

Air Force Personal Financial Readiness Program Evaluation Development

FY 2018 Request for Applications (RFA)

APPLICATION DEADLINE: July 31, 2018

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

Air Force Personal Financial Readiness Program Evaluation Development

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 July 31, 2018.**

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'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 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 Air Force Readiness Program Evaluation Development RFA.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY: NIFA requests applications for the Air Force Personal Financial Readiness Program Evaluation Development (PFRP) for fiscal year (FY) 2018 to develop and complete a comprehensive program evaluation of Personal Financial Readiness Program (PFRP) within the Air Force Personal Financial Readiness Programs supporting Air Force members and their families. The anticipated amount available for PFRP in FY 2018 is approximately \$454,545.

This notice identifies the objectives PFRP projects, deadline dates, funding information, eligibility criteria for projects and applicants, and application forms and associated instructions needed to apply for a PFRP grant.

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PART I—FUNDING OPPORTUNITY DESCRIPTION

A. Legislative Authority

In accordance with the Economy Act of 1932, as amended, (31 U.S.C. 1535), the Department of the Air Force (USAF), in order to utilize the unique resources of the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), the National Institute of Food and Agriculture (NIFA), has provided NIFA with funds to support the Air Force Readiness Program Evaluation Development Competitive Grant Program.

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

Within the Department of Defense, Economy Act transactions are governed by Department of Defense Financial Management Regulation, Volume 11A, Chapter 3, Economy Act Orders.

B. Purpose and Priorities

PRFP is aligned with:

- [USDA Strategic Plan for FY 2018-2022](#), Goal 1;
- [USDA's 2014 Research, Education, and Economics \(REE\) Action Plan](#), Goal 7, Strategies 3 and 4 of Goal 7; and
- [NIFA Strategic Plan for 2014-2018](#), Goal 1, Sub-goal 1.7.

This work also supports the mission of the DoD-USDA Partnership for Military Families Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) signed in 2010 by NIFA and DoD senior leadership, which is in effect for ten years. The goal of the MOU is "...to enhance federal interagency coordination and build capacity for partnerships and collaboration among the agencies and across public and private sectors to sustain programs and services for military Service members and their families."

Background and Context

Air Force Personal Financial Readiness (PFR) services are delivered by certified personal financial counselors and educators (PFC&E) located in an installation's Airman & Family Readiness Center (A&FRC). The PFC&Es are responsible for managing PFR requirements installation-wide and as certified PFC&Es. Requirements for PFC&Es are identified in prior passages of 10 United States Code (USC) §992 and DoD Instruction (DoDI) 1342.22.

- PFR is a core service area and A&FRCs are mandated to offer information, education, and personal financial counseling to help individuals and families maintain financial readiness and build resiliency.

- A&FRCs offer proactive personal life cycle financial management services that provide members and families with the tools and information they need to develop individual strategies to achieve financial goals and address financial challenges.
- PFR services support commanders in maintaining unit financial readiness to sustain mission readiness and promote personal readiness and retention in the military.
- PFM's are part of the A&FRC Community Readiness Consultant (CRC) model and have financial readiness as a primary duty but also have additional duties to ensure the functioning of the installation A&FRC.

The National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA) of 2016 stipulated a significant number of changes to 10 USC §992 that became effective in May of 2016, to include the change to the Blended Retirement System which mandates financial literacy training. Financial literacy training raises the standard of current training from an information and awareness level to an understanding and decision making level. Using the language contained in the *National Strategy for Financial Literacy*, published in 2011 and updated in 2016 by the Financial Literacy and Education Commission (FLEC), financial literacy means that Service Members possess the knowledge and skills to make informed and effective decisions at various life stages. Additionally, financial literacy provides the pathway for sustaining financial well-being with benchmarks of meeting all financial responsibilities, feeling secure in financial future, and ability to make choices for the enjoyment of life.

Figure 1 depicts the congruence of current operations which include voluntary education and counseling with the addition of mandatory training across the military lifecycle at touch points designated by NDAA 2016 to yield financially literate and financially ready Airmen. This concept aligns with the *National Strategy* and FLEC's definition of financial well-being.

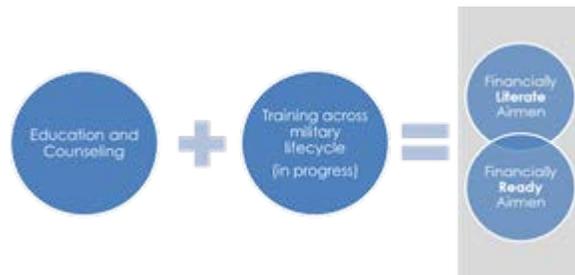


Figure 1.

In NDAA 16, multiple touchpoints were established throughout an Airman's military life cycle requiring financial literacy training as depicted in *Figure 2* below. Training is required for all active duty, Reserve, and Guard Airmen.

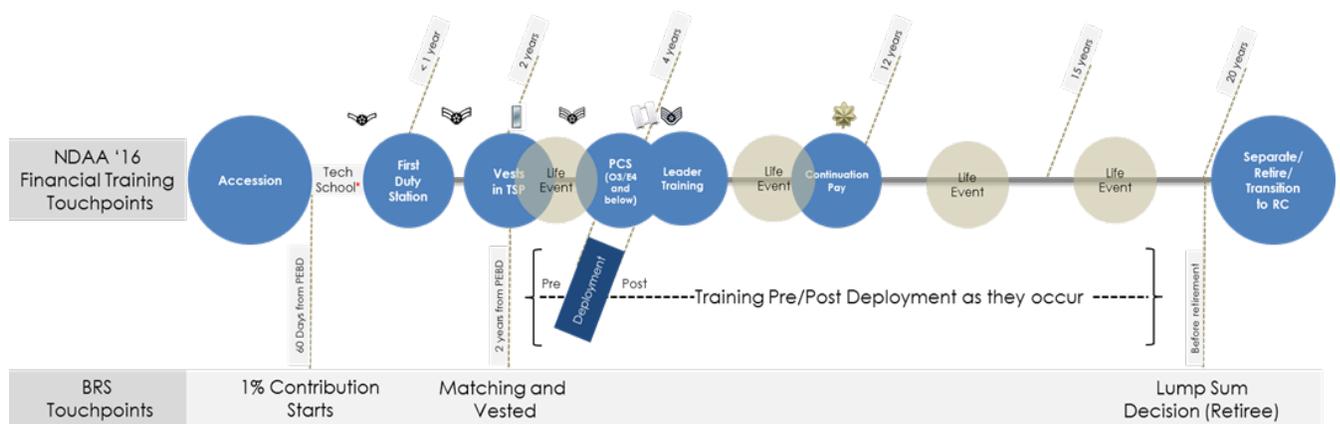
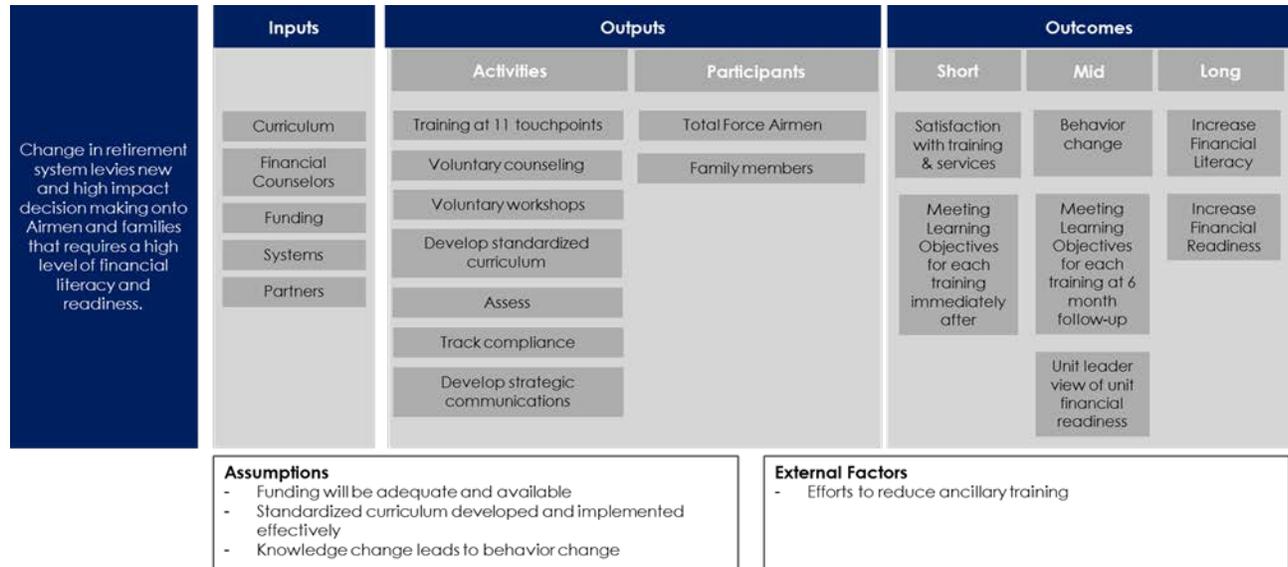


Figure 2.

The table below lists the mandatory touchpoints for financial literacy training (training marked with an asterisk (*) were requirements previous to NDA 16). This training will be delivered to Airmen via in-person classroom training or online as depicted in the table below. Where both modes of delivering the training are checked, the Airman will have the option of which mode to complete the training. For in-person training, the training will be delivered by a Personal Financial Counselor and Educator (excluding Accessions).

Touchpoint	In Person	Online
Accessions* (Enlisted)	X	
Accessions* (ROTC/OTS)		X
Accessions* (USAFA)	X	
Arrival at First Duty Station*	X	
Arrival at Subsequent Duty Station (E-4/O-3 and below)	X	X
Promotion (E-5/O-4 and below)		X
Vests in TSP	X	X
Continuation Pay		X
Transition to Reserve Component, Separation, Retirement*	X	X
Leadership Training	X	X
Pre-Deployment	X	
Post-Deployment	X	
Birth of Child	X	X
Marriage	X	X
Divorce	X	X
Disabling Sickness/Condition	X	X

To comply with best practices, the Air Force will evaluate the new financial literacy education on needs, process, outcomes, and impact. The following logic model is a top-level view of the Air Force’s planned evaluation of the financial literacy education efforts.



The primary objective for this project is:

- Develop and implement comprehensive Personal Financial Readiness program evaluation within the Air Force Readiness Program.

This objective will be accomplished through fulfilling the following activities:

- a. Prepare for evaluation of PFRP such as defining the study, developing an evaluation strategy and developing a data plan. Evaluation will be set up so that the program can be continuously and systematically reviewed.
- b. Execute the program evaluation through collecting and analyzing data.
- c. Compile feedback on the results of the evaluations, develop reports and improvement plans based on the findings.
- d. Develop and provide products for Government approval related to program evaluations such as executive briefings, emails to stakeholders, etc.
- e. Develop plan to inform curriculum reviews and updates based upon evaluation data.
- f. Submission of progress reports, briefings, as well as update meetings with PFR team, and any necessary technical assistance upon request.

The anticipated period of performance for this project is September 1, 2018 – August 31, 2019.

PART II—AWARD INFORMATION

A. Available Funding

The anticipated amount available for the PRFP grant in FY 2018 is approximately \$454,545 to fund one proposal for one year.

There is no commitment by USDA to fund any particular application or to make a specific number of awards.

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 2018, you may only submit a new application to the PRFP Competitive Grant Program.

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

C. Grant Type

This is a Standard grant. Standard grant is an award instrument by which NIFA agrees to support a specified level of effort for a predetermined project period without the announced intention of providing additional support at a future date.

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 further information.

PART III—ELIGIBILITY INFORMATION

A. Eligible Applicants

Eligible applicants include: State agricultural experiment stations, State cooperative extension services, all colleges and universities, other research or educational institutions or organizations, Federal and private agencies and organizations, individuals, and any other contractor or recipient, either foreign or domestic, to further research, extension, or teaching programs in the food and agricultural sciences of the Department of Agriculture.

The award recipient may subcontract to organizations not eligible to apply provided such organizations are necessary for the conduct of the project. Failure to meet an eligibility criterion by the time of application deadline may result in the application being excluded from consideration or, even though an application may be reviewed, will preclude NIFA from making an award.

For those new to Federal financial assistance, a [grants overview page](#) is available on the NIFA website. This page includes information about free Grants 101 Training and other resources that are highly recommended for those seeking an understanding of Federal awards.

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 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) 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.

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 where appropriate

Funding Opportunity Number: USDA-NIFA-EXCA-006631

Click “Search.” On the displayed page, click the corresponding link to continue. 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 (<https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/support.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:

1. Funding Opportunity Number (FON)
2. Name of agency you are applying to
3. Specific area of concern

B. Content and Form of Application Submission

Electronic applications are to be prepared 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:

1. Email: electronic@nifa.usda.gov
2. Phone: 202-401-5048

3. 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 2.17 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.

The summary should also include the relevance of the project to the goals of PFRP. 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 6 pages of written text and up 4 additional pages for figures and tables. Use 12pt Times New Roman font. We have established this maximum 10 pages) to ensure fair and equitable competition. Project narratives with more pages than this maximum 10 pages will be not reviewed. The Project Narrative must include all of the following*:

Section 1: Statement of Need & Background

- Demonstrate an understanding of the nature of the issue this project is seeking to address.
- Describe how the overall project will effectively address the audience(s) to be served.
- Detail the characteristics of the institution(s) that make it particularly qualified to conduct the proposed work; describe ongoing or recently completed significant activities related to the proposed project, expert knowledge and experience in high-quality curriculum development and refinement, program assessment, program evaluation, particularly experience with evaluation of military support programs, adult learning and training and experience with related projects for the DoD – USDA Partnership for Military Families, the Services, including Air Force, Navy, Army, Coast Guard, or National Guard & Reserves.

Section 2: Objectives, Approach and Plan

Projects should provide a clear description of the project objectives and activities. Objectives must address program priorities listed in Part 1, Section B. Please develop a project action plan. The plan should contain the following:

- Clear, concise, and logically arranged project objectives;

- Clear relationships between objectives, inputs, activities, outputs, desired outcomes, and anticipated results;
- A timeline outlining the summary of activities under each objective which will lead to completion of those objectives within the 1-year project duration;
- Methods by which science-based information will be gathered and synthesized to inform evaluation design;
- Methods by which data will be collected and analyzed; indicate collection instruments and methods, if appropriate (i.e.: questionnaire, interviews, focus groups, site visits, etc.);
- A description of all outputs and anticipated results along with strategies to track and monitor each.
- A description of development and/or implementation challenges that may be encountered and how those challenges will be addressed;

The project plan will be finalized based on written feedback from the Airman & Family Readiness Policy Branch PFRP Program Manager and NIFA National Program Leader after the award is made.

Section 3: Project Communication Plan

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

Section 4: Project Management

- Describe the fiscal and administrative oversight for the project including the division of labor and a description of how any collaborative efforts will be managed.

Section 5: Budget and Budget Narrative *(to be included below in #6. R&R Budget)

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

c. Field 12. Add Other Attachments

See Part V. Section 4.12 of the NIFA Grants.gov Application Guide (Field 12 on the form) for instructions regarding mandatory Felony Convictions or Tax Delinquent Status.

4. R&R Senior/Key Person Profile (Expanded)

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.

Field 2. Program to which you are applying. Enter the program code name (i.e., enter “Air Force Personal Financial Readiness Program”) and the program code (i.e., enter “PFRP”). Note that accurate entry of the program code is very important for proper and timely processing of an application.

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

C. Submission Dates and Times

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.

Instructions for submitting an application are included in Part IV, Section 1.5 of the NIFA Grants.gov Application Guide.

Applications must be received by Grants.gov by **5 p.m. Eastern Time on July 31, 2018**. 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 15 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

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

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

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

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

E. Other Submission Requirements

You should follow the submission requirements noted in Part IV, Section 1.5 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., program evaluators, military serving professionals, financial education experts) 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 PRFP team will recommend that your project be approved for support from currently available funds or be declined due to insufficient funds or unfavorable review.

The PFRP team 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

A reviewer's written evaluation entails two levels of assessment. First, the reviewer summarizes how well the application addressed each evaluation criterion. After the application has been assessed for strengths and weaknesses of each criterion, the reviewer then evaluates the overall likelihood that the project will have significant outcome and impact. These written reviews are used to begin panel discussions with other reviewers serving on the peer review panel. Through these discussions, peer review panelists come to consensus on the final rating and ranking of

proposals. A complete description of NIFA's peer review process can be found at the NIFA website: https://nifa.usda.gov/sites/default/files/resource/NIFA-Peer-Review-Process-for-Competitive-Grant-Applications_0.pdf

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

1. Potential for successfully developing a comprehensive program evaluation for the Air Force Personal Financial Readiness Program. (25 points)

This criterion is used to assess the likelihood that the project will succeed in: (1) providing the overall management of this project including partnerships and management of project staff; and (2) completing the activities and products described in Part I—Funding Opportunity Description, Section B., based on their proposed plan and past experience program assessment and program evaluation in coordination with military personal financial readiness programs, Service members and their families. Factors include those identified in the project narrative.

2. Proposed Approach (30 points)

This criterion is used to assess the soundness and sustainability of the proposed approach to successfully develop and implement an evaluation of the Air Force Personal Financial Readiness Program including statement of need, scope of the project, objectives, design, and methods. Factors include those identified in the project narrative.

3. Project Coordination (30 points)

This criterion is used to assess the institution's capability to successfully coordinate the project to meet the objectives based on the division of labor, timeline, expected products and results, and communication plan. Factors include those identified in the project narrative.

4. Budget and Budget Narrative (15 points)

This criterion is used to assess the extent to which the total budget adequately supports the project and is cost effective based on budget outline provided. Elements considered include: the necessity and reasonableness of costs to carry out project activities and achieve project objectives and the adequacy of time committed to the project by key project personnel. Factors include those identified in the project narrative.

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 PFRP team 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, they will be identified in the award.

Data Use: Use of data provided to NIFA awardees pursuant to this grant shall comply with the provisions of this paragraph. NIFA awardees shall be free to publish in professional, refereed journals information or data developed or collected (except confidential data or information including Protected Health Information (PHI) or Personal Identifiable Information (PII)) resulting from the activities under this agreement. Awardees will be required to submit a copy of any such publication to USDA NIFA sixty (60) days prior to publication for review and approval by NIFA and the USAF to ensure that any confidentiality necessary related to the deliverables is maintained and that NIFA and the USAF have been accurately represented. All educational and technical assistance materials developed by the awardee under an agreement with NIFA shall be owned by the awardee. NIFA and the USAF will have a non-exclusive, royalty-free, non-transferable, irrevocable license to reproduce, prepare derivative work and distribute copies of the deliverables so long as such deliverables are used for non-commercial educational or government purposes. Any work produced under a NIFA award is subject to 2 CFR Part 200.315 related to intangible property.

PART VII—AGENCY CONTACT

Applicants and other interested parties are encouraged to contact:

Programmatic Contact:

Ahlishia Shipley, Ph.D.

National Program Leader

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Administrative/Business Contact:

Adriene Woodin

Branch Chief

Awards Management Division

Office of Grants and Financial Management

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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

This program is not subject to the provisions of 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

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.