

Capacity Building Grants for Non Land Grant Colleges of Agriculture (NLGCA) Program

FY 2013 Request for Applications

Application Deadline: May 30, 2013

NLGCA Program:

Telephone: 202-720-1973

Email: NLGCA@nifa.usda.gov

Internet:

<http://www.nifa.usda.gov/fo/nonlandgrantcollegesofagriculture.cfm>

Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance Number (CFDA)

10.326 - Capacity Building Grants for Non Land Grant Colleges of Agriculture

NIFA Funding Opportunity Number

USDA-NIFA-NLGCA-004248



United States
Department of
Agriculture

National Institute
of Food and
Agriculture

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

**CAPACITY BUILDING GRANTS FOR NON LAND GRANT COLLEGES OF
AGRICULTURE PROGRAM (NLGCA)**

INITIAL ANNOUNCEMENT

CATALOG OF FEDERAL DOMESTIC ASSISTANCE: This program is listed in the Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance under 10.326, Capacity Building Grants for Non Land Grant Colleges of Agriculture.

DATES: Applications must be received by close of business (COB) on May 30, 2013 (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 outreach 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: Policy@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 Capacity Building Grants for Non Land Grant Colleges of Agriculture Program RFA.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY: NIFA requests applications for the Capacity Building Grants for Non Land Grant Colleges of Agriculture Program (NLGCA) for fiscal year (FY) 2013 to make competitive grants to NLGCA Institutions (non-land-grant colleges of agriculture) to assist the NLGCA Institutions in maintaining and expanding the capacity to conduct education, research, and outreach activities relating to agriculture, renewable resources, and other similar disciplines. NLGCA Institutions may use the funds: (a) to successfully compete for funds from Federal grants and other sources to carry out educational, research, and outreach activities that address priority concerns of national, regional, State, and local interest; (b) to disseminate information relating to priority concerns to interested members of the agriculture, renewable resources, and other relevant communities, the public, and any other interested entity; (c)

to encourage members of the agriculture, renewable resources, and other relevant communities to participate in priority education, research, and outreach activities by providing matching funding to leverage grant funds; and (d) through: (1) the purchase or other acquisition of equipment and other infrastructure (not including alteration, repair, renovation, or construction of buildings); (2) the professional growth and development of the faculty of the NLGCA Institution; and (3) the development of graduate assistantships.

NIFA anticipates the amount available for support of this program in FY 2013 will be approximately \$4 million.

This notice identifies the objectives for NLGCA Program projects, the eligibility criteria for projects and applicants, and the application forms and associated instructions needed to apply for a NLGCA 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	5
A. Legislative Authority and Background	5
B. Purpose and Priorities	6
C. Program Category Description.....	7
PART II—AWARD INFORMATION.....	16
A. Available Funding.....	16
B. Types of Applications	16
C. Project Types.....	16
D. Project Duration.....	17
E. Number and Size of Grant Awards	17
F. Application Submission & Award Limitations	17
G. Responsible and Ethical Conduct of Research.....	18
PART III—ELIGIBILITY INFORMATION.....	19
A. Eligible Applicants	19
B. Cost Sharing or Matching	19
PART IV—APPLICATION AND SUBMISSION INFORMATION	20
A. Electronic Application Package	20
B. Content and Form of Application Submission.....	21
C. Submission Dates and Times	30
D. Funding Restrictions	30
E. Other Submission Requirements	31
PART V—APPLICATION REVIEW REQUIREMENTS	36
A. General.....	36
B. Evaluation Criteria	36
C. Conflicts of Interest and Confidentiality.....	37
PART VI—AWARD ADMINISTRATION	39
A. General.....	39
B. Award Notice	39
C. Administrative and National Policy Requirements.....	40
D. Expected Program Outputs and Reporting Requirements	41
PART VII—AGENCY CONTACT	42
PART VIII—OTHER INFORMATION	43
A. Access To Review Information	43
B. Use of Funds; Changes	43
C. Confidential Aspects of Applications and Awards	44
D. Regulatory Information.....	44
E. Definitions	44
Appendix A- List of HSACU Institutions, 2012-2013	49

PART I—FUNDING OPPORTUNITY DESCRIPTION

A. Legislative Authority and Background

Section 1473F of the National Agricultural Research, Extension, and Teaching Policy Act of 1977 (NARETPA), as added by Section 7138 of the Food, Conservation, and Energy Act of 2008, (7 USC 3319i), authorizes the ***Capacity Building¹ Grants for Non Land Grant Colleges of Agriculture (NLGCA) Program*** to make competitive grants to *NLGCA Institutions* to assist the NLGCA Institutions in maintaining and expanding the capacity to conduct education, research, and outreach activities relating to *agriculture, renewable resources, and other similar disciplines*. NLGCA Institutions may use the funds: (a) to successfully compete for funds from Federal grants and other sources to carry out educational, research, and outreach activities that address priority concerns of national, regional, State, and local interest; (b) to disseminate information relating to priority concerns to interested members of the agriculture, renewable resources, and other relevant communities, the public, and any other interested entity; (c) to encourage members of the agriculture, renewable resources, and other relevant communities to participate in priority education, research, and outreach activities by providing matching funding to leverage grant funds; and (d) through: (1) the purchase or other acquisition of equipment and other infrastructure (not including alteration, repair, renovation, or construction of buildings); (2) the professional growth and development of the faculty of the NLGCA Institution; and (3) the development of graduate assistantships.

NLGCA supports **USDA’s Research, Education and Economics (REE) 2012 Strategic Goal #6: Education and Science Literacy** to recruit, cultivate, and develop the next generation of scientists and leaders, and to produce a highly-skilled workforce for food, agriculture, natural resources, forestry, and environmental systems.

Background

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) encourages, and relies upon, the Nation’s *colleges and universities* to educate and graduate professionals for careers in the *food and agricultural sciences*, to conduct research and outreach activities, and to disseminate information relating to priority concerns in these areas to members of the agriculture, renewable resources, and other relevant communities, and to the public.

In July 2008, the National Institutes of Health, National Science Foundation, and Department of Energy asked the National Research Council’s Board on Life Sciences to convene a committee to “... examine the current state of biological research in the United States and recommend how best to capitalize on recent technological and scientific advances that have allowed biologists to integrate biological research findings, collect and interpret vastly increased amounts of data, and predict the behavior of complex biological systems.” The committee produced a report entitled “New Biology for the 21st Century: Ensuring the United States Leads the Coming Revolution,” and a set of recommendations that recognize the most effective leveraging of investments would come from a coordinated, interagency effort to encourage the emergence of a New Biology to address broad and challenging societal problems.

¹ Throughout this RFA document, *italicized* terms are further defined in Part VIII.E.

That committee outlined four broad societal challenges in food, environment, energy, and health that could be addressed by the New Biology. The four challenges are: (1) Generate food plants to adapt and grow sustainably in changing environments; (2) Understand and sustain ecosystem function and biodiversity in the face of rapid change; (3) Expand sustainable alternatives to fossil fuels; and (4) Understand individual health.

Building upon these four broad societal challenges, USDA-NIFA refocused its mission to direct agricultural sciences research, education, and outreach-funded programs to address the following five NIFA Priority Areas:

1. **Global Food Security and Hunger**
2. **Climate Change**
3. **Sustainable Energy**
4. **Childhood Obesity**
5. **Food Safety**

B. Purpose and Priorities

The **NLGCA Program** awards grants to address critical issues and challenges of national, regional, State, local and multi-institutional scope that establish or strengthen research, teaching and outreach capacity needed by NLGCA Institutions to assist USDA in its mission to ensure a competent, professional work force in the *food and agricultural sciences* of sufficient size and demographic composition to be representative of the U.S. population.

The **NLGCA Program** is a NIFA-administered competitive grants program focused on improving formal, postsecondary-level agricultural sciences education, research, and outreach activities related to *agriculture, renewable resources, and other similar disciplines*. NLGCA-funded projects shall ensure a competent, qualified and diverse workforce to serve the food and agricultural sciences. At the same time, NLGCA-funded projects should improve the economic health and viability of rural communities through the development of degree programs emphasizing new and emerging employment opportunities, as well as through conducting research and outreach activities that serve members of the agriculture, renewable resources, and other relevant communities, and the public. Finally, NLGCA-funded projects shall focus on the national challenge to increase the number and diversity (i.e., having an agricultural sciences workforce representative of the Nation's population) of students entering other food and agriculture-related science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) disciplines.

Therefore, all applications submitted to this grants program must state how NLGCA Institutions will address the following **NLGCA Program Goals**:

1. Strengthen the capacity of NLGCA institutions to develop infrastructure support to carry out teaching, research and outreach activities in food, agriculture and natural resources.
2. Enhance the ability of faculty members at NLGCA institutions to engage in professional development opportunities to update content knowledge and/or pedagogical skills to better carry out teaching, research and outreach activities.

3. Increase the number, quality, and diversity of graduates entering the workforce with skills and competencies expected by employers and relevant to emerging food, agriculture and natural resources careers.

The intent of a NLGCA-funded project is to make a significant impact on the challenge or opportunity being addressed, with the expectation that major portions of the impact will be sustained after NIFA funding ends.

C. Program Category Description

The four activities, (a) through (d) noted in Part I A., can be undertaken through a variety of mechanisms, approaches, or strategies, any of which shall be part of an applicant's response to addressing any two of the three Program Categories (education, research and/or outreach) described in this subpart. In addressing the legislative intent of this grants program, an applicant may include, but is not limited to, the following activities (listed as discussed in Part I A.):

- a) Successfully compete for funds from other sources:

By using NLGCA funds, grantees can -

- Develop pilot projects that may provide preliminary findings to support a full proposal.
- Build partnerships in order to develop collaborative projects that may be competitive for other funding sources.
- Leverage funds to support students and faculty time to work on developing new projects or instructional materials or tools, or
- Pursue other, similar activities to address this activity.

- b) Disseminate information to relevant groups:

NLGCA funds can be used to reach the relevant communities to increase awareness and participation in activities of high priority to agriculture and renewable resources through -

- Workshops, website development, or on-line discussions/forums, etc., that highlight community practices relevant to promoting partner engagement that advances food and agricultural sciences education, research and outreach opportunities, or
- Pursue other, similar activities to address this activity.

- c) Encourage relevant groups or communities to participate in education, research and outreach activities:

NLGCA institutions may use funds that will encourage communication, interaction, and participation in activities that will engage various communities and increase their interest in agriculture education, research and outreach through -

- Building partnership with local communities.
- Building partnership with Land grant institutions.
- Reaching out to underrepresented and underserved groups, or
- Pursue other, similar activities to address this activity.

- d) Increase Non-Land Grant Colleges of Agriculture infrastructure capacity:

Grant funds can be used to support the capacity building of NLGCA institutions through -

- Purchase of equipment that may be used for research or instructional materials.
- Building library collections (including on-line subscription) to keep content knowledge of faculty and build research background of students.
- Support of professional development for faculty through research sabbaticals, exchange or visiting scientists programs, etc., or
- Pursue other, similar activities to address this activity.

For FY 2013, applications submitted to the NLGCA Program must be **Integrated Project Applications**, meaning that projects must include at least two (2) of the three (3) components of research, education, or outreach. The resulting Integrated Project Application activities shall be interwoven throughout the life of the project, and shall complement and reinforce each another. Because authorizing language for this grants program encourages "...members of the agriculture, renewable resources, and other relevant communities to participate in priority education, research, and outreach activities..." Integrated Project Applications are expected in order to strengthen the capacity of NLGCA Institutions through close collaboration among one or more of these entities. A NLGCA-funded project must address at least two (2) of the following three (3) **Program Categories (C. 1, 2, or 3)** of Education, Research or Outreach:

1. Education Program Category:

Applications with an education-focus must address at least one (1) of the following, three **Education Need Areas** (C. 1. a) through c)) listed directly below, and applications must demonstrate how this chosen Need Area will support each of the three NLGCA Program Goals from Part I. B.

Proposed education-focused activities shall support for-credit coursework (academic curriculum) leading to a degree within the broadly defined *food and agricultural sciences* disciplines. Projects shall address a documented issue/problem/challenge in education of national, regional, State, or local interest; be innovative; have potential for adoption by other academic institutions; exhibit broad-based applicability beyond a single course or an individual instructor; have a strong potential for institutionalization; and must be supported by evidence-based studies, publications or practices.

Education Need Areas:

a) Expanding Student Career and Learning Opportunities through Curriculum Development, and Instructional Delivery Systems:

This Need Area promotes developing new (or adapting existing) curricula and related materials to meet changes anticipated within the food and agricultural sciences system. Projects shall encourage integration and be multidisciplinary. Learner-centered instructional techniques, or other improvements in teaching and student learning, are encouraged, and are expected to demonstrate how the project will reach large audiences efficiently and effectively, provide hands-on learning experiences, extend learning beyond the classroom, reinforce recent research on how to motivate students to learn, retain, apply, and transfer knowledge, skills, and competencies, and integrate and synthesize knowledge.

The purpose of this Need Area is to enhance the NLGCA Institution's capacity to promote new and improved curricula, instructional materials, and other learning resources to increase the quality of, and continuously renew, curricula in order to attract, recruit, and retain students in the food and agricultural sciences fields. The overall objective is to stimulate the development and use of exemplary education models and materials incorporating the most recent advances in subject matter, and research on teaching and learning theory. Projects may emphasize, but are not limited to: the development of courses of study, degree programs, and instructional materials; incorporating alternative instructional methodologies that respond to differences in student learning styles; inter-institutional collaborations that deliver instruction in ways that maximize program quality and reduce unnecessary duplication; the use of new approaches to the study of traditional subjects; the introduction of new subjects, or new applications of knowledge pertaining to agriscience and agribusiness content. The end goal is to have these activities fully institutionalized so they can be sustained and not just a one-time activity, in order to show impacts on the institutions' educational capacity.

The choice for which strategy to employ shall be based on most current research or studies and references shall be included. Examples of eligible projects in this Education Need Area may include, but are not limited to, the following strategies:

- Designing course content around overarching and unifying concepts, skills and competencies -including innovative ways to integrate scientific research experiences-within the postsecondary curricula;
- Creating model curricula, laboratory, or student research experiences, especially activities that expand students' career interests in the food and agricultural sciences through mentoring or professional shadowing activities, internships or practicums including international learning experiences, visiting lecturers, or other similar experiential learning activities such as hands-on, remote, and virtual laboratories;
- Fostering student experiential learning opportunities where students are placed in team-oriented, problem-solving, decision-making situations in the context of real-world situations. Experiential learning in laboratory research or field-based internships is encouraged, but any activity shall expose students to experiences directly supporting topics within the food and agricultural sciences. Such experiences must: (1) demonstrate how the experience will help meet students' career goals or produce 'society-ready' graduates, and (2) contain an evaluation process—involving the faculty and/or employer or mentor—to assure that students meet project objectives;
- Forming partnerships involving a broad range of diverse institutions to better understand how students learn, how to sustain their interests, and how to acquire those skills and occupational competencies expected by employers;
- Establishing and promoting instructional methodologies to improve students' retention of subject content, develop students' analytical, interpersonal, leadership, communications, problem-solving, computational, and decision-making skills and abilities. These may take the form of undergraduate research opportunities, service learning, case studies, or other experiential learning activities;
- Creating career placement or higher education academic counseling activities, with the expected outcome of encouraging postsecondary graduates to pursue higher degrees, especially those that support the food and agricultural sciences;

- Developing Internet-based approaches and systems for multi-institutional delivery and sharing of curriculum content to improve effectiveness and efficiencies; or
- Other approaches to achieve NLGCA Program Goals.

b) Professional Development for Faculty Members:

This Need Area promotes postsecondary-focused activities that improve faculty members' teaching competencies and subject matter expertise in order to address emerging student demographic composition and learning styles. Developmental activities may include both formal training and informal continuing education.

The purpose of this Need Area is to enhance the NLGCA Institution's capacity to advance faculty development in the areas of teaching competency and leadership, subject matter expertise, or student recruitment and advising skills, in order to better advise and provide students the experience or knowledge that will encourage them to pursue advanced postsecondary degrees in the food and agricultural sciences, or prepare them for the food and agricultural sciences workforce. Training of targeted faculty recipients shall be intentional and relevant to the identified educational needs of the students, who will be the beneficiaries of such faculty development. Proposals may emphasize, but are not limited to: obtaining experience with recent developments and new applications in a discipline supporting the food and agricultural sciences, expanding competence using innovative technologies and new methods of instructional delivery, or in improving student advising skills.

Any faculty recipient of support must be an *eligible participant*. The choice for which strategy to employ shall be based on most current research or studies and references shall be included. Examples of eligible projects in this Education Need Area may include, but are not limited to, the following strategies:

- Developing a self-sustaining model for faculty professional development that better prepares new faculty for teaching careers, or provides retraining for experienced faculty;
- Promoting teaching and advising strategies to increase faculty understanding of how to recruit and retain students, especially within populations and cultures traditionally underrepresented in the food and agricultural sciences workforce;
- Developing faculty awareness of the importance of increasing the number, quality and diversity of postsecondary-level students enrolled in agricultural education degree programs, and engaging these students (and/or existing faculty in agricultural education) to more effectively interact with K-14 programs, especially to increase food and agriculture sciences STEM education and career awareness among secondary and two-year postsecondary students and teachers;
- Creating assessments that document student learning outcomes, or that identify conceptual areas or skills particularly challenging to students, followed by appropriate changes in instructional approaches to effectively address these issues;
- Establishing systems that improve student learning across a curriculum, and identifying ways to redesign curricula to meet goals for achieving improved student learning and competencies;

- Integrating current science and pedagogy into the teacher preparation curriculum or professional development program (this may involve actual hands-on research experiences for teachers, and as applicable, may be gained from partner institutions with strong research infrastructure and carried out as a summer sabbatical);
- Exploring Internet-based approaches for faculty professional development; or
- Other approaches to achieve NLGCA Program Goals.

c) Collaborative Interaction with Other Academic Institutions:

This Need Area promotes postsecondary-focused activities and linkages between secondary, 2-year postsecondary, and/or baccalaureate degree-granting institutions to maximize the development and use of resources supporting instruction within the food and agricultural sciences.

The purpose of this Need Area is to enhance the NLGCA Institution's capacity to promote partnerships with secondary, 2-year postsecondary, or other postsecondary academic institutions to support postsecondary instruction (i.e., providing coursework targeted at undergraduate students, but that may also be available for advanced placement credit for secondary students; for transfer credit from associate-degree programs into baccalaureate-level programs; or for postsecondary faculty development that includes research sabbaticals). The intent of these activities is to encourage and facilitate transfer and matriculation into postsecondary programs within the food and agricultural sciences. Emphasis between secondary and higher education institutions may focus on, but is not limited to, the development and use of articulation agreements, 2+2 or 2+2+2 arrangements, advanced placement credit transfer, or the sharing of faculty and facilities. Partnerships, collaborative arrangements and shared resources between institutions (including course credit sharing arrangements) are encouraged.

Projects shall contribute to the academic community's understanding about how new strategies are transferred to diverse settings and about how they impact student learning. Evaluation plans shall explore opportunities for adapting new strategies in diverse educational settings. Projects that specifically address challenges to achieving widespread adoption of proven practice are especially encouraged.

The choice for which strategy to employ shall be based on most current research or studies and references shall be included. Examples of eligible projects in this Education Need Area may include, but are not limited to, the following strategies:

- A project that focuses on developing and implementing comprehensive, multi-institutional practices proven to recruit and retain K-14 level graduates, with a focus on cultivating those students to pursue a postsecondary degree (**Note: NLGCA grant funding may not be used to provide student scholarships or other tuition-re mission activity**);
- A collaborative project between faculty from K-12, two-year postsecondary, and baccalaureate-level schools that develops a functional plan facilitating seamless transfer of course credit between institutions;

- An activity promoting faculty exchanges to help update course content or to encourage increased, hands-on student research experiences;
- A pilot project that explores the practical aspects of using remote laboratories; moving research into the classroom; or instruction among several institutions;
- A program to reduce duplication of similar educational resources across institutions and to increase instructional efficiencies. Examples may include multi-institutional or interstate approaches to curriculum development, faculty sharing, cross enrollments, joint degrees, regionalization of academic programs, regional and national workshops and symposia, and similar methodologies;
- A project to establish and implement programs or procedures (faculty sharing, articulation agreements, electronic exchange of coursework, etc.) to disseminate curricula, instructional methods, or training practices to faculty across the state or region; or
- Other approaches to achieve NLGCA Program Goals.

Finally, an application focused on any of the three, Education Need Areas identified above is strongly encouraged to reference recommendations from the National Academy of Science 2009 report entitled, *Transforming Agricultural Education for a Changing World*. This report recommends that academic institutions with undergraduate programs in agriculture implement the following nine steps to better meet the needs of students, employers, and the broader society. For information on the full report, please refer to http://dels.nas.edu/ag_education/report.shtml and click on recommendations. The list of recommendations (http://dels.nas.edu/ag_education/recommendations.shtml#plan) follows:

- | | |
|--|--|
| • Implement Strategic Planning | • Build Stronger Connections among Institutions |
| • Broaden Treatment of Agriculture in the Overall Curriculum | • Start Early—K-12 Outreach |
| • Broaden the Student Experience | • Build Strategic Partnerships |
| • Prepare Faculty to Teach Effectively | • Focus Reviews of Undergraduate Programs in Agriculture |
| • Reward Exemplary Teaching | |

Applicants are also strongly encouraged to refer to a 2009 white paper on Human Capacity Development prepared by the Academic Programs Section of the Association of Public and Land Grant Universities. Copies of the white paper entitled “*Human Capacity Development: The Road to Global Competitiveness and Leadership in Food, Agriculture, Natural Resources, and Related Sciences (FANRRS)*” can be found at: <http://www.aplu.org/NetCommunity/Document.Doc?id=1639>.

2. Research Program Category:

Applications with a research focus must address at least one (1) of the following two (2) **Research Need Areas** (C. 2. a) through b)) listed directly below, and applications must demonstrate how this chosen Need Area will support each of the three NLGCA Program Goals from Part I. B. Projects shall address a demonstrated, documented issue/problem/challenge in research of national, regional, State, or local interest within the broadly defined *food and agricultural sciences*.

Either **Research Need Area** may encourage graduate assistantships. Such student learning opportunities shall emphasize team-oriented, problem-solving, decision-making situations in the context of addressing real-world research experiences. Experiential learning in laboratory research or other internships with business and industry, community organizations, federal agencies and other domains that provide knowledge and skills for graduate study shall be given priority. Projects addressing graduate assistantships must: (1) demonstrate how the experience will produce qualified and well trained graduates, (2) contain an evaluation process involving both the faculty or mentor to assure that students meet project objectives, and (3) document that the field of science under consideration is experiencing a shortage of scientific and professional personnel, and how the project plans to address this deficiency. Individual students may be supported under this experiential learning opportunity for up to three (3) years (including summers, semesters, or semester breaks). Requested grant funds may be used as stipends for students while they are working in research/field settings. **(However, a NLGCA grant may not fund student scholarships or other tuition-remission activity).** Students shall be required to prepare written and oral summaries of the experiential learning gained through this opportunity. To attract high-caliber students, stipends should be competitive with alternative employment options. A modest amount of funds may be requested for materials/supplies to facilitate a student's broad exposure to research/field techniques and methodologies. Grant recipients are encouraged to take advantage of any related paid internship opportunities provided by state, county, federal, business and industry sources.

Research Need Areas:

a) Studies and Experimentation in Food and Agricultural Sciences

The purpose of this Need Area is to advance the body of knowledge within the *food and agricultural sciences*. Projects addressing this Need Area are encouraged to focus on multidisciplinary and interdisciplinary research activities addressing critical issues rather than single, discipline-specific research studies.

Examples of studies and experiments that address this Research Need Area include, but are not limited to:

- Conceiving, designing, and evaluating new bio-processing techniques for eliminating undesirable constituents from, or adding desirable ones to, food products;
- Development of bio-energy/fuel alternatives;
- Conducting plant or animal breeding programs to develop higher yielding and improved quality products and improved disease resistance;
- Proposing and evaluating methods to enhance utilization of the capabilities and resources of food and agricultural institutions to promote rural development (e.g., exploitation of new technologies by small rural businesses);
- Identifying control factors that influence consumer demand for agricultural products;
- Analyzing social, economic, and physiological aspects of nutrition and health, food choices, and life-style choices, and community strategies for meeting the changing needs of different population groups;
- Advancing the body of knowledge in highly important scientific, food and agriculture program areas such as human nutrition, food safety, *sustainable agriculture*, global climate change, natural resources management and the environment, biotechnology and

genomics, newly developed research areas such as proteomics, metabolomics, nanotechnology, pharmaceutical qualities of medicinal plants, agribusiness management and marketing, integrated pest management, and the human sciences.

- Other research areas relevant to the five NIFA priority areas and foundational areas supported by NIFA.

b) Centralized Research Support Systems

The purpose of this Need Area is to establish centralized research support systems that: (1) meet national needs or serve regions of NLGCA institutions; or (2) provide research support more economically, thereby freeing up resources for other research uses. Examples of projects that address this Research Need Area include, but are not limited to:

- Storage, maintenance, characterization, evaluation and enhancement of germ plasm for use by animal and plant breeders, including those using the techniques of biotechnology;
- Establishment of computerized data banks of important scientific information (e.g., human nutrition, epidemiological, demographic, weather, economic, crop yields);
- Establishment of expert service centers for sophisticated and highly specialized methodologies (e.g., evaluation of organoleptic and nutritional quality of foods, toxicology, taxonomic identifications, consumer preferences demographics, and efficacy of medicinal plants);
- Enhancing technology and instrumentation for research and instruction; and
- Other approaches to achieve NLGCA Program Goals.

Research-focused applications are strongly encouraged to reference recommendations from the National Academy of Science 2010 report entitled, *New Biology for the 21st Century: Ensuring the United States Leads the Coming Revolution,*"

(http://www.nap.edu/openbook.php?record_id=12764&page=1). The report contains a set of recommendations that recognize that the most effective leveraging of investments come from a coordinated, interagency effort to encourage the emergence of a New Biology that would enunciate and address broad and challenging societal problems.

3. Outreach Program Category:

Applications with an outreach focus must address at least one (1) of the following six (6) **Outreach Need Areas** (C. 3. a) through f)) listed directly below, and applications must demonstrate how this chosen Need Area will support each of the three NLGCA Program Goals from Part I. B. Outreach-focused projects generally result in a primary, target beneficiary consisting of individuals and communities outside of a formal, academic program setting. Projects shall address a demonstrated, documented issue/problem/challenge in outreach of national, regional, State, or local interest within the broadly defined *food and agricultural sciences*.

Outreach Need Areas:

a) 4-H, or other similar, Youth Development

The purpose of this Need Area is to cultivate important life skills in youth that build character and assist them in making appropriate life and career choices. At-risk youth targeted in such projects shall be encouraged to participate in academic retention and enrichment programs.

b) Food and Agricultural Sciences

The purpose of this Need Area is to increase research and educational programs that help individuals learn new ways to produce income through alternative enterprises, to improve marketing strategies and management skills, and to assist farmers, ranchers, and foresters to improve productivity through sound resource management strategies, including controlling crop pests, soil testing, livestock production practices, and marketing.

c) Leadership Development

The purpose of this Need Area is to train outreach professionals and volunteers to deliver programs in agriculture, gardening, health and safety, family and consumer issues, and to support Agriculture in the Classroom or 4-H youth development programs, that encourage greater involvement and leadership roles within the community.

d) Natural Resources

The purpose of this Need Area is to inform landowners and homeowners how to use natural resources wisely and to protect the environment with educational programs in water quality, timber management, composting, lawn waste management, and recycling.

e) Family and Consumer Sciences

The purpose of this Need Area is to help families become resilient and healthy by teaching nutrition, food preparation skills, positive child care, parenting, family communication, financial management, and health care strategies.

f) Community and Economic Development

The purpose of this Need Area is to assist local governments, community and non-profit organizations to 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, as well as to help with the development of small family owned businesses.

PART II—AWARD INFORMATION

A. Available Funding

NIFA anticipates approximately \$4 million will be available to fund applications in FY 2013, and has no commitment 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 2013. Enactment of additional Continuing Resolutions or an Appropriations Act may affect the availability or level of funding for this program.

B. Types of Applications

For FY 2013, applications may only be submitted as:

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

(2) **Resubmitted application.** This is a project application that had previously been submitted to the NLGCA Program but not funded. Applicants must respond to the previous review panel summary (See Part IV, B.3.). 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

In FY 2013, applications may be any of the following four types of projects:

1. Conference/Planning Proposal

Applicants in this Project Type may request up to \$30,000 (total conference, not per year) to facilitate strategic planning session(s) required of faculty, industry, professional association, community leaders, or other necessary participants for the specific purpose of developing a formal plan leading to a subsequent submission of either a *Joint*, or a *Large-scale (state or region) comprehensive initiatives (LCI)*, Project Proposal, as described directly below in C.3. or C.4. **A Conference/Planning grant application may not be submitted in the same year for which a Joint or LCI application for the same project is also submitted.**

2. Regular Project Proposal (Single Institution/Organization)

Applicants may request up to \$150,000 (total, not per year) for a Regular Project Proposal. In a Regular Project Proposal, the applicant executes the project without the requirement of sharing grant funds with other project partners.

3. Joint Project Proposal (Applicant + One or more Partners)

Applicants may request up to \$300,000 (total, not per year) for a *Joint Project Proposal*. In a *Joint Project Proposal*, the applicant executes the project with assistance from at least one additional partner. The partner(s) must share grant funds (see explanation of required funds distribution percentage among partners in the definition of a *Joint Project Proposal* in Part VIII, E.). [Note: This '*Joint Project Proposal*' Project Type may be dropped entirely in future NLGCA grant competitions and replaced by the *Large-scale (state or region) comprehensive initiatives* (LCI) described directly below in item C.4.]

4. Large-scale (state or region) comprehensive initiatives (LCI) (Applicant + Two or more Partners)

Applicants may request up to \$750,000 (total, not per year) for a large-scale (state or region) comprehensive initiatives (LCI) Project Proposal. In a LCI Project Proposal, the applicant executes the project with assistance from at least two additional partners. The additional partners must share grant funds (see explanation of required funds distribution percentage among partners in the definition of a LCI Project Proposal in Part VIII, E.). An LCI project differs from a *Joint Project Proposal* in project scope and impact. LCI Project Proposals must support a multi-partner approach to solving a major state or regional challenge in agricultural sciences *education* at the postsecondary level. LCI Project Proposals are characterized by multiple partners (each providing a specific expertise) organized and led by a strong applicant with documented project management ability to organize and carry out the initiative. To be funded, in addition to meeting this grant program's Evaluation Criteria, a LCI project application must specifically encourage study in areas that contribute to any of the five NIFA Priority Areas listed in Part I, A.

D. Project Duration

Project periods may range from twenty-four (24) to thirty-six (36) months. Projects shall conclude no sooner than twenty-four (24) months after the award start date to allow the applicant sufficient time to evaluate the results and report the impacts. For project budget and timeline purposes, the project start date should not occur prior to September 2013.

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

E. Number and Size of Grant Awards

The total number of grants awarded by this grant program will depend on the number and type of meritorious applications submitted in response to this notice. Based on the project scope and budget of all applications selected for awards, the actual, individual grant amounts awarded by NIFA under this grants program may differ from the funds requested by the applicant. In such cases, revised budgets and revised plans of work may be required by NIFA before an award is made.

F. Application Submission & Award Limitations

For FY 2013, a NLGCA Institution may submit (as the lead applicant) any number of applications in response to this RFA, however, that institution will be limited to a maximum of two (2) grants, as the lead (applicant) institution. NLGCA Institutions may participate in any number of NLGCA-funded projects as a partner institution in any given year.

G. Responsible and Ethical Conduct of Research

The responsible and ethical conduct of research (RCR) is critical for excellence, as well as public trust, in science and engineering. Consequently, education in RCR is considered essential in the preparation of future scientists. In accordance with sections 2, 3, and 8 of 7 CFR Part 3022, institutions that conduct extramural research funded by USDA must foster an atmosphere conducive to research integrity, bear primary responsibility for prevention and detection of research misconduct and are to maintain and effectively communicate and train their staff regarding policies and procedures. In the event an application to NIFA results in an award, the Authorized Organizational Representative (AOR) assures, through acceptance of the award that the institution will comply with the above requirements. Per award terms and conditions, grant recipients shall, upon request, make available to NIFA the policies and procedures as well as documentation to support the conduct of the training.

Note that the training referred to herein shall be either on-campus or off-campus training. The general content of the ethics training, at a minimum, will emphasize three key areas of research ethics: authorship and plagiarism, data and research integration and reporting misconduct. Each institution will be responsible for developing its own training system, as schools will need flexibility to develop training tailored to their specific student needs. Grantees should consider the Collaborative Institutional Training Initiative (CITI) program for RCR (www.citiprogram.org/rcrpage.asp). Typically this RCR education addresses the topics of: Data Acquisition and Management - collection, accuracy, security, access; Authorship and Publication; Peer Review; Mentor/Trainee Responsibilities; Collaboration; Conflict of Interest; Research Misconduct; Human Subject Research; and Use of Animals in Research.

PART III—ELIGIBILITY INFORMATION

A. Eligible Applicants

Applications may only be submitted by a *NLGCA institution*. For the purposes of this program, the individual branches of a State *college or university* that are separately accredited as degree-granting institutions are treated as separate institutions, and are therefore eligible to apply for NLGCA Program awards. Separate branches or campuses of a *college or university* that are not individually accredited as degree-granting institutions are not treated as separate institutions, and are therefore not eligible to submit an application. Accreditation must be conferred by an agency or association recognized by the Secretary of the U.S. Department of Education.

The following are **not** NLGCA institutions and therefore are not eligible to apply:

1. *Hispanic-serving agricultural college or university* (see Appendix A, for a current list of these **ineligible** institutions); or
2. any institution designated under:
 - a. the Act of July 2, 1862 (commonly known as the "First Morrill Act"; 7 U.S.C. 301 et seq.); or
 - b. the Act of August 30, 1890 (commonly known as the "Second Morrill Act") (7 U.S.C. 321 et seq.); or
 - c. the Equity in Educational Land-Grant Status Act of 1994 (Public Law 103-382; 7 U.S.C. 301 note); or
 - d. Public Law 87-788 (commonly known as the "McIntire-Stennis Cooperative Forestry Act") (16 U.S.C. 582a et seq.).

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

B. Cost Sharing or Matching

NIFA does not require matching support for this grants program and matching resources will not be factored in 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 Grants.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/assets/Grants.govRegistrationBrochure.pdf>.** Item 2. below mentions the “NIFA Grants.gov Application Guide.” Part II.1. of the NIFA Grants.gov Application Guide contains additional explanatory language regarding the registration process.

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-NLGCA-004248**, 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), refer to resources available on the Grants.gov Web site first (<http://grants.gov/>). Grants.gov assistance is also available as follows:

Grants.gov customer support
Toll Free: 1-800-518-4726 Toll-Free or 606-545-5035
Business Hours: 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Closed on [Federal Holidays](#).
Email: support@grants.gov

Grants.gov iPortal: Top 10 requested help topics (FAQs), Searchable knowledge base, self service ticketing and ticket status, and live web chat (available 7:00 A.M. - 9:00 P.M. ET). Get help now!

Please have the following information available when contacting Grants.gov, to help expedite your inquiry:

- Funding Opportunity Number (FON)
- Name of Agency You Are Applying To
- Specific Area of Concern

See http://grants.gov/applicants/app_help_reso.jsp or <http://www.nifa.usda.gov/funding/electronic.html> for additional resources for applying electronically.

B. Content and Form of Application Submission

Electronic applications shall 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 THAT ARE NON-COMPLIANT WITH THE REQUIREMENTS (i.e., content format, pdf file format, file name restrictions, and no password protected files) WILL BE AT RISK OF BEING EXCLUDED FROM NIFA REVIEW.** Partial applications will be excluded from NIFA review. With documented prior approval, subsequent submissions of an application 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/help/download_software.jsp#pdf_conversion_programs.

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.

Complete all applicable fields. The following, additional information may be helpful:

Field 5. Applicant Information – This must be the legal name of the eligible college or university (See Part III. A, Eligible Applicant). Official correspondence will be directed to either the Project Director (Field 14) or the Authorized Representative (Field 19).

Field 8. Type of Application – Only ‘New’ or ‘Resubmitted’ applications are permitted.

Field 12. Proposed Project Start Date and End Date – A project’s duration shall normally be at least 24 months (to allow time for assessment and evaluation) and no more than 36 months. **Project Start Date should not occur before September 2013.**

Field 15. Estimated Project Funding –

- a. **Total Federal Funds Requested =** Amount of Federal funds being requested for support of this project (See Part II. C. for maximum award amounts permitted). Lines 15a. and 15c. should be the same dollar amount.

Field 20. Pre-application – Not applicable to the NLGCA Program. No attachments needed.

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

Information related to the questions on this form is dealt with in detail in Part V, 4. of the NIFA Grants.gov Application Guide. The following is additional information to assist in the completion of the fields. **Complete all applicable fields. Note: If a ‘Yes’ response is provided for Fields 1, 2, or 4.a, the applicant may need to provide additional information prior to an award being made (e.g., if IRB or IACUC approval is pending at time of application then the approval information would be necessary prior to award).**

Field 7. Project Summary/Abstract – (Required Attachment – Must be PDF format)

Include the following underlined text along with your responses:

- List the Project Title;

- List the Project Director (and any) Co-Project Director(s) (include institutional affiliation for each);
- List your project's *primary* NIFA Priority Area: (see Part I, A.; list only one Area);
- List your project's two (2) Program Categories: (see Part I, C.1. through 3.); and within each of the two, selected Program Categories, further identify at least one Need Area; and
- List your project's *primary* Discipline Code/Academic Discipline: (Select one from the list below);

Discipline Codes & Academic Discipline

- | | |
|---|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) Animal health, production, and well-being. (b) Plant health and production. (c) Animal and plant germ plasm collection and preservation. (d) Aquaculture. (e) Food safety. (f) Soil, water, and related resource conservation and improvement. (g) Forestry, horticulture, and range management. (h) Nutritional sciences and promotion. (i) Farm enhancement, including financial management, input efficiency, and profitability. (j) Home economics (Family and Consumer Sciences). (k) Rural human ecology. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (l) Youth development and agricultural education, including 4-H clubs. (m) Expansion of domestic and international markets for agricultural commodities and products, including agricultural trade barrier identification and analysis. (n) Information management and technology transfer related to agriculture. (o) Biotechnology related to agriculture. (p) The processing, distributing, marketing, and utilization of food and agricultural products. |
|---|--|

- Joint or LCI Project Proposal: Yes or No? (If 'Yes', specify if 'Joint' or 'LCI' Project Application. See 'Definitions', Part VIII. E.);
- Partners: If Joint or LCI Project Proposal, list all partner institutions/organizations that will share grant funding (Note: Each Partner so identified needs to have their budget information submitted on a separate sub award budget attachment – see Part IV B.7.);
- Total Funds Requested: List total Federal funds requested for this application. (If this project is a Joint or LCI Project Proposal, also list each partner's total funds requested next to the institution/organization's name); and
- Summary Text - Provide a very concise (approx. 250 word) summary of your project to include:
 - Purpose: What is the major problem your project will address?
 - Audience: Who are the intended beneficiaries? Who will be impacted?
 - Products: What will be produced?
 - Outcome/Impact: What is the intended result (consequence) of your project? Describe the primary benefits to your audience. Note: outcomes/impacts shall be measurable, and shall be included in your project's assessment/evaluation plan to demonstrate how you will assess whether or not these benefits were achieved (see explanation of terms in Part IV, B. 3. Field 8. 2.c., below).

Field 8. Project Narrative – (Required Attachment – Must be PDF format)

PLEASE NOTE: The Project Narrative shall not exceed 20 pages of written text (excluding up to a maximum of 5 additional pages for supporting figures and tables). This maximum (25-page limit) ensures fair and equitable competition. Narratives exceeding the maximum allowable 25 pages shall not be reviewed.

The Project Narrative in this Field 8 attachment contains the major description of your project. It follows the NLGCA Program’s Evaluation Criteria (Part V. B). Accordingly, please provide your responses in the following format:

(Note: To facilitate application review and evaluation, **include the following, underlined wording as headings in your attached Project Narrative**, followed by your response for each item.)

1. Potential for Advancing the Quality of Education, Research or Outreach; Significance of the Problem:
 - a. Identification of Education, Research or Outreach Problem and Project Impact. Briefly state: (1) the specific problem/challenge (or opportunity) to be addressed within each chosen Program Category; (2) the anticipated project audience; and (3) the project’s target objectives (what change in education, research or outreach is proposed?) and its anticipated, overall impact on improving the quality of *food and agricultural sciences* (Note: Your impact shall be a change you can measure at the project’s conclusion.). Clearly identify and explain how the proposed project will address your Need Area under the Program Categories described in Part I, C.1. through 3.
 - b. Project Justification. Describe how and by whom the focus and scope of the project were determined. Summarize the body of knowledge justifying the need for the proposed project. Discuss how the project’s Program Categories and Need Areas will be of value at the State, regional, national, or international level(s), and where applicable, how it will advance improving science, technology, engineering, and mathematical (STEM) capabilities in *food and agricultural sciences*. Describe any ongoing or recently completed, significant activities related to the proposed project for which previous funding was received under this program.
 - c. Institutional Long-range Goals. Demonstrate how the institution/organization attributes a high priority to the project; discuss how the project will contribute to the achievement of the institution/organization’s long-term (five- to ten-year) goals; explain how the project will help satisfy the institution/organization’s high-priority objectives, or how the project is linked to and supported by the institution/organization’s strategic plan.
 - d. Innovation. Describe the proposal’s creative approach to improving the quality of teaching, research or outreach in the *food and agricultural sciences* in solving the specified problem. Describe how/why this approach was chosen.
 - e. Multidisciplinary and/or Problem-based Focus. Indicate how the project is relevant to multiple disciplines in *food and agricultural sciences*, or with other academic curricula, and how the project will enhance the grant recipient’s understanding of complex agricultural systems. Also, discuss whether the project may be adapted by, or serve as a model for, other institutions.

2. Proposed Approach and Cooperative Linkages:

- a. Plan of Operation and Methodology. Describe procedures for accomplishing the objectives of the project. Describe plans for management of the project to ensure its proper and efficient administration. Describe the way in which resources and personnel will be used to conduct the project.
- b. Timetable. Identify all important project milestones (performance targets that indicate when project goals will be met) and dates as they relate to project start-up, execution, evaluation, dissemination, and closeout.
- c. Products, Results and Measurable Outcomes. Outline the expected products/results and their outcome (impact) on strengthening education in *food and agricultural sciences* in the United States. (**Important Note: Make sure to differentiate among the three terms:**
 1. “Products” may be actual items or services acquired with funds, e.g., “...developed three, new Web-based courses”;
 2. “Results” are accomplishments related to the products, e.g., “...additional course materials now available online to reinforce student learning during non-classroom hours”; and
 3. “Outcomes/Impacts” are the benefits to your audience. Outcomes/impacts are the consequences of your project and the most critical elements in your Evaluation Plan. They are a measure of the results by comparison to what might have happened in the absence of the funded project, e.g., “...an observed, overall increase in student learning based upon 8% higher average test scores of those students who both attended class and used the supplemental, Web-based course materials”.)
- d. Evaluation Plan. State the methodologies to be used in assessing the accomplishment of stated products, results and measurable outcomes from the project. Discuss the strategies and metrics for evaluating progress toward meeting the four NLGCA Program Goals from Part I, B. Describe any data to be collected and analyzed. Demonstrate how the project will improve education. This section shall clearly indicate how you plan to measure outcomes/impacts. (See Part IV.E.2. for details of what is to be included in the Evaluation Plan).
- e. Dissemination Plans. The application must document how project accomplishments (products, results and impacts...etc.) will be published or otherwise disseminated to the broadest extent throughout the academic community. Discuss the institution/organization’s commitment to disseminate project results and products and potential for institutionalization. Identify target audiences and explain methods of communication. This section shall clearly indicate how you plan to publicize your project’s outcomes/impacts.
- f. Partnerships and Collaborative Efforts. Explain how the project will maximize partnership and collaborative efforts to strengthen education, research, or outreach in the *food and agricultural sciences* (e.g., involvement of faculty in related disciplines at the same institution, joint or LCI projects with other educational institution/organizations, or cooperative activities with business or industry). Also explain how it will stimulate academia, the States, or the private sector to join with the Federal partner in enhancing

food and agricultural sciences education, research or outreach. Provide evidence, via letters from the parties involved in the partnership or collaborative arrangement. The letters should be included in Field 12, Other Attachments.

3. Institution Capability and Capacity Building:
 - a. Institution/organizational Commitment and Capability. Demonstrate that the applicant's administration is committed to this project and has the capability to ensure its completion.
 - b. Institution/organizational Resources. Document how the institution/organizational resources (see Field 10, Facilities and Other Resources) to be made available to the project, when combined with the support requested from USDA will be adequate to carry out the activities of the project.
 - c. Academic Enhancement. Document how this project will improve and strengthen teaching, research or outreach at the institution (including any partner institution/organizations). Include how any project performance target(s) identified above (item 2.b., Timetable) will be incorporated into institutional procedures. Discuss how the benefits to be derived from the project will transcend the applicant institution/organization or the grant period.
 - d. Continuation Plans. Discuss the likelihood of, or specific plans for, continuation or expansion of the project beyond the period of USDA support. For example, does the institution/organization's long-range budget or academic plan provide for the realistic continuation or expansion of the initiative undertaken by this project after the grant period ends? Are plans for eventual self-support built into the project? Are plans being made to institutionalize the program if it meets with success? Are there indications of other continuing non-Federal support?
4. Key Personnel: Discuss the adequacy, specific attributes, and project responsibilities of each key person associated with the project. Also include the background and qualifications of those personnel who will be responsible for assessing project results and administering the project evaluation and reporting process. Specific roles for each key personnel must be defined to ensure appropriate project leadership and to avoid any duplication of effort.
5. Budget and Cost-effectiveness:
 - a. Budget. In addition to the separate, required budget forms and budget justification, discuss how the budget specifically supports the proposed project activities. Explain how such budget items as professional or technical staff time and salary, travel, equipment, etc., are necessary and reasonable to achieve project objectives. Justify that the total budget is allocated adequately between the applicant and any collaborating institution/organization(s), and will be appropriate to carry out the activities of the project.
 - b. Cost-effectiveness. Justify the project's cost-effectiveness. Show how the project maximizes the use of limited resources, optimizes value for the dollar, achieves economies of scale, or leverages additional funds. For example, discuss how the project has the potential to generate a critical mass of expertise and activity focused on a Need Area, or to promote coalition building that could lead to future ventures.

For a **Conference/Planning project type**, in addition to providing responses to any appropriate items listed directly above in Field 8, items 1 through 5, the Project Narrative must also include all of the following:

- 1) Justification for the meeting;
- 2) Meetings related to this Conference/Planning application held within the past two years;
- 3) Names and organizational affiliations of the chairperson and other members of the organizing committee;
- 4) Proposed program (or agenda for the conference), including a listing of scheduled participants and their institutional affiliations; and
- 5) Method of announcement or invitation to be used.

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)

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.** Any such letter should be included as a part of Other Attachments, see Field 12 below.

Field 12. Other Attachments - (Must be PDF format) as applicable.

- **Response to Previous Review – PDF Attachment. 1 Page Limit.** Title the attachment as ‘Response to Previous Review’ in the document header and save file as ‘ResponsetoPreviousReview’. This requirement only applies to “Resubmitted Applications” as described under Part II, B., “Types of Applications”. PDs must respond to the previous review panel summary on **no more than one page**, titled, “RESPONSE TO PREVIOUS REVIEW”. If desired, additional comments may be included in the text of the Project Narrative, subject to the page limitations of that section.
- **Appendices to Project Narrative – PDF Attachment.** Title the attachment as ‘Appendices’ in the document header and save file as ‘Appendices’. Appendices to the Project Narrative are allowed if they are directly germane to the proposed project. The addition of appendices should not be used to circumvent the text and/or figures and tables page limitations. Such appendices are not part of the 25-page application limit.
- **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 consultant/collaborating 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.

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

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

- **Current and Pending Support** – See section 5.3 of Part V of the NIFA Grants.gov Application Guide. **Also note that for this proposed project the time commitments stated on the Current and Pending Support should be consistent with the Federal percentage of salary on the budget (e.g., should not be lower).**

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. Complete all applicable fields. Consult the NIFA Grants.gov Application Guide for instructions. The following, additional information may be helpful:

Complete one R&R Budget Form for each 12-month period. If your project involves partners with whom you plan to share Federal funds (Joint or LCI Project Proposal), make sure (a) you include a sub award attachment for each project partner (sub award/consortium), for each 12-month period and (b) your budget figures reflect the required budget sharing criteria (See ‘Definitions’, Part VIII. E, Joint or LCI Project Proposal).

Reasonable travel expenses to attend the Project Director’s Conference may be included in the travel expenses (see Part VI D.).

Field H. Indirect Costs –

For FY 2012, section 720 of the General Provisions in Title VII of the Agriculture, Rural Development, Food and Drug Administration, and Related Agencies Programs (HR 112-284), limited indirect costs to 30 percent of the total Federal funds provided under each award. Applicants should anticipate that the FY 2013 appropriation will contain a similar limitation. Therefore, when preparing budgets, applicants shall limit their requests for recovery of indirect costs to the lesser of their institution’s official negotiated indirect cost rate or the equivalent of 30 percent of total Federal funds awarded.

Field K. Budget Justification – (Required Attachment – Must be PDF format)

- (a) Provide a Budget Justification that reflects each 12-month period, plus a cumulative justification for the entire project. If your project involves partners with whom you plan to share Federal funds (Joint or LCI Project Proposal), make sure the attachment reflects information (a) for the applicant institution (each project partner (sub award/consortium), for each 12-month period, plus a cumulative column total for the entire project, and (b)

your budget figures reflect the required budget sharing criteria (See ‘Definitions’, Part VIII. E, *Joint Project Proposal*). Letters of consent or collaboration or other evidence should be provided to show that collaborators have agreed to participate (such letters are to be included in Field 12).

The Budget Justification should follow a standard spreadsheet format (‘Budget Line Item’ = row; ‘Budget Year’ and ‘Cumulative Project’ = columns) including a detailed, itemized breakdown of each of the line item categories reported on the R&R Budget form. This Budget Justification attachment provides a more detailed, itemized breakdown for each budget line item reported on the R&R Budget Form. Items should be justified and include relevance to the project objectives. Include a description for each requested budget line item found on the R&R Budget form (i.e., total budget amount reported on the R&R Budget Form should equal the total budget amount reported on the Budget Justification attachment).

Allowable costs will be determined in accordance with the applicable program legislation, the purpose of the grant award, the terms and conditions for the grant award, and by the following Federal cost principles that are applicable to the type of organization receiving the award, regardless of the type of award or tier (i.e., prime awardee, sub award) as are in effect at the time of the award:

- (1) **2 CFR Part 220** (OMB Circular No. A-21), “Cost Principles for Educational Institutions.”
- (2) **2 CFR Part 225** (OMB Circular No. A-87), “Cost Principles for State and Local Government (including certain Indian tribal governments).”
- (3) **2 CFR Part 230** (OMB A-122), “Cost Principles for Nonprofit Organizations” other than institutions of higher education (nonprofit organizations excluded from coverage are listed in Attachment C of OMB Circular No. A-122).
- (4) **Federal Acquisition Regulations** (48 CFR Subpart 31.2), “Principles for determining costs with profit making firms and those nonprofits organizations that are specifically excluded from the provisions of OMB Circular No. A-122.”
- (5) **45 CFR Part 74, Appendix E**, “Principles for Determining Costs Applicable to Research and Development under Grants and Contracts with Hospitals.”

The Code of Federal Regulations is accessible through the National Archives and Records Administration.

(b) **Matching:** See Part III B.

7. R&R Subaward Budget Attachment (Only required if submitting a LCI or Joint Project Proposal) Information related to the questions on this form is dealt with in detail in Part V, 8. of the NIFA Grants.gov Application Guide.

8. Supplemental Information

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

Field 2. Program Code -

For the 'Program Code Name' field, enter:

“Capacity Building Grants for Non Land Grant Colleges of Agriculture”

For the 'Program Code' field, enter:

“NLGCA”

Field 8. Conflict of Interest List - (Required Attachment – Must be PDF format)

See format in NIFA Grants.gov Application Guide, Section VI, 1.8, for instructions and a link to a suggested template. Include this one-page attachment even if your responses to the requested information are “N.A.”.

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 May 30, 2013** (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 acknowledged by 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.

If the AR has not received a confirmation message from NIFA within 30 days of the established deadline, please contact the Agency Contact identified in Part VII of the applicable RFA 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

Consistent with other competitive grant programs, NIFA has determined that grant funds awarded under this authority may not be used for student tuition remission, on-campus room and board, academic fees or other financial assistance (no scholarships or fellowships). Also, funds may not be used for the renovation or refurbishment of research, education, or extension space; the purchase or installation of fixed equipment (e.g., equipment that is unmovable or unusable if detached) in such space; or the planning, repair, rehabilitation, acquisition, or construction of buildings or facilities (i.e., no greenhouses, laboratories, barns, or other structures). Promotional items (e.g., T-shirts and other give-a-ways) and food functions (e.g., cookouts or other social

meal gatherings) are considered ‘entertainment’ expenses, and are, therefore, also *not allowed* under this grants program.

A teacher or student recipient receiving Federal funds from this grants program must be an *eligible participant*. Where eligibility is claimed under 8 U.S.C. 1101(a) (22), documentary evidence from the Immigration and Naturalization Service as to such eligibility must be made available to NIFA upon request.

See Field H. under Part IV B. 6. for indirect cost limitations.

E. Other Submission Requirements

1. The applicant should follow the submission requirements noted in Part IV, section 1.9 in the document entitled “NIFA Grants.gov Application Guide.”

For information about the **status of a submitted application**, see Part III., section 6. of the NIFA Grants.gov Application Guide.

2. Evaluation Plan

All projects, regardless of the scope or program component they address, must have an evaluation plan as part of the Project Narrative (see Part IV, B.3., Field 8, 2.d.). The evaluation plan must include both a strategy for monitoring the project as it evolves (to provide feedback to guide these efforts), as well as a strategy for evaluating the effectiveness of the project in achieving its goals and for identifying positive and negative findings when the project is completed.

An Evaluation Plan must contain a separate component to assess each of the Program Categories (C. 1, 2, or 3) of Education, Research or Outreach, as selected by the applicant.

Evaluation Information that must be in your grant application:

- a) The evaluation section of your application shall briefly present from two to five main project goals that directly support the three NLGCA Program Goals (Part I. B.). Application reviewers and staff will be looking for an evaluation plan -and accompanying assessment measures- that focus on gains or changes in knowledge, skills, behaviors, and/or attitudes of the target audience(s). You may want to consider including the following information in your application:

1. A proposed **measure of student/faculty or other stakeholder knowledge/learning or interest** in the food and agriculture sciences that you think will result from your proposed project. You may identify the measurement instrument or method that will be used, but selecting something that is valid and reliable is recommended.

Example: The purpose of the project is to develop new instructional materials in a course on human nutrition. At the conclusion of the project, the PD administers pre-

and posttest surveys to students asking them to rate the degree to which the instructional materials influenced their interest in human nutrition.

2. The **anticipated number and type of products created or anticipated number of students/faculty or other stakeholders served** based on the target area(s) proposed in the project.

Examples of assessment information by target area to include in your proposal are listed below. Please note that this list is not comprehensive. Quantify the number of products created, and/or students/faculty or other stakeholders served, when possible.

- *Education Program Category: Curriculum Development, Instructional Delivery Systems, Faculty Professional Development, and/or Interactions with other Academic Institutions:*
 - # of students enrolled in course/program, using materials, participating in experiential learning opportunities
 - # of courses or credits/credit hours developed
 - Type of course, curriculum, or instructional methodology
 - # of student experiential learning opportunities at businesses, organizations, non-profits, academic institutions, federal agencies
 - # of internships, research opportunities, study abroad opportunities, or peer mentoring opportunities developed,
 - Or other, similar indicators

Increasing Faculty Teaching Competency Opportunities:

- # of faculty served
- # of workshops, professional meetings, sabbaticals attended
- # of publications, presentations that resulted from opportunity
- Type of opportunity – workshop, professional meeting, sabbatical, etc.
- Or other, similar indicators

Facilitating Interaction with Other Institutions:

- # of collaborations between institutions
- Type of institutions involved in collaborations
- # and types of meaningful products resulting from planned interactions (e.g., curricula, faculty professional development opportunities, workshops,...etc.)
- # of faculty served
- # students served
- Or other, similar indicators

- *Research Program Category: Studies & Experimentation in Food and Agricultural Sciences, and/or Centralized Research Support Systems:*
 - Products and Individuals Served:
 - # of participating students
 - # of participating faculty
 - # of participating institutions
 - # of conference poster presentations
 - # of conference talks
 - # of peer-reviewed journal articles
 - # of publications besides peer-reviewed journal articles
 - # of patents
 - # of other entities adopting/using products of the research
 - Or other, similar indicators

- *Outreach Program Category: 4-H or other, similar Youth Development, Food and Agricultural Sciences, Leadership Development, Natural Resources, Family and Consumer Sciences, Community and Economic Development:*
 - Primary project type: agriculture, youth, natural resources, nutrition/health...
 - # of community members served (estimate):
 - # of farmer/rancher/business/community or other stakeholder contacts
 - # of acres improved
 - # of youth contacts
 - # of youth clubs
 - # of community contacts
 - # of health and wellness activities
 - # of educational materials developed (i.e., CDs, brochures, etc.)
 - Outcomes and Impacts:

With reference to all assessment measures listed above (and other that may be developed that are not listed above), regardless of Program Category, the intention is to answer the basic questions of: “Did the project result in a change in knowledge or attitude among the target population of students/faculty or other stakeholders served?”, and “How do you know this occurred? (What assessment measure did you use to determine this impact/outcome?)”

The evaluation may also include assessment of other outcomes, particularly if the project aims to change organizational structures, create cost-efficiencies, or achieve other ends not specifically represented by learning. Explain the data gathering procedures to monitor and assess progress toward intended project goals. When describing the measurement instruments you plan to use (surveys, interviews, focus groups, assessments of e-portfolios or capstone projects, measures of class performance, scores on standardized tests, cost-benefit analyses, etc.), be sure to mention why they are appropriate to gauging success.

- b) The evaluation plan section shall make a convincing case to reviewers that -at the conclusion of the grant- the grantee could report the extent to which learning and engagement outcomes, professional development goals, and/or organizational outcomes have been achieved. Collection of this evidence is critical to achieving the NLGCA's Program Goals. An evaluation plan that only indicates a desire to develop assessment measures once the project is underway, and an eventual description of resulting project activities and outcomes, would be considered a poorly prepared and inadequate evaluation plan.
- c) The project budget shall contain funding to either hire an outside project evaluator, or to present convincing evidence that an appropriate evaluator is already on staff and available to provide assistance with assessment and evaluation throughout the life of the project. As a guide, up to 10 percent of grant funds may be used to support this purpose. The following activities are examples of items that may be included in the Evaluation Plan: project objectives that lend themselves most readily to measurement and evaluation, baseline assessment data and a planned collection process from a possible comparison or control group, possible measurement instruments (surveys, student journals, standardized tests, interviews, focus groups, analysis of e-portfolios or capstone projects, cost-benefit analyses, etc.), a strategy for what assessment measures will be a part of the annual and final Project Performance Reports (Part VI. D.), and how this information will eventually be disseminated to interested parties and to the public.
- d) Finally, the Evaluation Plan itself shall contain measures of 1. **student/faculty or other stakeholder learning and engagement** and 2. **the number of students/faculty or other stakeholders impacted by your project as a result of the proposed activities**, either directly (through stipends, experiential learning opportunities, workshops, teaching experiences, etc.) or indirectly (through taking a developed course or program, or participating in a recruitment or retention program). In addition, the PD shall specify metrics summarizing who benefited the most (and the least) from your project, an explanation of what revisions, improvements, or enhancements you would make, funding permitting, to increase the value of this project in the future, and ideas about how to make projects like yours more cost-effective. These, and other funded project assessments determined by the project director and evaluation team shall be reported both annually and in the final performance report (Part VI. D.). The following, suggested evaluation examples are derived from the Department of Education's Report of the Academic Competitiveness Council, May 2007, Federal STEM Goals and Metrics, Education Undergraduate National Goals and Metrics.

“To demonstrate progress toward increasing the number of graduates, the following metric is suggested: first **provide baseline data** for the year preceding the grant award showing the number and/or percentage of students who declare and/or complete a major program of study of agriscience or agribusiness within your unit; and second, provide similar data for the final year of the grant and include an assessment of the impact of your project on changes from the baseline data. List the expected number of students benefiting from this project and their level of education, a table is recommended.

To demonstrate progress toward increasing the quality of instruction, the following metric is suggested: first **provide baseline data** for the year preceding the grant award showing the current number and/or percentage of graduates who either graduate and pursue a vocation in the food and agricultural sciences, or who pursue advanced degrees within the food and agricultural sciences; and second, provide similar data for the final year of the grant and include an assessment of the impact of your project on changes from the baseline data”.

Suggested resources to obtain quantitative, baseline, student enrollment, degrees granted and employment data for comparison purposes; postsecondary institutions may find appropriate information in the Food and Agricultural Education Information System (FAEIS) at: <http://faeis.ahnrit.vt.edu/>, and from the publication: *Employment Opportunities for College Graduates in Food, Renewable Energy, and the Environment United States, 2010-2015* at: <http://www.ag.purdue.edu/usda/employment/pages/default.aspx>. Other, similar source(s) may also be consulted.

Applications shall include elements of a logic model (see sample at the end of this document) detailing the activities, outputs, and outcomes of the proposed project. This information may be provided as a narrative or formatted into a logic model chart. The logic model planning process is a tool that should be used to develop your project **before** writing your proposal. Two additional pages are allowed for this information. See Part IV.B.3. (Field 12) for details on where to attach this information to your application. More information and resources related to the logic model planning process are provided at http://www.nifa.usda.gov/about/strat_plan_logic_models.html.

Additional Resources for Project Evaluation:

- NSF 02-057: The 2002 User-Friendly Handbook for Project Evaluation, a basic guide to quantitative and qualitative evaluation methods for educational projects
<http://www.nsf.gov/pubs/2002/nsf02057/start.htm>
- Field-Tested Learning Assessment Guide (FLAG): This website is designed for Science, Math, Engineering, and Technology Instructors who are interested in new approaches to evaluating student learning, attitudes, and performance. It has a primer on assessment and evaluation, classroom assessment techniques, discipline-specific tools, and resources - all in a searchable, downloadable data base, <http://www.flaguide.org/>
- American Evaluation Association. Online Resources
(<http://www.eval.org/resources.asp>)

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, outreach, or education fields, taking into account the following factors: (a) The level of relevant formal scientific, technical education, or outreach experience of the individual, as well as the extent to which an individual is engaged in relevant research, education, or outreach activities; (b) the need to include as reviewers experts from various areas of specialization within relevant scientific, education, or outreach 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 following criteria and weights below will be used in reviewing applications submitted in response to this RFA:

1. Potential for Advancing Quality of Education, Research or Outreach/Significance of the Problem (25 points). This criterion is used to assess the likelihood that the project will have an impact upon and advance the quality of food and agricultural sciences education, research or outreach, by strengthening institutional capacities to meet clearly delineated needs. Elements considered include institutional long-range goals, identification of a problem or opportunity to be addressed, justification for the project, innovation, advancing multidisciplinary and/or problem-based focus, and potential for adoption by other institutions and contribution to current body of knowledge in areas addressed. The proposed project must also show its relevance to NIFA's Priority Areas and how it will contribute to the goals of the NLGCA Program. Potential project impacts must be stated.

2. Proposed Approach and Cooperative Linkages (30 points). This criterion relates to the soundness of the proposed approach including objectives, methodology, plan of operation, timetable, expected products and results, project evaluation, and dissemination plans. The project evaluation plan should state the methodologies to be used in assessing the accomplishment of stated products, results and measurable outcomes from the project. The approach must be based on sound research concepts and educational principles and may be documented through background literature or actual institutional data. Emphasis is placed on the quality of education, research or outreach support provided to the applicant institution/organization through its

partnerships and collaborative initiatives, and on the potential cooperative linkages likely to evolve as a result of this project. Any perceived pitfalls and alternative strategies or approaches should be addressed. A thorough evaluation plan must be included that includes both a strategy for monitoring the project as it evolves (to provide feedback to guide these efforts), as well as a strategy for evaluating the effectiveness of the project in achieving its goals and for identifying positive and negative findings when the project is completed.

3. Institutional Capability and Capacity Building (20 points).

This criterion relates to the institution's capability to perform the project and the degree to which the project will strengthen its teaching, research or outreach capacity. Elements include the institution's commitment to the project, the adequacy of institutional resources (administrative, facilities, equipment, and/or materials) available to carry out the project, potential for academic or research enhancement, and plans for project continuation or expansion beyond the period of USDA support. Level of institutional data provided to show the institution's ability to support the proposed project.

4. Key Personnel (15 points).

This criterion relates to the adequacy of the number, qualifications and expertise of key persons who will develop and carry out the project, and the qualifications of project personnel who will provide for the assessment of project results and impacts and the dissemination of these findings.

5. Budget and Cost-Effectiveness (10 points).

This criterion relates to the extent to which the total budget adequately supports the project and is cost effective. Elements considered include the necessity and reasonableness of costs to carry out project activities and achieve project objectives; the appropriateness of budget allocations between the applicant and any collaborating institution(s); the adequacy of time committed to the project by key project personnel; and the degree to which the project maximizes the use of limited resources, optimizes value for the dollar, achieves economies of scale, leverages additional funds, and focuses expertise and activity on high-priority education, research or outreach.

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., 1801 Robert Fulton Drive, Suite 340, Reston, Virginia 20191. Phone: (888) 349-7715. 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 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.

(Note: *This management information will also be required from designated Fiscal Agents.*)

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), and the NIFA General Awards Administration Provisions at 7 CFR part 3430, subparts A through E.

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 which the Administrator 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 Administrator 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:

2 CFR Part 220 – Cost Principles for Educational Institutions (OMB Circular A-21).

2 CFR Part 225 – Cost Principles for State, Local, and Indian Tribal Governments (OMB Circular A-87).

2 CFR Part 230 – Cost Principles for Non-profit Organizations (OMB Circular A-122).

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, A-87, and A-122 and 48 CFR 3.2, now codified at 2 CFR Parts 220, 225 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 3016 – USDA Implementation of Uniform Administrative Requirements for Grants and Cooperative Agreements to State and Local Governments.

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

7 CFR Part 3018—USDA implementation of New 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 Agreements With Institutions of Higher Education, Hospitals, and Other Nonprofit Organizations (2 CFR Part 215).

7 CFR Part 3021—USDA Implementation of Governmentwide Requirements for Drug-Free Workplace (Grants).

7 CFR Part 3022 —Research Institutions Conducting USDA-Funded Extramural Research; Research Misconduct.

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

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

7 CFR 3430—Competitive and Noncompetitive Non-formula Federal Assistance Programs-- General Award 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 and 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. Details of annual and final technical reporting requirements also are included in the award terms and conditions.

Project Directors Conference

During the tenure of a grant, Project Director(s) may be invited to attend at least one national Project Directors meeting, if offered, in Washington, D.C., or any other announced location. The purpose of the meeting will be to discuss project and grant management, opportunities for collaborative efforts, future directions for education reform, and opportunities to enhance dissemination of exemplary end products/results. Reasonable travel expenses to attend this meeting may be included in your proposal's travel expenses.

PART VII—AGENCY CONTACT

Applicants and other interested parties are encouraged to contact Mr. P. Gregory Smith; National Education Program Leader; Institute of Youth, Family and Community; Division of Community and Education; National Institute of Food and Agriculture; STOP 2251; 1400 Independence Ave, SW; Washington, DC 20250-2251; Telephone: (202) 720-1973; Fax: (202) 720-2030; E-mail: NLGCA@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. Changes in Project Period: 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 five years. 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: 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. 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 Federal Assistance Programs--General Award Administrative Provisions, for the applicable definitions for this NIFA grant program. The following are additional definitions that apply to this program.

Agriculture, renewable resources, and other similar disciplines means -specifically for this NLGCA Program- those *food and agricultural sciences* topical areas defined below.

Capacity Building means enhancing and strengthening the quality and depth of an institution's research and academic programs as evidenced by its: faculty expertise, scientific and technical resources, research environment, curriculum, student experiential learning opportunities, scientific instrumentation, library resources, academic standing and racial, ethnic, or gender diversity of its faculty and student body, faculty and student recruitment and retention programs, and organizational structures and reward systems for attracting and retaining first-rate research and teaching faculty or students.

Citizen or national of the United States means (1) a citizen or native resident of a State; or, (2) a person defined in the Immigration and Nationality Act, 8 U.S.C. 1101(a) (22), who, though not a citizen of the United States, owes permanent allegiance to the United States.

"College" and "university" – From 7 USC Section 3103, mean an educational institution in any State which: (i) admits as regular students only persons having a certificate of graduation from a school providing secondary *education*, or the recognized equivalent of such a certificate, (ii) is legally authorized within such State to provide a program of *education* beyond secondary education, (iii) provides an educational program for which a bachelor's degree or any other higher degree is awarded, (iv) is a public or other nonprofit institution, and (v) is accredited by a nationally recognized accrediting agency or association. Inclusions: The terms "college" and "university" include research foundations maintained by a college or university.

Education – See ‘Teaching’, below.

Eligible institution means a NLGCA institution (non-land-grant college of agriculture), as defined in this Section. An Eligible Institution

Eligible participant means an individual who is a citizen or national of the United States as defined in this section.

Food and agricultural sciences – From 7 USC Section 3103, means basic, applied, and developmental research, extension, and teaching activities in food and fiber, agricultural, renewable energy and natural resources, forestry, and physical and social sciences, including activities relating to the following:

- (a) Animal health, production, and well-being.
- (b) Plant health and production.
- (c) Animal and plant germ plasm collection and preservation.
- (d) Aquaculture.
- (e) Food safety.
- (f) Soil, water, and related resource conservation and improvement.
- (g) Forestry, horticulture, and range management.
- (h) Nutritional sciences and promotion.
- (i) Farm enhancement, including financial management, input efficiency, and profitability.
- (j) Home economics (Family and Consumer Sciences).
- (k) Rural human ecology.
- (l) Youth development and agricultural education, including 4-H clubs.
- (m) Expansion of domestic and international markets for agricultural commodities and products, including agricultural trade barrier identification and analysis.
- (n) Information management and technology transfer related to agriculture.
- (o) Biotechnology related to agriculture.
- (p) The processing, distributing, marketing, and utilization of food and agricultural products.

Joint project proposal means an application for a project: (1) which will involve the applicant institution working in cooperation with **one or more** other entities not legally affiliated with the applicant institution, including other schools, *colleges*, *universities*, community colleges, junior colleges, units of State government, private sector organizations, or a consortium of institutions; and (2) where the applicant institution and each cooperating entity will assume a significant role in the conduct of the proposed project. To demonstrate a substantial involvement with the project, **the applicant institution/organization submitting a joint project proposal must**

retain at least 30 percent but not more than 70 percent of the awarded funds and no cooperating entity may receive less than 10 percent of awarded funds. Only the applicant institution must meet the definition of an *eligible institution/organization* as specified in this RFA; other entities participating in a joint project proposal are not required to meet the definition of an *eligible institution/organization*.

Large-scale, Comprehensive Initiative (LCI) project proposal means an application for a project: (1) which will involve the applicant institution/organization working in cooperation with **two or more** other entities not legally affiliated with the applicant institution, including other schools, *colleges, universities*, community colleges, junior colleges, units of State government, private sector organizations, or a consortium of institutions; and (2) where the applicant institution and each cooperating entity will assume a significant role in the conduct of the proposed project. To demonstrate a substantial involvement with the project, **the applicant institution/organization submitting a LCI proposal must retain at least 30 percent but not more than 70 percent of the awarded funds and no cooperating entity may receive less than 10 percent of awarded funds.** Only the applicant institution must meet the definition of an *eligible institution* as specified in this RFA; other entities participating in a *joint project proposal* are not required to meet the definition of an *eligible institution*. LCI Project Proposals must support a multi-partner approach to solving a major state or regional challenge in agricultural sciences education at the postsecondary level. LCI Project Proposals are characterized by multiple partners (each providing a specific expertise) organized and led by a strong applicant with documented project management ability to organize and carry out the initiative. To be funded, in addition to meeting this grant program's Evaluation Criteria, a LCI project application must encourage study in areas that contribute to any of the five NIFA Priority Areas listed above in Part I, A.

Note: LCI Projects must include both the R&R Budget and the R&R Subaward Budget Attachment Forms. The forms shall clearly identify the total grant funding anticipated for the applicant and each partner to demonstrate the required sharing percentage. All expenditures for the applicant and all partners shall be further itemized in the Budget Justification. LCI Project Proposal funds do not have to be divided equally among project years, nor do they need to be divided equally among project partners.

Impacts for all LCI Projects: In addition to addressing the Evaluation Plan section of this program expected impacts from a LCI Project must include, but are not limited to:

- An assessment of significant progress toward addressing the national challenge of increasing the number and diversity of food and agriculture sciences STEM graduates, while addressing the specific state or regional opportunity defined in the grant application;
- Documented expansion of the number of students who enroll in postsecondary courses in the food or agricultural sciences disciplines;
- Documented enhanced retention rates of students exposed to LCI Project activities;

- A comprehensive project evaluation, using the indicators and methods defined in this grants program, that informs the undergraduate food and agriculture sciences STEM community and others about the effectiveness of this LCI Project;
- A description of completed or ongoing activities supported by this LCI Project, and a description of those same activities that will be sustained once grant funds end; and
- A description of any related activities expected to occur as an outgrowth of this funded project.

NLGCA institution; (non-land-grant college of agriculture) – From 7 USC Section 3103, means a public *college* or *university* offering a baccalaureate or higher degree in the study of agriculture or forestry.

Exclusions - The terms "NLGCA Institution" and "non land grant college of agriculture" do not include (and, therefore, the following institutions **are not eligible to apply** to this grants program):

1. Hispanic-serving agricultural colleges and universities (See Appendix A, below); or
2. any institution designated under:
 - a. the Act of July 2, 1862 (commonly known as the "First Morrill Act"; 7 U.S.C. 301 et seq., or the '1862 Land Grants');
 - b. the Act of August 30, 1890 (commonly known as the "Second Morrill Act") (7 U.S.C. 321 et seq., or the '1890 Land Grants');
 - c. the Equity in Educational Land-Grant Status Act of 1994 (Public Law 103-382; 7 U.S.C. 301 note, or the '1994 or Tribal Colleges Land Grants');
 - d. Public Law 87-788 (commonly known as the "McIntire-Stennis Cooperative Forestry Act") (16 U.S.C. 582a et seq.).

Outcomes means specific, measurable project results and benefits that, when assessed and reported; indicate the project's plan of operation has been achieved. Measurable outcomes include:

- Results are intended or unintended consequences of the project, (e.g., "...additional course materials now available online to reinforce student learning during non-classroom hours");
- Products may be actual items or services acquired with funds, (e.g., "...mechanisms and content to transition existing course(s) or elements of course(s) for Web-based access" or "created new and innovative prevention and intervention initiatives"); and
- Impacts are a measure of the results by comparing what might have happened in the absence of the funded project, (e.g., "...an observed, overall increase in student learning based upon 8% higher average test scores of those students who both attended class and used the supplemental, Web-based course materials".)

Regular project proposal means a proposal for a project: (1) where the applicant institution will be the sole entity involved in the execution of the project; or (2) which will involve the applicant

institution and one or more other entities, but where the involvement of the other entity(ies) does not meet the requirements for a *joint project proposal* as defined in this section.

Sustainable Agriculture - From 7 USC Section 3103, means an integrated system of plant and animal production practices having a site-specific application that will, over the long-term— (A) satisfy human food and fiber needs; (B) enhance environmental quality and the natural resource base upon which the agriculture economy depends; (C) make the most efficient use of nonrenewable resources and on-farm resources and integrate, where appropriate, natural biological cycles and controls; (D) sustain the economic viability of farm operations; and (E) enhance the quality of life for farmers and society as a whole.

“Teaching” and “education” - From 7 USC Section 3103, means formal classroom instruction, laboratory instruction, and practicum experience in the food and agricultural sciences and matters relating thereto (such as faculty development, student recruitment and services, curriculum development, instructional materials and equipment, and innovative teaching methodologies) conducted by *colleges* and universities offering baccalaureate or higher degrees.

Appendix A- List of HSACU Institutions, 2012-2013

The institutions listed in this appendix are granted HSACU certification by the Secretary and are eligible for HSACU programs for the period starting October 1, 2012 and ending September 30, 2013. Institutions are listed alphabetically under the state of the school's location, with the campus indicated where applicable.

Due to their HSACU designation, the following institutions listed directly below are not eligible to apply to this NLGCA grants program during the designated 2012-2013 period (see Definition for "NLGCA", above).

Arizona (3)

Central Arizona College
Phoenix College
Pima Community College

California (26)

Allan Hancock College
Bakersfield College
California State Polytechnic University-Pomona
California State University-Bakersfield
California State University-Fresno
California State University-Fullerton
California State University-Long Beach
California State University-Monterey Bay
California State University-San Bernardino
College of the Sequoias
Fullerton College
Golden West College
Hartnell College
Imperial Valley College
MiraCosta College
Modesto Junior College
Monterey Peninsula College
Mt. San Antonio College
Porterville College
Reedley College
San Diego Mesa College
San Joaquin Delta College
Santa Ana College
Southwestern College
West Hills College Coalinga
Whittier College

Colorado (1)

Trinidad State Junior College

Florida (4)

Florida International University
Miami Dade College
Nova Southeastern University
Saint Thomas University

Illinois (2)

City Colleges of Chicago-Harold Washington College
Triton College

New Mexico (8)

Central New Mexico Community College
Eastern New Mexico University-Main Campus
New Mexico Highlands University

New Mexico Institute of Mining and Technology
Northern New Mexico College
Santa Fe Community College
University of New Mexico-Main Campus
Western New Mexico University

New York (4)

CUNY Bronx Community College
CUNY City College
CUNY LaGuardia Community College
Mercy College

Puerto Rico (15)

Bayamon Central University
Instituto Tecnológico de Puerto Rico-Manati
Inter American University of Puerto Rico-Aguadilla
Inter American University of Puerto Rico-Bayamon
Inter American University of Puerto Rico-Metro
Inter American University of Puerto Rico-Ponce
Inter American University of Puerto Rico-San German
Pontifical Catholic University of Puerto Rico-Ponce
Universidad Del Turabo
Universidad Metropolitana
University of Puerto Rico-Arecibo
University of Puerto Rico-Humacao
University of Puerto Rico-Medical Sciences Campus
University of Puerto Rico-Rio Piedras Campus
University of Puerto Rico-Utuado

Texas (16)

Houston Community College
Lee College
Midland College
Palo Alto College
South Plains College
Southwest Texas Junior College
Texas A&M International University
Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi
Texas A&M University-Kingsville
Texas State Technical College-Harlingen
University of Texas at Brownsville
University of Texas at El Paso
University of Texas at San Antonio
University of Texas – Pan American
University of Houston
University of the Incarnate Word

Washington (1)

Wenatchee Valley College

Generic Logic Model for NIFA Reporting NIFA – Office of Planning & Accountability

(This model is intended to be illustrative guide for reporting on NIFA funded research, education and extension activities. It is not a comprehensive inventory of our programs.)

