

Emergency Citrus Disease Research and Extension Competitive Grants Program

Modification: Page 18 listed “Supplemental Information” twice. The first reference of “Supplemental Information” has been deleted.

2018 Request for Pre-Applications (RFPA)

APPLICATION DEADLINE:

PRE-APPLICATION DEADLINE (Stakeholder Relevance Statement):

Complete pre-applications must be received by 5:00 pm Eastern Time on June 29, 2018.

FULL APPLICATION DEADLINE (Only invited full applications will be considered)

Complete, invited full applications must be received by 5:00 p.m. Eastern Time on September 24, 2018.

ELIGIBILITY: See Part III, A of RFPA



United States
Department of
Agriculture

National Institute
of Food and
Agriculture

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

Emergency Citrus Disease Research and Extension Competitive Grants Program

INITIAL ANNOUNCEMENT

CATALOG OF FEDERAL DOMESTIC ASSISTANCE: This program is listed in the Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance under 10.309.

DATES: Complete pre-applications (Stakeholder Relevance Statement) must be received by **5 p.m. Eastern Time** on June 29, 2018. Invited full applications must be received by **5 p.m. Eastern Time** on September 24, 2018. Applications received after this deadline will normally not be considered for funding (see Part IV, C of this RFPA). Comments regarding this request for pre-applications (RFPA) 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 RFPA. We will consider your comments when we develop the next RFPA 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 RFPA and *not* for requesting information or forms.) In your comments, please state that you are responding to the Emergency Citrus Research and Extension RFPA.

Applicants to the Emergency Citrus Disease Research and Extension program may request designation as a Center of Excellence. Visit the [NIFA website](#) to access a factsheet on the Center of Excellence (COE) designation process, including COE criteria, and a list of programs that offer COE opportunities. You may also review a recording of COE outreach webinars held in February and March of 2015 and COE implementation webinars held in August and September of 2015 from the site.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY: NIFA requests pre-applications for Emergency Citrus Disease Research and Extension (CDRE) for fiscal year (FY) 2018 to address priorities identified by the Citrus Disease Sub-committee (CDS) of the National Agricultural Research, Extension, Education, and Economics (NAREEE) Advisory Board through the integration of research and extension activities that use systems-based, trans-disciplinary approaches.

The need to advance research and extension to develop management strategies for huanglongbing (HLB) has reached a critical juncture. Industry experts estimate that unless new strategies are found and made available, the Florida citrus industry will cease to exist in 2 years. The HLB epidemic in Texas is expanding at an increased pace and threatens to reach the severity seen in Florida over the same time scale. In California, the Asian citrus psyllid, which vectors the disease, has become endemic in important citrus production areas but HLB infection has only

been found in isolated, non-production areas. Early detection tools are needed in the next 18 months to prevent HLB establishment statewide.

The anticipated amount available for grants in FY 18 is approximately \$21.7 million.

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

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PART I—FUNDING OPPORTUNITY DESCRIPTION

A. Legislative Authority

The Emergency Citrus Disease Research and Extension Program (CDRE) program is authorized in section 412(j) of the Agricultural Research, Extension, and Education Reform Act of 1998 (7 U.S.C. 7632(j)), as added by section 7306 of the Agricultural Act of 2014 (Pub. L. 113-79), to award grants to eligible entities to:

- A. Combat citrus diseases and pests, both domestic and invasive and including *huanglongbing* and the Asian citrus psyllid, which pose imminent harm to United States citrus production and threaten the future viability of the citrus industry; and
- B. Provide support for the dissemination and commercialization of relevant information, techniques, and technologies discovered pursuant to research and extension activities funded through SCRI/CDRE and other research and extension projects targeting problems caused by citrus production diseases and invasive pests.

B. Purpose and Priorities

Based on consultation with the Citrus Disease Sub-committee (CDS) of the National Agricultural Research, Extension Education, and Economics (NAREEE) Advisory Board on January 25 and 26, 2018, only applications that deal with the huanglongbing (HLB, citrus greening) complex or its management will be considered in FY2018. Pre-applications proposing research and extension on other citrus diseases or citrus disease vectors will be returned without review.

HLB is considered to be the most devastating disease of citrus and threatens citrus production globally. HLB was first found in the continental United States in Florida in 2005 and since then has reached epidemic proportions. Citrus producers in Florida are severely threatened. Since the disease was discovered in 2005, acreage in Florida has declined from approximately 641,000 acres to approximately 411,000 acres in 2017. Production has dropped from 7.6 million tons in 2005 to around 3.5 million tons in this same period. NASS estimates this production will drop to approximately 2.2 million tons in 2018.

Based on this trajectory, CDS has asked that NIFA prioritize projects that can potentially deliver solutions in the **near to intermediate time frame**.

During the January 25 and 26, 2018 consultation, the CDS identified seven areas of highest priority for the current competition. Those areas, ranked by CDS for importance, are:

1. Therapies to prevent or suppress *Candidatus Liberibacter asiaticus* (CLAs) bacteria within trees.
2. Development of tolerance or resistance in commercial citrus in all production areas with a focus on delivery of new cultivars (or rootstocks and scions) using all available strategies, with consideration of pathogen genetic diversity.
3. Improve productivity of infected trees, including root health.
4. Systems for delivery of therapies into the phloem of citrus trees, including the root system.
5. Culturing or cultivating the CLAs bacterium.

6. Early detection of the bacterium in host and vector.
7. Development of pre- and post-harvest tools to maximize citrus fruit quality for use in fresh fruit or processed products.

NIFA recognizes that project teams potentially will make discoveries during the lifetime of a project that point to promising new advancements that were not part of the original objectives. The CDS has recommended that, should this situation arise, NIFA allow teams from currently funded projects to expand the project scope in order to produce tools useable by growers as quickly as possible. Pre-applications requesting an expansion in scope to take advantage of new discoveries should be submitted as RENEWAL projects.

In addition to addressing the priorities identified by the CDS, the CDRE program also supports USDA strategic Goals 1, 4, 5, and 7 (<https://www.usda.gov/our-agency/about-usda/strategic-goals>) and NIFA Strategic Plan (<http://nifa.usda.gov/resource/nifa-strategic-plan-fy2014-fy2018>) sub-goals 1.1, 1.2, 1.3, and 1.5. Further, CDRE supports REE Action Plan (<http://nifa.usda.gov/resource/ree-action-plan>) sub-goals 1A, 1B, 1C, 2A, 3A, 3B and Goals 4, and 6.

In FY 2018, the CDRE program will be competed in two stages. Applicants will be required to submit a pre-application containing a Stakeholder Relevance Statement (SRS). The content required in an SRS is described in Section IV, B. of this RFPA. Panels of industry representatives will review and rank the pre-applications for merit, relevance and impact and will decide which pre-applications should be invited to submit full applications. Details for submitting full applications will be provided to invitees in a separate Request for Applications. Review criteria for the SRS can be found in Section V, A. of this RFPA.

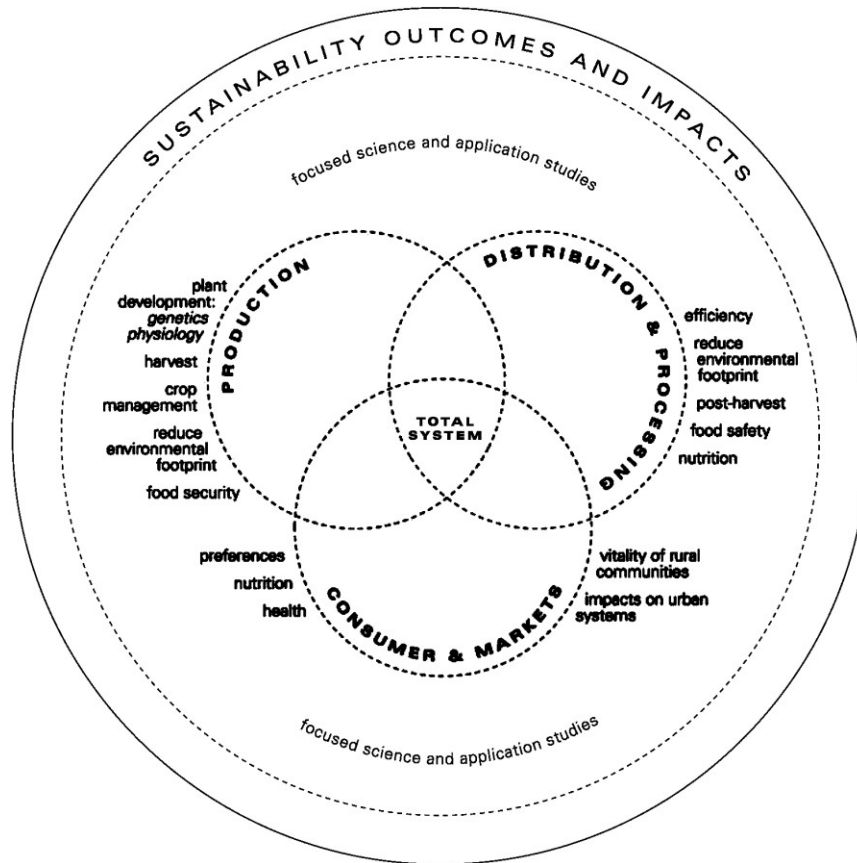
The CDRE program only considers projects that integrate research *and* extension activities.

Applicants are strongly encouraged to propose a unique approach to addressing CDRE priorities using a systems approach:

A systems approach is any process of estimating or inferring how local policies, actions, or changes influence the state of the neighboring universe. It is a framework that is based on the belief that the component parts of a system can best be understood in the context of relationships with each other and with other systems, rather than in isolation. The only way to fully understand why a problem or element occurs and persists is to understand the part in relation to the whole.

The philosophy of the CDRE program is that truly effective, long-term solutions to citrus health challenges can best be achieved by understanding and treating those challenges as complex systems of many interacting components. This perspective requires projects that are larger in scope and complexity, and that demand more resources than have traditionally been allocated to individual research and extension projects.

In doing so, projects should focus on entire primary systems, or on areas where two or more primary systems overlap. For the purpose of this announcement, a primary system is one of the three main sectors of the citrus industry depicted in the graphic below: the production system; the processing and distribution system; and the consumer and marketing system. Meeting the challenges faced by these industries can best be handled by considering the full breadth of system components (see example components listed for each primary system), rather than treating each component in isolation and ignoring important interactions, synergies, and conflicts among components that may reduce the viability of component-specific solutions in the long term.



PLEASE NOTE: For purposes of the CDRE program, the term **trans-disciplinary** is defined as a multi-disciplinary approach that brings biological and physical scientists together with economists and social scientists to address challenges in a holistic manner. It is anticipated that successful applications will:

1. Engage stakeholders in collaborative ways to identify those priorities of greatest need;
2. Bring together multi-state, multi-institutional teams of biological, physical, and social scientists to develop strategies and actions emphasizing **systems-based, trans-disciplinary** approaches for meeting the identified priorities;
3. Address priorities through research and extension;

4. Present plans for documenting the impacts of funded applications that include stakeholder involvement; and
5. Include explicit mechanisms to communicate results to producers and the public.

The Emergency Citrus Research and Extension strongly encourages applicants to develop partnerships that include collaboration with: (1) small- or mid-sized, accredited colleges and universities, and/or (2) 1890 land-grant institutions, 1994 land-grant institutions, Hispanic-serving institutions, and/or other institutions that serve high-risk, under-served, or hard-to-reach audiences, and/or (3) international partnerships, linkages, and exchanges that can positively impact critical citrus issues, priorities, or problems in the United States.

PART II—AWARD INFORMATION

A. Available Funding

The anticipated amount available for CDRE in FY 18 is approximately \$21.7 million.

The CDRE pre-application process does not result in award recommendations. However, an estimate of project costs is required. The information in Section B should be used to develop the estimate. PLEASE NOTE: Indirect cost recovery for CDRE is capped at 22% of total federal funds.

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 RFPA. For more information see

https://www.fiscal.treasury.gov/fsservices/gov/pmt/asap/asap_home.htm.

B. Project Types

In FY 18, the CDRE program offers the following two project types. Applicants should decide which project type is best suited to the objectives of their research and extension project and develop a preliminary budget that fits the objectives. Applicants are discouraged from developing a project (and selecting a project type) based on a budget request target.

1. Standard Research and Extension Projects (SREPs)

- a. Project Period – Up to 48 months.
- b. Budget – Normally, federal funds will not exceed \$1,000,000 per year. Requests less than \$250,000 per project are discouraged.
- c. Purpose – To support targeted problem-solving efforts that would not otherwise qualify in scope for support as a CAP project.
- d. For the years 2014 through 2017, CDRE SREP awards ranged from \$1.7 million to \$5.1 million with an average award of \$4.5 million and a median award of \$4.1 million.

SREP awards will support targeted problem-solving efforts that contribute to the overall sustainability of a primary system or one of its components (see Sustainability Outcomes and Impacts diagram in Part I B), and that would not otherwise qualify in scope and effort for support as a Coordinated Agricultural Project (CAP). Applications should bring together both research and extension components of the agricultural knowledge system around a problem area or activity. For each SREP award, there is an expectation that an advisory panel will be formed to inform the project throughout its life, including the identification and prioritization of research and extension objectives. SREPs represent the “focused science and application studies” portion of the systems diagram referenced above.

2. Coordinated Agricultural Projects (CAPs)

- a. Project Period – Up to 48 months.
- b. Budget – Normally, federal funds will not exceed \$2,000,000 per year.
- c. Purpose – To address specific multiple components of a primary system or multiple components of areas where primary systems overlap (see Sustainability Outcomes and Impacts diagram in Part I B).
- d. It is anticipated that most CAP awards will be in the range of \$5,000,000 to \$7,000,000 per project. No CAP projects have been awarded by the CDRE program to date.

CAPs will be awarded to consortia or groups of qualified applicants to address multiple components of a primary system, an entire primary system or problems that cut across primary systems, with the expectation that the project will make significant contributions to the sustainability of the system or system component (see Sustainability Outcomes and Impacts diagram in Part IB). CAP applications are expected to demonstrate coherent and complementary integrated activities with the ultimate goal of developing a strategy or solution that could be implemented for citrus crops. Applications are expected to take advantage of recent advances in biological, physical, and social and economic sciences and to translate basic discoveries and knowledge to practical applications. Applications are expected to demonstrate the potential to develop a national (or regional) strategy or solution as an ultimate goal. This would include the intent to promote collaboration, open communication, the exchange of information and development of resources that accelerate the application of scientific discovery and technology to solving the needs of affected citrus industries. Such a CAP should aim to reduce duplication of efforts and integrate activities among individuals, institutions, states, and regions.

C. 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

Pre-Applications may only be submitted by Federal agencies, national laboratories, colleges and universities, research institutions and organizations, private organizations or corporations, State Agricultural Experiment Stations, Cooperative Extension Services, individuals, or groups consisting of two or more of these entities.

Failure to meet an eligibility criterion by the 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

In accordance with section 1492 of the National Agricultural Research, Extension, and Teaching Policy Act of 1977 (7 U.S.C. 3371), as added by section 7128 of the Agricultural Act of 2014 (Pub. L. 113-79), for grants awarded after October 1, 2014, the recipient of an award from the **CDRE program** must provide funds, in-kind contributions, or a combination of both, from sources other than funds provided through such grant in an amount that is at least equal to the amount awarded by NIFA. The matching funds requirement does not apply to grants awarded:

1. To a research agency of the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA); or
2. To an entity eligible to receive funds under a capacity and infrastructure program (as defined in section 251(f)(1)(C) of the Department of Agriculture Reorganization Act of 1994, 7 U.S.C. 6971(f)(1)(C)), including a partner (see Part VIII, E. Definitions for definition of partnership) of such an entity. Entities eligible to receive funds under a capacity and infrastructure program and exempt from the matching funds requirement include:
 - a. 1862 Land-grant Institutions, including State Agricultural Experiment Stations receiving funding under the Hatch Act of 1887
 - b. 1890 Land-grant Institutions
 - c. 1994 Land-grant Institutions
 - d. Recipients of Continuing Animal Health and Disease, Food Security, and Stewardship Research, Education, and Extension Program Funds — Capacity and Infrastructure Program (CIP)
 - e. Hispanic-Serving Agricultural Colleges and Universities (HSACU)
 - f. Insular Area Schools Eligible to Receive Funds from the Distance Education/Resident Instruction Grant Programs
 - g. Recipients of McIntire-Stennis Cooperative Forestry Program Funds
 - h. Non-Land Grant Colleges of Agriculture (NLGCA) – (for exemption from the new matching requirement, these applications must include NLGCA certification, see instructions for requesting certification at <http://www.nifa.usda.gov/form/form.html>)
 - i. Recipients of funds under a program established under section 1417(b) of the National Agricultural Research, Extension, and Teaching Policy Act of 1977 (7

U.S.C. 3152(b)), including: (1) 1890 Institution Teaching, Research, and Extension Capacity Building Grants Program; (2) Higher Education Challenge Grants Program; (3) Higher Education Multicultural Scholars Program; and (4) Food and Agricultural Sciences National Needs Graduate and Postgraduate Fellowship Grants Program

- j. Individual public or private, nonprofit Alaska Native-Serving and Native Hawaiian-Serving Institutions of higher education (see 20 U.S.C. 1059d).

An invited application submitted to CDRE may indicate that the work will be completed by multiple entities as a collaborative partnership. If any member of such a partnership is eligible to be excepted from the CDRE matching requirement, all members of the partnership are excepted.

A proposal submitted in response to this RFPA may indicate that the work will be completed by multiple entities as a collaborative partnership. All partners must have a substantial involvement in the project throughout the life of the project. If a partnership among multiple entities is proposed, the proposal must clearly identify the following:

- 1) A narrative of each entity's clearly established role in the project;
- 2) How each entity involved as a partner on the project will contribute to execution of project objectives, determination of experimental design, development of the project work plan and time table, and submission of collaborative, timely reports; and
- 3) A comprehensive project budget that reflects each entity's financial or third party in-kind contribution (see section 2 of 7 CFR 3430 or section 96 of 2 CFR part 200) to the total project budget costs.

If a proposal indicates that the work on the project will be completed by multiple entities as partners, and at least one entity is exempt from the matching requirement under #2 above, the entire project will be exempt from the matching requirement regardless of whether all entities involved are otherwise exempt. Any partner entity can serve as the lead entity on the project. All partners must be significantly involved in the project.

After proposals have been recommended for award, NIFA will determine if the submitted proposal and proposed division of work reflects substantial involvement of all entities involved. If a proposal is recommended for award to a lead entity not otherwise exempt from the matching requirement and the proposal does not reflect substantial involvement of at least one partner that is exempt under #2 above, then the matching requirement will apply. Exemption from the matching requirement for an entity not otherwise exempt is limited to the project for which it is a partner.

Waiver of Match - NIFA may waive the matching funds requirement for a recipient for one year with respect to a competitive grant that involves research or extension activities that are consistent with the priorities established by the National Agricultural Research, Education, Extension and Economics Advisory Board (NAREEEAB) for the year involved.

C. Centers of Excellence

Pursuant to Section 7214 of the Agricultural Act of 2014 (Pub. L. 113-79), beginning in Fiscal Year 2015, for applicable competitive research and extension programs, NIFA will be recognizing and providing priority in the receipt of funding to applications from “centers of excellence” that have been established for purposes of carrying out research, extension, and education activities relating to the food and agricultural sciences. In July of 2014, NIFA held listening sessions and accepted written comments from stakeholders to inform NIFA’s implementation of the centers of excellence (COE) provision. Information from the webinars and a summary of the input gathered are available on NIFA’s website at http://www.nifa.usda.gov/about/offices/legis/cntr_ex_webinar_documents.html.

A COE is composed of 1 or more of the following entities that provide financial or in-kind support to the center of excellence. Therefore, an eligible applicant who wishes to be considered as a center of excellence must be one of the following entities that provides financial or in-kind support to the Center being proposed, as described in the grant application.

- (A)) State agricultural experiment stations;
- (B) colleges and universities;
- (C) university research foundations;
- (D)) other research institutions and organizations;
- (E)) Federal agencies;
- (F) national laboratories;
- (G)) private organizations, foundations, or corporations;
- (H)) individuals; or
- (I) any group consisting of 2 or more of the entities described in (A) through (H).

Only CAP projects and Standard Research and Extension projects will be considered for COE designation. To be granted center of Excellence designation a project must meet the following criteria.

- (A) The ability of the COE to ensure coordination and cost effectiveness by reducing unnecessarily duplicative efforts regarding research, teaching, and extension in the implementation of the proposed research and/or extension activity outlined in this application;
- (B)) in addition to any applicable matching requirements, the ability of the Center of Excellence to leverage available resources, (resources which are commensurate with the size of the award, scope of project, etc.) by using public-private partnerships among agricultural industry groups, institutions of higher education, and the Federal Government in the implementation of the proposed research and/or extension activity outlined in this application;
- (C) The capacity of the COE plan to implement teaching initiatives to increase awareness and effectively disseminate solutions to target audiences through extension activities in the implementation of the proposed research and/or extension activity outlined in this application;

(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.

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 RFP. 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.
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 where appropriate

Funding Opportunity Number: USDA-NIFA-SCRI-006550

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:

- Funding Opportunity Number (FON)
- Name of agency you are applying to
- 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 RFP. **If there is discrepancy between the two documents, the information contained in this RFP 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 RFP (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 RFP. 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

Stakeholder Relevance Statements (SRSs) are required for both CDRE project types. SRSs must be submitted as an attachment to a pre-application in the portable document format (PDF). SRSs not submitted in PDF format are not transmitted from grants.gov to NIFA and pre-applications not containing an SRS will be rejected.

Content of the Stakeholder Relevance Statement for SREP and CAP Projects

- a) Title of the project;
- b) Type of project to be submitted (i.e. SREP or CAP);
- c) Anticipated amount of funding to be requested.
- d) How stakeholders were engaged in identifying the strategy to be employed and determining project objectives;
- e) How stakeholders will continue to be engaged in project development and evaluation;
- f) How information developed during project will be translated into actionable recommendations or products and delivered to end-users. This section must indicate how intellectual property issues are being addressed and how regulatory requirements will be met;
- g) Experience of PD and key co-investigators (6 max) in working with the citrus community and in the techniques to be employed (a bio of up to 200 words can be included for each). If invited to submit a full application, additional project members can be added to the project;
- h) List of project objectives with corresponding hypotheses to be tested. Please note: Because the scientific merit review panel that examines subsequent full applications will help verify that the pre-application and full-application projects are essentially identical, the list of project objectives identified here must carry forward to a full application and the estimated budget in “c” above should be commensurate with those objectives.;
- i) Outline of methodology to be used to achieve project objectives (NB: the list of objectives and the methodology outline, combined, should consume no more than one page);
- j) Logic model chart; and
- k) Letters of support and collaboration from industry stakeholders.

PLEASE NOTE: The SRS cannot exceed 7 pages in length, exclusive of investigator bios and industry letters of collaboration and support. The SRS must be formatted with margins no less than 1 inch on all sides. Text must be 12 point or larger and must be left justified. A smaller font may be used in the logic model chart. Detailed budgets and budget narratives **ARE NOT** required in the SRS. **The SRS must be submitted in the PDF format.**

The SRS should be prepared following Parts IV and V of the document entitled “A Guide for Preparation and Submission of NIFA Applications via Grants.gov.” This guide is part of the corresponding application package (see Section A. of this Part). The following **additional information** is needed in order to prepare an application in response to this RFPA. **If there is discrepancy between the two documents, the information contained in this RFPA is overriding.**

2. Supplemental Information Form

Information related to the questions on this form is dealt with in detail in Part VI, 1. of the NIFA Grants.gov Application Guide.

- ~~a. **Field 2. Program to which you are applying.** Enter the program code name (i.e., enter “Emergency Citrus Research and Extension”) and the program code (i.e., enter “CDRE”). 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. **Felony Tax and Certification Form.** This form will be required for processing of awards. Please include your institution’s tax and felony certification form with your application. 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.~~

2. 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 “CDRE”) and the program code (i.e., enter “CDRE”). 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.

3. 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.

Pre-Applications must be received by Grants.gov by **5 p.m. Eastern Time on June 29, 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 5 days of the established deadline, contact the Agency Contact identified in Part VII of the RFPA 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.**

4. 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—PRE-APPLICATION REVIEW REQUIREMENTS

A. General

The CDRE program has instituted a two-phase review process. The first phase of the review process is the Industry Relevance Review. Each Pre-Application containing a Stakeholder Relevance Statement (SRS) will be evaluated in a two-part process. First, each SRS will be screened to ensure that it meets the administrative requirements as set forth in this RFP. Administrative requirements include: meeting the application deadline; meeting eligibility requirements; satisfying program intent; inclusion of all required sections of the SRS package; and adherence to guidelines.

Industry reviewers will be selected from: (a) persons directly involved in the growing, handling and processing of citrus; or (b) persons representing those defined above through trade organizations or other professional associations.

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 relevance review panel. Through these discussions, relevance review panelists come to consensus on the final rating and ranking of proposals.

The evaluation criteria listed below, with relative weights in parentheses, will be used to review pre-applications submitted in response to this RFP:

1. The proposed project builds on previous research and has real potential to result in systems to maintain the sustainability of citrus production in the United States (either regionally or nationally) in the presence of HLB. (20)
2. The described research and extension approach will result in impacts/outcomes that can be achieved over time frames that will allow growers to sustainably produce citrus. (20)
3. There is a clear indication that intellectual property concerns will be addressed at the onset of the project and that the project team has a plan for meeting regulatory requirements. (20)
4. Information developed by the project team will be delivered to stakeholders in ways that allow them to implement new and/or improved practices. (15)
5. Stakeholders were involved in identifying and developing project goals and objectives. (10)
6. Plans are in place for stakeholders to remain actively engaged in project activities. (5)
7. Stakeholders will be involved in program evaluation. (5)

8. Project team has at least some members who have worked with citrus in the past and have experience with the described research and extension approach. (5)

C. Conflicts of Interest and Confidentiality

During the pre-application 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 relevance review process.

PART VI – AWARD ADMINISTRATION

A. 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, C for more information.

PART VII—AGENCY CONTACT

Applicants and other interested parties are encouraged to contact:

Programmatic Contact –

Tom Bewick; National Program Leader
Division of Plant Systems Production; Institute of Food Production and Sustainability; National
Institute of Food and Agriculture USDA
STOP 2240; 1400 Independence Avenue, SW, Washington, DC 20250-2240;
Telephone: (202) 401-3356;
E-mail: tbewick@nifa.usda.gov.

Administrative/Business Contact –

Susan Bowman, Branch Chief
Office of Grants and Financial Management, Awards Management Division
National Institute of Food and Agriculture; USDA
STOP 2271; 1400 Independence Avenue, SW, Washington, DC 202005-2271;
Telephone: (202) 401-4324;
E-mail: sbowman@nifa.usda.gov.

OR

Adrienne Woodin, Branch Chief
Office of Grants and Financial Management, Awards Management Division
National Institute of Food and Agriculture; USDA;
STOP 2271; 1400 Independence Avenue, SW, Washington, DC 202005-2271;
Telephone: (202) 401-4320;
E-mail: awoodin@nifa.usda.gov.

PART VIII—OTHER INFORMATION

A. Use of Funds; Changes

The CDRE pre-application process does not result in award recommendations.

B. Confidential Aspects of Applications and Awards

Because pre-applications do not result in awards, all information conveyed in a pre-application will be considered confidential. A copy of the pre-application will be retained by the Agency for a period of three years.

C. Regulatory Information

For the reasons set forth in the final Rule related Notice to 7 C.F.R. part 3015, subpart V (48 FR 29114, June 24, 1983), 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

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.

For the purpose of this program, the following additional definitions are applicable:

Director means the Director of the National Institute of Food and Agriculture (NIFA) and any other officer or employee of NIFA to whom the authority involved is delegated.

Multifunctional research and extension activities are those in which research results are communicated via extension activities to stakeholders and the public in a coordinated manner during the life of a single project.

Project Director or PD means the single individual designated by the grantee in the grant application, who is responsible for the direction and management of the project and who is approved by the Authorized Departmental Officer. By extension of this definition, then, all project personnel listed as Co-PDs on an application are assumed to be approved by the grantee institution as ready and able to fulfill the role of PD in the event that the PD can no longer serve in that capacity. All other project personnel should be identified as co-principal investigators or key personnel.

Trans-disciplinary means a multi-discipline approach that brings biological and physical scientists together with economists and social scientists to address challenges in a holistic manner.