

Issuing Agency: Petaluma Bounty

1.1. Request for Proposals (RFP) Schedule

Event	Date
RFP Released	6/1/2024
Deadline to Submit Questions (via email to FoodRecoveryNetwork@PetalumaPeople.org)	6/15/2024 at 11:59pm
Answers to Applicant Questions Published	6/22/2024
Deadline to Submit Proposals as a PDF via email to FoodRecoveryNetwork@PetalumaPeople.org	7/1/2024 at 11:59pm* *Note that issuing agency staff will not be available after 5pm.
Selection Process	7/2/2024 - 7/19/2024
Awards Announced	7/23/2024
Grant Project Implementation	8/1/2024 - 5/1/2025
<i>Potential Project Implementation Extension</i>	5/2/2025 - 5/1/2026** <i>**Extension pending approval by USDA funders. Any program timeline updates will be communicated to grantees.</i>

Please be aware that the above schedule is subject to change by amendment.

1.2. Award Amount Summary

\$10,000 will be awarded per program year to each Coordinating agency: \$7,500 for people power and \$2,500 for supplies related to food recovery. There is a *possibility* of a second-year program extension, pending USDA approval. See **section 2.7.** for more details about award uses and disbursement.

2. Project Background

2.1. Proposal Summary:

This grant project seeks to establish a Sonoma County Food Recovery Network in order to expand local needs assessments with a food recovery lens, increase structural and systems capacity for food recovery, provide more robust geographic coverage of food recovery across our county's food system, and broaden the scale and scope of existing community-based food recovery operations.

The intent of this RFP is to identify and select five Food Recovery Network (FRN) Coordinators distributed throughout Sonoma County; optimally, there will be one Coordinator in each of Sonoma County's 5 [Supervisory Districts](#). See **section 2.5.** below for a list of anticipated FRN Coordinator duties.

2.2. Grant Administration Partners:

- Issuing Agency: [Petaluma Bounty](#), a project of [Petaluma People Services Center](#)
- Grant Administration Partner: [Zero Waste Sonoma](#)
- Primary Funding Partner: [USDA Composting and Food Waste Recovery \(CFWR\) Program](#)

2.3. FRN Project Background:

California's Short-lived Climate Pollutant Reduction Strategy (SB 1383) requires Sonoma County and the jurisdictions within it to strengthen existing food recovery networks in order to reduce the amount of edible food sent to landfill and redirect it to feed people. The law is intended to spur climate action, conserve resources, and decrease food insecurity.

Zero Waste Sonoma, the government agency tasked with SB 1383 implementation, is partnering with Petaluma Bounty to administer an RFP process to regrant some funds from the USDA's Composting and Food Waste Reduction (CFWR) program. This regranting project will allow for increased food recovery capacity throughout our county and is especially concerned with supporting equitable, regionalized local food systems.

2.4. FRN Project Goals:

Food Recovery Network Coordinators will support local food recovery efforts in capacity-building projects, such as populating a list of needed supplies and existing assets, prioritized to remove bottlenecks in food recovery and emergency food distribution systems. Examples include storage, refrigeration, gleaning supplies, and food distribution materials.

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In using grant funds to expand food recovery and food waste reduction efforts in our region, Zero Waste Sonoma will be better able to gather proof of concept and potentially secure ongoing funds from government sources to continue the project beyond the grant term.

Food Recovery Network Goals:

The anticipated collective impact of the 5 awarded FRN Coordinators includes that they will:

- Create and update a prioritized list of needed supplies and materials for purchase and distribution;
- Address gaps in services by expanding food recovery activities in respective zones;
- Engage at least ten local [Tier 1 & Tier 2 food generators](#) to better understand reluctance to participate in ongoing food recovery initiatives;
- Conduct an educational campaign geared toward households regarding food waste reduction and ethical recovery through promotion of food preservation, food preparation and storage, localizing and activating the [EPA Wasted Food Scale](#), and harvest calendar and tips.

Food Recovery Network Outputs:

The anticipated collective impact of the 5 awarded FRN Coordinators includes that they will:

- Recruit and train 150 new food recovery volunteers
- Increase food recovery events (one-time and ongoing) by 100
- Increase edible food recovery from [Tier 1 & Tier 2 food generators](#) by 10,000 pounds from SCFRC 2023 baseline
- Recruit a minimum of 40 new food donors
- Expand prepared food recovery in two new Supervisorial regions of Sonoma County
- Increase overall food recovery 2023 baseline by 100,000 pounds
- Submit a final report for grant administrators with recommendations for equitable funding mechanisms to support ongoing Food Recovery Network activities.

2.5. FRN Coordinator Duties:

Each awarded FRN Coordinator is expected to:

- Conduct food recovery needs assessments in their respective geographic/supervisorial district zones through surveys and bi-monthly (6 annual) meetings;
- Attend monthly [Sonoma County Food Recovery Coalition \(SCFRC\)](#) meetings;
- Help create the Food Recovery Network, a sub-group of food recovery operators within the SCFRC, and attend sub-group meetings happening every 2 months. These meetings will serve as professional development opportunities, accountability check-ins, and learning circles for food recovery groups;
- Support, mentor, and communicate with other FRN members to build our collective capacity to seek and retain food donors, volunteers, and food recipient organizations;
- Contribute to educational campaigns and awareness-raising efforts regarding food recovery and food waste reduction;
- Attend and promote trainings to address skill gaps among food recovery operators on an ongoing basis. Topics may include food safety practices, survey development and

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implementation, data collection in the field, and other timely topics identified by members with the end result being long term increased food recovery capacity;

- Contribute to data collection and analysis through the Careit software and other tools provided by FRN grant administrators to collaboratively track outcomes and deliverables.

2.6. FRN Project Evaluation and Reporting:

Food Recovery Network members will collaborate to create and maintain a shared database, likely in Careit, to track food recovery progress, including amount of food recovered for human consumption and for animal feed. The success of this shared database will require commitment from all participating food recovery organizations and/or food donor businesses. Progress and targets will be reviewed at each bi-monthly FRN meeting and monthly Food Recovery Coalition meeting to ensure that FRN is on track to complete the deliverables outlined in this document. Grant administrators from Zero Waste Sonoma and Petaluma Bounty will also track progress via quarterly meetings.

In addition to the objectives listed above, to build community resilience in the face of increased climate change impacts, the project will result in more sustainable stewardship of resources, including associated reductions in (1) food waste to local landfills, (2) greenhouse gas generation, (3) gallons of water wasted in food production, (4) food miles within distribution networks, and (5) other climate-adaptive metrics that will be identified throughout the project.

The grant administration team values collective impact and seeks to fund multidisciplinary, integrated approaches between agencies who can work well together in support of common goals. The collective impact approach is premised on the belief that no single policy, government department, organization, or program can tackle the increasingly complex social problems we face. This approach calls for multiple entities from different sectors to set aside their own agendas in favor of common alignment and collective capacity building.

The grants administration team supports fair, accessible, and relevant services for families and individuals that promote equity and social justice.

Reporting Requirements for Awarded Organizations:

Awarded FRN Coordinators are expected to contribute to qualitative and quantitative data collection, including surveys, Careit food recovery database, and possible use of other tools on a quarterly basis. This reporting will support our local FRN implementation.

Invoicing and progress reports are to be completed on a quarterly basis, unless otherwise negotiated with Petaluma Bounty/PPSC. This will support required grant spend-down and reporting to project funders at the USDA.

2.7. Grant Award Amounts, Uses, and Schedule

Grant funds will be awarded to 5 successful applicants to support their work as Sonoma County Food Recovery Network Coordinators. Each coordinating agency will be awarded \$10,000 per

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program year (currently, program duration is 8/1/24 to 5/1/25 with a possible second-year extension through 5/1/26): \$7,500 for people power supporting food recovery work and \$2,500 for food recovery supplies (examples include storage, refrigeration, gleaning supplies, and food distribution materials).

Invoicing and progress reports are to be completed on a quarterly basis or as negotiated with Petaluma Bounty/PPSC. Grant funds to support project work will be disbursed on a reimbursement basis, unless otherwise negotiated with Petaluma Bounty/PPSC, for example if the reimbursement model is a barrier to participation for an awarded organization.

2.8. How the FRN Fits in with Other Local Coalitions

The FRN is one of several different regionalized efforts to build collective capacity in our Sonoma County food system. To help differentiate the FRN's purpose, here is an abbreviated list of local regional food systems coalitions and their focuses:

- **Sonoma County Food Recovery Network (FRN)** | Funded by USDA's CFWR program, administered by Zero Waste Sonoma and Petaluma Bounty. Purpose is to build collective capacity for food waste reduction in order to support climate resilience and food security. Will be a working sub-group (meeting every two months) of Sonoma County Food Recovery Coalition (which meets monthly). Launches 2024.
- [Sonoma County Food Recovery Coalition \(SCFRC\)](#) | A group of local organizations and individuals who operate food recovery programs. Meets monthly to share resources and collaborate on co-promotion of events and awareness-raising. Founded 2014.
- [Sonoma County Community-Based Food Networks \(CBFN\)](#) | Funded by the USDA Regional Food Systems Partnership program, administered by UCCE. Purpose is to support equitable regionalized food systems and develop collective capacity for ongoing and emergency feeding needs. Launches 2024.
- [Sonoma County Food System Alliance \(FSA\)](#) | A group of organizations and individuals in Sonoma County focused on food policy advocacy to support a vibrant local food system. Founded 2012.

3. How to Apply

Proposals from 501(c)3 nonprofits, faith-based groups, and individuals will all be considered. Organizations and individuals may apply to become the FRN Coordinator of more than one Supervisorial District.

To be considered, proposals shall following these general instructions:

1. Any questions shall be submitted via email to FoodRecoveryNetwork@PetalumaPeople.org by the **question deadline, 6/15/2024 at 11:59pm**. Responses will be posted on the Petaluma Bounty website by 6/22/2024.
2. **Proposals must be received as a PDF file sent via email to FoodRecoveryNetwork@PetalumaPeople.org by the deadline, 7/1/2024 at 11:59pm.** Failure to meet these requirements may result in a proposal's disqualification.
3. All completed applications will be reviewed and scored by members of the review committee. Members are subject-matter experts, including longtime members of the Sonoma County Food Recovery Coalition and other activists who do not stand to gain personally or professionally by the outcome of the review process.
4. Proposals will be evaluated based on the requirements of this RFP.
5. Depending on the number and quality of responses, and after initial screening and evaluation of proposals submitted in response to this RFP, the review committee may select a short-list of applicants for additional evaluation and potential interview. If a short list is selected, the grant team may amend the project schedule, as appropriate.
6. Award decisions will be made and communicated via email to all applicants by 7/23/2024. Questions may be directed to FoodRecoveryNetwork@PetalumaPeople.org.

4. Application Questions

4.1. Organizational Capacity Questions:

1. Provide the organization's full legal name and street address (street, city, state, and zip code).
2. Which [Sonoma County Supervisorial District](#) are you applying to work in as the FRN Coordinator, and what is your experience working in that region? If different from the District you're applying to coordinate in, please indicate the District(s) where your organization has primarily worked in the past and describe your experience there.
3. Describe your fiscal structure and how you would plan to receive reimbursement for grant project work.
4. Provide the contact information of your organization's representatives, including job title, full name, email address, and phone number.
5. Briefly describe what role(s) you imagine team members playing in the grant project if you are selected to be a Food Recovery Network Coordinator.
6. Describe your continuity and succession plan, in case key team members leave during project implementation.
7. Outline the languages spoken by your team and level of proficiency:
 - a. Elementary proficiency. Demonstrating this level of fluency means you know how to structure basic sentences, which may include common questions and answers typically used by tourists.
 - b. Limited working proficiency. Level two means you're able to have limited social conversations and understand basic commands.
 - c. Professional working proficiency. Level three means you understand the language well enough to contribute greatly in the workplace, though you may exhibit an obvious accent and need help with advanced terminology.
 - d. Full professional proficiency. Having level four skills on the ILR scale is what most employers want to see on a resume. It means that you can have conversations at an advanced level and have a firm understanding of the language, though you may have some misunderstandings or occasional mistakes.
 - e. Primary fluency / bilingual proficiency.
8. If additional partners are involved, please provide contact information for them and outline their roles and relevant expertise on the project.

4.2. Food Systems Capacity Questions:

9. Describe your organization's mission and vision and how they relate to food recovery.
10. Describe your experience conducting food recovery work. What volume of food have you recovered annually in the past?
11. Why do you think your team will succeed in the role of Food Recovery Network Coordinator?
12. Are there any dynamics within the community that would be an obstacle to the success of our regional Food Recovery Network?

4.2. Equitable Network-Building Capacity Questions:

13. What can you contribute to the shared learning network of Food Recovery operators? For example, would you be able to lead, train, or develop network capacity in any of the following issue areas: asset inventory development, needs assessment development and execution, metrics for measuring food waste reduction, equity considerations, food safety, etc.?
14. How does your organization approach equity in its work?
15. Describe how you have built partnerships with others in the past. Give examples of ongoing collaborations.
16. Describe your capability and experience with convening and building the capacity of diverse community members and agency representatives, including those with differing language backgrounds.

5. Proposal Evaluation

5.1. Proposal Evaluation Criteria:

Proposal evaluation will focus on a proposer's experience and capacity to fulfill the project goals. Criteria for evaluating applications will include, but not be limited to, the following:

- Organizational Capacity (maximum 30 points)
- Food Systems Capacity (maximum 35 points)
- Equitable Network-Building Capacity (maximum 35 points)

Proposers' approach to service provision should demonstrate the following characteristics of an equity-informed approach (as adapted from the County of Sonoma Office of Equity):

- A commitment to self-reflection and lifelong learning;
- Recognition of power and privilege as undeniable factors in relationships;
- Acknowledgment of the expertise of each individual or community group as a leader and educator regarding the content and nature of their own culture/lived experience;
- Understanding of how the intersectionality of social categorizations such as gender, race, socio-economic status, immigration status, ethnicity, nationality, sexual orientation, family structural identities, religion, age, mental disability, physical disability, mental illness, and physical illness create overlapping and interdependent systems of discrimination and disadvantage;
- A commitment to naming biases, suspending judgment, and redefining assumptions and cultural norms through a practice of cultural humility

5.2. Proposal Evaluation Process:

A proposal evaluation system, which includes a point system for rating each proposal, will be used to review all proposals that meet minimum qualifications. This system will ensure uniformity in evaluating proposals and will reflect the criteria for funding recommendations identified above.

Proposals will be ranked by their total score and with consideration for the Supervisorial District within which the proposer is applying to coordinate.

The proposal review committee is composed of subject-matter experts representing public and non-profit sectors. Committee members will score each completed proposal submitted.

As part of the evaluation and scoring process, the review committee may decide to interview proposers in person, via phone or video. Interviews may or may not have their own separate scoring during the evaluation process.

When proposals are being scored and funding recommendations are being made, the review committee can only base their scoring and subsequent recommendations on the information contained in the proposals. The review committee members cannot make assumptions, nor

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consider their personal knowledge or experience regarding the proposing agencies and/or proposed services.

In order to ensure that all proposing agencies are reviewed in a fair and equitable manner and to ensure that no agency is given unfair advantage, the scores and recommendations are based solely on the proposals that are submitted and the manner in which those proposals address the requirements of the RFP.

6. Disclaimers

Petaluma Bounty and its grant partners (the “Admin Group”) reserve the right to negotiate with any or all Proposer(s) to develop Agreement(s) that are in the best interests of the project and grant. In addition:

1. The issuance of this RFP does not constitute an award commitment on the part of the Admin Group, and the Admin Group shall not pay for costs incurred in the preparation or submission of proposals.
2. The Admin Group reserves the right to reject any or all proposals or portions thereof, if Admin Group determines that it is in the best interest of Admin Group to do so. Admin Group may cancel or modify the RFP, or may withdraw a notice of intent to award, at any time prior to providing a written recommendation in the form of an agenda item to the governing Board of Petaluma Bounty.
3. The Admin Group may waive any deviation in any proposal. Admin Group’s waiver of a deviation shall in no way modify the RFP requirements nor excuse the successful Proposer from full compliance with any resultant Agreement. Admin Group reserves the right to reject any or all proposals, or to waive any defect or irregularity in a proposal. The Admin Group further reserves the right to award the Agreement to the Proposer or Proposers that, in Admin Group’s judgment, best serves the needs of Sonoma County.
4. The Admin Group shall not be liable for any pre-contractual expenses incurred by the Proposer or selected contractor or contractors. Admin Group shall be held harmless and free from any and all liability, claims, or expenses whatsoever incurred by, or on behalf of, any person or organization responding to this RFP.
5. All proposals will remain in effect and shall be legally binding for at least ninety (90) days.
6. The selected Proposer will be invited to execute an Agreement with Petaluma Bounty within a reasonable period of time from the date of notice of intent to award. If an Agreement on terms and conditions acceptable to the Admin Group cannot be achieved within a reasonable timeframe, or if, after reasonable attempts to negotiate such terms and conditions, it appears that an agreement will not be possible, as determined at the sole discretion of Petaluma Bounty, Petaluma Bounty reserves the right to retract any notice of intent to award and proceed with awards to other Proposers.
7. A Proposer may withdraw a proposal at any time prior to the submission deadline by submitting a written notification of withdrawal signed by the Proposer or his/her authorized agent. Another proposal may be submitted prior to the deadline. A proposal may not be changed after the designated deadline for submission of proposals.
8. Failure to furnish all information requested or to follow the format requested herein may disqualify the Proposer, in the sole discretion of Petaluma Bounty. False, incomplete,

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misleading or unresponsive statements in a proposal may also be sufficient cause for a proposal's rejection.

9. The Admin Group may, during the evaluation process, request from any Proposer additional information which the Admin Group deems necessary to determine the Proposer's ability to perform the required services. If such information is requested, the Proposer shall be permitted three (3) working days to submit the information requested.
10. The Admin Group reserves the right to select the proposal which in its sole judgment best meets the needs of the grant project. **In its sole discretion, The Admin Group may reject any or all proposals or portions thereof and/or may cancel or modify the RFP at any time.**
11. All respondents to this RFP will be notified of their selection or non-selection via e-mail after the evaluation committee has completed the selection process.