

**Foundational and Applied Science Request for Applications  
Data Science for Food and Agricultural Systems Initiative  
Frequently Asked Questions**

These are some Frequently Asked Questions about the **Data Science for Food and Agricultural Systems (DSFAS)** within the [AFRI Foundational and Applied Science program](#).

For general Agriculture and Food Research Initiative information, please see the [AFRI FAQ](#).

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  - Are there any requirements on making data associated with a project funded through this opportunity available to the public?
  - Is a logic model required in my application and where can I find a template?
  - What is the deadline for DSFAS applications?
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## GENERAL QUESTIONS

### **What is the Data Science for Food and Agricultural Systems (DSFAS)?**

The **Data Science for Food and Agricultural Systems (DSFAS)** is a revision of the prior FACT program for FY21/22 and solicits applications that focus on data science to enable systems and communities to effectively utilize data, improve resource management, and integrate new technologies and approaches to further U.S. food and agriculture enterprises.

Projects funded through DSFAS will work to examine the value of data for small and large farmers, agricultural and food industries, and gain an understanding of how data can impact the agricultural supply chain, reduce food waste and loss, improve consumer health, environmental and natural resource management, affect the structure of U.S. food and agriculture sectors, and increase U.S. competitiveness.

### **Who should I contact if I have a general question about DSFAS?**

General questions can be sent to [NIFA-DSFAS@usda.gov](mailto:NIFA-DSFAS@usda.gov). All associated National Program Leaders (NPLs) listed in the Request for Applications (RFA) have access to the DSFAS email box and can reply to questions.

### **What grant types are available through DSFAS?**

The AFRI Foundational and Applied Science RFA DSFAS program area priority requests Standard, Conference, and Food and Agricultural Science Enhancement (FASE) Grants only.

### **What project types are available through DSFAS?**

The AFRI Foundational and Applied Science RFA DSFAS program area priority requests Research Projects and Integrated Projects only.

### **What are integrated projects?**

Under the AFRI Foundational and Applied Science RFA, integrated projects must address at least two of the three functions of the agriculture knowledge system (research, education, and extension). The functions should be interdependent and necessary for the success of the project, and no more than two-thirds of the project's budget may focus on a single component. Additional information on integrated project types is available on the [AFRI RFA Resources page](#) ("AFRI Project Types" in the attachments list, see pages 3-5).

### **What is a FASE grant and what are the eligibility requirements for FASE grants?**

Food and Agricultural Science Enhancement (FASE) grants help institutions develop competitive projects and attract new scientists and educators to careers in high-priority areas of national need in agriculture, food, and environmental sciences. FASE Grants have additional eligibility requirements; please see Part II, D of the RFA for details. For more information, visit the [FASE Grants website](#).

**What is a coordinated innovation network?**

The AFRI Foundational and Applied Science DSFAS program area priority (A1541) requests applications for *Coordinated Innovation Networks*. Coordinated innovation networks projects should foster communities that address bottlenecks in critical areas by bringing together experts from different disciplines and domains to identify innovative and synergistic solutions. They should promote collaboration among research and education communities, as well as develop and maintain effective networks across multiple disciplines and the public and private sectors. They should bring together research, education, and or extension communities working on multiple aspects of a data-supported problem into one multi-disciplinary network to collectively advance the field.

**What are the eligibility requirements for projects submitted to DSFAS?**

Eligible applicants for Research Projects include: a) State Agricultural Experiment Stations; b) colleges and universities (including junior colleges offering associate degrees or higher); c) university research foundations; d) other research institutions and organizations; e) Federal agencies, f) national laboratories; g) private organizations or corporations; h) individuals who are U.S. citizens, nationals, or permanent residents; and i) any group consisting of two or more entities identified in a) through h). Eligible institutions do not include foreign and international organizations.

Eligible applicants for Integrated Projects include: a) Colleges and universities; b) 1994 Land-Grant Institutions; and c) Hispanic-serving agricultural colleges and universities. Those institutions must also meet additional guidelines in the RFA Eligibility Information.

For more information see Part III (Eligibility Information) of the RFA and the [AFRI FAQs](#).

**Can I submit a proposal for a conference or workshop to DSFAS?**

Yes, DSFAS accepts applications for conference grants and workshops.

**What background information is available on DSFAS?**

Applicants are encouraged to visit NIFA's web site for information on the [Data Summit and extensive stakeholder input](#) that informed the development of the FACT/DSFAS initiative.

**Can the same proposal be submitted to multiple program areas?**

In accordance with Part III, Section 5 of NIFA Grants.gov Application Guide, duplicate, essentially duplicate or predominantly overlapping applications submitted to one or more program areas within the AFRI (including FASE Grants) in any one fiscal year will not be reviewed. In addition, applicants may not submit to AFRI an application that is considered duplicate, essentially duplicate, or predominantly overlapping with an application submitted to another NIFA program in the same fiscal year.

## LETTER OF INTENT QUESTIONS

### **Is a Letter of Intent required to submit a full application?**

Submission of a Letter of Intent (LOI) prior to the LOI deadline is not required for submission of a full proposal for Standard and FASE grants. Conference and workshop grant applications DO require a LOI.

### **What information should be included in a Letter of Intent and what are the formatting guidelines?**

For detailed guidance on LOI submission, please see the [AFRI RFA Resources page](#) (“AFRI Letter of Intent Instructions” in the attachments list).

### **What is the deadline for DSFAS Conference Letters of Intent?**

The LOI must be submitted a minimum of 195 days before the conference begins. After LOI decision response, applications must be submitted a minimum of 150 days before the conference begins.

### **Where do I email my conference grant Letter of Intent?**

LOIs can be sent to [NIFA-DSFAS@usda.gov](mailto:NIFA-DSFAS@usda.gov).

## APPLICATION QUESTIONS

### **What is the allowed budget and length/duration of the awards?**

Standard Grants, Strengthening Standard Grants, and New Investigator Grants must not exceed \$650,000 total per project (including indirect costs) for project periods of up to four years. Standard Grants addressing the coordination innovation networks priority within Program Area Priority A1541 must not exceed \$1,000,000 total per project (including indirect costs) for project periods of up to five years.

### **Is a data management plan required?**

Yes, data management plans are required, and they are important to fully understand the scope of the proposal. Data management plans are explicitly considered in the peer review process. A well designed and scripted management plan is critical for complete review. For guidelines on preparation and inclusion of a DMP in your application, see [Data Management Plan for NIFA-Funded Research, Education and Extension Projects](#).

### **Are there any requirements on making data associated with a project funded through this opportunity available to the public?**

Information on data sharing, protection, and public access guidelines is provided on [Data Management Plan for NIFA-Funded Research, Education and Extension Projects](#) as well as [NIFA's General Award Terms and Conditions](#).

**Is a logic model required in my application and where can I find a template?**

A logic model is a required for integrated project applications. For additional information on logic models, please visit the [Logic Model Planning Process page](#).

**What is the deadline for DSFAS applications?**

Applications to DSFAS (A1541) must be submitted to Grants.gov by 5:00 p.m. Eastern Time. Late applications will not be reviewed.

- **2021:** Thursday, July 29, 2021 (5:00 p.m. Eastern Time)
- **2022:** Thursday, October 20, 2022 (5:00 p.m. Eastern Time)