

Minor Crop Pest Management Program Interregional Research Project # 4 (IR-4)

FY 2019 Request for Applications (RFA)

APPLICATION DEADLINE: April 3, 2019

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

MINOR CROP PEST MANAGEMENT PROGRAM – INTERREGIONAL RESEARCH PROJECT #4

INITIAL ANNOUNCEMENT

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

DATES: Applications must be received by **5 p.m. Eastern Time on April 3, 2019**. 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 Minor Crop Pest Management Program – Interregional Research Project #4 (IR-4) RFA.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY: NIFA requests applications for the Minor Crop Pest Management Program – Interregional Research Project #4 (IR-4) for fiscal year (FY) 2019 to provide safe, effective, and economical pest management solutions for minor agricultural use and use on specialty crops (see **Part VIII, E.** for definitions). NIFA anticipates funding five projects: one to establish a national headquarters and four to establish geographically-based regional IR-4 centers (North Central, Northeastern, Southern, and Western); three of the centers will include analytical chemistry programs.

In FY 2019 the award period for IR-4 awards will be two years, with funding provided in one-year increments. Funding in the second year will be dependent upon the annual appropriation and satisfactory progress. The anticipated amount available for grants in FY 2019 is approximately \$11 million.

This notice identifies the objectives for IR-4 projects, the deadline dates, funding information, the eligibility criteria for projects and applicants, and the application forms and associated instructions needed to apply for an IR-4 grant.

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PART I—FUNDING OPPORTUNITY DESCRIPTION

A. Legislative Authority and Background

The Minor Crop Pest Management Program - Interregional Research Project #4 (IR-4 Program) is authorized under the Competitive, Special, and Facilities Research Grant Act, (7 U.S.C. 3157, (e)(1)(2)).

The IR-4 Program provides expert assistance for the development and registration of crop protection products needed for minor agricultural use and use on specialty crops. For the past 55 years, the program has facilitated cooperation between producers, grower organizations, state Cooperative Extension Services, land-grant universities, and federal agencies to ensure the availability of safe, effective and economical pest management tools for specialty crops, minor crops, and minor uses.

B. Purpose and Priorities

The purpose of the IR-4 program is to enable the availability of safe, effective and economical pest management products for growers of specialty crops and for minor agricultural uses. The crop protection industry cannot justify the costs associated with the research, development and registration of crop protection products for these uses due to small market size and limited sales potential. The IR-4 program provides the assistance needed to ensure that new and more effective crop protection products are tested and registered for these uses. This requires effective collaborations between federal science agencies, federal regulatory agencies, crop producers, the crop protection industry, and land-grant colleges and universities.

The IR-4 program provides support for efforts to develop reduced-risk products, bio-pesticides, and other chemicals with characteristics that are deemed lower risk to humans, non-target organisms, and the environment. In addition, the program concentrates on internal processes that reduce the time needed to complete successful regulatory packages.

Projects shall demonstrate the capacity and commitment required to achieve the following regionally-oriented goals:

- 1) Expedite the registration of newer, reduced-risk pest management products for minor agricultural uses and specialty crops.
- 2) Conduct efficacy research to identify new more effective minor agricultural use and specialty crop pest management products.

Projects must also demonstrate a commitment to addressing the societal challenge of keeping American agriculture competitive and reducing world hunger by improving the availability and accessibility of safe and nutritious food. NIFA is committed to supporting new science to boost U.S. agricultural production, improve global capacity to meet growing food demand, and fight hunger by addressing food security for vulnerable populations. The IR-4 program directly aligns with the Research, Education, and Economics Action Plan (<https://nifa.usda.gov/resource/ree-action-plan>) and specifically addresses: Goal 1; Subgoals 1A 1B; and Goals 5 and 7. This

program is also aligned with several of the goals in the NIFA 2014-2018 Strategic Plan (<https://nifa.usda.gov/resource/nifa-strategic-plan-fy2014-fy2018>). These are Goals 1.1, 1.3 and 1.6.

C. Program Area Description

In FY 2019, NIFA will provide funding for an IR-4 project headquarters and four geographically-based regional IR-4 Centers. The four regional centers correspond to the agency's four administrative regions: North Central, Northeastern, Southern, and Western.

List of States and Territories by Region:

North Central: Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Kansas, Michigan, Minnesota, Missouri, Nebraska, North Dakota, Ohio, South Dakota, and Wisconsin.

Northeastern: Connecticut, Delaware, District of Columbia, Maine, Maryland, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New York, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, Vermont, and West Virginia.

Southern: Alabama, Arkansas, Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, Louisiana, Mississippi, North Carolina, Oklahoma, Puerto Rico, South Carolina, Tennessee, Texas, Virginia, and the U.S. Virgin Islands.

Western: Alaska, American Samoa, Arizona, California, Colorado, Federated States of Micronesia, Guam, Hawaii, Idaho, Montana, Nevada, New Mexico, Northern Marianas, Oregon, Utah, Washington, and Wyoming.

Proposals submitted to the IR-4 program should clearly describe a plan for achieving the following core objectives:

- 1) Obtain and maintain regulatory clearances of effective crop protection agents for high value, specialty food crops and for minor agricultural uses (special circumstance needs) on major food crops with an emphasis on lower risk chemicals, biopesticides, and uses that are compatible with integrated pest management (IPM) programs.
- 2) Support research on crop protection products that will expand their uses on ornamental crops (nursery, floral, turf, and other non-food crop systems) to allow management of invasive/exotic pests (arthropods, nematodes, vertebrates, pathogens, or weeds).

The five IR-4 projects funded in FY 2019 will be expected to build on the successes and capacity developed by prior projects. Applicants are encouraged to review progress reports and the current strategic plan developed for the IR-4 program (available at www.ir4.rutgers.edu).

The IR-4 program will fund three types of projects: IR-4 project headquarters, regional IR-4 centers with an analytical chemistry program and regional IR-4 centers without an analytical chemistry program. The key responsibilities of these project types are described below.

Project Headquarters Responsibilities:

- Coordinate IR-4 activities nationally and internationally with other agencies and organizations including, but not limited to, the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), USDA's Agricultural Research Service (ARS), Canada's Pest Management Centre of Agriculture, Agri-Food Canada, and the crop protection industry.
- Interact with the crop protection industry in selecting high priority chemistries that the industry will ultimately support through the Federal Insecticide, Fungicide, and Rodenticide Act (FIFRA) regulatory process.
- Convene state and federal scientists, commodity group representatives, growers, and other experts to evaluate specific crop uses of crop protection products for potential inclusion in the IR-program and give them a priority based on:
 - the availability and efficacy of alternative crop protection products;
 - the potential damage from the target pest;
 - the performance of the proposed product in managing the target pest;
 - the compatibility of the proposed product with IPM programs; and
 - the level of risk use of the product poses to humans, non-target organisms, and the environment.
- Identify headquarters staff with experience in managing pesticide registration protocol and preparing and submitting petitions.
- Conduct training on IR-4 procedures and practices for regional scientific field and laboratory research staff.

Regional Center Responsibilities:

- Participate in national coordination meetings with IR-4 headquarters staff to harmonize and prioritize regional needs and activities into a comprehensive nationally-coordinated program. Program priorities will be established with stakeholder input provided at national meetings attended by program stakeholders, including producers, land-grant institution representatives, and other individuals and organizations interested in the production of minor and specialty crops.
- Establish a process for research coordinators to verify each request for assistance and add that information to a master list.
- Identify field, laboratory, and quality assurance representatives experienced in generating data according to Good Laboratory Practices (GLPs) for pesticide registration.
- Plan and conduct field trials at EPA-approved locations.
- Analyze the residue samples from field trials as well as residue samples from USDA/ARS Specialty Crops Programs per EPA guidelines and GLPs. This responsibility only applies to the three regional IR-4 centers with analytical chemistry programs.

Shared Responsibilities of Headquarters and Regional Centers:

- Identify pest management needs from requests submitted through a nationwide network of liaison representatives.
- Maintain working liaison with the counterpart regional Integrated Pest Management Centers to facilitate joint progress on priority programs.
- Integrate multiple pest disciplines in the management and execution of IR-4 programs.
- Identify a network of qualified field research scientists who can conduct the necessary research trials and develop the data under EPA-mandated Good Laboratory Practices (GLP) guidelines following specific directions in the research protocol.
- Outline plans and identify key personnel for a quality assurance unit for GLP compliance and to format all research data and reports for submission to the EPA.
- Identify expert assistance for the development and registration of biological agents for use in pest management strategies on minor and specialty crops.

NIFA will give priority consideration to IR-4 proposals that:

- 1) Address high priority pest management problems that relate to the societal challenge of food security and foster new collaborations between individuals, programs and institutions;
- 2) Address the needs of underrepresented or hard-to-reach audiences;
- 3) Include collaboration with small- or mid-sized accredited colleges and universities, 1890 land-grant institutions, 1994 land-grant institutions, Hispanic-serving institutions, Hispanic serving Agricultural Colleges and universities, and/or other institutions that serve high-risk, underrepresented, or hard-to-reach audiences that contribute to or support U.S. pest management issues;
- 4) Successfully integrate multiple pest management disciplines in the management and execution of IR-4 programs; and
- 5) Include specific plans for building collaborative partnerships with the regional Integrated Pest Management Centers on programmatic areas of mutual interest.

NIFA's programs are intended to promote advances in U.S. food, agriculture, and forestry, and these industries are increasingly worldwide in scope and reach. If appropriate, applicants to the IR-4 program may include international partnerships or engagement in proposals. In doing so, applicants are to keep in mind that any international efforts included in a proposal (e.g., partnerships, exchanges, training, travel) must support IR-4 program goals.

PART II—AWARD INFORMATION

A. Available Funding

In FY 2019, the IR-4 program will award grants for a 24-month period; work to be completed in FYs 2019 and 2020. The amount available for support of this program in FY 2019 will be approximately \$11 million.

The IR-4 program anticipates awarding one IR-4 headquarters grant and four regional IR-4 center grants, one in each USDA administrative region: North Central, Northeastern, Southern, and Western (see Part I, C. for a list of States and Territories by region). 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 2019, you may only submit a new application to the IR-4 program.

New application. This is a project application that has not been previously submitted to the IR-4 program. We will review all new applications competitively by screening for administrative requirements and evaluating proposals using evaluation criteria and selection process described in Part V—Application Review Requirements.

In FY 2019, NIFA intends to make IR-4 awards as continuation grants. With continuation grants, NIFA agrees to a specified level of support for a specified period with intention to provide additional future support provided performance has been satisfactory, funds are available and continued support is in the interest of the public and the Federal government. NIFA is not obligated to award a continuation grant and will make them only if the Authorized Departmental Officer (ADO) concurs.

C. Project Types

The IR-4 program will provide funding for three types of projects as follows:

- 1) Regional IR-4 center with analytical chemistry program (up to \$4.0 million/year);
- 2) Regional IR-4 center without an analytical chemistry program (up to \$1.5 million/year);
- 3) IR-4 project headquarters (up to \$4.0 million/year).

Project proposals should be submitted for a 24-month project period.

D. Responsible and Ethical Conduct of Research

In accordance with sections 2, 3, and 8 of 2 CFR Part 422, institutions that conduct USDA-funded extramural research must foster an atmosphere conducive to research integrity, bear primary

responsibility for prevention and detection of research misconduct, and maintain and effectively communicate and train their staff regarding policies and procedures. In the event an application to NIFA results in an award, the Authorized Representative (AR) assures, through acceptance of the award that the institution will comply with the above requirements. Award recipients shall, upon request, make available to NIFA the policies, procedures, and documentation to support the conduct of the training. See <https://nifa.usda.gov/responsible-and-ethical-conduct-research> for more information.

E. Scientific Peer Review

Subsection (c)(5) of the Competitive, Special, and Facilities Research Grant Act, as amended (7 U.S.C. 3157 (c)(5)), requires that scientific peer review of the proposed research activities be conducted prior to the Secretary making a grant award under this authority. Regulations implementing this requirement are set forth in 7 CFR Part 3400.20. The regulations impose the following requirements:

(1) Scientific peer review. Prior to the award of a standard or continuation grant, any proposed research project shall have undergone a review arranged by the grantee. Such review must be a scientific peer review conducted in accordance with 7 CFR 3400.21. It must be credible, independent, and arranged by the grantee. It should provide an appraisal of technical quality and relevance sufficient for an organizational representative to make an informed judgment as to whether the proposal is appropriate for submission for federal support. Often this review is conducted by faculty peers. It may include USDA employees, but should not be conducted solely by USDA employees. Although evidence of a scientific peer review is not required until an award is ready to be finalized, peer reviews can improve the quality of a proposal. **For this reason, we encourage applicants to have proposals peer reviewed before submission.**

(2) Notice of completion and retention of records. A notice of completion of the review shall be conveyed in writing to NIFA. The written notice constitutes certification by the applicant that a review in compliance with these regulations has occurred. **Applicants are not required to submit results of the review to NIFA; however, proper documentation of the review process and results must be retained by the applicant.** The notice should state “In accordance with 7 CFR 3400.21, this memo is to certify that this project [title] has undergone a scientific peer review.” If the notice is submitted as part of the application, it is to be included in Other Attachments (Field 12. of the R&R Other Project Information Form). If, however, it is submitted to NIFA after the application is submitted through Grants.gov, the memo must be on the institution’s letterhead and signed by the Authorized Representative. This memo must be sent to the NIFA program contact (see Part VII of this RFA).

PART III—ELIGIBILITY INFORMATION

A. Eligible Applicants

Applications may only be submitted by State agricultural experiment stations, land-grant colleges and universities, research foundations established by land-grant colleges and universities, colleges and universities receiving funds under the Act of October 10, 1962 (16 U.S.C. 582a et seq.), and accredited schools or colleges of veterinary medicine for the purpose of facilitating or expanding ongoing state-federal food and agricultural research programs (Competitive, Special and Facilities Research Grant Act of August 4, 1965 [7 U.S.C. 3157(c)(1)(B)]).

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

The Agriculture Improvement Act of 2018 (HR 2) removed the matching requirements for some NIFA competitive grants imposed by the Agricultural Act of 2014. Therefore, there are changes to the matching requirements for some funds awarded in 2019.

For FY 2019, NIFA does not require matching support for the IR-4 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 <https://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 <https://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 <https://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 <https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/applicants/search-opportunity-package.html> and enter the funding opportunity number

Funding Opportunity Number: USDA-NIFA-SRGP-006701

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 move forms amongst different Grant Application Packages but you may ONLY submit an application to the particular funding opportunity to which the Grant Application Package is associated.

Contained within the application package is the “NIFA Grants.gov Application Guide.” This guide contains an introduction and general Grants.gov instructions, information

about how to use a Grant Application Package in Grants.gov, and instructions on how to complete the application forms.

If you require assistance to access the application package (e.g., downloading or navigating Adobe forms) **or submitting the application**, refer to resources available on the Grants.gov website (<https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/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. ET).
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. ET, 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. The following is additional information.

a. Field 7. Project Summary/Abstract.

The summary must include:

- the project type (Headquarters, regional Center with analytical chemistry, or regional Center without analytical chemistry);
- physical location(s) of proposed headquarters or center;
- categorized list of partners and collaborators;
- a clear overview of the proposal; and
- the anticipated impacts of the proposed project.

The summary should also include the relevance of the project to the goals of IR-4. 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.

The Project Narrative shall not exceed 18 pages of written text, regardless of whether it is single- or double-spaced, and up to 50 additional pages for figures and tables. We have established this maximum (68 total pages) to ensure fair and equitable competition. The Project Narrative must include all of the following:

1. Identify the mission and goals of the proposed IR-4 headquarters or regional IR-4 center specifically designated in the application;
2. Identify the project director and other key personnel (or positions) of the IR-4 headquarters or regional center specifically designated in the application;
3. Describe the management process the proposed IR-4 headquarters or regional center will use to: a) establish broad-based advisory committees; b) involve stakeholders and partner institutions in its operations through working groups and other mechanisms; c) identify program needs and priorities; and d) develop a strategic plan that will be followed to address national and regional priorities and achieve IR-4 goals and objectives;
4. Demonstrate the ability to establish and maintain an interactive information network that will provide a mechanism to share current pest management information and successes with pest managers, funding organizations, policy-makers, and other stakeholders;
5. Describe the process that will be used to ensure effective management of IR-4 resources (including personnel, training and travel budgets, and supplies/equipment needed for field and laboratory research) and provide a plan to assess progress and accomplishments throughout the project; and

6. Describe a process for managing sub-awards and/or fee for service arrangements made from NIFA funding provided through the IR-4 headquarters or IR-4 center award. The management process must ensure: a) the needs identification and prioritization process is kept separate from the funding process, b) that eligible applicants are notified of funding opportunities, and c) that funding is distributed in a fair and equitable fashion.

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 for this field. Following is an additional instruction:

Data Management Plan. A Data Management Plan (DMP) is required and is to 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.). **See Part III Section 3.1 of the NIFA Grants.gov Application Guide for NIFA attachment specifications.**

The requirements for preparation and inclusion of a DMP in your application is included on the following web page, <https://nifa.usda.gov/resource/data-management-plan-nifa-funded-research-projects>. Also included on the web page are FAQs and information about accessing examples of DMPs.

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.

Applicants should prepare a budget for both years of the grant plus a cumulative two-year budget. This is done to provide a comprehensive spending plan for the life of the project. All applications must include a budget narrative to justify budget items for both years and all sub-awards must include a budget and budget narrative for each year they are part of the grant.

At least one member from the successful IR-4 headquarters project and one member from each successful regional IR-4 center project must attend leadership meetings as often as necessary to report and coordinate IR-4 activities. These include three project management committee meetings and the annual priority setting workshop. Reasonable travel expenses may be claimed as part of the project budget.

Indirect Costs are not allowed for this program. For indirect cost funding restrictions, refer to Part IV, D. of this RFA.

7. Supplemental Information Form

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

Field 2. Program to which you are applying. Enter the program code name “**Minor Crop Pest Management IR-4**” and the program code “**RR**”. Note that accurate entry of the program code is very important for proper and timely processing of an application. Following is an additional instruction:

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.

8. Representations Regarding Felony Conviction and Tax Delinquent Status for Corporate Applicants

This is a required form for corporate applicants. See Part VI, 2 of the NIFA Grants.gov Application Guide for a description of the term, “corporation,” and detailed information related to the questions on this form.

C. Submission Dates and Times

We recommend that you conduct an administrative review of the application before submission of it via Grants.gov to ensure that it complies with all preparation instructions. An application checklist is included in Part VII of the NIFA Grants.gov Application Guide to assist with this review.

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

Applications must be received by Grants.gov by **5 p.m. Eastern Time on April 3, 2019**. Applications received after this deadline will normally not be considered for funding.

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

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

If the AR has not received correspondence **from NIFA** regarding a submitted application within 30 days of the established deadline, contact the Agency Contact identified in Part VII of the RFA and request the proposal number assigned to the application. **Failure to do so may result in the application not being considered for funding. Once the application has been assigned a proposal number, you should cite this number on all future correspondence.**

D. Funding Restrictions

Pursuant to Section 1473 of the National Agriculture Research, Extension, and Teaching Policy Act of 1977, as amended, (7 U.S.C. 3319), **indirect costs or tuition remission are not allowable costs under** Competitive, Special and Facilities Research Grant Act of August 4, 1965 **section 2(c)(1)(B)** [7 U.S.C. 3157(c)(1)(B)] **and no funds will be approved for this purpose.** Further, costs that are a part of an institution's indirect cost pool (e.g., administrative or clerical salaries) may not be reclassified as direct costs for the purpose of making them allowable.

The use of grant funds to plan, acquire, or construct a building or facility is not allowed under this program. With prior approval, and in accordance with the cost principles set forth in 2 CFR part 200, some grant funds may be used for minor alterations, renovations, or repairs deemed necessary to retrofit existing teaching or research spaces in order to carry out a funded project. However, requests to use grant funds for such purposes must demonstrate that the work is essential to achieving the major purpose of the project.

Statutory language (7 U.S.C. 3157(c)(1)) limits the maximum potential funding period (including any awards transferred from another institution or organization) to 3 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.

Funds made available for grants under the IR-4 program must comply with the legislative authority.

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 set forth in this RFA. Second, a technical review panel will evaluate applications that meet the administrative requirements.

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

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

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

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

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

B. Evaluation Criteria

A reviewer's written evaluation entails two levels of assessment. First, the reviewer summarizes how well the application addressed each evaluation criterion. After the application has been assessed for strengths and weaknesses of each criterion, the reviewer then evaluates the overall likelihood that the project will have significant outcome and impact. These written reviews are used to begin panel discussions with other reviewers serving on the peer review panel. Through these discussions, peer review panelists come to consensus on the final rating and ranking of proposals. A complete description of NIFA's peer review process can be found at the NIFA website: <https://nifa.usda.gov/resource/nifa-peer-review-process-competitive-grant-applications>.

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

1. Relevance of the application to the accomplishment of program goals and objectives, as described in Part I, B and Part I, C. (25 points)
2. Adequacy of the proposal response to items listed in the Project Narrative, including a process for managing sub-awards made from NIFA funding. (25 points)
3. Quality and extent of documented stakeholder involvement in application development. (20 points)
4. Capacity of host institution(s) to provide support for the project, including commitment to the program. (10 points)
5. Experience, accomplishments, and time commitments of key project personnel. (10 points)
6. Appropriateness of requested budget. (10 points)

C. Conflicts of Interest and Confidentiality

During the evaluation process, we take extreme care to prevent any actual or perceived conflicts of interest that may impact review or evaluation. See <https://nifa.usda.gov/resource/nifa-peer-review-process-competitive-grant-applications> for further information about conflicts of interest and confidentiality as related to the 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 NIFA 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 <https://nifa.usda.gov/terms-and-conditions> 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 – <https://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 <https://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 <https://nifa.usda.gov/terms-and-conditions> 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.

In addition, the Headquarter grantee shall prepare and submit an annual report listing all registrations, re-registrations, and tolerances for which data has been collected in the preceding year and a listing of all registrations, reregistrations, and tolerances for which data collection is scheduled to occur in the following year plus an explanation of the priority system used to develop this list. The

report should also list all activities the IR-4 program has carried out to assist in removing trade barriers caused by residues of pesticides registered for minor agricultural use and use on domestically grown specialty crops; assist in the registration and reregistration of pest management technologies for minor agricultural use and for use on specialty crops; and to coordinate with other programs within the Department of Agriculture and the Environmental Protection Agency to develop and promote biological and other alternative control measures.

At least one member from the successful IR-4 headquarters project and one member from each successful regional IR-4 center project must attend leadership meetings as often as necessary to report and coordinate IR-4 activities. These include three project management committee meetings and the annual priority setting workshop. Reasonable travel expenses may be claimed as part of the project budget.

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PART VII—AGENCY CONTACT

Applicants and other interested parties are encouraged to contact:

Programmatic Contact –

Robert Hedberg
National Program Leader
Institute of Food Production and Sustainability
Division of Agricultural Systems
Location: 800 9th Street SW, Room 3405 Waterfront Centre
Full Address and Directions
Phone: (202) 720-5384
Fax: (202) 401-1782
Email: rhedberg@nifa.usda.gov

Administrative/Business Contact –

Susan Bowman
Branch Chief, Branch I
Office of Grants and Financial Management
Awards Management Division
Location: 800 9th Street SW, Room 2240 Waterfront Centre
Full Address and Directions
Phone: (202) 401-4324
Fax: (202) 401-6271
Email: sbowman@nifa.usda.gov

PART VIII—OTHER INFORMATION

A. Use of Funds; Changes

1. Delegation of Fiscal Responsibility

Unless the terms and conditions of the award state otherwise, awardees may not in whole or in part delegate or transfer to another person, institution, or organization the responsibility for use or expenditure of award funds.

2. Changes in Budget or Project Plans

In accordance with [2 CFR 200.308](#), awardees must request prior approval from NIFA for the following program or budget-related reasons:

- (i) Change in the scope or the objective of the project or program (even if there is no associated budget revision requiring prior written approval).
- (ii) Change in a key person specified in the application or the federal award.
- (iii) The disengagement from the project for more than three months, or a 25 percent reduction in time devoted to the project, by the approved project director or principal investigator.
- (iv) The inclusion, unless waived by the federal awarding agency, of costs that require prior approval in accordance with 2 CFR 200 Subpart E—Cost Principles of this part or 45 CFR Part 75 Appendix IX, “Principles for Determining Costs Applicable to Research and Development under Awards and Contracts with Hospitals,” or 48 CFR Part 31, “Contract Cost Principles and Procedures,” as applicable.
- (v) The transfer of funds budgeted for participant support costs as defined in §200.75 Participant support costs to other categories of expense.
- (vi) Unless described in the application and funded in the approved federal awards, the subawarding, transferring or contracting out of any work under a federal award, including fixed amount subawards as described in §200.332 Fixed amount subawards. This provision does not apply to the acquisition of supplies, material, equipment, or general support services.
- (vii) Changes in the approved cost-sharing or matching provided by the non-federal entity.
- (viii) The need arises for additional federal funds to complete the project.

The awardee will be subject to the terms and conditions identified in the award. See <https://nifa.usda.gov/terms-and-conditions> 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

For the reasons set forth in the final Rule related Notice to 2 CFR Part 415, Subpart C, 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.

For this program, the following additional definitions are applicable:

Minor Use as defined in Pesticide Registration (PR) Notice 97-2 is the use of a pesticide on a commercial agricultural crop or site, or an animal where: 1) the total United States acreage for the crop is less than 300,000 acres, as determined by the Secretary of Agriculture; or 2) the use does not provide sufficient economic incentive to support the initial registration or continuing registration of a pesticide for such use.

Specialty Crop as defined in Public Law 108-465 Specialty Crops Competitive Act of 2004 (7 U.S.C. 1621 note) are fruits and vegetables, tree nuts, dried fruits, and nursery crops (including floriculture).

E. Materials Available on the Internet

Comprehensive information about the IR-4 program is available at <https://ir4.rutgers.edu>.