email acknowledging the receipt of the application as soon as administratively possible with an application ID number.

2. Hard copy mailed submissions – If not submitted by email

All applications must be **RECEIVED by close of business (5:00 p.m. CT) on Wednesday, May 20, 2020**. TDA will affix or place a date and time stamp on each application it receives via U.S. mail. If Applicant uses U.S. mail for delivery of its application to TDA, the agency strongly recommends that Applicant send same by certified mail, return receipt requested, or equivalent delivery confirmation service provided by USPS.

Applications may be sent to TDA to the following addresses:

By U.S. Mail:

Texas Department of Agriculture
Trade & Business Development- Grants
P.O. Box 12847
Austin, TX 78711

By Overnight or Hand Delivery

Texas Department of Agriculture
Trade & Business Development- Grants
1700 North Congress, 11th Floor
Austin, Texas 78701

TDA program staff will send an email acknowledging the receipt of the application as soon as administratively possible with an application ID number.

For questions regarding submission of the application and/or TDA requirements, please contact the Grants Office at (512) 463-7448 or by email at Grants@TexasAgriculture.gov.

GENERAL INFORMATION

Selected Applicants will receive a Notice of Grant Award (NGA) letter and an official Grant Agreement from TDA. The NGA is not legally binding until a grant agreement is fully executed.

TDA reserves the right to fund projects partially or fully. TDA reserves the right to negotiate individual elements of any application and to reject any and all applications. Where more than one application is acceptable for funding, TDA may request cooperation between grantees or revisions/adjustments to an application in order to avoid duplication and to realize the maximum benefit to the state. Selected projects will receive funding on a cost-reimbursement basis.

Applications

TDA reserves the right to reject all applications and is not liable for costs incurred by the applicant in the development, submission, or review of the application, or costs incurred by the applicant prior to the effective date of grant agreement.

Right to Amend or Terminate Program

TDA reserves the right to alter, amend, or clarify any provisions, terms, or conditions of this program or any grant awarded as a result thereof, or to terminate this program at any time prior to the execution of an agreement, if TDA deems any such action to be in the best interest of TDA and of the State of Texas. The decision of TDA will be administratively final in this regard.

Proprietary Information/Public Information

The Applicant is responsible for clearly designating any portion of the application that contains proprietary or trade secret information and must state the reason(s) the information is designated as such. Merely making a blanket claim that the entire application is protected from disclosure because it contains proprietary or trade secret information is not acceptable, and may subject the entire application subject to release under the PIA.

In the event that a public information request for the application is received, TDA shall process such request in accordance with §552.305 of the Texas Government Code. Applicants are advised to consult with their legal counsel regarding disclosure issues and to take appropriate precautions to safeguard trade secrets or any other proprietary information.

All applications submitted under this program are subject to release as public information, unless the application or specific parts of any such application can be shown to be exempt from disclosure under the Texas Public Information Act, Chapter 552 of the Government Code.

GRANTEE REQUIREMENTS

1. Grantee (an applicant who receives a grant under this program) must comply with TDA's reporting requirements and financial procedures outlined in the grant agreement. Any delegation by the Grantee to a subcontractor regarding any duties and responsibilities imposed by the grant award must be approved in advance by TDA and shall not relieve the Grantee of its responsibilities to TDA for performance of those duties.
2. Grantees must remain in full compliance with state and federal laws and regulations. Non-compliance may result in termination of the grant or ineligibility for reimbursement of expenses.
3. Grantees must keep separate records and a bookkeeping account (with a complete record of all expenditures) for a project. Records shall be maintained for a minimum of three (3) years after the completion of the project, or as otherwise agreed upon with TDA. If any litigation, claim, negotiation, audit or other action is initiated prior to the expiration of the three-year retention period, then all records and accounts must be retained until their destruction is authorized in writing by TDA. TDA and the Texas State

Auditor's Office (SAO) reserve the right to examine all books, documents, records, and accounts relating to the project, including all electronic records, at any time throughout the duration of the agreement until all litigation, claims, negotiations, audits or other action pertaining to a grant is resolved, or until the expiration of the three-year retention period or a final judgment in litigation, whichever is longer. TDA and the SAO shall have access to: all electronic data or records pertaining to the grant project; paper or other tangible documents or records, including the physical location where records are stored; and all locations related to project activities.

4. If the Grantee has a financial audit performed during the time the Grantee is receiving funds from TDA, upon request, TDA shall have access to information about the audit, including the audit transmittal letter, management letter, any schedules, and the final report or result of such audit.
5. Grantees must comply with Texas Government Code, Chapter 783, Uniform Grant and Contract Management, and the Texas Uniform Grant Management Standards (UGMS).