

**AFRI Education and Workforce Development (EWD)
Youth Innovators Empowering Agriculture Across America (YEA)**

Frequently Asked Questions

1. Where can I find the recording of the Youth Innovators Empowering Agriculture Across America (YEA) RFA Webinar?

The YEA Webinar occurred on June 3, 2022, at 1:30 CST. The recording will be available on the AFRI EWD webpage: <https://www.nifa.usda.gov/grants/programs/afri-education-workforce-development>

2. Where can I find the PowerPoint Presentation from the (YEA) Webinar?

You can download a copy of the PowerPoint on the AFRI EWD webpage: <https://www.nifa.usda.gov/grants/programs/afri-education-workforce-development>

3. Where can I find the RFA for the Youth Innovators Empowering Agriculture Across America (YEA) funding opportunity?

You can find the YEA opportunity on page 28 of the “Current AFRI Education and Workforce Development RFA”, available on the AFRI EWD webpage: <https://www.nifa.usda.gov/grants/funding-opportunities/agriculture-food-research-initiative-education-workforce-development>

4. When are applications for Youth Innovators Empowering Agriculture Across America (YEA) funding opportunity due?

Applications are due on August 4, 2022, at 5pm EST.

5. Is the Youth Innovators Empowering Agriculture Across America (YEA) funding opportunity going to be offered again in FY23?

This program area priority under the Special Workforce Development Topics may change annually based on priorities. There is no commitment beyond the FY22 RFA to include YEA as a program priority topic.

6. Where can I find the evaluation criteria?

You can find evaluation criteria on the AFRI RFA Resources webpage: <https://www.nifa.usda.gov/afri-request-applications-resources>

7. What is the start date for YEA projects and YEA-CN projects?

The start date will be between January 1, 2023, and September 1, 2023.

8. Can there be subcontractors and who can we include?

Please review the project narrative in AFRI EWD PART IV C on page 69 and page 80 which states the following:

c. Subcontract Arrangements

If it will be necessary to enter into a formal subcontract agreement with another institution, then refer to the following items:

1) Letters of commitment (including proposed amount of subaward) and statement of work are required to be included in the application for each subaward. Letters of commitment are to be included in Field 12, Other Attachments of the R&R Other Project Information.

2) If the cumulative amount for subawards exceeds 50 percent of the total Federal funds requested or in instances where the proposed subaward is to a federal agency, then the applicant must provide budgetary detail (i.e., budget and budget justification) for each subaward. If this is the case then refer to Part V, 8 of the NIFA Grants.gov. Application Guide for instructions on how to include this information as part of the application.

9. Can an institution apply for both the YEA and YEA-CN?

The Duplicate of Multiple Submissions statement is intended to refer to duplicate, essentially duplicate or predominantly overlapping applications submitted to one or more program areas within AFRI (including FASE Grants) in any one fiscal year. Duplicate or multiple submissions are not allowed. NIFA will disqualify both applications if an applicant submits multiple applications that are duplicative or substantially overlapping to NIFA programs within the same fiscal year. For additional information please reach out to the Dr. Maurice Smith at (Maurice.smith2@usda.gov) listed in this RFA. For more information see: [NIFA Federal Assistance Policy Guide | National Institute of Food and Agriculture \(usda.gov\)](#)

A university/institution may submit multiple applications on behalf of a single faculty or multiple faculty as long as they are not essentially duplications of the same project or portions of the same project to multiple program area priorities.

10. Can a university/institution submit applications on behalf of multiple faculties as long as they are not essentially duplications of the same project or portions of the same project to multiple program area priorities?

Yes, we have no general restriction against that and there is nothing in the RFA to preclude it.

11. How much would an applicant need to allocate for indirect costs?

Please review AFRI EWD PART IV C on page 80 and the RFA on page 42 that states the following:

D. Funding Restrictions

Indirect Cost (IDC) not to exceed 30 percent of Total Federal Funds Awarded (TFFA) of the recipient. Section 1462(a) and (c) of the National Agricultural Research, Extension, and Teaching Policy Act of 1977 (NARETPA) limits IDC for the overall award to 30 percent of Total Federal Funds Awarded (TFFA) under a research, education, or extension grant. The maximum IDC rate allowed under the award is determined by calculating the amount of IDC using:

- 1. the sum of an institution's negotiated indirect cost rate and the indirect cost rate charged by sub-awardees, if any; or*
- 2. 30 percent of TFFA.*

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

12. In the budget, can a proposal include graduate student support or stipends?

Graduate student support or stipends can be included in the budget.

13. Should applicants complete a sustainability plan?

*In the RFA on page 30 it states the following for YEA-CN projects:
Develop a complete, thorough, YEA-CN sustainable plan to ensure the YEA program is continued after the duration of the grant.*

A sustainability plan is not required for YEA projects.

14. Can the matching requirements be explained?

The RFA states on Page 38 the following:

Applicants must provide matching contributions on a dollar-for-dollar basis for all Federal funds awarded under AFRI for equipment or applied research grants unless a waiver applies. Matching funds requirements for AFRI programs included in this RFA may be found at 7 U.S.C. 3157 (b)(9) (A-C). If an applied Research (see Appendix III) or Integrated Project with an applied research component, is commodity-specific and not of national scope, the grant recipient is required to match the USDA funds awarded on a dollar-for-dollar basis from non-federal sources with cash and/or in-kind contributions. NIFA may waive the matching funds requirement for a grant if one of the following applies:

- 1. The results of the project, while of particular benefit to a specific agricultural commodity, are likely to be applicable to agricultural commodities generally; or*
- 2. The project involves a minor commodity, the project deals with scientifically important research, and the grant recipient is unable to satisfy the matching funds requirement.*

15. With respect to matching requirements, can you describe what is meant by “not of national scope”?

Something that is highly specific to one topic/crop/topic of study that cannot be replicated anywhere else.

16. Should applicants respond to all AFRI Farm Bill areas and all USDA priority areas in their proposal?

The RFA states on Page 28 the following:

*The YEA program seeks projects supporting **one or more** of the six AFRI Farm Bill priorities, as well as **one or more** of the USDA priorities of: (1) addressing climate change via climate smart agriculture and forestry; (2) advancing racial justice, equity, and opportunity; (3) creating more and better market opportunities; (4) tackling food and nutrition insecurity or (5) promoting workforce development.*

17. What is the Center of Excellence criteria?

The RFA states on Page 39 the following:

In addition to meeting the other requirements detailed in Part IV § C , of this Request for Application (RFA), eligible applicants who wish to be recognized as centers of excellence must provide a brief justification statement at the end of their Project Narratives and within the page limits provided for Project Narratives, describing how they meet the standards of a center of excellence, based on the following criteria:

(A) The ability of the center of excellence to ensure coordination and cost effectiveness by reducing unnecessarily duplicative efforts regarding research, teaching, and extension in the implementation of the proposed research and/or extension activity outlined in this application;

(B) In addition to any applicable matching requirements, the ability of the center of excellence to leverage available resources by using public-private partnerships among agricultural industry groups, institutions of higher education, and the Federal Government in the implementation of the proposed research and/or extension activity outlined in this application. Resources leveraged should be commensurate with the size of the award;

(C) The planned scope and capability of the center of excellence to implement teaching initiatives to increase awareness and effectively disseminate solutions to target audiences through extension activities in the implementation of the proposed research and/or extension activity outlined in this application; and

(D) The ability or capacity of the center of excellence to increase the economic returns to rural communities by identifying, attracting, and directing funds to high-priority agricultural issues in support of and as a result of the implementation of the proposed research and/or extension activity outlined in this application.

Additionally, where practicable (not required), center of excellence applicants should describe proposed efforts to improve teaching capacity and infrastructure at colleges and universities (including land-grant colleges and universities, cooperating forestry schools, certified Non-Land Grant Colleges of Agriculture (NLGCA) (list of certified NLGCA is available at http://www.nifa.usda.gov/funding/pdfs/nlgca_colleges.pdf), and schools of veterinary medicine).

Only YEA-CN applicants must meet Center of Excellence criteria.

18. What information is needed concerning equipment?

Please see more information on equipment in the Part IV C of this YEA program on page 75: <https://nifa.usda.gov/afri-request-applications-resources-0>

e. Field 11. Equipment

No Page Limit. Title the attachment as “Equipment” in the document header and save file as “Equipment”.

Describe available equipment. Items of nonexpendable equipment necessary to conduct and successfully complete the proposed project should be listed in Field C. of the R&R Budget and described in the Budget Justification. Detailed information related to the questions of the R&R Budget form is available in PART V, 7 of the NIFA Grants.gov Application Guide found here: [NIFA-22-001 NIFA Grants Application Guide | National Institute of Food and Agriculture \(usda.gov\)](#)

19. What is meant by Underrepresented?

*Found in AFRI EWD PART IV C Resource on page 72 it states the following:
Underrepresented = those whose representation among food and agricultural professionals is disproportionately less than their proportion in the general population as indicated in standard statistical references, or as documented on a case-by-case basis by national survey data (e.g., the U.S. Department of Education's Digest of Education Statistics, U.S. Department of Agriculture's Food and Agricultural Education Information Systems, etc.).*

20. Can applicants include international components?

*In the RFA on page 9 it states the following:
NIFA supports global engagement that advances U.S. agricultural goals. NIFA recognizes that collaboration with international partners may be necessary to attain the agency's goals for U.S. agriculture, promote global competence of our nation's future agricultural workforce, and promote safe and nutritious food security in a growing world. Therefore, although application to this RFA is limited to eligible U.S. institutions, applicants may collaborate with international partners, to include subcontracts to international partners or other institutions. Applications must clearly demonstrate benefits to the United States. Additional guidance on including international activities is provided on the [AFRI International Partnerships](#) website.*

21. Who is eligible to apply?

*Eligibility for AFRI integrated grants includes **colleges, universities and state agricultural experiment stations**. Colleges and universities are degree granting (including Associate, graduate, or professional degree). Colleges and universities must be listed in the Directory of Higher Education to be considered a college or university.*

22. How many YEA projects will USDA NIFA fund?

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