

Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program and Expanded Food and Nutrition Education Program (SNAP and EFNEP): Regional Nutrition Education and Obesity Prevention Centers of Excellence (RNECE)

Questions and Answers through 8/13/2014, and including RFA Highlights Webinar **Most recent questions and responses listed at top**

Modified responses from the Webinar, based on the modified RFA, noted in red

IMPORTANT NOTES:

- 1) The RFA has been modified since the webinar training. It now reflects: 1) FNS authorization language for the indirect cost rate agreement; 2) expanded eligibility; and 3) additional similarity between the regional centers and national coordination center priority consideration language.
- 2) Please also note, ALL FUTURE COMMUNICATIONS, including links to the modified RFA, webinar, webinar slides, questions/answers to the webinar and subsequent questions and answers REGARDING THE RFA CAN BE FOUND AT: <http://www.nifa.usda.gov/funding/rfas/rnece.html>. Potential applicants are encouraged to look to that site for information about the RFA and related questions/responses, rather than additional email blasts from me.

Questions between 8-08 and 8-13 am

Formatting

What are the requirements for the page margins? 1/2 inch? I see the font must be 12-point, but nothing about the margins in the RFA. Is there any flexibility for the margins in terms of the logic model?

Although not stated explicitly in the RFA, we would expect standard margins to be used – 1 inch. An exception could be the logic model, which, as shown in the RFA does exceed normal boundaries.

Application Deadline

I've heard from a state that is thinking of applying that is under the impression that the due date has been moved back to the end of August. Is this true?

I'm not sure where that impression has come from, unless the state is confusing the dates that the panel will meet (end of August) with due date of the RFA. All official information – including the RFA notification – gives August 15, 2014, 5 pm EDT as the final moment that applications will be accepted into grants.gov, with encouragement to submit early to avoid any last minute glitches. Feel free to share this information if you learn of others who are misinformed, and draw their attention to the official RFA site - <http://www.nifa.usda.gov/funding/rfas/rnece.html>.

Questions between 8-05 and 8-07

National Coordination Center and eXtension

Do the national coordination center applications need a letter of support from eXtension Community Nutrition Community of Practice? If so, who do we contact?

Both types of grants (regional centers and national center) will need a letter of support from the Community Nutrition Education Community of Practice and a letter of acknowledgement from eXtension. Check with Ms. Laryessa D. Worthington, lengland@umd.edu, 410-715-6903; and Ms. Sandy Jensen, Sandra.jensen@sdstate.edu, 605-688-4944 for specifics.

Indirect Costs

As the prime on this regional proposal, can we take the 10% or 26% indirect cost rate since we are a nonprofit, educational institution? If another university is a subcontractor would they get 10% or 26%? If we sub-award to others, what indirect rate do we include on those in our proposal - 10% or 26%?

The 10% indirect cost rate limitation is for the national coordination center grant. The 26% indirect cost rate limitation is for the regional center grants for higher education institutions. Another way of looking at these grants is that the regional center grants are standard grants, and so subject to the 26% indirect cost rate limitation for educational institutions. The national coordination center grant is a cooperative agreement and so is subject to the 10% indirect cost rate limitation. The same rates would apply for sub-awards.

Questions between 7-30 and 8-04

Three-Fold Purpose

One purpose of this funding is to evaluate the long-term effectiveness of nutrition education/obesity prevention interventions for disadvantaged and underserved populations and opportunities for new research. Page 10, number 4 also mentions aggregation and synthesis of existing information and generation of new information. Is the expectation that the regional centers will evaluate and report on their own signature programs or that they will also compile and share existing nutrition education and obesity prevention programs via the information networks?

The expectation is that even as the regional centers are determining how to evaluate and report on their own signature programs, they will also work with the national coordination center in order to aggregate and synthesize the information. Also, they will be expected to add to/build upon other work that may be underway through program initiatives. Whether or not they can use existing systems or add to existing systems will need to be determined as we go forward.

Project Narrative

For item (2) under the project narrative, what do they want us to address under organizational affiliation of the Center... a listing of the director and other key personnel (or positions), including organizational affiliation of the Center?

For references to listings of directors and other key personnel, the organizational affiliation would be the organization, agency, or institution wherein such personnel are employed. For references only to the Center, the organizational affiliation would be the applying institution, organization, or agency.

Per the EFNEP program policy document <<http://www.nifa.usda.gov/nea/food/efnep/pdf/program-policy.pdf>> EFNEP "learning occurs through a series of lessons delivered in groups or one-on-one settings to allow participants time to apply the concepts that are taught." Per the RFP for the Regional NEOP Centers of Excellence grant EFNEP interventions must include at least two levels of the social-ecological framework for change: individual, environmental, and/or sectors of influence. Are there any

limitations or guidance as to what is allowable with EFNEP within the framework of the RFP, beyond delivery of lessons? And must the intervention include delivery of lessons?

A close read of the EFNEP program policy document reflects the incorporation of the socio-ecological framework into EFNEP, see page 6 - secondary audiences, as an example. With respect to EFNEP, the RFA stipulates that two of three levels of the socio-ecological framework from the Dietary Guidelines 2010 need to be included: individual, environmental settings, and/or sectors of influence. It would be your decision as to if and how you would include lesson delivery. I won't say that the intervention must include delivery of lessons, but I will say that whatever is planned should help strengthen programming, as per the three-fold purpose of the grant.

Budget

Would you please clarify the statement on p. 28 under R & R budget that the initial project period of each new center award will be for 18 months, with subsequent funding for 6 months? Page 21 states that awards made in FY 2014 will provide funds for the first 12 months. Is the maximum \$642,188 for the first 12 months? Should we front-load it so that sub-award funding will be in year 1? Where do the 18 months and 6 months come in?

The budget should reflect the full 24 months of grant activity. Recognizing that there can be delays in processing and managing sub-awards associated with the regional center grants, the RFA was written to provide up to 18 months of funding in the first year (e.g. the first 12 months) and then depending on the acceptability of the work, to provide the last six months of funding in the second year through a continuation award.

Another way of thinking about this is that up to three fourths of the funds would be available in the first year, and the remaining one fourth of the funds would be available in the second year depending on the acceptability of the work for the regional center grants.

If we need to spend slightly less than $\frac{3}{4}$ of the total allocation in year 1 and slightly more in year 2, is that a problem?

The RFA was written to allow as much flexibility to the budget as possible. Thus, it was written as a two-year award with a budget required for each year. It also includes an expectation for showing satisfactory progress through a continuation grant in order to receive the final quarter of funding. We recognize that expenses may vary over the two year period and so have set no requirements for a certain amount of funds to be expended in a single year.

Indirect Cost Rate Limitations

I have a question re the indirect rate for the RNECE RFA for educational institutions. In the RFA first it says 26% and then below it says 10%. I want to verify which is correct so that we build our budget correctly.

The indirect cost rate for educational institutions depends upon the type of application being made. As noted in the RFA, the regional centers grants are standard grants (page 9), whereas the national center grant is a cooperative agreement grant (page 14). The 26% indirect cost rate limitation for educational institutions is for standard grants, whereas the 10% indirect cost rate limitation is for cooperative agreements (page 30).

For other types of organizations and agencies, the full negotiated rate limitation would apply for standard grants and the 10% cost rate limitation would apply for cooperative agreements.

Regional Centers and National Center Involvement

Can an organization be a part of a regional center application and also apply as prime for the national coordination center grant (or vice versa)?

In either case, the answer is yes. An organization can apply for one or the other type of grants and be a collaborator on the second type of grant. What applicants cannot do is be the primary applicant for both a regional center proposal and a national coordinator center proposal.

Decisions about who to coordinate and collaborate with would be the decision of the applicants, as they consider how best to achieve what they expect to accomplish. A similar question has been asked about whether an organization/agency could be represented on more than one proposal. The answer is yes. Importantly, it should be clear that such organizations/agencies were included in the development of the proposal and not a last minute addition.

The RFA states that at least one member of each Regional Center team and National Coordination Center team must attend annual leadership meetings to report on RNECE activities. Reasonable travel expenses may be claimed as part of the project budget. It also states that NIFA intends to work with the National Coordination Center to conduct a review of the Regional Centers to assess each Center's configuration, performance, and engagement with other programs, and that successful applicants are expected to participate in this review and prepare documentation and materials for the review. So there are TWO meetings, right? Do we assume D.C. both meetings will be in D.C.? The leadership meetings are annual so we need to budget for 2 trips. What about the review meeting(s)? Will there be one or two? If one, in which year?

The RFA stipulates that one person must attend the annual leadership meeting, as you have noted. As for the reviews, that will be for the National Coordination Center, the Regional Center, and NIFA to work out. My initial sense is that they would be on site at the regional center, possibly with some virtual component. Applicants would need to think about how they would involve the necessary people to participate in that review and prepare all content that will be reviewed.

Sub-Awards

Are there suggested guidelines for what proportion of the funding should be for sub-awards?

No. As noted in the last FAQ update, there is no targeted amount of money that should be used for sub-awards. Sub-awards will be important, but they are secondary to establishment of the centers and having a signature research program. See <http://www.nifa.usda.gov/funding/rfas/rnece.html>.

eXtension Community of Practice

The RFA states that applicants must have a letter of acknowledgment from eXtension and letter of support from Community Nutrition Education Community of Practice. Are these required for the application process (due August 15 with proposal) or are these required if awarded funding?

They are required as part of the application - due August 15 with the proposal. See the updated FAQ for additional information.

Questions between 7-22 and 7-29

National Coordination Center

I have searched, but am unable to locate any existing USDA NIFA National Coordination Centers. Is there an existing center we might use as a point of reference?

The concept for a national coordination center was built off the Sustainable Agriculture Research and Education Program (SARE), which has been in existence since 1988. The Coordination Center for SARE, as one might guess, is well-developed and well-funded. Still, it does provide one example of how a new national coordination center may evolve. See http://www.nifa.usda.gov/nea/ag_systems/part/sustain_ag_part_regions.html and www.sare.org.

FNS and Regional Center Involvement

Can we submit an application for one region and be part of an application for another region? Can institutions/organizations be included in a region wherein they do not reside?

The RFA does not stipulate who can be included in the regional proposal. It only stipulates that the regional awards go to one institution/organization per region and that there is a regional focus, since the intent of the funds is to establish regional centers. Decisions about who to coordinate and collaborate with would be the decision of the applicants, as they consider how best to achieve what they expect to accomplish. A similar question has been asked about whether an organization/agency could be represented on more than one proposal. The answer is yes. Importantly, it should be clear that such organizations/agencies were included in the development of the proposal and not a last minute addition.

Would it be appropriate to involve the [FNS] regional SNAP-Ed coordinator to participate per the RFA requirement – for example to serve on an advisory committee?

Interactions with FNS, including regional FNS staff, are included in the RFA, see page 14 as an example. However, federal employees should not be considered as part of the regional teams or as members of advisory committees. That would be a conflict of interest.

Our hope is that the research will draw from and build upon the expertise, wisdom, and experience in the field (e.g. boots on the ground), through the research, and in the discipline/profession to strengthen the evidence, show longer term results, and enhance coordination, cooperation, and collaboration, e.g. to accomplish the RFA's three-fold purpose.

Budget

Can EFNEP and SNAP-Ed "program" people, e.g. those who are funded through EFNEP and SNAP-Ed dollars be part of these research centers?

The regional proposals can fund programmatic research. EFNEP and SNAP-Ed program dollars are to be used for programming – e.g. for serving EFNEP and SNAP-Ed target audiences. Program dollars should not be used to fund research. However, given that cooperation and collaboration are also essential to the success of EFNEP and SNAP-Ed programming, and that this new research program is expected to strengthen programming, it would be appropriate to have EFNEP and SNAP-Ed professionals involved in enhancing understanding and helping to facilitate the success of the research centers.

Letters of Support

Can Coordinators and Partners write a letter of support for more than one proposal?

Given that the intent of this RFA is to establish Regional Centers and that only one award per region is anticipated, it may be that some organizations/institutions will appear in multiple proposals. What is critical is that such organizations are clearly involved in the planning process and not a last minute addition.

Is there some way to reassure SNAP-Ed staff that it is OK to have their name listed and/or send a letter of support?

I'm not sure of your reason for including SNAP-Ed staff in the RFA. If you have a specific reason for involving them, that should be clearly stated. Regarding letters of support, key people who will play an active role will be important – reflecting active commitment.

Eligibility

Do we need to be an implementer of both EFNEP and SNAP-Ed in order to be eligible to apply?

No, Three types of organizations/agencies are eligible to apply – 1) EFNEP implementing agencies; 2) SNAP-Ed implementing agencies; and 3) non-profit organizations that meet certain criteria that are spelled out in the RFA. If you meet any of these three criteria, you would be eligible to apply directly for these funds.

As long as there is strong involvement from land grant organizations, is it OK for the fiscal/lead agency to be non-land grant?

The RFA does not require that the lead agency to be a land-grant institution.

Can agencies/organizations that subcontracted with implementing agencies/organizations be included in these awards?

Organizations that received funds directly from the state SNAP agency to implement the program in FY 2014 would qualify as a potential grant applicant. Organizations that received funds from an implementing agency through a sub-award (sub-contract), would not qualify, unless they meet one of the other two eligibility criteria. Such organizations could still be written into the proposal as a cooperator... or however the implementing agency and subcontracting organization would agree.

Is a state SNAP agency eligible to apply for the grants?

If the state agency is implementing the program in FY 2014 it can apply; but if it is not, then no. In general, state SNAP agencies, receive SNAP-funds and then contract with other agencies/organizations to implement SNAP-Ed.

eXtension Community Nutrition Community of Practice

I understand that I need to provide a letter of support from the eXtension Community Nutrition Education Community of Practice. Whom do I contact?

You are correct that you will need to connect with the eXtension Community Nutrition Education Community of Practice to get a letter of support. You will also need a letter of acknowledgement from eXtension. I have followed up with two individuals, to alert them that they may hear from potential applicants: Ms. Laryessa D. Worthington, lengland@umd.edu, 410-715-6903; and Ms. Sandy Jensen, Sandra.jensen@sdstate.edu, 605-688-4944.

Personnel

What is the reason for requiring EFNEP and SNAP-Ed representation as part of the regional center team? Could regional SNAP-Ed staff serve in that capacity?

The intent of including EFNEP and SNAP-Ed in the personnel expectations is to assure that the focus on both programs will not be lost in a broader research and collaborative agenda. Involving state EFNEP and/or SNAP-Ed Coordinators/Directors or other state/local program staff would be a way of addressing that expectation. Federal involvement in an advisory capacity would not be appropriate. A second way in which the RFA seeks to ground the work to EFNEP and SNAP-Ed is in drawing attention to the EFNEP policy document and SNAP-Ed Guidance. With that information as a backdrop, it is up to the regional centers to involve a variety of stakeholders in determining what actions they will take.

Can there be Co-Directors/Co-Principal Investigators (PI's)?

NIFA will fund one agency/organization for each award (up to 4 regional centers and 1 national center). Involvement of a Co-PI is possible and would be determined by those who submit applications.

The bulleted list under personnel contains a list of suggested types of people and organizations to include to ensure high level involvement from across the region. We are curious about the inclusion of the Evaluation Specialist and the Communication Specialist. Is the intent to include these people as paid staff? Or is the intent to have the expertise of an evaluation specialist and communication specialist on the regional center team?

The intent of the RFA is to assure that evaluation and communication expertise is incorporated into the regional centers. Whether those individuals are paid from the grant or from other sources would be for the applicants to determine.

What is meant by "communications specialist"? Is this intended to be an academic with theoretical expertise in communications, or a technical specialist with experience with various electronic/other methods of communication? Likewise, what is meant by 'evaluation specialist'? Is this intended to be an academic, or a program evaluation practitioner?

The RFA does not give this level of detail. Applicants are responsible for determining the expertise and expectations that are needed to accomplish what they set out to do in their proposal – what will be essential for having a regional center that achieves the expectations of the grant.

We took the inclusion of an EFNEP representative and SNAP-Ed representative to be voluntary, not as paid personnel on the Center budget – Is that a correct assumption?

The inclusion of EFNEP and SNAP-Ed representation is to assure that the work of the centers remains grounded in supporting these programs – such as building the evidence base, evaluating long-term effectiveness, and coordinating/collaborating for more synergistic relationships. Active programmatic involvement is essential. Whether or not grant funds would be used to assure that involvement would be for the applicants to determine.

What are the educational requirements for the center directors? We did not see that in the RFA. Educational requirements were not listed for the “center directors”.

Sub-awards

Is there a targeted amount of money that should be used for sub-award? Is there a minimum or maximum amount or other guidance that could be shared to help us plan a reasonable budget for the center?

There is no targeted amount of money that should be used for sub-awards. Sub-awards will be important, but they are secondary to establishment of the centers and having a signature research program.

Miscellaneous

There are several references to a Center's focus. Should these foci be content areas (e.g., fruit and vegetable consumption), audiences (e.g., parents of preschoolers), or processes (e.g., text-based programs, social marketing)?

A quick review of the RFA shows five uses of the word “focus,” four of which pertain to EFNEP and SNAP-Ed programming characteristics: food rather than nutrition emphasis, nutrition education and obesity prevention, improving behaviors of underserved/hard to reach audiences, and improving programs through evidence-based practices.

One use of the term “focus” pertains to the regional centers – that each center would have its own focus. In this case it is referring to the signature programs which would be for the applicants to determine. Content, audience, and/or processes could all be components of that signature program. The RFA is intentionally silent on such details to encourage applicants to determine and justify what that regional focus should be.

Who are the existing regional centers? Or, is this brand new funding for this purpose?

This is a new research program.

Questions thru 21 July

Who can apply/who can be involved

Can researchers at the land-grant institutions other than the EFNEP and/or SNAP-ED director be the PI on applications?

Yes. The RFA does not stipulate that only the EFNEP/SNAP-Ed Director is eligible for these funds. Rather, it specifies that EFNEP and SNAP-Ed representation must be present.

Can someone not at a SNAP-Ed or EFNEP implementing agency be a co-PI?

NIFA will fund one agency/organization for each award (up to 4 regional centers and 1 national center). Involvement of a co-PI is possible and would be determined by those who submit applications.

I understand that the total region must apply as a whole but only one university would be listed as host. Is that right?

Although the intent of this RFA is to have regional centers, that does not mean that these are regional applications. For the Regional Centers, only one institution/organization per region will receive the award. Importantly, the applications should reflect a regional focus – i.e. thinking beyond the specific institution/organization, or even state that may be applying.

Does an applicant need letters of support from all states in the region?

No.

How many states should be included in the region for the grant?

No number is specified.

Can you review once more your thoughts on cross-region and/or cross-state collaborations?

Part of the intent of the RFA is to enhance coordination and cooperation of low-income nutrition education/childhood obesity programs and research. We seek to incorporate a spirit of cooperation and collaboration at the outset in establishing this new research program – both across states and across regions. The inclusion of a coordination center and expectation that successful applicants will coordinate efforts reflect that expectation.

Will a proposal from a bona fide agent of an eligible organization be accepted?

Proposals from all eligible applicants will be considered. Agencies that receive sub-awards or subcontracts would not be eligible to apply directly, but could be considered under the umbrella of the applying agency.

Can you review once again who is eligible to apply as the lead applicant for this funding opportunity?

- 1) Land-grant institutions that have EFNEP programs
- 2) SNAP-Ed Implementing Agencies (<http://snap.nal.usda.gov/state-contacts>)
- 3) **Other non-profit organizations/agencies that have developed and/or delivered and/or evaluated similar low-income nutrition education/obesity prevention programs.**

Applications must include justification of eligibility to be considered for an award. Examples of eligibility would include: 1) being an 1862 or 1890 land-grant university, 2) having received SNAP-Ed funding from the state SNAP-Agency to implement SNAP-Ed in FY 2014; and/or 3) evidence that they are a non-profit organization/agency along with a description of the similar type of low-income nutrition education/obesity prevention program that they developed, delivered, and/or evaluated – including a program description, audience reached, action taken, and results achieved.

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

Some confusion may exist in that implementing agencies for SNAP-Ed do not receive SNAP-Ed funds directly. FNS funding goes to the state SNAP-agencies. Implementing agencies then apply and are approved for SNAP-Ed funding by the state SNAP agency.

Budget

Could the budget for the first year be less than \$642k?

The budget should reflect the full two year period. Regional Centers may receive less than \$642,188 for the first year if their proposals do not warrant full funding. In other words, the grants are for up to \$856,250. Proposals may be written for less than the full amount that is available, or pieces of the proposal may not merit being funded, in which case less than the full \$642,188 would be awarded.

Please clarify the indirect cost limitations. Pg. 29 of the RFA lists two rates, 30% and 10%.

The indirect cost rate language has been modified to reflect the Food and Nutrition Service's funding authorization. Indirect cost rate restrictions for the Regional Centers is marked in red in the RFA. Indirect cost rate restrictions for the Nutrition Coordination Center is a maximum of 10%, as noted.

Can you clarify the indirect rate for sub-contracts? Will it follow the NIH model (e.g., 30% of the first 25,000)?

The indirect cost rate for subcontracts is the same as for the grantee.

How does this funding reconcile with other USDA funding sources that do not allow duplication of funding? Ex. SNAP Ed and SNAP Outreach

EFNEP and SNAP-Ed program funding are for the conduct of those programs. This funding is for the establishment and conducting of program implementation research centers, the conduction of research, and the dissemination of research findings. Thus, this research program does not represent a duplication of funding.

Titles

Can you define or expand upon the "communication specialist" title?

The term does not refer to a specific position. Rather, it reflects a type of expertise that is expected. Communications expertise will be important to the success of these grants.

Three-Fold Purpose

What time frames correspond to request for mid to long-term effectiveness?

As program implementers of EFNEP and SNAP-Ed are well aware, those programs are relatively short interventions. A question that results is whether these programs are effective beyond the short term intervention. Two examples of mid-to-long term effectiveness might be:

- If using the CNE Logic Model, a mid-term outcome would represent changed behaviors, whereas a long-term intervention would represent changed conditions. What evidence is there that behaviors or conditions have actually changed? Such changes could be at the individual, environmental, and/or sectors of influence level.
- Outcomes could also be viewed in terms of maintaining changed behaviors and/or adopting additional desired behaviors over time following completion of the program intervention.

Can you reconcile the seemingly paradoxical concept of long-term evaluation over 2 years?

These programs should not be confused with epidemiological studies which can last for many years. Rather, EFNEP and SNAP-Ed are short term interventions, for which we are trying to determine if and to what extent those interventions make a difference beyond involvement with the programs.

Research Program

When do you expect the research program to be implemented?

The RFA stipulates that the signature research program should begin within 9 months of receiving the award.

Sub-awards

Could you provide more insight into the competitive sub award contracts (page 7 of the RFP) that regional centers will administer?

The RFA was designed to allow potential applicants as much latitude as possible for the sub-award contracts. Examples would be innovation grants, which would allow exploring new ideas on a small scale, and professional development grants, such as sharing findings with broader audiences. NIFA and FNS will be involved in approving the project award and evaluation criteria that are developed once the Regional Centers are established.

If a possible subcontractor has a product that regions might be interested in testing, what is the best way to let others know of its availability? Can perhaps a Google doc be set up for applicants to network with others? www.challenge.gov might serve as a collaborative model.

It is the responsibility of potential applicants and other interested persons to establish and reflect their network connections in their respective proposals. NIFA will not dictate that process.

RFA Process

I agree this is a complex task so why are we being asked to do this in 30 days (well actually 28 days now) in August? Is there a possibility of extending the deadline to 9-15-30 to accommodate all the collaboration agreements that will need to be arranged?

NIFA and FNS have been exploring the concept of research centers for some time, but funds were only recently identified to support this new research program. These are FY 2014 funds, which means that they must be obligated by September 30th. NIFA has been working expeditiously to get the RFA published using a competitive awards process. The timeline has been and will be incredibly tight for preparing the RFA, submitting proposals, conducting the competitive panel review, and finalizing proposal and award requirements.

We hope that potential applicants see this as an opportunity, where none existed before, as considerable effort has been expended to identify these research dollars.

What is time frame for panel, award notices, and implementation? I don't see that in the RFA.

As noted in the training webinar, important dates are:

- RFA announcement – 15 July 2014
- RFA webinar – 16 July, repeated 17 July and then posted
- Applications due – 15 August BEFORE 5 pm EDT
- Panel review (tentative) week of 25 August 2014
- Awards approved and announced: 30 September 2014

Details regarding the panel process are still being worked through. What's important for potential applicants to know is that they may hear from NIFA as early as 28 August, and will need to provide any remaining information that is needed as soon as possible after receiving notification in order for the awards to be processed in time.

Should we assume start date of Oct 1, 2014 then?

The start date needs to be within FY 2014. It will be as soon as the funds can be obligated

How will funding be handled if one or more region does not apply or does not submit an acceptable application?

If no approvable proposal is submitted by a region, funds will not be awarded. However, we hope that this RFA generates enough interest that approvable proposals will be submitted by all regions.

Sustainability/Continuity

Can you say what might happen beyond these two years - continuation/sustainability?

This new program has caught the attention of the Department, Mission Areas, and FNS and NIFA administration. The concept has been well-received as evidenced by the effort made to identify funds within existing resources and the decision to term this new program "regional centers."

Specific funds have not, as yet, been designated for the continuation of the centers, but there is considerable interest in what may be achieved. This new research program creates an opportunity to demonstrate what is possible if given the resources.

Miscellaneous

How much focus will be on children vs. adults?

The RFA does not distinguish between youth and adult programming.

The funding is primarily for the evaluation vs implementation of nutrition-related activities, correct?

No. Evaluation is only one component of the research program. Please refer to the three-fold purpose of the RFA along with the sections on proposals that will be given priority consideration.

Why are you wanting to have the Nat Coordination Center be separate and not one of the 4 regional centers? As proposed, it appears to be an extra layer and not integrated with the day to day work.

The National Coordination Center needs to be separate from the Regional Centers and to work independently of the Research Centers.

Could you discuss policy work within a center? Can we do legislative education - not lobbying?
Informing policy is part of the socio-ecological framework. We would expect that what comes from these research centers can help inform policy.

Where can I find the RFA?

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

RFA Training Follow-up

Will the slides presented today be available for download or be emailed out to registered participants?

Yes. All RFA information is now available at: <http://www.nifa.usda.gov/funding/rfas/rnece.html>.
You are encouraged to visit that site periodically as you develop your RFA, as responses to potential applicants' questions will be posted there, rather than through email and listserv messages.