

# *Military Family Readiness System (MFRS)*

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## *FY 2011 Request for Applications*

**APPLICATION DEADLINE: September 12, 2011**

**Funding Opportunity Number: USDA-NIFA-EXCA-003517**



**U.S. Department of Agriculture**

**National Institute of Food and Agriculture**

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

Military Family Readiness System (MFRS)

## 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 close of business (COB) on **September 12, 2011** (5:00 p.m. Eastern Time). Applications received after this deadline will normally not be considered for funding. Comments regarding this request for applications (RFA) are requested within six 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) is requesting comments regarding this RFA from any interested party. These comments will be considered in the development of the next RFA for the program, if applicable, and will be used 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)). This section requires the Secretary to solicit and consider input on a current RFA from persons who conduct or use agricultural research, education and extension for use in formulating future RFAs for competitive programs. Written stakeholder comments on this RFA should be submitted in accordance with the deadline set forth in the DATES portion of this Notice.

Written stakeholder comments should be submitted by mail to: Policy and Oversight Division; Office of Grants and Financial Management; National Institute of Food and Agriculture; USDA; STOP 2299; 1400 Independence Avenue, SW; Washington, DC 20250-2299; or via e-mail to: [RFP-OEP@nifa.usda.gov](mailto:RFP-OEP@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 Military Family Readiness System (MFRS) RFA.

**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:** NIFA announces the availability of grant funds and requests applications for the Military Family Readiness System (MFRS) for fiscal year (FY) **2011** to develop a high quality, effective and efficient DoD-standard, joint-Service training resource (with supporting materials) to prepare Family Center/Family Readiness program staff (management and front line employees) to implement individual programs within the context of a “social service delivery system” model.

The amount available for support of this program in FY **2011** is approximately **\$1,818,182**.

This notice identifies the objectives for **MFRS** projects, the eligibility criteria for projects and applicants, and the application forms and associated instructions needed to apply for a **MFRS** grant. NIFA additionally requests stakeholder input from any interested party for use in the development of the next RFA for this program.

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## **PART I—FUNDING OPPORTUNITY DESCRIPTION**

### **A. Legislative Authority and Background**

In accordance with the Economy Act of 1932, as amended, (7 U.S.C. 1532), The Office of the Under Secretary of Defense for Military Community and Family Policy (OUSD {MC&FP}) in order to utilize the unique resources of USDA and its land-grant institution partners has provided the National Institute of Food and Agriculture (NIFA) with funds to support the Military Family Readiness System (MFRS).

Pursuant to 7 U.S.C. Sec. 3318(c), the Secretary of Agriculture, acting through the Director of the National Institute of Food and Agriculture (NIFA), may enter into contracts, grants, or cooperative agreements, for periods not to exceed five years, with State agricultural experiment stations, State cooperative extension services, all colleges and universities, other research or educational institution or organization, and any other contractor or recipient, either foreign or domestic, to further research, extension, or teaching programs in the food and agricultural sciences of the Department of Agriculture.

### **B. Purpose and Priorities**

Applications are being solicited for the **DoD – USDA Extension Military Partnership: Military Family Readiness System (MFRS)**.

**For Fiscal Year 2011 funds are available in the amount of \$1,818,182 to support the DoD – USDA Extension Military Partnership: Military Family Readiness System (MFRS). The period of performance for this project may not exceed two years.** Funds may be used to support personnel and fringe benefits, materials and supplies, reproduction of materials, in state and out of state travel, consultants, meeting expenses and stipends for graduate students.

#### **Project objectives include:**

- Develop a high quality, effective and efficient DoD-standard, joint-Service training resource (with supporting materials) to prepare Family Center/Family Readiness program staff (management and front line employees) to implement individual programs within the context of a “social service delivery system” model.
- Determine how sub-programs, e.g., deployment; relocation; financial; spouse employment, and others can be enhanced through an approach that emphasizes a “delivery system” model rather than delivering “separate programs.”
- Design and develop evidence-based and promising practice instructional materials for professional staff, Soldiers, Families, and the combined military/civilian community across all components. These materials often include facilitator’s information and accompanying presentation PowerPoints, handbooks, or guides. Delivery methods will vary and may include print media, CDs, DVDs, but the primary emphasis should focus on web-based accessibility and delivery.

- Incorporating these materials, develop a baseline training that is adapted to fit the needs of the respective services and their unique requirements.

**The project will be implemented in three phases:**

**Phase I (to be completed within five months of grant award)**

Funds are available to establish and coordinate an advisory and working group of subject matter experts that include senior program managers and front line staff from each of the Military Service (Army, Air Force, Navy and Marines) and Cooperative Extension faculty as appropriate. Conduct a comprehensive scan and gap analysis of existing Family Center / Family Readiness training curricula. Utilizing input from the advisory group, assess current and future training needs and identify a training platform as well as needed curriculum that will meet the anticipated needs.

**Phase II (to be completed within seven months of the completion of Phase I)**

Using Phase I as a foundation, develop training modules/curricula that can be used in traditional and future electronic learning delivery options, including web-based training, utilizing existing platforms such as eXtension where applicable. Modify existing training, curriculum and materials for delivery through the new system. Where needed, develop new training, curriculum and materials that address gaps, enhance standardization, and improve quality and effectiveness of family readiness programs across installations/Services. Incorporate continuing education requirements of program staff in the training.

**Phase III (to be completed within six months of the completion of Phase III)**

Building upon Phase I and II, pilot the training system, evaluate results, and incorporate suggested improvements. Sites and access will be coordinated through DoD. Finally in Phase III, deploy the training curriculum for use by all the Services.

The successful applicant will produce the following outputs:

- Standardized curriculum for family readiness program staff development and training.
- Enhanced competency and skills of family readiness program staff in and across specific program areas.
- Integrated delivery of family readiness programs.
- Community outreach component that includes external programs such as Cooperative Extension in a comprehensive "social service delivery system" that is based on member/family needs and seeks to positively affect and enhance member and family resilience and readiness.
- Promotion of diverse forms of service delivery, including but not limited to, the Internet, telephone, "apps", outreach and program co-location in a one-stop environment.

- Promotion of interagency collaboration and service coordination within and among federal and non-federal entities to identify and achieve common family readiness goals and improve communication among providers and service users.

### C. Program Area Description

USDA NIFA and the Office of the Secretary of Defense (OSD) Military Community and Family Policy (MC&FP) seek to implement a **Military Family Readiness System (MFRS)** that is a high quality, effective and efficient DoD-standard, joint-Service training resource (with supporting materials) that prepares Family Center/Family Readiness program staff (management and front line employees) to implement individual programs within the context of a “social service delivery system” model.

In collaboration with key stakeholders such as DoD MC&FP and Service branches and components, the successful applicant will analyze existing military Family Center (FC) programs and services that assist commanders in preventing, identifying and addressing family-related challenges in order to maintain unit cohesion and operational readiness. Family Center programs also seek to enhance family readiness and resilience by preparing individuals to effectively navigate the challenges of daily living experienced in the unique context of military service across three domains of family readiness:

- mobility and financial readiness: The state of being prepared to successfully meet financial obligations and manage the challenges of the mobile military lifestyle;
- mobilization and deployment readiness: The state of being prepared for the challenges of mobilization and deployment, to cope with changes in operational tempo, to address personal and family emergencies and stress in the absence of a deployed family member and to access appropriate services and support in the event of military service-related injury, illness, or death; and
- personal and family life readiness: The state of being prepared to cope with the stressors of daily living and manage the competing demands of work life and personal/family life.

Military Family Programs were established over the years by the Military Services, beginning in the late 1970s. The Office of the Secretary of Defense (OSD) issued DoD Directive 1342.17, "Family Policy," December 30, 1988 and DoD Instruction 1342.22, “Family Centers,” December 30, 1992. DoD Instruction 1342.22 provides guidance for the implementation and oversight of Service Family Centers, and requires that FC services be available at all installations with 500 or more military members assigned. Currently 267 FCs exist at military installations worldwide.

FCs have different names depending on the sponsoring Service:

- Army Community Services;
- Airman and Family Readiness Center;
- Navy Fleet and Family Support Center;
- Marine Corps Community Services; and
- The Reserve Components operate family centers on a limited (in many cases, virtual) basis depending on the numbers and concentration of families in a given area.

FCs are required to provide the following programs/services:

- Crisis Response and Intervention Services (CRI);
- Emergency Family Assistance (EFA);
- Exceptional Family Member Program (EFMP);
- Family Advocacy Programs (FAP);
- Military Lifestyle Support and Education (MLSE), which includes:
  - Relocation Assistance;
  - Mobilization and Deployment Readiness;
  - Spouse Employment Assistance;
  - Life Skills Education;
  - Information and Referral; and
  - Transition Assistance.
- Non-Medical Clinical Counseling (NMC);
- Volunteer Coordination (VC); and
- Financial Readiness (Fr).

Until September 11, 2001, Military Family Programs were primarily installation-based “brick and mortar” facilities that served an active duty peacetime force and their families. While the Reserve Components (RCs), including the National Guard, provided family support it was often by one person as a collateral duty. After September 11<sup>th</sup>, the RCs were required to quickly evolve from a strategic to an operational force with significantly increased mobilization and family separation. It was a significant challenge to Reserve and Guard members and their families who previously had limited exposure to the demands resulting from separations due to military deployments. Many RC family members that had not previously identified themselves as “military families” were now facing the likelihood of longer and often multiple deployments.

In 2003, OSD MC&FP began to augment the services provided by the Service family programs with Military OneSource, the Joint Family Support Assistance Program (JFSAP), and the Military and Family Life Counselor (MFLC) Program to help meet the needs of Guard and Reserve and other geographically dispersed Service members and families who may not have access to a military installation or require assistance at times when family centers are unavailable.

### **CURRENT STATUS (FAMILY PROGRAMS)**

Over the past ten years in response to a military at war with associated high “operations tempo / personnel tempo” (OPTEMPO/PERSTEMPO) and increased supplemental funding, the military has experienced a proliferation of family programs both on and off the installation which has contributed to duplication, redundancy and confusion among commanders, members, families and professionals. In many instances, programs are not connected or integrated into a comprehensive delivery system. The draft update to DoDI 1342.22 has been renamed “Military Family Readiness System,” and reflects an approach aimed to connect on and off installation Military programs, with relevant programs in the community. The emphasis is on coordination and integration of programs and services into a delivery system that maximizes the network of

agencies, programs, services, and individuals, and the collaboration among them, to promote military family readiness. The goal is to provide high-quality integrated services and support that mitigate the challenges of daily living and the military lifestyle and emphasize personal growth, positive development, and improved individual and family functioning.

### **CURRENT FAMILY PROGRAMS' TRAINING PROCESS**

Each Service individually develops and provides training to their family programs' staff, primarily for individual programs in face-to-face settings. There has been little emphasis within each Service on cross-program training including the integration of programs into a social service delivery system; or the connection between/among programs and behavioral health outcomes. Further, coordination among the Services to develop and/or implement joint service training has not readily occurred. Over the past few years, OSD has collaborated with the Services to develop joint Service initiatives including program accreditation standards; needs assessment; and annual reports. This initiative will be the first attempt to develop joint service training curriculum. The impetus includes an increasingly constrained fiscal environment for both development of training programs and materials and for expanded delivery options. Additionally, Service leadership has stated their goal to increase the standardization, quality, and effectiveness of family readiness programs across installations/Services.

### **GOAL(S) of FAMILY PROGRAMS TRAINING SYSTEM DEVELOPMENT**

The overall goal of the initiative is to develop a high quality, effective and efficient DoD-standard, joint-Service training curricula (with supporting materials) to prepare Family Center/Family Readiness program staff (management and front line employees) to implement individual programs within the context of a "social service delivery system" model. A special emphasis should be placed on the connection among many sub-programs, e.g., deployment; relocation; financial; spouse employment, etc. and the need for an approach that emphasizes a "delivery system" model rather than just delivering "separate programs."

In addition to individual programs, curriculum will focus on the need for community outreach and connection/integration of programs into a comprehensive "social service delivery system" that is based on member/family needs and is planned to positively affect and enhance member and family resilience/readiness/fitness (across relevant domains).

The development of the Family Programs Curriculum will be a multi-phase process involving extensive collaboration between the successful applicant, the Office of Family Policy and respective services. The Office of Family Policy will assist in developing an advisory group made up of service representatives to inform the work of the applicant.

The curriculum for family readiness program staff development and training will be based on the principles and requirements of DoDI 1342.22, Military and Family Readiness; and Council on Accreditation (COA) Accreditation standards for Family Programs (for each program and for the overall delivery system). The curriculum will address:

- Program implementation, management and evaluation, using logic model and performance-based standards for program development, integration and implementation to:
  - Assess the needs of the population served (both formal and informal), using:
    - Demographics and mission responsibilities
    - Skills required to fulfill those responsibilities
    - Feedback on effectiveness/utility of services and programs currently provided
    - Input from commands, members, families, other helping programs within the system
  - Survey and research data/outcomes and recommendations
  - Map data that shows where military families live and where programs are available
  - Develop and implement meaningful outcome measures/metrics
  - Work with military, federal, and state/county service providers to plan and implement services and programs
- Developing the competency and skills of family readiness program staff in specific program areas and also across programs (Work Life Specialists), as indicated.
- Integrating delivery of family readiness programs to optimize DOD Family Programs strategic initiatives in a cost-effective manner.
- Employing community outreach to include external programs in a comprehensive "social service delivery system" that is based on member/family needs and is planned to positively affect and enhance member and family resilience and readiness (across relevant domains).
- Leveraging diverse forms of service delivery, including but not limited to, the Internet, telephone, "apps", outreach and program co-location in a one-stop environment.
- Promoting interagency collaboration and service coordination within and among federal and non-federal entities to identify and achieve common family readiness goals and improve communication among providers and service users.

Applicants should discuss how they may align efforts with the DoD – USDA Extension Military Partnership projects ([http://www.nifa.usda.gov/nea/family/pdfs/11\\_extension\\_mil\\_part.pdf](http://www.nifa.usda.gov/nea/family/pdfs/11_extension_mil_part.pdf)), including the Youth, Family & Community Extension Programs Leadership, Multi-disciplinary Partnerships, Clearinghouse for Military Family Readiness, Virtual Lab School Environment, Child Care Training and Technical Assistance, to ensure efforts are mutually supportive, beneficial, and non-duplicative.

Applicants will also engage with federal-level work groups, state-level networks, and/or other agencies and groups as appropriate, to implement and assess the overall effort.

The project should include an evaluation that measures the extent to which project objectives are met or in progress. At a minimum, the evaluation should describe how MFRS has identified and categorized existing Family Center training curricula as well as any potential gaps, standardized training and technical assistance resources that promote a comprehensive approach to service delivery and access, and implemented the resource for all Services.

MFRS encourages projects that develop content suitable for delivery through eXtension where appropriate ([http://about.extension.org/mediawiki/files/5/51/EXECUTIVE\\_SUMMARY -  
\\_March\\_14%2C\\_2006\\_-\\_YEAR\\_2.pdf](http://about.extension.org/mediawiki/files/5/51/EXECUTIVE_SUMMARY_-_March_14%2C_2006_-_YEAR_2.pdf)). Any content must align with the eXtension Implementation Plan (available at <http://about.extension.org/wiki/Planning>). Funds may be used to contribute to the communities of practice (CoP) that inform the Military Families Learning Network (MFLN) (<http://create.extension.org/node/2605>).

## **PART II—AWARD INFORMATION**

### **A. Available Funding**

**The successful applicant will be invited to enter into a cooperative agreement with NIFA.** There is no commitment by USDA to fund any particular application. Approximately **\$1,818,182** is available to fund a single application in FY **2011**.

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 Financial Management Service, as the payment system for funds. For more information see [http://www.nifa.usda.gov/business/method\\_of\\_payment.html](http://www.nifa.usda.gov/business/method_of_payment.html).

### **B. Types of Applications**

In FY **2011**, applications may be submitted to the **MFRS** Program as “NEW” applications only. All new applications will be reviewed competitively using the selection process and evaluation criteria described in Part V—Application Review Requirements.

### **C. Project Types**

NIFA is seeking applications from institutions that can demonstrate their ability to provide overall management to a **Military Family Readiness System (MFRS)** to develop a high quality, effective and efficient DoD-standard, joint-Service training resource (with supporting materials) to prepare Family Center/Family Readiness program staff (management and front line employees) to implement individual programs within the context of a “social service delivery system” model. The MFRS grantee will be required to submit a year-end report to REEport. (See PART VI—AWARD ADMINISTRATION, D. Expected Program Outputs and Reporting Requirements.) In FY 2011 funds totaling **\$1,818,182** are available to fund one (1) application for two years.

## **PART III—ELIGIBILITY INFORMATION**

### **A. Eligible Applicants**

Applications may be submitted by State agricultural experiment stations, State cooperative extension services, all colleges and universities, other research or educational institutions or organizations, Federal and private agencies and organizations, non-profit organizations, individuals, and any other domestic contractor or recipient, to further research, extension, or teaching programs in the food and agricultural sciences of the Department of Agriculture.

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

An applicant's failure to meet an eligibility criterion by the time of an 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**

NIFA does not require matching support for this program and matching resources will not be factored into the review process as evaluation criteria.

## 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. Applicants are advised to submit early to the Grants.gov system.

#### New Users of Grants.gov

Prior to preparing an application, it is suggested that the PD/PI first contact an Authorized Representative (AR) (also referred to as Authorized Organizational Representative or AOR) to determine if the organization is prepared to submit electronic applications through Grant.gov. If the organization is not prepared (e.g., the institution/organization is new to the electronic grant application process through Grants.gov), then the one-time registration process must be completed PRIOR to submitting an application. It can take as much as two weeks to complete the registration process so it is critical to begin as soon as possible. In such situations the AR should go to “Get Registered” on the Grants.gov left navigation bar (or go to [http://www.grants.gov/applicants/get\\_registered.jsp](http://www.grants.gov/applicants/get_registered.jsp)) for information on registering the institution/organization with Grants.gov. A quick reference guide listing the steps is available as a 4-page PDF document at the following website: <http://www.grants.gov/section910/Grants.govRegistrationBrochure.pdf>.

#### Steps to Obtain Application Package Materials

The steps to access application materials are as follows:

1. In order to access, complete and submit applications, applicants must download and install a version of Adobe Reader compatible with Grants.gov. This software is essential to apply for NIFA Federal assistance awards. For basic system requirements and download instructions, please see [http://www.grants.gov/help/download\\_software.jsp](http://www.grants.gov/help/download_software.jsp). To verify that you have a compatible version of Adobe Reader, Grants.gov established a test package that will assist you in making that determination. Grants.gov Adobe Versioning Test Package: <http://www.grants.gov/applicants/AdobeVersioningTestOnly.jsp>.
2. The application package must be obtained via Grants.gov, go to <http://www.grants.gov>, click on “Apply for Grants” in the left-hand column, click on “**Step 1: Download a Grant Application Package and Instructions,**” enter the funding opportunity number **USDA-NIFA-EXCA-003517** in the appropriate box and click “Download Package.” From the search results, click “Download” to access the application package.

Contained within the application package is the “NIFA Grants.gov Application Guide: A Guide for Preparation and Submission of NIFA Applications via Grants.gov.” This Guide contains an introduction and general Grants.gov instructions, information about how to use a Grant Application Package in Grants.gov, and instructions on how to complete the application forms.

**If assistance is needed to access the application package** (e.g., downloading or navigating Adobe forms), **or submitting the application** then refer to resources

available on the Grants.gov Web site first (<http://www.grants.gov/>). Grants.gov assistance is also available as follows:

Grants.gov customer support  
Toll Free: 1-800-518-4726  
Business Hours: 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Closed on [Federal Holidays](#).  
Email: [support@grants.gov](mailto:support@grants.gov)

See <http://www.nifa.usda.gov/funding/electronic.html> for additional resources for applying electronically.

## **B. Content and Form of Application Submission**

Electronic applications should be prepared following Parts V and VI of the document entitled “A Guide for Preparation and Submission of NIFA Applications via Grants.gov.” This guide is part of the corresponding application package (see Section A. of this Part). The following is **additional information** needed in order 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., portable document format) in Part III section 3. of the Guide. ANY PROPOSALS CONTAINING NON-PDF DOCUMENTS WILL BE AT RISK OF BEING EXCLUDED FROM NIFA REVIEW. Partial applications will be excluded from NIFA review. With documented prior approval, resubmitted applications will be accepted until close of business on the closing date in the RFA.**

**If you do not own PDF-generating software, Grants.gov provides online tools to assist applicants. Users will find a link to “Convert Documents to PDF” on <http://grants.gov/assets/PDFConversion.pdf>.**

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

- Email: [electronic@nifa.usda.gov](mailto:electronic@nifa.usda.gov)
- Phone: 202-401-5048
- Business hours: Monday through Friday, 7:00 am – 5:00 pm Eastern Time, excluding Federal holidays.

### **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.

### **2. SF 424 R&R Project/Performance Site Location(s)**

Information related to the questions on this form is dealt with in detail in Part V, 3. of the NIFA Grants.gov Application Guide.

### **3. R&R Other Project Information Form**

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

- a. Field 7. Project Summary/Abstract. The summary should also include the relevance of the project to the goals of **MFRS**.
- b. Field 8. Project Narrative.

PLEASE NOTE: The Project Narrative shall not exceed **eight** pages of written text regardless of whether it is single or double spaced and up to **five** additional pages for figures and tables. This maximum (**thirteen** pages) has been established to ensure fair and equitable competition.

**PLEASE NOTE:** Appendices to the Project Narrative are allowed if they are directly germane to the proposed project. The addition of appendices should not be used to circumvent the page limit. The Project Narrative must include all of the following:

#### **Section 1: Introduction**

A clear statement of the goal(s) and supporting objectives of the proposed activities should be included. Summarize the body of knowledge or other past activities which substantiate the need for the proposed activities. Describe ongoing or recently completed significant activities related to the proposed project. Include any preliminary data/information pertinent to the proposed project.

#### **Section 2: Statement of Need**

- Briefly describe how this overall project will address the issues and the audience to be reached; and
- Describe how the MFRS project will develop a high quality, effective and efficient DoD-standard, joint-Service training resource (with supporting materials) to prepare Family Center/Family Readiness program staff (management and front line employees) to implement individual programs within the context of a “social service delivery system” model.

#### **Section 3: Objectives**

Clear, concise, complete, and logically arranged statement(s) of specific aims of the proposed effort, corresponding to each of the three phases, must be included in all proposals.

#### **Section 4: Methods**

The procedures or methodology to be applied to the proposed effort (corresponding to each of the three phases) should be explicitly stated. This section should include but not necessarily be limited to:

- Scope and duration of the project. Since the program is of two-year duration, describe how it may link to ongoing programs or how it might grow or evolve to meet changing training needs;
- A description of the proposed project activities in the sequence in which it is planned to carry them out;

- Techniques to be employed, including their feasibility and rationale for their use in this project; and
- Kinds of outcomes expected.

### **Section 5: Evaluation Design and Methodologies**

Describe the evaluation design and methodologies, based on your stated project objectives and corresponding to each of the three phases, which will be used to measure the extent to which the objectives are met. This section should address but not necessarily be limited to:

- Focus of evaluation as to audience;
- Methodological framework(s) within which information will be collected (i.e. analysis of Service family policy documents, program scan, training curricula and related materials);
- Means by which data will be collected; indicate collection instruments and methods if appropriate (i.e. interviews, focus groups, site visits, etc.);
- Identification of opportunities for ongoing program sustainability or improvement.

At a minimum, the evaluation should answer the following questions:

Has the program been successful in attaining the anticipated implementation objectives?

- Have you identified and categorized policies and training, curricula and materials?
- Have training modules / curricula been adapted or developed for traditional and electronic delivery?
- How was feedback from the pilot launch incorporated to ensure successful deployment for use by all Services?

### **Section 6: Communication Plan**

Briefly describe how results from this project will be communicated to stakeholders and the public. Consider how project outputs or findings might be suitable for delivery through eXtension's Military Families Learning Network (MFLN)

<http://www.facebook.com/MilitaryFamilies>, other online environments, and /or social media <http://twitter.com/#!/milfamLN>.

### **Section 7: Project Management**

Provide a brief summary of key staff and their functions, timelines, accounting procedures, reporting, and collaborative efforts. Indicate how the project may coordinate with other DoD – USDA Extension Military Partnership projects: Youth, Family & Community Extension Programs Leadership, Multi-disciplinary Partnerships, Clearinghouse for Military Family Readiness, Virtual Lab School Environment, Child Care Training and Technical Assistance, and other projects as appropriate. Information about the projects is at

[http://www.nifa.usda.gov/nea/family/pdfs/11\\_extension\\_mil\\_part.pdf](http://www.nifa.usda.gov/nea/family/pdfs/11_extension_mil_part.pdf)

### **Field 11. Other Attachments - (Must be PDF format)**

#### **Collaborative Arrangements:**

Title the attachment as 'Collaborative Arrangements' in the document header and save file as 'Collaborative Arrangement'. If it is necessary to enter into formal consulting or collaborative arrangements with others, such arrangements should be fully explained and justified. If the

consultant(s) or collaborator(s) are known at the time of the application, a vitae or résumé should be provided. In addition, evidence (e.g., letter of support signed by the AR of the consultant/collaborating organization) should be provided as evidence that the collaborators involved have agreed to render these services. The applicant also will be required to provide additional information on consultants and collaborators in the budget portion of the application.

#### **4. R&R Senior/Key Person Profile (Expanded)**

Information related to the questions on this form is dealt with in detail in Part V, 5. of the NIFA Grants.gov Application Guide.

**5. R&R Personal Data** – As noted in Part V, 6. of the NIFA Grants.gov Application Guide, the submission of this information is voluntary and is not a precondition of award.

#### **6. R&R Budget**

Information related to the questions on this form is dealt with in detail in Part V, 7. of the NIFA Grants.gov Application Guide.

#### **7. 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.

a. Field 2. Program Code. Enter the program code name **Inst. of Youth, Family and Community, Admin. Discretionary & Reim. Extension** and the program code **MI.1**

### **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 COB on **September 12, 2011** (5:00 p.m. Eastern Time). Applications received after this deadline will normally not be considered for funding.

**Applicants who have problems with the submission of an application to Grants.gov are encouraged to 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.**

Correspondence regarding submitted applications will be sent using e-mail. Therefore, applicants are strongly encouraged 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 10 days of the established deadline, please contact the Program Contact identified in Part VII of the applicable RFA (for the Small Business Innovation Research program (SBIR) the Program Contacts are specified under subsection 1.5 of the SBIR Program Solicitation) and request the proposal number assigned to the application. **Failure to do so may result in (for competitive programs) the application not being considered for funding by the peer review panel or**

**(for non-competitive programs) a delay in the issuance of an award. Once the application has been assigned a proposal number, this number should be cited on all future correspondence.**

#### **D. Funding Restrictions**

The award may not exceed a period of five (5) years in duration.

#### **E. Other Submission Requirements**

The applicant should follow the submission requirements noted in the document entitled “A Guide for Preparation and Submission of NIFA Applications via Grants.gov.”

Described below are the requirements for successful submission of an application, all of the following steps must be met for an application to be considered for peer review:

- 1) Meeting the deadline: To electronically send the application to Grants.gov the submit button is hit, which triggers a date and time stamp on the application. The date and time stamp is used to determine whether the application was received by Grants.gov before the deadline, which is prior to close of business (5:00 p.m. Eastern Time) on **September 12, 2011**. An application submitted or resubmitted after the deadline is late. Consideration of late applications is only given in extenuating circumstances (e.g., natural disasters, confirmed Grants.gov outage) with proper documentation and support of the Agency Contact (see Part VII). The occurrence of one of these situations does not automatically ensure that a late application will be accepted. If an applicant wants a late application considered under an extenuating circumstance, the applicant should contact the Agency Contact accordingly.
- 2) Successful Grants.gov validation: The Grants.gov system performs a limited check of the application, and applicants are notified by Grants.gov of the outcome of the initial review. Applications meeting Grants.gov requirements are made available to the funding agency for further processing. Applications that fail Grants.gov validation may be resubmitted to Grants.gov if the original agency deadline has not passed. (Note that the Grants.gov system may allow applications to be submitted after the deadline has passed, but the application is considered late by NIFA.)
- 3) Successful Agency validation: NIFA staff performs precursory review of the application. The agency validation process includes, for example, meeting eligibility requirements and following agency application guidelines (e.g., formatting, page limitations, limits on budget requests). Applicants are notified by NIFA of the outcome of this review.

## **F. Central Contractor Registration and Universal Identifier Requirements**

In accordance with the Office of Management and Budget guidance published in the Federal Register (FR), 75 FR 55671, on September 14, 2010, “Financial Assistance Use of Universal Identifier and Central Contractor Registration,” awardees must comply with the requirements of this award term.

### **Requirement for Central Contractor Registration (CCR)**

Unless you are exempted from this requirement under 2 CFR 25.110, you as the recipient must maintain the currency of your information in the CCR until you submit the final financial report required under this award or receive the final payment, whichever is later. This requires that you review and update the information at least annually after the initial registration, and more frequently if required by changes in your information or another award term.

### **Requirement for Data Universal Numbering System (DUNS) Numbers**

If you are authorized to make subawards under this award, you:

1. Must notify potential subrecipients that no entity (see definition in paragraph C of this award term) may receive a subaward from you unless the entity has provided its DUNS number to you.
2. May not make a subaward to an entity unless the entity has provided its DUNS number to you.

### **Definitions**

For purposes of this award term:

1. *Central Contractor Registration (CCR)* means the Federal repository into which an entity must provide information required for the conduct of a business as a recipient. Additional information about registration procedures may be found at the CCR Internet site (currently at <http://www.ccr.gov>).
2. *Data Universal Numbering System (DUNS) number* means the nine-digit number established and assigned by Dun and Bradstreet, Inc. (D&B) to uniquely identify business entities. A DUNS number may be obtained from D&B by telephone (currently 866-705-5711) or the Internet (currently at <http://fedgov.dnb.com/webform>).
3. *Entity*, as it is used in this award term, means all of the following, as defined at 2 CFR part 25, subpart C:
  - a. A Governmental organization, which is a State, local government, or Indian Tribe;
  - b. A foreign public entity;

- c. A domestic or foreign nonprofit organization;
- d. A domestic or foreign for-profit organization; and
- e. A Federal agency, but only as a subrecipient under an award or subaward to a non-Federal entity.

4. *Subaward:*

- a. This term means a legal instrument to provide support for the performance of any portion of the substantive project or program for which you received this award and that you as the recipient award to an eligible subrecipient.
- b. The term does not include your procurement of property and services needed to carry out the project or program (for further explanation, *see* Sec .210 of the attachment to OMB Circular A-133, “Audits of States, Local Governments, and Non-Profit Organizations”).

## **PART V—APPLICATION REVIEW REQUIREMENTS**

### **A. General**

Each application will be evaluated in a 2-part process. First, each application will be screened to ensure that it meets the administrative requirements as set forth in this RFA. Second, applications that meet these requirements will be technically evaluated by a review panel.

Reviewers will be selected based upon training and experience in relevant scientific, extension, or education fields, taking into account the following factors: (a) The level of relevant formal scientific, technical education, or extension experience of the individual, as well as the extent to which an individual is engaged in relevant research, education, or extension activities; (b) the need to include as reviewers experts from various areas of specialization within relevant scientific, education, or extension fields; (c) the need to include as reviewers other experts (e.g., consumers) who can assess relevance of the applications to targeted audiences and to program needs; (d) the need to include as reviewers experts from a variety of organizational types (e.g., colleges, universities, industry, state and Federal agencies, private profit and non-profit organizations) and geographic locations; (e) the need to maintain a balanced composition of reviewers with regard to minority and female representation and an equitable age distribution; and (f) the need to include reviewers who can judge the effective usefulness to producers and the general public of each application.

### **B. Evaluation Criteria**

The evaluation criteria below will be used in reviewing applications submitted in response to this RFA:

#### **1. Significance of the Problem and Potential for Implementing a Military Family Readiness System (MFRS) Project (25 points).**

This criterion is used to assess the likelihood that the project will succeed in synthesizing existing training resources across Services while identifying any gaps; (2) developing a comprehensive, standardized training approach to be used by all Services and emphasizing electronic delivery methods; and (3) launching the revised training within the defined time frame.

#### **2. Proposed Approach and Program Coordination (35 points).**

This criterion is used to assess the soundness of the proposed approach including statement of need, scope of the project, objectives, methodology, key personnel, timeline, expected products and results (e.g., educational approaches including training curricula, workshops, meetings, conferences, exhibits, publications, electronic communication – including social media, fact sheets, newsletters, mass media), and communication plan.

#### **3. Evaluation (25 points)**

This criterion is used to assess the adequacy of the evaluation design and its capacity to measure the extent to which program objectives are met. Elements considered include: how existing Family Center training resources are identified and categorized, how the material has been

condensed and enhanced via a unified approach; and how the pilot launch informs the final training platform.

#### **4. Budget and Budget Narrative (15 points)**

This criterion is used to assess the extent to which the total budget adequately supports the project and is cost effective. Elements considered include: the necessity and reasonableness of costs to carry out project activities and achieve project objectives; the appropriateness of budget allocations between the applicant and any collaborating institution(s); and the adequacy of time committed to the project by key project personnel.

#### **C. Conflicts of Interest and Confidentiality**

During the peer evaluation process, extreme care will be taken to prevent any actual or perceived conflicts of interest that may impact review or evaluation. For the purpose of determining conflicts of interest, the academic and administrative autonomy of an institution shall be determined by reference to the current Higher Education Directory, published by Higher Education Publications, Inc., 6400 Arlington Boulevard, Suite 648, Falls Church, Virginia 22042. Phone: (703) 532-2300. Web site: <http://www.hepinc.com>.

Names of submitting institutions and individuals, as well as application content and peer evaluations, will be kept confidential, except to those involved in the review process, to the extent permitted by law. In addition, the identities of peer reviewers will remain confidential throughout the entire review process. Therefore, the names of the reviewers will not be released to applicants.

#### **D. 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, as 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. NIFA will provide copies of forms recommended for use in fulfilling these requirements as part of the preaward process. Although an applicant may be eligible based on its status as one of these entities, there are factors which 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**

Within the limit of funds available for such purpose, the awarding official of NIFA shall make grants to those responsible, eligible applicants whose applications are judged most meritorious under the procedures set forth in this RFA. The date specified by the awarding official of NIFA as the effective date of the grant shall be no later than September 30 of the Federal fiscal year in which the project is approved for support and funds are appropriated for such purpose, unless otherwise permitted by law. It should be noted that the project need not be initiated on the grant effective date, but as soon thereafter as practical so that project goals may be attained within the funded project period. All funds granted by NIFA under this RFA shall be expended solely for the purpose for which the funds are granted in accordance with the approved application and budget, the regulations, the terms and conditions of the award, the applicable Federal cost principles, and the Department's assistance regulations (parts 3015 and 3019 of 7 CFR).

### **B. Award Notice**

The award document will provide pertinent instructions and information including, at a minimum, the following:

- (1) Legal name and address of performing organization or institution to whom the Director has issued an award under the terms of this request for applications;
- (2) Title of project;
- (3) Name(s) and institution(s) of PDs chosen to direct and control approved activities;
- (4) Identifying award number assigned by the Department;
- (5) Project period, specifying the amount of time the Department intends to support the project without requiring recompetition for funds;
- (6) Total amount of Departmental financial assistance approved by the Director during the project period;
- (7) Legal authority(ies) under which the award is issued;
- (8) Appropriate Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance (CFDA) number;
- (9) Applicable award terms and conditions (see <http://www.nifa.usda.gov/business/awards/awardterms.html> to view NIFA award terms and conditions);
- (10) Approved budget plan for categorizing allocable project funds to accomplish the stated purpose of the award; and

(11) Other information or provisions deemed necessary by NIFA to carry out its respective awarding activities or to accomplish the purpose of a particular award.

### **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 include, but are not limited to:

2 CFR 225 - Cost Principles for State, Local, and Indian Tribal Governments.

7 CFR Part 1, subpart A—USDA implementation of the Freedom of Information Act.

7 CFR Part 3—USDA implementation of OMB Circular No. A-129 regarding debt collection.

7 CFR Part 15, subpart A—USDA implementation of Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, as amended.

7 CFR Part 331 and 9 CFR Part 121—USDA implementation of the Agricultural Bioterrorism Protection Act of 2002.

7 CFR Part 3015—USDA Uniform Federal Assistance Regulations, implementing OMB directives (i.e., OMB Circular Nos. A-21 and A-122 (2 CFR Parts 220 and 230), and incorporating provisions of 31 U.S.C. 6301-6308 (formerly the Federal Grant and Cooperative Agreement Act of 1977, Pub. L. No. 95-224)), as well as general policy requirements applicable to recipients of Departmental financial assistance.

7 CFR Part 3017—USDA implementation of Governmentwide Debarment and Suspension (Nonprocurement).

7 CFR Part 3018—USDA implementation of Restrictions on Lobbying. Imposes prohibitions and requirements for disclosure and certification related to lobbying on recipients of Federal contracts, grants, cooperative agreements, and loans.

7 CFR Part 3019—USDA implementation of OMB Circular A-110, Uniform Administrative Requirements for Grants and Other Agreements With Institutions of Higher Education, Hospitals, and Other Nonprofit Organizations (2 CFR Part 215).

7 CFR Part 3021—Governmentwide Requirements for Drug-Free Workplace (Financial Assistance).

7 CFR Part 3052—USDA implementation of OMB Circular No. A-133, Audits of States, Local Governments, and Nonprofit Organizations.

7 CFR Part 3407—NIFA procedures to implement the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969, as amended.

7 CFR 3430—Competitive and Noncompetitive Non-formula Grant Programs--General Grant Administrative Provisions.

29 U.S.C. 794 (section 504, Rehabilitation Act of 1973) and 7 CFR Part 15b (USDA implementation of statute) —prohibiting discrimination based upon physical or mental handicap in federally assisted programs.

35 U.S.C. 200 et seq. —Bayh Dole Act, controlling allocation of rights to inventions made by employees of small business firms and domestic nonprofit organizations, including universities, in Federally assisted programs (implementing regulations are contained in 37 CFR Part 401).

#### **D. Expected Program Outputs and Reporting Requirements**

Grantees are to submit initial project information and annual and summary reports to NIFA's electronic, Web-based inventory system that facilitates both grantee submissions of project outcomes and public access to information on Federally-funded projects. The details of these reporting requirements are included in the award terms and conditions. Progress updates corresponding to completion of Phase I and II will also be required.

## **PART VII—AGENCY CONTACT**

Applicants and other interested parties are encouraged to contact

Brent Elrod  
National Program Leader – Military and Veterans Programs  
USDA NIFA  
202.690.3468  
[belrod@nifa.usda.gov](mailto:belrod@nifa.usda.gov)

Regular Mail:  
1400 Independence Avenue, SW  
Washington, D.C. 20250-2225

Overnight and Other Deliveries:  
800 9th St. SW  
Waterfront Centre Rm. 4403  
Washington, D.C. 20024

## **PART VIII—OTHER INFORMATION**

### **A. Access to Review Information**

Copies of reviews, not including the identity of reviewers, and a summary of the panel comments will be sent to the applicant PD after the review process has been completed.

### **B. Use of Funds; Changes**

#### **1. Delegation of Fiscal Responsibility**

Unless the terms and conditions of the award state otherwise, the awardee may not in whole or in part delegate or transfer to another person, institution, or organization the responsibility for use or expenditure of award funds.

#### **2. Changes in Project Plans**

a. The permissible changes by the awardee, PD(s), or other key project personnel in the approved project shall be limited to changes in methodology, techniques, or other similar aspects of the project to expedite achievement of the project's approved goals. If the awardee or the PD(s) is uncertain as to whether a change complies with this provision, the question must be referred to the Authorized Departmental Officer (ADO) for a final determination. The ADO is the signatory of the award document, not the program contact.

b. Changes in approved goals or objectives shall be requested by the awardee and approved in writing by the ADO prior to effecting such changes. In no event shall requests for such changes be approved which are outside the scope of the original approved project.

c. Changes in approved project leadership or the replacement or reassignment of other key project personnel shall be requested by the awardee and approved in writing by the ADO prior to effecting such changes.

d. Transfers of actual performance of the substantive programmatic work in whole or in part and provisions for payment of funds, whether or not Federal funds are involved, shall be requested by the awardee and approved in writing by the ADO prior to effecting such transfers, unless prescribed otherwise in the terms and conditions of the award.

e. The project period may be extended by NIFA without additional financial support, for such additional period(s) as the ADO determines may be necessary to complete or fulfill the purposes of an approved project, but in no case shall the total project period exceed any applicable statutory limit or expiring appropriation limitation. Any extension of time shall be conditioned upon prior request by the awardee and approval in writing by the ADO, unless prescribed otherwise in the terms and conditions of award.

f. Changes in Approved Budget: Unless stated otherwise in the terms and conditions of award, changes in an approved budget must be requested by the awardee and approved in writing by the ADO prior to instituting such changes, if the revision will involve transfers or expenditures of amounts requiring prior approval as set forth in the applicable Federal cost principles, Departmental regulations, or award.

### **C. Confidential Aspects of Applications and Awards**

When an application results in an award, it becomes a part of the record of NIFA transactions, available to the public upon specific request. Information that the Secretary determines to be of a confidential, privileged, or proprietary nature will be held in confidence to the extent permitted by law. Therefore, any information that the applicant wishes to have considered as confidential, privileged, or proprietary should be clearly marked within the application. The original copy of an application that does not result in an award will be retained by the Agency for a period of three years. Other copies will be destroyed. Such an application will be released only with the consent of the applicant or to the extent required by law. An application may be withdrawn at any time prior to the final action thereon.

### **D. Regulatory Information**

For the reasons set forth in the final Rule related Notice to 7 CFR part 3015, subpart V (48 FR 29114, June 24, 1983), this program is excluded from the scope of the Executive Order 12372 which requires intergovernmental consultation with State and local officials. Under the provisions of the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995 (44 U.S.C. chapter 35), the collection of information requirements contained in this Notice have been approved under OMB Document No. 0524-0039.

## **E. Definitions**

Please refer to 7 CFR 3430, Competitive and Noncompetitive Non-formula Grant Programs-- General Grant Administrative Provisions, for the applicable definitions for this NIFA grant program.