

Air Force Medical Operations Agency (AFMOA) Mental Health Division Research Project

FY 2017 Request for Applications (RFA)

APPLICATION DEADLINE: September 12, 2017

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 Medical Operations Agency (AFMOA) Mental Health Division Research Project

INITIAL ANNOUNCEMENT

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

DATES: Applications must be received by **5 p.m. Eastern Time on September 12, 2017**. Applications received after this deadline will normally not be considered for funding (see Part IV, C of this RFA). Comments regarding this request for applications (RFA) are requested within six months from the issuance of this notice. Comments received after that date will be considered to the extent practicable.

STAKEHOLDER INPUT: We at the National Institute of Food and Agriculture (NIFA) seek your comments about this RFA. We will consider your comments when we develop the next RFA for the program, if applicable, and we'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 Medical Operations Agency Mental Health Division Research (MHRP) RFA**.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY: NIFA requests applications for the **MHRP** for fiscal year (FY) **2017** to support the AFMOA MHRP in promoting the psychological health and well-being for Airmen and their families through staff development, consultation, program and resource development; program evaluation, and data tracking. The anticipated amount available for **MHRP** in FY 2017 is approximately **\$1,363,635**.

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

Table of Contents

PART I—FUNDING OPPORTUNITY DESCRIPTION	4
A. Legislative Authority and Background	4
B. Purpose and Priorities	4
PART II—AWARD INFORMATION.....	8
A. Available Funding.....	8
B. Types of Applications	8
C. Project Types	8
D. Responsible and Ethical Conduct of Research.....	8
PART III—ELIGIBILITY INFORMATION.....	9
A. Eligible Applicants.....	9
B. Cost Sharing or Matching	9
PART IV—APPLICATION AND SUBMISSION INFORMATION	9
A. Electronic Application Package	10
B. Content and Form of Application Submission	11
C. Submission Dates and Times	14
D. Funding Restrictions	15
PART V—APPLICATION REVIEW REQUIREMENTS	16
A. General.....	16
B. Evaluation Criteria	16
C. Conflicts of Interest and Confidentiality	17
D. Organizational Management Information	17
E. Application Disposition.....	18
PART VI—AWARD ADMINISTRATION	19
A. General.....	19
B. Award Notice	19
C. Administrative and National Policy Requirements.....	19
D. Expected Program Outputs and Reporting Requirements	19
PART VII—AGENCY CONTACT	21
PART VIII—OTHER INFORMATION	22
A. Use of Funds; Changes.....	22
B. Confidential Aspects of Applications and Awards.....	22
C. Regulatory Information	23
D. Definitions	23

PART I—FUNDING OPPORTUNITY DESCRIPTION

A. Legislative Authority and Background

In accordance with the Economy Act of 1932, as amended, (31 U.S.C. 1535), the Air Force Medical Operations Agency (AFMOA), 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 AFMOA Mental Health Division Research Project 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

MHRP is aligned with:

- USDA Strategic Plan for FY 2014-2018, Goal 1, Objective 1.1;
- 2014 USDA's Research, Education, and Economics (REE) Action Plan, Goal 7, Strategies 3 and 4 of Goal 7;
- NIFA Strategic Plan for 2014-2018, Goal 1, Sub-goal 1.7; and
- NIFA's Family and Consumer Sciences priorities in the areas of community vitality and family well-being.

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. 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

Military members and families encounter unique stressors and challenges that may pose increased threats to psychological well-being. Unique challenges include long duty-related separations, multiple relocations, service member morbidity and mortality, and living with loved ones being in harm's way. In addition, military families also experience major life events similar to their civilian counterparts such as a birth of a child, buying a house in addition to daily stressors (e.g., taking care of chores, providing childcare, sitting in traffic). In both the military

and civilian social service sectors, there is increased interest in providing policy, programs and services that work to prevent and treat psychological health issues. In addition, there has been pressure from Congress, policymakers, and program funders for greater effectiveness and accountability in prevention and intervention programs. These events have culminated in recent calls to enhance the health and well-being of military families through the use of evidence-based informed policy and practices.

The Mental Health Division of AFMOA engages in projects with an emphasis on translating evidence based programs into the policy, program development and practices for military families. The Mental Health Division's mission is to define and execute mental health care policy, programs and services in support of the Air Force Surgeon General's objectives. This critical service is provided to 44,000 personnel at 76 military treatment facilities (MTFs), ensuring a cost-effective, patient-centered, and prevention-based behavioral health care continuum for 2.6 million military beneficiaries worldwide. Integral to this work is the ability to create support tools and provide policy and training that foster high quality implementation of evidence-based programs and practices.

For the past five years the Mental Health Division has enhanced its efforts to pursue strategies for provision of evidence-based informed policy, practices and services ensuring high quality mental health care in support of Air Force members' psychological health. Recently, the Mental Health Division of AFMOA has facilitated the development of print and social media marketing campaign across all Air Force installations—the Early Mental Health Help Seeking campaign. The messages and images were designed to encourage Airmen and family members to seek help for mental health problems early when the problems are generally more manageable. All materials were extensively piloted with airmen at various installations and revised based on the collected feedback and outcome were monitored to measure impact.

The Mental Health Division also implemented a social norms-based approach aimed at reducing problem alcohol use at select installations. This approach to alcohol misuse prevention has been applied on numerous college campuses with same-aged cohorts, has demonstrated promising results, and has been identified as a model practice by the U.S. Department of Education. The social norms approach uses normative-based messages crafted from site-specific data designed to reduce misperceptions and reinforce positive norms for each base, which in turn attenuate problematic drinking behavior. The project demonstrated the utility of using a social norms approach to alcohol abuse prevention in a military setting. Results showed that among Airmen at bases where the social norms media campaigns were delivered, Airmen's accurate perceptions of peer alcohol use norms increased. In addition, drinking frequency, drinking quantity, and consequences experienced as a result of drinking declined at the bases who received the social norms intervention.

Furthermore, a comprehensive review of more than 50 programs to treat substance use and alcohol use disorders identified the best practices available for inclusion in the Mental Health Division's Level 1 Alcohol and Drug Abuse Prevention and Treatment (ADAPT) program. As a result of this review process, three evidence-based programs were identified for ADAPT Level 1

treatment and three separate manuals have been adapted specifically for Air Force application and are now available for counselors' use.

Lastly, the Mental Health Division, in partnership with a land-grant university under an agreement with NIFA, developed a computer-based training for mental health providers who are new to the Air Force. The training has ten educational modules encompassing relevant topics such as assessing and managing suicide risk, maintaining confidentiality and consultation with military commanders, termination and transfer of patient care, and special military duty evaluations. These modules are designed to be equally effective when viewed in a series or consulted individually when specific questions arise.

The primary objective for this project is:

- To assess, develop, and evaluate programming to treat and prevent mental health problems to support the Mental Health Division of the Air Force Medical Operations Agency (AFMOA).

This objective will be accomplished through the following activities and products:

Project I: Staff Training and Advisory Functions

1. *Advisory and Consultation:* Require consultation at least monthly with experts in practices, programming, and program evaluation for the prevention and treatment of psychological health and alcohol/drug abuse problems among Air Force members and families to provide guidance regarding ongoing service improvement initiatives.
2. *Continuing Education Unit (CEU) Coordination and Administration:* Collaborate with the Mental Health Division to establish Continuing Education Units (CEUs; e.g., APA, NASW, CME, and Nursing) for 3-5 trainings (e.g., face-to-face, web-based, and computer-based).

Project II: Mental Health Continuous Quality Improvement and Management

Phase II of Air Force Implementation of Zero Suicide Systems Approach:

1. Continue building upon the Phase I Air Force Zero Suicide System Approach (ZSSA) Pilot Project. The recipient of this award will continue to support the ZSSA pilot with the five existing pilot bases and utilize lessons learned from the first year of the pilot to initiate scale-up of ZSSA to remaining 71 bases Air Force wide. Requirements will include support for leadership, screening/assessment implementation, engagement protocol implementation, and continuous quality improvement.
2. *Creation of an Evidence-Based Course of Care Repository:* To assist Air Force mental health and behavioral health providers to efficiently apply the proper courses of care for a wide variety of diagnoses, recipient of this award will create a web-based platform and

decision tree in the form of evidence-based course of care repository. Phase I of this project will involve gathering information from Air Force providers regarding the most frequent diagnoses they encounter.

Project III: Continuous Quality Improvement for Alcohol and Drug Abuse Program

- I. Phase III Social Norms Alcohol Misuse/Abuse Prevention Initiative:* This project will build upon Phase I and Phase II of the Social Norms Initiative. In Phase III, the grant recipient will develop an online social norms survey with the ultimate goal of establishing an Air Force-specific Social Norms intervention targeting alcohol overuse and abuse. This phase of the project will involve piloting of the survey and the development of the online portion, as well as the development of Social Norms marketing materials. Future project phases may involve the Air Force-wide rollout of the survey and the evaluation of it as a prevention tool.

PART II—AWARD INFORMATION

A. Available Funding

The anticipated amount available for **MHRP** in **FY 17** is approximately \$1,363,635.

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 17, you may only submit a new application to the MHRP Competitive Grant Program:

New application. This is a project application that has not been previously submitted to the MHRP 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. Project Types

For FY 2017, approximately \$1,363,635 will be available to fund one standard grant proposal for two (2) years (see Part I, A. Legislative Authority and Background).

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.

For information about the Responsible and Ethical Conduct of Research, see

<http://nifa.usda.gov/responsible-and-ethical-conduct-research>.

PART III—ELIGIBILITY INFORMATION

A. Eligible Applicants

Applications may only be submitted by State agricultural experiment stations, State cooperative extension services, all colleges and universities, other research or educational institutions or organizations, to further research, extension, or teaching programs in food, agriculture, natural resources and human sciences.

Award recipients 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.

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.
2. To obtain the application package from Grants.gov, go to <http://www.grants.gov/web/grants/applicants/download-application-package.html> and enter the funding opportunity number

Funding Opportunity Number: USDA-NIFA-COOP-006389

From the search result, click “Select Package” to access the application package. A Grant Application Package is tied to a particular funding opportunity. You may submit an application ONLY to the particular funding opportunity to which the Grant Application Package is associated.

Contained within the application package is the “NIFA Grants.gov Application Guide.” This guide contains an introduction and general Grants.gov instructions, information about how to use a Grant Application Package in Grants.gov, and instructions on how to complete the application forms.

If you require assistance to access the application package (e.g., downloading or navigating Adobe forms) **or submitting the application**, refer to resources available on the Grants.gov website (<http://www.grants.gov/web/grants/applicants/applicant-tools-and-tips.html>). Grants.gov assistance is also available at:

Grants.gov customer support

800-518-4726 Toll-Free or 606-545-5035

Business Hours: 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Closed on [federal holidays](#).

Email: support@grants.gov

Grants.gov iPortal (see <https://grants-portal.psc.gov/Welcome.aspx?pt=Grants>):

Top 10 requested help topics (FAQs), Searchable knowledge base, self-service ticketing and ticket status, and live web chat (available 7 a.m. - 9 p.m. EST).

Have the following information available when contacting Grants.gov:

- Funding Opportunity Number (FON)
- Name of agency you are applying to
- Specific area of concern

B. Content and Form of Application Submission

You should prepare electronic applications following Parts V and VI of the NIFA Grants.gov Application Guide. This guide is part of the corresponding application package (see Section A of this part). The following is **additional information** you need to prepare an application in response to this RFA. **If there is discrepancy between the two documents, the information contained in this RFA is overriding.**

Note the attachment requirements (e.g., PDF) in Part III, Section 3 of the guide. ANY PROPOSALS THAT ARE NON-COMPLIANT WITH THE REQUIREMENTS (e.g., content format, PDF file format, file name restrictions, and no password protected files) WILL BE AT RISK OF BEING EXCLUDED FROM NIFA REVIEW. Grants.gov does not check for NIFA required attachments or whether attachments are in PDF format; see Part III, Section 6.1 of the guide for how to check the manifest of submitted files. Partial applications will be excluded from NIFA review. We will accept subsequent submissions of an application until close of business on the closing date in the RFA (see Part V, 2.1 of the NIFA Grants.gov Application Guide for further information).

For any questions related to the preparation of an application, review the NIFA Grants.gov Application Guide and the applicable RFA. If assistance is still needed for preparing application forms content, contact:

- Email: electronic@nifa.usda.gov
- Phone: 202-401-5048
- Business hours: Monday through Friday, 7 a.m. – 5 p.m. EST, excluding [federal holidays](#).

1. SF 424 R&R Cover Sheet

Information related to the questions on this form is dealt with in detail in Part V, 2 of the NIFA Grants.gov Application Guide. See Part V, Section 2.18 of the NIFA Grants.gov Application Guide for the required certifications and assurances (e.g., Prohibition Against Entities Requiring Certain Internal Confidentiality Agreements).

2. SF 424 R&R Project/Performance Site Location(s)

Detailed information related to the questions on this form is available in Part V, 3 of the NIFA Grants.gov Application Guide.

3. R&R Other Project Information Form

Detailed information related to the questions on this form is available in Part V, 4 of the NIFA Grants.gov Application Guide.

a. Field 7. Project Summary/Abstract.

The summary should also include the relevance of the project to the goals of **MHRP**. 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 **8** pages of written text, regardless of whether it is single- or double-spaced, and up to **4** additional pages for figures and tables. We have established this maximum (**12** pages) to ensure fair and equitable competition. 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 basic and applied research; and describe knowledge and experience in behavioral and psychological health issues, building staff and program capacity among mental health professionals focused on substance abuse treatment, learning science, implementing large-scale, multi-site zero-suicide prevention programs, and developing and implementing effective prevention/intervention practices. Please describe any relevant experience with the DoD and/or the Air Force Medical Operations Agency (AFMOA).

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, desired outcomes, and anticipated impacts;
- The sum of activities under each objective must lead to completion of those objectives within the 1-year project duration;
- As appropriate, methods by which data and/or information 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 intended outcomes to be tracked and monitored; and
- A description of development and/or implementation challenges that may be encountered.

The project plan will be finalized based on written feedback from the AFMOA 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, as well as relevant stakeholders.

Section 4: Project Management

- Provide a brief summary of key personnel, their project functions, qualifications and expertise along with timelines, reporting, and collaborative efforts. Describe any experience in coordinating with the DoD and/or AFMOA on related projects. **The project start date should be September 1, 2017 and the end date should be August 31, 2019.**

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. **Budget breakdown and justification should be provided for each project year (Year 1 and Year 2). The project start date should be September 1, 2017 and the end date should be August 31, 2019.**

7. Supplemental Information Form

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

- a. Field 2. Program to which you are applying.** Enter the program code name (i.e., enter “AFMOA Mental Health Division Research Program”) and the program code (i.e., enter “MHRP”). 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.

While the checklist should be used to check the application for completeness, the application should be checked additionally for the following required item(s). This is not an exhaustive list of required items; it only serves to highlight required items that are sometimes overlooked by applicants:

- Project Summary
- Project Narrative: including Project Action Plan
- Bibliography
- Current and Pending Support forms
- Conflict of Interest forms

Instructions for submitting an application are included in Part IV, Section 1.9 of the NIFA Grants.gov Application Guide.

Applications must be received by Grants.gov by **5 p.m. Eastern Time on September 12, 2017**. Applications received after this deadline will normally not be considered for funding.

If you have trouble submitting an application to Grants.gov, you should FIRST contact the Grants.gov Help Desk to resolve any problems. Keep a record of any such correspondence. See Part IV. A for Grants.gov contact information.

We send email correspondence to the AR regarding the status of submitted applications. We strongly encourage you to provide accurate email addresses, where designated, on the SF-424 R&R Application for Federal Assistance.

If the AR has not received correspondence **from NIFA** regarding a submitted application within 10 business 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 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 1.9 in the document entitled “NIFA Grants.gov Application Guide.”

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

PART V—APPLICATION REVIEW REQUIREMENTS

A. General

We evaluate each application in a two-part process. First, we screen each application to ensure that it meets the administrative requirements as set forth in this RFA. Second, a technical review panel will evaluate applications that meet the administrative requirements.

We select reviewers based upon their training and experience in relevant scientific, extension, or education fields, taking into account the following factors:

- the level of relevant formal scientific, technical education, or extension experience of the individual, as well as the extent to which an individual is engaged in relevant research, education, or extension activities;
- the need to include experts from various areas of specialization within relevant scientific, education, or extension fields;
- the need to include other experts (e.g., educators, researchers, and military helping professionals) 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 the U.S. Air Force (USAF), mental health professionals serving Airmen and their families, and Airmen and their families.

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

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

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

B. Evaluation Criteria

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

1. Potential for successfully assessing, developing, implementing and evaluating psychological health and substance abuse treatment programming as well as conducting related research to support the Mental Health Division of AFMOA (40 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) meeting project objectives by completing the activities and products described in Part I—Funding Opportunity Description, Section B., based on their proposed plan and past experience with basic and applied research related to mental health? and? behavioral and psychological health issues; building staff and program capacity among mental health professionals focused on substance abuse treatment; learning science; suicide prevention including demonstrated partnership with an organization experienced in tailoring and implementing a zero suicide framework on a large, multi-site scale; and best prevention/intervention practices, in coordination with DoD and/or AFMOA.

2. Proposed Approach and Program Coordination (25 Points)

This criterion is used to assess the soundness of the proposed approach including statement of need, scope of the project, objectives, project plan, design, methods, key personnel, timeline, expected products and results, and communication plan.

3. Evaluation (20 Points)

This criterion is used to assess the adequacy of the proposed project evaluation design and? its capacity to meet the project objectives.

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 the budget outline provided. Elements considered include: the necessity and reasonableness of costs to support project activities and achieve project objectives and the adequacy of time committed to the project by key project personnel.

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 **MHRP** program staff for a period of three years.

PART VI—AWARD ADMINISTRATION

A. General

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

B. Award Notice

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

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

C. Administrative and National Policy Requirements

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

NIFA Federal Assistance Policy Guide—a compendium of basic NIFA policies and procedures that apply to all NIFA awards, unless there are statutory, regulatory, or award-specific requirements to the contrary—is available at <http://nifa.usda.gov/policy-guide>.

Responsible and Ethical Conduct of Research

Refer to Part II, D for more information.

D. Expected Program Outputs and Reporting Requirements

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

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 AFMOA to ensure that any confidentiality necessary related to the deliverables is maintained and that NIFA and AFMOA 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 AFMOA 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
USDA – National Institute of Food and Agriculture
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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, unless the terms and conditions state otherwise.

- (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 excluded from the scope of the Executive Order 12372, which requires intergovernmental consultation with state and local officials.

Under the provisions of the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995 (44 U.S.C. Chapter 35), the collection of information requirements contained in this notice have been approved under OMB Document No. 0524-0039.

D. Definitions

Please refer to [7 CFR 3430, Competitive and Noncompetitive Non-formula Financial Assistance Programs--General Award Administrative Provisions](#), for applicable definitions for this NIFA grant program.