

Alaska Native-Serving and Native Hawaiian-Serving Institutions Education Competitive Grants Program (ANNH)

2016 Request for Applications (RFA)

APPLICATION DEADLINE: March 1, 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

ALASKA NATIVE-SERVING AND NATIVE HAWAIIAN-SERVING INSTITUTIONS EDUCATION COMPETITIVE GRANTS PROGRAM (ANNH)

INITIAL ANNOUNCEMENT

CATALOG OF FEDERAL DOMESTIC ASSISTANCE: This program is listed in the Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance under 10.228.

DATES: Applications must be received by **5:00 p.m. Eastern Time on March 1, 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. (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 (ANNH) RFA.

Stakeholder input/feedback are also solicited through annual Project Directors' Meetings/Conferences, webinars, electronic, formal and informal communications with clientele, federal, academic and other collaborators. Overall, NIFA gathers and reviews stakeholder feedback for incorporation into the respective RFA with assurance of meeting the requirements of the Agricultural Research, Extension, and Education Reform Act of 1998. Through the ongoing communications including the latest ANNH and Insular Areas Joint PDs Meeting on June 22-24, 2015, Stakeholder Feedback has been integrated into the FY 2016 RFAs for education programs in Alaska and Hawaii in accordance and compliance with the authorizing legislation.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY: NIFA requests applications for the Alaska Native-Serving and Native Hawaiian-Serving Institutions Education Competitive Grants Program (ANNH) for fiscal year (FY) 2016 to promote and strengthen the ability of Alaska Native-Serving Institutions and Native Hawaiian-Serving Institutions to carry out education, applied research, and related community development programs. The anticipated amount available for grants FY 2016 is approximately \$3,000,000. There is no commitment by USDA to fund any particular application or to make a specific number of awards.

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

Table of Contents

PART I—FUNDING OPPORTUNITY DESCRIPTION	4
A. Legislative Authority and Background.....	4
B. Purpose and Priorities.....	4
C. Program Area Description	7
PART II—AWARD INFORMATION.....	11
A. Available Funding	11
B. Types of Applications.....	11
C. Project Types	12
D. Responsible and Ethical Conduct of Research.....	13
PART III—ELIGIBILITY INFORMATION.....	14
A. Eligible Applicants	14
B. Cost Sharing or Matching.....	17
PART IV—APPLICATION AND SUBMISSION INFORMATION	18
A. Electronic Application Package	18
B. Content and Form of Application Submission	19
C. Submission Date and Time.....	22
D. Funding Restrictions.....	23
E. Other Submission Requirements	23
PART V—APPLICATION REVIEW REQUIREMENTS	26
A. General	26
B. Evaluation Criteria.....	26
C. Conflicts of Interest and Confidentiality	27
D. Organizational Management Information	27
E. Application Disposition	27
PART VI—AWARD ADMINISTRATION	28
A. General	28
B. Award Notice.....	28
C. Administrative and National Policy Requirements	29
D. Responsible and Ethical Conduct of Research.....	29
E. Expected Program Outputs and Reporting Requirements	29
F. Evaluation	29
PART VII—AGENCY CONTACT	30
PART VIII—OTHER INFORMATION	31
A. Access to Review Information	31
B. Use of Funds; Changes	31
C. Confidential Aspects of Applications and Awards.....	32
D. Regulatory Information	32
E. Definitions	32

PART I—FUNDING OPPORTUNITY DESCRIPTION

A. Legislative Authority and Background

This program is administered under the provisions of section 759 of Public Law 106-78 (7 U.S.C. 3242) which was amended and re-designated as section 1419B of the National Agricultural Research, Extension, and Teaching Policy Act (NARETPA) of 1977 (7 U.S.C. 3156) by Section 7112 of the Food, Conservation, and Energy Act of 2008 (FCEA) (Pub. L. 110- 246). As legislatively reauthorized by Section 7107 of the Agricultural Act of 2014 (H.R. 2642; Pub. L. 113-79), the purpose of this program continues to promote and strengthen the ability of eligible Alaska Native-Serving Institutions and Native Hawaiian-Serving Institutions to carry out education, applied research, and related community development programs within a broadly defined area of food and agricultural sciences and related disciplines. In FY 2016, the Secretary will make competitive grant awards to individual eligible institutions or consortia of eligible institutions in Alaska and in Hawaii, with funds awarded equally to each of the states of Alaska and Hawaii.

In efforts to carry out education, applied research, and related community development, the ANNH Program aligns its purpose and priorities with recommendations from the following reports: (i) National Research Council’s publication: “How People Learn,” available at: http://books.nap.edu/catalog.php?record_id=9853; and (ii) the National Research Council’s 2009 report, [Transforming Agricultural Education for a Changing World](#), which recommends that academic institutions should broaden the undergraduate student experience by integrating opportunities to participate in research, education, and extension. Furthermore, in 2012, the President’s Council of Advisors on Science and Technology (PCAST) Report attested: “At the baccalaureate level, a comprehensive array of undergraduate programs relevant to agriculture and the food industry, as well as applied social and natural sciences, must remain strong and well-supported”. The full PCAST report is available at: http://www.whitehouse.gov/sites/default/files/microsites/ostp/pcast_agriculture_20121207.pdf Increasingly, the leadership in the scientific community embraces multi-disciplinary efforts that integrate biological and social sciences. The incorporation of social sciences would result in successful and powerful academic foundations toward needed expertise and relevant professional skills employers anticipate and value; for example, in government, nonprofits, social services, education institutions, and businesses.

B. Purpose and Priorities

The ANNH grants program is soliciting applications that will align to the mission and goals of the USDA Research, Education, and Economics Action Plan (REE) and NIFA. The ANNH Program directly aligns with the USDA REE Action Plan (http://www.ree.usda.gov/ree/news/USDA_2014_REE_Action_Plan_08-2014_Final.pdf), and specifically addresses Goal 6 – Education and Science Literacy, by recruiting, cultivating, and developing the next generation of scientists, leaders, and a highly-skilled workforce for food, agriculture, natural resources, forestry, environmental systems, and life sciences to out-educate our global competitors.

The program contributes to the USDA NIFA Strategic Goal #1 “Catalyze exemplary and relevant research, education and extension programs,” (http://nifa.usda.gov/about/pdfs/strat_plan_2014.pdf) 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 agricultural system.”

The FY 2016 ANNH grant opportunity should be aligned with the six Farm Bill Priority Areas:

1. Agricultural economics and rural communities
2. Agriculture systems and technology
3. Animal health, production, and products
4. Bioenergy, natural resources, and environment
5. Food safety, nutrition, and health
6. Plant health, production, and products

In addition, legislatively, the purpose of this program is to promote and strengthen the ability of Alaska Native-Serving Institutions and Native Hawaiian-Serving Institutions to carry out education, applied research, and related community development programs. NIFA intends this program to address educational needs, as determined by each institution, within a broadly defined area of food and agricultural sciences and related disciplines.

Grants shall be used to fulfill the following areas of priorities:

- (1) To support the activities of consortia of Alaska Native-Serving or Native Hawaiian-Serving Institutions to enhance educational equity for under-represented students;
- (2) To strengthen institutional education capacities, including libraries, curriculum, faculty, scientific instrumentation, instruction delivery systems, and student recruitment and retention, in order to respond to identified State, regional, national, or international educational needs in the food and agriculture sciences;
- (3) To attract and support undergraduate and graduate students from under-represented groups in order to prepare them for careers related to the food, agricultural, and natural resource systems of the United States, beginning with the mentoring of students from K-12, and continuing with the provision of financial support for students through their attainment of a doctoral degree; and
- (4) To facilitate cooperative initiatives between at least two or more Alaska Native-Serving or Native Hawaiian-Serving Institutions, which may work in cooperation with one or more other entities including units of State government and private sector organizations, to maximize the development and use of resources, such as faculty, facilities, and equipment, to improve food and agricultural sciences teaching programs.

Applicants are encouraged to submit applications that will result in building linkages with other institutions (including other colleges and universities, units of State government, and private

sector entities) having a significant, ongoing commitment to the food and agricultural sciences generally, and to the specific Need Area(s) for which a grant is requested (see below). The goals of such joint initiatives should include maximizing the development and use of limited resources (including faculty, facilities, and equipment) by generating a critical mass of expertise and activity focused on a targeted Need Area(s); increasing cost-effectiveness through achieving economies of scale; strengthening the scope and quality of a project's impact; and promoting coalition building likely to transcend the project's lifetime and lead to future ventures.

NIFA encourages the applicant's consideration of the recommendations in the "New Biology for the 21st Century: Ensuring the United States Leads the Coming Revolution; National Academy of Sciences' Report on Agricultural Education; Association of Public and Land Grant Universities (APLU) Whitepaper on Human Capacity Development, "Transforming Agricultural Education for a Changing World"; and, the President's Council of Advisors on Science and Technology (PCAST) Report to the President on Agricultural Preparedness and the Agriculture Research Enterprise in developing the application.

In accordance with the evaluation criteria of the application, priority will be given to those projects that: enhance educational equity for under-represented students; strengthen institutional educational capacities; prepare students for careers related to the food, agricultural, and natural resource systems of the United States; and, maximize the development and use of resources to improve food and agricultural sciences teaching programs.

Leadership Skills Development

All projects are required to provide leadership skills opportunities. The development of leadership skills, knowledge and qualities are necessary for preparing students for agricultural related careers in private sector, government and academia. **ANNH-funded projects must demonstrably incorporate a leadership development component** to ensure that students are equipped with both technical and leadership abilities upon graduation. Specific activities may include:

- Developing practical applications to increase understanding of leadership roles, including critical thinking, problem solving, and communication skills, ethics and professionalism, and working in teams;
- Connecting the academic classroom experience with daily leadership roles and organizational activities;
- Providing opportunities for mentoring and shadowing; and
- Organizing leadership academies, workshops, trainings, etc.

Incorporation of Social Sciences and Enhancing Impacts

The ANNH Program supports social and behavioral science disciplines. ANNH projects that integrate social and biological sciences to provide experiential learning opportunities for students in applied research, and related community development programs are encouraged. Incorporation

of social and behavioral sciences is important for addressing many of the challenges facing agriculture and rural communities, such as increasing global demand for food production in the face of limited natural resources; improving health and reducing obesity by engaging in healthy diets; and alleviating poverty by fostering economic opportunity

ANNH encourages projects that develop content suitable for delivery through the Cooperative Extension System's eXtension Initiative. Funds may be used to 1) enhance an existing Community of Practice or 2) to establish a new Community of Practice that focuses on **Stakeholder/Land Grant Institutions Partnership: Integrated Research, Extension and Education**. Projects must align with the eXtension vision, mission, and values. A letter of acknowledgement from eXtension is required, and a letter of support may be required from one or more of the Communities of Practice. For detailed guidance on how to partner with eXtension, go to <http://create.extension.org/node/2057>.

C. Program Area Description

A proposed project may address one or more Educational Need Areas and/or be an Applied Project that addresses research, outreach and capacity building to benefit the communities they serve, especially their students.

1. Educational Needs Areas

ANNH projects should focus on one or more of the Need Areas listed below. Please note that at least one of these Need Areas must be indicated on the Project Summary (See [Part IV, B. 3](#)). Need Areas for FY 2016 are defined below:

a. Curricula Design, Materials Development, and Library Resources

The purpose of this initiative is to promote the development of courses of study and degree programs, new and improved curricula, and instructional materials and technology; promote the acquisition of library resources including books and journals relating to the food and agricultural sciences; and stimulate the use of new approaches to the study of traditional subjects, new research on teaching and learning theory, and new applications of knowledge. The overall objective is to increase the quality of, and continuously renew, the academic programs of Alaska Native-Serving and Native Hawaiian-Serving Institutions in the food and agricultural sciences.

b. Faculty Preparation and Enhancement for Teaching

The purpose of this initiative is to advance faculty development in the areas of teaching competency and leadership, subject matter expertise, or student recruitment and advising skills. Applications may emphasize, but are not limited to: obtaining experience with recent developments and new applications in a field; expanding competence in innovative technologies and new methods of instruction delivery; developing new skills in a field of science or education including student advising skills; or pursuing graduate-level study in a field related to the food and agricultural sciences.

Each faculty recipient of support for developmental activities must be an "eligible participant" as defined in [Part VIII, E. Definitions](#)

c. Instruction Delivery Systems

The purpose of this initiative is to encourage the use of alternative methods of delivering instruction to enhance the quality, effectiveness, and cost efficiency of teaching programs. Applications may emphasize, but are not limited to: incorporating alternative instructional methodologies that respond to differences in student learning styles; inter-institutional collaborations that deliver instruction in ways that maximize program quality and reduce unnecessary duplication; and consideration and implementation of innovative instructional techniques, methodologies, and delivery systems in response to advances in knowledge and technology.

d. Scientific Instrumentation for Teaching and Research

The purpose of this initiative is to provide students and faculty in science-oriented courses with suitable, up-to-date equipment in order to involve them in work central to scientific understanding and progress. Applications may emphasize, but are not limited to: acquiring new, state-of-the-art instructional, laboratory, classroom, and research scientific equipment to help assure the achievement and maintenance of outstanding food and agricultural sciences education programs, upgrading existing equipment, or replacing non-functional or obsolete equipment.

e. Student Experiential Learning

The purpose of this initiative is to further the development of student scientific and professional competencies through experiential learning programs that provide students with opportunities to solve complex problems in the context of real-world situations. Applications may emphasize, but are not limited to: preparing future graduates to advance knowledge and technology, enhancing quality of life, conserve resources, and addressing community and economic development issues. Projects should focus on advancing student decision-making and communication skills, and improving real-life technological expertise. Activities may include, but are not limited to: internships, practicum experiences, study abroad opportunities, and participation with faculty on applied research and related community development projects.

f. Student Recruitment, Retention, and Educational Equity (including the provision of student financial assistance)

The purpose of this initiative is to enhance educational equity for under-represented students, and strengthen student recruitment and retention programs in order to promote the future strength of the Nation's scientific, professional, and technical work force in the food and agricultural sciences. Applications may emphasize, but are not limited to: initiating new projects or supplementing current efforts to attract increased numbers of students from under-represented groups to attend college in order to prepare them for careers as food and agricultural scientists, professionals, and technicians; promoting opportunities for students from under-represented groups, their families, and communities to engage in a robust exchange of ideas on more effective use of the full breadth of the Nation's intellectual resources; agricultural and science literacy programs at the high school level to attract students to college and careers in the food and agricultural sciences; mentoring programs and other initiatives for student retention; and the provision of student financial support to attend college.

Each student recipient of monetary support for education costs or developmental purposes must be enrolled at an eligible institution and meet the requirement of an "eligible participant" as defined in [Part VIII, E. Definitions](#).

2. Applied Projects

In addition to the Educational Need Areas, applications may choose to develop studies that have relevancy and application within the communities that these institutions serve.

a. Applied Studies in the Food and Agricultural Sciences

The purpose of this initiative is to apply the body of knowledge in natural and social sciences that comprise the food and agricultural sciences to address real-world problems, including applied research activities focusing on community and economic development issues related to food, nutrition, conservation, and renewable natural resources. Illustrative examples include, but are not limited to:

- (i) Conduct plant or animal breeding programs to develop better crops, forests, or livestock (e.g., improving disease resistance, improving productivity, yielding higher quality product(s));
- (ii) Conceive, design, and evaluate new bio-processing techniques for eliminating undesirable constituents from, or adding desirable ones to food products;
- (iii) Propose and evaluate ways to enhance utilization of the capabilities and resources of ANNH institutions to promote rural development (e.g., exploitation of new technologies by small rural businesses);
- (iv) Identify control factors influencing consumer demand for agricultural products;
- (v) Analyze social, economic, and physiological aspects of nutrition, housing, and life-style choices, and of community strategies for meeting the changing needs of different population groups; and
- (vi) Study other identified State, regional, community, national and global problems such as human nutrition and obesity prevention, sustainable agriculture, bioenergy, climate change, food safety, food security, biotechnology, agribusiness management and marketing, and aquaculture (see [Part I. B](#) on areas of priorities).

b. Applied Research Support Systems

The purpose of this initiative is to establish centralized support systems to meet State, regional, or community needs, or serve clientele that cannot otherwise afford or do not have ready access to the support in question, or to provide such support more economically thereby freeing up resources for other applied research uses. Examples include, but are not limited to:

- (i) Storage, maintenance, characterization, evaluation, and enhancement of germplasm for use by animal and plant breeders (including those using the techniques of biotechnology);
- (ii) Digital databases of important scientific information (e.g., epidemiological, demographic, nutrition, weather, economic, crop yields, animal migration patterns); and
- (iii) Expert service centers for sophisticated and highly specialized methodologies (e.g., evaluation of nutritional quality of foods, toxicology, taxonomic identifications,

consumer preferences and demographics).

c. Technology-based Information Delivery Systems

The purpose of this initiative is to promote innovations and improvements in the delivery of benefits of food and agricultural sciences to producers and consumers, particularly those who are currently disproportionately low in receipt of such benefits. Examples include, but are not limited to:

- (i) Computer-based decision support systems to assist small-scale farmers, ranchers, herders, or fishermen to take advantage of relevant technologies, programs, policies, etc.; and
- (ii) Efficacious delivery systems for nutrition information or for resource management assistance for low-income families and individuals.

d. Other Applied Research and Community Development Applications

The purpose of this initiative is to encourage other creative projects, outside the areas previously outlined, that are designed to provide needed enhancement to the capacity of ANNH institutions to conduct applied research and related community development projects.

PART II—AWARD INFORMATION

A. Available Funding

The anticipated amount available for grants in FY 2016 is approximately \$3,000,000. The funds will be awarded through a grant. The funds will be awarded competitively through a peer panel review process. 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 Financial Management Service, as the payment system of funds. For more information see <http://fms.treas.gov/index1.html>.

B. Types of Applications

In FY 2016, you may only submit a new application to the ANNH Program as one of the following types of requests:

- (1) New Application.** This is a project application that has not been previously submitted to the ANNH Program. All new applications will be reviewed competitively using the selection process and evaluation criteria described in Part V- Application Review Requirements.
- (2) Renewal Application.** This is a project application that requests additional funding for a project beyond the period that was approved in an original or amended award. Applications for renewed funding must contain the same information as required for new applications, and additionally must contain the same information as required for new applications; they also must contain a Progress Report (see Project Narrative, Part IV). Renewal applications must be received by the relevant due dates, will be evaluated in competition with other pending applications in appropriate area to which they are assigned, and will be reviewed according to the same evaluation criteria as new applications.
- (3) Resubmitted Application.** This is an application that had previously been submitted to the ANNH Program but not funded. Project Directors (PDs) must respond to the previous review panel summary (see Response to Previous Review, Part IV). Renewal applications must be received by the relevant due dates, will be evaluated in competition with other pending applications in appropriate areas to which they are assigned, and will be reviewed according to the same evaluation criteria as new applications.
- (4) Resubmitted renewal application.** This is a project application that requests additional funding for a project beyond the period that was approved in the original award. In addition, this is an application that had previously been submitted for renewal to the

ANNH Program but not funded. Therefore, PDs must provide a Progress Report a required under the Project Narrative, Part IV. Resubmitted renewal applications must be received by the relevant due dates, will be evaluated in the competition with other pending applications in the same areas to which they are assigned, and will be reviewed according to the same evaluation criteria as new applications.

C. Project Types

1. Regular Grant

An eligible, individual institution, independent branch campus, or branch institution of a State system may submit a Regular Grant application for project activities to be undertaken principally on behalf of its own students or faculty, and to be managed primarily by its own personnel.

2. Consortium Grant

To facilitate inter-institutional cooperation and collaboration initiatives, two or more eligible, individual institutions, independent branch campuses, or branch institutions of a State system within a State may form a consortium, or use an existing consortium of which they are members, and submit a Consortium Grant application under a consortium agreement. In such cases, one institution or fiscal agent is to be designated as the “lead institution”. The designated lead institution, fiscal agent, and PD, will receive the award on behalf of all the consortium members, will be responsible for managing the grant, and may allocate awarded funds among the consortia members. Eligible consortium may be sub-grantees of the primary award. Other entities not eligible to receive an award directly from NIFA under this program may also participate in fulfilling grant objectives and receive a sub-grant from the designated lead institution.

A Consortium Grant application must contain a separate plan of work and a separate budget for each consortium member receiving funds as a sub-grantee, as well as an overall project plan of work and overall budget from the lead institution. Sub-grantees may not normally receive less than 10 percent of total grant funds must be fully justified. Only in exception instances will NIFA approve involvement by sub-grantees at a lower level.

Sub-grantee arrangements by the lead institution with consortium members and others must be approved in advance by NIFA. The cumulative amounts of any such arrangements may not be for more than 7- percent of total grant funds.

3. Project Duration

The project period may range from 12 to 36 months (one to three years). The project start date should not occur prior to August 2016.

4. Number and Size of Awards

The number of grants awarded in FY 2016 will depend on the number of applications recommended for funding in response to this notice.

NIFA estimates that awards for Regular Grant applications will be in the range of \$150,000 to \$450,000 each. Budget forms submitted with the grant applications should reflect his estimate. NIFA estimates that awards for Consortium Grant applications will be in the range of \$300,000 to \$1,500,000. Note that the amount of grant funds going to eligible consortium members as sub-grantees does **NOT** have to be the same for each sub-grantee; however, a sub-grantee will not normally receive less than 10 percent and the applicant institution submitting an application must retain at least 30 percent but not more than 70 percent of the awarded funds. Requests for deviations from these restrictions must be fully justified for review and approval by the panel of reviewers and NIFA before a final decision is made on the application. Such approval will be made only under the most exceptional circumstances.

Note that actual amounts awarded by NFA under the ANNH grants program may differ from the amounts requested in the application submitted to the program, and that revised budgets and revised plans of work may be required by NIFA before an award is made.

5. Proposal Submission Limitations

Each eligible, individual institution, independent branch campus, and branch institution of a State system may submit, or be a party to, a maximum of two applications for funding. An institution (or its fiscal agent) may submit one application as an individual institution (see Part II, C.1. Regular Grant) and also may be a party to one other application as part of a consortium arrangement (see Part II, C.2. Consortium Grant). Institutions may not apply as part of more than one consortium arrangement.

6. Grant Limitations per Institution

For the FY 2016 program, each eligible, individual institution, independent branch campus, and branch institution of a State system may receive, or be a party to, a maximum of two grant awards – one Regular Grant and one Consortium Grant – under the ANNH program. This ceiling including sub-grant awards made under a consortium arrangement (i.e., an institution may participate as the lead institution or as a sub-grantee on a Consortium grant, and also receive one Regular Grant on its own). USDA may fund an institution simultaneously under both applications. Institutions that received a grant under this program in a prior year are still eligible to receive a grant this year.

7. Funding Limitations per Institution

For FY 2016, there are no limits on the total funds that may be awarded to any one institution. However, applicants should take note of the proposal submission limitations (see C.5. above).

D. Responsible and Ethical Conduct of Research

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

PART III—ELIGIBILITY INFORMATION

A. Eligible Applicants

1. Individual Institutions

Applications may be submitted only by eligible institutions. For the purpose of the ANNH grants program, an eligible institution means an individual public or private, nonprofit Alaska Native-Serving and Native Hawaiian-Serving Institutions of higher education that meet the definitions of Alaska-Serving Institutions or Native Hawaiian-Serving Institution established in Title III, Part A of the Higher Education Act of 1965, as amended (20 U.S.C. 1059d.).

2. Branch Institutions of a State System

For the purposes of this program, the individual branches of a State university system or public system of higher education that are separately accredited as degree granting institutions are treated as separate, individual institutions, eligible to apply for and receive awards, provided that they otherwise satisfy the definition of Alaska Native-Serving Institution or Native Hawaiian-Serving Institution as specified above.

3. Independent Branch Campuses

Independent branch campuses of individual institutions may apply for and receive grant awards under this program, provided that they otherwise satisfy the definition of Alaska Native-Serving Institution or Native Hawaiian-Serving Institution as specified above. An “independent branch campus” means a unit of a 2-year or 4-year institution of higher education that is geographically apart from the main campus, is permanent in nature, offers courses for credit and programs leading to an associate or bachelor’s degree, and is autonomous to the extent that it has its own faculty and administrative or supervisory organization and its own budgetary and hiring authority.

4. Consortium Arrangements

Two or more eligible, individual institutions, independent branch campuses, or branch institutions of a State system may form a consortium to carry out education, applied research, and related community development programs in the food and agricultural sciences as allowed under this program. In addition to the individual eligible institutions (or independent branch campuses, etc.), such a consortium also may include units of State government and private sector entities. A consortium established for such purposes may apply for and receive a consortium grant under the ANNH grants program.

An existing consortium consisting of at least two or more eligible, individual institutions, independent branch campuses, or branch institutions of a State system, which demonstrates its ability to carry out allowed activities and its commitment to the goals of the ANNH grants program, also may apply for and receive a Consortium Grant under the ANNH grants program. Such a consortium also may include units of State government and private sector entities.

5. Certification of Eligibility

At the time of application, each primary applicant will be required to demonstrate or certify that it is an eligible institution under the ANNH program. If the applicant is a new or existing consortium, each member of the consortium must demonstrate or certify that they are eligible

individual institutions, independent branch campuses, or branch institutions of a State system as defined in paragraphs 1-3 above.

If an institution has received a “Designation as an Eligible Institution” letter for FY 2016 funding under the Title III, Part A, Alaska Native-Serving Institutions Program or the Native Hawaiian- Serving Institutions Program from the U.S. Department of Education, the institution shall submit a copy of the letter along with its application to satisfy the demonstration of eligibility requirement.

If an institution currently has a Title III, Part A. grant from the U.S. Department of Education that does not end prior to September 30, 2016, the institution shall submit a copy of the “Notice of Award” letter for that grant along with its application to satisfy the demonstration of eligibility requirement.

Otherwise, an institution must submit a letter, signed by the institution’s Authorized Representative, (AR) certifying that it meets the requirements of an Alaska Native-Serving Institution or Native Hawaiian-Serving Institution as defined in paragraph 1 above. The AR must certify that:

- a. The institution, or parent institution in the case of an independent branch campus, is legally authorized by the State in which it is located to provide an educational program for which it awards an associate’s or bachelor’s degree, or that it is a junior or community college;
- b. The institution, or parent institution in the case of an independent branch campus, is accredited by a nationally recognized accrediting agency or association determined by the Secretary of Education to be a reliable authority as to the quality of training offered, or making reasonable progress toward such accreditation;
- c. At least 50 percent of enrolled degree students are receiving need-based assistance under Title IV of the Higher Education Act, or that a substantial percentage of students are receiving Pell Grants in comparison with the percentage of students receiving Pell Grants at all similar institutions (institution of higher education, or junior or community college);
- d. Unless waived by the Secretary of Education, the average educational and general expenditures per full-time equivalent undergraduate student are low in comparison with the average educational and general expenditures per full-time equivalent student at institutions that offer similar instruction; and
- e. For an Alaska Native-Serving Institution, at the time of application, it has an enrollment of undergraduate students that is at least 20 percent Alaska Native students (where the term “Alaska Native” has the meaning given the term in section 7306 of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 7546); or
- f. For a Native Hawaiian-Serving Institution, at the time of application, it has an

enrollment of undergraduate students that is at least 10 percent Native Hawaiian students (where the term “Native Hawaiian” has the meaning given the term in section 7207 of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 7517)).

Eligibility documentation must be submitted with the application.

6. Fiscal Agent

If an institution cannot accept Federal funds directly, it must submit a letter stating that it will accept the award, but that funds must be administered through a fiscal agent. This agent must be identified in the letter from the applicant, and the letter must be countersigned by a representative of the fiscal agent organization. The letter should include the fiscal agent’s point of contact, address, telephone number, fax number and e-mail address. Both the fiscal agent and the applicant institution must submit complete management information (see [Part V, D.](#)). Nevertheless, the legal recipient of the award must be an eligible, individual institution, independent branch campus, or branch institution of a State system, or a consortium of eligible institutions. Submission of fiscal agent information (above) is not requested now, but will be required, before an award is made.

Please note that consortia may designate fiscal agents for the members of the consortia and allocate funds among the consortia members.

Examples of fiscal agent arrangements include, but are not limited to, the following scenarios:

- a. A State university system or a public system of higher education may apply on behalf of an eligible, individual institution, independent branch campus, or branch institution in the State. In such cases, the State system will act as fiscal agent for the eligible institution under a Regular Grant award to advance the purposes of the ANNH grants program.
- b. A research foundation or other, similar foundation established and maintained by an eligible, individual institution to facilitate the application and management of externally funded grant awards may apply on behalf of its eligible, parent institution. In such cases, the foundation will act as fiscal agent for the eligible, individual institution under a Regular Grant award to advance the purposes of the ANNH grants program.
- c. A State university system or a public system of higher education may apply on behalf of two or more eligible, individual institutions, independent branch campuses, or branch institutions in its State under a consortium arrangement. In such cases, the State system will act as fiscal agent for the eligible institutions under a Consortium Grant award to advance the purposes of the ANNH grants program.
- d. A research foundation, or other similar foundation, established and maintained by an eligible, individual institution to facilitate the application and management of externally-funded grant awards, may apply on behalf of its parent institution and at least one additional eligible, individual institution, independent branch campus, or branch institution of a State system under a consortium arrangement. In such cases, the foundation will act as fiscal agent for the eligible institutions under a Consortium Grant award to advance the purposes of the

ANNH grants program.

A research foundation, or other similar foundation, established and maintained by an eligible, individual institution to facilitate the application and management of externally-funded grant awards, may apply on behalf of its parent institution and at least one additional eligible, individual institution, independent branch campus, or branch institution of a State system under a consortium arrangement. In such cases, the foundation will act as fiscal agent for the eligible institutions under a Consortium Grant award to advance the purposes of the ANNH grants program.

Award recipients may subcontract to organizations not eligible to apply provided such organizations are necessary for the conduct of the project. An applicant's failure to meet an eligibility criterion by the time of an application deadline shall result in the application being excluded from consideration or, even though an application may be reviewed, will preclude NIFA from making an award.

B. Cost Sharing or Matching

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

PART IV—APPLICATION AND SUBMISSION INFORMATION

A. Electronic Application Package

Only electronic applications may be submitted via Grants.gov to NIFA in response to this RFA. We urge you to submit early to the Grants.gov system. For an overview of the Grants.gov application process see <http://www.grants.gov/web/grants/applicants/grant-application-process.html>.

New Users of Grants.gov

Prior to preparing an application, we recommend that the Project Director/Principal Investigator (PD/PI) first contact an Authorized Representative (AR, also referred to as Authorized Organizational Representative or AOR) to determine if the organization is prepared to submit electronic applications through Grants.gov. If not (e.g., the institution/organization is new to the electronic grant application process through Grants.gov), then the one-time registration process must be completed PRIOR to submitting an application. It can take as long as 2 weeks to complete the registration process so it is critical to begin as soon as possible. In such situations, the AR should go to **“Register” in the top right corner of the Grants.gov web page (or go to <http://www.grants.gov/web/grants/register.html>) for information on registering the institution/organization with Grants.gov.** Part II.1. of the NIFA Grants.gov Application Guide contains detailed information regarding the registration process. Refer to item 2. below to locate the “NIFA Grants.gov Application Guide”.

Steps to Obtain Application Package Materials

To receive application materials:

1. You must download and install a version of Adobe Reader compatible with Grants.gov to access, complete, and submit applications. For basic system requirements and download instructions, see <http://www.grants.gov/web/grants/support/technical-support/software/adobe-reader-compatibility.html>. Grants.gov has a test package that will help you determine whether your current version of Adobe Reader is compatible.
2. To obtain the application package from Grants.gov, go to <http://www.grants.gov/web/grants/applicants/apply-for-grants.html>. Under Step 1 click on “Download a Grant Application Package,” and enter the funding opportunity number

Funding Opportunity Number: USDA-NIFA-AHSI-005541

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

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
- 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/Abstract. The summary should also include the relevance of the project to the goals of the ANNH Program. 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 20 pages of written text regardless of whether it is single- or double-spaced and up to 5 additional pages for figures and tables. We have established this maximum (25 pages) to ensure fair and equitable competition.

The Project Narrative for a Consortium Grant application must contain an overall plan of work limited to 10 double-spaced pages of written text for the lead institution. A Project Narrative, limited to 10 double-spaced pages for each consortium member receiving funds as a sub-grantee should also be submitted. Up to 5 additional pages for figures and tables are allowed for each consortium member receiving funds (lead institution and sub-grantees).

The Project Narrative must include the following:

Introduction: Include a clear statement of the long-term goal(s) and supporting objectives of the proposed activities. Summarize the body of knowledge or other past activities that substantiate the need for the proposed project. Describe ongoing or recently completed significant activities that relate to the proposed project including the work of key project personnel. Include preliminary data/information on the following, when applicable:

1. Estimates of the magnitude of the issues and their relevance to stakeholders and to ongoing state-federal food and agricultural research, education and extension programs.
2. The role of stakeholders in the problem identification, planning, implementation, and evaluation as appropriate.
3. Reasons for performing the work at the proposing institution.

Objectives: All applicants must include a statement(s) of specific aims of the proposed effort in clear, concise, complete, and logically arranged terms.

Methods: Explicitly state the procedures or methodology you will apply to the proposed effort. This section should include but not necessarily be limited to, descriptions of:

- (1) Stakeholder involvement in problem identification, planning, implementation and evaluation;
- (2) Proposed project activities, listed sequentially;
- (3) Techniques to be employed in this project, including their feasibility and rationale;
- (4) Expected Results;
- (5) How Extension and Education activities will be evaluated;
- (6) How data will be analyzed or interpreted;
- (7) Plans to communicate results to stakeholders and the public;
- (8) Pitfalls that might be encountered; and,
- (9) Limitations to proposed procedures.

Project Timetable: The proposal should outline all important phases as a function of time, year to year, for the entire project, including periods beyond the grant funding period.

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.

- (a) Budgets for each project year do NOT have to be the same from year to year. However, detailed budget information (budget and narrative) must be submitted for each year of the proposed project and, in the case of a Consortium Grant application, yearly budgets and narratives must be supplied for each institution in accordance with the instructions.
- (b) During the tenure of a grant PDs must attend at least one National Project Directors' Meeting/Conference, if offered, in Washington DC, or any other announced location. The purpose of the meeting will be to discuss project and grant management, opportunities for collaborative efforts, future directions for education reform, and opportunities to enhance dissemination of exemplary end products/results of the projects. Reasonable travel expenses to attend the meeting may be included in the application's budget under travel expense.

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., “Alaska Native-Serving and Native Hawaiian-Serving Inst.”) and the program code (i.e., enter “RD”). 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 Date and Time

Prior to electronic submission of the application via Grants.gov, it is strongly recommended 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. The application should be checked for the following required items that might be overlooked (this is not an exclusive list):

- Logic Model
- Management Plan
- Current and Pending Form

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 March 1, 2016**. Applications received after this deadline will normally not be considered for funding.

If you have trouble submitting an application to Grants.gov, you should **FIRST** contact the Grants.gov Help Desk to resolve any problems. Keep a record of any such correspondence. See Part IV. A. for Grants.gov contact information. For information about the **status of a submitted application**, see Part III., Section 6. of the NIFA Grants.gov Application Guide.

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 submission of the application 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

Section 713 of the Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2016 (Pub. L. 114-113) limits indirect costs to 30 percent of the total Federal funds provided (or 42.857 percent of total direct costs) under each award. Therefore, 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. See webpage at <http://nifa.usda.gov/indirect-costs> for indirect cost options.

Include a statement under this section if indirect costs are unallowable. Included a statement under this section if the full negotiated indirect cost rate is allowable.

If your institution does not have, or cannot obtain, a negotiated rate, you must calculate an indirect cost rate in order to request indirect costs. You should calculate an indirect cost rate based on actual costs for the entire organization for the most recently completed accounting year. If no prior cost history exists, you should use budgeted costs for the entire organization. You should follow the example(s) found at: http://nifa.usda.gov/business/indirect_cost_process.html for information regarding this process. You may elect to charge indirect costs and, instead, use all grant funds for direct costs. If indirect costs are not charged, the phrase "None requested" should be written in this space.

You may not use grant funds awarded under this authority to renovate or refurbish research, education, or extension space; purchase or install fixed equipment in such a space; or to plan, repair, rehabilitate, acquire, or construct buildings or facilities. The use of grant funds to plan, acquire, or construct a building or facility is not allowed under this program. With prior approval, and in accordance with the cost principles set forth in 2 CFR part 220 (Circular No. A-21), some grant funds may be used for minor alterations, renovations or repairs deemed necessary to retrofit existing teaching or research spaces in order to carry out a funded project. However, requests to use grant funds for such purposes must demonstrate that the work is essential to achieving the major purpose of the project. Grant funds may not be used for endowment funding.

Statutory language or 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 notification. Any such limitation also applies to subcontracts made under awards subject to a funding period limitation.

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 Felony Convictions or Tax Delinquent Status.

Applications should include elements of a logic model detailing the activities, outputs, and outcomes of the proposed project. This information may be provided as a narrative or formatted into a logic model chart. The logic model planning process is a tool that should be used in developing projects before writing the proposal. Two additional pages are allowed for this information. More information and resources related to the logic model planning process are provided at http://www.nifa.usda.gov/about/strat_plan_models.html.

Expected Outcomes – PDF Attachment

Title the attachment “Expected Outcomes” in the document header and save file as “ExpectedOutcomes”. Please use a format, similar to what is provided below, to submit expected impacts and attach it as the last page of the application.

Recommended Format for Submitting Expected Impacts

Primary Project Function: (Choose one)		
EDUCATION: <input type="checkbox"/>	EXTENSION : <input type="checkbox"/>	RESEARCH: <input type="checkbox"/>
DATA FOR ANNH PROGRAMS		
Total expected impact during entire grant period		Expected Number
Number of farmers to be served		
Number of products to be developed for students through grant funds (i.e., curricula, academic programs, recruitment/retention programs, materials, experiential learning opportunities)		
Number of collaborations to be developed between institutions		
Number of faculty attending professional development: sabbaticals, workshops, conferences, etc.		
Number of individuals who indirectly will benefit from the projects (i.e., using the curriculum/instrumentation, enrolled in the program, recruited or retained)		
Total number of students to be directly supported by grant (i.e., scholarships, fellowships, assistantships, internships)		
Number of underrepresented students to be supported during the grant period		
Number of women students to be supported during the grant period		
Number of students who will graduate as a result of the grant during grant period		
Number of students who will complete advanced or additional degree programs as a result of the grant (graduate, professional)		
Number of students who will complete internships and other experiential learning during the grant-period		
Number of students who will complete international experiential learning as a result of this grant		
Number of students who will complete post-doctoral experiences as a result of this grant		

Project Director’s Meeting

During the tenure of a grant, PDs must attend at least one National Project Directors’ meeting, if offered in Washington DC or any other announced location. The purpose of the meeting will be to discuss project and grant management, opportunities for collaborative efforts, future directions

for education reform, and opportunities to enhance dissemination of exemplary end products/results of the projects. Reasonable travel expenses to attend this meeting may be included in the application's budget under travel expenses.

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 ANNH 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.

ANNH 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:

1. Potential for Advancing Education and/or Applied Research – 35 Points

The criterion is used to assess the likelihood that the project will have an impact upon and advance the quality of food and agricultural sciences education, applied research, and related community development by strengthening institutional capacities to meet clearly delineated needs. Elements considered included institutional long-range goals, identification of the problem or opportunity to be addressed, justification for the project, the degree to which it builds institutional capacity, is innovative, advances educational equity, has multidisciplinary focus and adds to the current knowledge in the area.

2. Proposed Approach – 30 Points

This criterion relates to the soundness of the proposed approach including objectives, methodology, plan of operation, timetable, expected products and results (including measurable outcomes), evaluation plans, dissemination plans, and partnerships and collaborative efforts. Emphasis is placed on the quality, innovation, and creativity of educational and/or research support provided to the applicant institution through its partnerships and collaborative initiatives.

3. Key Personnel – 20 Points

This criterion relates to the adequacy of the number and qualifications/expertise of the key persons who will carry out the project.

4. Budget and Cost-Effectiveness – 15 Points

This criterion relates to the extent to which the total budget adequately supports the project and is cost-effective. Elements considered included the necessity and reasonableness of costs to carry out project activities and achieve project objectives; the appropriateness of budget allocations between the applicant and any collaborating institution(s); the adequacy of time committed to the project by key project personnel; and the degree to which the project maximizes the use of limited resources, optimizes educational value for the dollar, achieves economies of scale, leverages additional funds, and focuses expertise and activity on targeted areas.

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 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 ANNH 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 re-competition for funds;
- (6) Total amount of financial assistance approved for the award;
- (7) Legal authority(ies) under which the award is issued;
- (8) Appropriate Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance (CFDA) number;
- (9) Applicable award terms and conditions (see <http://www.nifa.usda.gov/business/awards/awardterms.html> to view NIFA award terms and conditions);
- (10) Approved budget plan for categorizing allocable project funds to accomplish the stated purpose of the award; and

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

C. Administrative and National Policy Requirements

Several federal statutes and regulations apply to grant applications considered for review and to project grants awarded under this program. These may include, but are not limited to, the ones listed on the NIFA web page - <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>.

D. Responsible and Ethical Conduct of Research

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

E. 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.

Grantees are to use REEport, NIFA's electronic, web-based inventory system to submit an initial project initiation which documents expected products and outcomes of the project. Additionally, annual progress report documenting realized project outcomes must be submitted to the electronic system. The web-based system facilitates an electronic workflow between access to information on Federally-funded projects. The details of these reporting requirements, including those specific to the annual and final technical reports, are included in the award terms and conditions.

F. Evaluation

- a. Evaluation Plan: All projects must have an Evaluation Plan that includes both a strategy for monitoring the project as it evolves (to provide feedback to guide these efforts), as well as a strategy for evaluating the effectiveness of the project in achieving its goals and for identifying positive and negative findings when the project is completed.
- b. The complexity of the evaluation will depend on the scope of the project. Grantees are encouraged to obtain an independent evaluation to secure appropriate documentation of the projects outcomes and impacts. Such efforts should be led by knowledgeable and experienced individuals. As a guide, up to 10% of the grant funds may be used to support this purpose.

PART VII—AGENCY CONTACT

Applicants and other interested parties are encouraged to contact:

Programmatic Contact –

Saleia Afele-Faamuli, PhD, M.P.H.

Title: National Program Leader

Unit: Division of Community and Education, Institute of Youth, Family and Community

Location: 4446 Waterfront Centre, 800 9th St. SW, Washington, DC 20024

Phone: (202) 720-0384

Fax: (202) 202-4924

Email: sfaamuli@nifa.usda.gov

Administrative/Business Contacts-

Bruce Mertz

Title: Team Leader, Team I

Unit: Office of Grants and Financial Management

Location: 2174 Waterfront Centre, 800 9th St., SW, Washington, DC 20024

Phone: (202) 401-5062

Fax: (202) 401-6271

Email: 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.

Alaska Native means a citizen of the United States who is a person of one-fourth degree or more Alaska Indian, Eskimo, or Aleut blood, or combination thereof. It also includes any citizen of the United States who is regarded as an Alaska Native by the Native village or Native group and whose father or mother is (or, if deceased, was) regarded as Native by any village or group.

Alaska Native-Serving Institution or Native Hawaiian-Serving Institution means an institution of higher education where:

- (1) the institution, or parent institution in the case of an independent branch campus, is legally authorized by the State in which it is located to provide an educational program for which it awards an associate's or bachelor's degree, or where it is a junior or community college;
- (2) the institution, or parent institution in the case of an independent branch campus, is

accredited by a nationally recognized accrediting agency or association determined by the Secretary of Education to be a reliable authority as to the quality of training offered, or making reasonable progress toward such accreditation;

(3) at least 50 percent of enrolled degree students are receiving need-based assistance under Title IV of the Higher Education Act, or where a substantial percentage of students are receiving Pell Grants in comparison with the percentage of students receiving Pell Grants at all similar institutions (institution of higher education, or junior or community college);

(4) unless waived by the Secretary of Education, the average educational and general expenditures per full-time equivalent undergraduate student are low in comparison with the average educational and general expenditures per full-time equivalent student at institutions that offer similar instruction; and

(5) for an Alaska Native-Serving Institution, at the time of application, it has an enrollment of undergraduate students that is at least 20 percent Alaska Native students (where the term “Alaska Native” has the meaning given the term in this solicitation as described below, or in section 7306 of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 [20 U.S.C. 7546]); or

(6) for a Native Hawaiian-Serving Institution, at the time of application, it has an enrollment of undergraduate students that is at least 10 percent Native Hawaiian students (where the term “Native Hawaiian” has the meaning given the term in this solicitation as described below, or in section 7207 of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 [20 U.S.C. 7517]).

Consortium of Alaska Native-Serving or Native Hawaiian-Serving Institutions means two or more Alaska Native-serving or Native Hawaiian-serving institutions that have entered into a cooperative arrangement for the purpose of carrying out a common objective, and which demonstrates its ability to carry out allowed activities and its commitment to the goals of this grants program. The term also applies to a public or private nonprofit agency, organization, or institution designated or created by two or more Alaska Native-serving or Native Hawaiian-serving institutions for the purpose of carrying out a common objective on the group’s behalf, and which demonstrates its ability to carry out allowed activities and its commitment to the goals of this grants program.

Consortium project application means an application for a project: (1) which will involve a consortium of at least two or more Alaska Native-Serving or Native Hawaiian-Serving Institutions, which may work in cooperation with one or more other entities including units of State government and private sector organizations; and (2) where the applicant institution and each cooperating entity receiving grant funds will assume a significant role in the conduct of the proposed project. To demonstrate substantial involvement with the project, the applicant consortium institution submitting an application must retain at least 30 percent but not more than 70 percent of the awarded funds, and no eligible ANNH institution receiving funds as a sub-grantee may receive less than 10 percent of awarded funds. Only the consortium members receiving funds as eligible sub-grantees must meet the definition of an Alaska Native-Serving

or Native Hawaiian-Serving Institution as specified in this section; other institution(s) participating in a consortium project application under subcontracts are not required to meet the definition of an Alaska Native-Serving or Native Hawaiian-Serving Institution.

Educational and general expenditures means the total amount expended by an institution for instruction, research, public service, academic support (including library expenditures), student services, institutional support, scholarships and fellowships, operation and maintenance expenditures for the physical plant, and any mandatory transfers that the institution is required to pay by law.

Eligible institution means individual public or private, nonprofit Alaska Native-serving and Native Hawaiian-serving institutions as defined in this section. Institutions of higher education that meet the definitions of Alaska Native-Serving Institution or Native Hawaiian-Serving Institution established in Title III, Part A of the Higher Education Act of 1965, as amended (20 U.S.C. section 1059d.) are eligible institutions under this program. The term eligible institution also applies to any branch of any institution of higher education that by itself satisfies the requirements contained in the definition of an Alaska-Native-serving or Native Hawaiian-serving institution, including:

- (1) the individual branches of a State university system or public system of higher education that are separately accredited as degree granting institutions, provided that they otherwise satisfy the definition of Alaska Native-Serving Institution or Native Hawaiian-Serving Institution;
- (2) independent branch campuses of individual institutions, provided that they otherwise satisfy the definition of Alaska Native-Serving Institution or Native Hawaiian-Serving Institution as specified above; or
- (3) a consortium of two or more eligible, individual institutions.

Eligible participant means an individual who is a citizen or national of the U.S. as defined in this section.

Enrollment of needy students means an enrollment at an institution with respect to which:

- (1) at least 50 percent of the degree students so enrolled are receiving need-based assistance under title IV of the Higher Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 1001 et seq.) in the second fiscal year preceding the fiscal year for which the determination is made (other than loans for which an interest subsidy is paid); or
- (2) a substantial percentage of the students so enrolled are receiving Federal Pell Grants in the second fiscal year preceding the fiscal year for which determination is made, compared to the percentage of students receiving Federal Pell Grants at all such institutions in the second fiscal year preceding the fiscal year for which the determination is made.

Full-time equivalent students means the sum of the number of students enrolled full time at an institution, plus the full-time equivalent of the number of students enrolled part time

(determined on the basis of the quotient of the sum of the credit hours of all part-time students divided by 12) at such institution.

Independent branch campus means a unit of a 2-year or 4-year institution of higher education that is geographically apart from the main campus, is permanent in nature, offers courses for credit and programs leading to an associate or bachelor's degree, and is autonomous to the extent that it has its own faculty and administrative or supervisory organization and its own budgetary and hiring authority.

Institution of higher education means an educational institution in any State that:

- (1) Admits as regular students only persons having a certificate of graduation from a school providing a secondary education, or the recognized equivalent of such a certificate;
- (2) Is legally authorized within such State to provide a program of education beyond secondary education;
- (3) Provides an educational program for which the institution awards a bachelor's degree or provides not less than a 2-year program that is acceptable for full credit toward such a degree;
- (4) Is a public or other nonprofit institution; and
- (5) Is accredited by a nationally recognized accrediting agency or association, or if not so accredited, is an institution that has been granted pre-accreditation status by such an agency or association that has been recognized by the Secretary of Education for the granting of pre-accreditation status, and the Secretary of Education has determined that there is satisfactory assurance that the institution will meet the accreditation standards of such an agency or association within a reasonable time.

Junior or community college means an institution of higher education that:

- (1) Admits as regular students persons who are beyond the age of compulsory school attendance in the State in which the institution is located and who have the ability to benefit from the training offered by the institution;
- (2) Does not provide an educational program for which the institution awards a bachelor's degree (or an equivalent degree); and
- (3) Provides an educational program of not less than 2 years in duration that is acceptable for full credit toward such a degree; or offers a 2-year program in engineering, mathematics, or the physical or biological sciences, designed to prepare a student to work as a technician or at the semiprofessional level in engineering, scientific, or other technological fields requiring the understanding and application of basic engineering, scientific, or mathematical principles of knowledge.

Low-income individual means an individual from a family whose taxable income for the preceding year did not exceed 150 percent of an amount equal to the poverty level determined by using criteria of poverty established by the Bureau of the Census.

Native Hawaiian means any individual who is a citizen of the United States; and is a descendant of the aboriginal people, who prior to 1778, occupied and exercised sovereignty in the area that now comprises the State of Hawaii, as evidenced by genealogical records, Kapuna (elders) or Kama'aina (long-term community residents) verification, or certified birth records.

Need Area means the specific area(s) of educational, applied research, or community development activities identified in the solicitation for applications and addressed by the applicant's application. Need Areas are derived from statutory language authorizing the grants program and specific Need Areas are targeted for funding support in the solicitation for applications.

Outcomes means specific, measurable project results and benefits that, when assessed and reported; indicate the project's plan of operation has been achieved.

Measurable outcomes include:

Results are intended or unintended consequences of the project, e.g., "...additional course materials now available online to reinforce student learning during non-classroom hours";

Products may be actual items or services acquired with funds, e.g., "...mechanisms and content to transition existing course(s) or elements of course(s) for Web-based access" or "created new and innovative prevention and intervention initiatives"; and

Impacts are a measure of the results by comparing what might have happened in the absence of the funded project.

Partnership requires that all partners have a substantial involvement in the project throughout the life of the project. If a partnership between multiple entities is proposed, the proposal should clearly identify the following:

- 1) A narrative of each entity's clearly established role in the project;
- 2) How each entity involved as a partner on the project will contribute to execution of project objectives, determination of experimental design, development of the project work plan and time table, and submission of collaborative, timely reports; and
- 3) A comprehensive project budget that reflects each entity's financial or in-kind contribution to the total project budget costs.

Plan of work means a detailed, step-by-step description of how the applicant intends to accomplish the project's objectives. At a minimum, the Plan of Work should include a time line of major activities to be undertaken, descriptions of protocols and procedures to be followed, an explanation of how resources will be acquired and used, and an outline of the qualifications and responsibilities of all key project personnel.