

**AFRI Foundational and Applied Science Request for Applications
Food and Agriculture Cyberinformatics and Tools Initiative
Frequently Asked Questions**

These are some Frequently Asked Questions about the [Food and Agriculture Cyberinformatics Tools Initiative](#) within the [AFRI Foundational and Applied Science program](#). For questions about FACT in the AFRI Education and Workforce Development program, see the [Research and Extension Experiences for Undergraduates Program \(REEU\) FAQ](#).

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GENERAL QUESTIONS

What is the Food and Agriculture Cyberinformatics and Tools initiative?

The Food and Agriculture Cyberinformatics and Tools (FACT) initiative is new in 2018 and solicits applications that

- 1) focus on fundamental or core big data analytics and tool development, and/or
- 2) apply big data concepts to specific science domains or across domains and sectors for any of the Agriculture and Food Research Initiative (AFRI) Foundational and Applied Science program area priorities.

FACT focuses 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 FACT 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 FACT?

General questions can be sent to FACT@nifa.usda.gov. All associated National Program Leaders (NPLs) listed in the Request for Applications (RFA) have access to the FACT email box and can reply to questions.

What grant types are available through FACT?

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

What project types are available through FACT?

The AFRI Foundational and Applied Science RFA FACT 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.

For additional information on submission of integrated project types, please see pages 3-5 of [AFRI Project Types](#).

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 FACT 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 FACT?

Eligible applicants for Research Projects include: a) State Agricultural Experiment Station; 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.

For more information see Part III (Eligibility Information) of the RFA.

Can I submit a proposal for a conference or workshop to FACT?

Yes, FACT encourages applications for conference grants and workshops.

What background information is available on FACT?

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 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?

Yes, submission of a Letter of Intent (LOI) prior to the LOI deadline is required for submission of a full proposal. Conference and workshop grant applications do not require an LOI.

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

Please see the [AFRI Letter of Intent Instructions](#) for information on formatting and submitting an LOI.

What is the deadline for FACT Letters of Intent?

LOIs for A1541 must be emailed to FACT@nifa.usda.gov by 5:00 p.m. Eastern Time on Wednesday, July 25, 2018.

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 \$500,000 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 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 the [Logic Model Planning Process page](#).

Is a data management plan required?

Yes, data management plans are required. For additional information, please see the Data Management Plan [Instructions](#) and [Frequently Asked Questions](#).

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

If there are limitations on project data sharing, the application must clearly justify those limitations in the Data Management Plan, including confidentiality, privacy, proprietary interests, business confidential information, and intellectual property rights, and/or avoiding significant negative impact on intellectual property rights, innovation, and U.S. competitiveness.

Information on data sharing, protection, and public access guidelines is provided in NIFA's Data Management Plan [Instructions](#) and [Frequently Asked Questions](#) as well as NIFA's General Award Terms and Conditions.

What is the deadline for applications?

Applications must be submitted to Grants.gov by 5:00 p.m. Eastern Time Wednesday, October 31, 2018. Late applications will not be reviewed.

OTHER QUESTIONS

Is there a FACT component in other AFRI Request for Applications?

Yes, the [Education and Workforce Development](#) (EWD) Request for Applications includes the Research and Extension Experiences for Undergraduates (REEU) program area, which has a FACT component. For more information see the [EWD RFA](#) and [REEU FAQ](#).

Can I submit an application on education activities that develop data competencies within undergraduate research and extension learning experiences to the AFRI Foundational and Applied Science FACT program area priority?

No, education-related FACT applications should be submitted to the [Education and Workforce Development](#) Request for Applications in the Research and Extension Experiences for Undergraduates (REEU) program area priority, which provides undergraduate students with experiential learning opportunities that include significant research and/or extension components in the food and agricultural sciences.