

Tribal Colleges Extension Program -- Special Emphasis

2011 Request for Applications

APPLICATION DEADLINE: March 16, 2011



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

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

TRIBAL COLLEGES EXTENSION PROGRAM (TCEP)

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 5:00 pm Eastern Time on March 16, 2011. 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 Tribal Colleges Extension Program-Special Emphasis RFA.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY: NIFA requests applications for the Tribal Colleges Extension Program-Special Emphasis (TCEP-SE) for fiscal year (FY) 2011 to conduct specialized, focused projects as a complement to a full extension department operations. 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. NIFA anticipates that the amount available for support of this program in FY 2011 will be approximately \$1,688,000.

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

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PART I—FUNDING OPPORTUNITY DESCRIPTION

A. Legislative Authority and Background

This program is authorized under Section 534(b) of the Equity in Educational Land-Grant Status Act of 1994 (7 U.S.C. 301 note), as amended by the Agricultural Research, Extension, and Education Reform Act of 1998 (AREERA) (7 U.S.C. 7601). This section amends Section 3 of the Act of May 8, 1914 (Smith-Lever Act) (7 U.S.C. 341 et seq.), as amended. Under this authority, appropriated funds are to be awarded to the 1994 Land-Grant Institutions (hereinafter referred to as 1994 institutions or Tribal Colleges and Universities or TCUs) for Extension work and funds are to be distributed on the basis of a competitive application process

B. Purpose and Priorities

The purpose of the TCEP is to enable 1994 institutions to deliver science-based, culturally relevant extension education programs designed to address public needs and improve quality of life. The TCEP is intended to be a component of the applicant 1994 institution's land-grant roadmap or strategic planning process. To the extent practicable, priorities should reflect NIFA's national critical needs areas:

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

Applications are being solicited for the TCEP-SE under the following areas:

1. Agriculture —educational programs help individuals learn new ways to generate income through alternative enterprises, improved marketing strategies, and management skills and help farmers, foresters and ranchers improve productivity through resource management, controlling crop pests, soil testing, livestock production practices, and marketing.
2. 4-H Youth Development —builds important life skills in youth that build character and assist them in making appropriate life and career choices. At-risk youth participate in school retention and enrichment programs. Youth learn science, math, social skills, and much more, through hands-on projects and activities.
3. Leadership Development —trains extension professionals and volunteers to deliver programs in gardening, health and safety, family and consumer issues, and 4-H youth development and serve in leadership roles in the community.
4. Natural Resources —informs landowners and homeowners how to achieve sustainable use of natural resources and enhance environmental values with educational programs in

water quality, water conservation, timber management, composting, lawn waste management, and recycling.

5. Family and Consumer Sciences —enhances families’ resiliency and health by teaching nutrition, food preparation skills, positive child care, family communication, financial management, and health care strategies.
6. Community and Economic Development —helps local governments investigate and create viable options for economic and community development, such as improved job creation and retention, small and medium-sized business development, effective and coordinated emergency response, solid waste disposal, tourism development, workforce education, and land use planning.

C. Program Area Description

This RFA is designed for 1994 Land Grants that received Tribal College Extension Capacity Grants in 2010. **It is for Special Emphasis applications only.**

The use of Logic Models is strongly encouraged. The logic model planning process is a tool that should be used to develop your project **before** writing your proposal. See Part IV.B.3, c. for details on where to attach this information to your application. Discuss plans to identify successes and build upon and disseminate them. Provide the numbers of participants expected to be directly and indirectly impacted by activities.

At its most fundamental level, a logic model should be a graphic representation of the thought path you followed in seeing an end objective and charting a course to achieve it. This should be a graphic path that others can follow easily. You can find an example and template of a logic model here:

http://www.csrees.usda.gov/nea/education/in_focus/tribal_if_tribal.html

eXtension

TCEP-SE 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 extension projects serving 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

This is a NIFA grant for 1994 Land Grants for Special Emphasis. There is no commitment by NIFA to fund any particular application or to make a specific number of awards. 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. NIFA anticipates that approximately \$1,688,000 will be available to fund 1994 Land Grant Extension applications in FY 2011.

TCEP Program Components	Approximate FY 2011 Funding Anticipated
New Extension Program Capacity Projects	\$1.1 million
Continuations Extension Program Capacity Projects Funding provided under a separate RFA	\$1.4 million
Special Emphasis Projects	\$1.2 million
Special Emphasis Leadership	\$300,000

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 TCEP-SE Program through this RFA will be submitted as new proposals.

C. Project Types

This RFA is for 1994 Land Grants that received TCEP capacity funding in 2010. This RFA is for Special Emphasis applications only. There are two types of special emphasis options available. Each proposal type needs a separate application. Eligible 1994 Land Grants may submit multiple proposals, but will receive no more than two awards in FY 2011.

Special Emphasis Grants: Support innovative projects to address special community needs or complement capacity programs beyond existing funding. Projects should take advantage of important opportunities, and demonstrate long-term sustained benefits and positive impact at 1994 Institutions. Unlike the Special Emphasis awards of previous years, these may focus on program or planning. **The funding is \$85,000 annually for three years per award.**

Special Emphasis: Leadership Option: An opportunity to mentor other Tribal Colleges and Universities or create broad-reaching and integrated extension projects to benefit the tribal community. Leadership projects will involve multiple partnerships and leveraging of resources. **The funding is \$85,000 annually for three years** and NIFA anticipates that no more than 2 schools will obtain this type of award in FY 2011—contingent upon proposal quality and available funding. If the applicant intends to mentor another 1994 Land Grant, a letter of agreement, signed by Project Directors from both institutions and their AR is required.

Examples of possible mentoring projects could be:

- Faculty or extension staff member exchange;
- Student exchange;
- Collaboration to improve grant management and writing;
- Collaboration on a project of interest to both schools; or
- Advise a Tribal College in setting up a 1994 Land Grant Office.

PART III—ELIGIBILITY INFORMATION

A. Eligible Applicants

The Educational Land-Grant Status Act of 1994, as amended in Section 533(a), requires that each 1994 Land-Grant Institution be accredited or making progress towards accreditation and be recognized as a legal entity. If accreditation is being sought, a college must demonstrate its progress towards accreditation by a letter from a nationally recognized accreditation agency affirming receipt of application for an accreditation site visit or other such documentation.

This RFA is for 1994 Land Grants who received a 4-year Extension Capacity Grant in 2010 and wish to apply for a new Special Emphasis Grant in 2011. **The schools are as follows:**

- Blackfeet Community College
- Fond du Lac Tribal and Community College
- Lac Courte Oreilles Ojibwa Community College
- Little Priest Tribal College
- Navajo Technical College
- Nebraska Indian Community College
- Northwest Indian College
- Oglala Lakota College
- Saginaw Chippewa Tribal College
- Salish Kootenai College
- Sinte Gleska University
- Stone Child College
- Turtle Mountain Community College
- United Tribes Technical College

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-003409** 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 be written 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 describe the activity to be undertaken and should focus on goals, strategies and specific project outcomes.
5. Identify the project type proposed - Special Emphasis regular or leadership.
6. List which of the area(s) you will be addressing: Agriculture, 4-H and Youth Development, Leadership Development, Natural Resources, Family and Consumer Sciences, Community and Economic Development (Part I.C). For Leadership Special Emphasis: list any partners or mentees in the project.

b. Field 8. Project Narrative.

PLEASE NOTE: The Project Narrative shall not exceed 3 pages of written text regardless of whether it is single or double spaced. This maximum has been established to ensure fair and equitable competition. The key is to be economical in words and thorough in meaning. The Project Narrative must include all of the following:

1. **Opportunity Statement:** Is there a need in the TCU's community that can be addressed? (One sentence)
2. **Program plan:** Can the TCU address all or part of the need in the community with the grant money provided? How will this be done?
3. **Program Evaluation:** Can progress be demonstrated? How will TCU measure progress toward addressing the need? Can a lasting impact be identified?
4. **Budget Narrative:** How will the money be spent?
5. **For Leadership Only: Benefit to Mentored TCU**

Field 9. Bibliography & Cited References - (Optional Attachment – Must be PDF format)

If needed, provide a complete list of all references cited in the application. **For each reference, provide the complete name for each author, the year of the publication, full title of the article, name of the journal or book published, volume, and the page numbers.** The references should be listed in alphabetical order using the last name of the first author.

Field 10. Facilities & Other Resources - (Optional Attachment – Must be PDF format)

If needed, describe the types, location, and availability of instrumentation and physical facilities necessary to carry out the work proposed. **If special academic, private or government laboratories or facilities are being used, include a letter in the application from the authorized representative of the facility describing the proposed arrangements and availability.** This letter should be included as a part of Other Attachments, see Field 12 below.

Field 11. Equipment Documentation - (Optional Attachment – Must be PDF format)

Equipment purchased (defined as in excess of \$5,000 for each item) must be fully justified under this section. Note: Equipment, as previously defined, is normally not funded in a HEC grant. Other purchases (e.g., computers, laboratory materials,...etc.) are described, instead, in the Budget Justification section under the ‘Materials and Supplies’ line item.

c. Other Attachments (Field 12. on the Form).

- **Collaborative Arrangements – PDF Attachment. No Page Limit.** Title the attachment as “Collaborative Arrangements” in the document header and save file as “CollaborativeArrangement.” If it is necessary to enter into formal consulting or collaborative arrangements with others, such arrangements should be fully explained and justified. If the consultant(s) or collaborator(s) are known at the time of the application, a vitae or resume should be provided. In addition, evidence (e.g., letter of support signed by the AR of the organization) should be provided that the collaborators involved have agreed to render these services. The applicant also will be required to provide additional information on consultants and collaborators in the budget portion of the application.
- **Mentoring Agreement Leadership Program Focus (If applicable)**
- **Logic Model – PDF Attachment.** Title attachment as “Logic Model” in the document header and save file as “Logic Model.”

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.

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 TCEP-SE) and the program code (i.e., enter NK).

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 5:00 pm Eastern Time on March 16, 2011. 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 (the submitting official) 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.

The third e-mail message should arrive within two weeks. If it does not, please call the National Program Leader, Tim Grosser at 202-690-0402. You should have a grants.gov tracking number if you received the first two mails. Be sure to have that number when you call, so your application can be tracked.

If the AR has not received ANY 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 RFA (or above) 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

Indirect costs are unallowable, and no funds will be approved for this purpose. Costs that are a part of the institution's indirect cost pool may not be reclassified as direct costs for the purpose of making them allowable.

The use of grant funds to plan, acquire, or construct a building or facility, or to acquire land, is not allowed under this program. With prior approval, in accordance with the cost principles set forth in OMB Circular No. A-21, grant funds may be used to purchase equipment, or for improvements, alterations, renovations, or repairs to land, buildings, or equipment, deemed necessary to retrofit existing spaces and resources in order to carry out a funded project under this grant. However, requests to use grant funds for such purposes must demonstrate that such expenditures are incidental to the major purpose for which the grant request is made and no more than twenty-five percent of the project budget may be used to purchase equipment. Any equipment purchased with Federal funds is the property of the grantee or the subgrantee, as appropriate.

Neither Equity nor Research projects are supported under the TCEP.

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 5:00 p.m. Eastern Time on March 16, 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:

- For all Special Emphasis: Did the application make a case that a need exists? Did the project narrative address that need as a result of funded activities? Can it be demonstrated that progress has been made toward meeting the need? Is the budget cost effective?
- For Specific Emphasis Leadership involving mentoring: Does the planned project offer benefits to the mentored school that will make it a stronger Land Grant institution in some aspect of the Food and Agricultural Sciences?

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

Successful Special Emphasis applicants will need to address each funded project within their annual reporting requirement.

Annual Performance Report:

In the case of annual performance reports are due 90 days *prior* to the anniversary date of the award.

Annual performance reports must include the following information:

- 1) A comparison of actual accomplishments with the goals established for the reporting period;
- 2) If established goals were not met, the reasons;
- 3) Documentation of outputs; i.e., significant activities, including dissemination activities, events, services or products that contribute toward achieving the goals and objectives of the project;
- 4) Outcomes/impacts; i.e., a change in knowledge, actions or conditions; and
- 5) Any other indication of increased capacity for carrying out the land grant mission.

Final Technical Report must include the following information:

A final technical report must be submitted within 90 days after the expiration date of the project. The expiration date is specified in the award documents and modifications thereto, if any. Generally, the final technical report should be a summary of the completed project, including:

- 1) A review of project objectives and accomplishments;
- 2) A description of outcomes resulting from the project and activities undertaken to disseminate these outcomes;
- 3) An explanation of partnerships and collaborative ventures that resulted from the project, including future initiatives that are planned as a result of the project;
- 4) A description of the project's impact on the PD(s), the institution(s) involved, and the community; and
- 5) Any pertinent data on project personnel and beneficiaries.

The final technical report also must contain any other information specified in the terms and conditions of the award.

Financial Reporting

An annual and a final “**Financial Status Report**” (SF-425) is due within 90 days after the expiration date of the grant.

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

Room 4445

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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.