



STATE OF VERMONT
JOINT FISCAL OFFICE

MEMORANDUM

To: Joint Fiscal Committee members
From: Sorsha Anderson, Staff Associate
Date: June 29, 2021
Subject: Grant Request – JFO #3056

Enclosed please find one (1) item, which the Joint Fiscal Office has received from the Administration.

JFO #3056 – \$616,317 to the Agency of Human Services, Dept of Health from the United States Dept of Agriculture. Funds will be used for Vermont WIC to deliver breastfeeding support and education using telehealth. The technology will compliment on-going in-person or telephonic counseling provided by local WIC staff. Funds will also be used to conduct research as to the effectiveness of the new telehealth solutions.

{JFO received 6/23/2021}

Please review the enclosed materials and notify the Joint Fiscal Office (Sorsha Anderson: sanderson@leg.state.vt.us) if you have questions or would like this item held for legislative review. Unless we hear from you to the contrary by July 15, 2021, we will assume that you agree to consider as final the Governor's acceptance of this request.

Department of Health
Office of the Commissioner
108 Cherry Street – PO Box 70
Burlington, VT 05402-0070
healthvermont.gov

[phone] 802-863-7280
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[tdd] 800-464-4343

Agency of Human Services

MEMORANDUM

To: Michael K. Smith, Secretary of Human Services

From: Mark Levine, MD, Commissioner of Health

Re: Request for Grant Acceptance of USDA/Tufts Telehealth Intervention Strategies for WIC (THIS-WIC)

Date: 5/14/2021

I am pleased to report that the Department of Health has received a grant for the USDA/Tufts Telehealth Intervention Strategies for WIC (THIS-WIC) from the USDA/Tufts for the project called USDA WIC Telehealth Intervention and Evaluation Center. This grant amount total is \$616,317 and has a project period of two years and ten months from 2/5/2021 to 12/31/2023.

The purpose of this grant award is for Vermont WIC to engage in delivering breastfeeding support and education using telehealth, and to conduct research to evaluate the effectiveness of a new telehealth solution. Vermont WIC proposes to design a game-based telehealth solution using a low-bandwidth mobile website for use during pregnancy and early postpartum weeks for breastfeeding support. Vermont WIC will work with Tufts to finalize a research design through which it will conduct research to evaluate the effectiveness of the new telehealth solution. WIC services are currently offered remotely due to COVID-19. This project will use existing tools and supports, including the Breastfeeding Attrition Prediction Tool which is currently used statewide by local WIC staff, to engage participants and tailor breastfeeding supports. The grant will allow the program to deliver breastfeeding education and supports using technology that complements in-person or telephonic breastfeeding counseling delivered by local WIC staff. There will be no new limited-service positions required during this two-year and ten-month project.

Please find enclosed a Grant Acceptance Request (AA-1) for your review and approval.

Cc: Sarah Clark, AHS Chief Financial Officer





State of Vermont
 Department of Finance & Management
 109 State Street, Pavilion Building
 Montpelier, VT 05620-0401

[phone] 802-828-2376
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Agency of Administration

STATE OF VERMONT FINANCE & MANAGEMENT GRANT REVIEW FORM				
Grant Summary:	USDA WIC Telehealth Intervention and Evaluation Center			
Date:	5/14/2021			
Department:	Agency of Human Services – Department of Health			
Legal Title of Grant:	USDA/Tufts Telehealth Intervention Strategies for WIC (THIS-WIC)			
Federal Catalog #:	10.528			
Grant/Donor Name and Address:	Tufts University Friedman School of Nutrition Science and Policy 150 Harrison Ave, Boston, MA 02111			
Grant Period:	From:	02/05/2021	To:	12/31/2023
Grant/Donation	\$616,317			
	SFY 21	SFY 22	SFY 23	Total
Grant Amount	\$90,560	\$358,620	\$167,137	\$616,317
Comments				
Position Information	# Positions	Explanations/Comments		
	0			
Additional Comments	See attached grant summary			

Department of Finance & Management	Adam Greshin <small>Digitally signed by Adam Greshin Date: 2021.05.26 16:09:42 -0400</small>	(Initial)
Secretary of Administration	Kristin Clouser <small>Digitally signed by Kristin Clouser Date: 2021.05.27 15:05:00 -0400</small>	(Initial)
Sent to Joint Fiscal Office	Ariel Murphy <small>Digitally signed by Ariel Murphy Date: 2021.06.23 09:48:19 -0400</small>	Date



The USDA/Tufts Telehealth Intervention Strategies for WIC (THIS-WIC) Grant Summary:

The Department of Health has received a grant for the USDA/Tufts Telehealth Intervention Strategies for WIC (THIS-WIC) from the USDA/Tufts for the project called USDA WIC Telehealth Intervention and Evaluation Center. This grant amount total is \$616,317 and has a project period of two years and ten months from 2/5/2021 to 12/31/2023.

The purpose of this grant award is for Vermont WIC to engage in delivering breastfeeding support and education using telehealth, and to conduct research to evaluate the effectiveness of a new telehealth solution. Vermont WIC proposes to design a game-based telehealth solution using a low-bandwidth mobile website for use during pregnancy and early postpartum weeks for breastfeeding support. Vermont WIC will work with Tufts to finalize a research design through which it will conduct research to evaluate the effectiveness of the new telehealth solution. WIC services are currently offered remotely due to COVID-19. This project will use existing tools and supports, including the Breastfeeding Attrition Prediction Tool which is currently used statewide by local WIC staff, to engage participants and tailor breastfeeding supports. The grant will allow the program to deliver breastfeeding education and supports using technology that complements in-person or telephonic breastfeeding counseling delivered by local WIC staff.

Vermont WIC rapidly evolved with the advent of COVID-19. There is more need than ever to ensure access to information in an increasingly remote, virtual world. All appointments have temporarily transitioned to phone based. Nutrition education is available primarily online via WIChealth.org and high-risk follow-up is completed by phone. We recently launched online breastfeeding and baby behavior classes, making the program ideally suited to take online learning to the next level with gamification and personalization of existing breastfeeding support content.

Vermont WIC proposes to design a game-based telehealth solution using a low-bandwidth mobile website for use during pregnancy and early postpartum weeks for breastfeeding support. The solution will aid qualified professionals by delivering relevant content throughout pregnancy and early weeks postpartum that will facilitate productive and meaningful discussions with participants when they are at clinic appointments.

Vermont WIC will aim to answer these research questions in the evaluation:

- What are participant and staff perceptions of this new tool?
- Does the tool facilitate productive discussions between WIC qualified professionals and participants that elevate participant centered breastfeeding support?
- What are the costs of developing this tool, including costs of sustainability and replicability to other state WIC Programs?
- What is the impact on participant knowledge, confidence, and support for breastfeeding?
- Does the tool impact breastfeeding initiation and duration rates?

STATE OF VERMONT REQUEST FOR GRANT (*) ACCEPTANCE (Form AA-1)

BASIC GRANT INFORMATION				
1. Agency:	Agency of Human Services			
2. Department:	Department of Health			
3. Program:	USDA WIC Telehealth Intervention and Evaluation Center			
4. Legal Title of Grant:	USDA/Tufts Telehealth Intervention Strategies for WIC (THIS-WIC)			
5. Federal Catalog #:	10.528			
6. Grant/Donor Name and Address: Tufts University Friedman School of Nutrition Science and Policy 150 Harrison Ave, Boston, MA 02111				
7. Grant Period:	From:	2/5/2021	To:	12/31/2023
8. Purpose of Grant: For Vermont WIC to engage in delivering breastfeeding support and education using telehealth, and to conduct research to evaluate the effectiveness of a new telehealth solution. Vermont WIC proposes to design a game-based telehealth solution using a low-bandwidth mobile website for use during pregnancy and early postpartum weeks for breastfeeding support. Vermont WIC will work with Tufts to finalize a research design through which it will conduct research to evaluate the effectiveness of the new telehealth solution.				
9. Impact on existing program if grant is not Accepted: None				
10. BUDGET INFORMATION				
	SFY 21	SFY 22	SFY 23	Comments
Expenditures:				
Personal Services	\$62,043	\$124,087	\$124,087	
Operating Expenses	\$1,017	\$2,033	\$3,050	
Grants	\$27,500	\$232,500	\$40,000	
Total	\$90,560	\$358,620	\$167,137	
Revenues:				
State Funds:	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	
Cash	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	
In-Kind	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	
Federal Funds:	\$90,560	\$358,620	\$167,137	
(Direct Costs)	\$68,917	\$315,334	\$123,851	
(Indirect Costs)	\$21,643	\$43,286	\$43,286	
Other Funds:	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	
	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	
Total	\$90,560	\$358,620	\$167,137	
Appropriation No:	3420010000	Amount:	\$8,680	
	3420021401		\$81,880	
Total			\$90,560	
Has current fiscal year budget detail been entered into Vantage? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No				

STATE OF VERMONT REQUEST FOR GRANT (*) ACCEPTANCE (Form AA-1)

PERSONAL SERVICE INFORMATION		
11. Will monies from this grant be used to fund one or more Personal Service Contracts? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No If "Yes", appointing authority must initial here to indicate intent to follow current competitive bidding process/policy. Appointing Authority Name: Mark Levine, MD Agreed by: _____ (initial)		
12. Limited Service Position Information:	# Positions	Title
Total Positions		
12a. Equipment and space for these positions: <input type="checkbox"/> Is presently available. <input type="checkbox"/> Can be obtained with available funds.		
13. AUTHORIZATION AGENCY/DEPARTMENT		
I/we certify that no funds beyond basic application preparation and filing costs have been expended or committed in anticipation of Joint Fiscal Committee approval of this grant, unless previous notification was made on Form AA-1PN (if applicable):	Signature:  Title: Commissioner	Date: 5/19/2021
	Signature: E-SIGNED by Jenney Samuelson on 2021-05-26 13:14:56 GMT Title: AHS Deputy Secretary	Date:
14. SECRETARY OF ADMINISTRATION		
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Approved:	(Secretary or designee signature) Kristin Clouser <small>Digitally signed by Kristin Clouser Date: 2021.05.27 13:01:44 -04'00'</small>
		Date:
15. ACTION BY GOVERNOR		
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Check One Box: Accepted	 (Governor's signature)
<input type="checkbox"/>	Rejected	Date: 6/22/21
16. DOCUMENTATION REQUIRED		
Required GRANT Documentation		
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Request Memo <input type="checkbox"/> Dept. project approval (if applicable) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Award <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Grant Agreement <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Grant Budget	<input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Donation (if any) <input type="checkbox"/> Grant (Project) Timeline (if applicable) <input type="checkbox"/> Request for Extension (if applicable) <input type="checkbox"/> Form AA-1PN attached (if applicable)	
End Form AA-1		
(*) The term "grant" refers to any grant, gift, loan, or any sum of money or thing of value to be accepted by any agency, department, commission, board, or other part of state government (see 32 V.S.A. §5).		

E-SIGNED by Tracy O'Connell
on 2021-05-20 14:20:26 GMT

Budget Justification Narrative

Project Title: Leveling Up: Delivery of Breastfeeding Education via Interactive Gamification

Personnel **\$144,287.00**

Amy Malinowski 0.25 FTE – February 2021 – December 2023, **\$47,047.00**

Ms. Malinowski will serve as overall project manager and point person on evaluation activities. Ms. Malinowski will manage an advisory group for the project which will include local WIC staff and family partners in addition to the project team. Amy will be responsible for completing the administrative roles including participation on grantee conference calls and submission of required reports

Tricia Cassi 0.2 FTE – February 2021 – December 2023, **\$36,036.00**

Ms. Cassi will provide subject matter expertise in game content and local level implementation of use of the telehealth solution.

Project coordinator – 0.5 FTE – February 2021 – December 2023, **\$61,204.00**

This position will be hired to manage day-to-day aspects of the project. These duties include providing logistical support for testing groups, coordination with local offices on recruitment of study participants, and compiling data for reports.

Fringe Benefits **\$57,714.80**

The actual cost of fringe benefits (not a fringe benefit rate) will be reported as a direct cost of the program. The actual cost of fringe benefits varies from employee to employee based on salary, employee choice of health care plan, and employee election of certain other benefits. The usual, major components of this cost are FICA, retirement, and a portion of the actual costs of the medical, dental and life insurance coverage selected by the employee. The cost of each employee's fringe benefits will be allocated to the program based on hours worked in the program relative to all hours worked by the employee. Based on the current cost of fringe benefits for employees working in this program, we are estimating the cost of these fringe benefits at 40% of salary.

The Vermont Department of Health uses unique program codes for each grant and project to track where staff code time and charge expenses to a given project. The WIC program already has a suite of program codes, and a new one will be created for the THIS-WIC grant, should it be received. This unique program coding will assure that time spent on grant activities will be charged to the grant.

Other Direct Costs

Consultant/Vendor Costs **\$300,000.00**

The bulk of the grant funding will be used for the technical development of the telehealth solution focused in Priority Area 2. We will contract with an educational games and apps developer to create, test, and deploy the telehealth solution. The contractor will have strong project management skills and creative expertise and lead the technical development of the game. They will lead all aspects of the game development including user testing, alignment with WIC federal and state security standards, and evaluation of game analytics. Please see attached Game Theory Proposal which served as the basis for this vendor cost.

Data Collection Costs **\$0**

There is no anticipated budget needed for data collection. Collection of game analytics will be built into the game in addition to participant satisfaction with game components. Breastfeeding outcomes will be tracked within our management information system.

Equipment **\$0**

There is no anticipated budget needed for equipment. Participants recruited into the study will engage with the telehealth solution using their own devices. State and local staff will use existing work computers.

Supplies **\$0**

There is no anticipated budget needed for supplies.

Travel **\$3,100.00**

There is no anticipated in-state travel for the project. User-testing, training for local agency staff, and advisory committee meetings will happen virtually.

State of Vermont employees are currently not allowed any non-essential out of state travel. If those restrictions are lifted, Amy Malinowski and Tricia Cassi will attend the Kick-off meeting and Amy Malinowski and Tricia Cassi or the Project Coordinator will attend the Telehealth Innovation Research Dissemination Workshop.

2 persons to DC area for 2 nights (Kickoff meeting) \$1,550.00

Airfare- \$600 round trip

Hotel- \$175 x 2 nights x 2 people = \$700

Ground transport \$100

Meals 2 days x 2 people \$150

2 persons to DC area for 2 nights (Dissemination meeting) \$1,550.00

Airfare- \$600 round trip

Hotel- \$175 x 2 nights x 2 people = \$700

Ground transport \$100

Meals 2 days x 2 people \$150

Other Costs

\$3,000.00

\$3,000.00 - Stipends

Vermont WIC will pay a stipend to 3 Family Partners to participate in quarterly Project Advisory Council meetings, \$25 per meeting for a minimum of 10 meetings throughout the project period. Vermont WIC will also pay a stipend to participants who will test the solution in the pre-production and development phases. Detailed amounts will be determined.

Facilities and Administrative Costs (Indirect Costs)

\$108,215.25

The Vermont Department of Health uses a Cost Allocation Plan, not an indirect rate. Please see the attached currently approved Cost Allocation Plan. The Vermont Department of Health is a department of the Vermont Agency of Human Services, a public assistance agency, which uses a Cost Allocation Plan in lieu of an indirect rate agreement as authorized by OMB Circular A-87, Attachment D. This Cost Allocation Plan was approved by the US Department of Health and Human Services effective October 1, 1987. The Cost Allocation Plan summarizes actual, allowable costs incurred in the operation of the program. These costs include items which are often shown as direct costs, such as telephone and general office supply expenses, as well as items which are often included in an indirect rate, such as the cost of office space and administrative salaries. These costs are allocated to the program based on the salaries and wages paid in the program. Because these are actual costs, unlike an Indirect Cost Rate, these costs will vary from quarter to quarter and cannot be fixed as a rate. Based on costs allocated to similar programs during recent quarters, we would currently estimate these allocated costs at 75% of the direct salary line item.

Total Budget Request

\$616,317.05



Gerald J. and Dorothy R.
Friedman School of
Nutrition Science and Policy

February 5, 2021

Dear Amy Malinowski,

Congratulations! Vermont WIC been selected as subgrantee of the USDA/Tufts Telehealth Intervention Strategies for WIC (THIS-WIC). This letter serves to confirm that Tufts University, Friedman School of Nutrition Science and Policy intends to issue a subaward agreement from its USDA Food and Nutrition Service award #OPS-WIC Telehealth-FY19-Tufts-MA under the direction of Project Director Dr. Erin Hennessy to carry out the telehealth solution proposed in your application.

Grant Period: February 5, 2021-December 31, 2023

Date for Completion of Project Implementation: July 31, 2023

Budget Amount: \$616,317

Please note that while grant period runs until December 31, 2023 to allow the Agency to invoice for costs for travel to the ATA conference, project implementation must be complete by July 31, 2023.

In order to draft a subaward agreement, Tufts University requires the following to be submitted no later than Friday, February 12, 2021:

- Completed and signed Statement of Intent, template attached
- Final budget with annual increments & budget justification
- Indirect cost rate agreement (or weblink to online document included on the Statement of Intent), if applicable

In addition, as part of its subrecipient monitoring process, Tufts University will complete a risk assessment that may require additional state agency information as part of that process.

Please note that the THIS-WIC team will work collaboratively with you to finalize the study design and evaluation plan to ensure that the data collected through the implementation of your telehealth solution aligns with that collected for the other funded projects and supports a robust evaluation of the use of telehealth in WIC.

Finally, we have attached, for reference, a copy of the FNS Grant Terms and Conditions for this award which will also be incorporated in the resulting subaward agreement from Tufts University. These Terms and Conditions will remain in full force and effect throughout the agreement period. Please specifically note the following, as detailed in the Terms and Conditions:

- All expenditures paid for with funds provided under this award must be incurred within the period authorized in the subaward agreement, and be in accordance with the tasks, project deliverables, and guidelines outlined in the FNS Grant Terms and Conditions
- Only actual costs for work completed, rather than the estimates described in your grant application, may be charged to the subaward.

- If you establish sub-awards to carry out any of the work on your project, it is important that subgrantees also abide by these award terms. It is your responsibility to monitor the work and expenditures of your subgrantees.

For purposes of clarifying Section 9 of the FNS Grant Terms and Conditions (Property Standards) and as a condition to receiving the grant, please note that all data, reports and information generated, acquired, purchased or collected under this project and all software, app, website and other electronic or intangible resources generated, developed, acquired, licensed or purchased under this project, whether by you or your employees or agents or by your subgrantees, contractors or vendors, shall be licensed to the FNS on a royalty-free, non-exclusive, irrevocable and sublicensable basis to be used for Federal Purposes.

Thank you for the time and energy that went into the proposal process and we look forward to working with you.

Sincerely,



Erin Hennessy, PhD, MPH
Project Director
THIS-WIC