

Streamlined Continuation Awards Process

Frequently Asked Questions

What is the streamlined continuation awards process?

The National Institute of Food and Agriculture (NIFA) is implementing a new process to simplify the time and effort required to apply for a continuation award. NIFA staff implemented the change using a Continuous Process Improvement (CPI) approach in an effort to provide improved customer service and administrative efficiency.

Who should know about streamlined continuation grants?

Competitive NIFA grantees that have an active New Continuation or Continuation grant and NIFA staff who administer continuation grants.

How will the new process work?

The new process **will not** require awardees to use the Grants.gov process. Continuation award requirements will now include only:

- Submission of REEport;
- Submission of an SF-425;
- Justification for funding, and;
- Additional documents if there have been changes to the projects (such as updated assurance statements, or the CV of a new employee on the project).

For most continuation grant applications, the new process eliminates the chance of a “funding gap” from one year to the next for continuation awards that are approved each year. The new process has fewer requirements and steps; applicant training will be simplified.

When will the streamlined continuation grant process be implemented?

The updated process takes effect **November 14, 2016**.

Where can I learn more about the streamlined continuation grant process?

A “how to” webinar will be available on the NIFA website (<https://nifa.usda.gov/continuations-awards>) to guide grant applicants through the new process.

What are the benefits of the streamlined continuation awards process?

- Reduces time on grant award application and administration;
- Reduces the potential for applicant error, which in turn may reduce delayed funding;
- Fewer requirements and steps during the award process;
- Simpler applicant training;
- Uses a simpler process than Grants.gov;
- Fewer forms, redundancies eliminated;
- Includes only essential signatures;

- Especially helpful for project directors who are guiding projects with minimal institutional oversight; and
- Pilot tests with competitive applicants resulted in an average time reduction of 22.5 hours per award.

What if I have a current continuation award?

If you have a continuation award in FY2017, NIFA staff will send out the new process to you four months before the end of your award. Awards with end dates of February 15 and after will be using this new process. Continuations that began before January 2016 will also require a budget for that specific year, even if there were no changes to the budget.

If I have a continuation, when and to whom do I submit my information?

Continuation awards **will still be triggered** by program staff emailing continuation award guidance to the project directors. This happens three to four months before the end date on the award. If you do not receive an email from NIFA program staff by then, be sure to contact them right away.

Where can I find more information?

Visit <https://nifa.usda.gov/continuations-awards> for full details on the streamlined grant continuation process.

Email comments or questions to SOPContinuations@usda.gov.