Youth Farm Safety Education and Certification (YFSEC) Competitive Grant Program

Edits were made on pages 16 and 23. References to farmers with disabilities and to non-profit disability organizations were deleted. 4/3/2017

FY 2017 Request for Applications (RFA)

APPLICATION DEADLINE: May 10, 2017

ELIGIBILITY: See Part III, A of RFA

Grant Type: Standard
Project Type: Extension
Program Area Code: RB
Program code name: Youth Farm Safety

United States Department of Agriculture

National Institute of Food and Agriculture

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

YOUTH FARM SAFETY EDUCATION AND CERTIFICATION (YFSEC) PROGRAM

INITIAL ANNOUNCEMENT

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

DATES: Applications must be received by **5 p.m. Eastern Time** on **May 10, 2017**. 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 six months from the issuance of this notice. Comments received after that date will be considered to the extent practicable.

STAKEHOLDER INPUT: We at the National Institute of Food and Agriculture (NIFA) seek your comments about this RFA. We will consider your comments when we develop the next RFA for the program, if applicable, and we will 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 your written stakeholder comments by the deadline set forth in the DATES portion of this notice via email to Policy@nifa.usda.gov. (This email address is only for receiving comments regarding this RFA and _not_ for requesting information or forms.) In your comments, please state that you are responding to the YFSEC RFA.

Your proposal has a chance to be designated under Center of Excellence (COE) criteria. A grantee whose application is not only found to be highly meritorious by a peer panel, but meets additional criteria, can receive this designation. Please visit the NIFA website to access a factsheet on the Center of Excellence (COE) designation process, criteria, and a list of programs for FY 2017. You may also review COE outreach webinars held in February and March of 2015 from the NIFA website.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY: NIFA requests applications for the Youth Farm Safety Education and Certification (YFSEC) Program for fiscal year (FY) 2017 to support national efforts for delivering timely, pertinent, and appropriate farm safety education to youth seeking employment or who are already employed in agricultural production. The appropriated amount available for NIFA to support this grant in FY 2017 is approximately $300,000. This RFA is being released prior to the passage of an appropriations act for FY 2017. Enactment of additional continuing resolutions or an appropriations act may affect the availability or level of funding for this program.

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

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PART I—FUNDING OPPORTUNITY DESCRIPTION

A. Legislative Authority and Background

YFSEC program is authorized under Section 3(d) of the Smith Lever Act line for *Farm Safety and Youth Farm Safety Education and Certification*.

Since the Youth Farm Safety Education and Certification (YFSEC) Program was first funded in FY 2001, 1890 Land-Grant Colleges and Universities, including Tuskegee University and West Virginia State University have been eligible to apply at any appropriated level. Section 7403 of the Food, Conservation, and Energy Act (FCEA) of 2008 amends section 3(d) of the Smith-Lever Act of 1914 [7 U.S.C. 343(d)] regarding eligibility. Beginning in FY 2009, the eligibility to compete for YFSEC funding was broadened to include the University of the District of Columbia, and in 2015 to Central State University as well

B. Purpose and Priorities

NIFA's non-formal education programs and services in farm safety promote rural health and seek to strengthen economic vitality. A critically important component of effective farm safety initiatives is engagement of agricultural and human social and behavioral sciences in mitigating agricultural hazards to workers. Non-formal education programs in the area of youth farm safety provide timely safety information to rural youth, their families, and their on-farm employers, as well as increased access to opportunities for protection of youth health and promotion of safe agricultural practices. To date, Agricultural and Human Sciences educators and other relevant partners, supported by innovative communication platforms, have developed and implemented diverse youth farm safety education and certification initiatives in order to protect and enhance resiliency among youth and ensure long-term vitality of agricultural communities. NIFA's YFSEC competitive grant program provides funding for just such projects.

YFSEC program supports the United States rural communities by encompassing the USDA/NIFA's agricultural, social and human sciences. The program addresses:
- USDA Strategic Plan for FY 2014-2018, G*oal 1;*
- 2014 USDA's Research, Education, and Economics (REE) Action Plan, Goal 7;
- NIFA Strategic Plan for 2014-2018, Goal *1:* and
- NIFA's Agricultural Systems Portfolio priorities in the area of agricultural safety in farming and ranching, and Family & Consumer Sciences Portfolio priorities in the areas of family well-being and community vitality.

Since the U.S. Department of Agriculture's National Institute of Agriculture (NIFA) began funding the YFSEC program in 2001, the program has supported projects that focus on identifying and developing educational resources that mitigate agricultural hazards to young workers, regardless of their knowledge, experience, ability, ethnicity, or culture. Over the years, two complete curricula were developed through the YFSEC program: one from the Pennsylvania State University and one from Purdue University. Both curricula are available on the

www.agsafety4youth.info web site. These curricula are based on core competencies as identified by agricultural safety experts to operate agricultural machinery safely.

In FY 2013 and per stakeholder request, the *YFSEC* program moved further to develop a coordinated, national approach to agricultural safety and health education for youth. In that effort, NIFA made awards in support of a multi-institution, multi-state project entitled *Safety in Agriculture for Youth (SAY),* led by Pennsylvania State University. Between 2013 and 2016, the SAY project has met the needs of the YFSEC programs in implementing a national approach to youth farm safety education and certification by: (1) Establishing four stakeholder groups (Content Identification, Curriculum Alignment, Outreach, and Marketing) that engaged experts from various sectors and leadership positions within academia, public health and the agricultural industry; (2) Establishing a National Steering Committee to help identify curriculum and testing gaps, certification needs, and industry recognized credentials; (3) Developing a youth farm safety tool that assesses alignment of existing youth farm safety curricula with the Agriculture, Food and Natural Resources (AFNR) Career Cluster Content Standards; (4) Developing and implementing a National Clearinghouse for gathering of national youth farm safety and education curricula and testing; (5) Working closely with members of the SAY National Steering Committee to developed a national outreach strategy to promote awareness and utilization of the farm safety materials by diverse stakeholder audiences; and (6) Annually assessing resources required to sustain the Clearinghouse and to continue national dialogue about youth farm safety education and certification needs. In FY 2016, an award was made through a competitive grant process to build upon and strengthen SAY activities and accomplishments to date, as well as identify and address curricula and outreach gaps. Specifically, the project set out to: a) enhance the viability and utility of the Curriculum Alignment Submission Tool (CAST); b) strengthen the SAY National Clearinghouse by increasing curricula and other resources available through the clearinghouse, enhancing outreach to stakeholders, and identifying and communicating to others gaps in curricula and resources; c) supporting outreach and marketing activities of the CareerSafe OSHA 10-Hour General Industry (Agriculture) course; and d) enhance operations of the National Steering Committee for the SAY project.

NIFA encourages (but does not require) projects that develop content suitable for delivery through eXtension (https://extension.org/).

C. Program Area Description

The YFSEC program proposals are expected to continue with the coordinated national approach to agricultural safety and health education for youth. In FY 2017, NIFA is soliciting applications for the YFSEC program that will help build upon and strengthen accomplishments made to date by the SAY project, as well as identify and address curricula and outreach gaps.

All proposals should show how their proposed activities build on current curricula and outreach efforts in the following areas:
  a) Curriculum Alignment Submission Tool (CAST), an online instrument, developed by the SAY project, that allows educational authors to submit their agricultural safety and health curricula for possible inclusion in the national clearinghouse.

b) [SAY National Clearinghouse](), which consists of two different types of educational products: formal curricula and other supporting resources that are indexed based on their alignment to AFNR Career Cluster Content Standards. The main purpose of the clearinghouse is to serve educators, employers, and parents looking for specific agricultural safety and health resources. In FY 2017, applicants to the YFSEC program need to describe how their projects will contribute to one or more of the following:
   a. Increase the number of curricula and resources available through the clearinghouse;
   b. Enhance outreach to agricultural educators working with youth to help integrate youth safety information available through the clearinghouse into the classroom;
   c. Enhance outreach to youth and training of youth; and
   d. Enhance outreach to faculty at institutions of higher education.
c) [OSHA 10-Hour General Industry (Agriculture) Course](), a web-based course developed for entry level workers and employers through collaboration between OSHA and the SAY project. Students who successfully complete the course receive a printable certificate, as well as an OSHA 10-Hour General Industry wallet card from the OSHA Training Institute.

Priority consideration will be given to proposals with multi-institution, multi-state partnerships. Collaboration among 1862, 1890, and 1994 Land Grant Institutions within or across state lines on a joint application is encouraged. Collaborations with institutions/organizations/centers not eligible to apply as leads (such is the case with 1994 Land Grant institutions) on a joint application are also encouraged. All applications involving such collaboration must demonstrate a clear and meaningful involvement in the project for each institution/organization/centers throughout the 4-year project period.

PART II—AWARD INFORMATION

A. Available Funding

The amount available for NIFA support of this program in FY 2017 is approximately $300,000. The funds will be awarded through a competitive grant process. There is no commitment by USDA to fund any particular application or to make a specific number of awards. This RFA is being released prior to the passage of an appropriations act for FY 2017. Enactment of additional continuing resolutions or an appropriations act may affect the availability or level of funding for this program.

The Automated Standard Applications for Payment System (ASAP), operated by the Department of Treasury's Bureau of the Fiscal Service, is the designated payment system for awards resulting from this RFA. For more information see
https://www.fiscal.treasury.gov/fsservices/gov/pmt/asap/asap_home.htm.

B. Types of Applications

In FY 2017, you may submit an application to the YFSEC program only as one of the following types of requests:

New application. This is a project application that has not been previously submitted to the YFSEC program. We will review all new applications competitively using the screening for administrative requirements and panel evaluations of proposals using evaluation criteria and selection process described in Part V—Application Review Requirements.

C. Project Types

All YFSEC projects are Extension projects expected to lead to measurable, documented changes in learning, actions, or conditions in an identified audience or stakeholder group. Within that context, in FY 2017 the YFSEC program will focus on supporting Extension projects that will build upon accomplishments made to date by the SAY project. Specifically, the program will support three (3) types of projects:
1) SAY National Clearinghouse Project – to continue efforts made to date with SAY Clearinghouse, curricula submission and review, marketing of the Clearinghouse, and SAY National Steering Committee. Proposed budgets must not exceed $100,000 per year for project periods of up to 4 years.
2) YFSEC Instructor Training Project – to support recruitment and training of youth farm safety instructors in currently available youth farm safety curricula. Grantees leading this type of project are required to incorporate evaluation of instructor training and to submit, at the end of their project period, information about and results from tested curricula to the SAY National Clearinghouse. Proposed budgets must not exceed $100,000 per year for project periods of up to 4 years.
3) YFSEC Youth Training Project – to continue with development of new/enhancement of current youth farm safety curricula, implementation/piloting of those curricula with

youth, and evaluation of youth training. Grantees leading this type of project are required to submit, at the end of their project period, developed and tested curricula to the SAY National Clearinghouse. Proposed budgets must not exceed $100,000 per year for project periods of up to 4 years.

All projects should plan to share their activities and progress with the SAY National Steering Committee (SAY NSC) during annual meetings of SAY NSC at NIFA. These meetings will be organized by the SAY Clearinghouse project in collaboration with NIFA.

Given that the primary source of funding for the YFSEC program is Federal funds, grantees are encouraged to contract with hotels for lodging at or below the Federal per diem rate for SAY NSC meetings and any other meetings relevant to the project and that require travel. NIFA retains the right to disallow use of NIFA funds for any travel that is not reasonable under the Uniform Guidance (2 CFR 200).

In FY 2017, the YFSEC program expects to fund up to three projects, one in each: SAY National Clearinghouse, YFSEC Instructor Training, and YFSEC Youth Training. The program has also established a maximum award size of $100,000 per year for up to four years for each project type. Please note that grant applications requesting more than $100,000 per year and/or proposing project periods greater than 4 years will *not* be considered for funding. Similarly, grant applications with no secured letters of commitment from partner organizations/institutions will *not* be reviewed.

D. Responsible and Ethical Conduct of Research

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

PART III—ELIGIBILITY INFORMATION

A. Eligible Applicants

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

Award recipients may subcontract to organizations not eligible to apply (such as 1994 Land-Grant Colleges, Hispanic-Serving Institutions, eXtension) provided such organizations are necessary for the conduct of the project.

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

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

B. Cost Sharing or Matching

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

C. Centers of Excellence

Pursuant to Section 7214 of the Agricultural Act of 2014 (Pub. L. 113-79), beginning in Fiscal Year 2015, for applicable competitive research and extension programs, NIFA will recognize and provide priority in the receipt of funding to applications from "centers of excellence" (COE) that implement research, extension, and education activities that relate to the food and agricultural sciences. NIFA held listening sessions in July 2014 and accepted written comments from stakeholders to inform NIFA's implementation of the COE provision. Information from the webinars and a summary of the input are available on NIFA's website at http://nifa.usda.gov/centers-excellence.

A COE is composed of one or more of the following entities that provide financial or in-kind support to the COE.

(A) State agricultural experiment stations;

(B) Colleges and universities;

(C) University research foundations;

(D) Other research institutions and organizations;

(E) Federal agencies;

(F) National laboratories;

(G) Private organizations, foundations, or corporations;

(H) Individuals; or

(I) any group consisting of two or more of the entities described in (A) through (H).

Part IV, B., 3 of this RFA contains additional requirements for COE consideration.

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 information about the pre-award phase of the grant lifecycle see http://www.grants.gov/web/grants/learn-grants/grants-101/pre-award-phase.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) at his/her institution 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 two weeks to complete the registration process so it is critical to begin as soon as possible. In such situations, the AR should go to **"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-SLBCD-006287

   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-tools-and-tips.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. EST). 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** you need 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 whether 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. EST, 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)
Detailed information related to the questions on this form is available in Part V, 3 of the NIFA Grants.gov Application Guide.

3. R&R Other Project Information Form
Detailed information related to the questions on this form is available in Part V, 4 of the NIFA Grants.gov Application Guide.

a. Field 7. Project Summary/Abstract.
See Part V. 4.7 of NIFA Grants.gov Application Guide for further instructions and a link to a suggested template.

Proposals must include a Project Summary/Abstract page of 400 words or less. The summary page should include the following, in the order listed here:
- Project title;
- Names of PD, Co-PDs, and key project personnel and their affiliated institutions;
- Names of partnering institutions and organizations (if not already listed);
- A brief description of the proposed project, including the relevance of the project to the goals of the YFSEC Program needs;
- Funding amount requested by year and in total; and
- Whether the proposal includes a request for Center of Excellence consideration.

b. Field 8. Project Narrative.
NOTE: The Project Narrative shall not exceed 18 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 (23 pages) to ensure fair and equitable competition. Applications exceeding the maximum page limitation will be disqualified from the review process and not considered for funding.

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

The Project Narrative must have six distinct sections, titled and presented in the following order:
    Introduction;
    Objectives, Activities, and Timeline;
    Division of Labor;
    Performance Measurement/ Evaluation Plan;
    Management Plan;
    Budget Justification;

Project Sustainability Plan; and
Centers of Excellence Request and Justification (if applicable).

(a) Introduction

Justify the need for the project by describing the nature and magnitude of the issue the project is seeking to address. Provide the most recent relevant data, including data on the incidence of injuries and health issues among the farming youth population. Provide references for data. Explain and substantiate any assumptions made.

In addition, please address the following elements:
o Briefly discuss related programs currently available and how your project will address existing gaps and limitations among currently available programs/services.
o Clearly identify population(s) your proposed project will reach out to and serve.
o If proposing to work with specific minority groups, describe prior experience your team has had in addressing the needs of that target audience. Describe your ability and readiness to provide appropriate (i.e., ethnically-, racially-, linguistically- and socio-economically-sensitive) education, training, and outreach for such an audience(s). For example, if you will be serving Spanish-speaking or Native American communities, how will you ensure that your outreach and services are culturally appropriate and understandable?
o Justify your institution's and team's ability to meet the gaps and limitations in services by detailing your accomplishments from similar projects. If the project involves collaboration between Land Grant Institutions, clearly identify each institution's relevant previous work that speaks to its ability to successfully participate on the proposed project.
o Identify your project partners. Provide justification for their selection. Clearly state the organizations' previous and current work that make it a good fit for the proposed project.
o *If the proposed project is currently funded by the YFSEC program or has been funded by the YFSEC program in the past,* you must include also the following in your Introduction section:
  ▪ A brief history of the current/past project and main project outcomes and/or impacts;
  ▪ If your project has had a gap in funding from NIFA, explain how and at what level you were able to sustain the project since it last received funding from NIFA.

(b) Objectives, Activities, and Timeline

Provide a clear description of the project objectives and activities. Please use a Logic Model (for example resource on Logic Models, see https://cyfar.org/ilm_1_1). The following elements must be addressed:
o Objectives must addressed program priorities listed in Part I, Section B.
o Explain how the activities will help to achieve the objectives and the intended target audience.

o   Clearly show the relationships between objectives, inputs, activities, desired
    outcomes, and anticipated impacts.
o   The sum of activities under each objective must lead to completion of those
    objectives within the 4-year maximum project duration. Group activities and
    associated outcomes and impacts by project year (FY 2017, FY 2018, FY 2019,
    and FY 2020).
o   When describing project <u>outcomes</u> to be tracked, indicate when (e.g., before and/or
    after a given activity) you plan to monitor your project outcomes and how you intend
    to measure them. Outcomes monitoring plan should allow you to annually review
    outcomes achieved and to use results to inform, refine and adjust future project plans
    as needed.

Provide a *Timeline* to demonstrate the duration and the sequence of project activities, as
well as division of labor (as noted in the next section of this RFA). Each objective may
have multiple activities. Chart against a quarterly scale, so that the Timeline depicts four
(4) years and 16 quarters.

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

(c) Division of Labor

List State Cooperative Extension System and other partner organizations collaborating on
the project. For each, briefly describe type of activities for which they will provide
leadership. For further details regarding division of labor, refer readers to the project
timeline.

Within the project timeline, include a column that shows responsibilities of the respective
organizations under appropriate objectives/activities.

Land-Grant Institutions submitting joint applications must demonstrate that the
institutions' roles and responsibilities in regards to main aspects of project development,
implementation and outcome evaluation will be equitable and appropriate.

Applicants proposing SAY National Clearinghouse project should describe in this section
the projected composition and role(s) of their SAY National Steering Committee.

(d) Performance Measurement/Evaluation Plan

Proposals should contain a strong performance measurement plan that clearly states the
goals of the project and explains how project activities will lead to results (both outputs
and outcomes). The plan will identify the project's most significant outcomes and
explain the methods by which those outcomes will be measured. We strongly recommend

that these plans include or refer to the project's logic model. Please be as specific as possible in describing the linkages among activities, outputs, and different types of outcomes (e.g., changes in participant knowledge, awareness, competency, and behavior or changes in condition).

NIFA encourages projects to consider including an evaluator/evaluation-skilled person on the project who can assist with development of a performance measurement plan and, if funds are available, help carry out that plan. The purpose of the performance measurement is to help determine whether a project has achieved its objectives, whether it has reached intended outcomes, and what level of performance has been achieved.

(e) Management Plan

Provide a brief summary of key staff who will manage the proposed project, their individual roles on the project, and percent of time they will be dedicating to the project. If the percentages are expected to change in Years 2, 3, or 4 of the proposed project, please indicate so and provide an explanation.

Describe how the relationship between the State Cooperative Extension System and the partner organizations will be managed. If the proposed project represents a collaboration between two or more Land Grant Institutions, provide an explanation of how the relationship between the agencies will be managed.

Describe the fiscal and administrative oversight provided by the Land Grant Institution(s) and the partner organizations.

Indicate who on the team will provide the project outcomes evaluation oversight.

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

There is a direct relationship between the items in the budget and budget justification, as well as between budget justification and the objectives/activities contained in the Project Narrative.

Every item in the budget needs to be justified in the proposal. The amount of detail depends on the nature of the project and the breakdown of costs.

Proposed budgets must not exceed $100,000 per year level or request funding for more than 4 years in total.

Budget breakdown and justification need to be provided for each year of funding being requested.

Annual budgets should include estimated 2-day travel costs to attend a SAY NSC meeting at NIFA (Washington, DC). Annual budgets of applications proposing to conduct SAY National Clearinghouse project should also include estimated costs

associated with organizing annual meetings of the SAY NSC, to be held at NIFA. Projects that represent a collaboration between two or more Land Grant Institution need to include at least one representative from each of the institutions at the annual meetings of SAY NSC.

In Budget Justification, costs (e.g., personnel, materials, travel, etc.) are to be broken down and itemized rather than shown as lump sums.

(g) Project Sustainability Plan

Describe steps you will undertake during the course of the proposed project activities to assess options and opportunities for project's sustainability beyond the life of the NIFA YFSEC grant. Include your proposed project sustainability activities in the proposal timeline.

Identify opportunities (e.g., resources, trainings, collaborations) you plan to tap-into/develop/enhance during the life of the proposed project that will help you sustain program operations after NIFA funding has expired.

Describe how you plan to track your project sustainability planning efforts during the course of the proposed project implementation.

(h) <u>Center of Excellence Justification</u>

For consideration as a COE, you must provide a brief justification statement, as part of your Project Narrative and within the page limits provided, which describes how you meet the standards of a COE, based on the following criteria:

(A)The ability of the COE to ensure coordination and cost effectiveness by reducing unnecessarily duplicative efforts in the research, teaching, and extension activities outlined in this application;

(B)In addition to any applicable matching requirements, the ability of the COE to leverage available resources by using public-private partnerships among agricultural industry groups, institutions of higher education, and the federal government in the proposed research and/or extension activities outlined in this application. Resources leveraged should be commensurate with the size of the award;

(C) The planned scope and capability of the COE to implement teaching initiatives that increase awareness and effectively disseminate solutions to target audiences through extension activities of the proposed research and/or extension activity outlined in this application; and

(D) The ability or capacity of the COE to increase the economic returns to rural communities by identifying, attracting, and directing funds to high-priority agricultural

issues in support of and as a result of the implementation of the proposed research and/or extension activity outlined in this application.

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

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.

- **Letter(s) of Commitment from Collaborators on the Proposed Project** (e.g., 1862, 1890 or 1994 Land Grant Institutions, Minority Serving Institutions, eXtension.) The letters must state the partner institution's readiness to collaborate on the proposed project and describe the partner's specific role on the project.
  (*Note: If partnering with eXtension, you must have a letter of acknowledgement from eXtension and a letter of commitment from the Ag Safety and Health Community of Practice. For detailed guidance on how to partner with eXtension, go to http://create.extension.org/node/2057.*) Title the attachment(s) as, for example, "LGULetter", "MSILetter" or "eXtensionLetter".

4. R&R Senior/Key Person Profile (Expanded)
Detailed information related to the questions on this form is available in Part V, 5 of the NIFA Grants.gov Application Guide. This section of the guide includes instructions about senior/key person profile requirements, 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. Part V.6 also notes the importance and use of the information.

6. R&R Budget
Detailed information related to the questions on this form is available in Part V, 7 of the NIFA Grants.gov Application Guide.

7. Supplemental Information Form
Detailed information related to the questions on this form is available in Part VI, 1 of the NIFA Grants.gov Application Guide.

a. **Field 2. Program to which you are applying.** Enter the program code name (i.e., enter "Youth Farm Safety") and the program code (i.e., enter "RB"). Note that accurate entry of the program code is very important for proper and timely processing of an application.

b. Field 8. Conflict of Interest List. See Part VI, 1.8 of the NIFA Grants.gov Application Guide for further instructions and a link to a suggested template.

c. Field 9. Bibliography
No page limit. Submit as an attachment in PDF format. Title the attachment as "BibliographyReferencesCited".

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

C. Submission Dates and Times

We recommend that you conduct an administrative review of the application before submission of it via Grants.gov to ensure that it complies with all preparation instructions. An application checklist is included in Part VII of the NIFA Grants.gov Application Guide to assist with this review.

While the checklist should be used to check the application for completeness, the application should be checked for the following required item(s). This is <u>not</u> an exhaustive list of required items; it only serves to highlight <u>required items that are sometimes overlooked by applicants</u>:
- Abstract
- Project Narrative
- Logic Model
- Timeline
- Bibliography
- Current and Pending Support forms
- Conflict of Interest forms
- Letters of Commitment
- Mandatory Felony Convictions or Tax Delinquent Status

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 p.m. Eastern Time on May 10, 2017.** 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. We strongly encourage you to provide accurate email addresses, where designated, on the SF-424 R&R Application for Federal Assistance.

If the AR has not received correspondence **from NIFA** regarding a submitted application within 30 days of the established deadline, contact the Agency Contact identified in Part VII of the 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, you should cite this number on all future correspondence.**

D. Funding Restrictions

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

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

Unallowable costs include, but are not limited to, the following examples:
1. Entertainment Costs not permitted include banquets, award ceremonies, and meals for persons not traveling on behalf of the project except when provided to maintain the continuity of a meeting, tickets to shows or sporting events, and alcoholic beverages.
2. Awards and Certificates of Achievement are disallowed by 2 CFR 200, the Uniform Administrative Requirement, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards.
3. Facility Costs not permitted include the renovation or refurbishment of research, education, or extension space; the purchase or installation of fixed equipment in such space; or the planning, repair, rehabilitation, acquisition, or construction of buildings or facilities.
4. Any expense not directly related to the program or project is considered unallowable. Examples include child-care services, kitchen help hired to prepare refreshments, and promotional or appreciation gifts such as clothing, coffee mugs, or bags.

E. Other Submission Requirements

You should follow the submission requirements noted in Part IV, Section 1.9 in the document entitled "NIFA Grants.gov Application Guide."

For information about the **status of a submitted application**, see Part III, Section 6 of the NIFA Grants.gov Application Guide.

PART V—APPLICATION REVIEW REQUIREMENTS

A. General

We evaluate each application in a two-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:
- 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;
- the need to include experts from various areas of specialization within relevant scientific, education, or extension fields;
- the need to include 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;
- the need to include 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;
- the need to maintain a balanced composition with regard to minority and female representation and an equitable age distribution; and
- the need to include reviewers who can judge the effective usefulness of each application to producers and the general public.

After each peer review panel has completed its deliberations, the responsible program staff of the YFSEC program will recommend that your project be approved for support from currently available funds or be declined due to insufficient funds or unfavorable review.

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

We will send copies of reviews, *not* including the identity of reviewers, and a summary of the panel comments to the PD after the review process has been completed.

B. Evaluation Criteria

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

a) Potential for Advancing Impact Upon and Outreach to Youth and Instructors (25 points).

This criterion is used to assess the likelihood that the project will have an impact upon and advance the outreach to youth and/or youth farm safety instructors. Elements considered include those required for the Introduction section of proposals (see Part IV. B.3.b. (a))

b) Proposed Objectives, Activities, and Timeline (25 points).

This criterion relates to the soundness of the proposed approach including objectives, methodology, plan of operation, timetable, logic model, outputs, desired outcomes, and anticipated impacts. Elements considered include those required for the Objectives, Activities and Timeline section of proposals (see Part IV. B.3.b. (b))

c) Proposed Division of Labor (10 points)

This criterion relates to the adequacy of the lead and partner organizations to conduct the proposed project and the division of activities for which each entity in the collaboration will provide leadership, whether the institutions' roles and responsibilities in regards to main aspects of project development, implementation and outcome evaluation are equitable and appropriate. Elements considered include those required for the Division of Labor section of proposals (see Part IV. B.3.b. (c))

d) Proposed Performance Measurement Plan (10 points)

This criterion is used to assess soundness of the proposed performance measurement plan, whether the project's expected outcomes are identified and whether the methods by which those outcomes will be measured are clearly noted. Elements considered include those required for the Performance Measurement/Evaluation Plan section of proposals (see Part IV. B.3.b. (d))

e) Proposed Management Plan (10 points)

This criterion relates to the adequacy of the lead and partner organizations to conduct the proposed project, the number and qualifications of key persons who will develop and carry out the project, and the qualifications of project personnel who will provide oversight and the assessment of project results and reporting of those results. Elements considered include those required for the Management Plan section of proposals (see Part IV. B.3.b. (e))

f) Budget and Cost-Effectiveness (10 points)

This criterion relates to the extent to which the total budget adequately supports the project and is cost effective. Elements considered include the necessity and

reasonableness of costs to carry out project activities and achieve project objectives; the appropriateness of budget allocations between the applicant and any collaborating institution(s); 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. Elements considered include those required for the Budget and Budget Justification section of proposals (see Part IV. B.3.b. (f))

g) Proposed Project Sustainability Plan (10 points)
This criterion assesses soundness and feasibility of the steps to be undertaken during the course of the proposed project activities to assess options and opportunities for project's sustainability beyond the life of the NIFA YFSEC grant. Elements considered include those required for the Budget and Budget Justification section of proposals (see Part IV. B.3.b. (g))

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

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

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 one-time, with updates on an as-needed basis. This requirement is part of the responsibility determined prior to the award of a grant identified under this RFA, if such information has not been provided previously under this or another NIFA program. We will provide you copies of forms recommended for use in fulfilling these requirements as part of the pre-award process. Although an applicant may be eligible based on its status as one of these entities, there are factors that may exclude an applicant from receiving federal financial and nonfinancial assistance and benefits

under this program (e.g., debarment or suspension of an individual involved or a determination that an applicant is not responsible based on submitted organizational management information).

E. Application Disposition

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

PART VI—AWARD ADMINISTRATION

A. General

Within the limit of funds available for such purpose, the NIFA awarding official shall make grants to those responsible, eligible applicants whose applications are judged most meritorious under the procedures set forth in this RFA. The date specified by the NIFA awarding official as the effective date of the grant shall be no later than September 30 of the federal fiscal year in which the project is approved for support and funds are appropriated for such purpose, unless otherwise permitted by law. The project need not be initiated on the grant effective date, but as soon thereafter as practical so that project goals may be attained within the funded project period. All funds granted by NIFA under this RFA may be used only for the purpose for which they are granted in accordance with the approved application and budget, regulations, terms and conditions of the award, applicable federal cost principles, USDA assistance regulations, and NIFA General Awards Administration Provisions at 7 CFR part 3430, subparts A through E.

B. Award Notice

The award document will provide pertinent instructions and information including, at a minimum, the information described in 2 CFR 200.210.

See http://www.nifa.usda.gov/business/awards/awardterms.html to view current NIFA award terms and conditions.

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.

Responsible and Ethical Conduct of Research
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 CONTACT

Applicants and other interested parties are encouraged to contact:

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

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

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

PART VIII—OTHER INFORMATION

A. 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 Budget or Project Plans

In accordance with 2 CFR 200.308, awardees must request prior approval from NIFA for the following program or budget-related reasons:
   (i) Change in the scope or the objective of the project or program (even if there is no associated budget revision requiring prior written approval).
   (ii) Change in a key person specified in the application or the federal award.
   (iii) The disengagement from the project for more than three months, or a 25 percent reduction in time devoted to the project, by the approved project director or principal investigator.
   (iv) The inclusion, unless waived by the federal awarding agency, of costs that require prior approval in accordance with 2 CFR 200 Subpart E—Cost Principles of this part or 45 CFR Part 75 Appendix IX, "Principles for Determining Costs Applicable to Research and Development under Awards and Contracts with Hospitals," or 48 CFR Part 31, "Contract Cost Principles and Procedures," as applicable.
   (v) The transfer of funds budgeted for participant support costs as defined in §200.75 Participant support costs to other categories of expense.
   (vi) Unless described in the application and funded in the approved federal awards, the subawarding, transferring or contracting out of any work under a federal award, including fixed amount subawards as described in §200.332 Fixed amount subawards. This provision does not apply to the acquisition of supplies, material, equipment, or general support services.
   (vii) Changes in the approved cost-sharing or matching provided by the non-federal entity.
   (viii) The need arises for additional federal funds to complete the project.

The awardee will be subject to the terms and conditions identified in the award. See http://www.nifa.usda.gov/business/awards/awardterms.html for information about NIFA award terms.

B. 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 of Agriculture 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. We will retain for three years a copy of an application that does not result in an

award. 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.

C. 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.

D. 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.

E. Materials Available on the Internet

YFSEC program information will be made available on the NIFA web site at https://nifa.usda.gov/program/farm-safety. The following are among the materials available on the web page:
1. Information about the program
2. External resources
3. YFSEC Projects Funded to Date