

# **Assistive Technology Program for Farmers with Disabilities: National AgrAbility Project (NAP)**

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## ***FY 2016 Request for Applications (RFA)***

**APPLICATION DEADLINE: August 2, 2016**

**ELIGIBILITY: See Part III, A of RFA**



United States  
Department of  
Agriculture

National Institute  
of Food and  
Agriculture

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

**ASSISTIVE TECHNOLOGY PROGRAM FOR FARMERS WITH DISABILITIES:  
NATIONAL AGRABILITY PROJECT (NAP)**

**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 August 2, 2016**. Applications received after this deadline will normally not be considered for funding (see Part IV, C. of this RFA). 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 via e-mail to: [Policy@nifa.usda.gov](mailto: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 **Assistive Technology Program for Farmers with Disabilities: National AgrAbility Project (NAP) RFA**.

Visit the [NIFA website](#) to access a factsheet on the Center of Excellence (COE) designation process, including COE criteria, and a list of programs offering COE opportunities in fiscal year 2016. You can also review a recording of COE outreach webinars held in February and March of 2015 from the site. The COE webpages will be updated throughout FY 2016 with additional information, such as a summary of comments received from stakeholders.

**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:** NIFA requests applications for the Assistive Technology Program for Farmers with Disabilities: National AgrAbility Project (NAP) for fiscal year (FY) 2016 to increase the likelihood that farmers, farm workers or farm family members with disabilities and their farms experience success. The anticipated amount available for support of this program in Fiscal Year (FY) 2016 is approximately \$531,000 for new NAP grants. NIFA anticipates that approximately \$3.6 million will be available for competitively awarded State and Regional AgrAbility projects (SRAPs) that are eligible for continuation awards. Applications for the continuing SRAPs will be solicited via a separate RFA.

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

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## **PART I – FUNDING OPPORTUNITY DESCRIPTION**

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

The AgrAbility program is authorized under the Smith-Lever Act of May 8, 1914, as amended (7 U.S.C. 341 et seq.) and in Section 1680 of the Food, Agriculture, Conservation and Trade Act of 1990 (7 U.S.C. 5933), as amended. Section 7403 of the Food, Conservation, and Energy Act (FCEA) of 2008 (P.L. 110-246) amends section 3(d) of the Smith-Lever Act of 1914 [7 U.S.C. 343(d)] regarding eligibility. The AgrAbility program is funded through the Agriculture, Rural Development, Food and Drug Administration, and Related Agencies Appropriations Act, 2010 (P.L. 111-80).

Beginning in FY 1995, the eligibility to compete for AgrAbility funding was broadened to include 1890 Land-Grant Colleges and Universities, including Tuskegee University and West Virginia State University at any appropriated level. Beginning in FY 2009, the eligibility to compete for AgrAbility funding was further broadened to include the University of the District of Columbia. Beginning in FY 2014, the eligibility to compete for AgrAbility funding was further broadened to include Central State University as an 1890 land-grant designee. Funding is provided under Section 3(d) of the Smith Lever Act line for *Farm Safety and Youth Farm Safety Education and Certification*.

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

The AgrAbility Program (including its NAP component) specifically addresses the following USDA/NIFA goals and priorities:

- The USDA Strategic Plan FY 2014-2018 (<http://www.usda.gov/documents/usda-strategic-plan-fy-2014-2018.pdf>), addressing *Goal 1 (Assist Rural Communities to Create Prosperity so They are Self-Sustaining, Repopulating, and Economically Thriving; Objective 1.1 Enhance rural prosperity, including leveraging capital markets to increase government’s investing in rural America through supporting human and social capital)*;
- 2014 USDA’s Research, Education, and Economics (REE) Action Plan ([http://www.ree.usda.gov/ree/news/USDA\\_2014\\_REE\\_Action\\_Plan\\_08-2014\\_Final.pdf](http://www.ree.usda.gov/ree/news/USDA_2014_REE_Action_Plan_08-2014_Final.pdf)): *Goal 7 (Rural Prosperity/Rural-Urban Interdependence; specifically addressing Strategy 3 of Goal 7: Support information and technology transfer and translation <https://nifa.usda.gov/resource/nifa-strategic-plan-fy2014-fy2018> al research, “transformational extension,” to inform citizens and enable and support vibrant and resilient communities; and Strategy 4 of Goal 7: Build new partnerships with underserved and non-traditional populations)*;
- The NIFA Strategic Plan for 2014-2018: *Goal 1 (Catalyze Exemplary and Relevant Research, Education and Extension Programs (Sub-goal 1.1: Advance our Nation’s ability to achieve global food security and fight hunger; and Sub-goal 1.7: Ensure the development of human capital, communities, and a diverse workforce through research, education, extension and engagement programs in food and agricultural sciences to support a sustainable agriculture system)*; and

- NIFA’s Agricultural Systems Portfolio priorities in the area of agricultural safety in farming and ranching, and Family & Consumer Sciences Portfolio priorities in the areas of community vitality and family well-being.

AgrAbility increases the likelihood that individuals with disabilities and their families engaged in production agriculture (AgrAbility customers) will become more successful. The program supports cooperative projects in which State Cooperative Extension based at either 1862 or 1890 Land-grant universities subcontract to private, non-profit disability organizations. Measures of success may include improved access to agricultural and life activities, improvements in the financial stability of customers and increased capacity of the states and regions to deliver services this population requires in a timely and satisfying manner.

To address the specialized needs of AgrAbility customers, the AgrAbility program provides support for State and Regional AgrAbility Projects (SRAPs) and one National AgrAbility Project (NAP). AgrAbility builds service capacity on national, regional, state, and local levels through direct **assistance**, non-formal **education**, and **networking**. In addition, AgrAbility projects use **marketing** activities to direct the public to initiatives, trainings, resources, and partnering opportunities in AgrAbility-related outreach, education, networking and assistance. Assistance, education, networking, and marketing represent core components of all AgrAbility projects.

## 1. Assistance

Assistance addresses AgrAbility customer’s immediate needs that are inadequately addressed by health, farm, and government service providers. The program has particular interest in funding projects that encompass assistance activities with the following elements:

- (a) Assistance objectives focus on individualized consultative services that increase the likelihood that AgrAbility customers and their farm operations experience success;
- (b) Audiences include farmers, farm workers and farm family members with disabilities;
- (c) Delivery formats include product selection advice, accessibility and ergonomic recommendations; lifestyle activities and farm operations planning guidance; and advocacy to obtain services and financial aid. Assistance can occur in person or from a distance, via phone and internet;
- (d) Process and means to assess individual AgrAbility customers’ needs;
- (e) Evaluation component to appraise assistance outreach efforts, outcomes of those efforts in farmers being served, and effectiveness/impacts of AgrAbility assistance on the lives of farmers, farm workers and farm family members with disabilities who are being served by the program;
- (f) Opportunities for higher education faculty and students in agricultural and human social and behavioral sciences to develop/enhance their technical and leadership skills through engagement in activities and special projects designed *specifically* to support goals and objectives of SRAPs and NAP.

## 2. Education

Education represents AgrAbility's long-term investment strategy. The program has particular interest in funding educational activities with the following elements critical in development of human capital:

- (a) Within the context of production agriculture, learning objectives focus on accommodating disabilities and avoiding secondary injuries in persons with disabilities to ensure their continued participation in agriculture and, thereby, support sustainability of agriculture systems;
- (b) Audiences include farmers, farm workers and farm family members with disabilities, as well as health, safety, farm, community, non-profit and government service providers with access to farmers, farm workers, and their families;
- (c) Delivery formats include authoring or adapting printable and web-based resources, live presentations taught in-person or remotely to encourage audience interaction and networking, recorded presentations, and internet and social media presence;
- (d) Evaluation component to appraise the level of outreach, outcomes and effectiveness/impacts of AgrAbility educational efforts; and
- (e) Opportunities for higher education faculty and students in agricultural and human social and behavioral sciences to develop/enhance their technical and leadership skills through engagement in activities and special projects designed *specifically* to support goals and objectives of SRAPs and NAP.

## 3. Networking

Networking addresses AgrAbility need to connect people with each other and with resources, thereby enhancing sustainability of AgrAbility services and the program in general over the short-, medium-, and long-term. Because of that, AgrAbility program has particular interest in funding projects that encompass networking activities with the following elements:

- (a) Networking objectives encourage sharing of information among, and the provision of services, value, and/or funds from, individuals and/or organizations not employed by SRAPs and NAP;
- (b) Partners include former and current AgrAbility customers, peer supporters, volunteer groups, university faculty and student groups, stakeholders, and public and private funding organizations;
- (c) Delivery formats include the donation of goods and services of direct benefit to AgrAbility customers; and
- (d) Process and means to record and appraise economic value of services rendered to AgrAbility and its customers.

#### 4. Marketing

The marketing component does not address AgrAbility's education, networking, or assistance objectives but, rather, helps make key audiences aware of AgrAbility projects and their initiatives. Appropriate marketing activities have the following elements:

- (a) Objectives concentrate on program or project awareness to the exclusion of information required to provide education, assistance, or facilitate networking;
- (b) Audience includes everyone;
- (c) Delivery formats include public appearances with displays and the production or distribution of program awareness materials, press releases, public service announcements, print advertisements, Web pages with awareness content, newsletters, or electronic notices; and
- (d) Process and means to link marketing outputs to specific outcomes and impacts.

While SRAPs operate within a geographic area defined on the basis of counties, states, or both, and may function independently of each other, primary function of *NAP* is to support *SRAPs* in developing their capacity to meet their AgrAbility objectives in the areas of assistance, education, networking, and marketing. Attention is given also to assessment of SRAPs' and NAP's efforts and effectiveness, and to the need for SRAPs' sustainability beyond NIFA funding.

#### C. Program Area Description

##### National AgrAbility Project (NAP)

**Program Area Code:** LQ (program code name is AgrAbility)

**Application Deadline:** August 2, 2016 (5:00 p.m. ET)

**Proposed Budget Requests:** Proposed budgets must not exceed \$531,000 per year for project periods of 4 years. Program anticipates making one (1) new award.

**Partnership Requirement:** Collaboration with a regional or national non-profit disability organization(s) is required. Applications must contain letter(s) of commitment from a non-profit partner(s) at the time of application submission in Grants.gov.

**Requested Grant Type:** Cooperative Agreement

**Program Area Contact:** Dr. Aida Balsano (202-720-4436 or [abalsano@nifa.usda.gov](mailto:abalsano@nifa.usda.gov))

Please note that grant applications requesting more than \$531,000 per year and/or proposing project periods other than 4 years will *not* be reviewed. Similarly, grant applications with no secured letter(s) of commitment from a non-profit disability organization partner(s) will *not* be reviewed.

Collaboration among 1862 and 1890 Land Grant Institutions within or across state lines on a joint application is encouraged. Collaborations with Land Grant institutions not eligible to apply as lead institutions (such is the case with 1994 Land Grants and many of the Hispanic Serving Institutions), within or across state lines, on a joint application are also encouraged.

All applications involving collaboration between such institutions must demonstrate a clear and meaningful involvement in the project for each institution throughout the 4-year project period.

## **PART II—AWARD INFORMATION**

### **A. Available Funding**

The amount available for grants in FY **2016** is approximately **\$531,000**. The funds will be awarded through a cooperative agreement and used to support a single NAP. There is no commitment by USDA to fund any particular application.

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 <https://nifa.usda.gov/tool/asap>.

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

In FY **2016**, NAP applications may be submitted to the AgrAbility Program as one of the following types of requests:

**New application**. This is a project application that has not been previously submitted to the AgrAbility Program. We will review all new applications competitively using the selection process and evaluation criteria described in Part V - Application Review Requirements.

**Resubmitted application**. This is an application that had previously been submitted to the AgrAbility Program in FY 2012 but not funded. Project Directors (PDs) must respond to the previous review panel summary (see Response to Previous Review, Part IV). Resubmitted applications must be received by the relevant due dates, will be evaluated in competition with other pending applications in appropriate area to which they are assigned, and will be reviewed according to the same evaluation criteria as new applications.

### **C. Project Types**

AgrAbility supports two project types, NAP and SRAPs. **Under this announcement, NIFA plans to fund a single NAP in FY 2016. NIFA is not soliciting SRAP proposals under this announcement.** However, since NAP is required to interface and work with SRAPs, both project types are explained in this RFA.

#### **1. The National AgrAbility Project (NAP)**

The NAP has a dual mission:

- It helps SRAPs become more successful at meeting their objectives by providing them with timely and appropriate information, training and technical assistance; and
- It provides limited, on-demand SRAP-type services in geographic areas without SRAPs.

Over the past years, the NAP met the needs of the AgrAbility program in the areas of education, networking, assistance, marketing, and evaluation by conducting all of the following:

- Producing and/or recommending the education materials and/or forums, networking tactics, assistance protocols, and marketing products for SRAPs to adopt for their own use and success. Much of the information produced and collected by AgrAbility to date has been housed and can be viewed on the current NAP's AgrAbility website at <http://www.agrability.org/>;
- Connecting all SRAPs by: moderating information sharing forums; identifying, promoting, and addressing opportunities and challenges for AgrAbility; and recognizing and capitalizing on economies of scale. Teleconferencing, virtual meetings and webinars are used in place of face-to face meetings whenever possible. For example, see <http://www.agrability.org/Online-Training/virtualntw/index.cfm> for information about AgrAbility Virtual National Training Workshops (NVTW) conducted annually by NAP;
- Assisting SRAPs in finding and cataloging (e.g., in form of printable manuals, CDs, online databases) assistive technology devices and products that improve the accessibility and productivity of agricultural workers with disabilities. For examples, see <http://www.agrability.org/Toolbox/index.cfm>;
- Addressing disability in agriculture and assistive technology needs of special populations, specifically: African-American farmers, Native American farmers, Hispanic/Latino farmers, veterans engaged in farming, and beginning farmers in conjunction/cooperation with institutions and organizations that serve them (e.g., 1890 and 1994 Land Grant institutions, Hispanic-Serving Institutions, Farmer Veteran Coalition, etc.). For information about success to date in AgrAbility outreach to special populations via NAP, visit <http://www.agrability.org/> and [http://www.agrability.org/Documents/2013-14\\_Special\\_Pops\\_Summary.pdf](http://www.agrability.org/Documents/2013-14_Special_Pops_Summary.pdf);
- Organizing annual National AgrAbility Training Workshop (NTW) for SRAPs' project personnel, AgrAbility clients, AgrAbility partners, and other education and assistive technology professionals of import to the success of the AgrAbility program. The workshop offers orientation for new grantees/staff; staff development forums for discussing pressing issues and SRAPs' progress, successes, and challenges; special forums (e.g., veterans in agriculture; collaborations with minorities serving institutions); special speakers; networking opportunities; and presentation of reports of interest to the entire program. To view agendas and presentations from the past NTWs, go to <http://www.agrability.org/AgrAbility-National-Training-Wkshp/index.cfm>;
- Annually assessing the level of effort and effectiveness of the AgrAbility program in serving farmers, farm workers, and farm family members with disabilities. The NAP does this by outreach and impact evaluations of SRAPs and process, outcome and impact evaluations of NAP. The evaluations are focused on assessing SRAPs successes in reaching their intended customers and increasing the customers' quality of life, the NAP's efforts in increasing/strengthening SRAPs' outreach and service capacity, and the NAP's success in serving customers living in states with currently no active SRAPs; and

- Engaging SRAPs in identifying and sharing best practices in developing projects' sustainability beyond USDA/NIFA funding.

Given that the primary source of funding for the AgrAbility are Federal funds, the NAP should contract with hotels for lodging at or below the Federal per diem rate for the national training workshop and any other meetings that require travel. NIFA retains the right to disallow use of NIFA funds for any travel that does not meet these requirements.

All delivery formats, training and educational materials and products should be marketed as being part of the AgrAbility program and use the AgrAbility logo (see below). Other branding on any materials produced through this grant requires consent of the NIFA program contact.



## **2. State and Regional AgrAbility Projects (SRAPs)**

NIFA will fund only continuation grants for SRAPs in FY 2016 under a separate announcement. Since all NAP applications will need to describe their proposed interface and engagement with SRAPs, some additional information regarding SRAPs is included below.

Assistance, education, networking, and marketing represent core components of all AgrAbility projects. (For more details on these four components, see pages 5-7 of this RFA.) SRAPs operate within a geographic area defined on the basis of counties, states, or both. SRAPs may function independently of each other. States with insufficient potential clientele to merit individual AgrAbility projects submit regional, multi-state proposals. As is the case with the NAP, all SRAPs are required to subcontract to one private, non-profit disability organization. Applicants proposing to serve remote or diverse potential customer populations might form partnerships that include one or more land grant institutions, non-land-grant institutions, Hispanic-serving institutions, or additional, private non-profit disability organizations to effectively serve the entire qualifying population.

SRAPs receive support from and submit documentation and reports (e.g., client demographic data) to the NAP. NIFA views the relationship between the SRAPs and the NAP as critical to the success of the AgrAbility program. Prior to applying, SRAP applicants are instructed to contact the NAP for detailed information concerning standard operating procedures, best field practices, and access to the NAP's library of AgrAbility-related materials and resources.

SRAP commitments include: attending annual, three-day, national training workshops with at least one representative from each of the primary university and non-profit disability organization partners (2 persons minimum); participating in NAP-initiated efforts to collect

activity data; and submitting annual and final reports to NIFA. In their grants applications to NIFA, SRAPs have the opportunity to request funds to pay for these commitments. For a list of SRAPs currently funded by NIFA, see <http://nifa.usda.gov/press-release/usda-awards-21-ability-grants-expand-access-farming-americans-disabilities-0>.

#### **D. Responsible and Ethical Conduct of Research**

In accordance with sections 2, 3, and 8 of 2 CFR Part 422, institutions that conduct USDA-funded extramural research must foster an atmosphere conducive to research integrity, bear primary responsibility for prevention and detection of research misconduct, and maintain and effectively communicate and train their staff regarding policies and procedures. In the event an application to NIFA results in an award, the Authorized Representative (AR) assures, through acceptance of the award that the institution will comply with the above requirements. Award recipients shall, upon request, make available to NIFA the policies, procedures, and documentation to support the conduct of the training.

See <http://nifa.usda.gov/responsible-and-ethical-conduct-research> for more information.

## **PART III—ELIGIBILITY INFORMATION**

### **A. Eligible Applicants**

Applications may be submitted only by Cooperative Extension Services (CES) at 1862 Land-Grant Colleges and Universities, and 1890 Land-Grant Colleges and Universities including Central State University, the University of the District of Columbia, Tuskegee University and West Virginia State University.

Applicants are expected to partner on their projects with private non-profit direct service disability organizations.

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

The 1862 and 1890 Land Grant institutions may partner with each other and/or other Land Grant institutions (e.g., 1994 Land Grants) on joint proposals.

In instances where a state does not have an 1890 or 1994 Land Grant institution:

- 1862 Land Grant institution may partner with any 1890 and/or 1994 Land Grant in their region;
- 1890 Land Grant institutions may partner with any 1862 and/or 1994 Land Grant institution in their region.

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**

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

### **C. Centers of Excellence**

Pursuant to Section 7214 of the Agricultural Act of 2014 (Pub. L. 113-79), effective in Fiscal Year 2015, for applicable competitive research and extension programs, NIFA began recognizing and providing priority in the receipt of funding to applications from “centers of excellence” that have been established for purposes of carrying out research, extension, and education activities relating to the food and agricultural sciences. In July of 2014, NIFA held listening sessions and accepted written comments from stakeholders to inform NIFA’s implementation of the centers of excellence (COE) provision. Information from the webinars and a summary of the input gathered are available on NIFA’s website at <http://nifa.usda.gov/resource/centers-excellence-implementation-nifa-competitive-grant-programs>.

A COE is composed of one (1) or more of the following entities that provide financial or in-kind support to the center of excellence. Therefore, an eligible applicant who wishes to be considered

as a center of excellence must be one of the following entities that provides financial or in-kind support to the Center being proposed, as described in the grant application.

- (A) State agricultural experiment stations;
- (B) colleges and universities;
- (C) university research foundations;
- (D) other research institutions and organizations;
- (E) Federal agencies;
- (F) national laboratories;
- (G) private organizations, foundations, or corporations;
- (H) individuals; or
- (I) a group consisting of 2 or more of the entities described in (A) through (H).

## **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) 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 the one-time registration process must be completed 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.** Part II.1. of the NIFA Grants.gov Application Guide contains detailed information regarding the registration process. Refer to item 2. below to locate the “NIFA Grants.gov Application Guide”.

#### **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 determine 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

#### **Funding Opportunity Number: USDA-NIFA-SLBCD-005922**

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.” 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 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](mailto:support@grants.gov)

Grants.gov iPortal (see <https://grants-portal.psc.gov/Welcome.aspx?pt=Grants>):

Top 10 requested help topics (FAQs), Searchable knowledge base, self-service ticketing and ticket status, and live web chat (available 7 a.m. - 9 p.m. ET). Get help now!

Have the following information available when contacting Grants.gov:

- Funding Opportunity Number (FON)
- Name of agency you are applying to
- 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. Grants.gov does not check for NIFA required attachments or that attachments are in PDF format; see Part III section 6.1 of the guide for how to check the manifest of submitted files. Partial applications will be excluded from NIFA review. We will accept subsequent submissions of an application until close of business on the closing date 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](mailto:electronic@nifa.usda.gov)
- Phone: 202-401-5048

- Business hours: Monday through Friday, 7 a.m. – 5 p.m. ET, 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. See Section 2.18 of the NIFA Grants.gov Application Guide which provides that the applicant’s electronic signature on the SF-424 affirms its agreement with Federal representations and assurances (e.g., Prohibition against FY 16 Appropriations Act Funding under Grants and Cooperative Agreements with Entities Requiring Certain Internal Confidentiality Agreement).

### **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.

“See Part V., Section 4.12. of the NIFA [Grants.gov](#) Application Guide (Field 12 on the Form) for instructions regarding mandatory Felony Convictions or Tax Delinquent Status”.

#### **a. Field 7. Project Summary/Abstract.**

Proposals must include a Project Summary/Abstract page of 400 words or less. The summary page should include:

- Project title;
- Names of PD, Co-PDs, and key project personnel and their affiliated institutions;
- Names of partnering institutions and organizations (if not already listed);
- A brief description of the proposed project, including the relevance of the project to the goals of the AgrAbility Program and SRAP’s needs;
- Proposed project duration (in years);
- Funding amount requested, per each year of the project; and
- Type of application: New, Resubmission, or Renewal (see page 9 of this RFA for definitions).

See Part V. 4.7 of NIFA Grants.gov Application Guide for further instructions and a link to a suggested template.

#### **b. Field 8. Project Narrative.**

NOTE: The Project Narrative shall not exceed 30 pages of written text regardless of whether it is single- or double-spaced and up to 5 additional pages for figures and tables. We have established this maximum (35 pages) to ensure fair and equitable competition. Applications exceeding the maximum page limitation will be disqualified from the review process and not considered for funding.

Grant-writing resources may be accessed at <http://nifa.usda.gov/resource/usda-grant-writing-webinar-series-partnership-stakeholders>.

The Project Narrative must include the following section:

- (a) Project Justification;
- (b) Work Plan;
- (c) Division of Labor;
- (d) Management Plan;
- (e) Budget Justification;
- (f) Project Communication and Dissemination; and
- (g) Centers of Excellence Request and Justification (if applicable).

**(a) Project Justification**

- Justify the need for the project clearly and concisely by describing the SRAP needs and lack of services in geographic areas not served by SARPs.
- Review current related programs concentrating on limitations this application intends to address. Indicate what sets your proposed project apart from other programs you described.
- Justify your team's ability to meet the needs of SRAPs and provide necessary services by detailing accomplishments from similar projects.
- Describe the SRAPs' role in defining NAP's scope and future project planning.
- Identify your non-profit disability partner(s) and provide detailed justification for selection of the non-profit disability partner.
- Identify other partners on the project and provide justification for their inclusion on the proposed NAP.
- If your grant application is a resubmission, a PD must respond to the previous review panel summary. (See section 7. d. *Field 12. Other Attachments* below for details.)

**(b) Work Plan**

- NAP objectives must support the SRAPs' capacity to fulfill priority areas listed in Part I. B. and within the context of the NAP vision and current activities enumerated in Part II, C. 1. Use an outline format for this section, with the following goals as primary headings: Education, Networking, Direct Assistance, Marketing, Evaluation, and SRAPs' Sustainability.
- Under each goal, organize proposed objectives and related activities in a logical sequence, the sum of which must comprise an attainable project. The sum of activities under each objective must lead to completion of that objectives within the 4-year maximum project duration.
- Under each activity, list expected outcomes, describe the proposed means of evaluating the activity's efficacy, and describe outcomes' value to the SRAP's and other stakeholders.

The plan should allow evaluation results to refine and adjust objectives and activities while informing future plans.

- Use a summary table at the end of this section to show the relationships between goals, objectives, the activities designed to attain the objectives, expected outcomes, desired impacts, and the data sources which will inform evaluations. Thus, this table should have a minimum of six rows (one for each goal) and five columns.
- Objectives should have measurable outcomes, with quantitative and qualitative evaluation plans.
- Objective(s) under the Evaluation goal must address, at a minimum:
  - How SRAPs' client demographics data will be collected from SRAPs and stored, analyzed and reported by the NAP;
  - Proposed plans for assessment and reporting of traffic on the AgrAbility website ([www.agrability.org](http://www.agrability.org));
  - Interface with SRAPs and methodology the NAP evaluation team will use to continue to administer, analyze, and report results from the Quality of Life Survey;
  - Opportunities for SRAPs staff to receive training on their evaluation interface with NAP and, to the extent possible, technical assistance on evaluation-related issues; and
  - Annual opportunities for the AgrAbility program staff at NIFA, SRAPs' PDs and Co-PDs, and the NAP staff to jointly dialogue about AgrAbility projects' evaluation implementation challenges and needs, best practices, evaluation results analyses, and reporting needs and opportunities.
- Objective(s) under SRAPs' Sustainability should address the proposed NAP's plans to engage SRAPs in identifying and sharing best practices in developing projects' sustainability beyond USDA/NIFA funding.
- Priority is placed on continuing with main activities of the current NAP, mainly contributions to and oversight of the NAP website ([www.agrability.org](http://www.agrability.org)); technical support, networking, and training for SRAPs; organizing and conducting the annual NTWs; and evaluating the level of outreach, outcomes and impacts of SRAPs and NAP. Hence, New and Resubmitted NAP applications should account in their plans for time and engagement necessary to make a successful transition from the current to a new NAP leadership. See [www.agrability.org](http://www.agrability.org) for information about past and current NAP activities and commitments.
- Briefly describe challenges that might be encountered, limitations to proposed methodology, and how you plan to address them.

### **(c) Division of Labor**

CES, non-profit disability organization, and prospective other partners on the proposal may jointly or individually provide leadership for different objectives. Define the responsibilities of the respective organizations under each objective. For each activity, include time frames, personnel, and their roles. Composition and roles of the NAP evaluation team should be addressed in this section as well. Applicants may consult with

SRAPs, or consumer advisory type groups in developing their cooperators' role assignments.

**(d) Management Plan**

- Provide an explanation of how the relationship between the lead institution and each of the partner organizations (including the non-profit disability partner) will be managed.
- Describe the fiscal and administrative oversight provided by the lead institution and the non-profit disability partner.
- Briefly explain the lead institution's funds management strategy for funded projects. The funds management outlined in the Management Plan for NAP must comply with all administrative and national policy requirements listed in PART VI, C. of this RFA.
- Briefly describe the proposed working relationship with NIFA staff, with a focus on communication, planning, and oversight; and
- Provide time lines or Gantt charts to demonstrate the duration and the sequence of project activities. Use varied hatching for different cooperators. Chart against a quarterly scale, so that a schedule should depict no more than 16 quarters.

**(e) Budget (as below #6. R&R Budget) and Budget Justification**

- There should be a direct relationship between the items in the budget and budget justification, as well as between budget justification and the objectives/activities contained in the Project Narrative.
- Every item in the budget should be justified in the proposal. The amount of detail depends on the nature of the project and the breakdown of costs.
- Proposed budgets should not exceed \$531,000 per year nor request funding for more than 4 years in total.
- Budget breakdown and justification need to be provided for each year of funding being requested.
- Annual budgets should include estimated 4-day travel costs for NAP staff to attend AgrAbility NTWs.
- In Budget Justification, costs (e.g., personnel, materials, travel, etc.) should be broken down and itemized rather than shown as lump sums.

**(f) Project Communication and Dissemination**

- Briefly describe how results from this project will be communicated to all partners on the proposed project; SRAPs; State, Regional, and National stakeholders; and the public.
- Include your main project communication and dissemination activities in the proposal Timeline/Gantt chart.

**(g) Center of Excellence Justification**

Applicants who wish to be considered as centers of excellence must provide a brief justification statement, as part of their Project Narratives and within the page limits provided, describing how they meet the standards of a center of excellence, based on the following criteria:

- (A) The ability of the center of excellence to ensure coordination and cost effectiveness by reducing unnecessarily duplicative efforts regarding research, teaching, and extension in the implementation of the proposed research and/or extension activity outlined in this application;
- (B) In addition to any applicable matching requirements, the ability of the center of excellence to leverage available resources by using public-private partnerships among agricultural industry groups, institutions of higher education, and the Federal Government in the implementation of the proposed research and/or extension activity outlined in this application. Resources leveraged should be commensurate with the size of the award;
- (C) The planned scope and capability of the center of excellence to implement teaching initiatives to increase awareness and effectively disseminate solutions to target audiences through extension activities in the implementation of the proposed research and/or extension activity outlined in this application; and
- (D) The ability or capacity of the center of excellence to increase the economic returns to rural communities by identifying, attracting, and directing funds to high-priority agricultural issues in support of and as a result of the implementation of the proposed research and/or extension activity outlined in this application.

Additionally, where practicable (not required), center of excellence applicants should describe proposed efforts to improve teaching capacity and infrastructure at colleges and universities (including land-grant colleges and universities, cooperating forestry schools, certified Non-Land Grant Colleges of Agriculture (NLGCA) (list of certified NLGCA is available at [http://www.nifa.usda.gov/funding/pdfs/nlgca\\_colleges.pdf](http://www.nifa.usda.gov/funding/pdfs/nlgca_colleges.pdf)), and schools of veterinary medicine).

**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. This section of the Guide includes information about the people who require a Senior/Key Person Profile, and details about the Biographical Sketch and the Current and Pending Support, including a link to a suggested template for the Current and Pending Support.

**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. However,

NIFA strongly encourages applicants to provide the requested information to help NIFA identify and address any inequities based on gender, race, ethnicity, or disability of its proposed PDs/PIs and co-PDs/PIs. Information not submitted will seriously undermine the statistical validity, and therefore the usefulness, of information received from others. The information you submit will be kept confidential and will be used only for tracking and statistical purposes necessary to meet the demands of the agency and will not be part of the review process.

## **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 to which you are applying.** Enter the program code name (i.e., enter “AgrAbility”) and the program code (i.e., enter “LQ”). Note that accurate entry of the program code is very important for proper and timely processing of an application.
- b. Field 8. Conflict of Interest List.** See Part VI, 1.8 of the NIFA Grants.gov Application Guide for further instructions and a link to a suggested template.
- c. Field 9. Bibliography**  
No page limit. Submit as an attachment in PDF format. Title the attachment as “Bibliography”.

All work cited in the proposal must be referenced in this section of the application. All references must be complete, include titles and all co-authors, conform to an acceptable journal format, and be listed in alphabetical order using the last name of the first author or listed by number in the order of citation.

## **d. Field 12. Other Attachments**

- **Resubmitted Application’s Response to Previous Review - PDF Attachment.**  
One-page Limit. Title the attachment as “ResponseToPreviousReview”. This requirement only applies to “Resubmitted Applications” as described under Part II, B. (2), “Types of Applications”. PDs must respond to the previous review panel summary. If desired, additional comments may be included in the text of the Project Narrative, subject to the page limitations of that section.
- **Letter of Commitment from the Non-Profit Partner(s)** stating the non-profit organization’s readiness to collaborate on the proposed NAP and describing the organization’s specific role on the project. Title the attachment as “NonProfitLetter”.
- **Letter(s) of Commitment from other Collaborators on the Proposed NAP** (e.g., 1862, 1890 or 1994 Land Grant Institutions, Minority Serving Institutions, eXtension). The

letters should state partner institution's readiness to collaborate on the proposed NAP and describe the partner's specific role on the project.

*(Note: If partnering with eXtension, you must have a letter of acknowledgement from eXtension and a letter of commitment from the Ag Safety and Health Community of Practice. For detailed guidance on how to partner with eXtension, go to <http://create.extension.org/node/2057>.)* Title the attachment(s) as, for example, "LGULetter", "MSILetter" or "eXtensionLetter".

### **C. Submission Dates and Times**

Prior to electronic submission of the application via Grants.gov, it is strongly recommended that an administrative review be conducted to ensure that an application complies with all application preparation instructions. An application checklist is included in Part VII of the NIFA Grants.gov Application Guide to assist with this review.

While the checklist should be used to check the application for completeness, the application should be checked additionally for the following required item(s). This is not an exhaustive list of required items; it only serves to highlight required items that are sometimes overlooked by applicants:

- Project Summary
- Project Narrative
- Bibliography
- Current and Pending Support forms
- Conflict of Interest forms
- Letters of Commitment

**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 **5:00 p.m. Eastern Time on August 2, 2016**. 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, 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 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 considered for funding by the peer review panel.**

**Once the application has been assigned a proposal number, this number should be cited on all future correspondence.**

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

Pursuant to Section 1473 of the National Agricultural Research, Extension, and Teaching Policy Act of 1977 (NARETPA), as amended, 7 U.S.C. 3319, **indirect costs and tuition remission are not allowable costs under Section 3(d) of Smith-Lever funded projects, and no funds will be approved for this purpose.** Costs that are a part of an institution's indirect cost pool (e.g., administrative or clerical salaries) may not be reclassified as direct costs for the purpose of making them allowable.

NIFA has determined that grant funds awarded under this authority may not be used for the renovation or refurbishment of research, education, or Extension space; the purchase or installation of fixed equipment in such space; or the planning, repair, rehabilitation, acquisition, or construction of buildings or facilities.

Unallowable costs include, but are not limited to, the following examples:

1. Items designated as unallowable in 2 CFR 200 Subpart E – Cost Principles.
2. Entertainment Costs not permitted include banquets; award ceremonies; meals for persons not traveling on behalf of the project except when provided to maintain the continuity of a meeting; tickets to shows or sporting events; and alcoholic beverages. Entertainment costs are covered in the Uniform Guidance 2 CFR 200.438.
3. Facility Costs not permitted include the renovation or refurbishment of research, education, or extension space; the purchase or installation of fixed equipment in such space; or the planning, repair, rehabilitation, acquisition, or construction of buildings or facilities.
4. Any expense not directly related to the program or project is considered unallowable. Examples include child-care services, kitchen help hired to prepare refreshments, and promotional or appreciation gifts such as clothing, coffee mugs, or bags.

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

**You should follow the submission requirements noted in Part IV, section 1.9 in the document entitled “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.

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

### **A. General**

We evaluate each application in a 2-part process. First, we screen each application to ensure that it meets the administrative requirements as set forth in this RFA. Second, a technical review panel will evaluate applications that meet the administrative requirements.

We select reviewers based upon their 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., producers, range or forest managers/operators, and 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, and 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 of each application to producers and the general public.

When each peer review panel has completed its deliberations, the responsible program staff of the AgrAbility program will recommend that the project: (a) be approved for support from currently available funds or (b) be declined due to insufficient funds or unfavorable review.

The AgrAbility program reserves the right to negotiate with the PD/PI and/or with the submitting organization or institution regarding project revisions (e.g., reductions in the scope of work, funding level, period, or method of support) prior to recommending any project for funding.

### **B. Evaluation Criteria**

We will use the evaluation criteria below to review applications submitted in response to this RFA:

Evaluation criteria that will be used in reviewing applications submitted in response to this RFA will encompass all areas of the project summary and narrative as outlined and described in Part IV, B. Section 3 (R&R Other Project Information Form), Fields 7-12. As such, proposals will be evaluated on whether or not they include information requested in this RFA; the quality of information provided; and the feasibility of project's successful completion given proposed objectives, associated activities, time, and partner(s)' commitments. Each component of the Project Narrative is assigned a specific number of points, for a total of 100 points. The points are allocated as follows: Project Justification – 15 pts; Work Plan – 40 pts; Division of Labor – 10 pts; Management Plan – 10 pts; Budget and Budget Justification – 10 pts; and Project Communication and Dissemination – 15 pts.

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

During the peer evaluation process, we take extreme care to prevent any actual or perceived conflicts of interest that may impact review or evaluation. See [http://www.nifa.usda.gov/business/competitive\\_peer\\_review.html](http://www.nifa.usda.gov/business/competitive_peer_review.html) for further information about conflicts of interest and confidentiality as related to the peer review process.

### **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. 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 copies of forms recommended for use in fulfilling these requirements as part of the pre-award process. Although an applicant may be eligible based on its status as one of these entities, 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).

### **E. Application Disposition**

An application may be withdrawn at any time before a final funding decision is made regarding the application. Each application that is not selected for funding, including those that are withdrawn, will be retained by the AgrAbility program for a period of three years.

## **PART VI—AWARD ADMINISTRATION**

### **A. General**

Within the limit of funds available for such purpose, the NIFA awarding official 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 NIFA awarding official 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. 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 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, and NIFA General Awards Administration Provisions at 7 CFR part 3430, subparts A through E.

### **B. Award Notice**

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

- (1) Legal name and address of performing organization or institution to which 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 and the Federal Agency Identification Number assigned by NIFA;
- (5) Project period, specifying the amount of time NIFA intends to support the project without requiring recompetition for funds;
- (6) Total amount of financial assistance approved for the award;
- (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 may include, but are not limited to, the ones listed on the NIFA web page - <https://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>.

### **Responsible and Ethical Conduct of Research**

Please refer to Part II, C. for more information.

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

The output and reporting requirements are included in the award terms and conditions (see <http://www.nifa.usda.gov/business/awards/awardterms.html> for information about NIFA award terms). If there are any program or award-specific award terms, those, if any, will be identified in the award.

## **PART VII—AGENCY CONTACT**

Applicants and other interested parties are encouraged to contact:

Programmatic Contact:

Aida Balsano, Ph.D.  
National Program Leader  
National Institute of Food and Agriculture  
U.S. Department of Agriculture  
Waterfront Centre  
800 9<sup>th</sup> St SW  
Room 4433  
Washington, D.C. 20024  
(202) 720 – 4436 (phone)  
Email: [abalsano@nifa.usda.gov](mailto:abalsano@nifa.usda.gov)

Steven Thomson, Ph.D.  
National Program Leader  
National Institute of Food and Agriculture  
U.S. Department of Agriculture  
Waterfront Centre  
800 9<sup>th</sup> St SW  
Room 3240  
Washington, D.C. 20024  
(202) 401 – 6301 (phone)  
Email: [Steven.J.Thomson@nifa.usda.gov](mailto:Steven.J.Thomson@nifa.usda.gov)

Administrative/Business Contact:

Bruce Mertz  
Team Leader, Team I  
Office of Grants and Financial Management  
National Institute of Food and Agriculture  
U.S. Department of Agriculture  
Waterfront Centre  
800 9<sup>th</sup> St SW  
Room 2174  
Washington, D.C. 20024  
(202) 401 – 5062 (phone)  
Email: [bmertz@nifa.usda.gov](mailto:bmertz@nifa.usda.gov)

## **PART VIII—OTHER INFORMATION**

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

We will send copies of reviews, not including the identity of reviewers, and a summary of the panel comments 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, awardees 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. The awardee must request, and the ADO must approve in writing, all changes in approved goals or objectives prior to effecting such changes. In no event shall requests be approved for changes that are outside the scope of the original approved project.

c. The awardee must request, and the ADO must approve in writing, all changes in approved project leadership or the replacement or reassignment of other key project personnel, prior to effecting such changes.

d. The awardee must request, and the ADO must approve in writing, all 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, prior to instituting such transfers, unless prescribed otherwise in the terms and conditions of the award.

e. The project period may be extended without additional financial support, for such additional period(s) 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. The terms and conditions of award include information about no-cost extensions of the award and when ADO's prior approval is necessary.

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 2 CFR part 415, subpart C , 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 Financial Assistance Programs--General Award Administrative Provisions](#), for applicable definitions for this NIFA grant program.

### **F. Materials Available on the Internet**

AgrAbility program information will be made available on the NIFA web site at <https://nifa.usda.gov/program/agrability>. The following are among the materials available on the web page:

1. Information about the program
2. External resources
3. Stakeholder Input
4. Requests for Applications
5. AgrAbility Abstracts of Funded Projects