



# **IFSS Regulatory and Laboratory Training System Implementation Plan**

**October 2023 – September 2025**

**TABLE OF CONTENTS**

**INTRODUCTION .....3**

**IFSS RLTS PROPOSED GOVERNANCE STRUCTURE .....4**

**ASSUMPTIONS .....7**

**IMPLEMENTATION PLAN .....7**

**TIMELINE .....11**

**PROPOSED KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS .....11**

**ACRONYMS .....16**

## INTRODUCTION

An integrated food safety system (IFSS) consists of seamless partnerships and collaboration among federal, state, local, tribal, and territorial (SLTT) agencies, as well as academic, foreign, industry, and consumer stakeholders to achieve the public health mission of a safer human and animal food (HAF) supply. Considering the breadth and depth of knowledge needed to achieve this mission, the IFSS Regulatory and Laboratory Training System (RLTS) Strategic Plan aims to establish an optimal, sustainable, integrated national regulatory and laboratory training system that will advance mutual reliance and support the goals of an IFSS. High-quality regulatory training will allow the IFSS workforce to apply consistent inspectional, investigatory, and laboratory practices, and stay abreast of and adopt current regulations and standards. The process of building an effective IFSS RLTS depends on a strong foundation. Specifically:

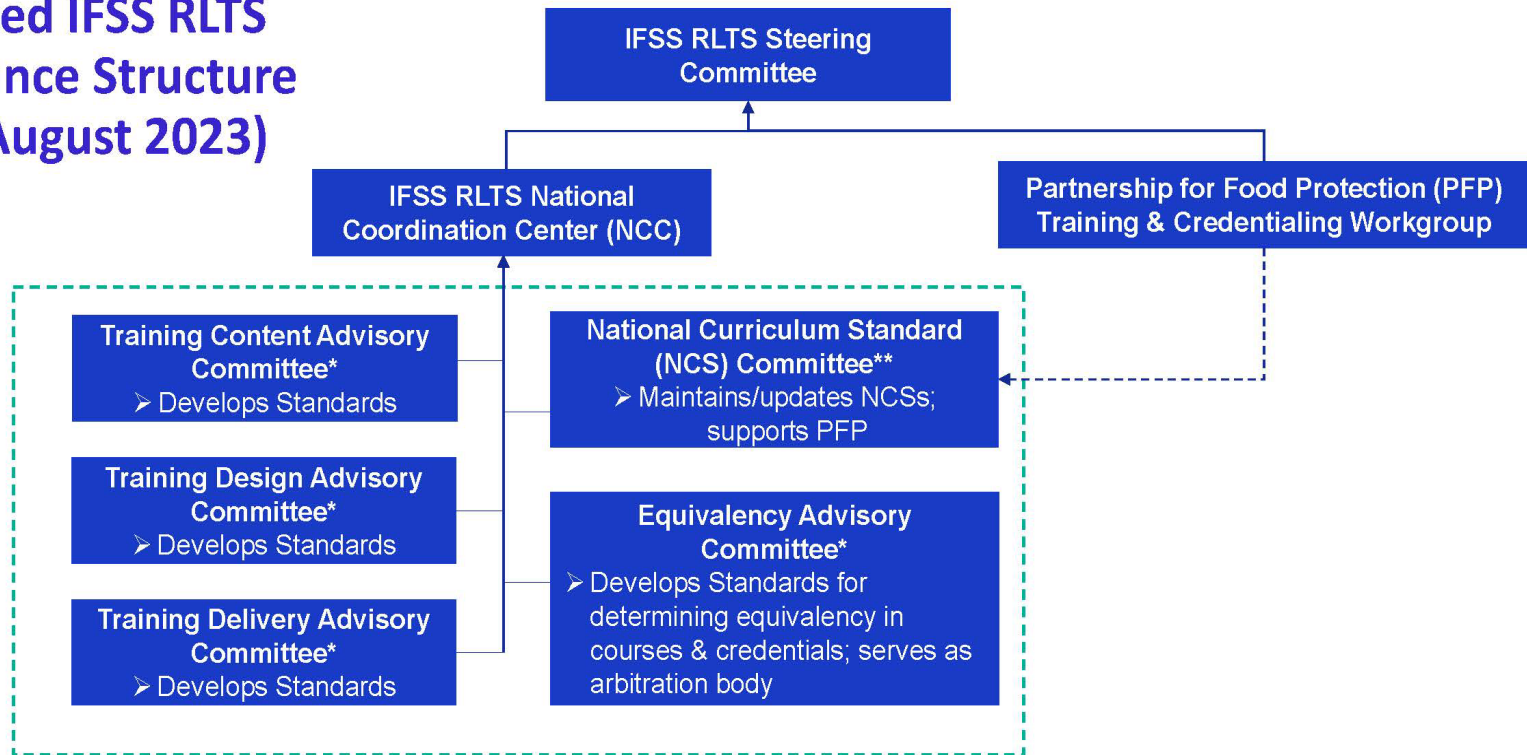
- **A collaboratively governed and administered IFSS RLTS:** The Strategic Plan outlines the necessity for a governance structure that is comprised of members of all facets of the IFSS RLTS, including but not limited to SLTT agencies, the FDA, other federal agencies, training organizations, and professional associations. Each of these entities are equal partners in responsibility for oversight and direction of the new system.
- **A fully built-out NCS:** As laid out in the Strategic Plan, it is essential to develop and maintain the Food Protection Professionals National Curriculum Standard (NCS) and the Food and Feed Laboratory NCS to create a training framework that can be applied across the system. The NCSs will establish a clear framework for competencies, ensuring that the IFSS workforce can perform comparable work across all jurisdictions and settings.

Given that the development of the NCSs is still underway, this two-year implementation plan accounts for time to complete and validate the NCSs and lays the groundwork for trainers to adjust existing training accordingly. This plan also lays the foundation for the IFSS RLTS by establishing governance, structure, framework, and policies so that the system can be operationalized smoothly and quickly.

The graphic on the next page shows the proposed governance structure of the IFSS RLTS and the roles of each implementation body.



## Proposed IFSS RLTS Governance Structure (as of August 2023)



Committees will communicate & collaborate with each other to ensure harmonization of standards.

\*Involves adult learning/training/instructional design SMEs, not HAF technical SMEs

\*\*Involves FDA & SLTT HAF technical SMEs, working in collaboration with IFPTI, AFDO, NEHA, APHL, & PFP

## IFSS RLTS PROPOSED GOVERNANCE STRUCTURE ROLES

Committee	Role
<p><b>IFSS RLTS Steering Committee (SC)</b></p> <p>(*Role will transfer to the NCC once it is stood up.)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sets strategic direction for the RLTS.</li> <li>• Creates a charter.</li> <li>• Determines final RLTS governance body, structure, and roles.</li> <li>• Oversees the implementation of the IFSS RLTS Strategic Plan, Implementation Plan, and tracker. *</li> <li>• Oversees communications related to the IFSS RLTS. *</li> <li>• Approves updates to the Strategic and Implementation Plans.</li> <li>• Charges, oversees, evaluates, and approves recommendations made by committees and the NCC regarding the development of standards for training content, design, delivery, and equivalency determinations.</li> <li>• Execute other deliverables in this Implementation Plan. *</li> <li>• “Decider” for the national content, design, delivery, and equivalence standards and policies.</li> </ul>
<p><b>National Coordination Center (NCC)</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Implementation operations body.</li> <li>• Oversees the day-to-day administration of the RLTS and implementation of the IFSS RLTS Strategic Plan, Implementation Plan, and tracker.</li> <li>• Oversees communications related to the IFSS RLTS.</li> <li>• Updates the strategic and implementation plans working with stakeholders.</li> <li>• Completes standing up the governance structure and processes for the RLTS.</li> <li>• Establishes a process for stakeholders to recommend changes to course content, design, delivery, and equivalence standards and policies.</li> <li>• Recommends changes to course content, design, delivery, and equivalence standards and policies to the IFSS RLTS Steering Committee for approval.</li> <li>• Determines equivalency of courses and credentials against the National Curriculum Standards (NCSs), (based on standards set by the Equivalency Advisory Committee).</li> <li>• Charges and oversees committees to develop/revise standards for training content, design, delivery, and equivalency determinations and execute other deliverables in this Plan.</li> <li>• Issues sub-awards and contracts to assist in the execution of the RLTS as needed.</li> </ul>

Committee	Role
<b>PFP Training and Credentialing Workgroup</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Recommends competency standards and policies.</li> <li>• Provides guidance on the NCSs.</li> <li>• Secures SMEs for NCS development and validation.</li> <li>• Assists in the updating of content, policies, and procedures in the NCSs (working in collaboration with the NCS committee under the NCC).</li> <li>• Revalidates the competencies every 5 years.</li> <li>• Develop feedback mechanism to ensure IFSS partner needs are being met.</li> </ul>
<b>National Curriculum Standard Committee</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Works in collaboration with the PFP Training and Credentialing Workgroup to reaffirm the purpose, objectives, and intended use of the NCSs.</li> <li>• Oversees the build-out of the NCSs.</li> <li>• Maintains the NCSs so they stay updated.</li> <li>• Receives feedback from IFSS partners for evaluation and incorporation into NCS.</li> </ul>
<b>Training Content Advisory Committee</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Recommends standards and policies.</li> </ul>
<b>Training Design Advisory Committee</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Recommends standards and policies.</li> </ul>
<b>Training Delivery Advisory Committee</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Recommends standards and policies.</li> </ul>
<b>Equivalency Advisory Committee</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Recommends standards and policies.</li> <li>• Determines equivalency of courses and credentials against the NCSs until NCC is stood up.</li> <li>• Acts as arbitration body for appeals to the NCC's determinations on equivalency.</li> </ul>

## ASSUMPTIONS

- The FDA will take the lead in establishing and funding any necessary public-private partnerships, cooperative agreements, etc. necessary to facilitate the implementation of the RLTS and execution of the IFSS RLTS Strategic Plan.
- This Implementation Plan assumes that the FDA will obtain additional funding in its FY24 budget to launch the formation of the NCC.
- FDA's Office of Training, Education, and Development (OTED) will continue being an important course developer and deliverer in the RLTS. OTED will also have representation on the IFSS RLTS Steering Committee.
- The Training Content, Training Design, and Training Delivery Advisory Committees will require federal, SLTT, association, academic, and industry volunteer SMEs with a strong background in adult learning, instructional design/delivery, and training. In contrast, the NCS Committee will require volunteer SMEs with strong technical expertise in NCS's professional tracks and a clear understanding of the competencies needed in the specific content areas at various levels within the curriculum framework.
- A roster of SMEs will need to be built and maintained so that the workload on SMEs within this implementation plan can be distributed equitably.

## IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

ACTIVITY / TASK / TACTIC	DELIVERABLE	RESPONSIBLE PARTY	START DATE	END DATE	STRATEGIC ALIGNMENT
<b>YEAR 1 (OCT 2023 – SEP 2024)</b>					
Obtain feedback from association partners on course modality	Recommendations Summary doc	FDA STWG (charged by FDA leadership)	<b><i>Jun 2023</i></b>	<b><i>Oct 2023</i></b>	2.3.2 3.1.4 3.2.4
Form IFSS RLTS SC (comprised of IFSS strategic partners)	Roster	IFSS Regulatory and Laboratory Training Strategic Plan Project Team	<b><i>Jul 2023</i></b>	<b><i>Aug 2023</i></b>	1.2.1 4.1.1 4.1.2
Form and charge NCS Committee	Charge document; Charter	IFSS Regulatory and Laboratory Training Strategic Plan Project Team	<b><i>Jul 2023</i></b>	<b><i>Aug 2023</i></b>	1.4.1

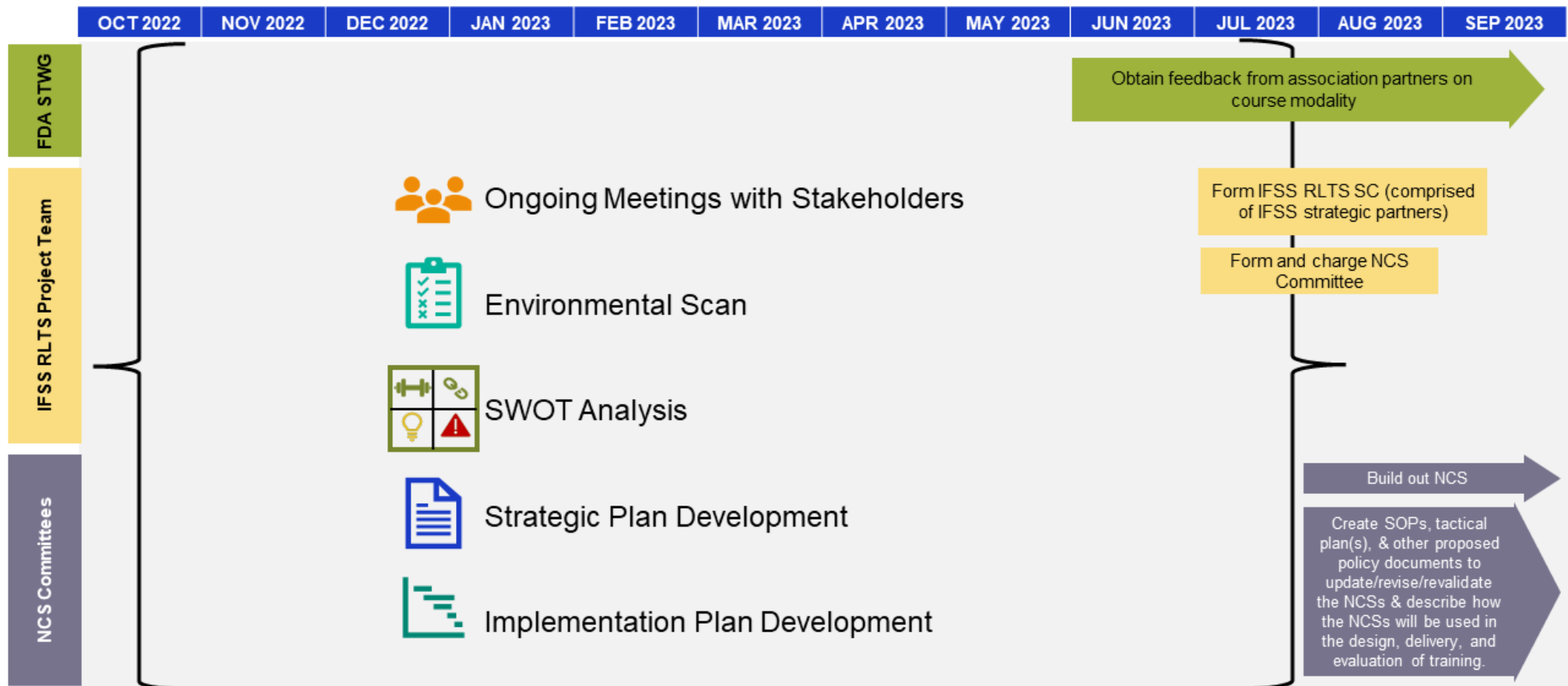
ACTIVITY / TASK / TACTIC	DELIVERABLE	RESPONSIBLE PARTY	START DATE	END DATE	STRATEGIC ALIGNMENT
Buildout the NCSs	Validated NCSs	NCS Committee and PFP Training and Credentialing Workgroup	Aug 2023	Jun 2024	1.4.1
Create SOPs, tactical plan(s), and other proposed policy documents to update/revise/revalidate the NCSs and describe how the NCSs will be used in the design, delivery, and evaluation of training.	Plan(s)/Policy docs	NCS Committee and PFP Training and Credentialing Workgroup	Aug 2023	Jun 2024	1.4.2 1.4.3
Stand up Training Content Advisory Committee	Roster & Charge document	SC	Oct 2023	Dec 2023	1.2.1
Stand up Training Design Advisory Committee	Roster & Charge document	SC	Oct 2023	Jan 2024	1.2.1 4.1.1
Stand up Training Delivery Advisory Committee	Roster & Charge document	SC	Oct 2023	Jan 2024	1.2.1 4.1.1
Stand up Equivalency Advisory Committee	Charge document	SC	Oct 2023	Jan 2024	1.2.2
Develop and clear SC charter & SOPs, if applicable.	Charter, SOPs	SC	Oct 2023	Jan 2024	4.1.1 4.1.2
Recommend and clear final RLTS governance structure w/ roles and responsibilities (draft provided in the Implementation Plan Introduction)	Concept paper	SC	Oct 2023	Jan 2024	4.1.1 4.2.1
Develop and implement communications/outreach plan to raise awareness of implementation and progress of IFSS RLTS	Comms/Outreach plan	SC	Oct 2023	Feb 2024	1.1.1
Reaffirm NCS purpose and goals, intended use	Decision memo	NCS Committee and PFP Training and Certification Workgroup	Oct 2023	Dec 2023	1.4.2
Inventory OTED courses supporting the RLTS	Inventory list	OTED	Nov 2023	Feb 2024	1.4.4

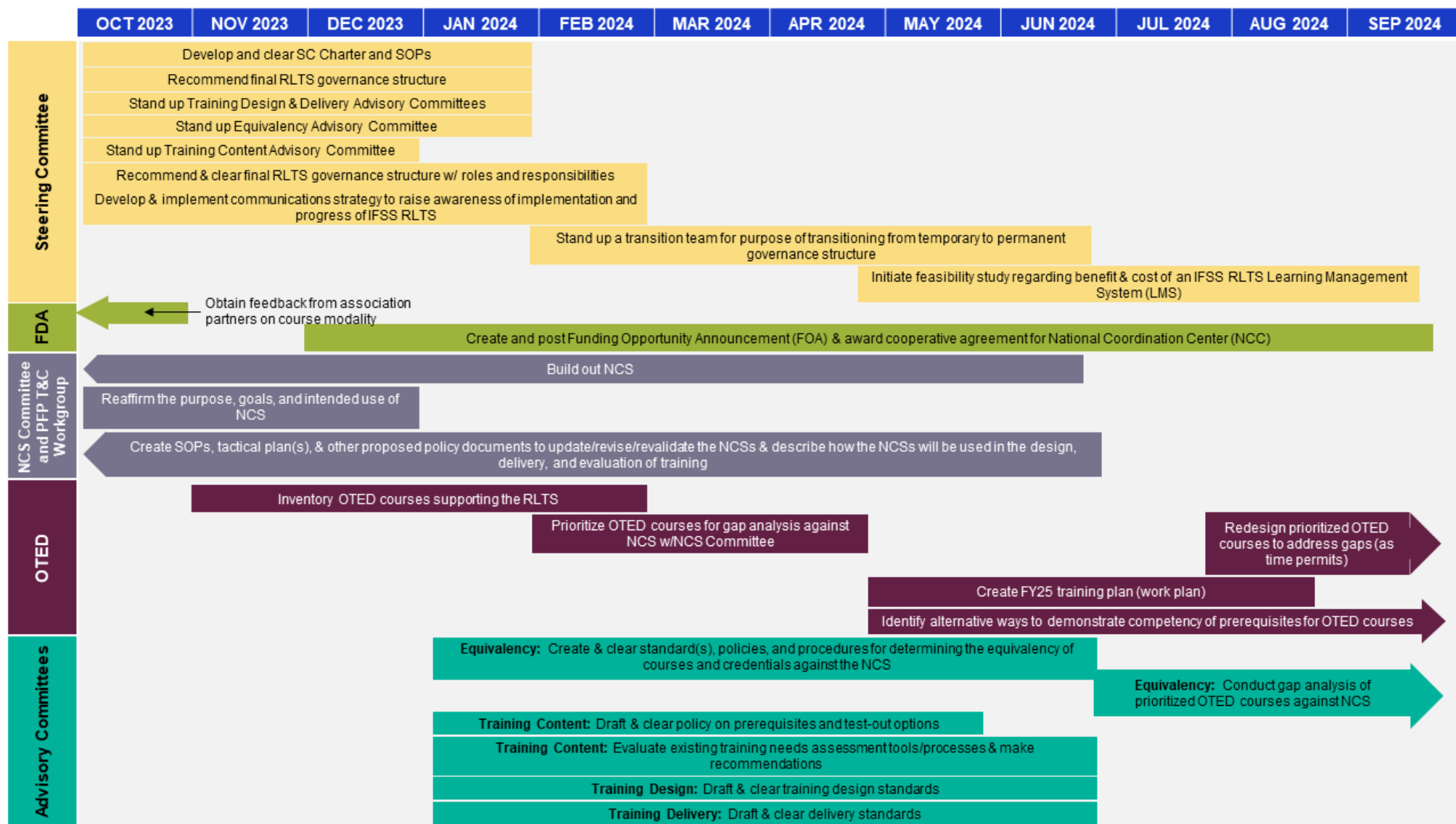


ACTIVITY / TASK / TACTIC	DELIVERABLE	RESPONSIBLE PARTY	START DATE	END DATE	STRATEGIC ALIGNMENT
Create & post Funding Opportunity Announcement (FOA) and award cooperative agreement for National Coordination Center (NCC)	FOA, Notice of Award Letter	FDA	Dec 2023	Sep 2024	1.2.1
Draft and clear policy on prerequisites and alternative ways to demonstrate competency	Final policy	Training Content Advisory Committee	Jan 2024	May 2024	1.2.2 1.1.3
Create and clear standard(s), policies, and procedures for determining the equivalency of courses and credentials against the NCSs.	Equivalency Determination Standard(s)/Policies	Equivalency Advisory Committee	Jan 2024	Jun 2024	1.2.2
Draft and clear training design standard(s)	Training Design Standard(s)	Training Design Advisory Committee	Jan 2024	Jun 2024	2.1.3 2.2.1 2.3.1 2.3.2
Draft and clear course delivery standard(s)	Course Delivery Standard(s)	Training Delivery Advisory Committee	Jan 2024	Jun 2024	3.1.2 3.1.3 3.1.4
Evaluate existing training needs assessment tools/processes and make recommendations	Training needs concept paper	Training Content Advisory Committee	Jan 2024	Jun 2024	3.1.1 3.2.1
Stand up a transition team for the purpose of transitioning from a temporary to a permanent governance structure including NCC	Roster	SC	Feb 2024	Jun 2024	N/A
Prioritize OTED courses for gap analysis against NCSs	Prioritized list	OTED, working in collaboration with the NCS Committee	Feb 2024	Apr 2024	1.4.4
Identify alternative ways to demonstrate competency of prerequisites for OTED courses	Needs list	OTED	May 2024	Sep 2025	1.1.3
Initiate feasibility study regarding benefit & cost of an IFSS RLTS Learning Management System (LMS)	Feasibility study concept paper	SC	May 2024	Sep 2024	1.3.2 3.1.1 3.2.1
Create FY25 training plan (work plan)	Course listing in OTED LMS	OTED	May 2024	Aug 2024	3.1.1

ACTIVITY / TASK / TACTIC	DELIVERABLE	RESPONSIBLE PARTY	START DATE	END DATE	STRATEGIC ALIGNMENT
Conduct gap analysis of prioritized OTED courses against NCSs (can be initiated as content areas are validated)	Summary report(s)	Equivalency Advisory Committee	Jul 2024	Sep 2025	1.4.4
Redesign prioritized OTED courses to address gaps (as time permits)	Revised course materials	OTED	Aug 2024	Sep 2025	2.1.3
<b>YEAR 2 (Oct 2024 – Sept 2025)</b>					
Stand up NCC	Grantee Project Plan	NCC Awardee Organization	Oct 2024	Sep 2025	4.1.1
Launch IFSS RLTS LMS (include all OTED courses that meet NCS & stakeholder partner courses once deemed equivalent)	LMS	NCC	Jan 2025	Sep 2025	3.2.1
Launch pilot to review stakeholder partner courses for equivalency	Pilot Plan	NCC	Jan 2025	Sep 2025	1.2.2 1.3.2 1.3.3
Pilot new training needs assessment tool/process	Needs list	NCC	Apr 2025	Sep 2025	1.1.2
Create FY26 training plan (work plan) (includes OTED and IFSS partner courses)	Course listing in NTS LMS	NCC	May 2025	Aug 2025	3.1.1

## TIMELINE

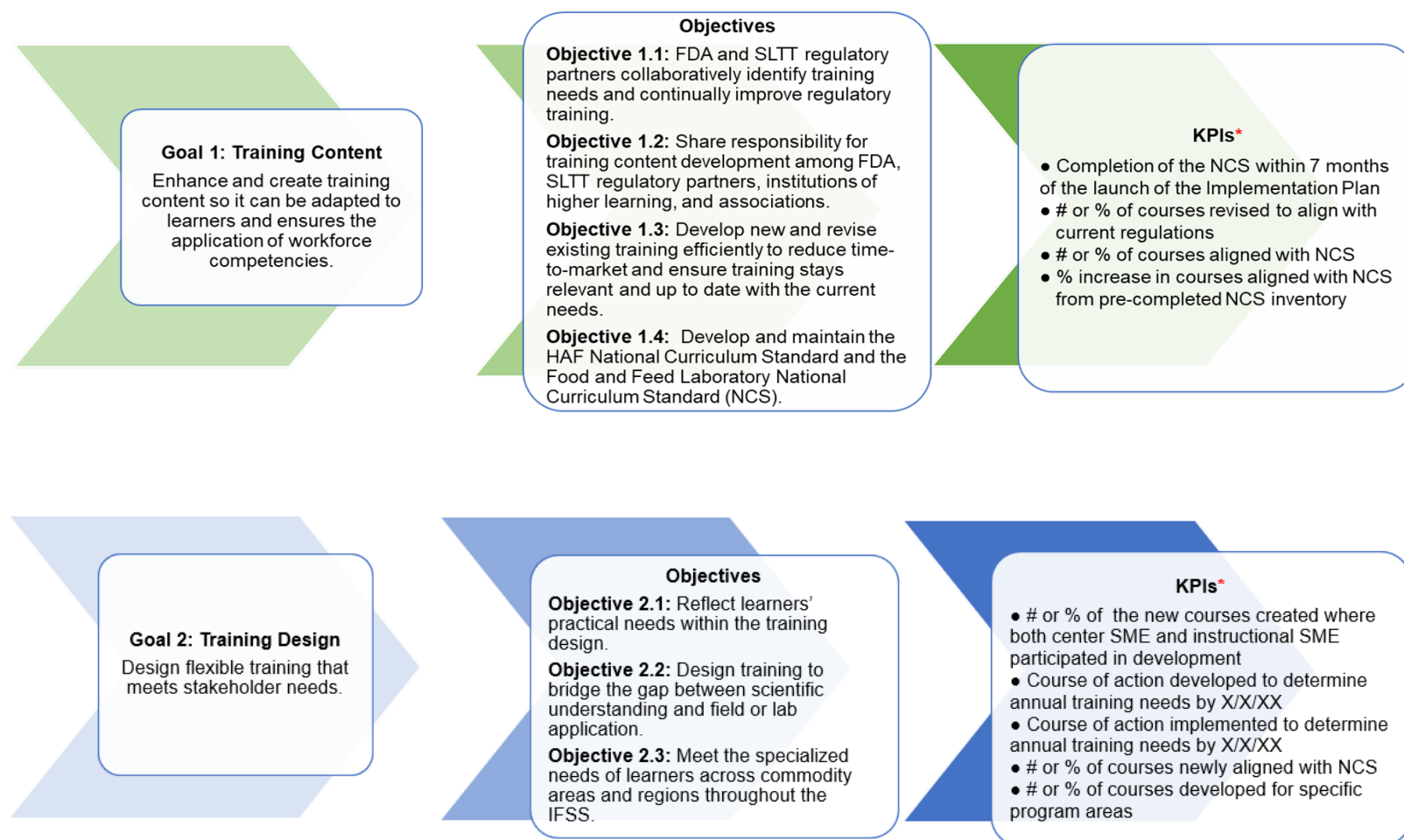




		OCT 2024	NOV 2024	DEC 2024	JAN 2025	FEB 2025	MAR 2025	APR 2025	MAY 2025	JUN 2025	JUL 2025	AUG 2025	SEP 2025
NCC Awardee Organization		Stand-up NCC											
					Launch IFSS RLTS LMS (include all OTED courses that meet NCS & stakeholder partner courses once deemed equivalent)								
NCC					Launch IFSS RLTS LMS (include all OTED courses that meet NCS & stakeholder partner courses once deemed equivalent)								
					Launch Pilot to review stakeholder partner courses for equivalency								
								Pilot new training needs assessment tool/process					
									Create FY26 training plan (work plan) with OTED and IFSS partner courses				

## PROPOSED KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

The KPIs below are intended as a reference point for the Steering Committee. The SC will determine which KPIs to use to best track progress and fidelity of the IFSS RLTS. Some of the KPIs below cannot be measured in the first two years of implementation. The SC will decide when to start measuring each KPI and whether to develop new ones that better fit the IFSS RLTS' needs. The measurement increment for each of the proposed KPIs is quarterly.





## ACRONYMS

- IFSS – Integrated Food Safety System
- LMS – Learning Management System
- NCC – National Coordination Center
- NCS – National Curriculum Standard
- OTED – Office of Training Education and Development
- PFP – Partnership for Food Protection
- RLTS – Regulatory and Laboratory Training System
- SC – Steering Committee
- SOP – Standard Operating Procedures