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NIFA

REQUEST FOR APPLICATION
Secondary Education, Two-Year Postsecondary Education, and Agriculture in the K-12 Classroom Challenge Grants Program (SPECA)

MODIFICATION: This RFA is an updated version of the FY 2020-FY 2021 solicitation. It includes only the references to FY 2021 funding; FY 2020 references have been eliminated; Additional edits 10/17/2020 pages 6, 15, 21, and 28. General updates and edits appear in red.

FUNDING YEAR:	Fiscal Year 2021
APPLICATION DEADLINE:	FY 2021: February 4, 2021
LETTER OF INTENT DEADLINE:	Not Required
AWARD AMOUNT:	Approximately: $ 800,000 (annually)
ASSISTANCE LISTING NUMBER:	10.226

INITIAL ANNOUNCEMENT
National Institute of Food and Agriculture, United States (U.S.) Department of Agriculture (USDA)

Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance. The Secondary Education, Two-Year Postsecondary Education, and Agriculture in the K-12 Classroom Challenge Grants Program (SPECA) is listed in the Assistance Listings under the Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance number 10.226.

Table 1: Key Dates and Deadlines

Task Description	Deadline
Application:	FY 2021: 5:00 P.M. Eastern, February 04, 2021
Letter of Intent:	Not Required
Applicants Comments:	Within six months from the issuance of this notice (*NIFA may not consider comments received after the sixth month*)

Stakeholder Input. The National Institute of Food and Agriculture (NIFA) seeks comments on all request for applications (RFAs) so it can deliver programs efficiently, effectively, with integrity, and with a focus on customer service. NIFA considers comments, to the extent possible when developing RFAs and use comments to help 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)). Applicants may submit written comments to Policy@usda.gov (email is for comments only). Please use the following subject line: Response to the SPECA RFA.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This notice identifies the objectives for SPECA projects, deadlines, funding information, eligibility criteria for projects and applicants, and application forms and associated instructions. NIFA requests applications for the Secondary Education, Two-Year Postsecondary Education, and Agriculture in the K-12 Classroom Challenge Grants Program (SPECA) to promote and strengthen food and agricultural science education.

NIFA requests applications for the SPECA program for FY 2021. The anticipated amount available for grants is approximately $800,000. This RFA is being released prior to the passage of an appropriations act for FY2021. Enactment of additional continuing resolutions or a full appropriations act may affect the availability or level of funding for this program. SPECA program information will be made available on the NIFA website at SPECA.
The following are among the materials available on the web page:
1. Frequently Asked Questions
2. SPECA Webinar
3. SPECA Proposal Evaluation Plan Guidance
4. SPECA Project Summary/Abstract Template

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PART I. FUNDING OPPORTUNITY DESCRIPTION

A.   Legislative Authority
Section 1405 of the [National Agricultural Research, Extension, and Teaching Policy Act of 1977](#) (NARETPA), as amended, ([7 U.S.C. 3121](#)) designates the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) as the lead Federal agency for agriculture research, extension and teaching in the food and agricultural sciences. Authority for this program is contained in section 1417(j) of NARETPA ([7 U.S.C. 3152(j)](#)).

B.   Purpose and Priorities
The purpose of the SPECA program is to award grants to:
1. Enhance the quality of K-14 instruction in order to help meet current and future national food and agricultural sciences workplace needs
2. Increase the number and diversity of students who will pursue and complete a 2 or 4-year degree in the food and agricultural sciences.

3. Promote and strengthen secondary education and 2-year postsecondary education in agriscience and agribusiness in order to help ensure the existence in the United States of a qualified workforce to serve the food and agricultural sciences system; and
4. Promote complementary and synergistic linkages among secondary, 2-year postsecondary, and higher education programs in the food and agricultural sciences in order to promote excellence in education and encourage more young Americans to pursue and complete a baccalaureate or higher degree in the food and agricultural sciences.

SPECA-funded projects encourage academic institutions, in partnership with organizations and employers to identify and address challenges facing the food and agricultural sciences education and workforce community. As noted in the [2016 National Academies (NAS) Press Report, Barriers and Opportunities for 2-Year and 4- Year STEM Degrees](#) and the [2016 NAS workshop on Creating the Future Workforce in Food, Agriculture, and Natural Resources](#), the talent pipeline for the agriculture workforce begins well before college admission and a focus on secondary programs holds tremendous potential to increase not only the number, but the diversity of students entering baccalaureate programs, a requisite for the innovation needed in the food and agricultural sciences.

Accordingly, SPECA-funded project activities shall support the creation, adaptation, and adoption of learning materials and teaching strategies to operationalize what we know about how students learn. Many of these concepts are identified in the National Research Council's publication: *[How People Learn](#)*. SPECA-funded projects shall also focus on imparting both technical knowledge as well as 'soft' skills such as communication, team work, and problem solving, as these are abilities expected by employers. These concepts may be found in the publication [Comparative Analysis of Soft Skills: What is Important for New Graduates?](#)

eXtension. SPECA encourages (but does not require) projects that develop content suitable for delivery through [eXtension.](#)

Global Engagement. NIFA supports global engagement that advances U.S. agricultural goals. NIFA recognizes that collaboration with international partners may be necessary to attain the agency's goals for U.S. agriculture, promote global competence of our nation's future

agricultural workforce, and promote safe and nutritious food security in a growing world. Therefore, although application to this RFA is limited to eligible U.S. institutions, applicants may collaborate with international partners, to include subcontracts to international partners or other institutions. Applications must clearly demonstrate benefits to the U.S.

Leadership Skills Development. The development of leadership skills, knowledge, and qualities are necessary to prepare students for agricultural and related careers in the private sector, government, and academia. SPECA teaching applications must demonstrably incorporate a leadership development component to equip students with technical and leadership abilities upon graduation. Specific activities may include:

1. Developing practical applications to increase understanding of leadership roles, including critical thinking, problem solving, and communication skills; ethics and professionalism; and working in teams;
2. Connecting the academic classroom experience with daily leadership roles and organizational activities;
3. Providing opportunities for mentoring and shadowing; and
4. Organizing leadership academies, workshops, trainings, etc.

Incorporation of Social Sciences and Enhancing Impacts. The SPECA Program supports social and behavioral science disciplines. SPECA projects that integrate social and biological sciences to provide experiential learning opportunities for students in applied research and related community development programs are encouraged. Incorporation of social and behavioral sciences is important for addressing many of the challenges facing agriculture and rural communities, such as increasing global demand for food production in the face of limited natural resources; improving health and reducing obesity by engaging in heathy lifestyles and consuming heathy diets; and alleviating poverty by fostering economic opportunity.

The SPECA is aligned with the following USDA Strategic Goals:

1. Strategic Goal 4: Facilitate Rural Prosperity and Economic Development; Objective 4.1: Expand rural business opportunity and rural quality of life with access to capital; improved infrastructure, broadband access and connectivity; and support for workforce availability

Table 2: Program Key Information

Title	Description
Program Code:	SPECA
Program Code Name:	Secondary and Two-Year Postsecondary Education Challenge
CFDA Number	10.226
Project Type:	Education/Teaching Projects
Grant Type:	Regular and Collaborative grants ONLY
Application Deadline	FY2021: February 04, 2021

Grant Duration:	24-36 months
Anticipated # of Awards:	8-12
Maximum Award Amount:	Regular Grant: $50,000 Collaborative Type 1 Grant: $150,000 Collaborative Type 2 Grant: $300,000

Program Category. Your project must support academic instruction with a primary focus in at least one of the following three K-14 Grade Levels:

1. **Agriculture in the K-12 Classroom (AITC):** Projects specifically developed by or for the state AITC program. (Note: A letter of support from the relevant state AITC organization endorsing your project, clarifying the absence of duplication with existing materials or projects, and explaining its implementation process into the academic system must accompany applications submitted in this Program Category)
2. **Secondary School**: Projects with a specific focus on any of the academic grades 9 through 12
3. **Junior or Community College**: Projects with a specific focus on associate degree level (2-year postsecondary) activities

A SPECA-funded project must focus on any of the K-14 grade levels. Projects with a target audience of baccalaureate or higher-level students or teachers should, instead, be referred to the Higher Education Challenge Grants Program HEC offered through NIFA..

Educational Need Areas. When preparing a SPECA-funded project, the rationale for choosing a particular Educational Need Area below must be explained in the context of how the project can contribute to the development of a cadre of students who will either pursue higher degrees in the food and agricultural sciences or be prepared to enter the food and agricultural sciences workforce.

Educational Need Areas for the SPECA program are:

1. *Curriculum Development, Instructional Delivery Systems, and Expanding Student Career Opportunities.* To promote new and improved curricula and materials to increase the quality of, and continuously renew, the Nation's K-14 academic programs in the food and agricultural sciences. Projects shall stimulate the development and facilitate the use of exemplary education models and materials that incorporate the most recent advances in subject matter research, research on teaching and learning theory, and instructional technology.

   Examples of eligible projects in this *Need Area* may include, but **are not limited to**, the following strategies:
   a. The development of innovative course content, including innovative ways to integrate scientific research experiences into K-14 curricula;
   b. The use of new approaches to the study of traditional subjects or the introduction of new food and agricultural sciences subjects;
   c. Hands-on learning experiences and methods to extend learning beyond the classroom and provide students with opportunities to solve complex problems in the context of real-world situations;

d. Opportunities for students to complete apprenticeships, internships, career mentoring experiences, or other participatory learning experiences. Targeted summer programs providing a bridge to 4-year food and agricultural sciences degrees for underrepresented high-school students are encouraged; and

e. Creating career placement or higher education academic counseling activities to encourage graduates to pursue postsecondary food and agricultural sciences degrees.

2. *Faculty Preparation and Enhancement for Teaching.* To advance faculty development in the areas of teaching competency, subject matter expertise, pedagogy, responsiveness to changes in student demographic composition and learning styles, and student recruitment and advising skills. Training of targeted faculty recipients must be relevant to the identified educational needs of the students, who will be the beneficiaries of such faculty development. Any individual recipient of federal funds must be an "eligible participant" as defined in the definitions section of this RFA (Appendix III). Examples of eligible projects in this Need Area may include, but not limited to, the following strategies:

    a. Engaging graduate students enrolled in agricultural education degree program (and/or existing faculty in agricultural education) to more effectively interact with K-14 food and agricultural science programs;

    b. Creating assessments that document student learning outcomes or that identify conceptual areas or skills particularly challenging to students, followed by appropriate changes in instructional approaches to effectively address these issues; and

    c. Exploring web-based approaches for faculty professional development.

3. *Facilitating Interaction with other Academic Institutions.* To promote K14 focused activities that form linkages between secondary, 2-year postsecondary, and baccalaureate degree-granting institutions to maximize the use of resources supporting outstanding education in the food and agricultural sciences. Activities should focus on ensuring completion of secondary degrees, enrollment into postsecondary programs and/or transfer to a 4-year institution. Partnerships, collaborative arrangements, and shared resources between institutions (including course credit sharing arrangements) are encouraged. Examples of projects strategies include:

    a. Development and use of articulation agreements, 2+2 or 2+2+2 arrangements (policies and programs designed to foster credit transfer between high schools, community colleges, and four-year institutions), advanced placement credit transfer, or the sharing of faculty and facilities;

    b. A project that focuses on developing and implementing comprehensive, multi-institutional practices proven to recruit and retain K-14 level students with a focus on cultivating those students to pursue a postsecondary food and agricultural sciences degree; and

    c. A project that will result in establishing and implementing programs or procedures (faculty sharing, articulation agreements, electronic exchange of coursework, etc.) to disseminate curricula, instructional methods, or training practices to faculty across the state or region.

Additional Information

1. SPECA- funded projects shall engage more than a single course or an individual instructor.

2. Any individual (eligible participant) receiving Federal funds must be a citizen or national of the United States, as defined in this RFA (see Appendix III).
3. Applicants are encouraged to collaborate with an agency or research facility, including a USDA agency, to leverage grant funds and/or contribute towards overall goals and objectives. USDA agencies may be found at Agencies.

The total number of grants awarded by this grant program will depend on the number and type of meritorious applications submitted in response to this notice. Depending upon available funding, there may be a limit of one *Collaborative Grant Type 2 (*CG2) project awarded each year.

Based on the project scope and budget of all applications selected for awards, the actual, individual grant amounts awarded by NIFA under this grants program may differ from the funds requested by the applicant. In such cases, NIFA may require revised budgets and revised plans of work before making an award. Each eligible individual institution, independent branch campus, and branch institution of a State system may submit one application. NIFA will make only one award per eligible institution. Only one active SPECA award at a time can be held by any single institution

PART II. AWARD INFORMATION

A.   Available Funding

The anticipated amount available for SPECA in FY2021 is approximately $800,000. This RFA is being released prior to the passage of an appropriations act for FY 2021. Enactment of additional continuing resolutions or an appropriations act may affect the availability or level of funding for this program.

USDA is not committed to fund any particular application or to make a specific number of awards.

The Automated Standard Application for Payments, operated by the Department of Treasury, Bureau of Fiscal Service, is the designated payment system for awards resulting from this RFA.

B.   Application Restrictions

NIFA will evaluate applications using the criteria described in Part V of this RFA. Applications are limited to the following applications types:

1. *New application*: New applications will be evaluated using the criteria described in Part V of this RFA and are subject to the due dates herein (see Appendix III for definition).
2. *Resubmitted application*: Resubmitted applications must include the respond to the previous review panel summary and are subject to the same criteria and due dates herein. Resubmitted applicants must enter the NIFA-assigned proposal number of the previously submitted application in the *Federal Field (Field 4)* on the application form (see Appendix III for definition).

C.   Project and Grant Types

The following describes the types of *projects* or *grants* that are eligible for funding:

1. Project Types. Applicants must propose one of three types of projects: Regular, Collaborative Type 1, or Collaborative Type II.
    a. *Regular Project*
        i.   Applicants may request up to $50,000 (total, not per year) for a Regular Grant.
        ii. Applicant executes the project without the requirement of sharing grant funds with other project partners.
    b. *Collaborative Grant Type 1 (CG1) (Applicant + One or more Partners)*
        i.   Applicants may request up to $150,000 (total, not per year) for a Collaborative Grant Type 1 (CG1) project.
        ii. Applicant executes the project with assistance from at least one additional partner. The partners must share grant funds (see explanation of required fund distribution percentage among partners in the definition of a Collaborative Grant Type 1 in Appendix III).

        Documented Impacts of CG1 projects must include, but are not limited to the following:
        *   An assessment of significant progress toward addressing the national challenge of increasing the number and diversity of food and agricultural sciences graduates;

- Expansion of the number of students who enroll in postsecondary courses in food and agricultural sciences;
- Enhanced retention rates of students exposed to CG1 project activities; and
- An informed food and agricultural sciences community and others about the effectiveness of this CG1 project through a comprehensive project evaluation, using the indicators and methods defined in this grants program

CG1 projects must include both the R&R Fed and Non-Fed Budget and the R&R Fed and Non-Fed Subaward Budget Attachment Forms. The forms should clearly identify the total grant funding anticipated for the applicant and each partner to demonstrate the required sharing percentage. All expenditures for the applicant and all partners should be further itemized in the Budget Justification. Funds do not have to be divided equally among project years.

c. *Collaborative Grant Type 2 (CG2) (Applicant + Two or more Partners)*
   i. Applicants may request up to $300,000 (total, not per year) for a Collaborative Grant Type 2 (CG2) project.
   ii. Applicant executes the project with assistance from at least two additional partners. The additional partners must share grant funds (see explanation of required funds distribution percentage among partners in the definition of a CG2 in Appendix III).
   iii. A CG2 project differs from a CG1 in project scope and impact. CG2 projects must support a multi-partner approach to solving a major state or regional challenge in food and agricultural sciences education at K-14 grade levels. CG2 projects are characterized by multiple partners (each providing a specific expertise) organized and led by a strong applicant with documented project management knowledge and skills to organize and carry out the initiative. Documented Impacts of CG2 projects must include, but are not limited to the following:
      - An assessment of significant progress toward addressing the national challenge of increasing the number and diversity of food and agricultural sciences graduates, while addressing the specific state or regional opportunity defined in the grant application;
      - Expansion of the number of students who enroll in postsecondary courses in food and agricultural sciences;
      - Enhanced retention rates of students exposed to CG2 project activities; and
      - An informed food and agricultural sciences community and others about the effectiveness of this CG2 project through a comprehensive project evaluation, using the indicators and methods defined in this grants program

CG2 projects must include both the R&R Fed and Non-Fed Budget and the R&R Fed and Non-Fed Subaward Budget Attachment Forms. The forms should clearly identify the total grant funding anticipated for the applicant and each partner to demonstrate the required cost sharing percentage. All expenditures for the applicant and all partners should be further itemized in the Budget Justification. Applicants do not have to divide funds equally among project years.

D.   Ethical Conduct of Funded Projects

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 must, upon request, make available to NIFA the policies, procedures, and documentation to support the conduct of the training. See Responsible and Ethical Conduct of Research for further information.

PART III. ELIGIBILITY INFORMATION

A.   Eligibility Requirements
Applicants for the SPECA must meet all the requirements discussed in this RFA. Applications may only be submitted by: (1) public secondary schools, (2) public or private nonprofit junior and community colleges, (3) institutions of higher education, or (4) nonprofit organizations (Attach IRS 501(c)(3) status under R&R 'Other Project Information' Field 12 Other Attachments). Failure to meet the eligibility criteria by the application deadline may result in exclusion from consideration or, preclude NIFA from making an award. For those new to Federal financial assistance, NIFA's Grants Overview provides highly recommended information about grants and other resources to help understand the Federal awards process.

School boards are not eligible as legal recipients of the award.

Duplicate or Multiple Submissions – duplicate or multiple submissions are not allowed. NIFA will disqualify both applications if an applicant submits duplicate or multiple submissions. For those new to Federal financial assistance, NIFA's Grants Overview provides highly recommended information about grants and other resources to help understand the Federal awards process.

B.   Cost Sharing or Matching
No Match Required - SPECA has ***NO*** matching requirement. NIFA will not factor matching resources into the review process as an evaluation criterion.

PART IV. APPLICATION AND SUBMISSION

A.   Method of Application

Applicants must apply to this RFA electronically; no other method or response is accepted. The electronic application for this RFA and additional resources are available on Grants.gov and Grants 101. **Table 3** provides instructions on how to obtain an electronic application. **Part II § 1** of the NIFA Grants.gov Application Guide (Application Guide) contains detailed information regarding the Grants.gov registration process.

Table 3. Steps to Obtain Application Materials

Steps	Action
Step One: Register	*New Users* to Grants.gov must register early with Grants.gov prior to submitting an application (Register Here).
Step Two: Download Adobe	Download and Install Adobe Reader (see Adobe Software Compatibility for basic system requirements)
Step Three: Find Application	Using this Funding Opportunity Number USDA-NIFA-SEACP-007855 search for application here: Opportunity Package.
Step Four: Assess Readiness	Contact an AR prior to starting an application to assess the organization's readiness to submit an electronic application.

Table 4: Help and Resources

Grants.gov Support	NIFA Support
Grants.gov Online Support Telephone support: 800-518-4726 Toll-Free or 606-545-5035 Email support: support@grants.gov Self-service customer based support: Grants.gov iPortal *Key Information: Customer service business Hours 24/7, except federal holidays.*	For application questions, please email policy@usda.gov

B.   Content and Form of the Application

The Application Guide is part of the corresponding application package for this RFA. The RFA overrides the Application Guide if there is a discrepancy between the two documents. NIFA will accept subsequent submissions to an application until the application deadline. However, applicants that do not meet the application requirements, to include partial applications, risk being excluded from NIFA's review. NIFA will assign a proposal number to all applications that

meet the requirements of this RFA. Applicants must refer to the proposal number when corresponding with NIFA. **Table 5** outlines other key instructions for applicants.

Table 5: Key Application Instructions

Instruction	References (All references are to the **Application Guide**)
Attachments must be in a portable document format (PDF) format.	**Part III § 3**
Check the manifest of submitted files to verify attachments are in the correct format.	**Part III § 6.1**
Conduct an administrative review of the application before submission.	**Part VII and**
Follow the submission instructions.	**Part IV § 1.5**
Provide an accurate email address, where designated, on the SF-424 R&R.	**Part IV § 1.5**
Contact the Grants.gov helpdesk for technical support, and keep a record of the correspondence.	**N/A**
Contact NIFA if applicant does not received correspondence from NIFA regarding an application within *30* days of the application deadline.	**N/A**

SF 424 R&R Cover Sheet. See **Part V § 2** and **Part V § 2.17** of the Application Guide for the required certifications and assurances.

SF 424 R&R Project/Performance Site Location(s). See **Part V § 3** of the Application Guide.

R&R Other Project Information Form. See **Part V § 4** of the Application Guide.
  1. Project Summary (PS)/Abstract. The PS must show how the project goals align with the project goals of the SPECA. Application will not be accepted for review if the project summary/abstract is not included, missing information, or not in PDF format. Please use the project summary/abstract template available in the 'Program Specific Resources' section of the SPECA program webpage. See **Part V § 4.7** of the Application Guide for instructions and suggested templates

     Include the following information:
     a. Project Title;
     b. Project Director (and any) Co-Project Director(s) (include institutional affiliation for each);
     c. Program Category: (see Part I);
     d. Educational Need Area: (Part I);
     e. Projected number of students or faculty to be served by the project during the project period (i.e., using a new curriculum, instructional delivery system, student career opportunity; benefitting from a partnership between institutions; etc.)
     f. Primary Discipline Code/Academic Discipline: (Select one from the list below);

g. Discipline Codes & Academic Discipline (see **Table 6** below);
h. Grant Type: Regular, Collaborative 1, or Collaborative 2
i. Total Funds Requested: List total Federal funds requested for this application. (If this project is a collaborative project, also list each partner's total funds requested next to the institution/organization's name); and
j. Partners: If a collaborative proposal, list all partner institutions/organizations that will share grant funding. (Note: Each Partner so identified needs to have their budget information submitted on a separate subaward budget attachment);
k. Summary Text: Provide a very concise (max. 250 word) summary of your project.

Table 6: Academic Codes and Disciplines

C	Animal Sciences
B	Related Biological Sciences (includes General/Basic Biotechnology, Biochemistry and Microbiology)
C	Conservation and Renewable Natural Resources (includes Forestry)
E	Agriscience (includes Agricultural/Biological Engineering)
F	Food Science/Technology and Manufacturing
G	General Food, Agriculture and Human Sciences (includes multidisciplinary problems)
H	Human Sciences/ Family and Consumer Sciences
I	International Education/Research (enhancement of US programs)
J	Entomology - Animal
L	Environmental Sciences/ Management
M	Agribusiness (includes Management, Marketing, and Agricultural Economics)
N	Human Nutrition
P	Plant Sciences and Horticulture
Q	Aquaculture
S	Agricultural Social Sciences (includes Agricultural Education, Agricultural Communications and Rural Sociology)
T	Entomology - Plant
W	Water Science

Application will be excluded from review if the summary text exceeds 250 words.
Summary text should include the following:
- Purpose: What is the major problem your project will address?
- Audience: Who are the intended beneficiaries? Who will be impacted?
- Products: What will be produced?
- Outcome/Impact: What is the intended result (consequence) of your project?

2. Project Narrative (PN). The PN must not exceed 25 double-spaced pages including all figures and tables. The font size should be no smaller than 12 points, Times New Roman. The page limits outlined here ensure fair and equitable competition. Appendices to the PN are allowed if they are directly germane to the proposed project. Do not add appendices to circumvent the page limit. Applications will not be accepted for review if the project narrative is not included, exceeds 25 total double-spaced pages, or is not in PDF format. The PN must include all of the following:
a. *Potential for Advancing the Quality of Education; Significance of the Problem*;
    i. Identification of Educational Problem and Project Impact: Briefly state: (1) the specific instructional problem/challenge (or opportunity) to be addressed; (2) the

anticipated project audience; and (3) the project's target objectives (what change in education is proposed?) and its anticipated, overall impact on improving the quality of food and agricultural sciences education (The impact shall be a change you can measure at the project's conclusion.). Clearly identify and explain how the proposed project will address your *Educational Need Area* described in Part I.

ii.   Project Justification: Summarize the body of knowledge justifying the need for the proposed project. Describe any ongoing or recently completed, significant activities related to the proposed project for which funding was received under a previous SPECA award

iii. Institutional Long-range Goals: Demonstrate how the institution/organization attributes a high priority to the project; discuss how the project will: (1) contribute to the achievement of the institution/organizations' long-term (five- to ten-year) goals; (2) help satisfy the institution's high-priority objectives; and (3) be linked to/supported by the institution's strategic plan

iv.   Innovation: Describe the proposal's creative approach to improving the quality of food and agricultural sciences education, solving an education problem, or promoting programs that advance equal opportunity for all students. Using either actual experiences or literature background information, show why you selected this approach.

b. *Proposed Approach and Cooperative Linkages*;

i.   Plan of Operation and Methodology: Describe procedures for accomplishing the objectives of the project. Describe plans for management of the project to ensure its proper and efficient administration. Describe the way in which resources and personnel will be used to conduct the project.

ii.   Timetable: Identify all important project milestones (performance targets that indicate when project goals will be met) and dates as they relate to project start-up, execution, evaluation, dissemination, and closeout.

iii. Products, Results, and Measurable Outcomes: Outline the expected products/results and their outcome (impact) on strengthening food and agricultural sciences education in the United States. Make sure to differentiate among the three terms:
- "Products" may be actual *items or services* acquired with funds, e.g., "…developed three, new Web-based courses";
- "Results" are *accomplishments* related to the products, e.g., "...additional course materials now available online to reinforce student learning during non-classroom hours"; and
- "Impacts" are the benefits to your audience. Impacts are the consequences of your project and the most critical elements in your Evaluation Plan. They are a measure of the results by comparison to what might have happened in the absence of the funded project, e.g., "…an observed, overall increase in student learning based upon 8% higher average test scores of those students who both attended class and used the supplemental, Web-based course materials")

iv.   Evaluation Plans: State the methodologies to be used in assessing the accomplishment of stated products, results and measurable impacts from the project. Discuss the strategies and metrics for evaluating progress toward meeting the two SPECA Program Goals from Part I. Describe any data to be collected and analyzed. Demonstrate how the project will improve education. This section shall clearly indicate how you plan to measure impacts. (See SPECA Proposal -

[Evaluation Plan Development](#) or additional resources on how to create evaluation plans).

v. Dissemination Plans: The application must document how project accomplishments (products, results and impacts…etc.) will be published or otherwise disseminated to the broadest extent throughout the academic community. Discuss the institution/organization's commitment to disseminate project results and products and the potential for institutionalization. Identify target audiences and explain methods of communication.

vi. Partnerships and Collaborative Efforts: Explain how the project will maximize partnership and collaborative efforts to strengthen food and agricultural sciences education. Provide evidence, via letters from the parties involved in the partnership or collaborative arrangement.

c. *Institutional Capability and Capacity Building*;

i. Institutional/organizational Commitment and Capability: Demonstrate that the program administration is committed to this project and has the capability to ensure its completion.

ii. Institutional/organizational Resources: Document that necessary institutional/organizational resources (administrative, facilities, equipment, and/or materials), and other appropriate resources, will be made available to the project. Demonstrate how the institutional/organizational resources to be made available to the project, when combined with the support requested from USDA, will be adequate to carry out the activities of the project.

iii. Continuation Plans: Discuss the likelihood of, or specific plans for, continuation or expansion of the project beyond the period of USDA support. For example, does the institution's/organization's long-range budget or academic plan provide for the realistic continuation or expansion of the initiative undertaken by this project after the grant period ends, are plans for eventual self- support built into the project, are plans being made to institutionalize the program if it meets with success, and are there indications of other continuing non-Federal support.

iv. Key Personnel: Discuss the adequacy and specific attributes and project responsibilities of each key person associated with the project. Also include the background and qualifications of those personnel who will be responsible for assessing project results and administering the project evaluation and reporting process.

d. *Budget and Cost-effectiveness*;

i. Budget: In addition to the separate, required budget forms and budget justification, discuss how the budget specifically supports the proposed project activities. Explain how such budget items as professional or technical staff time and salary, travel, equipment, etc., are necessary and reasonable to achieve project objectives. Justify that the total budget is allocated adequately between the applicant and any collaborating institution/organization(s) and will be appropriate to carry out the activities of the project. If the application addresses more than one *Educational Need Area* (see [Part I](#)), applicants should include estimates of the proportion of the funds requested from USDA that will support each respective area.

ii.   Cost-effectiveness: Justify the project's cost-effectiveness. Show how the project maximizes the use of limited resources, optimizes educational value for the dollar, achieves economies of scale, or leverages additional funds.

3. Field 12, Add Other Attachments. See **Part V § 4.12** of the [Application Guide](#).
   *Response to Previous Review – PDF Attachment. 1 Page Limit***.** Title the attachment as 'Response to Previous Review' in the document header and save file as 'Response to Previous Review'. This requirement only applies to "Resubmitted Applications" as described under [Part II, B.](#), "Types of Applications". PDs must respond to the previous review panel summary on no more than one page. If desired, additional comments may be included in the text of the Project Narrative, subject to the page limitations of that section.

   Appendices to Project Narrative – PDF Attachment. Title the attachment as 'Appendices' in the document header and save file as 'Appendices'. Appendices to the Project Narrative are allowed if they are directly germane to the proposed project. The addition of appendices should not be used to circumvent the text and/or figures and tables page limitations.

   Collaborative Arrangements – PDF Attachment. Title the attachment as 'Collaborative Arrangements' in the document header and save file as 'Collaborative Arrangement'. If it is necessary to enter into formal consulting or collaborative arrangements with others, 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.

   IRS 501(c)(3) Status – PDF Attachment. Title the attachment as 'IRS 501 (c)(3) Status' in the document header and save file as 'IRS501(c)(3)Status'.

   Expected Outcomes – PDF Attachment. Title the attachment "Expected Outcomes" in the document header and name the file to be saved as "Expected Outcomes". Please use a format, similar to what is provided below, to submit expected impacts and attach it as the last page of the application.

Table 7: Expected Outcomes

Expected outcomes during entire grant period	Expected Number	Justification for Expected Number
1. Number of products to be developed through grant funds during the grant period (i.e., curricula, academic programs, recruitment/retention programs, materials, experiential learning opportunities)	**Expected Number**	**Justification**
2. Number of faculty **directly** supported by this grant for professional development during the grant period: participation in sabbaticals, workshops, conferences, etc.	**Expected Number**	**Justification**
3. Number of students **directly** supported by this grant through stipends, work-study, etc.	**Expected Number**	**Justification**
4. Number of students who will **indirectly** benefit from the products produced from the grant during the grant period (i.e., using the curriculum/instrumentation, enrolled in the program, recruited or retained but not paid by the grant using scholarships, fellowships and assistantships).	**Expected Number**	**Justification**

R&R Senior/Key Person Profile (Expanded). See **Part V § 5** of the Application Guide for profile requirements, details about the biographical sketch, and suggested support templates.

Biographical Sketch - The following are additional instructions of information to include:
1. Author identifier (ORCID) of the researcher if available.
2. Digital Object Identifier (DOI) of all publications where possible.

You may also include a list of data publications or published data products relevant to the proposed project, following recommended data citation format.

R&R Personal Data. This information is voluntary and is not a precondition of award (see **Part V § 6** of the Application Guide).

R&R Budget. See **Part V § 7** of the Application Guide.

Indirect costs (IDC) – See **Part IV § C** of this RFA for funding restrictions regarding indirect cost, and **Part V 7.9** of the Application Guide for additional information.

Data Management Plan. A DMP is required for this program. Applicants should clearly articulate how the project director (PD) and co-PDs plan to manage and disseminate the data generated by the project. The DMP will be considered during the merit review process (see Part V § B of this RFA, **Part III § 3.1 of the Application Guide** and NIFA's Data Management Plan).

Supplemental Information Form. See **Part VI § 1** of the Application Guide.
1. Field 2. Program to which the applicant is applying. Enter the program name Secondary and Two-Year Postsecondary Education Challenge and the program code SPECA Accurate entry is critical.

2. Field 8. Conflict of Interest List. See **Part VI § 1.8** of the [Application Guide](#).

Representations Regarding Felony Conviction and Tax Delinquent Status for Corporate Applicants. This is required for corporate applicants. See **Part VI § 2** of the [Application Guide](#) for a description of the term, "corporation."

C.   Funding Restrictions

Indirect Cost (IDC) not to exceed 30 percent of Total Federal Funds Awarded (TFFA) of the recipient. Section 1462(a) and (c) of the National Agricultural Research, Extension, and Teaching Policy Act of 1977 (NARETPA) limits IDC for the overall award to 30 percent of Total Federal Funds Awarded (TFFA) under a research, education, or extension grant. The maximum IDC rate allowed under the award is determined by calculating the amount of IDC using:
1. the sum of an institution's negotiated indirect cost rate and the indirect cost rate charged by sub-awardees, if any; or
2. 30 percent of TFFA.

The maximum allowable IDC rate under the award, including the IDC charged by the sub-awardee(s), if any, is the lesser of the two rates.

If the result of number one is the lesser of the two rates, the grant recipient is allowed to charge the negotiated IDC rate on the prime award and the sub-award(s), if any. Any sub-awards would be subject to the sub-awardee's negotiated IDC rate. The sub-awardee may charge its negotiated IDC rate on its portion of the award, provided the sum of the IDC rate charged under the award by the prime awardee and the sub-awardee(s) does not exceed 30 percent of the TFFA.

If the result of number two is the lesser of the two rates, then the maximum IDC rate allowed for the overall award, including any sub-award(s), is limited to 30 percent of the TFFA. That is, the IDC of the prime awardee plus the sum of the IDC charged by the sub-awardee(s), if any, may not exceed 30 percent of the TFFA.

In the event of an award, the prime awardee is responsible for ensuring the maximum indirect cost allowed for the award is not exceeded when combining IDC for the Federal portion (i.e., prime and sub-awardee(s)) and any applicable cost-sharing (see [7 CFR 3430.52](#)(b)). Amounts exceeding the maximum allowable IDC are considered unallowable. See sections [408](#) and [410](#) of [2 CFR 200](#).

Successful applicants must not use grant funds awarded under the authority of this RFA to renovate or refurbish research, education, or extension space; purchase or install fixed equipment in such space; or to plan, repair, rehabilitate, acquire, or construct buildings or facilities.

PART V. APPLICATION REVIEW REQUIREMENTS

A.   NIFA's Evaluation Process

NIFA evaluates 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 scientific peer- review process will be used to technically evaluate applications that meet the administrative requirements using a review panel (see **NIFA Peer Review Process)**.
Scientific Peer Review Process:
NIFA selects reviewers for the review panel based upon their training and experience in relevant scientific, extension, or education fields, taking into account the following factors:

- the level of relevant formal scientific, technical education, or extension experience of the individual, as well as the extent to which an individual is engaged in relevant research, education, or extension activities;
- the need to include experts from various areas of specialization within relevant scientific, education, or extension fields;
- the need to include other experts (e.g., producers, range or forest managers/operators, and consumers) who can assess relevance of the applications to targeted audiences and to program needs;
- the need to include experts from a variety of organizational types (e.g., colleges, universities, industry, state and Federal agencies, and private profit and non-profit organizations) and geographic locations;
- the need to maintain a balanced composition with regard to minority and female representation and an equitable age distribution; and
- the need to include reviewers who can judge the effective usefulness of each application to producers and the general public.

After each peer review panel has completed its deliberations, the responsible program staff of NIFA will recommend that your project is either approved for support from currently available funds or declined due to insufficient funds or unfavorable review. NIFA reserves the right to negotiate with the PD/PI and/or 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. After the review process has been completed, NIFA sends copies of reviews, _not_ including the identity of reviewers, and a summary (if applicable) of the review panel comments to the PD.

Conflicts of interest. NIFA takes extreme care to prevent any actual or perceived conflicts of interest that may influence the review or evaluation (see NIFA Peer Review Process for Competitive Grant Applications).

B.   Evaluation Criteria
NIFA will use the following criteria, listed in order of importance, to evaluate SPECA proposals:

1. *Potential for Advancing Quality of Education/Significance of the Problem.* This criterion is used to assess the likelihood that the project will have an impact upon and advance the quality of food and agricultural sciences by strengthening institutional capacities to meet clearly delineated needs. Elements considered include institutional long-range goals,

identification of a problem or opportunity to be addressed, justification for the project, innovation, advancing educational equity, multidisciplinary and/or problem-based focus, and potential for adoption by other institutions/organizations. The proposed project must also show its relevance to the goals of the SPECA Program of increasing the number, diversity, and quality of the food and agricultural sciences workforce. Potential project impacts must be stated.

2. *Proposed Approach and Cooperative Linkages.* This criterion relates to the soundness of the proposed approach including objectives, methodology, plan of operation, timetable, expected products and results, evaluation, and dissemination plans. The project evaluation plan must state the methodologies to be used in assessing the accomplishment of stated products, results and measurable impacts from the project. The approach must be based on sound research concepts and educational principles and may be documented through background literature or actual institutional data. Emphasis is placed on the quality of educational or research support provided to the applicant institution/organization through its partnerships and collaborative initiatives, and on the potential cooperative linkages likely to evolve as a result of this project. Any perceived pitfalls and alternative strategies or approaches are addressed.

3. *Institutional Capability and Capacity Building.* This criterion relates to the institution's capability to perform the project and the degree to which the project will strengthen its teaching or research capacity. Elements include the institution's commitment to the project, the adequacy of institutional resources (administrative, facilities, equipment, and/or materials) available to carry out the project, potential for academic or research enhancement, and plans for project continuation or expansion beyond the period of USDA support. Include institutional data (i.e., financial, personnel and physical resources available to support the project could all be potential data provided by the applicant, depending upon the particular Need Area) to show the institution's ability to support the proposed project.

4. *Key Personnel.* This criterion relates to the adequacy of the number, qualifications and expertise of key persons who will develop and carry out the project, and the qualifications of project personnel who will provide for the assessment of project results and impacts and the dissemination of these findings. Specific roles for each key personnel must be defined to ensure appropriate project leadership and to avoid any duplication of effort. For a CG2 proposal, qualifications and expertise of key persons representing all contributors should be included. Such expertise should address all critical activities of the CG2 project.

5. *Budget and Cost-Effectiveness.* This criterion relates to the extent to which the total budget adequately supports the project and is cost effective. Elements considered include the necessity and reasonableness of costs to carry out project activities and achieve project objectives; the appropriateness of budget allocations between the applicant and any collaborating institution(s); the adequacy of time committed to the project by key project personnel; and the degree to which the project maximizes the use of limited resources, optimizes educational value for the dollar, achieves economies of scale,

leverages additional funds, and focuses expertise and activity on high-priority educational or research need areas

C.   Organizational Management Information

Applicants must submit specific management information relating to an applicant prior to an award and update the information as needed. Applicants may only have to update their information if they had previously provided the information under this or another NIFA program. NIFA provides the requisite forms during the pre-award process. Although an applicant may be eligible for award under this program, 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, or a determination that an applicant is not responsible).

D.   Application Disposition

Applicants may withdraw at any time before NIFA makes a final funding decision. NIFA will retain all applications, including withdrawn applications and unfunded applications.

PART VI. AWARD ADMINISTRATION

A.   General
Within the limit of funds authorized, the NIFA awarding official will make grants to responsible and 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 must 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 7 CFR part 3430, subparts A through E.

Award Notice. The award document will provide pertinent instructions and information as described in 2 CFR 200.210 (see NIFA's Terms and Conditions).

B.   Administrative and National Policy Requirements
Several federal statutes and regulations apply to grant applications and the projects outlined in this RFA (some are listed here: Federal Regulations). Unless specifically noted by statue or award-specific requirements, NIFA Policy Guide applies to all NIFA awards.

C.   Expected Program Outputs and reporting Requirements
The output and reporting requirements are included in the award terms and conditions. If there are any program or award-specific award terms, they will be identified in the award.

PART VII. OTHER INFORMATION

A.   Use of Funds and Changes in Budget
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.

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 (the awardee is subject to the terms and conditions identified in the award):
1. Change in the scope or the objective of the project or program without prior written approval (even if there is no associated budget revision requiring);
2. Change in a key person specified in the application or the federal award;
3. Disengagement from the project for more than three months, or a 25 percent reduction in time devoted to the project;
4. Inclusion of costs that require prior approval in accordance with 2 CFR 200 Subpart E (Cost Principles), 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, unless waived by the federal awarding agency,
5. Part 31, Contract Cost Principles and Procedures;
6. Transfer of funds budgeted for participant support costs to other categories of expense (§200.75 Participant support costs);
7. Sub-awarding, transferring or contracting out of any work under a federal award, including fixed amount sub-awards (see §200.332, Fixed Amount Sub-awards), unless described in the application and funded in the approved federal awards. This provision does not apply to the acquisition of supplies, material, equipment, or general support services;
8. Changes in the approved cost-sharing or matching provided by the non-federal entity; and
9. The need for additional federal funds to complete the project.

B.   Confidential Aspects of Applications and Awards
When an application results in an award, it becomes a part of NIFA transaction records, which are available to the public. Information that the Secretary of Agriculture determines to be confidential, privileged, or proprietary in nature will be held in confidence to the extent permitted by law. Therefore, applicants should clearly mark any information within the application they wish to have considered as confidential, privileged, or proprietary. NIFA will retain a copy of an application that does not result in an award for three years. Such an application will be released only with the consent of the applicant or to the extent required by law. An applicant may withdraw 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.

APPENDIX I: AGENCY CONTACT

Programmatic Contact

Name	Email	Telephone
Carlos Ortiz, PhD	carlos.ortiz@usda.gov	(202) 445-5594

Administrative Contacts

For administrative questions related to
- Grants.gov, see Part IV of this RFA
- Other RFA or application questions, please email policy@usda.gov
- Awards under this RFA, please email awards@usda.gov

NIFA's Mailing Address:
National Institute of Food and Agriculture
U.S. Department of Agriculture
2312 East Bannister Road
Mail Stop 10000 (ten thousand)
Kansas City, MO 64131

APPENDIX II: GLOSSARY OF TERMS

Name	Acronyms
Agriculture in the Classroom	AITC
Authorized Representative	AR
Agricultural Research, Extension, and Education reform Act of 1998	AREERA
Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance	CFDA
Center of Excellence	COE
Digital Object Identifier	DOI
Data Management Plan	DMP
National Agricultural Research, Extension, and Teaching Policy Act	NARETPA
National Institute of Food and Agriculture	NIFA
Project Director	PD
Request for Application	RFA
Research, Education, and Economics	REE
United States Department of Agriculture	USDA

APPENDIX III: DEFINITIONS

Refer to 7 CFR 3430 [Competitive and Noncompetitive Non-formula Federal Assistance Programs – General Award Administrative Provisions](#) for additional definitions.

Terms	Definitions
Citizen or national of the United States	For purposes of applicant citizenship, NIFA follows the U.S. Customs and Immigration Service (USCIS) definitions. U.S. citizens are individuals born in the United States, Puerto Rico, Guam, Northern Mariana Islands, and U.S. Virgin Islands, (persons born in American Samoa, or Swains Island are generally considered nationals of the United States); foreign-born children, under age 18, residing in the United States with their birth or adoptive parents, at least one of whom is a U.S. citizen by birth or naturalization; and individuals granted citizenship status by USCIS. The term "national of the United States" means a person who, though not a citizen of the United States, owes permanent allegiance to the United States (for example, persons born in American Samoa or Swains Island).
Collaborative Grant Type 1 (CGI) Project	An application for a project: which will involve the applicant institution and one or more other colleges, universities, community colleges, junior colleges, or other institutions, each of which will assume a major role in the conduct of the proposed project, and for which the applicant institution will transfer at least one-half of the awarded funds to the other institutions participating in the project. Only the applicant institution must meet the definition of "eligible institution" as specified in §3405.2(i); the other institutions participating in a CG1 project proposal are not required to meet the definition of "eligible institution" as specified in §3405.2(i), nor required to meet the definition of "college" or "university" as specified in §3405.2(f).
Collaborative Grant Type 2 (CG2)	A project: (1) which will involve the applicant institution/organization working in cooperation with two or more other entities not legally affiliated with the applicant institution/organization, including other schools, colleges, universities, community colleges, junior colleges, units of State government, private sector organizations, or a consortium of institutions; and (2) where the applicant institution/organization and each cooperating entity will assume a significant role in the conduct of the proposed project. To demonstrate a substantial involvement with the project, the applicant institution/organization submitting a CG2 proposal must retain at least 30 percent, but not more than 70 percent of the awarded funds and no cooperating entity may receive less than 10 percent of awarded funds. Only the applicant institution/organization must meet the definition of an eligible institution/organization as specified in this RFA; other entities participating in a joint project proposal are not required to meet the

	definition of an eligible institution/organization. CG2 Project Proposals must support a multi-partner approach to solving a major state or regional challenge in agricultural sciences education at any of the K-14 grade levels. CG2 Project Proposals are characterized by multiple partners (each providing a specific expertise) organized and led by a strong applicant with documented project management ability to organize and carry out the initiative.
Eligible Institution/Organization	A public secondary school, a public or private nonprofit junior or community college, an institution of higher education, or a nonprofit organization. School districts are not eligible applicants. (See Part III, A.)
Eligible Participant	An individual who is a citizen or national of the United States. NIFA follows the U.S. Customs and Immigration Service (USCIS) definitions: U.S. citizens are individuals born in the United States, Puerto Rico, Guam, Northern Mariana Islands, and U.S. Virgin Islands, (persons born in American Samoa, or Swains Island are generally considered nationals of the United States); foreign-born children, under age 18, residing in the United States with their birth or adoptive parents, at least one of whom is a U.S. citizen by birth or naturalization; and individuals granted citizenship status by USCIS. The term "national of the United States" means a person who, though not a citizen of the United States, owes permanent allegiance to the United States (for example, persons born in American Samoa or Swains Island).
Fiscal Agent	A third party designated by an authorized representative of an eligible institution/organization which would receive and assume financial stewardship of federal grant funds and perform other activities as specified in the agreement between it and the eligible institution/organization.
Institution of Higher Education	An educational institution in any State that: (1) admits as regular students only persons having a certificate of graduation from a school providing secondary education, or the recognized equivalent of such a certificate; (2) is legally authorized within such State to provide a program of education beyond secondary education; (3) provides an educational program for which the institution awards a bachelor's degree or provides not less than a 2-year program that is acceptable for full credit toward such a degree; (4) is a public or other nonprofit institution; and (5) is accredited by a nationally recognized accrediting agency or association, or if not so accredited, is an institution that has been granted pre-accreditation status by such an agency or association that has been recognized by the Secretary of Education for the granting of pre-accreditation status, and the Secretary of Education has determined that there is satisfactory assurance that the institution will meet the accreditation standards of such an agency or association within a reasonable time.

Junior or Community College	an institution of higher education that: (1) admits as regular students persons who are beyond the age of compulsory school attendance in the State in which the institution is located and who have the ability to benefit from the training offered by the institution; (2) does not provide an educational program for which the institution awards a bachelor's degree (or an equivalent degree); and (3) (i) provides an educational program of not less than 2 years in duration that is acceptable for full credit toward such a degree; or (ii) offers a 2-year program in engineering, mathematics, or the physical or biological sciences, designed to prepare a student to work as a technician or at the semiprofessional level in engineering, scientific, or other technological fields requiring the understanding and application of basic engineering, scientific, or mathematical principles of knowledge (20 U.S.C. 1101a(a)(6)).
Matching	The process through which a grant recipient match awarded USDA funds with cash and in-kind contributions on a dollar-for-dollar basis. The matching funds must derive from non-Federal sources.
New Application	An application not previously submitted to a program.
Nonprofit or Nonprofit Organization	As applied to a school, junior or community college, agency, organization, or institution, is defined as a school, junior or community college, agency, organization, or institution owned and operated by one or more nonprofit corporations or associations, no part of the net earnings of which insures, or may lawfully inure, to the benefit of any private shareholder or individual.
Outcomes	A specific, measurable project results and benefits that, when assessed and reported, indicate the project's plan of operation has been achieved.
Plan of Operation	A detailed, step-by-step description of how the applicant intends to accomplish the project's outcomes. At a minimum, the plan should include a timetable indicating how outcomes are achieved, a description of resources to be used or acquired, and the responsibilities expected of all project personnel.
Regular Project Proposal	An application for a project: (1) where the applicant institution/organization will be the sole entity involved in the execution of the project; or (2) which will involve the applicant institution/organization and one or more other entities, but where the involvement of the other entity(ies) does not meet the requirements for a collaborative grant type 1 or collaborative grant type 2 project proposal as defined in this section.
Resubmitted Application	A project application that was previously submitted to a program, but the application was not funded.
Secondary School	A nonprofit institutional day or residential school that provides secondary education, as determined under State law, except that such term does not include any education beyond grade 12 (Section 14101(25) of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965

		(20 U.S.C. 8801(25))). Note that school districts are not eligible applicants.
	Teaching	A formal classroom and/or laboratory instruction, or practicum experience in the food, agricultural and human sciences and matters related thereto (such as faculty development, student recruitment and services, curriculum development, instructional materials and equipment, and innovative teaching methodologies) conducted by eligible educational institutions.