


Special Research Grants Program – Pest Management Alternatives

FY 2011 Request for Applications

APPLICATION DEADLINE: March 3, 2011

 **U.S. Department of Agriculture
National Institute of Food and Agriculture**

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

SPECIAL RESEARCH GRANTS PROGRAM – PEST MANAGEMENT ALTERNATIVES

INITIAL ANNOUNCEMENT

CATALOG OF FEDERAL DOMESTIC ASSISTANCE: This program is listed in the Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance under 10.200, Grants for Agricultural Research, Special Research Grants.

DATES: Applications must be received by close of business (COB) on **March 3, 2011 (5:00 p.m. Eastern Time)**. Applications received after this deadline will normally not be considered for funding. 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: The National Institute of Food and Agriculture (NIFA) is requesting comments regarding this RFA from any interested party. These comments will be considered in the development of the next RFA for the program, if applicable, and will be used 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)). This section requires the Secretary to solicit and consider input on a current RFA from persons who conduct or use agricultural research, education and extension for use in formulating future RFAs for competitive programs. Written stakeholder comments on this RFA should be submitted in accordance with the deadline set forth in the DATES portion of this Notice.

Written stakeholder comments should be submitted by mail to: Policy and Oversight Division; Office of Grants and Financial Management; National Institute of Food and Agriculture; USDA; STOP 2299; 1400 Independence Avenue, SW; Washington, DC 20250-2299; or via e-mail to: RFP-OGFM@nifa.usda.gov. (This e-mail address is intended only for receiving comments regarding this RFA and not requesting information or forms.) In your comments, please state that you are responding to the Special Research Grants Program – Pest Management Alternatives RFA.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY: NIFA requests applications for the Special Research Grants Program - Pest Management Alternatives (PMAP) for fiscal year (FY) 2011 to address needs in integrated pest management (IPM) for food, feed, fiber, forest, human and livestock health, and ornamental commodities resulting from the implementation of the Food Quality Protection Act of 1996 (FQPA) (Pub. L. 104-170) and related regulatory actions. Excluded are physiological problems not associated with a pest. This RFA is being released prior to the passage of an Appropriations Act for FY 2011. Enactment of additional Continuing Resolutions or an Appropriations Act may affect the availability or level of funding for this program. It is

anticipated that the amount available for support of this program in FY 2011 will be approximately \$1.4 million.

This notice identifies the objectives for PMAP projects, the eligibility criteria for projects and applicants, and the application forms and associated instructions needed to apply for a PMAP grant. NIFA additionally requests stakeholder input from any interested party for use in the development of the next RFA for this program.

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PART I—FUNDING OPPORTUNITY DESCRIPTION

A. Legislative Authority and Background

The Special Research Grants Program - Pest Management Alternatives (PMAP) is administered by the National Institute of Food and Agriculture (NIFA) of the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA). The authority for this program is contained in subsection (c)(1)(A) of Section 2 of the Competitive, Special, and Facilities Research Grant Act, (Pub. L. No. 89-106), as amended (7 U.S.C. 450i(c)(1)(A)). Under this authority, subject to the availability of funds, the Secretary may make grants, for periods not to exceed three years, for the purpose of conducting research to facilitate or expand promising breakthroughs in areas of the food and agricultural sciences of importance to the United States.

B. Purpose and Priorities

The purpose of PMAP is to provide support for the development and implementation of integrated pest management (IPM) practices, tactics and systems for specific pest problems while reducing human and environmental risks. This purpose addresses the broader “National Roadmap for Integrated Pest Management,” (IPM Roadmap: http://www.nifa.usda.gov/nea/pest/in_focus/ipm_if_roadmap.html). The successful management of pest problems in commercial production is facing challenges due to regulatory changes, emergence of new pest problems, and the development of pest resistance to available management technologies. The greatest impact on current management technologies is in the production of specialty crops; however, other crops, including grain, forage and fiber, as well as human and animal health, are also being impacted by these changes.

1. Objectives for PMAP

- (a) Develop or adapt IPM tactics and technologies to address specific pest problems in both pre- and post-harvest systems (*e.g.*, modify existing tactics and practices or create different pest management approaches or tactics, and demonstrate their effectiveness);
- (b) Adapt, evaluate and demonstrate the effectiveness of modified or alternative IPM tactics and technologies, including products of genetic engineering, biological organisms, biological pesticides, new chemical pesticides, and cultural practices; and
- (c) Conduct field demonstration programs and describe how anticipated results can be economically and effectively integrated into production systems for individual crops.

2. Critical Elements in PMAP Applications

Applicants must fulfill **all four** of the following:

- (a) Demonstrate the potential for one to three year implementation of project results, findings, and outcomes and include an economic analysis that demonstrates the feasibility of implementation;
- (b) Evaluate the feasibility for commercialization (including product registration, if necessary) of technologies developed as a result of the project;
- (c) Demonstrate that the application is responding to pest management needs and priorities identified by stakeholders either through Pest Management Strategic Plans or documented Regional IPM Center priorities (www.ipmcenters.org/pmsp/index.cfm), Interregional Research Project #4 (IR-4) priorities (<http://ir4.rutgers.edu/>), or similar citable documents; and
- (d) Include funding needed to attend a Project Directors' Workshop. PMAP requires successful applicants to attend at least one Project Directors' workshop during the term of their project. For the purposes of budget development, applicants are required to request funds to attend at least one such workshop (see Part IV, B, 6).

C. Program Area Description

PMAP supports the development and implementation of pest management alternatives when regulatory action, voluntary action by the registrant, the development of pest resistance, or other circumstances, result in the unavailability of certain pesticides or pesticide uses. PMAP grants support the development of new pest management tools and techniques to address critical pest problems identified by pest managers and other stakeholders. Projects are two years in duration with a three year statutory limitation on the availability of funds.

PMAP encourages projects that develop content suitable for delivery through eXtension (<http://extension.org>). This content is for end users, as opposed to staff development, and must align with the eXtension Strategic Roadmap (available at <http://about.extension.org/wiki/Planning>). Applicants establishing new Communities of Practice (CoPs), or enhancing existing ones, that focus on pest management education and outreach activities, must first follow the corresponding steps outlined by eXtension.org (http://about.extension.org/wiki/NIFA_RFA_Information).

PART II—AWARD INFORMATION

A. Available Funding

There is no commitment by USDA to fund any particular application or to make a specific number of awards. This RFA is being released prior to the passage of an Appropriations Act for FY 2011. Enactment of additional Continuing Resolutions or an Appropriations Act may affect the availability or level of funding for this program. It is anticipated that approximately \$1.4 million will be available to fund applications in FY 2011. There is no upper limit or cap on funding for awards. Typically, six to eight projects are funded each fiscal year at \$100,000 to \$200,000 per award.

Awards issued as a result of this RFA will have designated the Automated Standard Applications for Payment System (ASAP), operated by the Department of Treasury's Financial Management Service, as the payment system for funds. For more information see http://www.nifa.usda.gov/business/method_of_payment.html.

B. Types of Applications

In FY 2011, applications may be submitted to the PMAP Program as one of the following two types of requests:

(1) **New application**. This is a project application that has not been previously submitted to the PMAP Program. All new applications will be reviewed competitively using the selection process and evaluation criteria described in Part V—Application Review Requirements.

(2) **Resubmitted application**. This is an application that had previously been submitted to the PMAP Program but not funded. Project Directors (PDs) must respond to the previous review panel summary (see Response to Previous Review, Part IV). Resubmitted applications must be received by the relevant due dates, will be evaluated in competition with other pending applications in appropriate area to which they are assigned, and will be reviewed according to the same evaluation criteria as new applications.

C. Project Types

Project periods may not exceed two years. Recipients may be eligible for no-cost extensions, but no carryover or extension is permitted for these projects beyond three years. Any unexpended funds must be returned to the U.S. Treasury.

D. Scientific Peer Review

Subsection (c)(5) of the Competitive, Special, and Facilities Research Grant Act, as amended (7 U.S.C. 450i(c)(5)) requires applicants to conduct scientific peer review of their proposed research activities in accordance with regulations promulgated by the Secretary 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 by NIFA, any proposed project shall have undergone a review arranged by the grantee. For research projects, such review must be a scientific peer review conducted in accordance with 7 CFR 3400.21.

(2) **Credible and independent review**. A review arranged by the grantee must provide for a credible and independent assessment of the proposed project. A credible review is one that provides 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. To provide for an independent review, such review may include USDA employees, but should not be conducted solely by USDA employees.

(3) **Notice of completion and retention of records**. A notice of completion of the review shall be conveyed in writing to NIFA as part of the Other Attachments (Field 12. of the R&R Other Project Information Form). 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 should be retained by the applicant. **Please note: Award funds will not be available until the Scientific Peer Review Certification is received.**

PART III—ELIGIBILITY INFORMATION

A. Eligible Applicants

Applications may be submitted by State agricultural experiment stations, all colleges and universities, other research institutions and organizations, Federal agencies, private organizations or corporations, and individuals. While their collaboration is encouraged, scientists affiliated with non-United States organizations are not eligible to serve as project directors for PMAP funded projects. Award recipients may subcontract to organizations not eligible to apply provided such organizations are necessary for the conduct of the project. An applicant's failure to meet an eligibility criterion by the time of an application deadline may result in the application being excluded from consideration or, even though an application may be reviewed, will preclude NIFA from making an award.

B. Cost Sharing or Matching

NIFA does not require matching support for this program. Applications shall be peer reviewed and selected for funding without regard to matching resources.

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. **Applicants are advised to submit early to the Grants.gov system.**

New Users of Grants.gov

Prior to preparing an application, it is suggested that the 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 the organization is not prepared (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 much 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 **“Get Registered” on the Grants.gov left navigation bar (or go to www.grants.gov/applicants/get_registered.jsp) for information on registering the institution/organization with Grants.gov. A quick reference guide listing the steps is available as a 4-page PDF document at the following website: www.grants.gov/section910/Grants.govRegistrationBrochure.pdf.**

Steps to Obtain Application Package Materials

The steps to access application materials are as follows:

1. In order to access, complete and submit applications, applicants must download and install a version of Adobe Reader compatible with Grants.gov. This software is essential to apply for NIFA Federal assistance awards. For basic system requirements and download instructions, please see www.grants.gov/help/download_software.jsp. To verify that you have a compatible version of Adobe Reader, Grants.gov established a test package that will assist you in making that determination. Grants.gov Adobe Versioning Test Package: www.grants.gov/applicants/AdobeVersioningTestOnly.jsp.
2. The application package must be obtained via Grants.gov, go to www.grants.gov, click on “Apply for Grants” in the left-hand column, click on **“Step 1: Download a Grant Application Package and Instructions,”** enter the funding opportunity number **“USDA-NIFA-SRGP-003404”** in the appropriate box and click “Download Package.” From the search results, click “Download” to access the application package.

Contained within the application package is the “NIFA Grants.gov Application Guide: A Guide for Preparation and Submission of NIFA Applications via Grants.gov.” 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 assistance is needed to access the application package (e.g., downloading or navigating Adobe forms), **or submitting the application** then refer to resources available on the Grants.gov Web site first (www.grants.gov/). Grants.gov assistance is also available as follows:

Grants.gov customer support

Toll Free: 1-800-518-4726

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

Email: support@grants.gov

See www.nifa.usda.gov/funding/electronic.html for additional resources for applying electronically.

B. Content and Form of Application Submission

Electronic applications should be prepared following Part V and VI of the document entitled “A Guide for Preparation and Submission of NIFA Applications via Grants.gov.” This guide is part of the corresponding application package (see Section A. of this Part). The following is **additional information** needed in order 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., portable document format) in Part III section 3. of the Guide. ANY PROPOSALS CONTAINING NON-PDF DOCUMENTS WILL BE AT RISK OF BEING EXCLUDED FROM NIFA REVIEW. Partial applications will be excluded from NIFA review. With documented prior approval, resubmitted applications will be accepted until close of business on the closing date in the RFA.

If you do not own PDF-generating software, Grants.gov provides online tools to assist applicants. Users will find a link to “Convert Documents to PDF” on <http://grants.gov/assets/PDFConversion.pdf>.

For any questions related to the preparation of an application please review the NIFA Grants.gov Application Guide and the applicable request for applications. 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, 7:00 am – 5:00 pm Eastern Time, 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.

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

Information related to the questions on this form is dealt with in detail in Part V, 3. of the NIFA Grants.gov Application Guide.

3. R&R Other Project Information Form

Information related to the questions on this form is dealt with in detail in Part V, 4. of the NIFA Grants.gov Application Guide.

a. Field 7. Project Summary/Abstract. The summary should also include the relevance of the project to the goals and objectives of PMAP as described in Part I, B, 1 of this announcement. Please find the suggested Project Summary/Abstract Template at:

www.nifa.usda.gov/home/faq_apply.html#abstract.

b. Field 8. Project Narrative.

PLEASE NOTE: The Project Narrative shall not exceed eighteen pages of written text including figures and tables regardless of line spacing. This maximum (**18 pages**) has been established to ensure fair and equitable competition. The Project Narrative must include all of the following:

(i) Introduction: Identify the pest management problem addressed, its significance, and options for a solution. Identify the commodities and the pesticides that will be addressed by the proposed project. Identify the production area addressed, its size (for example, acreage), frequency and severity of losses, and the potential applicability of this study to other production regions. Include a section describing methods or approaches. As appropriate, proposals should address issues as they relate to current IPM and agricultural production practices, technologic and economic feasibility of potential new practices, and the potential durability of these new practices. Describe how the proposed project addresses the priorities identified by stakeholders. Discuss how IPM management practices will be enhanced if the proposed project is successful.

(ii) Objectives: Provide clear, concise, complete, and logically arranged statements of the project's proposed objectives.

(iii) Research, education, and technology transfer plan: Where applicable, provide a credible, detailed plan for the research, education, and technology transfer elements of the proposed project.

c. Field 12. Other Attachments.

(i) Response to Previous Review. This requirement only applies to "Resubmitted Applications". PDs must respond to the previous review panel summary on **no more than one page**. Title and save the attachment file as "ResponsetoPreviousReview".

(ii) Scientific Peer Review Certification Documentation. Notice that the scientific peer review has been completed should be included in the application (see Part II.D.). Title and save the attachment file as “ScientificPeerReviewCertificationDocumentation”.

4. R&R Senior/Key Person Profile (Expanded)

Information related to the questions on this form is dealt with in detail in Part V, 5. of the NIFA Grants.gov Application Guide.

You **must attach** “Current and Pending Support” information (see NIFA Grants.gov Application Guide Part V, 5. for guidelines and a suggested format) for each senior/key person identified above. Please find the suggested Current and Pending Support Template at:

www.nifa.usda.gov/home/faq_apply.html#current. **Note: Even if no other funding is currently reported under the “Active” section of this attachment, you must still list information for this grant application under the “Pending” section of this attachment for each senior/key person identified above.**

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.

6. R&R Budget

Information related to the questions on this form is dealt with in detail in Part V, 7. of the NIFA Grants.gov Application Guide.

Applicants are required to request funds to attend at least one project directors’ workshop during the term of their project. The request for these funds should be clearly indicated in the budget and budget narrative sections of the application.

7. Supplemental Information Form

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

a. Field 2. Program Code. Enter the program code name “**Pest Management Alternatives**” and the program code “**MX**”.

b. Field 8. Conflict of Interest. A Conflict of Interest List is required for each senior/key person included in the R&R Senior/Key Person Profile. Please find the suggested Conflict of Interest Template at: www.nifa.usda.gov/home/faq_apply.html#coi.

C. Submission Dates and Times

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 COB on **March 3, 2011 (5:00 p.m. Eastern Time)**. Applications received after this deadline will normally not be considered for funding.

Applicants who have problems with the submission of an application to Grants.gov are encouraged to 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.

Correspondence regarding submitted applications will be sent using e-mail. Therefore, applicants are strongly encouraged to provide accurate e-mail 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, please contact the Program Contact identified in Part VII of the applicable RFA and request the proposal number assigned to the application. **Failure to do so may result in the application not being considered for funding by the peer review panel.**

Once the application has been assigned a proposal number, this number should be cited on all future correspondence.

D. Funding Restrictions

Section 7132 of the Food, Conservation, and Energy Act amended section 1462 of the National Agricultural Research, Extension, and Teaching Policy Act of 1977 (7 U.S.C. 3310) on recovery of indirect costs. The recovery of indirect costs on awards made by NIFA under this program area may not exceed the lesser of the institution's official negotiated indirect cost rate or the equivalent of 22 percent of total Federal funds awarded.

NIFA has determined that grant funds awarded under this authority may not be used for the renovation or refurbishment of research, education, or extension space; the purchase or installation of fixed equipment in such space; or the planning, repair, rehabilitation, acquisition, or construction of buildings or facilities.

E. Other Submission Requirements

The applicant should follow the submission requirements noted in the document entitled “A Guide for Preparation and Submission of NIFA Applications via Grants.gov.”

Described below are the requirements for successful submission of an application, all of the following steps must be met for an application to be considered for peer review:

- 1) Meeting the deadline: To electronically send the application to Grants.gov the submit button is pressed, which triggers a date and time stamp on the application. The date and time stamp is used to determine whether the application was received by Grants.gov before the deadline, which is **5:00 p.m. Eastern Time on March 3, 2011**. An application submitted or resubmitted after the deadline is late. Consideration of late applications is only given in extenuating circumstances (e.g., natural disasters, confirmed Grants.gov outage) with proper documentation and support of the Agency Contact (see Part VII). The occurrence of one of these situations does not automatically ensure that a

late application will be accepted. If an applicant wants a late application considered under an extenuating circumstance, the applicant should contact the Agency Contact accordingly.

- 2) Successful Grants.gov validation: The Grants.gov system performs a limited check of the application, and applicants are notified by Grants.gov of the outcome of the initial review. Applications meeting Grants.gov requirements are made available to the funding agency for further processing. Applications that fail Grants.gov validation may be resubmitted to Grants.gov if the original agency deadline has not passed. (Note that the Grants.gov system may allow applications to be submitted after the deadline has passed, but the application is considered late by NIFA.)
- 3) Successful Agency validation: NIFA staff perform precursory review of the application. The agency validation process includes meeting eligibility requirements and following agency application guidelines (e.g., formatting, page limitations, limits on budget requests). Applicants are notified by NIFA of the outcome of this review.

PART V—APPLICATION REVIEW REQUIREMENTS

A. General

Each application will be evaluated in a two-part process. First, each application will be screened to ensure that it meets the administrative requirements as set forth in this RFA. Second, applications that meet these requirements will be technically evaluated by a review panel.

Reviewers will be selected based upon training and experience in relevant scientific, extension, or education fields, taking into account the following factors: (a) 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; (b) the need to include as reviewers experts from various areas of specialization within relevant scientific, education, or extension fields; (c) the need to include as reviewers 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; (d) the need to include as reviewers experts from a variety of organizational types (e.g., colleges, universities, industry, state and Federal agencies, private profit and non-profit organizations) and geographic locations; (e) the need to maintain a balanced composition of reviewers with regard to minority and female representation and an equitable age distribution; and (f) the need to include reviewers who can judge the effective usefulness to producers and the general public of each application.

B. Evaluation Criteria

During the past few years the Regional IPM Centers were funded and willing to contribute evaluations of relevance for each proposal submitted to NIFA. The Regional IPM Centers worked with stakeholder groups to develop these helpful evaluations of relevancy. However, given project program priorities and budgets for FY 2011 and beyond, the Regional IPM Center Directors decided during the FY 2010 PMAP Review not to continue to develop and provide these evaluations of relevance due to fiscal constraints on their programs. Input and recommendations from stakeholder groups on the PMAP program and RFA will continue to be solicited through the Stakeholder Input process described in the Initial Announcement at the beginning of this RFA.

The PMAP Panel will use the following evaluation criteria to evaluate the relevance and technical merit of applications submitted in response to this RFA.

Relevance Evaluation Criteria	
Documented need (based on statement in “Objectives for PMAP” under Part I, B. ‘Purpose and Priorities’)	20 points
Potential for proposed project to address priority needs	10 points
Potential for proposed project to contribute to the development of viable pest management practices while reducing human and environmental risks.	10 points
Total	40 points

Technical Evaluation Criteria	
Appropriate and clearly stated research and/or outreach objectives	15 points
Methodology and analytical approach is appropriate to project objectives	15 points
Involvement of appropriate, relevant expertise	9 points
Experience of key personnel	6 points
Feasibility of attaining objectives during the project period including commercialization of technologies	6 points
Appropriateness of the budget	6 points
Adherence to the proposal guidelines	3 points
Total	60 points

C. Conflicts of Interest and Confidentiality

During the peer evaluation process, extreme care will be taken to prevent any actual or perceived conflicts of interest that may impact review or evaluation. For the purpose of determining conflicts of interest, the academic and administrative autonomy of an institution shall be determined by reference to the current Higher Education Directory, published by Higher Education Publications, Inc., 6400 Arlington Boulevard, Suite 648, Falls Church, Virginia 22042. Phone: (703) 532-2300. Web site: www.hepinc.com.

Names of submitting institutions and individuals, as well as application content and peer evaluations, will be kept confidential, except to those involved in the review process, to the extent permitted by law. In addition, the identities of peer reviewers will remain confidential throughout the entire review process. Therefore, the names of the reviewers will not be released to applicants.

D. Organizational Management Information

Specific management information relating to an applicant shall be submitted on a one time basis, with updates on an as needed basis, as part of the responsibility determination 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. NIFA will provide copies of forms recommended for use in fulfilling these requirements as part of the preaward process. Although an applicant may be

eligible based on its status as one of these entities, there are factors which 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).

PART VI—AWARD ADMINISTRATION

A. General

Within the limit of funds available for such purpose, the awarding official of NIFA 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 awarding official of NIFA 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. It should be noted that 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 shall be expended solely for the purpose for which the funds are granted in accordance with the approved application and budget, the regulations, the terms and conditions of the award, the applicable Federal cost principles, and the Department's assistance regulations (parts 3015 and 3019 of 7 CFR).

B. Award Notice

The award document will provide pertinent instructions and information including, at a minimum, the following:

- (1) Legal name and address of performing organization or institution to whom the Director has issued an award under the terms of this request for applications;
- (2) Title of project;
- (3) Name(s) and institution(s) of PDs chosen to direct and control approved activities;
- (4) Identifying award number assigned by the Department;
- (5) Project period, specifying the amount of time the Department intends to support the project without requiring recompetition for funds;
- (6) Total amount of Departmental financial assistance approved by the Director during the project period;
- (7) Legal authority(ies) under which the award is issued;
- (8) Appropriate Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance (CFDA) number;
- (9) Applicable award terms and conditions (see www.nifa.usda.gov/business/awards/awardterms.html to view NIFA award terms and conditions);

(10) Approved budget plan for categorizing allocable project funds to accomplish the stated purpose of the award; and

(11) Other information or provisions deemed necessary by NIFA to carry out its respective awarding activities or to accomplish the purpose of a particular award.

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 include, but are not limited to:

7 CFR Part 1, subpart A—USDA implementation of the Freedom of Information Act.

7 CFR Part 3—USDA implementation of OMB Circular No. A-129 regarding debt collection.

7 CFR Part 15, subpart A—USDA implementation of Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, as amended.

7 CFR Part 331 and 9 CFR Part 121—USDA implementation of the Agricultural Bioterrorism Protection Act of 2002.

7 CFR Part 3015—USDA Uniform Federal Assistance Regulations, implementing OMB directives (i.e., OMB Circular Nos. A-21 and A-122 (2 CFR Parts 220 and 230), and incorporating provisions of 31 U.S.C. 6301-6308 (formerly the Federal Grant and Cooperative Agreement Act of 1977, Pub. L. No. 95-224), as well as general policy requirements applicable to recipients of Departmental financial assistance.

7 CFR Part 3017—USDA implementation of Governmentwide Debarment and Suspension (Nonprocurement).

7 CFR Part 3018—USDA implementation of Restrictions on Lobbying. Imposes prohibitions and requirements for disclosure and certification related to lobbying on recipients of Federal contracts, grants, cooperative agreements, and loans.

7 CFR Part 3019—USDA implementation of OMB Circular A-110, Uniform Administrative Requirements for Grants and Other Agreements With Institutions of Higher Education, Hospitals, and Other Nonprofit Organizations (2 CFR Part 215).

7 CFR Part 3021—Governmentwide Requirements for Drug-Free Workplace (Financial Assistance).

7 CFR Part 3052—USDA implementation of OMB Circular No. A-133, Audits of States, Local Governments, and Nonprofit Organizations.

Of the administrative regulations at 7 CFR part 3400, only section 3400.1, Applicability of Regulations, subpart C, Peer and Merit Review Arranged by Grantees, and subpart D, Annual Reports, apply to the Special Grants Programs awards made under the authority of section 2(c) of this Act (7 U.S.C. 450i(c)).

7 CFR Part 3407—CSREES procedures to implement the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969, as amended.

7 CFR 3430—Competitive and Noncompetitive Non-formula Grant Programs--General Grant Administrative Provisions.

29 U.S.C. 794 (section 504, Rehabilitation Act of 1973) and 7 CFR Part 15b (USDA implementation of statute) —prohibiting discrimination based upon physical or mental handicap in Federally assisted programs.

35 U.S.C. 200 et seq. —Bayh Dole Act, controlling allocation of rights to inventions made by employees of small business firms and domestic nonprofit organizations, including universities, in Federally assisted programs (implementing regulations are contained in 37 CFR Part 401).

D. Expected Program Outputs and Reporting Requirements

Grantees are to submit initial project information and annual summary reports to NIFA's electronic, Web-based inventory system that facilitates both grantee submissions of project outcomes and public access to information on Federally-funded projects. The details of these reporting requirements are included in the award terms and conditions.

For informational purposes, the "Federal Financial Report," Form SF-425, consolidates into a single report the former Financial Status Report (SF-269 and SF-269A) and the Federal Cash Transactions Report (SF-272 and SF-272A). The [NIFA Agency-specific Terms and Conditions](#) include the requirement that Form SF-425 is due on an **annual basis no later than 90 days following the award's anniversary date (i.e., one year following the month and day of which the project period begins and each year thereafter up until a final report is required)**. A final "Federal Financial Report," Form SF-425, is due **90 days after the expiration date of this award**.

PART VII—AGENCY CONTACT

Applicants and other interested parties are encouraged to contact Dr. Monte P. Johnson; National Program Leader; Division of Plant Systems-Protection; Institute of Food Production and Sustainability; National Institute of Food and Agriculture; U.S. Department of Agriculture; STOP 2220; 1400 Independence Avenue, SW; Washington, DC 20250-2220; telephone: (202) 401-1108; fax: (202) 401-4888; e-mail: mpjohnson@nifa.usda.gov.

PART VIII—OTHER INFORMATION

A. Access to Review Information

Copies of reviews, not including the identity of reviewers, and a summary of the panel comments will be sent to the applicant PD after the review process has been completed.

B. Use of Funds; Changes

1. Delegation of Fiscal Responsibility

Unless the terms and conditions of the award state otherwise, the awardee 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 Project Plans

a. The permissible changes by the awardee, PD(s), or other key project personnel in the approved project shall be limited to changes in methodology, techniques, or other similar aspects of the project to expedite achievement of the project's approved goals. If the awardee or the PD(s) is uncertain as to whether a change complies with this provision, the question must be referred to the Authorized Departmental Officer (ADO) for a final determination. The ADO is the signatory of the award document, not the program contact.

b. Changes in approved goals or objectives shall be requested by the awardee and approved in writing by the ADO prior to effecting such changes. In no event shall requests for such changes be approved which are outside the scope of the original approved project.

c. Changes in approved project leadership or the replacement or reassignment of other key project personnel shall be requested by the awardee and approved in writing by the ADO prior to effecting such changes.

d. Transfers of actual performance of the substantive programmatic work in whole or in part and provisions for payment of funds, whether or not Federal funds are involved, shall be requested by the awardee and approved in writing by the ADO prior to effecting such transfers, unless prescribed otherwise in the terms and conditions of the award.

e. The project period may be extended by NIFA without additional financial support, for such additional period(s) as the ADO determines may be necessary to complete or fulfill the purposes of an approved project, but in no case shall the total project period exceed any applicable statutory limit or expiring appropriation limitation. Any extension of time shall be conditioned upon prior request by the awardee and approval in writing by the ADO, unless prescribed otherwise in the terms and conditions of award.

f. Changes in Approved Budget: Unless stated otherwise in the terms and conditions of award, changes in an approved budget must be requested by the awardee and approved in writing by the ADO prior to instituting such changes, if the revision will involve transfers or expenditures of amounts requiring prior approval as set forth in the applicable Federal cost principles, Departmental regulations, or award.

C. 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 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. The original copy of an application that does not result in an award will be retained by the Agency for a period of three years. Other copies will be destroyed. 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.

D. Regulatory Information

For the reasons set forth in the final Rule related Notice to 7 CFR part 3015, subpart V (48 FR 29114, June 24, 1983), this program is excluded from the scope of the Executive Order 12372 which requires intergovernmental consultation with State and local officials. Under the provisions of the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995 (44 U.S.C. chapter 35), the collection of information requirements contained in this Notice have been approved under OMB Document No. 0524-0039.

E. Definitions

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

For the purpose of this program, the following additional definition is applicable:

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