



T.I.M.E. Inc. Urban  
Innovative  
Agriculture  
Community-  
Based  
Organization  
Fund

**Fiscal Year (FY) 2024  
T.I.M.E. Inc. Program Outreach and  
Technical Assistance Competitive Sub-Award  
Funding Opportunity Guidance**

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**T.I.M.E. Inc.**

## **Competitive Subaward Funding Guidance SUMMARY**

**Awarding Non-Federal Entity Name:** To Improve Mississippi Economics, Inc. (T.I.M.E. Inc.)

**Notice of Funding Opportunity Title:** Urban and Innovative Agriculture Community-Based Organization Fund

### **Summary**

T.I.M.E. Inc has partnered with the USDA Farm Service Agency (FSA) to support Urban Farmers in accessing FSA and other USDA programs and services. TIME Inc.'s Urban Farm Outreach Program (UFOP) will develop a National Urban Farmer Demonstration Program that can serve as a model for states to establish similar programs.

This initiative involves collaborating with stakeholders to educate and train FSA and Urban producers about local food systems. TIME Inc. will lead this effort across 10 pilot Urban County Committee (UCOC) and one tribal location throughout the country. T.I.M.E. Inc. will evaluate the effectiveness of FSA programs in urban agriculture and provide policy recommendations to enhance urban agriculture participation in FSA programs.

TIME Inc. will accomplish this using a two-pronged approach, with one area of work focused on outreach, training, education, and technical assistance. The other area of work involves managing subaward agreements in FSA Urban County Committee (UCOC) Pilot States through partnerships with various organizations to support urban agriculture and increase access to FSA programs for urban producers.

T.I.M.E. Inc.'s role includes guiding cooperators and FSA County Offices in understanding the needs of urban agriculture producers and assessing existing FSA programs in the urban agriculture sector.

Furthermore, TIME Inc. will also gather feedback from communities to identify successes and challenges. This information will be used to assist FSA and other USDA agencies in developing guidelines to better serve underserved communities, promote cooperative community growers' organizations, and uphold USDA's commitment to equity.

Subawards will be established in the following 11 locations:

1. Boston, MA
2. Columbia, SC
3. Denver, CO
4. Houston, TX
5. Jackson, MS
6. Kansas City, MO
7. Las Vegas, NV
8. Little Rock, AR
9. Memphis, TN
10. Pittsburgh, PA

## 11. Tribal Location TBD

### **Key Dates**

Complete applications must be submitted via email to [UrbanAg@toimprovems.org](mailto:UrbanAg@toimprovems.org) by 11:59 p.m. Eastern Time on April 10, 2024. A recorded webinar will be held on March 18, 2024 12:00 Eastern Time for applicants.

The funding opportunity will be announced in April 2024. T.I.M.E. Inc. will make awards on an ongoing basis from April 2024 through June 2024. T.I.M.E. Inc will provide funding through competitive cooperative agreements to eligible recipients in the UCOC pilot locations to support the growth of the UCOC pilot while increasing the capacity of local agencies and CBOs to assist urban producers in their states.

### **Federal Funding Floor and Ceiling Amounts**

The estimated funding floor for this opportunity is \$500,000 and the estimated funding ceiling is \$895,000. The funding floor means the minimum agreement funding amount per agreement awarded. The ceiling is the maximum agreement funding amount per agreement awarded. These numbers refer to the total agreement amount, not any specific budget period.

### **Financial Assistance Training**

This funding is made possible through federal financial assistance to T.I.M.E. Inc. and will be subawarded by T.I.M.E. Inc to eligible recipients. Due to the reporting requirements of this grant, Grants 101 Training is highly recommended. The training is free and available to the public via [the Chief Financial Officers Council](https://www.cfo.gov/resources/federal-financial-assistance-training/) at <https://www.cfo.gov/resources/federal-financial-assistance-training/>. It consists of five modules covering each of the following topics: 1) laws, regulations, and guidance; 2) financial assistance mechanisms; 3) uniform guidance administrative requirements; 4) cost principles; and 5) risk management and single audit. FPAC agencies also apply Federal financial assistance regulations to certain non-assistance awards (e.g., non-assistance cooperative agreements).

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## A. PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

### **Institutional Background:**

Time Inc. is a nonprofit organization based in Mississippi with a 501(c)3 status, primarily focused on agriculture. Their mission is to provide outreach, training, and technical assistance to socially disadvantaged, limited-resource, and underserved audiences, particularly new and beginning farmers, ranchers, veterans, and residents interested in agriculture and value-added products.

They have a four-year track record of delivering an urban and new agriculture training program in Jackson, MS. This program targets Mississippi residents, with a special focus on young adults, veterans, individuals seeking a second chance, and women. The training encompasses a wide range of skills, including agricultural practices, mathematics, vocabulary, critical thinking, art, and various scientific and technical skills.

Time Inc. has also developed programs to offer technical assistance to small Black farmers in Mississippi, helping them grow and sell their products at scale. This initiative addresses the shift in consumer behavior towards direct purchases from farmers, as opposed to relying on grocery stores.

Furthermore, Time Inc. works to enhance the participation of socially disadvantaged or veteran farmers and ranchers in USDA/FSA programs. They assist in building relationships between these farmers and USDA offices at the local, state, regional, and national levels.

In addition, Time Inc. has programs aimed at identifying and addressing problems and barriers faced by socially disadvantaged farmers and ranchers, as recognized by state, local, and federal entities. These programs provide technical guidance, hands-on training, and instruction on various aspects of agriculture, including crop selection, irrigation systems, business formation, marketing, branding, and certifications, such as GAP (Good Agricultural Practices) certification and product liability insurance.

Overall, Time Inc. is committed to empowering and supporting individuals in agriculture, especially those facing socio-economic challenges, by providing education, training, and assistance to help them succeed in today's changing agricultural landscape.

### **Program Goals and Objectives**

There are two main goals associated with this opportunity:

**Goal 1:** Increase equity in urban food systems by expanding FSA's outreach efforts to commercial urban producers through technical assistance, outreach, education, and research.

**Goal 2:** Increase supply chain resiliency in urban food systems by improving the sustainability and long-term viability of urban farming operations.

T.I.M.E. Inc. needs partnerships with trusted, local CBOs in each city to build a new customer base, enhance access to USDA programs and services, and build capacity to better serve urban producers. Awarded CBOs will:

1. Establish and grow customer base for USCs by assisting with outreach, education, engagement and technical assistance;
2. Create synergies, coordination, and cooperation between existing USDA investments in urban areas;
3. Further USDA's Food System Transformation by helping to provide urban and innovative producers the full-suite of USDA programs available in their area, thereby strengthening the local food system;
4. Implement the 2018 Farm Bill by helping to grow FSA's Urban County Committee pilot; and
5. Promote USDA's goals of increasing diversity, equity, inclusion, and access.

Sub-awardees can develop their own objectives that support the goals outlined in this document. However, **cooperators must include at least one of the following objectives in their projects:**

1. Increase knowledge, awareness, and participation in FSA and USDA programs and services associated with growing food in an urban area;
2. Assist farmers with expanding their farming operations, accessing land, and implementing climate-friendly practices that can mitigate their susceptibility to natural disasters in urban areas; and
3. Increase representation of underserved farmers serving on County Committees.

The agreements will target urban agricultural producers, with a focus on underserved producers in the identified locations. Increasing the Agency's service potential to urban farmers will likely increase the USDA's ability to serve members of underserved communities in the ways that they are practicing agriculture and support the Agency's commitment to equity. Agreements will allow for subawards to partner with smaller CBOs that serve urban producers and can provide direct funding to farmers to expand their farming operations, with priority given to areas facing food insecurity. T.I.M.E. Inc. encourages applicants intending to serve smaller businesses, farms and ranches, new and beginning farmers and ranchers, underserved producers, veteran producers, and/or underserved communities to engage and involve those beneficiaries when developing projects and applications.

Sub-awardees are encouraged to consider including microgrants in the subaward proposals. Micro-grants are small, one-time-only, awards given to eligible producers for short-term projects. Micro-grants are grants that can be awarded by sub-awarded cooperators of the FSA Urban and Innovative Agriculture Community-Based Organization Fund. These grants can be awarded by sub-awardees to urban agricultural producers (beneficiaries) for projects that support the goals of FSA Urban and Innovative Agriculture Community-Based Organization Fund and for areas of work (i.e., projects). Micro-grants can be utilized to leverage or implement conservation practices, improve soil quality, purchase on-farm infrastructure, or provide cost share for supplies and equipment if funding isn't currently available and/or hasn't already been awarded through other existing USDA programs for the designated micro-grant recipients.

Sub-awardees will be required to participate in the Kick-off meeting in the selected location to be determined by TIME and the National Urban Agriculture conference to take place in Detroit, MI.

This is a non-competitive application process. These are multi-year awards (2-3 years). The maximum award amount will be \$895,000, and the minimum award amount will be \$500,000. TIME Inc. will consider all proposals, but preference will be given to proposals with no new ground disturbances below the existing plow zone or disturbance area that qualify for a CatEx listed in 7 CFR 799.31.

## **B. AWARD INFORMATION**

### **1. Available Funding**

#### **a. Estimated Funding**

The non-federal entity expects to award approximately \$9.85 million through this opportunity. However, the entity retains the discretion to award a lesser amount.

#### **b. Start Dates and Performance Periods**

Projects may be between two (2) and three (3) years in duration. Applicants should plan their projects based on an estimated project start date of , April 2024 T.I.M.E. Inc. retains the discretion to adjust the period of performance and the start date on an ongoing basis.

#### **c. Number of Awards**

The non-federal entity expects to fund 11 awards.

### **2. Type of Award**

#### **a. Subaward:**

As these subawards are being issued as cooperative agreements, T.I.M.E. Inc. will be substantially involved in the work performed under the agreement and will undertake activities such as the following:

1. Authority to suspend work if specifications or work statements are not met.
2. Review and approval of one stage of work before another may begin.
3. Review and approval of substantive provisions of proposed subawards or contracts beyond existing Federal policy
4. Non-federal entity and recipient collaboration or joint participation.
5. Project monitoring to permit specified kinds of direction or redirection of the work because of interrelationships with and impacts on other projects.
6. Highly prescriptive non-federal entity requirements that limit recipient discretion.
7. Review and approval of key personnel.
8. Direct non-federal entity operational involvement or participation during the activity.

#### **b. Procurement Contracts**

T.I.M.E. Inc. does not expect to award procurement contracts associated with this opportunity.

**c. Eligibility of Renewal or Supplemental Project Applications**

Applications for renewal or supplementation of existing projects are not eligible to compete with applications for new awards. An application for renewal means an application submitted to continue an existing agreement that meets the objectives and requirements of this opportunity. An application for supplementation of an existing project means an application to add components to an existing agreement so that it would meet the objectives and requirements in this opportunity.

**C. ELIGIBILITY INFORMATION**

**1. Eligible Applicants**

Applicants and applications must meet eligibility criteria by the application deadline to be considered for award. Eligible applicant type is determined by the implementing program statute. Applicant entities identified in the SAM.gov exclusions database as ineligible, prohibited/restricted, or excluded from receiving Federal contracts and certain Federal assistance and benefits will not be considered for funding, as applicable to the funding being requested under this program (2 CFR 200.206(d)).

Eligibility for this opportunity is limited to the following entity types:

- a. City or township governments*
- b. County governments*
- c. Native American tribal governments (Federally recognized)*
- d. Native American tribal organizations (other than Federally recognized tribal governments)*
- e. Nonprofits having a 501(c)(3) status with the IRS (other than institutions of higher education)*
- f. Nonprofits that do not have a 501(c)(3) status with the IRS (other than institutions of higher education)*
- g. Public and State-controlled institutions of higher education*
- h. Special district governments*
- i. State governments*

**2. Other**

Any award made pursuant to these agreements will be made to a single entity. Applicants that apply as “partnerships” or other similar groupings must clearly describe the relationship between the applicant and the “partner” parties. In all but exceptional cases, it must be reflected in the award as an awardee/sub-awardee relationship.

An applicant organization may not submit more than one application for different projects or proposing different approaches. In the case of applications submitted as revisions or corrections to a previously submitted application under these agreements, the Non-federal entity will request that applications are revised accordingly.



Awards made pursuant to these agreements are not Farm Bill incentive contracts; therefore, the awards in and of themselves are not limited by the payment limitation in Chapter 58 of 16 U.S.C. However, any agricultural producers receiving a payment through participation in a project awarded under these agreements must meet the eligibility requirements of 7 CFR Part 12 and 7 CFR Part 1400 and have control of the land involved for the term of the proposed award period.

### **3. Cost Sharing or Matching**

There is no cost sharing or matching requirement for this opportunity. There is no competitive advantage to applicants who voluntarily provide a match.

## **D. APPLICATION AND SUBMISSION INFORMATION**

### **1. Information for Applicants**

#### **a. Overview**

For this opportunity, a Grants.gov account is **not** required to submit an application. All applications must be submitted via email to [UrbanAg@toimprovems.org](mailto:UrbanAg@toimprovems.org). However, please be aware that there are several steps you must take to register your organization before you can submit an application. **Completing those steps takes a significant amount of time.**

Register in SAM and Obtain a UEI Number. SAM registrations may take several weeks. Therefore, organizations should begin the process early to ensure they have sufficient time to complete registration and meet required application submission deadlines.

#### **b. Organizations must complete all steps to register for a UEI and obtain a SAM registration (steps i. through v. below).**

- i. Obtain a UEI: All entities applying for funding must have a UEI issued by SAM.gov. Applicants must enter the UEI in the data entry field labeled "UEI" on the SF-424 form.
- ii. Register with SAM: All organizations must register with System for Award Management (SAMS). SAM registration must be renewed annually. For more detailed instructions for registering with SAM, refer to: <https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/applicants/organization-registration/step-2-register-with-sam.html>

### **2. Submitting Application Package**

Applicants interested in submitting an application in response to this application must submit it via email to [UrbanAg@toimprovems.org](mailto:UrbanAg@toimprovems.org).

### **3. Content and Form of Application Submission**

T.I.M.E. Inc. may choose not to consider applications that fail to comply with the required content, format, and page limits, or those that are incomplete.

To be considered for funding under this opportunity, an application must contain the documents in a-e below.

**a. Project Narrative**

Each page must be numbered and have one-inch margins. The text of the project narrative must be single spaced and typed in a standard typeface (e.g., Times New Roman, Arial, Courier) with no smaller than 12-point font. The project narrative must not exceed ten (10) pages. This page limitation applies to the project narrative only.

Include the following in the Project Narrative:

- i. Project Team and Institutional Background** – In this section, describe the applicant’s organization or institution in terms of its location, demographics, mission, relationship to the urban service area and underserved producers, and past successes in the project area. Also, describe the project team’s experience working with urban producers and underserved farmers and ranchers. Describe existing partnerships with FSA and FSA state and county employees, if applicable. Identify any collaborating institution(s) and their involvement in the project. Provide a clear description of staff or partners’ relevant experience as it relates to the proposed project.
- ii. Problem statement/needs assessment** – In this section identify the area and programs of focus, what is causing the concern and identify the method used for determining the situation at-hand. Specify any FSA programs that your project might impact. Explain whether the specific underserved populations to benefit from the project were consulted and which will benefit from the project.
- iii. Purpose** – In this section, describe the reasons for undertaking the project, overarching goals, and their relationship to FSA’s goals. Provide a high-level overview of the proposed project and describe how your project will achieve your goals. Key strategies and project design, alignment of resources and activities, strategic partners and their roles, and goals should be clearly defined.

**EXAMPLE:**

- a. Provide technical assistance and outreach to help urban agricultural producers access USDA programs and focus on long-term food sovereignty in historically marginalized and underfunded communities in urban areas in one of the 17 UCOC Pilot locations. The overarching goal of the project is to support

and stimulate FSA goals to increase equity in urban food systems by expanding FSA's outreach efforts to commercial urban producers through technical assistance, outreach, education, and research as well as increase supply chain resiliency in urban food systems by improving the sustainability and long-term viability of urban farming operations.

iv. **Objectives** – This section should flow from the goals. While cooperators can develop their own objectives that should support the goals outlined in the purpose of this project cooperators must include at least one of the following objectives:

1. Increase knowledge, awareness, and participation in FSA and USDA programs and services associated with growing food in an urban area;
2. Assist farmers with expanding their farming operations, accessing land, and implementing climate-friendly practices that can mitigate their susceptibility to natural disasters in urban areas; and
3. Increase representation of underserved farmers serving on Urban County Committees.

**OTHER EXAMPLES:**

-To improve the coordination and effectiveness of Federal programs, services and actions affecting urban areas.

-To increase access and participation of underserved farmers in FSA programs and services in urban areas.

-To assist urban producers in accessing and utilizing tools, resources, and technical assistance associated with growing food in an urban area, expanding their farming operations, and implementing climate-friendly practices that can mitigate their susceptibility to natural disasters to increase supply chain resiliency in urban areas.

v. **Resources Required** – In this section include terms other than funding needed for the successful completion of the project.

**EXAMPLE:**

-Access to data explaining FSA Programs and Services.

vi. **Responsibilities of the Parties** – Describe the management approach for staffing, procurement of contractors or subawardees (as applicable), quality assurance planning, tracking timelines, and monitoring progress that will be used for the project. Describe your plan for coordination, data sharing, and reporting among members of the project team and stakeholder groups. Cooperative agreements also involve substantial FSA involvement so in this section, describe the ways in which you will

be cooperating during the project. T.I.M.E. Inc. will be substantially involved in the work performed under the agreement.

RECIPIENT EXAMPLES:

- Collaborate with T.I.M.E. Inc. officials
- Perform the work and produce deliverables as outlined in the Statement of Work.
- Comply with the applicable version of the General Terms and Conditions.
- Submit reports and payment requests to T.I.M.E. Inc as outlined in the applicable version of the General Terms and Conditions. Reporting frequency is as follows:
  - Performance reports: quarterly
  - SF425 Financial Reports: quarterly

- vii. **Expected Accomplishments and Deliverables** – In this section identify the activities, accomplishments, and deliverables associated with the project. The accomplishments and deliverables should flow logically from the Purpose and Objectives. Describe what will be done, how it will be accomplished, and how the completion will be measured.

EXAMPLES:

- Develop outreach materials/publications to disseminate information about urban agriculture initiatives at USDA and promote USDA programs in the community such as how to obtain a farm number from FSA. Spring of 2024
- Host listening sessions to gather information about the needs of local urban farmers to prepare and develop regional urban agriculture plans and engage with urban food councils. Spring of 2024
- Facilitate training, conduct workshops, online webinars, in person meetings and other community-level events to help beginning and socially disadvantaged/underserved farmers in urban areas to grow their farming businesses, and provide training on programs, forms and electronic applications. Summer of 2024 and 2025
- Provide one-on-one technical assistance to farmers by assisting producers with paperwork to apply to a FSA program or loan or to assist a farmer in implementing conservation practices that increase on-farm diversity and support climate-friendly farming practices. Summer of 2024 through Summer of 2025
- Provide urban agricultural producers with farm loan program information and provide micro-grants to implement conservation practices on their farm, improve soil quality, purchase on-farm

infrastructure, etc. Summer of 2024 through Summer of 2025

- Conduct research to compile data, write reports, and make recommendations on the number of urban farms, profitability, scale, etc. to help T.I.M.E. Inc. inform how it can better support Historically Underserved urban agricultural producers by making program improvements. Fall of 2025

- viii. **Evaluation Plan** – In this section present a plan for determining the success of the project and briefly describe your organization’s ability to monitor project activities and how the overall impact will be evaluated. Describe what will be measured and provide details about how any assessments the organization will conduct is expected to change the situation of underserved producers because of the project. Describe the evaluation activities you will conduct to measure your program against the required objective. Identify the indicator(s) that will be used for each activity. Indicate the date and frequency of the proposed activities. Lastly, identify a person or organization responsible for overseeing the evaluation plan. These successes must be documented in quarterly performance reports and at the end of the project in the final performance report.
- ix. **Sustainability (300 words or less)** – Describe how the project will continue beyond the period of performance (without additional T.I.M.E. Inc. funds).

The following documents do not count toward the above stated page limit.

- a. **Application Form:** (Standard Form 424 Application for Federal Assistance) See Instructions for Completing SF 424 located at the end of this document.
- b. **Standard Form (SF) 424A, Budget Information - Non-Construction Programs.** Fill in all spaces as appropriate. Section B, Item 6, Column 1 should reflect the agency funds, and Column 2 should reflect the applicant’s matching funds. This form is the summary budget for the project and should include the full project totals on pages one and two. See Instructions for Completing SF 424A located at the end of this document. Refer to Section D of this opportunity for information regarding indirect costs.
- c. **Budget Narrative.**
- i. In a separate document titled “Budget Narrative,” explain and justify all requested budget items/costs. (Refer to the budget narrative guidance located at the end of this document.) Detail how the totals on the SF-424A were determined and demonstrate a clear connection between costs and the proposed project activities. For personnel salary costs, include the base-line salary figures and the estimates of time (as

percentages) to be directly charged to the project. Describe any item that under the applicable Non-Federal cost principles requires the agency's approval and estimate its cost. The pages included as the budget narrative to not count toward the page limit.

- ii. Budget should include estimated travel expense to attend the Kickoff meeting and National Urban Agriculture conference in Detroit, MI for FY 24 and FY 25. The maximum amount for travel expenses is no more than 5% of the total award to be used to support the sub-awardees' and guest farmer attendees' travel to the Kickoff Event to take place in June 2024 and National Conference scheduled to take place in August 2024.
- iii. Only the 10 percent de minimis indirect cost rate will be allowed under this grant regardless of any NICRs that may be approved for the applicant. No documentation is required to justify the 10 percent de minimis indirect cost rate. As described in [2 CFR 200.403](#), costs must be consistently charged as either indirect or direct costs but may not be double charged or inconsistently charged as both.
- iv. Modified Total Direct Cost (MTDC) means all direct salaries and wages, applicable fringe benefits, materials and supplies, services, travel, and up to the first \$25,000 of each subaward or micro-grant (regardless of the period of performance of the subawards under the award). MTDC excludes equipment, capital expenditures, charges for patient care, rental costs, tuition remission, scholarships and fellowships, participant support costs and the portion of each subaward in excess of \$25,000. Other items may only be excluded when necessary to avoid a serious inequity in the distribution of indirect costs, and with the approval of the cognizant agency for indirect costs.
- v. As required in 2 CFR Part 200, Subpart F Audit Requirements, all U.S. states, local governments, Federally recognized Indian tribal governments, and non-profit organizations expending \$750,000 USD or more in Federal award funds in a fiscal year must submit a Single Audit report for that year through the Federal Audit Clearinghouse's Internet Data Entry System.

**d. Lobbying Form, Certification and Disclosure of Lobbying Activities.** Under Title 31 of the United States Code, Section 1352, an applicant or recipient must not use any federally appropriated funds (both annually appropriated and continuing appropriations) or matching funds under a grant or cooperative agreement award to pay any person for lobbying in connection with the award. Lobbying is defined as influencing or attempting to influence an officer or employee of any agency, a Member of Congress, an officer or employee of Congress, or an employee of a Member of Congress connection with the award. Submission of an application also represents the applicant's certification of the statements in 2 CFR Part 418, Appendix A-Certification Regarding Lobbying. If you/your organization have/has made or agrees to make any payment using non-appropriated funds for lobbying, you must also complete and submit the SF LLL, Disclosure of Lobbying Activities located at 2 CFR 418, Appendix B.

See 2 CFR418.110 for more information on when additional submission of this form is required.

- e. **Negotiated Indirect Cost Rate Agreement** Only the 10 percent de minimus indirect cost rate is allowed to be charged under this grant.
- f. **Post Award Documentation.** N/A.
- g. **Unique entity identifier (UEI) and System for Award Management (SAM).** Each applicant (unless the applicant is an individual excepted from those requirements under 2 CFR 25.110(b) or (c), or has an exception approved by the Federal awarding agency under 2 CFR 25.110(d)) is required to: (i) Be registered in SAM before submitting its application; (ii) provide a valid unique entity identifier in its application; and (iii) continue to maintain an active SAM registration with current information at all times during which it has an active Federal award or an application or plan under consideration by a Federal awarding agency. T.I.M.E. Inc. may not make an award to an applicant until the applicant has complied with all applicable unique entity identifier and SAM requirements and, if an applicant has not fully complied with the requirements by the time the agency is ready to make an award, it may determine that the applicant is not qualified to receive an award and use that determination as a basis for making an award to another applicant.

Entities must obtain a UEI and register in SAM. A description of each is below. Entities are strongly encouraged to apply early for their SAM registration.

System for Award Management (SAM) Registration: SAM is the official Federal system that consolidated the capabilities of Central Contractor Registry, Federal Agency Registration, Online Representations and Certifications Application, and Excluded Parties List System. To register, go to: <https://www.sam.gov>. The Federal Service Desk is available for registration assistance and can be contacted via the Help tab at the website listed above.

Awarding entity staff cannot support applicants regarding DUNS/UEI or SAM issues.

The Government intends to replace the D-U-N-S® number with a “new, non-proprietary identifier” requested in, and assigned by SAM.gov. This new identifier is being called the Unique Entity Identifier (UEI), or the Entity ID. See [Planned UEI Updates in Grant Application Forms](#) for UEI updates.

#### 4. Submission Dates and Times and Correspondence

Applicants must submit their applications via email to [UrbanAg@toimprovems.org](mailto:UrbanAg@toimprovems.org) by 11:59 pm Eastern Time on April 10, 2024. Applications will be reviewed on an ongoing basis.

T.I.M.E. Inc. Outreach will be hosting a recorded webinar that provides an overview of this opportunity to cooperators on March 18, 2024 at 12pm EST. Registration information will be provided directly to applicants.

## **5. Intergovernmental Review**

This funding opportunity is not subject to Executive Order 12372, “Intergovernmental Review of Federal Programs.”

## **6. Funding Restrictions**

Funds may not be used to pay any of the following costs unless otherwise permitted by law and approved in writing by the agency in advance of incurring such costs:

- a.** Costs above the amount of funds authorized for the project;
- b.** Costs incurred prior to the effective date of the award, including time spent applying for this opportunity;
- c.** Costs which lie outside the scope of the approved project and amendments thereto;
- d.** Entertainment costs, regardless of their apparent relationship to project objectives;
- e.** Compensation for injuries to persons, or damage to property arising out of project activities;
- f.** Consulting services performed by a Federal employee during official duty hours when such consulting services result in the payment of additional compensation to the employee; and
- g.** Capital expenditures for general purpose equipment, buildings, and land and for improvements to land, buildings, or equipment which materially increase their value or useful life. See 2 CFR 200.439 for additional information.
- h.** Management fees and profit. Any funds awarded to for-profit entities must be used for reimbursement of award related direct and indirect costs only;
- i.** Meals: Meals may be charged to an award only if they are necessary for the performance of the project. For instance, meals (normally only lunch) that are a necessary part of the costs of meetings and conferences (i.e., required attendance and continuity of a meeting), the primary purpose of which is the dissemination of information, are allowable, as are costs of transportation, rental of facilities, speakers’ fees, and other items incidental to such meetings or conferences. Note: Meals consumed while in official travel status do not fall in this category. They are considered to be per diem expenses and should be reimbursed in accordance with the organization’s established travel policies subject to statutory limitations or in accordance with Federal travel policies.
- j.** Costs normally charged as [indirect costs](#) may not be charged as [direct costs](#) without proper justification and agency approval. Proper justification includes documentation that the costs meet the criteria for allowability (see 2 CFR 200.403). Examples of such costs include rent, utilities, depreciation on buildings and equipment, the costs of operating and maintaining facilities, and general administration and general expenses, such as the salaries and expenses



of executive officers, personnel administration, and accounting.

- k. Salaries that are not commensurate with level of work: All costs must be reasonable to be allowable (2 CFR 200.403), and 2 CFR 200.404 defines a reasonable cost as one if, in its nature and amount, it does not exceed that which would be incurred by a prudent person under the circumstances prevailing at the time the decision was made to incur the cost. Salaries determined not to be reasonable compared to the level of work will be unallowable.

This list is not exhaustive. Questions regarding the allowances of particular items of cost should be directed to the administrative contact listed in this document.

## **7. Indirect costs limitations:**

A non-profit organization or institution of higher education awarded a cooperative agreement will be limited to a 10 percent indirect cost rate in accordance with the agency's annual appropriations act. The 10 percent indirect cost rate applies to both federal and non-federal funds. Other types of entities are not subject to this statutory limitation.

- a. To be eligible to recover any indirect cost under an award, recipients must either 1) have a current negotiated indirect cost rate agreement (NICRA) with a Federal agency that has not expired; or 2) qualify for use of the de minimis rate authorized by 2 CFR 200.414(f). A State, local, or tribal governmental department or agency unit that receives more than \$35 million in direct Federal funding is not eligible for the de minimis rate.

Sub-recipients are prohibited from shifting unallowable indirect costs to another Federal award unless specifically authorized to do so by legislation.

## **E. APPLICATION REVIEW INFORMATION**

### **1. Review and Selection Process**

Applications will be screened for completeness and compliance with the provisions of this notice. Applications will undergo an administrative review to ensure that the proposed activities fulfill the purpose and goals outlined in this announcement. The non-federal entity intends to make a selection after allowing applicants to correct deficiencies or omissions in their applications. Regardless, applicants must ensure their applications are complete and accurate. T.I.M.E. Inc. reserves the right to request applicants to revise their applications to correct deficiencies or omissions it identifies. If this occurs, T.I.M.E. Inc. will conduct discussions with all applicants, identify deficiencies and omissions for all, and give applicants an opportunity to submit a revised application. T.I.M.E. Inc. may also contact individual applicants to clarify certain components of their applications. The agency reserves the right to not make awards to applicants that are non-responsive to T.I.M.E. Inc. requests and not in compliance with the provisions in this notice.

Technical reviews will be conducted by a technical review board. The approving official

will make the final award decisions in coordination with FSA. The approving official for this opportunity is the T.I.M.E. Inc. Reviews will be conducted in a multi- phase review process in which a staff panel from T.I.M.E. Inc. will make recommendations to the deciding official. Reviewers will be selected based upon knowledge, skills, training and experience in relevant fields.

## **2. Administrative and Risk Criteria**

Notice of selection after merit/technical evaluation does not guarantee that an applicant will receive an award. Following notification of selection for funding (see section F), T.I.M.E. Inc.'s staff conducts a final administrative review of those applications. The administrative review includes, but is not limited to, a check to ensure that application requirements were met (e.g., applicant meets eligibility criteria, application was submitted by the established deadline), and proposed costs are allowable, allocable and necessary. During this process, it may be necessary to request further documentation from the applicant (e.g., organizational information as part of the risk assessment, more detail regarding proposed costs).

In addition, to comply with the requirements at 2 CFR 200.206, the agency will follow, at a minimum, the risk review process described below (additional steps may be taken).

The approving official will check SAM to ensure the applicant is not suspended or debarred, which would preclude receiving an award.

An applicant must meet the following standards to be considered for award:

- a.** Financial Stability. The applicant maintains an adequate financial resources or cash flow to meet its financial obligations on a routine basis in order to successfully complete any agreement it may be awarded.
- b.** Quality of Management Systems and Ability to meet Management Standards prescribed in 2 CFR Part 200. The applicant has a financial management system adequate to segregate and track funds. It has adequate systems in place for proper agreement administration; compliance with the standards outlined in 2 CFR Part 200 Section D for procurement, property, and records management; and required financial and performance reporting.
- c.** History of Performance. If the applicant has previously obtained a Federal financial assistance award, it has never failed to materially comply with the Federal award terms and conditions and further that it has never had an award terminated on that basis.

Submission of an application constitutes certification that an applicant meets these standards (items a through c. above). T.I.M.E. Inc. may request documentation to substantiate the certification.

## **F. AWARD ADMINISTRATION INFORMATION**

## **1. Award Notices**

T.I.M.E. Inc. will provide notice that an application has been selected before it actually makes the award. As such, the selection notification is not an authorization to begin performance. The Notice of Grant and Agreement Award signed by the authorized official is the only authorizing document and will be provided electronically to the entity's authorized official for signature.

Applicants will be notified of the award decision via letter once the application is approved by the selection committee.

## **2. Administrative and National Policy Requirements**

All project funds will be used in accordance with 2 CFR Part 200 and the General Terms and Conditions, which are available at the following website: <https://www.fpacbc.usda.gov/about/grants-and-agreements/award-terms-and-conditions/index.html>

Projects performed pursuant to this opportunity may be subject to the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA). TIME Inc. will consider all proposals, but preference will be given to proposals with no new ground disturbances below the existing plow zone or disturbance area that qualify for a CatEx listed in 7 CFR 799.31. Categorical exclusions (CatExes) are categories of actions that USDA has determined, by regulation, normally do not have a significant effect on the environment and in the absence of extraordinary circumstances, do not require an environmental assessment nor an environmental impact statement.

If required, TIME Inc. and FSA will work with sub-awardees to complete an environmental review of each sub-award project before project commencement. In addition, prior to any ground-disturbing activities related to TIME Inc. funding, the sub-awardee must work with TIME Inc. and FSA State staff to complete an environmental evaluation (EE) related to those activities. Sub-awardees may be required to prepare or pay for preparation of an environmental assessment (EA) or environmental impact statement (EIS), should any environmental review find that an EA or EIS is required.

In addition, a National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA), Section 106 review and consultation by an FSA State or area office with consulting parties (such as the pertinent State Historic Preservation Officer and federally recognized Indian Tribes) may be required prior to the implementation of project activities that have the potential to impact cultural resources. NHPA Section 106, its implementing regulations (36 CFR Part 800), and other related authorities, require Federal agencies to determine if a project has the potential to cause an effect to historic properties and, if so, if they are adverse and how the effects may be addressed. The NHPA review and compliance in accordance with section 106 of NHPA and implementing regulations at 36 CFR Part 800 must be completed by FSA and

applicants may be required to pay for any cultural resource surveys needed for FSA to assess project effects. More information on the applicant's role in the NHPA Section 106 process can be found on the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation website at <https://www.achp.gov/digital-library-section-106-landing/section-106-applicant-toolkit>.

Consultation with the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service and/or the National Marine Fisheries Service under the section 7 of the Endangered Species Act (ESA) is also required for projects that may affect listed or proposed species or destroy or modify critical habitat. The ESA consultation in accordance with section 7 of the ESA and implementing regulations at 50 CFR Part 402 must be completed by FSA prior to the implementation of project activities that have the potential to impact species or habitat protected under the ESA.

### **3. Reporting**

Reporting will follow the guidelines included in the agency's General Terms and Conditions, which will be made available to sub-awardees after award announcement and during award execution phase.

Applicants that receive sub-awards pursuant to this opportunity must comply with the reporting requirements described at 2 CFR Part 170 unless an exception applies. Applicants must ensure they have the necessary processes and systems in place to comply with those requirements. A list of exceptions can be found at 2 CFR 170.110(b).

Sub-recipients must provide the following to T.I.M.E. Inc.:

- Quarterly performance reports that compare accomplishments to the objectives stated in the application, and that must also:
- Identify all tasks completed to date and provide documentation supporting the reported results (dates and locations of activities, county, city state; number of participants assisted, barriers to participation);
- If the original schedule provided in the work plan is not being met, discuss the problems or delays that may affect completion of the project;
- List objectives for the next reporting period.

## **G. AWARDING NON-FEDERAL ENTITY CONTACT**

For questions regarding this opportunity, please contact [UrbanAg@toimprovems.org](mailto:UrbanAg@toimprovems.org) with the opportunity title in the subject line.

## **H. OTHER INFORMATION**