

Letter of Intent (LOI) Instructions

November 9, 2020: Added information for FY 2021 AFRI SAS CAP Grant LOIs.

If a Program Area Priority requires a Letter of Intent, applicants must submit a “Letter of Intent to Submit an Application” by the Letter of Intent due date specified in the RFA for the AFRI Program Area Priority of interest. The letter of intent is a prerequisite for the submission of an application for the Program Area Priorities that require letter of intent. Although a letter of intent does not enter into the review of a subsequent application, the information that it contains allows program staff to estimate the potential review workload and plan the review.

Please use the following guidelines for LOI submission:

1. The Letter of Intent must adhere to the following formatting guidelines:
 - a. Font size must be at least 12 point
 - b. Margins must be at least one inch in all directions
 - c. Line spacing must not exceed six lines of text per vertical inch
 - d. Page size must be letter (i.e., 8.5 inches × 11 inches)
2. The Letter of Intent is limited to three pages for CAP grants and two pages for all other grant types.
 - a. On Page 1, provide only the following information:
 - i. the name, professional title, department, institution, and e-mail address of the lead project director (PD) and name, professional title, department, and institution of all collaborating investigators
 - ii. the Program Area or the Program Area Priority that is most closely addressed in the application
 - b. On Page 2 (Pages 2-3 for CAP grants), include:
 - i. a descriptive title
 - ii. rationale
 - iii. overall hypothesis or goal
 - iv. specific objectives
 - v. approach
 - vi. potential impact and expected outcomes

➤ To further clarify LOI instructions for Conference Grants, LOIs should also include:

 - The date(s) of the conference on Page 1.

➤ To further clarify LOI instructions for the FY 2021 AFRI Sustainable Agricultural Systems RFA CAP Grants only (for Sustainable Agricultural Systems program code A9201), LOIs should also include:

 1. description of the goal(s) addressed by the project, including short, medium, and long-term objectives within the “specific objectives” section of the LOI;
 2. description of the scope of systems and justification of components under investigation within the “approach” section of the LOI;
 3. clear descriptions and justification of the methods for the integrated and transdisciplinary approach to be used to achieve the desired goal(s) also within the “approach” section of the LOI; and

4. description of the benefits to the food and agricultural system within the “potential impact and expected outcomes” section of the LOI.
3. When submitting a Letter of Intent, NIFA will only accept Letter of Intent in the portable document format (PDF). Attach the PDF Letter of Intent to an e-mail addressed to the appropriate Program Area e-mail address for Submission of Letter of Intent or Program Area Priority Contacts (if there is no specific LOI e-mail listed) indicated in the RFA. In the e-mail subject line, write: Letter of Intent [Program Area Code]-[PD’s Last Name].
4. A Letter of Intent is required for all grant types if requested by the program area priority.
5. With the exception of Conference Grant LOIs, submission of more than one Letter of Intent to a program is discouraged.
6. Letters of Intent will be reviewed by scientific program staff in order to plan for appropriate expertise for the peer review panel and ensure that the proposed project fits appropriately within the Program Area Priorities.