FY 2018 AFRI Education and Workforce Development (EWD)

Professional Development Opportunities for Secondary School Teachers and Education Professionals (PD-STEP) Program

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What are the important dates for PD-STEP?

- Applications are due Wednesday, July 11, 2018 at 5 pm EDT.
- A free applicant webinar will be held on Wednesday, May 16, 2018 from 1-2 pm EDT.

The link to the webinar will be posted to the PD-STEP program page when available and a recording will be available afterwards.
What is the focus of the NIFA Professional Development Opportunities for Secondary School Teachers and Education Professionals Program?
The program focuses on providing immersive learning experiences for K-14 teachers/educational professionals (counselors, administrators, etc.) to create and replicate best practices to improve student success outcomes within the food, agricultural, natural resources, and human (FANH) sciences.

Who is eligible to apply?
There are two categories of project types in PD-STEP for 2018: Integrated and Single-Function Projects. Your eligibility is determined by the type of project for which you intend to apply. To understand eligibility guidelines it helps to first understand these two project type categories in detail.

NIFA organizes the agricultural knowledge systems into three functions:
- Research—laboratory or field investigations or other types of scientific data gathering and analysis
- Education—the sharing of knowledge and building of skills
- Extension—community-focused education

An Integrated Project combines TWO or more of the three functions. A Single-Function Project focuses on at least ONE of the knowledge systems.

Single-Function Project Eligibility
- A State Agricultural Experiment Station
- A college or university, including junior colleges offering associate degrees or higher
- A university research foundation
- Another type of research institutions or organization
- A Federal agency
- A national laboratory
- A private organization or corporation
- A U.S. citizen, national, or permanent resident
- Any group consisting of two or more entities identified above

Integrated Project Eligibility
- A State Agricultural Experiment Station
- A college or university
- A university research foundation
- Another type of research institutions or organization

FASE Grant Eligibility
A Food and Agricultural Science Enhancement Grant is a special funding resource for capacity building with specific eligibility guidelines. For more information on FASE grants, see AFRI Grant Types.

What is the funding rate of submitted applications?
21%.
What are the Farm Bill Priorities?
PD-STEP applications must have a subject focus that falls under one of the Farm Bill categories which are:
- Plant health and production and plant products;
- Animal health and production and animal products;
- Food safety, nutrition and health;
- Bioenergy, natural resources, and environment;
- Agriculture systems and technology; and
- Agriculture economics and rural communities.

How much money is available and for how long?
Applications must not exceed $150,000 total (including indirect costs) for project periods of up to 3 years.

Is there a matching requirement?
Matching is only required if a funded project is commodity-specific and not of national scope. If this is the case, the grant recipient is required to match the USDA funds awarded on a dollar-for-dollar basis from non-Federal sources with cash and/or in-kind contributions. For more information see the NIFA Matching Requirements for Competitive Grant Awards Fact Sheet.

Are indirect costs allowed?
Yes. If an institution/organization’s official negotiated indirect cost rate exceeds the maximum allowed rate then the indirect costs are limited to 30% of the total Federal funds. For more information see the NIFA Indirect Costs page.

Are Letters of Intent required?
No.

Is there a limit to the number of proposals that can be submitted by a single institution?
Any single institution can submit a maximum of three proposals.

Can funds be used to support summer programs?
Yes.

Can funds be used to support international travel?
Yes.

Can international institutions be partner institutions?
Yes.

Do project directors have to be U.S. citizens, nationals, or permanent residents?
If the applicant is applying as an individual (not through an institution) they must be U.S. citizens, nationals, or permanent residents.
If I receive an award, when can I expect to start?
A minimum of six months will be needed to process awards after the application deadline.

How do I apply?
Instructions on how to apply are included in the AFRI Education and Workforce Development Request for Applications (RFA) for this grant. Read it carefully as this document includes complete information for submitting an application to this funding opportunity.

Applications will need to be submitted through Grants.gov. First-time users should allow at least a month to create their Grants.gov account.

Where can I find additional program information?
Please refer to the AFRI EWD Program Webpage for additional information including an applicant guide to help you navigate the 2018 AFRI EWD RFA.