

# 4-H Military Partnership and Outreach Support Program

---

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

**APPLICATION DEADLINE: August 15, 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**

**4-H Military Partnership and Outreach Support (4-H MPOS)**

**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 August 15, 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 **4-H Military Partnership and Outreach Support Program RFA**.

**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:** NIFA requests applications for the **4-H Military Partnership and Outreach Support Program (4-H MPOS)** for fiscal year (FY) 2016 to marshal resources of the land-grant institutions and Cooperative Extension System in collaboration with other organizations to develop and deliver positive youth development through 4-H programs for military-connected children and youth, and to plan and conduct on site trainings, webinars, and programs for military staff and volunteers. The amount available for NIFA to support the 4-H MPOS in FY 2016 is approximately **\$1,971,000**.

This notice identifies the objectives for **4-H MPOS** projects, the eligibility criteria for projects and applicants, and the application forms and associated instructions needed to apply for a **4-H MPOS** award.

## Table of Contents

PART I—FUNDING OPPORTUNITY DESCRIPTION .....	4
A. Legislative Authority and Background.....	4
B. Purpose and Priorities .....	4
C. Program Area Description .....	6
PART II—AWARD INFORMATION.....	7
A. Available Funding .....	7
B. Types of Applications .....	7
C. Project Types .....	7
D. Responsible and Ethical Conduct of Research .....	7
PART III—ELIGIBILITY INFORMATION.....	8
A. Eligible Applicants .....	8
B. Cost Sharing or Matching.....	8
PART IV—APPLICATION AND SUBMISSION INFORMATION.....	9
A. Electronic Application Package.....	9
B. Content and Form of Application Submission.....	10
C. Submission Dates and Times .....	14
D. Funding Restrictions .....	14
E. Other Submission Requirements.....	15
PART V—APPLICATION REVIEW REQUIREMENTS.....	16
A. General.....	16
B. Evaluation Criteria .....	16
C. Conflicts of Interest and Confidentiality.....	17
D. Organizational Management Information.....	17
E. Application Disposition .....	17
PART VI—AWARD ADMINISTRATION .....	18
A. General.....	18
B. Award Notice .....	18
C. Administrative and National Policy Requirements.....	19
D. Expected Program Outputs and Reporting Requirements .....	19
PART VII—AGENCY CONTACT .....	20
PART VIII—OTHER INFORMATION .....	20
A. Access to Review Information.....	21
B. Use of Funds; Changes .....	21
C. Confidential Aspects of Applications and Awards.....	22
D. Regulatory Information .....	22
E. Definitions.....	22

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

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

In accordance with the Economy Act of 1932, as amended, (31 U.S. C. 1535), the Army Child, Youth and School Services, Air Force Child and Youth Programs and Navy Child and Youth Programs has provided NIFA with funds to support the 4-H MPOS in order to utilize the unique resources of USDA and its land-grant institution partners.

Pursuant to 7 U.S.C. Sec 3318 (c), the Secretary of Agriculture, Acting through the Director of NIFA, may enter into contracts, grants, or cooperative agreements, for a period not to exceed five years, with State agricultural experiment stations, State cooperative extension services, all colleges and universities, other research or educational institutions or organizations, Federal and private agencies and organizations, individuals and any other contractor or recipient, either foreign or domestic, to further research, extension, or teaching programs in the food and agriculture sciences of the Department of Agriculture.

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

4-H MPOS is aligned with the USDA Strategic Plan found at (<http://www.ocfo.usda.gov/usdasp/usdasp.htm>) Strategic Goal 1: Assist Rural Communities to Create Prosperity so They Are Self-sustaining, Repopulating, and Economically Thriving through addressing human and social capital. 4-H MPOS is aligned with the USDA Research, Economics, and Education (REE) Action Plan found at ([http://www.ree.usda.gov/ree/news/USDA\\_REE\\_Action\\_Plan\\_03-2014.pdf](http://www.ree.usda.gov/ree/news/USDA_REE_Action_Plan_03-2014.pdf)) Goal 6: Education and Science Literacy- to leverage technology and innovation to distribute tools, information, and resources and use non-formal education programs, outreach, 4-H and other youth development programs to transfer knowledge and technology; Goal 7: Rural-Urban Interdependence and Prosperity through “supporting information and technology transfer and translational research, ‘transformational extension,’ to inform citizens and enable and support vibrant and resilient communities.” 4-H MPOS is aligned with the NIFA’s Strategic Plan found at [http://nifa.usda.gov/about/pdfs/strat\\_plan\\_2014.pdf](http://nifa.usda.gov/about/pdfs/strat_plan_2014.pdf) Goal 1: Science through “catalyzing exemplary and relevant research, education and extension programs.”

This project supports the mission of the DoD-USDA Military Extension Partnership Memorandum of Understanding signed in 2010, which states, “This Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) sustains the interagency momentum developed through collaborations’ with the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), land grant institutions, and the Cooperative Extension Service in providing joint programs in support of military children, youth, and families.

### **Background and Context**

Since 2009, NIFA has partnered with the United States military service branches to marshal resources of land grant institutions’ Cooperative Extension 4-H programs to develop capacity for supporting and sustaining programs for military-connected youth who are identified as at-risk youth. In FY 2015, USDA-NIFA-4-H, in partnership with the Army, Navy, and Air Force,

provided positive youth development 4-H experiences for military-connected youth in 43 states and 2 territories through 4-H clubs, afterschool, special projects and other 4-H opportunities for 125 installations and bases in the United States. Additionally, four States provided 4-H experiences for military-connected youth and professional development for military staff at 43 Installations and bases abroad through webinar, and face to face training (countries served included Japan, Korea, Marshall Islands, Singapore, Germany, England, Italy, Benelux-Brussels, Spain, and Turkey). These worldwide partnerships also enabled youth to attend National 4-H events in the United States. The installations and bases that work with 4-H all have child and youth programs. The USDA-NIFA and Army, Navy, and Airforce partnership also supports military-connected youth who live in local communities, including those in National Guard and Reserve families. Overall, 100,000 military-connected youth participate in 4-H programs.

NIFA is seeking applications from institutions that can demonstrate their ability to effectively administer and manage sub projects in multiple states via a consortium of land-grant institutions (to enable them to serve youth in 50 states, territories and D.C. ). The sub projects will deliver educational programs for military-connected youth. The educational programs are designed to equip military-connected youth with resiliency skills they need to lead positive, productive, and contributing lives. Military-connected youth are inherently at-risk from a variety of factors that include: multiple and lengthy deployments by family members; relocation of the family; single partner households; lower income; and family members who return home wounded or do not return home. Please see Part IV B. 3.c 6. of this RFA for more detailed information on required budget allocations.

The primary objective for this project is:

- To work with a consortium of states to administer and manage programs that provide positive youth development 4-H programming for military-connected youth.

The awardee will be expected to develop a mechanism to work with the consortium of land-grant institutions to provide programs for military-connected youth. Programs must include: 4-H programs and opportunities (based on needs and grounded in research) for military-connected youth on installations worldwide and within local communities. Programming must integrate 4-H Military Partnership programs into ongoing Extension programs and provide in-person and virtual positive youth development 4-H training for staff and volunteers. The awardee will be expected to provide the military service branches with expert advice and technical support throughout the process, collect program evaluation and report data, and submit annual reports and impact statements.

**Project Objective for each Service’s Outreach Support Program:**

- Develop a mechanism to work with the consortium of land–grant institutions to provide programs for military-connected youth and staff from each service branch that meet their objectives (below).

## Air Force

- **Youth Camp Experiences:** Provide 4-H residential and day camp experiences to include quality 4-H programming, unique camping experiences and a variety of activities to help develop leadership and resiliency skills, enhance communication, introduce Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM) initiatives, foster teamwork, and prepare students for post-secondary education and training.

## Navy

- **Youth Camp Experiences:** Provide 4-H residential and day camp experiences to include quality 4-H programming and a variety of activities to develop leadership and resiliency skills, enhance communication, introduce Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts, and Mathematics (STEAM) initiatives, foster teamwork, and prepare students for post-secondary education and training.
- **Leadership Support:** Provide leadership support for Navy youth programs which will expand opportunities for children and youth.

## Army

- **Healthy Initiatives:** Develop standardized nutrition education training/classes for child and youth Services staff as well as cooking classes for children and youth. Also included is development of new 4-H curricula, revisions, and adjustments to standardized menus.

4-H MPOS encourages, but does not require, projects that develop content and programs suitable for delivery through the Cooperative Extension System's eXtension Initiative.

[\(https://extension.org/\)](https://extension.org/).

You may use funds to contribute to an existing Community of Practice: **Military Families Learning Network (MFLN)**, or to form a new Learning Network(s). Projects must align with the eXtension vision, mission, and values. You must have a letter of acknowledgement from eXtension. A letter of support from one or more of the Communities of Practice may also be needed. For detailed guidance on how to partner with eXtension, go to <http://create.extension.org/node/2057>

## **PART II—AWARD INFORMATION**

### **A. Available Funding**

The amount available for NIFA support of this program in FY 2016 is \$1,971,000. The funds will be awarded through a cooperative agreement. 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

[https://www.fiscal.treasury.gov/fsservices/gov/pmt/asap/asap\\_home.htm](https://www.fiscal.treasury.gov/fsservices/gov/pmt/asap/asap_home.htm).

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

In FY 2016, you may only submit a new application to the **4-H MPOS** Program:

**New application.** This is a project application that has not been previously submitted to the 4-H MPOS 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 (Reserved)**

### **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.

For information about the Responsible and Ethical Conduct of Research, see <http://nifa.usda.gov/responsible-and-ethical-conduct-research>.

## **PART III—ELIGIBILITY INFORMATION**

### **A. Eligible Applicants**

Applications may be submitted by State agricultural experiment stations, State cooperative extension services, all colleges and universities, other research or educational institutions or organizations, Federal and private agencies and organizations, individuals and any other recipient, either foreign or domestic.

Due to the unique nature of this application, institutions applying must be authorized to use the 4-H name and emblem by 4-H National Headquarters at USDA and be currently implementing a positive youth development program through 4-H. 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.

Only one application per land-grant institution will be accepted.

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

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



## **PART IV—APPLICATION AND SUBMISSION INFORMATION**

### **A. Electronic Application Package**

Only electronic applications may be submitted via Grants.gov to NIFA in response to this RFA. 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/applicants/adobe-software-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/download-application-package.html> and enter the funding opportunity number

#### **Funding Opportunity Number: USDA-NIFA-EXCA-006003**

in the appropriate box and click “Search.” From the search result, click “Select Package” to access the application package. A Grant Application Package is tied to a particular funding opportunity. You may submit an application **ONLY** to the particular funding opportunity to which the Grant Application Package is associated.

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 Part V., Section 2.18. of the NIFA Grants.gov Application Guide for the required certifications and assurances (e.g., Prohibition Against Entities Requiring Certain Internal Confidentiality Agreements).

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

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

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

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

**a. Field 7. Project Summary/Abstract.** The summary should also include the relevance of the project to the goals of 4-H MPOS. 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 14 pages of written text regardless of whether it is single- or double-spaced, figures and tables are not allowed. We have established this maximum (14 pages) to ensure fair and equitable competition. The Project Narrative must include all of the following:

#### **Section 1: Statement of Need & Background**

- Demonstrate an understanding of the nature of 4-H programming for military-connected youth this project is seeking to address.
- Describe how the overall project will effectively address the audience(s) to be served.
- Detail the characteristics of the institution(s) that make it particularly qualified to conduct the proposed work; describe ongoing or recently completed significant activities related to the proposed project, expert knowledge and experience working with land grant institutions, cooperative extension and military partners.

#### **Section 2: Objectives**

- List clear, concise, and logically arranged project goals and objectives. Goals must address the statement of need identified in the first section of your proposal; and objectives must link to goals and address the program priorities listed.

### **Section 3: Approach and Design**

Project Plan for working with consortium of land-grant institutions to meet project objectives and provide required outcomes. The project plan should contain the following, but not necessarily be limited to:

- Draft RFA which shows the relationships between objectives, project activities, and deliverables;
- Evaluation approach to include internal, process evaluations and quality assurance controls;
- Development and/or implementation challenges that may be encountered;
- Description of how the consortium of land-grants will be involved throughout the project; and
- Identification of ongoing program sustainability or improvement efforts.

### **Section 4: Project Management**

- Provide a brief summary of key personnel, their project functions, qualifications and expertise along with timelines, accounting procedures, reporting, and collaborative efforts

### **Section 5: Project Communication Plan**

- Briefly describe how pertinent information, progress and results from this project will be communicated to the project team, as well as relevant stakeholders

### **c. Field 12. Add Other Attachments**

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.

#### **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.

A single year's budget and budget narrative are required for this application. Applicants should not exceed the overall maximum funding amount of \$1,971,000 for fiscal year 2016, or the maximum funding amounts per budget area (below), and should organize their budget narrative to clearly address each budget area.

### **Budget areas and maximum funding amounts:**

- 4-H Military Partnership Combined (Maximum Budget: \$949,500)
- Outreach and Support for each Service:
  - Army training for Nutritional Meals Program/4-H curriculum (Max Budget: \$270,000)
  - Navy 4-H residential and day camp experiences and leadership support for Navy for Navy CYP Professionals and youth (Max Budget: \$526,500)
  - Air Force 4-H residential and day camp experiences: \$225,000.

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

Indirect Cost: Fully negotiated rate. This applicant should use the current negotiated indirect cost rate established (i.e. approved) by its cognizant Federal agency. If the applicant does not have a current negotiated rate, the applicant should request a rate from the Federal agency from which the applicant receives the most funding.

For further instructions regarding indirect costs refer to Part V., section 7.9 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 **Inst. of Youth, Family and Community, Admin. Discretionary & Reim. Extension** and the program code **MPP**. 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.

**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 (T/B/D)**. 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 **15** 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**

**Indirect Cost:** Fully negotiated rate. The applicant should use the current negotiated indirect cost rate established (i.e., approved) by its cognizant Federal agency. If the applicant does not have a current negotiated rate, the applicant should request a rate from the Federal agency from which the applicant receives the most funding. See Part V section 7.9 of the NIFA Grants.gov Application Guide for further indirect cost information.

Agency policy limits the maximum potential funding period (including any awards transferred from another institution or organization) to five years in duration. The funding period will commence on the effective date cited in the award instrument. Any such limitation also applies to subcontracts made under awards subject to a funding period limitation.

The PD may incur pre-award costs within the 90-day period immediately preceding the effective date of the award providing: the approval of pre-award spending is made and documented in accordance with the awardee's normal procedures prior to the incurrence of the cost(s); the advanced funding is necessary for the effective and economical conduct of the project; and the costs are otherwise allowable. Pre-award expenditures are made at the awardee's risk. AOR authority to approve pre-award costs does not impose an obligation on NIFA: (1) in the absence of appropriations; (2) if an award is subsequently not made; or (3) if an award is made for a lesser amount than the awardee expected.

Pre-award costs incurred outside the 90-day period immediately preceding the effective date of the award must receive written approval from the Authorized Departmental Officer (ADO). Please verify with the Administrative/Business Contact listed in this RFA before any pre-award expenditures are incurred. Any expenditures made before the execution of the cooperative agreement are made at your own risk.

#### **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.

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”.

## **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 **4-H MPOS** 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.

**4-H MPOS** 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:

#### **4-H Military Partnership Outreach and Support (4-H MPOS)**

**There is a total of 100 points and each section will have allocated points.**

##### **1. Potential for working with consortium of land-grant universities and developing a plan to deliver 4-H programs and opportunities for military-connected youth on installations worldwide and within local communities.**

This criterion is used to assess the likelihood that the project will succeed in: (1) providing the overall management of this project including partnerships and management of project staff; (2) meeting project objectives; and 3) demonstrating successful past experience with military-connected youth and military services in related projects. (30 points)



## **2. Proposed Approach and Program Coordination**

This criterion is used to assess the soundness and sustainability of the proposed approach including statement of need, scope of the project, objectives, design, methods, key personnel, timeline, expected products and results, and communication plan. (20 points)

## **3. Collection of Program Evaluation and Report Data**

This criterion is used to assess the adequacy of the proposed project reporting process and its capacity to meet the project objectives. (25 points)

## **4. Budget and Budget Narrative**

This criterion is used to assess the extent to which the total budget adequately supports the project and is cost effective based on budget outline provided. Elements considered include: the necessity and reasonableness of costs to carry out project activities and achieve project objective and the adequacy of time committed to the project by key project personnel. (25 points)

## **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 **4-H MPOS** 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 a cooperative agreement 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 cooperative agreement 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 cooperative agreement 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/cooperative agreement applications considered for review and to projects awarded under this program. These may include, but are not limited to, the ones listed on the NIFA web page - <http://nifa.usda.gov/federal-regulations>.

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

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

Please refer to Part II, D. 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 CONTACTS**

Applicants and other interested parties are encouraged to contact:

### **Programmatic Contacts –**

#### **Carol Benesh, Ed.D**

National Program Leader  
Division of Youth and 4-H  
(202) 401-6861  
[cbenesh@nifa.usda.gov](mailto:cbenesh@nifa.usda.gov)

#### **Lisa Hampton-Buie:**

Program Specialist  
Division of Youth and 4-H  
(202) 720-4087  
[lhampton@nifa.usda.gov](mailto:lhampton@nifa.usda.gov)

#### **Administrative/Business Contact:**

Adriene Woodin  
Branch Chief  
Awards Management Division  
Office of Grants and Financial Management  
USDA-National Institute of Food and Agriculture  
(202) 401-4320 (phone)  
(202) 401-1804 (fax)  
[awoodin@nifa.usda.gov](mailto:awoodin@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 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**

This program is excluded from the scope of the Executive Order 12372." See, e.g., CFDA 2015 print catalog at Appendix I, page AA-1 (Dec. 2015). 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 program.