

**Letters of Support Templates and Guidance:**

**Spark Awards and Innovation Collaborative Awards**

Letters of Support are required for each Innovation Hub application. The purpose of a Letter of Support is to show that partners are committed to and invested in your project.

There are three different kinds of Letters of Support that may be required for your application and others that may be recommended. Please reach out to your State Lead with questions; State Lead contact information can be found at [InnovateSchoolFood.org/Support](http://www.InnovateSchoolFood.org/Support). Here’s what you need to know:

**Always Required:**

* **School Letter of Support.** All projects must benefit a school, school district, or group of schools so applications require at least one Letter of Support from a school or district.The template on page 3 includes different sections for schools to complete if they are on the project team or if they are supporting a project but are not on the project team.

**Required IF you have one or more project partners in addition to the Lead Applicant on a Spark Award; Always Required for Innovation Collaborative Awards:**

* **Project Team Letter of Support.** A Letter of Support is required from every organization listed in the Project Team Information section of the application (schools will complete the School Letter of Support, page 3). The template found on page 4 encompasses all necessary details.
	+ For Spark Awards, additional project partners are not mandatory.
	+ For Innovation Collaborative Awards, a minimum of one project partner, along with the Lead Applicant, is mandatory. At least one partner should be a farmer, food producer, food supplier, food distributor, or other food system partner.

**Required IF a school partner on the project team uses a contracted food service management company:**

* **Food Service Management Company Letter of Support.** A Letter of Support from the food service management company which indicates they are willing to cooperate with the project’s food service goals is required when working with schools that use contracted food service. The template on page 5 includes all information required.

**Recommended for Innovation Collaborative Applications:**

* **General Project Support Template**. Innovation Collaborative grant applications should promote systems-change in your school food system. Systems-change efforts are most successful with broad support from key organizations, legislators, school boards, superintendents, and/or community members. Letters of Support from representatives whose support is important for the success of your project are recommended for Innovation Collaborative applications. The template on page 6 can be completed by key supporters who are not on your project team.

**Other Tips:**

* You can pre-fill in much of the information, like your applicant organization name, project title, etc. before sending the template for partners to complete and sign.
* In the Project Team Letter of Support, the list of work the partner will perform for the project should match what is written in your application.
* For Innovation Collaborative applications, grant reviewers will consider if your application, including the Letters of Support, demonstrate that the project has the support needed from other organizations for successful completion. General Project Support Letters of Support are recommended to demonstrate broad support for and confidence in project implementation by key supporters.

**TEMPLATE: School Letter of Support**

[DATE]

[ADDRESS]

Dear Innovation Hub Team,

[School/District name] is pleased to submit this Letter of Support for the [Lead Applicant organization’s] grant application for the Innovation Hub [Spark/Innovation Collaborative] Awards, [Project Title].

This project aligns with our goals of [list a few ways this aligns with your school nutrition, farm-to-school, nutrition education, local food procurement, etc. efforts]

**[INCLUDE THIS SECTION HIGHLIGHTED IN GRAY ONLY IF THE SCHOOL OR DISTRICT IS ON THE PROJECT TEAM**: We are excited to participate in this innovative work to improve our school food system and marketplace. We commit to [list the work you will perform for this project].]

Here is some relevant administrative information:

* We use [self-operated food service OR contracted food service]. *Note: if the school uses contracted food service, a Letter of Support from their food service management company must also be included in your application.*
* Our School Food Authority Number is:]

If [Lead Applicant Organization] is awarded this grant, we look forward to supporting the project’s efforts to respond to students’ dietary, cultural and religious needs and preferences and learning from the project’s innovations to improve our school food system and marketplace. [optional: list any ways the school/district can support this (e.g., hosting taste-testing events, focus groups)]

Sincerely,

[Signature]

School Administrator Name
School Administrator Title
Phone Number

Email

**[INCLUDE THIS SECTION ONLY IF THE SCHOOL OR DISTRICT IS NOT ON THE PROJECT TEAM:** School Food Authority Number: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

**TEMPLATE: Project Team Letter of Support**

[DATE]

[ADDRESS]

Dear Innovation Hub Team,

[Organization name] is pleased to submit this Letter of Support for the [Lead Applicant organization’s] grant application for the Innovation Hub [Spark/Innovation Collaborative] Awards, [Project Title].

[Organization’s] mission is to […]. This project aligns well with our other efforts to [list a few ways this aligns with your school nutrition, farm-to-school, nutrition education, local food procurement, etc. efforts]

We are excited to participate in this innovative work to improve our school food system and products. We commit to [list the work you will perform for this project].

We look forward to this partnership if [Lead Applicant Organization] is awarded this grant.

Sincerely,

[Signature]

Name
Title
Phone Number
Email

**TEMPLATE: Food Service Management Company Letter of Support**

[DATE]

[ADDRESS]

Dear Innovation Hub Team,

[Company name] is pleased to submit this Letter of Support for the [Lead Applicant organization’s] grant application for the Innovation Hub [Spark/Innovation Collaborative] Award, [Project Title].

We commit to cooperating with this project’s food service goals and we look forward to learning about how our company can support innovations to improve the food system and products for [school/school district name].

Sincerely,

[Signature]

Name
Title
Phone Number
Email

**TEMPLATE: General Project Support Letter of Support**

[DATE]

[ADDRESS]

Dear Innovation Hub Team,

[I/Organization] [am/is] pleased to submit this Letter of Support for the [Lead Applicant organization’s] grant application for the Innovation Hub [Spark/Innovation Collaborative] Awards, [Project Title].

[Please briefly describe your role in your local school food system and why it is important to you]

[I/We] think this project is important to fund because [describe a few ways you feel this project will benefit your local school food system].

[I/We] look forward to following this project if [Lead Applicant Organization] is awarded this grant and supporting it as needed [add any ways your organization would support this project if awarded].

Sincerely,

[Signature]

Name
Title
Phone Number
Email