

# Rural Health and Safety Education Competitive Grants Program

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## *FY 2015 Request for Applications (RFA)*

**APPLICATION DEADLINE:** May 21, 2015

**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**

**RURAL HEALTH AND SAFETY EDUCATION (RHSE) COMPETITIVE GRANT PROGRAM**

**INITIAL ANNOUNCEMENT**

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

**DATES:** Applications must be received by **5:00 p.m. Eastern Time on May 21, 2015.** 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 RHSE RFA.

NIFA offered outreach webinars on its center of excellence implementation February 26th and March 12th, 2015. A recording can be accessed on the [NIFA website](#). In the coming months, NIFA will be holding additional webinars to collect stakeholder input about our center of excellence implementation strategy. Details and access information will be posted on the [NIFA website](#). Comments and suggestions relative to centers of excellence should be sent to [Policy@nifa.usda.gov](mailto:Policy@nifa.usda.gov) by September 30th, 2015.

**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:** NIFA requests applications for the Rural Health and Safety Education (RHSE) Competitive Grant Program for fiscal year (FY) 2015 to address the needs of rural Americans by providing individual and family health education programs. The amount available for support of this program in FY 2015 is approximately \$1.4 million.

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

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

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

The authority for the RHSE Competitive Grant Program is under Section 502 (i) of Title V of the Rural Development Act of 1972, as amended (7 U.S.C. 2662).

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

Part of the overall purpose of Title V of the Rural Development Act of 1972 is to foster quality of life in rural communities by providing the essential knowledge necessary for successful programs of rural development, improving coordination among Federal agencies, other levels of government, and institutions and private organizations in rural areas, and developing and disseminating information about rural conditions.

RHSE program supports the United States rural communities by encompassing the USDA/NIFA's agricultural, social and human sciences. The program addresses:

- [USDA Strategic Plan for FY 2014-2018](#) (*Goal 4. Ensure That All of America's Children Have Access to Safe, Nutritious, and Balanced Meals; Objective 1.2: Promote Healthy Diet and Physical Activity Behaviors*);
- [2014 USDA's Research, Education, and Economics \(REE\) Action Plan](#), Goal 7 (Rural Prosperity/Rural-Urban Interdependence and Prosperity; specifically, *Strategy 3 of Goal 7: Support information and technology transfer and translational 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*);
- [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*).

Many individuals and families living in rural areas and communities experience disparities related to health and well-being. Health disparities in rural areas are often triggered by the hardships of poverty, making the issue of population health and well-being, rurality, and poverty a circular one. Poverty rates are higher in rural than in urban areas, income is generally lower and health resources and services are poorer and less accessible. In addition, income and health disparities tend to disproportionately affect families with children.

The opportunity to receive health information, or engage in health promotion activities, is often limited and, when available, may not be appropriate for the diverse populations living in rural areas. For many rural residents, these adverse environmental, occupational and familial risk factors stemming from poverty underlie negative health behaviors and chronic health conditions

such as obesity, diabetes, heart disease, agricultural respiratory diseases, traumatic brain injury, and vision/hearing impairments.

Effective programs and services in the human sciences promote and enhance rural health, strengthen economic vitality and weaken rural poverty. Such initiatives can provide timely and adequate health information to rural residents of all ages, with consideration to life stage, cultural differences, healthy living behaviors, health literacy, and occupational and environmental exposures. Health promotion and education in areas such as nutrition and physical activity, healthy and safe homes (including indoor air quality), and overall human health and well-being are fundamental components of such programs and services. They can also help provide increased access to health services and opportunities for individuals and families to engage in promotion of their own health and the health of others. Human Science educators and other relevant partners, supported by information technology, can employ these programs and services to sustain health promotion activities that successfully protect and enhance vitality and resiliency of rural communities. RHSE competitive grant program helps to address these needs by providing funding for just such initiatives.

Projects funded through the RHSE program are carried out by the eligible colleges and universities on a competitive basis and according to determination of the projects that show the most promise of fulfilling the objectives of the RHSE grants program. In order to minimize duplication of efforts and maximize benefits to rural communities, projects funded through RHSE should coordinate, to the extent possible, with other federally supported agricultural research and extension activities (e.g., Regional Rural Development Centers), the State offices of rural health, and other appropriate programs of the Department of Health and Human Services.

NIFA is soliciting applications for RHSE in the area of **Individual and Family Health Education**.

### **C. Program Area Description**

The RHSE program proposals are expected to be health education projects that provide individuals and families living in rural areas with:

- Information as to the value of good health at any age;
- Information to increase individual or family's motivation to take more responsibility for their own health;
- Information regarding rural environmental health issues that directly impact on human health;
- Information about and access to health promotion and educational activities; and
- Training for volunteers and health services providers concerning health promotion and health care services for individuals and families in cooperation with state, local and community partners.

In order to achieve these program goals, in FY 2015 the RHSE program will focus on supporting projects proposing to scale-up new or established Extension programs in the area of individual and family health and safety education to rural communities State-wide.

**Program Area Code:** LX

**Application Deadline:** May 21, 2015 (5:00 p.m., ET)

**Proposed Budget Requests:** Proposed budgets must not exceed \$350,000 total for a two-year project period. Requests exceeding the budgetary guidelines will not be reviewed.

**Expected number of awards:** Program anticipates making 4 awards – one award per US region.

**Grant Period:** 2 years

**Requested Grant Type:** Standard grant

**Restriction:** Note that only one application per region will be recommended for funding. Thus, collaborations among 1862, 1890, and 1994 Land Grant institutions within a given State are highly encouraged, as well as the institutions' collaborations with appropriate Regional Rural Development Centers, State offices of rural health, and other relevant organizations, provided such organizations are necessary for the conduct of the project.

#### **Other Program Area Requirements for RHSE Projects:**

- The proposed Extension outreach health education projects should include programs and activities that deliver science-based knowledge and informal educational programs to rural audiences, enabling them to make practical decisions related to health.
- Projects should identify an existing individual and community health framework/model as a guide for their programs' health education focus and their Extension outreach strategy. The framework/model must recognize the complex, bidirectional relationship between individual, community, and societal factors. The RHSE program encourages applicants to take advantage of guiding frameworks/models already developed by Cooperative Extension, such as the Cooperative Extension's National Framework for Health and Wellness (see [http://www.aplu.org/members/commissions/food-environment-and-renewable-resources/CFERR\\_Library/national-framework-for-health-and-wellness](http://www.aplu.org/members/commissions/food-environment-and-renewable-resources/CFERR_Library/national-framework-for-health-and-wellness)).
- In order to minimize duplication of efforts within State, projects should coordinate with State offices of rural health on proposed health education activities and rural population outreach.
- Projects are expected to identify health outcome indicators and to lead to measurable changes in health knowledge, health attitudes, and health behaviors for project participants.
- In order to minimize duplication of efforts and to develop some common processes and networks across States and Regions when it comes to identification of health outcome indicators and measures, projects funded through the RHSE program are encouraged to collaborate with other USDA/NIFA-supported agricultural research and extension programs experienced in developing outcome indicators at State and Regional levels, active in promoting understanding and use of common indicators and measures across Cooperative Extension, and effective in communicating outcomes and impacts of Extension projects at State, Regional and National levels. In this effort, the RHSE program encourages applicants to partner on their

proposals with Regional Rural Development Centers (see <http://rrdc.info/>).

- Projects must identify rural counties in which they will be implemented. For definitions of Rural (Non-metro) counties and county classifications by state, refer to the 2013 Rural-Urban Continuum Codes definitions at <http://www.ers.usda.gov/data-products/rural-urban-continuum-codes/documentation.aspx>; and to obtain the actual codes for your proposed project counties, see the 2013 Rural-Urban Continuum Code County table at <http://www.ers.usda.gov/data-products/rural-urban-continuum-codes.aspx>. For each county in which your project will be implemented, provide Rural-Urban Continuum Code as found in the table. (Only counties with codes #4-9 are appropriate for inclusion.)
- Program delivery may range from individual to group and community-based audiences and use communication methods from face-to-face to electronic, or combinations thereof.
- Projects may address, but are not limited to, the following key strategic actions related to the specific topic priority areas of the RHSE grant opportunity:
  - Support Extension education to increase health literacy of and/or health access for individuals living in rural communities;
  - Build science-based knowledge and understanding in people to enable their informed decision-making on issues of rural health;
  - Develop new applications for instructional tools and curriculum structures that increase technical competency and promote individual and community health in rural areas;
  - Offer Extension projects that increase public access to new ideas and technologies related to rural health that have been tested and/or developed at the community-scale; and
  - Develop projects that increase public health knowledge and engage the health sector, leading to actions that protect or enhance rural health and well-being.
- We highly recommend involving an evaluator on your proposed project to lead the design and conduct of impact assessment and reporting.

## PART II—AWARD INFORMATION

### A. Available Funding

The amount available for NIFA support of this program in FY 2015 is approximately \$1.4 million. The funds will be awarded through competitive grants process described in this RFA. There is no commitment by USDA to fund any particular application or to make a specific number of awards.

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

### B. Types of Applications

In FY 2015, you may submit only a new application to the RHSE Program:

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

### C. Project Types

In FY 2015, the RHSE program will supports two project types: a) projects focused on scaling-up to State levels **new** Extension programs in the area of individual and family rural health and safety education; and b) projects seeking to scale-up to State levels **already established** Extension programs in the area of individual and family rural health and safety education.

The following types of applications submitted to the RHSE Program in FY2015 **will not** be considered for funding:

- Proposals with a focus on research (other than evaluation related to project outputs, outcomes and impacts), formal education (K-12, university), or clinical interventions;
- Proposals with a focus on topic areas specific to other NIFA grant programs, including AFRI, such as Food Safety, Childhood Obesity Prevention, Youth Farm Safety or AgrAbility.

In FY 2015, the RHSE program has established a maximum award size of \$350,000. Applications requesting more than the maximum will not be considered for funding. Total project periods may not exceed 2 years.

Number of New Awards Anticipated for FY 2015	Estimated Minimum Award	Estimated Maximum Award
4	\$250,000	\$350,000

Priority consideration will be given to proposals with multi-institution partnerships and Regional Rural Development Centers' involvement.

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

The responsible and ethical conduct of research (RCR) is critical for excellence, as well as public trust, in science and engineering. Consequently, we consider education in RCR essential to the preparation of future scientists. 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. Per award terms and conditions, grant recipients shall, upon request, make available to NIFA the policies, procedures, and documentation to support the conduct of the training.

Note that the training referred to herein shall be either on-campus or off-campus training. The general content of the ethics training will, at a minimum, emphasize three key areas of research ethics: authorship and plagiarism, data and research integration, and reporting misconduct. Each institution will be responsible for developing its own training system, as schools will need flexibility to develop training tailored to their specific student needs. Grantees should consider the Collaborative Institutional Training Initiative (CITI) program for RCR (<https://www.citiprogram.org/rcrpage.asp>). Typically this RCR education addresses the topics of: Data Acquisition and Management - collection, accuracy, security, access; Authorship and Publication; Peer Review; Mentor/Trainee Responsibilities; Collaboration; Conflict of Interest; Research Misconduct; Human Subject Research; and Use of Animals in Research.

## **PART III—ELIGIBILITY INFORMATION**

### **A. Eligible Applicants**

Applications may be submitted by 1862 and 1890 Land Grant colleges and universities that are eligible to receive funds under the Act of July 2, 1862 (7 U.S.C. 301 et seq.), and the Act of August 30, 1890 (7 U.S.C. 321 et seq.), including Central State University, Tuskegee University, West Virginia State University and the University of the District of Columbia.

Applications also may be submitted by any of the Tribal colleges and universities designated as 1994 Land Grant Institutions under the Educational Land-Grant Status Act of 1994, as amended.

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

Failure to meet an eligibility criterion by the time of application deadline may result in the application being excluded from consideration or, even though an application may be reviewed, will preclude NIFA from making an award.

### **B. Cost Sharing or Matching**

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), beginning in Fiscal Year 2015, for applicable competitive research and extension programs, NIFA will be 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 provision. Information from the webinars and a summary of the input gathered are available on NIFA’s website at [http://www.nifa.usda.gov/about/offices/legis/cntr\\_ex\\_webinar\\_documents.html](http://www.nifa.usda.gov/about/offices/legis/cntr_ex_webinar_documents.html).

A center of excellence is composed of 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) any group consisting of 2 or more of the entities described in (A) through (H).

See Part IV, C. of this RFA for additional requirements that eligible applicants must meet to be considered a center of excellence.

## **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 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-RHSE-005057**

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.

**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.**

All proposals must include a Project Summary page of 300 words or less. The summary page should include:

- Project title;
- Names and affiliated organizations of PD, Co-PDs, and key project personnel;
- Names of partnering institutions and organizations (if not already listed);
- A brief description of the proposed project;
- Funding amount requested.

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

The Project Narrative shall not exceed **15** pages (not including bibliography) of written text, regardless of whether it is single- or double-spaced, with standard 12-point font and 1-inch margins. Up to 5 additional pages are permitted for related figures and tables. This maximum (**20** pages) has been established to ensure ease of review as well as fair and equitable competition. Applications exceeding the applicable page limitation will be disqualified from the review process and not considered for funding.

The Project Narrative must have seven distinct sections, titled:

- Background and Problem Statement;
- Objectives, Activities, and Timeline;
- Division of Labor;
- Management Plan;
- Budget Justification;
- Project Communication, Dissemination, and Sustainability; and
- Centers of Excellence Justification.

**(a) Background and Problem Statement (30 pts)**

- Justify the need for the project by describing the nature and magnitude of the health/safety issues(s) the project is seeking to address. Indicate why the issue(s) is important to rural health and prosperity. Provide the most recent relevant data for the state in which your proposed RHSE project will be implemented, including data on the

incidence of health issue(s) your project will address. Provide references for data. Explain and substantiate any assumptions made.

- Briefly discuss related programs currently available in the state in which your proposed RHSE project will take place. Address existing gaps and limitations among currently available programs/services. Briefly describe the program you propose to scale up and clearly state which of the existing gaps/limitations among the available programs and services your proposed RHSE project will address.
- Identify rural counties in which your project will be implemented. For definition of Rural (Non-metro) counties and county classifications by state, refer to the 2013 Rural-Urban Continuum Codes definitions at <http://www.ers.usda.gov/data-products/rural-urban-continuum-codes/documentation.aspx>; and the 2013 Rural-Urban Continuum Code by State and County table at <http://www.ers.usda.gov/data-products/rural-urban-continuum-codes.aspx>. For each county in which your project will be implemented, provide the Rural-Urban Continuum Code as found in the table. (Only counties with codes #4-9 are appropriate for inclusion.)
- Clearly identify rural population(s) your project will reach out to and serve (e.g., children, adults, ethnic or cultural minority groups, military families, farmer/rancher families, physicians/health care providers, etc.). Provide the criteria used to select the population group to be served. Support for targeting these specific groups must be clearly reflected in the data and estimates you already provided for the state.
- Provide an estimate for how many individuals you expect to serve directly during each of the two years of the project implementation. Indicate what percentage of your project participants, per year, will be from specific groups you identified earlier.
- Justify your institution's and team's ability to meet the gaps and limitations in rural health and safety education services by detailing your accomplishments from similar projects. If the project involves collaboration between Land Grant Institutions, clearly identify each institution's relevant previous work that speaks to its ability to successfully participate on the proposed RHSE project.
- Clearly identify any other partners on the proposed project and briefly indicate how their past experiences and successes will contribute to the success of your proposed RHSE project.
- Describe your and your partners' prior experience in addressing the needs of the target audience(s). Describe your team's ability and readiness to provide appropriate (i.e., ethnically-, racially-, linguistically- and socio-economically-sensitive) education, training, and outreach for such audience(s). For example, if you will be serving Spanish-speaking families, or Native American communities, how will you ensure that your outreach and education services are culturally-sensitive and linguistically appropriate?
- If the proposed project is looking to scale up to the State level an already established program, you must include also the following in your Introduction section:
  - A brief history of the program, including cumulative data on individuals served, program outcomes and impacts to date, and program partners;
  - Has the program been implemented by Cooperative Extension in other States/Regions?

- List domains of change that you are assessing through evaluation analysis (e.g., changes in participant knowledge, awareness, competency, sustained behaviors change (private value) and condition change (public value));
- If the program's content has been published in peer-reviewed sources, please provide citations and/or links to pertinent publications.
- If the program's evaluation results have been published in peer-reviewed sources, please provide citations and/or links to pertinent publications.

**(b) Objectives, Activities, and Timeline (35 pts)**

- Projects should identify an existing individual and community health framework/model as a guide for their programs' rural health and safety education focus and their Extension outreach strategy. The framework/model must recognize the complex, bidirectional relationship between individual, community, and societal factors. The RHSE program encourages applicants to take advantage of guiding frameworks/models already developed by Cooperative Extension, such as the Cooperative Extension's National Framework for Health and Wellness (see [http://www.aplu.org/members/commissions/food-environment-and-renewable-resources/CFERR\\_Library/national-framework-for-health-and-wellness](http://www.aplu.org/members/commissions/food-environment-and-renewable-resources/CFERR_Library/national-framework-for-health-and-wellness)) to access the Cooperative Extension Framework for Health and Wellness webinar recording from June 26, 2014, visit <https://learn.extension.org/events/1651#.U61ih7Hr6f8> and click on 'watch recording').
- List clear, concise, and logically arranged project goals, objectives, and activities.
  - Goals must address the statement of need(s) identified in the Introduction section of your proposal;
  - Objectives must link to goals and addressed program priorities listed in Part I, Section B.
  - Denote activities required to achieve each objective and identify target audience(s). The sum of activities under each objective must lead to completion of those objectives within the 2-year maximum project duration.
- For each activity, list domains of change you will be assessing through project outcome evaluation (e.g., changes in participant knowledge, awareness, competency, sustained behaviors change (private value) and condition change (public value). Group activities and associated outcomes and impacts by project year (FY 2015 and FY 2016).
- If partnering on the proposed project with a Regional Rural Development Center:
  - Consult with the appropriate Center (see <http://rrdc.info/>) about rural health indicators and your project's proposed/prospective outcomes tracking so as to avoid potential duplication of efforts and capitalize on Regional Rural Development Centers' successes with common indicators, impacts assessment and reporting.
- Provide an *Action Plan* table to show the relationships between goals, objectives, activities, desired outcomes, and anticipated impacts.
- Provide a *Timeline* to demonstrate the duration and the sequence of project activities, as well as division of labor (as noted in the next section of this RFA). Each objective may

have multiple activities. Chart against a quarterly scale, so that the Timeline depicts 2 years and 8 quarters.

- o Identify implementation challenges and project procedures limitations you might encounter during the course of the proposed projects. Briefly describe how you plan to address those challenges and limitations.

**(c) Division of Labor (10 pts)**

- o State Cooperative Extension System and non-Land Grant partners may jointly or individually provide leadership for different objectives/activities.
- o Briefly describe roles of key staff on the proposed RHSE project and percent of time each will be dedicating to the project. If the percentages are expected to change in Year 2 of the proposed project, please indicate so and provide an explanation.
- o Indicate who on the team will provide the lead and oversight for design and conduct of project outcomes evaluation. We highly recommend involving on your proposed project a faculty/professional with expertise/strong experience in developing and implementing program evaluations to lead the design and conduct of your RHSE project's outcome evaluation.
- o Within the project Timeline, include a column that shows responsibilities of the respective organizations/individuals under appropriate objectives/activities.
- o Land Grant Institutions submitting joint applications must demonstrate that the institutions' roles and responsibilities in regards to main aspects of project development and implementation will be equitable and appropriate.

**(d) Management Plan (5 pts)**

- o If the proposed RHSE project represents collaboration between two or more Land Grant Institutions, provide an explanation of how the relationship and communication will be managed.
- o Describe how the relationship and communication between the State Cooperative Extension System and the non-Land Grant partners will be managed.
- o Describe the fiscal and administrative oversight for the project.
- o If partnering with a Regional Rural Development Center, briefly describe planned interface with the Center.

**(e) Budget (as below #6. R&R Budget) and Budget Justification (10 pts)**

- o 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.
- o 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.
- o Proposed budgets should not exceed \$350,000 total or request funding for more than 2 years.
- o Budget breakdown and justification should be provided for each project year (FY 2015 and FY 2016).
- o Annual budgets should include reasonable expenses for two 2-day trips for project director, project evaluation lead, and one representative from each partner institution

receiving funds to attend RHSE investigators meeting in Washington, D.C. The first meeting will occur in Fall 2015 and the second in Fall 2016. Purpose of these meetings to encourage networking among State project teams from different regions and support alignment of efforts on rural health indicators and outcomes measures.

- o 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, Dissemination and Sustainability (10 points)**

- o Briefly describe how results from this project will be communicated to State, Regional, and National stakeholders and the public. For example, consider how interface with Regional Rural Development Centers and State offices of rural health might support your project's communication, dissemination and sustainability efforts. Also, consider whether project outcomes, impacts and lessons learned might be suitable for dissemination through an existing eXtension CoPs (<http://www.extension.org/>).
- o Consider how lessons from your proposed project could be used to inform other Cooperative Extension initiatives in health and wellness in your State and at the regional level.
- o Describe steps you will undertake toward project's sustainability beyond the life of the NIFA RHSE grant. For example, identify opportunities (such as resources, trainings, partnerships, collaborations, funding streams) you plan to explore/tap-into/develop/enhance during the life of the proposed project to help you sustain project operations after NIFA funding has expired. If planning to sustain only certain aspects of the project beyond NIFA funding, please clearly identify them.
- o Include your main project communication, dissemination and sustainability activities in the proposal Timeline.

**(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).

### c. **Field 9. Bibliography**

No page limit. Submit as an attachment in PDF format. Title the attachment as “BibliographyReferencesCited”.

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**

- **Letters of Commitment from All Partners on the Proposed Project** (e.g., 1862, 1890 or 1994 Land Grant Institutions; Regional Rural Development Center; State offices of rural health, eXtension, etc.). The letters should state partner’s readiness to collaborate on the proposed RHSE project and describe the partner’s specific role(s) on the project. Title the attachments as, for example, “1890Letter”, “RRDCLetter” or “eXtensionLetter”.
  - *Note: If partnering with eXtension, you must have a letter of acknowledgement from eXtension and a letter of commitment from the appropriate Community of Practice. For detailed guidance on how to partner with eXtension, go to <http://create.extension.org/node/2057>.*

### **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.

## **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 “*Rural Health and Safety Education*”) and the program code (i.e., enter “**LX**”). 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. 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 Action Plan
- Timeline
- 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 May 21, 2015**. Applications received after this deadline will normally not be considered for funding.

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

We send email correspondence to the AR regarding the status of submitted applications. Therefore, 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**

NIFA has determined that grant funds awarded under this authority may not be used for:

- General Purpose Equipment – Equipment which does not have a particular scientific, technical, or programmatic purpose. It includes passenger carrying vehicles, typewriters, furniture (tables, chairs, file cabinets, book cases, etc.), copy machines, fax machines, etc;
- Entertainment – Banquets, awards ceremonies, and meals for persons not in a travel status, tickets to shows or sporting events, and alcoholic beverages;
- Incentives – Federal funds may not be used to offer targeted program participants incentives (e.g., fast-food coupons, gift certificates, etc.) to entice participation. This is prohibited under the 2 CFR Part 200;
- Renovation or refurbishment of research, education, or extension space;
- Purchase or installation of fixed equipment in such space;
- Planning, repair, rehabilitation, acquisition, or construction of buildings or facilities; and
- Any expense that is not directly related to the program or project would be considered unallowable. Costs such as child-care services hired so a person can attend a meeting or kitchen help hired to prepare refreshments for a field day, promotional or thank-you gifts such as T-shirts, coffee mugs, or canvas carry-all bags are unallowable because they are not directly related to the project plan.

Section 716 of the Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2014 (H.R. 3547) limits **indirect costs** to 30 percent of the total Federal funds provided under each award. When preparing budgets, you should limit your request for the recovery of indirect costs to the lesser of your institution's official negotiated indirect cost rate or the equivalent of 30 percent of total Federal funds awarded. See Part V section 7.9 of the NIFA Grants.gov Application Guide for further indirect cost information.

## **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 RHSE 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 RHSE 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**

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. 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:

Background and Problem Statement – 30 pts: the quality of information provided; and the feasibility of project's successful completion given proposed objectives, associated activities, time, and partner(s)' commitments.

Objectives, Activities, and Timeline – 35 pts: the quality of information provided; and the feasibility of project’s successful completion given proposed objectives, associated activities, time, and partner(s)’ commitments.

Division of Labor – 10 pts: the quality of information provided; and the feasibility of project’s successful completion given proposed objectives, associated activities, time, and partner(s)’ commitments.

Management Plan – 5 pts: the quality of information provided; and the feasibility of project’s successful completion given proposed objectives, associated activities, time, and partner(s)’ commitments.

Budget and Budget Justification – 10 pts: the quality of information provided; and the feasibility of project’s successful completion given proposed objectives, associated activities, time, and partner(s)’ commitments.

Project Communication, Dissemination and Sustainability – 10 pts: the quality of information provided; and the feasibility of project’s successful completion given proposed objectives, associated activities, time, and partner(s)’ commitments.

### **C. Center of Excellence Status**

All eligible applicants will be competitively peer reviewed (as described in Part V, A. and B. of this RFA), and ranked in accordance with the evaluation criteria. Those that rank highly meritorious and requested to be considered as a center of excellence will be further evaluated by the peer panel to determine whether they have met the standards to be centers of excellence (Part III D. and Part IV C.). In instances where they are found to be equally meritorious with the application of a non-center of excellence, based on peer review, selection for funding will be weighed in favor of applicants meeting the center of excellence criteria. NIFA will effectively use the center of excellence prioritization as a “tie breaker”. Applicants that rank highly meritorious but who did not request consideration as a center of excellence or who are not deemed to have met the centers of excellence standards may still receive funding.

In addition, the applicant’s Notice of Award will reflect that, for the particular grant program, the applicant meets all of the requirements of a center of excellence. Entities recognized as centers of excellence will maintain that distinction for the duration of their period of performance or as identified in the terms and conditions of that award.

### **D. 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.

## **E. 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 preaward 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).

## **F. 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 RHSE 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 include, but are not limited to the ones listed below.

2 CFR Part 25, “Universal Identifier and Central Contractor Registration”

2 CFR Part 170, “Reporting Subaward and Executive Compensation Information”

2 CFR Part 175, “Award Term for Trafficking in Persons”

2 CFR Part 180, “OMB Guidelines to Agencies on Governmentwide Debarment and Suspension (Nonprocurement)”

2 CFR Part 182, “Governmentwide Requirements for Drug-Free Workplace (Financial Assistance)”

2 CFR Part 200, “Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards”

2 CFR Part 400, “Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards”

2 CFR Part 415, “General Program Administrative Regulations”

2 CFR Part 416, “General Program Administrative Regulations for Grants Cooperative Agreements to State and Local Governments”

2 CFR Part 417, “Nonprocurement Debarment and Suspension”

2 CFR Part 418, “New Restrictions on Lobbying”

2 CFR Part 421, “Requirements for Drug-Free Workplace (Financial Assistance)”

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 3407—USDA procedures to implement the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969, as amended.

7 CFR 3430—Competitive and Noncompetitive Non-formula Financial Assistance Programs-- General Award Administrative Provisions.

[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.

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).

44 U.S.C. 3541 et seq. (Pub. L. 107-347) - Federal Information System Security Management Act of 2002 (FISMA), to improve computer and network security within the Federal Government. Applies to awardees if it will collect, store, process, transmit, or use information on behalf of NIFA.

#### **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.

At the end of the project's final year, grantees will be asked to prepare a final report for the project and to submit it to the RHSE programmatic contact within 45 days of the project's expiration date. The report should summarize all significant activities undertaken towards achieving the outcomes of the project: basic demographics and total numbers of participants served; tables, graphs, and other figures (as appropriate) to facilitate comparing targeted project results with actual results, aggregated for the entire project; final numbers of participants who showed/reported significant changes in learning, actions or conditions; project list of all educational materials (including web links when appropriate) used and/or generated by the project; and success stories and pictures showcasing project impacts. Project directors will receive feedback on their reports from the RHSE programmatic contact and be encouraged to use the reports as the basis for their REEport Final Technical Reports, due to NIFA within 90 days of the expiration date of the award.

## **PART VII—AGENCY CONTACT**

Applicants and other interested parties are encouraged to contact:

**Programmatic Contact:**

Aida Balsano, Ph.D.

National Program Leader

Division of Family and Consumer Sciences

USDA, National Institute of Food and Agriculture (NIFA)

Telephone: 202-720-4436

E-mail: [abalsano@nifa.usda.gov](mailto:abalsano@nifa.usda.gov)

**Administrative/Business Contact:**

Bruce Mertz

Team Leader, Team I

Office of Grants and Financial Management

USDA, National Institute of Food and Agriculture (NIFA)

Telephone: 202-401-5062

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.