



**NCIMS**  
National Conference on  
Interstate Milk Shipments



# Milk and Shellfish Grant Program

[www.afdo.org/grants/msgrants](http://www.afdo.org/grants/msgrants)

## EQUIPMENT GRANT GUIDANCE

### CALENDAR YEAR 2024

APPLICATION PERIOD FOR EQUIPMENT REQUESTS: May 6- May 31, 2024

*Improving implementation of and compliance with the guidelines of  
the National Grade "A" Milk Safety and National Shellfish Sanitation Programs*

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

<b><u>GRANT PROGRAM OVERVIEW</u></b> .....	3
I. Contact Information .....	3
II. Milk and Shellfish Grant Program Goals.....	3
III. Eligibility.....	3
IV. Maximum Number of Grant Applications per Program .....	3
V. Submission Deadlines .....	4
<b><u>FUNDING CATEGORIES</u></b> .....	4
I. Calendar Year 2024 Equipment Subawards.....	4
<b><u>PROJECT IDEAS</u></b> .....	5
<b><u>PROGRAM RULES, TERMS, AND CONDITIONS</u></b> .....	6
I. Allowable Costs .....	6
II. Non-Allowable Costs .....	6
III. Program Rules and Requirements .....	7
IV. Terms and Conditions .....	8
<b><u>PROPOSAL SCORING</u></b> .....	8
<b><u>REPORTING REQUIREMENTS</u></b> .....	9
I. Method for Reporting.....	9
II. Budget Changes (change requests) .....	10
III. Final Report Requirements-Equipment Subawards .....	10
<b><u>HOW TO APPLY FOR FUNDING</u></b> .....	10
<b><u>STEP-BY-STEP APPLICATION GUIDANCE</u></b> .....	10
Best Practices .....	10
Step 1 – Eligibility Questionnaire .....	11
Step 2 – Account Registration.....	11
Step 3 – Receive Your Username and Password.....	11
Step 4 – Apply for A Grant .....	12
Step 5 – Save And Submit .....	12
<b><u>IMPORTANT WEB LINKS</u></b> .....	13

### EQUIPMENT GRANT PROGRAM OVERVIEW

The U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA), in collaboration with the Interstate Shellfish Sanitation Conference (ISSC), the National Conference on Interstate Milk Shipments (NCIMS), and the Association of Food and Drug Officials (AFDO), is proud to announce the 2024 State Cooperative Grant Program for National Grade “A” Milk Safety Programs and National Shellfish Sanitation Programs (the *Milk and Shellfish Grant Program*). This program provides funds for equipment purchases in support of milk and shellfish regulatory programs. Knowing that resources are limited for all food protection partners, FDA, ISSC, NCIMS, and AFDO have worked diligently to design simple application, funding, and reporting systems. Applicants to this program can expect a straightforward application process with streamlined reporting requirements.

#### I. CONTACT INFORMATION

For additional information or technical support, please contact the AFDO Milk and Shellfish Grants Management Team at (717) 814-9873 or [msgrants@afdo.org](mailto:msgrants@afdo.org).

#### II. MILK AND SHELLFISH GRANT PROGRAM GOALS

The goal of the Milk and Shellfish Grant Programs is to assist regulatory programs with their implementation of the Grade "A" Milk Safety program and/or the National Shellfish Sanitation Program.

#### III. ELIGIBILITY

Funding is available to:

State or territorial (Puerto Rico) agencies with the regulatory/rating authority, or that provide a state laboratory service, to implement the National Grade “A” Milk Safety Program; *and/or* State agencies with the regulatory authority, or that provide a state laboratory service, to implement the National Shellfish Sanitation Program.

#### IV. MAXIMUM NUMBER OF GRANT APPLICATIONS PER PROGRAM

MILK: A single agency with authority to implement the National Grade “A” Milk Safety Program (regulatory/rating authority or laboratory service) may submit one application for funding in the CY 2024 equipment funding portal opening, which is currently projected as May 6- May 31, 2024. SHELLFISH: A single agency with authority to implement the National Shellfish Sanitation Program may submit one application for funding in the CY 2024 equipment funding portal opening, which is currently projected as May 6- May 31, 2024. Some states have multiple agencies that implement the National Shellfish Sanitation Program. Each agency may apply but only one application per agency is allowed to be submitted. For States that have multiple applications from different agencies with a role in implementing the National Shellfish Sanitation Program, the maximum funding limits will apply per State.

### V. SUBMISSION DEADLINES

All applications must be made through the online grant management portal

<https://msgnants.fluxx.io>.

Applications for **Calendar Year 2024 Equipment Subawards** can be submitted beginning May 6, 2024. All applications must be completed and successfully submitted through the portal by May 31, 2024, at 7:59 PM eastern.

## FUNDING CATEGORIES

Funds may be used to assist eligible agencies (with Milk and/or Shellfish regulatory/rating authority or that provide a state laboratory service) in completing projects that meet the goals and objectives of the *Milk and Shellfish Grant Program*:

### I. CALENDAR YEAR 2024 EQUIPMENT SUBAWARDS

Equipment Subawards allow programs to request funding for equipment purchases that support the National Grade “A” Milk Safety Program and/or the National Shellfish Sanitation Program (NSSP). These subawards allow the purchase of program-related equipment that helps to improve Milk or Shellfish safety and/or increase the efficiency and/or effectiveness of an eligible regulatory program.

- Milk and Shellfish Equipment Subawards – Applications to be accepted May 6- May 31, 2024.

#### Maximum funding details for CY 2024 Equipment Subawards:

##### National Grade “A” Milk Safety Program

- Each state can be awarded up to \$50,000 for Milk Equipment (Puerto Rico is also eligible).
- Applications above \$50,000 may be accepted if funds are available and if the state is able to provide proper justification for their request.
- For States that have multiple applications from different agencies with a role in implementing the National Grade “A” Milk Safety Program, the maximum limits will apply per State.

##### National Shellfish Sanitation Program

- Each Producing State Program can be awarded up to \$50,000 and
- Each Non-Producing State Program can be awarded up to \$5,000.
- Applications above \$50,000 may be accepted if funds are available and if the state is able to provide proper justification for their request.
- For States that have multiple applications from different agencies with a role in implementing the National Shellfish Sanitation Program, the maximum limits will apply per State.

### PROJECT IDEAS

The *Milk and Shellfish Grant Program* is designed to fund projects that assist programs in achieving and/or maintaining compliance with requirements and goals of the National Grade “A” Milk Safety Program and the National Shellfish Sanitation Program. Laptops and/or tablets (iPads, Smart books) will be considered provided sufficient justification in the application explains how the devices are going to be used as tools to support the milk or shellfish programs. **See the *Program Rules, Terms, and Conditions* section for more detail.**

### CALENDAR YEAR 2024 EQUIPMENT SUBAWARDS

Examples of equipment needs for the National Grade “A” Milk Safety Programs, including:

- Immersion circulators and heaters
- Salt timing testers
- Digital Scales
- LED lights, flashlights, light meters
- GPS devices
- Thermometers (field, infrared, data loggers, thermocouples, standardized, etc.)
- Digital cameras (Go-Pro style, telescoping hand-held mounts, light kits, borescope, etc.)
- Lab supplies and equipment
- Specific use field computers, tablets, digital and/or mobile printers
- Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) (including biosecurity suits and supplies; safety harnesses, bump caps, reflective vest, lock out/tag out equipment; etc.)
- Lab coats, field boots, rubber boots
- Sample dippers/sampling equipment
- Ice chests/coolers for samples
- Field kits (pH strips, etc.)
- Additional needs identified by a program

Examples of equipment needs for the National Shellfish Sanitation Programs, including:

- Optical equipment (range finders, scopes, binoculars, night vision optics, etc.)
- LED lights and flashlights, light meters
- Drones
- Portable projector / screens
- Marine equipment, including GPS and sonar not listed in non-allowable costs (see below)
- Boat parts and accessories not listed in non-allowable costs (see below)
- Thermometers (field, infrared, data loggers, thermocouples, standardized, etc.)
- Digital cameras (Go-Pro style, telescoping hand-held mounts, light kits, etc.)
- Lab supplies and equipment
- Handheld conductivity instruments
- Rain gauges, toxin test kits, shellfish area closure signs, plankton nets, etc.
- Specific use field computers, tablets, digital and/or mobile printers
- Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)

## PROGRAM RULES, TERMS, AND CONDITIONS

### I. ALLOWABLE COSTS

- Allowable costs include equipment and supplies (including purchase/rental/maintenance/shipping), contractual fees, audiovisual materials, boat parts, and purchase and/or development of information technology (equipment/software/support).
- Indirect costs are permissible with a signed and current federal cost rate agreement, or at the de minimis rate of 10%. Additional guidance on the de minimis rate can be found at: <https://www.ecfr.gov/current/title-2/subtitle-A/chapter-II/part-200/subpart-E/subject-group-ECFRd93f2a98b1f6455/section-200.414>
- For all agencies that request funding for the equipment purchase of a drone, the agency will need to have their drone operators certified with an operational SOP submitted to FAA (e.g., line-of-sight, night operations, etc.). Before an award is made, the agency will need to provide a copy of their FAA-required documents and a statement-of-affirmation that they are in compliance with all of FAA's guidance for drone operations including line-of-sight. *For information on operating a drone as a Public Safety or Government user, visit: [https://www.faa.gov/uas/public\\_safety\\_gov/](https://www.faa.gov/uas/public_safety_gov/)*

### II. NON-ALLOWABLE COSTS

Certain expenses and costs are not allowable under the *Milk and Shellfish Grant Program*. Please note the following restrictions:

- **Vehicles:** Costs associated with the procurement of vehicles, vehicle parts/service.
- **Boats and watercraft** including motors, trailers, boats, canoes, kayaks, rafts, inflatables, rigid inflatables, and skiffs are non-allowable
- **Construction:** Costs for construction and/or remodeling of physical structures are not allowed.
- **Food:** Expenses for food, snacks, meals, and catering (other than per diem for travelers) are not permitted for any subaward.
- **Personnel:** Personnel costs associated with training are not permitted. This includes employee salaries, fringe benefits, overtime, travel time, and time spent taking online courses.
- **Promotional items and costs** are generally prohibited unless they provide a direct food safety benefit. Examples of prohibited items: gift bags, logo items (pens, notepads, shirts, hats), gift cards, etc.
- **Purchasing of equipment and supplies for industry** is prohibited.
- **Liability insurance, maintenance/service agreements, etc.**
- **Other Agreements, Grants, & Funding Sources:** Any expenses reimbursed under

other cooperative agreements, grants, contracts, and/or other funding mechanisms must remain distinct and separate from any subaward of the Milk and Shellfish Grant Program.

- **Insufficient Justification:** Other costs may not be funded upon reviewer evaluation. All costs should clearly support Project Outcomes, with sufficient justification provided.

### III. PROGRAM RULES AND REQUIREMENTS

The following rules and requirements apply to subawards administered under the *Milk and Shellfish Grant Program*:

1. Funding is available for state and territorial (Puerto Rico) National Grade "A" Milk Safety Programs and state National Shellfish Sanitation Programs and can be used for 2024 Calendar Year equipment needs only.
2. Each Milk or Shellfish program may apply for funding for one equipment grant per program for the Calendar Year 2024 funding cycle. If more than one milk or shellfish application is submitted by a single program, only the first application in each of the project categories will be evaluated.
3. For States that have multiple agencies with a role in implementing the National Grade "A" Milk Safety Program or the National Shellfish Sanitation Program, the maximum limits will apply per State. Programs should coordinate internally to ensure they do not exceed these maximum funding limits (\$50,000 for Grade "A" Milk Programs, \$50,000 for Producing State Shellfish Programs and \$5,000 for Non-Producing State Shellfish Programs.)
4. Applications from a single program may be made by a single Point of Contact (POC), or multiple POCs.
5. For equipment purchases of single items that cost more than \$5,000 and with a useful life of more than one year, acquisitions must be made in accordance with 2 CFR 200, which has requirements for purchasing (2 CFR 200.317-320) and for record-keeping, management, and disposition (2 CFR 200.313).
6. Equipment purchased prior to award cannot be reimbursed.
7. Sufficient justification on how this equipment/supplies specifically supports the program is required. Justification must include the actual use and purpose of the equipment/supplies requested.
8. For reasons of security and functionality, programs are required to complete all grant applications on-line using a modern, up-to-date browser. We recommend Google Chrome or any of the other browsers available for download at <http://afdo.org/msgrants/browsers>.
9. When completing the on-line application, any character count restrictions include spaces.
10. All required fields in each application (including Point of Contact, Authorizing Official, organization, budget, budget justification, and all proposal information) must be clear and complete.
11. All grant applications must be submitted through the on-line portal, <https://msgrants.fluxx.io>, by the relevant Submission Deadlines listed in the *Grant*

### *Program Overview.*

#### IV. TERMS AND CONDITIONS

By applying for this funding opportunity, your agency has made an assurance that it will comply with all applicable Federal statutes and regulations in effect during the grant period, including applicable parts of 45 CFR Parts 74 and 92. Subawards will be based upon the submitted and approved project applications, and are

subject to the following conditions:

- Award decisions are made by the FDA Project Officer for the FDA Cooperative Agreement that funds this program.
- The grantee must complete the full scope of work and all tasks outlined in the approved grant application by the Project End Date entered on the grant application unless a written exception is granted by the AFDO Milk and Shellfish Grants Management Team. Contact the Grant Team at (717) 814- 9873 or at [msgrants@afdo.org](mailto:msgrants@afdo.org).
- **Any changes to the scope, tasks, deliverables, or expenses** of funded subawards must be approved in advance and in writing by AFDO prior to work being modified, purchased, or completed. Please note that costs incurred for unapproved changes may not be reimbursed.
- Reimbursement Request and culminating Final Report must be submitted through the online grant portal no more than 45 days after the Project End Date. As part of the Reimbursement Request, the grantee must provide a full accounting of all expenditures made with funds from this grant award, accompanied by the documentation specified in the Reporting Requirements section of this document.

## PROPOSAL SCORING

1. Applicants will receive an automated email notification upon the successful submittal of their application.
2. Applications received by applicable deadlines will undergo an administrative review.
  - Applications out-of-compliance with the Program Rules and Requirements will not be funded.
  - For applications requiring minor administrative clarification, applicants will be notified and given the opportunity to provide clarifying information within five (5) business days after the notification.
  - Applications that pass the administrative review will move to a final review by FDA.
3. Equipment proposals may also be peer-reviewed as follows:
  - Milk submissions may be scored by up to two reviewers from either FDA and/or NCIMS, following the scoring outline described below.
  - Shellfish submissions may be scored by up to two reviewers from either FDA and/or ISSC, following the scoring outline described below.
4. When peer review is used; applications will be scored using the following outline (these



## TABLE OF CONTENTS

are the scoring instructions that equipment reviewers will follow):

- Scoring Section 1:
    - Question 1: Review the Equipment Description entry and provide a score of 1-5 regarding the appropriateness and completeness of the listed information.
    - Question 2: Review the Program Objectives entry and provide a score of 1-5 regarding the appropriateness and completeness of the listed information.
    - Question 3: Review the Program Outcomes entry and provide a score of 1-5 regarding the appropriateness and completeness of the listed information.
  - Scoring Section 2 Budget Information: Review all Budget entries, the total Project Request and the detailed Budget Narrative entries and provide a score of 1-5 regarding the cost effectiveness of this project request.
  - Total Score: the system will auto calculate total points (Note that the funding allocations for the equipment and the training subawards are separate, and equipment subawards will not compete for funding with training subawards).
5. The FDA/NCIMS/ISSC Joint Advisory Groups have discretion when making award decisions and can approve changes to number of reviewers or reviews, funding amount, priority, project period, and other aspects of subawards to ensure this funding program meets the FDA's intended goals. Final Award decisions are made by the FDA Project Officer for the FDA Cooperative Agreement that funds this program.
  6. Applications not awarded will be notified via email.

## REPORTING REQUIREMENTS

### I. METHOD FOR REPORTING

As with the application process, the online grants management system is used for project reporting and is aimed at minimizing the grantee's time burden. Grantees must submit their reports through the online grant management portal at <https://msgrants.fluxx.io>. Funds are generally awarded on a reimbursement basis after each Reimbursement Request is submitted and approved, but exceptions may be made based on the nature and duration of the project or the needs of the Program (determined on a case-by-case basis). **Note:** *A reimbursement check will be made payable to the organization; it cannot be made payable to any individual.*

### II. BUDGET CHANGES

Changes to the project budget **that exceed 10% of the total grant amount** must be requested in advance of your final report submission. You must submit a change request, via the online portal. Amended budget line items must be approved before expenditures are incurred, and requested changes are not considered approved until you receive confirmation via email. **Note:** *If you are ready to submit your Reimbursement Request but have not yet requested and received approval for budget changes that exceed 10% of the total grant amount, you must submit your change request and wait for your approval*

*before submitting your Reimbursement Request.*

### III. FINAL REPORT REQUIREMENTS – EQUIPMENT SUBAWARDS

A **Final Report** is required for all Equipment Subawards and should document the completion of all project deliverables. The Final Report is due 45 days after the end of the project period listed in your application. Please visit

<http://afdo.org/grants/msgrants> for complete Reimbursement and Reporting Instructions.

## HOW TO APPLY FOR FUNDING

1. Carefully review the details of this Grant Guidance document.
2. Gather all the required information necessary to complete your application(s).
3. Ensure your computer meets the minimum browser requirements to ensure security and functionality with the system. We recommend Google Chrome or any of the other up-to-date browsers listed at <https://afdo.org/grants/browsers>.
4. Complete an on-line application using the grants management portal at <https://msgrants.fluxx.io> for each project for which your program chooses to apply.
5. Submit equipment applications by the May 31, 2024, 7:59 PM ET deadline, and wait for funding determination (approximately 6 weeks after the grant program deadline).

## STEP-BY-STEP APPLICATION GUIDANCE

### I. BEST PRACTICES

Listed below are several best practices:

- **Work in a single Word processing document first**

Many applicants find it helpful to gather the required information into a single word processing document, and then later cut and paste that information into the grant portal. This can prevent the loss of worktime caused by Internet connection issues.

- **Save Your Application Often**

Once you begin to type (or copy and paste) information into the portal, be sure to periodically hit the “**Save**” button at the top of the screen. After clicking the “Save” button, you can log in and out of the system as often as needed without losing your information. Saved applications may be viewed by clicking “Draft Applications” under the “Applications” heading in the menu on the left panel of your dashboard.

- **Complete all Required Fields**

Your application cannot be submitted until you complete all required fields. Once

you have completed all required fields, a “**Submit**” button will appear at the bottom of the screen. Do not click the “Submit” button until your application is complete. If you inadvertently hit “Submit” before your application is complete, contact the Milk and Shellfish Grants Management Team before the application submittal deadline and your application can be moved back to the “Draft” state so that further edits can be made.

- **Verify Your Application Has Been Successfully Submitted**

Applications not received by the deadline cannot be accepted. Make sure you successfully complete and submit your application. You will receive a confirmation email. If you do not, contact the AFDO grants team BEFORE the deadline.

### STEP 1 – ELIGIBILITY QUESTIONNAIRE

From <https://msgrants.fluxx.io>, select the button “New User Registration” and take the Eligibility Questionnaire (users with an existing username in the Milk and Shellfish Grant Portal can skip to STEP 4 – APPLY FOR A GRANT).

### STEP 2 – ACCOUNT REGISTRATION

Register as a Point of Contact for your program through the Milk and Shellfish grant portal. This step only appears if the answer to the Eligibility Quiz in Step 1 is answered as “Yes.”

### STEP 3 – RECEIVE YOUR USERNAME AND PASSWORD

Within 2 business days of registration (but normally sooner, often within 30 minutes) you will receive an email with your username and a password. This email will come to the POC email address you entered during registration. Once you receive these credentials, you may log into the Milk and Shellfish grants management portal and begin working on your application(s). Be sure to save your username and password, as these credentials may be used after you submit to check the status of your application(s). IN RARE CASES, SOME EMAILS ARE FILTERED OUT OR SENT TO SPAM FOLDERS. IF YOU DO NOT RECEIVE AN EMAIL WITH YOUR USERNAME AND PASSWORD WITHIN TWO (2) DAYS OF REGISTRATION, PLEASE CONTACT THE MILK AND SHELLFISH GRANTS MANAGEMENT TEAM.

### STEP 4 – APPLY FOR A GRANT

Complete your grant application(s) by using your username and password to log into the Milk and Shellfish Grant Portal at <https://msgrants.fluxx.io>.

Multiple POCs from a single Program may register and apply for grants through this program, but they should coordinate to ensure they do not apply for more than one (1) grant in each category (Training and Equipment), and no more than two (2) grants in total for the current grant cycle. If more than two (2) applications are made by a single Program, only the first application in each of the project categories will be evaluated.

Once you log into your user dashboard, click “Apply Now”, and select one of the following two categories to begin the application:

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

- GRADE "A" MILK SAFETY EQUIPMENT (2024)
- SHELLFISH SANITATION EQUIPMENT (2024)

After selecting a grant category, you may begin entering all required information. For certain sections, the required information varies depending on the selected category.

### STEP 5 – SAVE AND SUBMIT

- Once you have entered all the required information in Steps 3 and 4, carefully review the information you have entered.
- Click the **“Save”** button at the bottom right corner of your screen (we recommend that you save often during the application process to ensure your work is captured).  
**Note:** Saved applications may be viewed by clicking **“Draft Applications”** under the **“Applications”** heading in the menu on the left panel of your dashboard.
- Your application cannot be submitted until you complete all required fields. To make changes to a saved application, click the **“Edit”** button at the top right corner of your screen.
- Before the grant program deadline, once you have reviewed your application and are confident the information entered into all fields is correct, clear, and complete, click the **“Submit”** button in the bottom right corner of your screen to submit your application. A **“Note for Submit”** box will appear, but it is not required to enter any notes. Click **“OK.”**
- Before leaving the Application Portal, allow your screen to refresh (you may have to click on one or more **“Update Available”** pop-ups), and assure your application moves from the **“Draft Applications”** section of the Portal to the **“Submitted for Review”** section. You should also receive a system generated email confirming the submittal of each application, shortly after it is submitted (if you do not receive a confirming email, please check your email SPAM folder).
- If you do not receive confirmation of your submission, please contact the Milk and Shellfish Grants Management Team at (717) 814-9873 or [msgrants@afdo.org](mailto:msgrants@afdo.org), **before the end date of the open application period.**

### IMPORTANT WEB LINKS

**MILK AND SHELLFISH GRANT PROGRAM HOMEPAGE** – <https://afdo.org/grants/msgrants>

All the information for this grant program, including the latest information and program updates, and access to the grant portal, can be found at this site.

**MILK AND SHELLFISH GRANT PORTAL** – <https://msgrants.fluxx.io>

This link leads directly to the grant portal where you can register and apply for grants for this FDA-funded opportunity. The portal will be open for new equipment applications from May 6 to May 31, 2024, until 7:59 PM ET. This portal can also be reached through the AFDO Milk and Shellfish Grant Program homepage.

**DOWNLOAD A MODERN BROWSER** – <https://afdo.org/grants/browsers>

The grants management portal has minimum requirements for security and functionality reasons. Utilize this link to access and download a modern browser that is compatible with the system. Contact your Program's information technology office for assistance.

# QUESTIONS?

If you have any questions, please contact  
the Milk and Shellfish Grants Management Team:

**(717) 814-9873**

**[msgrants@afdo.org](mailto:msgrants@afdo.org)**