

AHEAD 2.0: Strengthening and Diversifying the WIC Workforce for WIC Dietetic Internships Subgrant Funding

Project Background & Overview

[The National WIC Association](#) (NWA) is the nonprofit voice of WIC, the Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children (WIC). WIC is a government program that provides nutrition education, breastfeeding support, nutritious foods for qualifying parents, pregnant people, and young children, and referrals to health care and social services. Through NWA's work, we support more than 12,000 WIC agencies and the 6.3 million mothers, babies, and young children enrolled in the program. NWA provides education and support to WIC staff and drives program innovation and advocacy.

The strength of WIC depends on the strength and diversity of its workforce. The workforce includes:

- Registered Dietitians (RDs)
- International Board Certified Lactation Consultants (IBCLCs)
- Breastfeeding Peer Counselors
- Competent Professional Authorities (CPAs)
- Competent Paraprofessionals Authorities (CPPAs)

[NWA](#) aims to strengthen the WIC program's network of RDs and IBCLCs by training individuals to provide vital nutrition and breastfeeding education and support and ensuring WIC professionals are diverse and reflective of their communities.

Eligibility

This opportunity aims for NWA to provide subgrant opportunities to State or Local WIC Agencies to address racial inequities in nutrition education and support the credentialing of WIC staff who **identify as a member of an underserved, underrepresented, marginalized community (e.g., Black, Indigenous, Person of Color)**. The State and Local WIC Agencies will utilize the subgrants to fund scholarships for the sub-grant recipient(s) to complete the requirements to apply for and sit the Registered Dietitian examination.

The AHEAD 2.0: Strengthening and Diversifying the WIC Workforce for RD/RDNs subgrant application is to be **submitted via email to the Center for Innovative Practices at WIC: CIPWIC@nwica.org**. For more information, contact Darlena Birch, Senior Manager of Public Health Nutrition at dbirch@nwica.org.

Requirements

State and Local Agencies are eligible to apply for the AHEAD 2.0: Strengthening and Diversifying the WIC Workforce for Dietetic scholarship program if:

- WIC staff members (s) identify as underserved, underrepresented, and marginalized communities (e.g., Black, Indigenous, or Person of Color).
- Will fully meet the requirements to participate in an ACEND-accredited dietetic internship in 2025 or
- Will fully meet the requirements to renew their dietetic licensure in 2024 or 2025.

Priority will be given to recipients who have demonstrated financial need. State and Local Agencies can request funding between \$1,000.00 and \$9,000.00 per eligible staff member. The number of staff members supported will be determined by the availability of funds.

For more information, please contact Darlena Birch at dbirch@nwica.org.

Proposal Requirements

Agency Profile

Please provide the following information:

- Name of the individual completing the proposal along with title and contact information (e.g., work address, phone number, and email address),
- Agency name and location (city and state)
- Demographic description of the community served (200 words or less)
- Length of time to process, approve, and execute contracts

Statement of Interest and Need

The statement of interest and need should describe in detail the following:

1. Describe how diversifying RDs at your State or Local WIC Agency would positively impact the community served. Draw on any available demographic data to demonstrate how diversifying your community's nutrition workforce is essential.
2. The staff members that the State or Local Agency intends to support. Please include demographical information and a biography of each staff member.
3. State the level of funding being requested and how funds will be used. Examples of support include costs of college course fees, nutrition-specific education credits, textbooks, professional memberships to a Dietetics association, licensure fees for the Commission on Dietetic Registration or any state or local nutrition or academy association, or RD examination fees only. (Note: This information should also be included in the budget.)

Proposal

Provide a description of the organization and any other relevant information that speaks to the demographics of WIC staff and participants. Describe how each subgrant recipient will utilize the funds to obtain their RD credential.

Please be sure to include the following information:

- Name of each subgrant recipient, length of employment with your WIC Agency, and current title
- Detailed work plan for obtaining the credential for each eligible subgrant recipient, including programs the recipient plans on enrolling in and any other support needed, anticipated date of completion of requirements, and expected date of examination.

Proposals are due on Friday, December 1, 2023, by 5:00 PM ET. The deadline for question submissions is Friday, November 17, 2023. **An electronic copy of the proposal shall be emailed to CIPWIC@nwica.org. Submission of missing application components or submitted after the deadline will *not* be accepted.** All questions must be submitted via email to the Center for Innovative Practices at WIC: CIPWIC@nwica.org.

Timeline

The subgrant period will commence on January 1, 2024, and conclude on November 1, 2024.

Budget

Provide a detailed, comprehensive budget narrative using the template, including the requested funding level and exact expenses. Examples of allowable costs include college course fees, nutrition-specific education credits, textbooks, professional memberships to a dietetic association, licensure fees to the Commission on Dietetic Registration, or any state or local nutrition or academy association, or RD examination fees only.

Letter of Support

Please include a completed letter of support from your State WIC Director. The letter of support should be on official letterhead and include the following statement,

“[Agency A] is in good management standing with the B State WIC Agency, and I support [Agency A’s] application for NWA’s AHEAD 2.0: Strengthening and Diversifying the WIC Workforce for RD/RDN subgrant project.”

Note: The letter of support must accompany the proposal upon submission. Proposals must submit a letter of support to be deemed complete and accepted.

Selection Criteria & Process

Successful proposals will demonstrate a need for support and describe in detail how diversifying RDs at your State or Local WIC Agency would positively impact the community served and increase participant enrollment and retention at the Agency.

NWA is seeking agencies with limited nutrition resources whose Agencies and communities would benefit from the additional credentialed nutrition support and care. Priority will be given to applicants who assist families with limited access to the services of a dietitian.

The request for proposals was released on Monday, October 23, 2023. Those interested in applying can request a 30-minute meeting with the Senior Manager of Public Health and project lead, Darlena Birch, by emailing her at dbirch@nwica.org. Questions will be accepted between Monday, October 23, 2023 and Friday, November 17, 2023.

Applications are due on Friday, December 1, 2023, by 5:00 PM ET. NWA will review all submitted proposals that fulfill the requirements.

Key Points

- An unfunded applicant may choose to proceed with the exam application at his/her/their own expense or wait and apply again at a later date.
- Recipients of the AHEAD 2.0: Strengthening and Diversifying the WIC Workforce subgrants may be asked to complete a survey about his/her/their experience of becoming a dietitian for two (2) years after receiving exam results. Application for a subgrant award constitutes agreement to complete such a survey.
- Those awarded subgrants will be able to use the funds toward the costs of college course fees, nutrition-specific education credits, textbooks, professional memberships to the dietetic association, licensure fees to the Commission on Dietetic Registration, or any state or local nutrition or academy association, or RD examination fees. (Note: Subgrant funds cannot be utilized for salary, travel, etc.)
- State and Local WIC Agencies with limited nutrition resources will be given preference.
- State and Local WIC Agencies who apply will be notified via email upon receipt of the application and after determination of their result.

Timeline

- RFP Available: Monday, October 23, 2023
- Question Period: Monday, October 23, 2023 to Friday, November 17, 2023
- Proposals Due: Monday, December 1, 2023, 5:00 PM ET
- Subgrant Award Announcements: The week of Monday, December 18, 2023

Important Information

- [Accreditation Council for Education in Nutrition and Dietetics](#)
- [2024 Graduate Degree Requirement](#)
- [RD/RDN Certification](#)

Resources

- [Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics](#)
- [Commission on Dietetic Registration](#)