



CALL FOR APPLICATIONS

2019 SNAP E&T STATE INSTITUTES

Introduction

The U.S. Department of Agriculture's (USDA) Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) is committed to strengthening the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Employment and Training Program (SNAP E&T) nationally to ensure that all SNAP participants have the skills they need to work toward self-sufficiency.

FNS' *SNAP to Skills Project (S2S)* provides technical assistance and resources to States to help them build employer-driven SNAP E&T programs. We have also operated two *SNAP E&T Learning Academies*, which provided an opportunity for State SNAP agencies and individuals outside of those agencies to gain expertise about SNAP E&T and work with their States or across States to build stronger employment and training programs.

In 2019, FNS is providing a new offering as part of S2S that is tailor-made for State SNAP agencies who want to advance an aspect their SNAP E&T program, even if they are not participating as one of the 10 States in the SNAP to Skills Project. **This Call for Applications (CFA) provides information on how interested States can apply for the 2019 SNAP E&T State Institutes.** Only State SNAP agencies are eligible to apply.

I. What are the SNAP E&T State Institutes?

The *SNAP E&T State Institutes* provide the opportunity for a select number of States to participate in a semi-national convening on how to strengthen their SNAP E&T program by utilizing employer-driven strategies. Seattle Jobs Initiative, a national nonprofit that operates the SNAP to Skills Project, will work in partnership with FNS to operate the *State Institutes*.

There will be two *State Institutes* offered in 2019. State SNAP Agencies are **eligible to apply to one or both**. The *State Institutes* will be offered as follows:

- **Taking SNAP E&T to Scale (Winter 2019)**

This convening will focus on topics that may be useful to State SNAP Agencies who are entering or already in a growth phase of their SNAP E&T program (as described in the [SNAP E&T Operations Handbook](#)). Attendees will hear from States and their peers about ways to streamline processes and policies in an expanded or quickly growing E&T program, how to ensure appropriate placements for SNAP E&T participants, and explore best practices in fiscal management.

- **Improving Outcomes with Work- and Skills-Based SNAP E&T Strategies (Fall 2019)**

This convening will focus on how to strengthen a State's SNAP E&T program outcomes by working with high-quality providers to identify and offer work- and skills-based workforce development strategies. Topics include how to assess the needs of SNAP participants, identifying the right service strategies to meet your State's goals, and how to recognize employer-driven, skills-based programs that are likely to best serve the diverse needs of SNAP participants.

II. Why State Institutes?

The *State Institutes* are part of FNS' efforts to create opportunities for SNAP participants that help them gain skills and work toward self-sufficiency. The focus of the S2S Project to date has been largely to establish an operational foundation from which States could build a high-quality SNAP E&T program. FNS received positive feedback on the tools and resources provided to date. In addition, States reported that they were interested in additional peer sharing as well as an opportunity to dig deeper into complex operational issues they face as they grow the program to new levels.

III. What will participants do?

An interactive format will allow participants to learn new strategies that they can immediately apply to their State's SNAP E&T program. States will have the opportunity to:

- Gain specific knowledge and skills to tackle some of the more challenging operational challenges States face in fully implementing/growing a SNAP E&T program;
- Together with colleagues, develop a concrete plan for advancing their SNAP E&T programs; and
- Learn from and forge networks with their peer States.

States should identify a **concentration** for their participation in the *State Institutes*. During the convening, States will be provided time to discuss, strategize, and develop a plan to address their concentration. Concentrations are unique to each State (e.g. streamlining a particular process or policy, improving communication with third-party partners, incorporating additional work-based learning strategies into the State's program). Applicants should be prepared to describe their proposed concentration in their application, per the application requirements below.

IV. Who should apply?

State SNAP agencies are eligible to apply. States should apply on behalf of a team of up to five (5) participants, who may all participate in the in-person event(s). Individuals from partner organizations, e.g. State workforce agencies or SNAP E&T providers, may be included in the list of participants submitted by the State SNAP agency, however, FNS is not able to cover the travel costs for non-State attendees.

V. Is there a cost to participate?

USDA's Food and Nutrition Service will cover transportation, lodging, and per diem costs associated with participating in the State Institute for all individuals with a State agency. FNS is not able to cover the travel expenses of non-State attendees, e.g. E&T providers or other non-State organizations.

VI. How do I apply?

Applicants should submit a letter of interest to the SNAP to Skills Project, Office of Employment and Training, Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program, Food and Nutrition Service, U.S. Department of Agriculture by **5pm ET on January 7, 2019** that includes the following information. Applications should be sent as a PDF or Word attachment to SNAPtoSkillsProject@seattlejobsinit.com.

- **Statement of interest** (500 words or less) that addresses the following:
 - Goals for your State SNAP E&T Program for the remainder of Federal Fiscal Year (FFY) 2019 and FFY 2020.
 - How do you hope to benefit from participation in the *State Institute(s)*?
- **Description of your State SNAP E&T concentration** (500 words or less, see description in Section III). Please be specific.
- **Please clearly indicate which *State Institute(s)* your State is applying to attend** (Winter, Fall, or Both). Please also indicate if you have a preference of which Institute you want to attend (in the event we are unable to accommodate all requests).

FNS anticipates selecting participants by mid-January. Questions about the application process or the Academy should be directed to Marcie Foster (Marcie.Foster@fns.usda.gov).