

Federally-Recognized Tribes Extension Program

2011 Request for Applications

APPLICATION DEADLINE: March 31, 2011



**U.S. Department of Agriculture
National Institute of Food and Agriculture**

**NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF FOOD AND AGRICULTURE;
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE**

FEDERALLY-RECOGNIZED TRIBES EXTENSION PROGRAM

INITIAL ANNOUNCEMENT

CATALOG OF FEDERAL DOMESTIC ASSISTANCE: This program is listed in the Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance under 10.500.

DATES: Applications must be received by close of business (COB) on March 31, 2011 (5:00 p.m. Eastern Time). Applications received after this deadline will normally not be considered for funding. Comments regarding this request for applications (RFA) are requested within six months from the issuance of this notice. Comments received after that date will be considered to the extent practicable.

STAKEHOLDER INPUT: The National Institute of Food and Agriculture (NIFA) is requesting comments regarding this RFA from any interested party. These comments will be considered in the development of the next RFA for the program, if applicable, and will be used to meet the requirements of section 103(c)(2) of the Agricultural Research, Extension, and Education Reform Act of 1998 (7 U.S.C. 7613(c)(2)). This section requires the Secretary to solicit and consider input on a current RFA from persons who conduct or use agricultural research, education and extension for use in formulating future RFAs for competitive programs. Written stakeholder comments on this RFA should be submitted in accordance with the deadline set forth in the DATES portion of this Notice.

Written stakeholder comments should be submitted by mail to: Policy and Oversight Division; Office of Grants and Financial Management National Institute of Food and Agriculture; USDA; STOP 2299; 1400 Independence Avenue, SW; Washington, DC 20250-2299; or via e-mail to: RFA-OGFM@nifa.usda.gov (This e-mail address is intended only for receiving comments regarding this RFA and not requesting information or forms.) In your comments, please state that you are responding to the Federally-Recognized Tribes Extension Program RFA.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY: NIFA requests applications for the Federally-Recognized Tribes Extension Program (FRTEP) for fiscal year (FY) 2011 to establish Extension education programs on American Indian Reservations and Tribal jurisdictions. This RFA is being released prior to the passage of an Appropriations Act for FY 2011. Enactment of additional Continuing Resolutions or an Appropriations Act may affect the availability or level of funding for this program. The amount available for support of this program in FY 2011 is approximately \$3,500,000.

This notice identifies the objectives for FRTEP projects, the eligibility criteria for projects and applicants, and the application forms and associated instructions needed to apply for a FRTEP grant. NIFA additionally requests stakeholder input from any interested party for use in the development of the next RFA for this program.

Table of Contents

PART I—FUNDING OPPORTUNITY DESCRIPTION	4
A. Legislative Authority and Background.....	4
B. Purpose and Priorities	4
C. Program Area Description	4
PART II—AWARD INFORMATION.....	5
A. Available Funding	5
B. Types of Applications.....	5
C. Project Types	5
PART III—ELIGIBILITY INFORMATION.....	7
A. Eligible Applicants	7
B. Cost Sharing or Matching.....	7
PART IV—APPLICATION AND SUBMISSION INFORMATION.....	8
A. Electronic Application Package.....	8
B. Content and Form of Application Submission.....	9
C. Submission Dates and Times.....	12
D. Funding Restrictions.....	13
E. Other Submission Requirements.....	14
PART V—APPLICATION REVIEW REQUIREMENTS.....	15
A. General.....	15
B. Evaluation Criteria.....	15
C. Conflicts of Interest and Confidentiality.....	15
D. Organizational Management Information.....	17
PART VI—AWARD ADMINISTRATION	18
A. General.....	18
B. Award Notice.....	18
C. Administrative and National Policy Requirements.....	19
D. Expected Program Outputs and Reporting Requirements.....	20
PART VII—AGENCY CONTACT	20
PART VIII—OTHER INFORMATION	22
A. Access to Review Information.....	22
B. Use of Funds; Changes	22
C. Confidential Aspects of Applications and Awards.....	23
D. Regulatory Information	23
E. Definitions.....	23

PART I—FUNDING OPPORTUNITY DESCRIPTION

A. Legislative Authority and Background

This program is authorized under Section 3(d) of the Act of May 8, 1914, Smith-Lever Act, ch. 79, 38Stat. 372, 7 U.S.C. 341 et seq. This program supports extension programs on American Indian Reservations and Tribal jurisdictions to address the unique needs and problems of American Indian Tribal Nations.

B. Purpose and Priorities

The purpose of this program is to support Extension Agents who establish Extension education programs on the Indian Reservations and Tribal jurisdictions of Federally-Recognized Tribes. To the extent practicable, priorities should reflect the following national critical needs areas:

- 1) Development of sustainable energy;
- 2) Increased global food security;
- 3) Adaptation /mitigation of agriculture and natural resources to global climate change;
- 4) Reduction of childhood and adolescent obesity; and
- 5) Improved food safety.

C. Program Area Description

The programs should serve Native American Communities within the critical need areas.

FRTEP encourages projects that develop content suitable for delivery through eXtension (http://about.extension.org/mediawiki/files/5/51/EXECUTIVE_SUMMARY_-_March_14%2C_2006_-_YEAR_2.pdf). This content is for end users, as opposed to staff development, and must align with the eXtension Implementation Plan (available at <http://about.extension.org/wiki/Planning>). Funds may be used to contribute to existing Communities of Practice (COPs) (http://about.extension.org/wiki/Glossary_of_eXtension_Terms#Community_of_Practice_.28CoP.29;) or form new COPs that focus on Native American Communities (for examples of developing COPs and guidance on forming COPs, see http://cop.extension.org/wiki/Main_Page).

PART II—AWARD INFORMATION

A. Available Funding

There is no commitment by USDA to fund any particular application or to make a specific number of awards. It is anticipated that approximately \$3,500,000 will be available to fund applications in FY 2011. This RFA is being released prior to the passage of an Appropriations Act for FY 2011. Enactment of additional Continuing Resolutions or an Appropriations Act may affect the availability or level of funding for this program.

Awards issued as a result of this RFA will have designated the Automated Standard Applications for Payment System (ASAP), operated by the Department of Treasury's Financial Management Service, as the payment system for funds. For more information see http://www.nifa.usda.gov/business/method_of_payment.html.

B. Types of Applications

In FY 2011 applications may be submitted to the **FRTEP** Program as one of the following types of requests:

(1) New application. This is a project application that has not been previously submitted to the FRTEP Program. All new applications will be reviewed competitively using the selection process and evaluation criteria described in Part V—Application Review Requirements.

In FY 2011, applications should be submitted for a 2-year period as NIFA anticipates making these awards as continuation grants ending in FY 2013. A continuation grant is an award for which an application is approved, but each year of funding is awarded on an annual basis and subject to the availability of annual appropriations and satisfactory progress of the project.

Therefore, awards made in FY 2011 would provide funds for the first year of the project. Limits on the amount of funding an applicant may request are dictated by the appropriate personnel salary rates of the applicant institution plus other allowable costs. It is expected that both years of the project would be at the same funding level as the initial project year (see Part IV, D, Funding Restrictions). Funding requests must be reasonable and fully justified (see part V, B, Evaluation Criteria, Cost Effectiveness of Proposed Project.)

(2) Resubmitted application. This is an application that had previously been submitted to the FRTEP Program but not funded. Project Directors (PDs) must respond to the previous review panel summary (see Response to Previous Review, Part IV). Resubmitted applications must be received by the relevant due dates, will be evaluated in competition with other pending applications in appropriate area to which they are assigned, and will be reviewed according to the same evaluation criteria as new applications.

C. Project Types

The key mission areas for this award program are as follows:

- Development of profitable farming, forestry and ranching techniques;
- Providing 4-H and youth development experiences for Tribal youth, including agriculture and agri-business;
- Enhancing stewardship of natural resources, including rangeland, fisheries and wildlife that leads to sustainable natural resource use;
- Responding to national security and food safety issues involving animal identification and disease prevention;
- Improving human health through nutrition and programs that utilize traditional foods;
- Adopting management practices to mitigate the effects of drought and other severe weather conditions; and
- Enhancing rural community economic development.

Given these mission areas, there is a broad diversity of project types available for applicants to pursue. Possible project types include (but are not limited to):

- Assisting farmers, foresters and ranchers in increasing efficiency of agricultural production systems and in generating high quality products and processes;
- Increasing knowledge of market principles, economic diversification and utilization of sustainable farming operations;
- Increasing producers' knowledge of principles and techniques of risk management;
- Reducing the number and severity of agricultural pests, weeds, invasive species and disease outbreaks;
- Increasing sustainable use of bio-energy and biomass conversion to achieve sustainable use;
- Reducing the incidence or prevalence of food born illnesses and contaminants by providing extension outreach to food, animal and produce growers, owners and operators of small plants, and food preparers and handlers;
- Improving management of forest and rangelands, including land, air and water to achieve sustainable use; and
- Helping youth to develop good decision-making and leadership skills and providing educational opportunities to improve their technical skills.

Project Duration:

The statutory limitation for this program is five (5) years.

PART III—ELIGIBILITY INFORMATION

A. Eligible Applicants

Applications may be submitted by 1862 and 1890 Land-Grant Institutions and the University of the District of Columbia.

Award recipients may subcontract to organizations not eligible to apply provided such organizations are necessary for the conduct of the project.

B. Cost Sharing or Matching

NIFA does not require matching support for this program, and matching resources will not be factored into the review process as evaluation criteria.

PART IV—APPLICATION AND SUBMISSION INFORMATION

A. Electronic Application Package

Only electronic applications may be submitted via Grants.gov to NIFA in response to this RFA. **Applicants are advised to submit early to the Grants.gov system.**

New Users of Grants.gov

Prior to preparing an application, it is suggested that the PD/PI first contact an Authorized Representative (AR)(also referred to as Authorized Organizational Representative or AOR) to determine if the organization is prepared to submit electronic applications through Grant.gov. If the organization is not prepared (e.g., the institution/organization is new to the electronic grant application process through Grants.gov), then the one-time registration process must be completed PRIOR to submitting an application. It can take as much as two weeks to complete the registration process so it is critical to begin as soon as possible. In such situations the AR should go to “Get Registered” on the Grants.gov left navigation bar (or go to http://www.grants.gov/applicants/get_registered.jsp) for information on registering the institution/organization with Grants.gov. A quick reference guide listing the steps is available as a 4-page PDF document at the following website: <http://www.grants.gov/section910/Grants.govRegistrationBrochure.pdf>.

Steps to Obtain Application Package Materials

The steps to access application materials are as follows:

1. In order to access, complete and submit applications, applicants must download and install a version of Adobe Reader compatible with Grants.gov. This software is essential to apply for NIFA Federal assistance awards. For basic system requirements and download instructions, please see http://www.grants.gov/help/download_software.jsp. To verify that you have a compatible version of Adobe Reader, Grants.gov established a test package that will assist you in making that determination. Grants.gov Adobe Versioning Test Package: <http://www.grants.gov/applicants/AdobeVersioningTestOnly.jsp>.
2. The application package must be obtained via Grants.gov, go to <http://www.grants.gov>, click on “Apply for Grants” in the left-hand column, click on “**Step 1: Download a Grant Application Package and Instructions,**” enter the funding opportunity number **USDA-NIFA-SLBCD-003402** in the appropriate box and click “Download Package.” From the search results, click “Download” to access the application package.

Contained within the application package is the “NIFA Grants.gov Application Guide: A Guide for Preparation and Submission of NIFA Applications via Grants.gov.” This Guide contains an introduction and general Grants.gov instructions, information about how to use a Grant Application Package in Grants.gov, and instructions on how to complete the application forms.

If assistance is needed to access the application package (e.g., downloading or navigating Adobe forms), **or submitting the application** then refer to resources available on the Grants.gov Web site first (<http://www.grants.gov/>). Grants.gov assistance is also available as follows:

Grants.gov customer support

Toll Free: 1-800-518-4726

Business Hours: 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Closed on [Federal Holidays](#).

Email: support@grants.gov

See <http://www.nifa.usda.gov/funding/electronic.html> for additional resources for applying electronically.

B. Content and Form of Application Submission

Electronic applications should be prepared following Parts V and VI of the document entitled “A Guide for Preparation and Submission of NIFA Applications via Grants.gov.” This guide is part of the corresponding application package (see Section A. of this Part). The following is **additional information** needed in order to prepare an application in response to this RFA. **If there is discrepancy between the two documents, the information contained in this RFA is overriding.**

Note the attachment requirements (e.g., portable document format) in Part III section 3. of the Guide. ANY PROPOSALS CONTAINING NON-PDF DOCUMENTS WILL BE AT RISK OF BEING EXCLUDED FROM NIFA REVIEW. Partial applications will be excluded from NIFA review. With documented prior approval, resubmitted applications will be accepted until close of business on the closing date in the RFA.

If you do not own PDF-generating software, Grants.gov provides online tools to assist applicants. Users will find a link to “Convert Documents to PDF” on <http://grants.gov/assets/PDFConversion.pdf>.

For any questions related to the preparation of an application please review the NIFA Grants.gov Application Guide and the applicable request for applications. If assistance is still needed for preparing application forms content, contact:

- Email: electronic@nifa.usda.gov
- Phone: 202-401-5048
- Business hours: Monday through Friday, 7:00 am – 5:00 pm Eastern Time, excluding Federal holidays.

1. SF 424 R&R Cover Sheet

Information related to the questions on this form is dealt with in detail in Part V, 2. of the NIFA Grants.gov Application Guide.

2. R&R Project/Performance Site Location(s)

Information related to the questions on this form is dealt with in detail in Part V, 3. of the NIFA Grants.gov Application Guide.

3. R&R Other Project Information Form

Information related to the questions on this form is dealt with in detail in Part V, 4. of the NIFA Grants.gov Application Guide.

a. Field 7. Project Summary/Abstract. The summary should also include the relevance of the project to the goals of FRTEP.

PDF attachment. Specifications are as follows:

1. The summary should not exceed 250 words.
2. Include the names and affiliated organizations of all PDs and Co-PDs.
3. Include the title of the project (must be descriptive of the program).
4. The summary must be a self-contained specific description of the activity to be undertaken and should focus on goals, strategies and anticipated project outcomes.
5. List which of the program focus area(s) you will be addressing. Examples could include: Development of profitable farming and ranching techniques, providing 4-H and youth development experiences, natural resources stewardship, responding to national security and food safety issues, improving human health through nutrition, adopting management practices to mitigate the effects of drought or enhancing rural community economic development.

b. Field 8. Project Narrative.

PLEASE NOTE: The Project Narrative shall not exceed 15 pages of written text regardless of whether it is single or double spaced and up to 5 additional pages for figures and tables. This maximum (20 pages) has been established to ensure fair and equitable competition. The Project Narrative must include all of the following:

- 1) Situation Statement, Goals Statement and Statement of Program Objectives: Description of the project should include the situational statement that indicates the need for funding and the program goals and objectives. Consider how you can link your objectives to the goals of promoting sustainable energy, global food security and hunger reduction, addressing climate change, nutrition and preventing childhood obesity, enhanced food safety and sustainable rural economies.
- 2) Target audience(s) and geographic description of the area to be served.
- 3) Statement of Approach: Include a description of the major strategies to be undertaken; procedures for stakeholder input; anticipated program delivery methods; observation on the feasibility of reaching program objectives and the relevance of methods used to reach objectives; identification of partnerships and a description of each partner's roles and

responsibilities, including those of the Cooperative Extension Service(s) and the Tribe(s); and a proposed timeline for achieving the major objectives;

- 4) Project Review and Evaluation: Identify appropriate methodologies for reviewing and evaluating the project from implementation to completion of project goals, particularly the impact on targeted individuals, communities and organizations. Describe how the project will create a lasting impact.

4. R&R Senior/Key Person Profile (Expanded)

Information related to the questions on this form is dealt with in detail in Part V, 5. of the NIFA Grants.gov Application Guide.

5. R&R Personal Data – As noted in Part V, 6. of the NIFA Grants.gov Application Guide, the submission of this information is voluntary and is not a precondition of award.

6. R&R Budget

Information related to the questions on this form is dealt with in detail in Part V, 7. of the NIFA Grants.gov Application Guide.

Applications must contain an annual budget for each year of the project and a cumulative budget. A separate Budget Narrative in PDF format that justifies and documents specific expenditures and subcontracts is required. In addition to specific yearly budget requests, a cumulative budget is required detailing the requested total support for the overall project period.

Be sure to list in the budget narrative any carry-over funds from previous grant years and how you propose to use these funds.

The initial year of funding (FY 2011) is to be used as the basis for funding for 2 years: 2011-2013, therefore, the subsequent yearly funding request (and budgets) must not exceed the amount requested in 2011.

Funds may be requested under any of the categories listed on the Budget Form (Form NIFA-2004), provided that the item or service for which support is requested is allowable under the authorizing legislation, the applicable statutes, regulations, and Federal cost principles, and these program guidelines, and can be justified as necessary for the successful conduct of the proposed project.

Funds may be used for salaries and appropriate fringe benefits for the Reservation Extension Agent, any individual directly involved in the delivery of Extension programs, and secretarial and/or support staff time that is directly related to the project. Funds may also be used to pay travel costs for up to two meetings per year for members of a Federally-Recognized Tribes Extension Program Advisory Committee.

In addition, an amount budgeted should include sufficient funds for the Reservation Extension Agent to attend the annual meetings of the FRTEP Agents and the annual meetings of the Intertribal Agriculture Council or the Southwest Indian Agriculture Association, or both.

All budget categories, with the exception of Indirect Costs, for which support is requested, must be individually listed (with costs) in the same order as the budget and justified on a separate sheet of paper and placed immediately behind the Budget Form.

If consulting, collaborative arrangements, or sub-contractual arrangements are included in the application, these arrangements should be fully explained and justified. The rate of pay for any consultant must be included, if known at the time of application. **Letters of Intent or other evidence should be provided to show that collaborators have agreed to participate must be signed by the consultant or AR of the subcontract.** For each arrangement involving the transfer of substantive programmatic work or the provision of financial assistance to a third party, a proposed statement of work, vita, and a budget must be supplied. In multi-State/territory applications, a Budget and Budget Narrative must be included for each State/territory involved. The lead State/territory and each participating State/territory must be identified.

7. Supplemental Information Form

Information related to the questions on this form is dealt with in detail in Part VI, 1. of the NIFA Grants.gov Application Guide.

a. Field 2. Program Code. Enter the program code name (i.e., enter “Federally-Recognized Tribes Extension Program”) and the program code (i.e., enter “LP”).

C. Submission Dates and Times

Instructions for submitting an application are included in Part IV, Section 1.9 of the NIFA Grants.gov Application Guide.

Applications must be received by Grants.gov by COB on March 31, 2011 (5:00 p.m. Eastern Time). Applications received after this deadline will normally not be considered for funding.

Applicants who have problems with the submission of an application to Grants.gov are encouraged to FIRST contact the Grants.gov Help Desk to resolve any problems. Keep a record of any such correspondence. See Part IV. A. for Grants.gov contact information.

Correspondence regarding submitted applications will be sent using e-mail. Therefore, applicants are strongly encouraged to provide accurate e-mail addresses, where designated, on the SF-424 R&R Application for Federal Assistance.

Carefully Monitor for Confirmation E-mails from Grants.gov

Institutions will receive 3 emails from Grants.gov on the progress of their submission. Applicants should be monitoring their Inbox for e-mail messages that confirm their submission status. The confirmation e-mails are as follows:

- First e-mail: Confirms receipt of the application by the Grants.gov system.
- Second e-mail: indicates that the application has either been successfully validated by the system prior to transmission to the grantor agency OR has been rejected due to errors.

- Third e-mail: confirms that the application has been passed to Grants USDA.

If applicants do not receive the first 2 e-mails within 24 hours they should contact Grants.gov to determine what corrective steps need to be taken. Be sure to obtain a case number from the Grants.gov help desk for future reference.

Within 2 weeks of submission the third e-mail should arrive. If it does not arrive, contact the National Program Leader (NPL). Be sure to keep a record of the Grants.gov number to help the program leader track your application. A detailed description of this process is in section E.

Once the application has been accepted it will be assigned a proposal number, this number should be cited on all future correspondence.

If the AR has not received correspondence **from NIFA** regarding a submitted application within 30 days of the established deadline, please contact the Program Contact identified in Part VII of the applicable and request the proposal number assigned to the application. **Failure to do so may result in the application not being considered for funding by the peer review panel. Once the application has been assigned a proposal number, this number should be cited on all future correspondence.**

D. Funding Restrictions

Pursuant to Section 1473 of the National Agricultural Research, Extension, and Teaching Policy Act of 1977 (91 Stat. 981), indirect costs are unallowable costs under Section 3(d) of the Smith-Lever funded projects, and no funds will be approved for this purpose. Costs that are a part of an institution's indirect cost pool may not be reclassified as direct costs for the purpose of making them allowable.

The following list of costs, although not all-inclusive, **are not permitted:**

- Entertainment;
- Meals (except when provided to maintain the continuity of a meeting);
- Tickets to shows or sporting events;
- Alcoholic beverages; and
- Costs associated with banquets and award ceremonies.

Awards and Certificates of Achievement are disallowed by OMB Circular, A-21 -- Cost Principles for Educational Institutions and OMB Circular A-122 -- Cost Principles for Non-Profit Organizations.

Any expense not directly related to the program or project is considered unallowable. Examples include child-care services, kitchen help hired to prepare refreshments, and promotional or appreciation gifts such as clothing, coffee mugs, or bags.

NIFA has determined that grant funds awarded under this authority may not be used for the renovation or refurbishment of research, education, or extension space; the purchase or installation of fixed equipment in such space; or the planning, repair, rehabilitation, acquisition, or construction of buildings or facilities.

In addition, tuition remission is prohibited by Section 1473 of the National Agricultural Research, Extension, and Teaching Policy Act of 1977, as amended (7 U.S.C. 3319).

E. Other Submission Requirements

The applicant should follow the submission requirements noted in the document entitled “A Guide for Preparation and Submission of NIFA Applications via Grants.gov.”

Described below are the requirements for successful submission of an application, all of the following steps must be met for an application to be considered for peer review:

- 1) Meeting the deadline: To electronically send the application to Grants.gov the submit button is hit, which triggers a date and time stamp on the application. The date and time stamp is used to determine whether the application was received by Grants.gov before the deadline, which is prior to close of business (5:00 p.m. Eastern Time) on March 31, 2011. An application submitted or resubmitted after the deadline is late. Consideration of late applications is only given in extenuating circumstances (e.g., natural disasters, confirmed Grants.gov outage) with proper documentation and support of the Agency Contact (see Part VII). The occurrence of one of these situations does not automatically ensure that a late application will be accepted. If an applicant wants a late application considered under an extenuating circumstance, the applicant should contact the Agency Contact accordingly.
- 2) Successful Grants.gov validation: The Grants.gov system performs a limited check of the application, and applicants are notified by Grants.gov of the outcome of the initial review. Applications meeting Grants.gov requirements are made available to the funding agency for further processing. Applications that fail Grants.gov validation may be resubmitted to Grants.gov if the original agency deadline has not passed. (Note that the Grants.gov system may allow applications to be submitted after the deadline has passed, but the application is considered late by NIFA.)
- 3) Successful Agency validation: NIFA staff perform precursory review of the application. The agency validation process includes, for example, meeting eligibility requirements and following agency application guidelines (e.g., formatting, page limitations, limits on budget requests). Applicants are notified by NIFA of the outcome of this review.

PART V—APPLICATION REVIEW REQUIREMENTS

A. General

Each application will be evaluated in a 2-part process. First, each application will be screened to ensure that it meets the administrative requirements as set forth in this RFA. Second, applications that meet these requirements will be technically evaluated by a review panel.

Reviewers will be selected based upon training and experience in relevant scientific, extension, or education fields, taking into account the following factors: (a) The level of relevant formal scientific, technical education, or extension experience of the individual, as well as the extent to which an individual is engaged in relevant research, education, or extension activities; (b) the need to include as reviewers experts from various areas of specialization within relevant scientific, education, or extension fields; (c) the need to include as reviewers other experts (e.g., producers, range or forest managers/operators, and consumers) who can assess relevance of the applications to targeted audiences and to program needs; (d) the need to include as reviewers experts from a variety of organizational types (e.g., colleges, universities, industry, state and Federal agencies, private profit and non-profit organizations) and geographic locations; (e) the need to maintain a balanced composition of reviewers with regard to minority and female representation and an equitable age distribution; and (f) the need to include reviewers who can judge the effective usefulness to producers and the general public of each application.

B. Evaluation Criteria

The evaluation criteria below will be used in reviewing applications submitted in response to this RFA:

Criteria
Statement of Need, Site Location, and Scope of Project
Program Objectives
Program Design and Methodologies
Quality of Stakeholder/Participant Involvement in the Proposed Project
Evaluation Methodologies
Cost Effectiveness of Proposed Project

- 1. Statement of Need, Site Location, and Scope of Project:** How well a case does the applicant make for overcoming a problem or taking advantage of an opportunity? Does the applicant adequately relate those issues that will be addressed in this project to the stated needs of the community? How well stated a case does the applicant make relative to reaching an underserved population in terms of geographic distribution and/or number of people to be served? Are the proposed activities, the geographic area to be covered and the number of people to be reached adequate for the funding amount requested?
- 2. Program Objectives:** Are the objectives written to address one or more of the Strategic Goals contained in Part I, B.? Are the specific program objectives written in clear,

concise, complete, measurable and logically arranged statements? Do the proposed project objectives provide sufficient justification for funding this proposal?

- 3. Program Design and Methodologies:** Will the program design and strategies likely produce the outcomes needed to meet the objectives described above? Is the project sufficiently focused and does it contain a critical mass of leadership and resources to undertake the activity? Are the scope and duration of the programs adequate to produce positive outcomes? Is the appropriate research base used to support the selected educational design and activities?
- 4. Quality of Stakeholder/Participant Involvement in the Proposed Project:** Does the applicant demonstrate a broad understanding of Tribal interests that is sufficient to produce positive outcomes? Are existing and/or potential partnerships and collaborations included and adequately described? Is there evidence of sufficient commitment on the part of stakeholder/participant groups to ensure success of the proposed project efforts and accomplishment of goals?
- 5. Evaluation Methodologies:** Are the evaluation designs and methodologies adequate to measure the extent to which program objectives are being met?
- 6. Cost Effectiveness of Proposed Project:** How well stated is the relationship between the proposed budget and the anticipated outcomes of this project? Are costs reasonable and necessary? How effective do the salaries and other direct costs appear to be in support of Extension program delivery? Are there proper balance, as well as sufficiency and efficiency of funds, among the individual budget items? Does the applicant include other sources of funding and describe how they will support increased program delivery or services?

C. Conflicts of Interest and Confidentiality

During the peer evaluation process, extreme care will be taken to prevent any actual or perceived conflicts of interest that may impact review or evaluation. For the purpose of determining conflicts of interest, the academic and administrative autonomy of an institution shall be determined by reference to the current Higher Education Directory, published by Higher Education Publications, Inc., 6400 Arlington Boulevard, Suite 648, Falls Church, Virginia 22042. Phone: (703) 532-2300. Web site: <http://www.hepinc.com>.

Names of submitting institutions and individuals, as well as application content and peer evaluations, will be kept confidential, except to those involved in the review process, to the extent permitted by law. In addition, the identities of peer reviewers will remain confidential throughout the entire review process. Therefore, the names of the reviewers will not be released to applicants.

D. Organizational Management Information

Specific management information relating to an applicant shall be submitted on a one time basis, with updates on an as needed basis, as part of the responsibility determination prior to the award of a grant identified under this RFA, if such information has not been provided previously under this or another NIFA program. NIFA will provide copies of forms recommended for use in fulfilling these requirements as part of the preaward process. Although an applicant may be eligible based on its status as one of these entities, there are factors which may exclude an applicant from receiving Federal financial and nonfinancial assistance and benefits under this program (e.g., debarment or suspension of an individual involved or a determination that an applicant is not responsible based on submitted organizational management information).

PART VI—AWARD ADMINISTRATION

A. General

Within the limit of funds available for such purpose, the awarding official of NIFA shall make grants to those responsible, eligible applicants whose applications are judged most meritorious under the procedures set forth in this RFA. The date specified by the awarding official of NIFA as the effective date of the grant shall be no later than September 30 of the Federal fiscal year in which the project is approved for support and funds are appropriated for such purpose, unless otherwise permitted by law. It should be noted that the project need not be initiated on the grant effective date, but as soon thereafter as practical so that project goals may be attained within the funded project period. All funds granted by NIFA under this RFA shall be expended solely for the purpose for which the funds are granted in accordance with the approved application and budget, the regulations, the terms and conditions of the award, the applicable Federal cost principles, and the Department's assistance regulations (parts 3015 and 3019 of 7 CFR).

B. Award Notice

The award document will provide pertinent instructions and information including, at a minimum, the following:

- (1) Legal name and address of performing organization or institution to whom the Director has issued an award under the terms of this request for applications;
- (2) Title of project;
- (3) Name(s) and institution(s) of PDs chosen to direct and control approved activities;
- (4) Identifying award number assigned by the Department;
- (5) Project period, specifying the amount of time the Department intends to support the project without requiring recompetition for funds;
- (6) Total amount of Departmental financial assistance approved by the Director during the project period;
- (7) Legal authority(ies) under which the award is issued;
- (8) Appropriate Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance (CFDA) number;
- (9) Applicable award terms and conditions (see <http://www.nifa.usda.gov/business/awards/awardterms.html> to view NIFA award terms and conditions);
- (10) Approved budget plan for categorizing allocable project funds to accomplish the stated purpose of the award; and

(11) Other information or provisions deemed necessary by NIFA to carry out its respective awarding activities or to accomplish the purpose of a particular award.

C. Administrative and National Policy Requirements

Several Federal statutes and regulations apply to grant applications considered for review and to project grants awarded under this program. These include, but are not limited to:

7 CFR Part 1, subpart A—USDA implementation of the Freedom of Information Act.

7 CFR Part 3—USDA implementation of OMB Circular No. A-129 regarding debt collection.

7 CFR Part 15, subpart A—USDA implementation of Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, as amended.

7 CFR Part 331 and 9 CFR Part 121—USDA implementation of the Agricultural Bioterrorism Protection Act of 2002.

7 CFR Part 3015—USDA Uniform Federal Assistance Regulations, implementing OMB directives (i.e., OMB Circular Nos. A-21 and A-122 (2 CFR Parts 220 and 230), and incorporating provisions of 31 U.S.C. 6301-6308 (formerly the Federal Grant and Cooperative Agreement Act of 1977, Pub. L. No. 95-224), as well as general policy requirements applicable to recipients of Departmental financial assistance.

7 CFR Part 3017—USDA implementation of Governmentwide Debarment and Suspension (Nonprocurement).

7 CFR Part 3018—USDA implementation of Restrictions on Lobbying. Imposes prohibitions and requirements for disclosure and certification related to lobbying on recipients of Federal contracts, grants, cooperative agreements, and loans.

7 CFR Part 3019—USDA implementation of OMB Circular A-110, Uniform Administrative Requirements for Grants and Other Agreements With Institutions of Higher Education, Hospitals, and Other Nonprofit Organizations (2 CFR Part 215).

7 CFR Part 3021—Governmentwide Requirements for Drug-Free Workplace (Financial Assistance).

7 CFR Part 3052—USDA implementation of OMB Circular No. A-133, Audits of States, Local Governments, and Nonprofit Organizations.

7 CFR Part 3407—NIFA procedures to implement the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969, as amended.

7 CFR 3430—Competitive and Noncompetitive Non-formula Grant Programs--General Grant Administrative Provisions.

29 U.S.C. 794 (section 504, Rehabilitation Act of 1973) and 7 CFR Part 15b (USDA implementation of statute) —prohibiting discrimination based upon physical or mental handicap in Federally assisted programs.

35 U.S.C. 200 et seq. —Bayh Dole Act, controlling allocation of rights to inventions made by employees of small business firms and domestic nonprofit organizations, including universities, in Federally assisted programs (implementing regulations are contained in 37 CFR Part 401).

D. Expected Program Outputs and Reporting Requirements

Grantees are to submit initial project information and annual summary reports to NIFA's electronic, Web-based inventory system that facilitates both grantee submissions of project outcomes and public access to information on Federally-funded projects. The details of these reporting requirements are included in the award terms and conditions.

Any additional reporting requirements will be identified in the terms and conditions of the award (see Part VI, B.9. for a link to view the NIFA award terms and conditions).

PART VII—AGENCY CONTACT

Applicants and other interested parties are encouraged to contact:

Tim Grosser;

National Program Leader;

National Institute of Food and Agriculture;

U.S. Department of Agriculture;

Waterfront Centre;

Telephone: 202-690-0402;

E-mail: tgrosser@nifa.usda.gov

PART VIII—OTHER INFORMATION

A. Access to Review Information

Copies of reviews, not including the identity of reviewers, and a summary of the panel comments will be sent to the applicant PD after the review process has been completed.

B. Use of Funds; Changes

1. Delegation of Fiscal Responsibility

Unless the terms and conditions of the award state otherwise, the awardee may not in whole or in part delegate or transfer to another person, institution, or organization the responsibility for use or expenditure of award funds.

2. Changes in Project Plans

a. The permissible changes by the awardee, PD(s), or other key project personnel in the approved project shall be limited to changes in methodology, techniques, or other similar aspects of the project to expedite achievement of the project's approved goals. If the awardee or the PD(s) is uncertain as to whether a change complies with this provision, the question must be referred to the Authorized Departmental Officer (ADO) for a final determination. The ADO is the signatory of the award document, not the program contact.

b. Changes in approved goals or objectives shall be requested by the awardee and approved in writing by the ADO prior to effecting such changes. In no event shall requests for such changes be approved which are outside the scope of the original approved project.

c. Changes in approved project leadership or the replacement or reassignment of other key project personnel shall be requested by the awardee and approved in writing by the ADO prior to effecting such changes.

d. Transfers of actual performance of the substantive programmatic work in whole or in part and provisions for payment of funds, whether or not Federal funds are involved, shall be requested by the awardee and approved in writing by the ADO prior to effecting such transfers, unless prescribed otherwise in the terms and conditions of the award.

e. The project period may be extended by NIFA without additional financial support, for such additional period(s) as the ADO determines may be necessary to complete or fulfill the purposes of an approved project, but in no case shall the total project period exceed any applicable statutory limit or expiring appropriation limitation. Any extension of time shall be conditioned upon prior request by the awardee and approval in writing by the ADO, unless prescribed otherwise in the terms and conditions of award.

f. Changes in Approved Budget: Unless stated otherwise in the terms and conditions of award, changes in an approved budget must be requested by the awardee and approved in writing by the

ADO prior to instituting such changes, if the revision will involve transfers or expenditures of amounts requiring prior approval as set forth in the applicable Federal cost principles, Departmental regulations, or award.

C. Confidential Aspects of Applications and Awards

When an application results in an award, it becomes a part of the record of NIFA transactions, available to the public upon specific request. Information that the Secretary determines to be of a confidential, privileged, or proprietary nature will be held in confidence to the extent permitted by law. Therefore, any information that the applicant wishes to have considered as confidential, privileged, or proprietary should be clearly marked within the application. The original copy of an application that does not result in an award will be retained by the Agency for a period of three years. Other copies will be destroyed. Such an application will be released only with the consent of the applicant or to the extent required by law. An application may be withdrawn at any time prior to the final action thereon.

D. Regulatory Information

For the reasons set forth in the final Rule related Notice to 7 CFR part 3015, subpart V (48 FR 29114, June 24, 1983), this program is excluded from the scope of the Executive Order 12372 which requires intergovernmental consultation with State and local officials. Under the provisions of the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995 (44 U.S.C. chapter 35), the collection of information requirements contained in this Notice have been approved under OMB Document No. 0524-0039.

E. Definitions

Please refer to 7 CFR 3430, Competitive and Noncompetitive Non-formula Grant Programs-- General Grant Administrative Provisions, for the applicable definitions for this NIFA grant program.