

Federal Employees Retirement System (FERS) Contributions Program

FY 2016 Request for Applications

APPLICATION DEADLINE: July 20, 2015



United States
Department of
Agriculture

National Institute
of Food and
Agriculture

NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF FOOD AND AGRICULTURE; U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

FEDERAL EMPLOYEES RETIREMENT SYSTEM (FERS) CONTRIBUTIONS PROGRAM

INITIAL ANNOUNCEMENT

CATALOG OF FEDERAL DOMESTIC ASSISTANCE: This program is listed in the Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance under 10.500.

DATES: Applications must be received by **5:00 p.m. Eastern Time on July 20, 2015.** Comments regarding this request for applications (RFA) are requested within 6 months from the issuance of this notice. Comments received after that date will be considered to the extent practicable.

STAKEHOLDER INPUT: The National Institute of Food and Agriculture (NIFA) seeks your comments about this RFA. We will consider the comments when we develop the next RFA for the program, if applicable, and we'll use them to meet the requirements of section 103(c)(2) of the Agricultural Research, Extension, and Education Reform Act of 1998 (7 U.S.C. 7613(c)(2)). Submit written stakeholder comments by the deadline set forth in the DATES portion of this Notice to: policy@nifa.usda.gov. (This e-mail address is intended only for receiving comments regarding this RFA and not requesting information or forms.) In your comments, please state that you are responding to the Federal Employees Retirement System (FERS) Contributions Program RFA.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY: NIFA requests applications for the Federal Employees Retirement System (FERS) Contributions Program for fiscal year (FY) 2016 to defray the FERS Retirement cost to the 1862 Land-grant institutions for the former Schedule A Appointments who conduct agricultural extension work.

This RFA is being released prior to the passage of an appropriations act for FY 2016. Enactment of continuing resolutions (CR) or an appropriations act may affect the availability or level of funding for this program. Subject to any 2016 Continuing Resolution, funds will be distributed to the institutions on a quarterly basis and according to the amounts allocated in FY 2015.

Adjustments will be made to the allocations for FY 2015 once the FY 2016 appropriations are finalized. The amount available for support of this program in FY 2015 was **\$753,653**. Funds are to be distributed through grants to the institutions on a quarterly basis. The specific distributions are included in Appendix A of this RFA. In FY 2016, subject to the availability of funds and the applicant having met the previous year's reporting requirements, quarterly payments will be issued.

This notice identifies the objectives for FERS project/program, the eligibility criteria for projects/program and applicants, and the application forms and associated instructions needed to apply for a FERS grant.

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PART I—FUNDING OPPORTUNITY DESCRIPTION

A. Legislative Authority and Background

Funding for the FERS Retirement Contributions Program are provided under sections 3(b) and (c) of the Smith-Lever Act. The Consolidated and Further Continuing Appropriations Act, 2015 (H.R. 83) provides funds for the retirement costs of the former Schedule A Appointments at the 1862 land-grant institutions. These funds are allocated to the 1862 Land-Grant institutions with former Schedule A Appointments based on each institution's relative share of the total payments to OPM during the previous year.

The separate allocation of funds for this purpose is being phased out over a 10-year period, beginning in FY 2008. The amount available for this program is reduced each year by \$376,826 and this same amount is added to the funds available for distribution under the Smith-Lever Act, Section 3(b) and (c), statutory formula.

The Schedule A 213.3113 (a) (1) was issued by the U.S. Office of Personnel Management (OPM) for the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) to employ individuals in the Cooperative Extension Service (CES) as a joint appointment between USDA and the Land-Grant institution. The official title of Schedule A appointees includes the title Agent (e.g., Agent/Cooperative Extension Director; Agent/Cooperative Extension Educator) as by law only agents with a Schedule A appointment were eligible to participate in the Federal benefit plan(s).

Employment is dependent upon an individual's appointment in the CES at the university. The appointment must be a regular position with at least 50 percent of the staff's time dedicated to extension projects, and the appointee must work and be paid over a 12 month period.

Agents in the Cooperative Extension program are not classified under the General Schedule (GS) classification system or any other Federal pay system. The positions are classified by the employing land-grant institution, and the salary is established according to policies and procedures at the institution.

The OPM has the authority and responsibility for issuing rules and regulations covering Schedule A appointments and resulting benefits. OPM has delegated to the USDA the responsibility for overseeing and managing Cooperative Extension Schedule A appointments and the accompanying Federal benefits, (e.g., retirement and insurance plans). The Human Resources Division (HRD)/Metropolitan Services Branch (MSB) with Administrative and Financial Management (AFM) of the Agricultural Research Service (ARS) carries out this function for USDA.

Effective January 31, 2003, the authority to grant Schedule A Excepted Appointments to CES employees was terminated. P. L. 107-171, Farm Security and Rural Investment Act of 2002, dated May 13, 2002, Section 7220, terminated the Schedule A appointing authority used by USDA to grant a companion Federal appointment and Federal benefits to state/university

employees of the Cooperative Extension Service. The law allowed the CES Federal appointees that were employed on the day before the date of the enactment of the Act, (i.e., May 12, 2002), to: a) continue to accrue Federal creditable service for retirement; and b) participate in the following benefits as long as the employees continued their employment with the Cooperative Extension Service:

- 1) The Federal Employees Health Benefits Program (FEHB);
- 2) The Federal Employees' Group Life Insurance Program (FEGLI);
- 3) The Federal Employee Retirement System (FERS);
- 4) The Thrift Savings Plan (TSP); and
- 5) The Federal Long Term Care Insurance Program (FLTCIP).

The Federal Office of Workers Compensation Program (OWCP) is the only Federal program that will not continue as it is not a program that the dual appointee was vested in. Claims already on file with the Department of Labor (DOL) Office of Workers Compensation Office will continue to be processed by the DOL. Using a formula based in the prior year's injury or illness claims, NIFA will pay these claims on behalf of each institution and charge that institution by reducing its annual retirement allocation by the amount remitted. If the amount of claims paid exceeds the institution's annual retirement allocation, NIFA will bill the institution for any OWCP costs in excess of the annual retirement allocation.

Changes and new features for the current Federal Benefits programs such as FEHB, FEGLI, TSP and FLTCIP will be offered to the CES organizations and employees that are eligible to participate in the affected program(s). However, former Federal appointees cannot participate in new Federal benefit programs that were not in effect as of May 12, 2002.

Effective January 31, 2003, CES can no longer grant Schedule A Federal appointments to new employees because they no longer have a Federal appointment authority available to make new Federal appointments. Former CES Schedule A appointees may be reappointed to another CES organization and continue their benefits as long as they do not have a break in service.

Under the Federal Funding Accountability and Transparency Act (FFATA), the U.S. Office of Management and Budget (OMB) was required to develop and maintain a public searchable data base for all Federal financial assistance awards, and Federal agencies are required to report specific data elements which will be collected via these applications (e.g., Dun and Bradstreet Data Universal Numbering (DUNS) numbers, legal name of institution, legal address, and congressional district). OMB makes this information available at <http://www.usaspending.gov>.

Please note that the submission of this application package does not change the following:

- Delegated authorities of the State Extension Director
- How funds are managed at your institution
- Indirect costs and tuition remission are unallowable costs

Guidelines for the administration of this program are published in the National Institute of Food and Agriculture (NIFA) Federal Assistance Policy Guide, which may be accessed at:

<http://nifa.usda.gov/resource/nifa-federal-assistance-policy-guide>

The guide is based on laws, regulations, USDA and NIFA guidance, NIFA policy, and administrative manuals, etc. applicable to NIFA financial assistance.

Please note that this version does not reflect the Agricultural Act of 2014 (aka 2014 Farm Bill) or USDA's Implementation of the Office of Management and Budget "OMB Uniform Guidance: Cost Principles, Audit, and Administrative Requirements for Federal Awards" (2 CFR part 200). Once the update is complete, NIFA will post the updated version to the appropriate NIFA web page and will publicize the posting accordingly.

Further, the USDA NIFA web-site home page for FERS is:

<http://nifa.usda.gov/program/fers-retirement-contributions-program>

B. Purpose

The purpose of this funding is to defray the FERS retirement costs to the 1862 Land-Grant institutions for former Schedule A appointees performing agricultural extension work.

PART II—AWARD INFORMATION

A. Available Funding

Subject to any 2016 Continuing Resolution, funds will be distributed to the institutions on a quarterly basis and according to the amounts allocated in FY 2015. Adjustments will be made to the allocations for FY 2016 once the FY 2016 appropriations are finalized. The amount available for support of this program in FY 2015 was **\$753,653**.

Awards issued as a result of this RFA will have designated the Automated Standard Applications for Payment System (ASAP), operated by the Department of Treasury's Bureau of the Fiscal Service, as the payment system for funds. For more information see <http://fms.treas.gov/index1.html>.

B. Type of Application

In FY 2016, submit applications to the FERS Program as a “new” application.

PART III---ELIGIBILITY INFORMATION

A. Eligible Applicants

Applications may only be submitted by 1862 Land-Grant institutions that are making payments to the U.S. Office of Personnel Management for FERS retirement costs for the former Schedule A Appointments. See Appendix A for the list of eligible institutions.

Award recipients may subcontract to organizations not eligible to apply provided such organizations are necessary for the conduct of the project. Failure to meet an eligibility criterion by the time of application deadline may result in the application being excluded from consideration or, even though an application may be reviewed, will preclude NIFA from making an award.

B. Cost Sharing or Matching

Section 3(e)(1) of the Smith-Lever Act (7 U.S.C. §343(e)(1) states, with regard to institutions in the 50 states, “no allotment shall be made to a State under subsection (b) or (c), and no payments from the allotment shall be made to a State, in excess of the amount that the State makes available out of non-Federal funds for cooperative extension work.” However, section 3(e)(4) of the Smith-Lever Act (U.S.C. §343(e)(4) provides that “Effective beginning for fiscal year 2003, in lieu of the matching funds requirements of paragraph (1), the insular areas of [American Samoa,] the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, Guam, [Micronesia, the Northern Marianas Islands,] and the Virgin Islands of the United States shall provide matching funds from non-Federal sources in an amount equal to not less than 50 percent of the formula funds distributed by the Secretary to each of the insular areas, respectively, under this section. The Secretary may waive the matching fund requirement [of 50 percent] for any fiscal year if the Secretary determines that the government of the insular area will be unlikely to meet the matching requirement for the fiscal year. See Part IV.B.4 for information about how to request a waiver.

The source(s) and amount or the value of third-party in-kind contributions proposed by the applicant to meet a matching or cost sharing requirement must be identified in the application. See Part VI, Section 5. of the NIFA Grants.gov Application Guide for instructions regarding Other Attachments Form. Must be submitted as a PDF file format (or document). Allowability of costs for cost sharing and matching purposes is determined by the applicable cost principles (2 CFR 200).

PART IV—APPLICATION AND SUBMISSION INFORMATION

A. Electronic Application Package

Only electronic applications may be submitted via Grants.gov to NIFA in response to this RFA. We urge you to submit early to the Grants.gov system. For an overview of the Grants.gov application process see <http://www.grants.gov/web/grants/applicants/grant-application-process.html>.

New Users of Grants.gov

Prior to preparing an application, we recommend that the Project Director/Principal Investigator (PD/PI) first contact an Authorized Representative (AR, also referred to as Authorized Organizational Representative or AOR)¹ (see B.,1.,d. of this Part to determine if the organization is prepared to submit electronic applications through Grants.gov. If not (e.g., the institution/organization is new to the electronic grant application process through Grants.gov), then you must complete the one-time registration process PRIOR to submitting an application. It can take as long as 2 weeks to complete the registration process so it is critical to begin as soon as possible. In such situations, the AR should go to **“Register” in the top right corner of the Grants.gov web page (or go to <http://www.grants.gov/web/grants/register.html>) for information on registering the institution/organization with Grants.gov.** Item 2. below mentions the “NIFA Grants.gov Application Guide.” Part II., 1. of the NIFA Grants.gov Application Guide contains additional explanatory language regarding the registration process.

Steps to Obtain Application Package Materials

To receive application materials:

1. You must download and install a version of Adobe Reader compatible with Grants.gov to access, complete, and submit applications. For basic system requirements and download instructions, see <http://www.grants.gov/web/grants/support/technical-support/software/adobe-reader-compatibility.html>. Grants.gov has a test package that will help you determination whether your current version of Adobe Reader is compatible.
2. To obtain the application package from Grants.gov, go to <http://www.grants.gov/web/grants/applicants/apply-for-grants.html>. Under Step 1 click on “Download a Grant Application Package,” and enter the funding opportunity number [USDA-NIFA-OP-005256] in the appropriate box and click “Download Package.” From the search results, click “Download” to access the application package.

The application package contains the “NIFA Grants.gov Application Guide.” This guide contains an introduction and general Grants.gov instructions, information about how to use a

¹The Authorized Representative (AR) must have the authority to represent and bind the organization for any agreement (i.e., the individual who is authorized to commit the awardee’s time and other resources to the project, to commit the awardee to comply with the terms and conditions of the award instrument including those set out herein, and to otherwise act for or on behalf of the awardee institution or organization).

Grant Application Package in Grants.gov, and instructions on how to complete the application forms.

If you require assistance to access the application package (e.g., downloading or navigating Adobe forms) **or submitting the application**, refer to resources available on the Grants.gov website (<http://www.grants.gov/web/grants/applicants/applicant-resources.html>). Grants.gov assistance is also available at:

Grants.gov customer support
800-518-4726 toll-free or 606-545-5035
Business Hours: 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Closed on [federal holidays](#).
Email: support@grants.gov

Grants.gov iPortal: Top 10 requested help topics (FAQs), searchable knowledge base, self-service ticketing and ticket status, and live web chat (available 7 am - 9 p.m. ET). Get help now!

Have the following information available when contacting Grants.gov:

- Funding opportunity number (FON)
- Name of agency to which you are applying
- Specific area of concern

B. Content and Form of Application Submission

You should prepare electronic applications following Parts V and VI of the NIFA Grants.gov Application Guide. This guide is part of the corresponding application package (see Section A. of this part). The following is **additional information** needed to prepare an application in response to this RFA. **If there is discrepancy between the two documents, the information contained in this RFA is overriding.**

Note the attachment requirements (e.g., PDF) in Part III, Section 3. of the guide. ANY PROPOSALS THAT ARE NON-COMPLIANT WITH THE REQUIREMENTS (e.g., content format, PDF file format, file name restrictions, and no password protected files) WILL BE AT RISK OF BEING EXCLUDED FROM NIFA REVIEW. Partial applications will be excluded from NIFA review. We will accept subsequent submissions of an application until the established deadline in the RFA (see Part V, 2.1 of the NIFA Grants.gov Application Guide for further information).

For any questions related to the preparation of an application, review the NIFA Grants.gov Application Guide and the applicable RFA. If assistance is still needed for preparing application forms content, contact:

- Email: electronic@nifa.usda.gov
- Phone: 202-401-5048
- Business hours: Monday through Friday, 7 a.m. – 5 p.m. ET, excluding [federal holidays](#).

Each grant application must contain a(n):

- “Application for Federal Assistance,” Form SF-424 R&R Cover Sheet

- Key Contacts Form.
- NIFA Supplemental Information Form.

The following is an optional form:

- Attachment Form

The NIFA Grants.gov Application Guide includes instructions for additional forms that are not needed for an application in response to this RFA. Complete and submit only the forms associated with the funding opportunity package and as instructed below.

1. SF 424 R&R Cover Sheet

Information related to the questions on this form is dealt with in detail in Part V, 2. of the NIFA Grants.gov Application Guide. The following are additional instructions.

- Field 1. Type of Submission** – Check “application.”
- Field 8. Type of Application** – Enter “new.”
- Field 15. Estimated Project Funding** – For item a. enter your institution’s FY 2015 allocation as listed in Appendix A to this announcement.

2. Key Contacts Form

Information related to the questions on this form is dealt with in detail in Part VI, 4. of the NIFA Grants.gov Application Guide.

Smith-Lever

- Contact 1 Project Role:** Enter the contact information for the State Extension Director.
- Contact 2 Project Role:** Enter the contact information for the State Extension Director’s designee.
- Contact 3 Project Role:** Enter the contact information for the Business Office Manager/Administrator.
- Contact 4 Project Role:** Enter the contact information for the person responsible for drawdowns.

3. Supplemental Information Form

Information related to the questions on this form is dealt with in detail in Part VI, 1. of the NIFA Grants.gov Application Guide. The following are additional instructions.

- Field 2. Program to which you are applying.** Enter the program code name (i.e., enter “FERS Contributions Program” and the program code (i.e., enter “**FERS**”).
- Field 8. Conflict of Interest List.** Do not attach a conflict of interest list.

4. Attachments Form

Information related to the questions on this form is dealt with in detail in Part VI, 5. of the NIFA Grants.gov Application Guide. The following are additional instructions.

See Part V., Section 4.12. of the NIFA Grants.gov Application Guide (Field 12 on the Form) for instructions regarding Felony and Tax Representation.

For the FERS Program, matching is required but waivers are available. See Part IV.D. -- Funding Restrictions for specific details.

Matching Funds Waiver Request (Optional)

If your institution is applying for a matching funds waiver, prepare a request in PDF format (see Part III, Section 3. of the guide for attachment requirements). Include the following elements in the request:

- (a) a request to waive matching requirements under this RFA;
- (b) a statement of the fiscal year(s) for which the waiver is requested;
- (c) a statement of the exact dollar amount of waiver being requested by fiscal year and how the amount was computed (by matching fund category);
- (d) a statement of why the waiver is requested;
- (e) documentation supporting the need for a waiver (i.e., newspaper articles/clippings or State budgets); and
- (f) the university's efforts to meet future matching needs.

The documentation should include the university's approved budget for the program for both the current and previous budget cycles. It may also submit items such as a statement from the State asserting what portion of the required match amount the State contribution to the institution will cover, a schedule of projected cash flows showing what portion of the matching funds the university will have available or other documents such as letters from State or institution budget personnel or newspaper articles. In requesting the waiver, the institution must consider the availability of all permissible forms of matching in detail.

See Part VI., Section 5. of the NIFA Grants.gov Application Guide for instructions regarding Other Attachments. Must be submitted as a PDF document.

C. Submission Dates and Times

Instructions for submitting an application are included in Part IV, Section 1.9 of the NIFA Grants.gov Application Guide.

Applications must be received by Grants.gov by **5 p.m. Eastern Time on July 20, 2015**. Applications received after this deadline will normally not be considered for funding.

If you have trouble submitting an application to Grants.gov, you should FIRST contact the Grants.gov Help Desk to resolve any problems. Keep a record of any such correspondence. See Part IV, A. for Grants.gov contact information.

We send email correspondence to the AR regarding the status of submitted applications. Therefore, we strongly encourage applicants to provide accurate e-mail addresses, where designated, on the SF-424 R&R Application for Federal Assistance.

If the AR has not received correspondence **from NIFA** regarding a submitted application within 30 days of the established deadline, contact the Agency Contact identified in Part VII of the applicable RFA and request the proposal number assigned to the application. **Failure to do so may result in the application not being processed and funding being held. Once the**

application has been assigned a proposal number, you should cite this number on all future correspondence.

D. Funding Restrictions

(1) Approved NIFA FERS Retirement Contributions Programs

NIFA FERS retirement allocations may only be used to support FERS retirement costs for former Schedule A Appointments.

(2) Matching

Section 3(e)(1) of the Smith-Lever Act (7 U.S.C. §343(e)(1) states, with regard to institutions in the 50 states, “no allotment shall be made to a State under subsection (b) or (c), and no payments from the allotment shall be made to a State, in excess of the amount that the State makes available out of non-Federal funds for cooperative extension work.” However, section 3(e)(4) of the Smith-Lever Act (U.S.C. §343(e)(4) provides that “Effective beginning for fiscal year 2003, in lieu of the matching funds requirements of paragraph (1), the insular areas of [American Samoa,] the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, Guam, [Micronesia, the Northern Marianas Islands,] and the Virgin Islands of the United States shall provide matching funds from non-Federal sources in an amount equal to not less than 50 percent of the formula funds distributed by the Secretary to each of the insular areas, respectively, under this section. The Secretary may waive the matching fund requirement [of 50 percent] for any fiscal year if the Secretary determines that the government of the insular area will be unlikely to meet the matching requirement for the fiscal year.”

The source(s) and amount or the value of third-party in-kind contributions proposed by the applicant to meet a matching or cost sharing requirement must be identified in the application. See Part VI, Section 5. of the NIFA Grants.gov Application Guide for instructions regarding Other Attachments Form. Must be submitted as a PDF file format (or document). Allowability of costs for cost sharing and matching purposes is determined by the applicable cost principles (2 CFR 200).

NIFA may consider and approve matching waivers submitted by 1862 Land-Grant Institutions in insular areas. Please note that these matching funds may be used for any extension activity identified in the state plan of work.

(3) Indirect Costs and Tuition Remission

In accordance with section 1473 of the National Agricultural Research, Extension, and Teaching Policy Act of 1977 (NARETPA) (7 U.S.C. §3319), indirect costs and tuition remission are unallowable as Sections 3(b) and 3(c) of the Smith-Lever Act formula grant expenditures for the FERS Retirement Contributions Program.

E. Other Submission Requirements

You should follow the submission requirements noted in Part IV, Section 1.9 of the NIFA Grants.gov Application Guide.

For information about the **status of a submitted application**, see Part III, Section 6. of the NIFA Grants.gov Application Guide.

Dun and Bradstreet Universal Numbering System (DUNS) Number and System for Award Management (SAM) - each applicant (unless excepted under 2 CFR § 25.110(b) or (c), or has an exception approved by the Federal awarding agency under 2 CFR § 25.110(d)) is required to: (i) Be registered in SAM before submitting its application; (ii) provide a valid DUNS number in its application; and (iii) continue to maintain an active SAM registration with current information at all times during which it has an active Federal award or an application or plan under consideration by a Federal awarding agency. It also must state that the Federal awarding agency may not make a Federal award to an applicant until the applicant has complied with all applicable DUNS and SAM requirements and, if an applicant has not fully complied with the requirements by the time the Federal awarding agency is ready to make a Federal award, the Federal awarding agency may determine that the applicant is not qualified to receive a Federal award and use that determination as a basis for making a Federal award to another applicant.

PART V—APPLICATION REVIEW REQUIREMENTS

A. General

NIFA will review submitted documents to determine if all program, financial, and administrative requirements have been met and are current.

B. Organizational Management Information

Specific management information relating to an applicant shall be submitted on a one time basis, with updates on an as needed basis. This requirement is part of the responsibility determination prior to the award of a grant identified under this RFA, if such information has not been provided previously under this or another NIFA program. We will provide you forms for use in fulfilling these requirements as part of the pre-award process. Although an applicant may be eligible, there are factors that may exclude an applicant from receiving federal financial and nonfinancial assistance and benefits under this program (e.g., debarment or suspension of an individual involved or a determination that an applicant is not responsible based on submitted organizational management information).

PART VI—AWARD ADMINISTRATION

A. General

All current program and administrative requirements must be met by the eligible institution, before funding will be released. The Capacity Grants Branch, Awards Management Division (AMD), Office of Grants and Financial Management (OGFM), will notify the institutions when all requirements have been met or approved.

Within the limit of funds available for such purpose, the NIFA awarding official shall make grants to those responsible, eligible applicants. All funds granted by NIFA under this RFA may be used only for the purpose for which they are granted in accordance with the approved application and budget, regulations, terms and conditions of the award, applicable federal cost principles, USDA assistance regulations [2 CFR part 415 (formerly 7 CFR part 3015) and 2 CFR parts 200 and 400 (formerly 7 CFR part 3019)] and the Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards (2 CFR part 200).

B. Award Notice

The notice of Federal award (Form NIFA-2009) is the authorizing document. The award document contains award provisions and other pertinent information. See <http://nifa.usda.gov/wait-notification> for further details.

C. Administrative and National Policy Requirements

Several federal statutes and regulations apply to grant applications considered for review and to project grants awarded under this program. These may include, but are not limited to, the ones listed on the NIFA web page - <http://nifa.usda.gov/federal-regulations>.

NIFA Federal Assistance Policy Guide—a compendium of basic NIFA policies and procedures that apply to all NIFA awards, unless there are statutory, regulatory, or award-specific requirements to the contrary is available at <http://nifa.usda.gov/policy-guide>.

D. Expected Program Outputs and Reporting Requirements

The following is a description of project data reporting requirements through the REEport system (located at <http://portal.nifa.usda.gov>) as well as the SF-425 reporting requirements:

Institutions must submit a REEport Project Initiation which includes the Project Description; Project Classification; Assurance Form; and Project Proposal through the REEport System prior to the initiation of each capacity-funded project. The project must undergo a review process and be approved before it is incorporated into the Program of Research.

Each institution shall submit a REEport Progress Report annually for each eligible project. All Progress Reports from institutions are based on the federal fiscal year and shall be submitted by March 1, 2016 for the preceding fiscal year.

A Final Report shall be submitted to NIFA through REEport for each completed or terminated project. Such reports shall be submitted at the same time as are progress reports on active projects and should include a summary of accomplishments for the entire life of the project.

A Financial Report shall be submitted to NIFA through REEport annually for all eligible projects from the preceding fiscal year. A Financial Report is also required for expenditures on all State projects that are to be included in the non-Federal funds and matching funds computation. Reports shall be made on the federal fiscal year basis.

Financial reporting via the SF-425, Federal Financial Report for FY 2015 is due to the Capacity Grants Branch, Awards Management Division, OGF, on December 31, 2016, for the period October 1, 2014, through September 30, 2015, and annually thereafter until the award is closed out.

See the **FERS Retirement Contributions Program** for additional details of annual, final technical and financial reporting requirements. Instructions for using the REEport system are included on the NIFA web site at: <http://nifa.usda.gov/reepreport-resources-land-grant-partners>.

PART VII—AGENCY CONTACTS

For questions regarding the FERS Retirement Contributions Programs projects/program, please contact: Susan Shockey, IYFC/DFCS, NIFA/USDA, Stop 2250, 1400 Independence Avenue, SW, Washington, DC 20250-2250; Telephone: (202) 690-2674, E-mail: sshockey@nifa.usda.gov

For questions relating to the completion of the grants.gov forms, please contact: Brenda Barnett, OGF, NIFA/USDA, Stop 2271, 1400 Independence Avenue, SW, Washington, DC 20250-2271; Telephone: (202) 401-6520; Fax: (202) 401-1804; E-mail: formulagrantsquestions@nifa.usda.gov.

For questions relating to REEport forms and submissions, please contact the Planning, Accountability, and Reporting Staff; Telephone: (202) 690-0009; Fax: (202) 690-0634; E-mail: electronic@nifa.usda.gov or reeport@nifa.usda.gov.

For questions relating to the 5-Year Plan of Work Update for FYs 2016-2020 or the Annual Report of Accomplishments and Results, please contact Katelyn Sellers, Planning, Accountability, and Reporting Staff, NIFA/USDA, Stop 2213, 1400 Independence Avenue, SW, Washington, DC 20250-2213; Telephone: (202) 401-5482; Fax: (202) 720-7714; E-mail: pow@nifa.usda.

PART VIII—OTHER INFORMATION

The USDA NIFA home page for the **FERS** is:

<http://nifa.usda.gov/program/fers-retirement-contributions-program>

**UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF FOOD AND AGRICULTURE
FY 2015 Distribution of Funds to Eligible Institutions
for Federal Employees Retirement System (FERS)
Award # 2015-41310**

NOTE: Amounts listed below are actual FY 2015 allocations. Adjustments will be made to FY 2016 allocations upon enactment of a FY 2016 Appropriations Act.

Institution	State	Grant Number	FY 2015 Allocation	FY 2015 Required Match
Tuskegee University	AL	2015-41310-08902	\$ 5,816	\$ 5,816
University of Arizona	AZ	2015-41310-00300	28,468	28,468
University of Arkansas	AR	2015-41310-00400	25,140	25,140
University of California	CA	2015-41310-00500	4,377	4,377
Colorado State University	CO	2015-41310-00600	15,698	15,698
University of Georgia	GA	2015-41310-01000	4,229	4,229
University of Idaho	ID	2015-41310-01200	16,907	16,907
Iowa State University	IA	2015-41310-01500	42,049	42,049
Kansas State University	KS	2015-41310-01600	51,081	51,081
University of Kentucky	KY	2015-41310-01700	30,312	30,312
Kentucky State University	KY	2015-41310-08907	6,811	6,811
University of Maine	ME	2015-41310-01900	3,850	3,850
University of Maryland	MD	2015-41310-02000	1,428	1,428
University of Minnesota	MN	2015-41310-02300	138,741	138,741
Mississippi State University	MS	2015-41310-02400	5,604	5,604
University of Missouri	MO	2015-41310-02500	16,441	16,441
Montana State University	MT	2015-41310-02600	7,683	7,683
University of Nevada	NV	2015-41310-02800	7,247	7,247
Rutgers University	NJ	2015-41310-03000	12,509	12,509
New Mexico State University	NM	2015-41310-03100	18,682	18,682
North Carolina State University	NC	2015-41310-03300	11,643	11,643
North Dakota State University	ND	2015-41310-03400	10,050	10,050
Oklahoma State University	OK	2015-41310-03600	21,372	21,372
Oregon State University	OR	2015-41310-03700	40,805	40,805
Clemson University	SC	2015-41310-04100	11,508	11,508
University of Tennessee	TN	2015-41310-04300	161,100	161,100
Utah State University	UT	2015-41310-04500	9,473	9,473
University of Vermont	VT	2015-41310-04600	13,094	13,094
Virginia Polytechnic Institute & State University	VA	2015-41310-04700	15,434	15,434
Washington State University	WA	2015-41310-04800	11,719	11,719
University of Wisconsin	WI	2015-41310-05000	4,382	4,382
TOTAL			<u>\$ 753,653</u>	<u>\$ 753,653</u>

APPENDIX A