The Food and Agriculture Education Information System (FAEIS)

2018 Request for Applications (RFA)

APPLICATION DEADLINE: June 28, 2018

ELIGIBILITY: See Part III, A of RFA

USDA

United States
Department of
Agriculture

National Institute
of Food and
Agriculture

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

The Food and Agriculture Education Information System

INITIAL ANNOUNCEMENT

CATALOG OF FEDERAL DOMESTIC ASSISTANCE: This program is listed in the Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance under 10.200

DATES: 2018 Applications must be received by **5 p.m. Eastern Time** on **June 28, 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 Food and Agriculture Education Information System RFA.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY: NIFA requests applications for the Food and Agriculture Education Information System (FAEIS) for fiscal year (FY) 2018 to maintain a national food and agricultural education information system that contains information on enrollment, degrees awarded, faculty, employment placement, and other similar information in the food and agricultural sciences. The amount available for the grant in FY 2018 is $220,000.

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

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PART I—FUNDING OPPORTUNITY DESCRIPTION

A. Legislative Authority

This project is authorized by section 1417(e) of the National Agricultural Research Extension, and Teaching Policy Act of 1977, as amended (7 U.S.C 3152(e)), which authorizes the Secretary of Agriculture to maintain a national food and agricultural education information system that contains:

    1) Information on enrollment, degrees awarded, faculty, employment placement in the food and agricultural sciences; and

    2) Such other similar information as the Secretary considers appropriate.

B. Purpose and Priorities

The Food and Agriculture Education Information System (FAEIS) is a comprehensive database that gathers information, on a voluntary basis, from degree granting institutions of higher education on student enrollment in Food, Agriculture, Natural Resources, and Human Sciences (FANH) sciences, degrees awarded, and graduate placement at all degree levels and by gender, race, and other relevant categories. In addition, data is collected on faculty salaries by rank and discipline.

By monitoring trends in FANH science education, FAEIS directly aligns with:

- USDA Strategic Plan (2018-2022). specifically addressing Goal 2 (https://www.usda.gov/our-agency/about-usda/strategic-goals);
- USDA Research, Education and Economics (REE) Action Plan (March 2014 version, https://nifa.usda.gov/resource/ree-action-plan , specifically addressing Goal 6.
- NIFA Strategic Plan (2014-2018) (https://nifa.usda.gov/resource/nifa-strategic-plan-fy2014-fy2018), specifically addressing Strategic Goal No. 1

Funding under this authority provides funds to administer the FAEIS database. The applicant will:

1. Collect and maintain an accurate, verified and validated set of data, with a focus on FANH sciences from institutions of higher education in the United States. This includes but is not limited to:

    a. Determining the parameters of data to be collected, taking into account existing data fields, Classification of Instructional Programs (CIP) codes, ability to capture trends over time, and other relevant factors;

    b. Adapting survey tools to improve ease in data entry and data accuracy;

    c. Developing survey methodologies and outreach activities that encourage participation from diverse institutions including 1994, 1890, Hispanic Serving Agricultural Colleges and Universities (HSACU), Alaska Native-Serving and Native Hawaiian- Serving Institutions (ANNH), and other non-land grant, insular area, and non-land grant certified institutions with FANH science degrees;

d. Collaborating with USDA, higher education organizations such as APLU, and their partners to develop means of data collection and to ensure that FAEIS provides relevant information that meets the needs of all end users;

e. Implementing quality assurance measures and procedures

f. Integrating and/or comparing FAEIS data with the Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS);

g. Implementing a mechanism to capture, report, and analyze data, both qualitative and quantitative, that does not fit into standard survey questions (for example: new majors, termination of a program, transferring from a 2-year to a 4-year program).

2. Maintain and enhance an online platform offering user-friendly access to the data for students, institutions, industry, Federal agencies, and the public at large. This includes:

a. Assessing existing data and potential for migrating it from the current website, https://www.faeis.ahnrit.vt.edu/, to a new host (if a new institution is awarded the grant);

b. Designing and/ or providing access to report builders, data visualizations tools and other mechanism for users to interpret the data;

c. Maintaining updated and working links to NIFA programs, relevant reports and opportunities.

3. Facilitate outreach and dissemination of information on both FAEIS itself and outcomes from FAEIS data to NIFA, contributors of the data, and other users of data. This includes:

a. Quarterly newsletters that highlight, based on FAEIS data, issues in the FANH sciences education realm that effect workforce development;

b. Summary reports of data collected by year (institution type; college, etc.) in an Excel format similar to those published by IPEDS and SED (Survey of Earned Doctorates);

c. Webinars for outreach to institutions on submitting data to FAEIS;

d. Webinars for researchers and institutions on how to use the FAEIS website to access data

e. Participation in conferences and other workshops or meetings to promote institutional participation and end-user use of FAEIS.

PART II—AWARD INFORMATION

A. Available Funding

The amount available for a FAEIS grant in FY 2018 is approximately $220,000.

The length of the grant is one year. Subsequent continuation of the grant to support the FAEIS project for up to five years total and at similar funding levels are expected, for a total of $1.1 million; however, future funding is contingent upon Congressional appropriations and project performance. 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.

Key Information:

Program Code Name: Food and Agriculture Education Information System
Program Code: FF-L
CFDA: 10.200
Maximum # of Applications Per Institution: NA
Maximum # of Awards: 1
Project Duration: 1 year (noncompetitive continuation for 5 years, pending acceptable yearly performance review)
Total Maximum Award: $220,000 per year
Submission Due Date: June 28, 2018 (5:00pm Eastern)

B. Types of Applications

In FY 2018 you may only submit a new application to the FAEIS Program:

New application. This is a project application that has not been previously submitted to the FAEIS 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

1. **Grant Type -**The following is the available grant type under this RFA.

     (a) Standard. This 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 https://nifa.usda.gov/responsible-and-ethical-conduct-research for more information.

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PART III—ELIGIBILITY INFORMATION

A. Eligible Applicants

Eligible applicants to the FAEIS program, as defined in (7 U.S.C. 3318(c)) include: ~~Applications may only be submitted by colleges and universities as defined in (7 U.S.C. 3318(c)) to the FAEIS program:~~ 1) colleges and universities (including junior colleges offering associate degrees or higher); 2) university research foundations; 3) other research institutions and organizations; 4) federal agencies; 5) national laboratories; or 6) private organizations or corporations. 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
No cost sharing or match is required.

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.

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-OP-006554

   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 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. <u>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</u>. 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 2.17 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 FAEIS 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 15 pages of written text and up to five additional pages for figures and tables. We have established this maximum (20 pages) to ensure fair and equitable competition. The Project Narrative must include all of the following:

Formatting of the Project Narrative is: 12 pt. font, New Times Roman, 1 inch margins, 1.5 spaced. Tables and Charts can be 10 pt. font and single spacing.

1) Introduction: A clear statement of the long-term goal(s) and supporting objectives of the proposed activities. Briefly describe the technology that will be used to operate the online platform and the applicant's experience in developing and maintaining such a system. Describe ongoing or recently completed significant activities that relate to the proposed project including the work of key project personnel.

2) Objectives and Outcomes: Present the goals, objectives and expected outputs and outcomes of the project in relation to the needs identified in the introduction and in the program priorities in Section I.b. 1-3

3) Body of Knowledge: A short discussion of the relevant Body of Knowledge sufficient to demonstrate the applicant's understanding of agricultural education data, FAEIS, and its uses.

3) Approach. A thorough description of the activities proposed to achieve each objective, the approaches being applied, and a justification for these actions. Specifically, this section must include:
   a) A description of the activities proposed for each objective;
   b) A timeline of the proposed projects, including activities and expected measurable outputs and outcomes for each year of the five year project;
   c) Any novel ideas or contributions of the proposed project;
   d) Pitfalls that may be encountered and limitations to proposed procedures;

e) An evaluation plan, including performance targets and the means by which the outcomes will be analyzed, assessed, or interpreted each year and at the end of the project.

4) Personnel and Resources:
a) Describe in detail the key project personnel's experience in data collection, management, user friendly platforms, analysis, and outreach. Describe ongoing or recently completed significant activities related to the proposed project.
b) Provide other personnel needs, assignments, and the division of labor anticipated to carry out the project
c) Discuss collaborating organizations and their role in the project
d) Include a description of facilities necessary to house and maintain FAEIS.

c. Field 11. Equipment – PDF Attachment. **No page limit.** Title the attachment as 'Equipment' in the document header <u>and</u> save file as 'Equipment'. Equipment purchases proposed for the project must be fully justified under this section. Other purchases (e.g., computers, laboratory materials, etc.) are described in the Budget Justification section under the 'Materials and Supplies' line item. Provide details on computer and technology requirements that are available for the project and what is required by those who will be accessing your online platform.

d. 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.

Collaborative Arrangements – PDF Attachment. No page limit. Title the attachment as 'Collaborative Arrangements' in the document header and save file as 'CollaborativeArrangements'. If it is necessary to enter into formal consulting or collaborative arrangements with others, i.e., those who provide specialized expertise not available in the project team but who are not involved in project management, such arrangements should be fully explained and justified. If the consultant(s) or collaborator(s) are known at the time of the application, a vitae or resume should be provided. In addition, evidence (e.g., letter of support signed by the AR of the consultant/collaborating organization) should be provided that the collaborators involved have agreed to render these services. The applicant also will be required to provide additional information on consultants and collaborators in the budget portion of the application. An applicant's failure to provide the requested information may preclude NIFA from making an award.

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.

Budget Justification – **PDF Attachment. No page limit.** Title the attachment as 'Budget Justification' in the document header and save the file as 'BudgetJustification'. The Budget Justification must list matching sources along with the identification of the entity(ies) providing the match as well as the total dollar amount being pledged. NIFA is no longer requiring written verification of commitments of matching support (a pledge agreement). However, you are still subject to documentation, valuing and reporting requirements, etc. as specified in 2 CFR Part 200, "Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards (the Uniform Guidance)," 7 CFR 3430, "Competitive and Noncompetitive Non-Formula Federal Assistance Programs – General Award Administrative Provisions," and program-specific regulations, as applicable. In instances where match is required, any resulting award will require the signature of an Authorized Representative. Only when NIFA receives the award signed by the AR will award funds be released and available for drawdown.

You must establish the value of applicant contributions in accordance with applicable cost principles. Refer to 2 CFR Part 200, "Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards (the Uniform Guidance)," for further guidance and other requirements relating to matching and allowable costs.

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 "Inst. of Youth, Family and Community, Admin. Discretionary & Reim. Research"and the program code "FF-L" Note that accurate entry of the program code is very important for proper and timely processing of an application.

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

C. Submission Dates and Times

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** June 28, 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 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

No indirect costs allowed.

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., 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 NIFA program staff will recommend that your project be approved for support from currently available funds or be declined due to insufficient funds or unfavorable review.

NIFA 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. The criteria below are not equal in merit but are listed in descending order of importance. Applications are evaluated primarily for organizational effectiveness in operating an electronic database of agricultural education data with emphasis placed on overall clarity and delineation of objectives, activities, and outcomes, and outreach and collaboration plans:

1. Organizational Effectiveness in Operating an Electronic Database of Agricultural Education Data including:
   a. Ability to identify, gather, organize, and make available relevant data;
   b. Clear rationale for types of data collected and organization of the data for analysis;
   c. Plan for systematically engaging external data sources, like IPEDS, with the FAEIS data
   d. Successful multi-year experience with data collection and/or management and/or user interfaces;
   e. Management and organizational capacity to provide support to database users; knowledge and expertise to compile, analyze, and continuously improve outcomes-based measures and reporting; and
   f. Capacity to provide communications materials to enhance the impacts of FAEIS.

2. Clarity and Delineation of Objectives, Activities and Outcomes:
   a. Conceptual adequacy of the proposed activities to meet the needs of users including suitability and feasibility of the approach;
   b. Innovative plan to improve data quality and accessibility related to FANH science education;
   c. Clear timeline of activities, including necessary backend programming and data transfer (if relevant) and schedule for outreach activities;
   d. Reasonableness of the budget for planned activities. (While the size of the budget is not an evaluation criteria, the reviewers will be asked to comment whether it matches logically with the program described in the narrative.);
   e. Probability of success of the project given the level of originality, target audience and budget for each activity; and
   f. Achievability of expected outcomes and the performance targets as indicated in the evaluation plan.

3. Outreach Plan and Collaborative Arrangements:
   a. Plan for outreach to users, participants, partners, and other collaborative efforts;
   b. Time allotted to these activities;
   c. Approach to integrating stakeholder activities and collaborative efforts into data collection, management, and outcomes reporting; and
   d. Potential to transform the FAEIS database usability and importance through collaborative relationships and outreach activities;

4. Personnel Expertise and Track Record:
   a. Staff, consultant, and collaborator expertise in successful multi-year database projects that includes survey design, statistics, data collection, data management, and user friendly digital platforms.

5. Available or Obtainable Facilities and Instrumentation:
   a. Adequacy of the facilities and equipment to maintain the database and facilitate organized data collection.

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 FAEIS 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.

D. Responsible and Ethical Conduct of Research

Refer to Part II, D for more information.

E. Expected Program Outputs and Reporting Requirements

The output and reporting requirements are included in the award terms and conditions (see http://www.nifa.usda.gov/business/awards/awardterms.html for information about NIFA award terms). If there are any program or award-specific award terms, they will be identified in the award.

PART VII—AGENCY CONTACT

Applicants and other interested parties are encouraged to contact:

Programmatic Contact –
Ariela Zycherman, Ph.D.
National Program Leader
Division of Community and Education
Institute of Youth, Family, and Community
Phone: 202-531-0643 / 202-720-0384
Email: ariela.zycherman@nifa.usda.gov

Administrative/Business Contact –
Sondra Watkins,
Awards Management Division
Phone: (202) 578-7434
Email: swatkins@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

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.

Partnership requires that all partners have a substantial involvement in the project throughout the life of the project. If a partnership between multiple entities is proposed, the proposal 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, determine experimental design, develop the project work plan and time table, and submit collaborative, timely reports; and
3. A comprehensive project budget that reflects each entity's financial or in-kind contribution to the total project budget costs.

E. Materials Available on the Internet
Current FAEIS data, survey and other materials are housed at https://www.faeis.ahnrit.vt.edu/.