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NIFA

REQUEST FOR APPLICATIONS
Veterinary Services Grant Program

MODIFICATION: This RFA is an updated version of the FY 2022 solicitation. It includes only the references to FY 2023 funding; FY 2022 references have been eliminated.

FUNDING YEAR:	Fiscal Year (FY) 2023
APPLICATION DEADLINE:	March 29, 2023
ANTICIPATED FUNDING:	$4,000,000
FUNDING OPPORTUNITY NUMBER:	USDA-NIFA-VSGP-009745
ASSISTANCE LISTING NUMBER:	10.336
LETTER OF INTENT DEADLINE:	Not Required

INITIAL ANNOUNCEMENT
NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF FOOD AND AGRICULTURE
UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

VETERINARY SERVICES GRANT PROGRAM (VSGP)

ASSISTANCE LISTING. The VSGP is listed in the Assistance Listings under the number 10.336.

Table 1: Key Dates and Deadlines

Task Description	Deadlines
Application:	5:00 P.M. Eastern Time March 29, 2023
Letter of Intent:	Not Required
SAMS and /UEI	Register for a SAM UEI numbers no later than 5 weeks before application deadline.
Applicants Comments:	Within six months from the issuance of this notice (*NIFA may not consider comments received after the sixth month*)

Advancing Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Accessibility. National Institute of Food and Agriculture (NIFA) recognizes research, education, and extension efforts will have the greatest impacts when programs are grounded in DEIA. NIFA is committed to enhancing diversity, equity, inclusion, and accessibility of programs and encourages individuals, institutions, and organizations from underserved communities to apply to funding opportunities as lead, co-lead, or subaward recipient(s), and to engage as leaders in the peer panel review process to support the development of strong networks and collaborations. NIFA encourages applications that engage diverse communities and have broad impacts through research, education, extension, and integrated activities to address current and future challenges.

Stakeholder Input. NIFA seeks comments on all requests for applications (RFAs) so it can deliver programs efficiently, effectively, with integrity, and focused on customer service. NIFA considers comments, to the extent possible, when developing RFAs and uses comments to help meet the requirements of [Section 103(c)(2) of the Agricultural Research, Extension, and Education Reform Act of 1998](#) [(7 U.S.C. 7613(c)(2))](#). Applicants may submit written comments to Policy@usda.gov (email is for comments only). Please use the following subject line: Response to the Veterinary Services Grant Program RFA.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

NIFA requests applications for the Veterinary Services Grant Program (VSGP) for fiscal years 2023 to develop, implement and sustain food and large animal veterinary services and relieve veterinary shortage situations in the United States and U.S. Insular Areas. The goals of the VSGP are to fund accredited schools and organizations in education, extension, and training (EET) for food animal veterinary medicine, and for rural practice enhancement (RPE) for veterinary clinics that provide services in veterinary shortage situations. The amount available for grants in FY 2023 is approximately $4,000,000.

This notice identifies the objectives for VSGP projects, deadlines, funding information, eligibility criteria for projects and applicants, and application forms and associated instructions.

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PART I. FUNDING OPPORTUNITY DESCRIPTION

A.   Legislative Authority

Section 7104 of the 2014 Farm Bill (P.L. 113-79) added section 1415B to the National Agricultural Research, Extension, and Teaching Policy Act of 1977 (NARETPA), as amended, codified at 7 U.S.C. 3151b to establish the Veterinary Services Grant Program (VSGP). This authorizes the Secretary of Agriculture to make competitive grants to qualified entities, including veterinary clinics/hospitals, that carry out programs in food and large animal veterinarian shortage situation areas and for the purpose of developing, implementing, and sustaining food/large animal veterinary services.

B.   Purpose and Priorities

Veterinarians play significant roles in assuring food and fiber animal health and wellbeing, food safety and security, public health, and producer profitability, especially in rural areas of the United States where most livestock production occurs. The VSGP, Assistance Listing 10.336 and its companion Veterinary Medicine Loan Repayment Program (VMLRP) authorized by the National Veterinary Medical Services Act (NVMSA), were born out of concerns that long-term maldistributions in the veterinary workforce have left some rural communities with insufficient access to food/large animal veterinary services. By appropriating funds in FY 2005 to implement the NVMSA (previously authorized in 2003), Congress sought to lessen one cause of this workforce problem, i.e., the tremendous educational debt burden of graduating veterinarians. This incentive program helped reduce educational debt of veterinarians in exchange for service in designated veterinary shortage areas.

Educational activities should include broad types of learning and engagement (e.g., hands-on learning, experiential, and innovative methods of teaching and disseminating information), emphasize leadership and development of interpersonal and team skills, and include virtual options, as appropriate.

It has been widely acknowledged that there are other important factors contributing to the maldistribution of veterinarians serving the agricultural sector besides debt burden. Among these are limited access to specialized education, extension, and training opportunities for veterinarians and veterinary technicians. In addition to the educational aspects, private practices that provide food/large animal services face insufficient resources to enhance their services such as updating equipment and adding personnel to expand or improve access for producers in veterinary shortage areas.

To complement the work being done under the VMLRP, and to address this veterinary shortage problem, the VSGP is designed to support two types of grants.
1. Education, extension, and training (EET) grants are initiatives that will enable veterinarians, veterinary students, veterinary technicians, and veterinary technician students to gain specialized skills through formal coursework, clinical training, and practice enhancement to mitigate veterinary service shortages more effectively in the United States and Insular Areas.
2. Rural practice enhancement (RPE) grants ultimately bolster the capacity of private clinics that provide food/large animal veterinary services in designated veterinarian shortage situations.

The purpose of the VSGP is to develop, implement, and sustain food animal veterinary services and relieve veterinarian shortage situations in the United States, which includes Insular Areas (see Appendix III of this RFA for a definition of "Insular Area").

Grants will be made available on a competitive basis to:
1. Establish or expand accredited veterinary education programs, veterinary residency and fellowship programs, or veterinary internship and externship programs carried out in coordination with accredited colleges of veterinary medicine.
2. Provide continuing education and extension, including veterinary telemedicine and other distance-based education, for veterinarians, veterinary technicians, and other health professionals needed to strengthen veterinary programs and enhance food safety and public health,
3. Cover travel and living expenses of veterinary students, veterinary interns, externs, fellows, and residents, and veterinary technician students attending training programs in food safety, public health, or food animal medicine.
4. To expose students in grades 11 and 12 to education and career opportunities in food animal medicine.
5. Expand or enhance private practice capabilities, services, and resources.

The VSGP is aligned with the following USDA Strategic Goals:
1. Strategic Goal 2: Ensure America's Agriculture System is Equitable, Resilient, and Prosperous;
2. Strategic Goal 4: Provide All Americans Safe and Nutritious Food;
3. Strategic Goal 5: Expand Opportunities for Economic Development and Improve Quality of Life in Rural and Tribal Communities

Handling of baseline data and data collection will be addressed in the Data Management Plan in accordance with the Part IV(B) of this RFA.
Additional requirements on expected performance goals, indicators and targets may be required as a condition of award.

C. Program Area Description
NIFA is soliciting applications under the following program areas:
1. Education, Extension and Training (EET) Grants
2. Rural Practice Enhancement (RPE) Grants

Table 2: EET Grants VSGP Education Key Information

Title	Description
Program Code:	VSGPE
Program Code Name:	VSGP Education
CFDA Number	10.336
Project Type:	Education, Extension and Training
Grant Type:	Regular
Application Deadlines:	March 29, 2023
Grant Duration:	36 Months
Anticipated # of Awards:	Approximately 9
Maximum Award Amount:	$250,000

Table 3: RPE Grants VSGP Rural Practice Enhancement Key Information

Title	Description
Program Code:	VSGPR
Program Code Name:	VSGP Rural Practice Enhancement
CFDA Number	10.336
Project Type:	Rural Practice Enhancement
Grant Type:	Regular
Application Deadlines:	March 29, 2023
Grant Duration:	36 Months (require a three-year service commitment)
Anticipated # of Awards:	Approximately 9
Maximum Award Amount:	$125,000

PART II. AWARD INFORMATION

A.   Available Funding
The amount available for VSGP in FY2023 is $4,000,000. The funding instrument will be a grant. USDA is not committed to fund any particular application or to make a specific number of awards. The Automated Standard Application for Payments (ASAP), operated by the Department of Treasury, Bureau of Fiscal Service, is the designated payment system for awards resulting from this RFA.

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

C.   Program Areas
The following describes the two program areas that are eligible for VSGP funding:
1. Education, Extension, and Training (EET) grants
> **EET** grants support the following types of formal coursework, clinical training, and practice enhancement activities:
>
> i.   To allow veterinary students, veterinary interns, externs, residents, and veterinary technician students to cover expenses (other than the types of expenses described in the rural practice enhancement program area) of attending training programs in food safety, public health, or food animal medicine.
> ii.   To modify a course(s) of accredited veterinary education programs that includes but is not limited to: updating course materials for in person or remote learning; faculty recruitment and retention
> iii.   To support training of veterinary residents, interns and externships carried out in coordination with accredited colleges of veterinary medicine.
> iv.   To provide continuing education and extension, including veterinary telemedicine and other distance-based education, for veterinarians, veterinary technicians, and other health professionals needed to strengthen veterinary programs and enhance food safety.
> v.   To expose students in grades 11 and 12 to education and career opportunities in food animal medicine.
> vi.   Although these grants can last 3 years, they do not have a minimum service commitment to a designated veterinary shortage area.
>
> Examples of activities may include development and implementation of:
> i.   Traditional or non-traditional learning opportunities;
> ii.   Non-degree educational training programs;
> iii.   Courses associated with existing degree programs;
> iv.   Continuing education.

Research and graduate program activities that are not considered consistent with the overall intent of the program are not encouraged for applications.

In FY2023, focus will be placed on programs that emphasize the following:

i.   Veterinary students and veterinary technician students enrolled in an accredited veterinary degree program.
ii.   Veterinary interns, externs, fellows, residents, and veterinary technicians.
iii. Early career veterinarians who, at the time they initiate the activities proposed in the application, are within 5 years of graduation from a Doctor of Veterinary Medicine (DVM) or equivalent degree program.
iv.   Students in grades 11 and 12 to expose education and career opportunities in food animal medicine.

Proposals should emphasize educational content that teaches:

i.   Veterinary practice enhancement techniques and strategies that benefit the health of agricultural animals.
ii.   Best practices for delivering quality food and agricultural animal veterinary services in rural areas, and/or
iii. Veterinary approaches to foster food safety, epidemiology, or veterinary public health.
iv.   Career opportunities in food animal medicine.

Note: For the purposes of this RFA, please refer to APPENDIX III: DEFINITIONS of this RFA for definitions of "Educational activity" and "Extension activity."

Other Program Area Requirements:

i.   Applicants are encouraged to collaborate with other qualified entities and to be creative and innovative in their approach.
ii.   The purpose of the proposed educational activities must be to substantially relieve veterinary shortage situations or facilitate or support veterinary practices engaged in clinical and public health activities in the United States and Insular areas.
iii. Application narratives must include formal evaluation plans (as described in Part IV.B.) to document the anticipated reach and impact(s) of each educational activity. These plans should be participant-centered and implemented during the term of the project.
iv.   In FY2023, applications that propose to develop new degree or curriculum programs will not be funded.

2. **RPE**

   Program Area Priority –Rural Practice Enhancement grants will support the development and provision of veterinary services to substantially relieve designated rural (as defined in Part I, B.) veterinary shortage situations (as defined in the following section) in the United States and Insular Areas and support education or extension needs of the area. Funds may be used for one or more of the following:

i. Equip veterinary offices. Applicants must explain how requested equipment will be used to provide veterinary care for agricultural animals in veterinary shortage situations.

ii. Equipment purchases may include, but are not limited to, animal restraints, diagnostic and therapeutic tools, such as chutes, imaging equipment, head gates, hoof trimming, breeding soundness examinations, etc.

iii. Share in reasonable costs of operating an eligible veterinary practice.

iv. Overhead costs may include but are not limited to salary and fringe benefits for veterinarian(s), support personnel, office rent, vehicle fuel supporting ambulatory services, maintenance contracts on equipment used to treat food animals, expendable medical and office supplies, computer software, utility expenses, and business consultant fees.

v. Establish mobile veterinary facilities. Mobile veterinary facilities include, but are not limited to, a vehicle equipped to provide mobile veterinary services, mobile restraint devices, veterinary truck inserts, point of care testing equipment, etc.

vi. To support the exposure of students in grades 11 and 12 to education and career opportunities in food/large animal medicine and herd health management.

RPE applicants can only apply to serve one veterinary shortage situation area (see below and Veterinary Shortage Situation Map). It is imperative that applicants make a compelling case in their Project Narrative (See **Part IV, B** of this RFA) describing how the equipment, mobile facilities, personnel, or other resources supported by the grant will contribute substantially toward the objectives and/or mitigation of the veterinary service needs described in the specific shortage situation area they are applying to serve.

Other Program Area Requirements:

i. Overhead costs cannot exceed 50% of the total budget. These costs must be associated directly with providing service to a veterinary shortage area. Applications with budgets that request greater than 50% for overhead costs will not be reviewed.

ii. Requests for overhead support must be justified, item by item, in the Budget Narrative (See **Part IV, B**. of this RFA.

iii. Funds cannot be used to construct new buildings or facilities or to acquire, expand, remodel, or alter an existing building or facility, including site grading and improvement and architect fees.

iv. Activities to address the required education or extension needs must be described in the Project Narrative section and may include experiential learning opportunities for veterinary or veterinary technician students, interns, or externs; courses, seminars, lectures or other events for producer groups, the public, community organizations or academic institutions; or participation in emergency preparedness events.

v. A clinic that employs a VMLRP awardee with an active contract from any year can propose to serve the same shortage area to which they are obligated under their VMLRP award. For example, if you have a VMLRP service obligation

that began in 2020, you can apply to serve the same veterinary shortage situation area from 2020.

vi. A clinic that does not wish to use the veterinary shortage situation area of their VMLRP employee(s) or a clinic that does not have a VMLRP awardee may apply to an open veterinary shortage area for the current application submission year. VMLRP Shortage Situations.

vii. The ID of the shortage situation area the applicant is proposing to serve must be clearly cited in the project title and abstract. Applicants are also required to submit the shortage situation nomination form with their application materials.

viii. Shortage situations must qualify as rural (as defined in Section 343(a) of the Consolidated Farm and Rural Development Act (7 U.S.C. 1991(a)).

    a. VMLRP type II shortage situations are rural.

    b. For type I shortage situations, use the USDA Rural Development's Business Program's Rural Community Development Initiative (RCDI) map to assess "rural" eligibility. The map can be found here. (Select Rural Business at top, then the link for RCDI, accept the disclaimer and zoom into the area of interest.)

ix. The percent full-time equivalent (FTE) specified in the shortage situation form (which can be found for each shortage here) does not apply to VSGP.

x. Only one shortage area can be applied to in a given application year, only one award is allowed per veterinary shortage situation, and only one award is allowed per RPE applicant.

xi. Applicants must provide a copy of a map of the shortage area to which they are applying that details their clinic's service area and the location of the clinic (example provided on website).

xii. A clinic can reapply for a VSGP-RPE award five years following the end date of a previous award.

D.   Ethical Conduct of Funded Projects (EET & RPE)

In accordance with sections 2, 3, and 8 of 2 CFR Part 422, institutions that conduct USDA-funded extramural research must foster an atmosphere conducive to research integrity, bear primary responsibility for prevention and detection of research misconduct, and maintain and effectively communicate and train their staff regarding policies and procedures. In the event an application to NIFA results in an award, the Authorized Representative (AR) assures, through acceptance of the award that the institution will comply with the above requirements. Award recipients must, upon request, make available to NIFA the policies, procedures, and documentation to support the conduct of the training. See Responsible and Ethical Conduct of Research for further information.

PART III. ELIGIBILITY INFORMATION

A. Eligibility Requirements
Applicants for the VSGP must meet all the requirements cited in this RFA. Failure to meet the eligibility criteria by the application deadline may result in exclusion from consideration or preclude NIFA from making an award. For those new to Federal financial assistance, NIFA's Grants Overview provides highly recommended information about grants and other resources to help understand the Federal awards process.

Applications may only be submitted by the entities listed below if they carry out programs or activities that will: 1) substantially relieve veterinary shortage situations; and 2) support or facilitate private veterinary practices engaged in the care of food animals and address food safety and public health concerns for the community.

Table 4: Eligible Applicants for EET
1. State, national, allied, regional, or professional food animal veterinary organization recognized by the American Veterinary Medical Association,
2. College or school of veterinary medicine accredited by the American Veterinary Medical Association,
3. University research foundation or veterinary medical foundation,
4. Department of veterinary science or department of comparative medicine accredited by the U.S. Department of Education,
5. State agricultural experiment station or Research Farm (1890 institutions),
6. State, local, or tribal government agency.

Table 5: Eligible Applicants for RPE
1. For-profit or non-profit entity located in the United States, such as a veterinary clinic or hospital, that provides mixed/large animal veterinary services in a rural area, as defined in section 343(a) of the Consolidated Farm and Rural Development Act (7 U.S.C. 1991(a)), within a current VMLRP shortage area. FY2023 shortage situation areas are found here.
2. Clinic or hospital that employs a current VMLRP awardee from any qualifying year (i.e., those with a current service obligation at the time of this application) and applies with reference to the single shortage area to which they are obligated to serve;
3. RPE awards are made to clinics, not individuals. Therefore, only a clinic, not an individual practitioner, may apply for and be awarded an RPE grant.

Duplicate or Multiple Submissions –For RPE, duplicate or multiple submissions are not allowed. NIFA will disqualify both applications if an RPE applicant submits duplicate or multiple submissions. For EET, multiple submissions are allowed by different departments of eligible institutions. However, only one award will be granted per institution per year. For those new to Federal financial assistance, NIFA's Grants Overview provides highly recommended information about grants and other resources to help understand the Federal awards process.

Multiple Awards
For RPE, a clinic can reapply for a VSGP-RPE award five years following the end date of a previous award.

For EET, an institution may have multiple awards that were granted from different years from different departments.

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

PART IV. APPLICATION AND SUBMISSION

A.   Method of Application (For EET and RPE)
Applicants must apply to this RFA electronically; no other method or response is accepted. The electronic application for this RFA and additional resources are available on Grants.gov and Grants 101. **Table 6** provides instructions on how to obtain an electronic application. **Part III** of the NIFA Grants Application Guide contains detailed information regarding the Grants.gov registration process. The NIFA Grants Application Guide is contained in the specific funding opportunity package or a sample of the guide can be found here. When applying for a NIFA award, it is important to reference the version of the guide that is included in the specific funding opportunity application package.

Table 6: Steps to Obtain Application Materials

Steps	Action
Step One: Register	*New Users* to Grants.gov must register at least five weeks before the application deadline with Grants.gov prior to submitting an application (Register Here). For RPE applicants, as a requirement for the application process, it is strongly recommended to complete the registration or renewal of Unique Entity Identifier (UEI) through the System for Awards Management (SAM) at least five weeks in advance to the VSGP application deadline.
Step Two: Download Adobe	Download and Install Adobe Reader (see Adobe Software Compatibility for basic system requirements)
Step Three: Find Application	Using the funding opportunity number **USDA-NIFA-VSGP-009745**, locate for the application here: Opportunity Package.
Step Four: Assess Readiness	For EET, contact an Authorized Representative (AR) prior to starting an application to assess the organization's readiness to submit an electronic application by the deadline.

Table 7: Help and Resources

Grants.gov Support	NIFA Support
Grants.gov Support Telephone support: 800-518-4726 Toll-Free or 606-545-5035 Email support: support@grants.gov Self-service customer-based online support: Grants.gov iPortal *Key Information: Customer service business Hours 24/7, except federal holidays.*	Email: grantapplicationquestions@usda.gov *Key Information*: Business hours: Monday thru Friday, 7a.m. – 5p.m. ET, except federal holidays

B.   Content and Form of the Application (EET & RPE)

The NIFA Grants Application Guide is part of the corresponding application package for this RFA. The RFA overrides the NIFA Grants Application Guide if there is a discrepancy between the two documents. Applicants that do not meet the application requirements, to include partial applications, risk being excluded from NIFA's review. NIFA will assign a proposal number to all applications that meet the requirements of this RFA. Applicants must refer to the proposal number when corresponding with NIFA. **Table 8** outlines other key instructions for applicants.

Table 8: Key Application Instructions

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

SF 424 R&R Cover Sheet. Fill in all areas of the SF 424 R&R cover sheet as it relates to your application. See **Part V** of the NIFA Grants Application Guide for the required certifications and assurances.

SF 424 R&R Project/Performance Site Location(s). Fill in all areas of the SF 424 R&R project/performance site location(s) as it relates to your application**.** See **Part V** of the **NIFA Grants Application Guide**

R&R Other Project Information Form. See **Part V** of the **NIFA Grants Application Guide**
1. Field 7. Project Summary /Abstract. The project summary must show how the goals of the proposal align with the purpose of VSGP. See **Part V** of the NIFA Grants Application Guide for instructions and suggested templates. The project summary must be submitted as a PDF document and the following items must be included in the summary (please include underlined text along with your responses):
   a. Project Title (Note: A single shortage area must be included in the proposal title for RPE applications this will be the shortage ID code, name of the clinic, and a short

description for example, DE211_Cherry Creek Clinic: Serving Rural Dairy Producers).

b. Project Director and any Co-Project Director(s): For EET applications include institutional affiliation for each. For RPE applications only the person responsible for managing award funds, typically the applying veterinarian or veterinary practice owner, should be included here.

c. Total Funds Requested.

d. Collaborators: For EET applications only, if applicable.

e. Summary Text: Concise (250 words or less) overview of problem(s) being addressed, objectives, approach and relevance to the purpose and goals of VSGP.

See Part V of NIFA Grants Application Guide for further instructions. Use the above Project Narrative template subheadings rather than the template in the guide.

NOTE: *The Project Narrative of each successful application will be published by USDA and, therefore, should not contain proprietary or private information.*

Before submitting an application, the applicant must review the summary/abstract attachment to ensure compliance with the specified word limit, PDF format, and shortage code (only for RPE applications). All summary text exceeding 250 words and RPE applications missing the shortage ID code in the project title will not be reviewed.

2. **Field 8. Project Narrative for EET applications**. The project narrative must not exceed 12, *1.5 spaced,* pages of written text and up to 3, *1.5 spaced,* additional pages for figures and tables (the font size for tables should be no smaller than 11 point, Times New Roman). The page limits outlined here ensure fair and equitable competition. Appendices to the project narrative are allowed if they are directly relevant to the proposed project. Do not add appendices to circumvent the page limit.

The EET Project Narrative must include the following:

a. **Problem Identification and Significance:** Clearly state the specific problem to be addressed and its importance to relieving veterinary shortage situations.

b. **Background:** Include a clear statement of the long-term goal(s) and supporting objectives of the proposed activities. Summarize the body of knowledge or other past activities that substantiate the need for the proposed project. Describe ongoing or recently completed significant activities that relate to the proposed project including the work of key project personnel. Include preliminary data/information pertinent to the proposed project. In addition, this section should include in-depth information on the following, when applicable:

    i.   Estimates of the magnitude of the issues to be addressed and their relevance to livestock producers and other stakeholders, and to ongoing local community, state, and Federal food and agricultural education and extension programs or needs.

    ii. The role of public and private stakeholders in problem identification, planning, implementation, and evaluation as appropriate.

    iii. Reasons for the work being done by the proposed entity (ies).

c. **Objectives:** All applications must include a statement(s) of specific aims of the proposed effort in clear, concise, complete, and logically arranged terms.
d. **Methods:** Explicitly state the procedures or methodology you will apply to the proposed effort. This section should include, but not necessarily be limited to, descriptions of:
     i. Stakeholder involvement in problem identification, planning, implementation, and evaluation (if working with 11th and 12th grade students, the secondary school(s) and/or school district(s) should be included);
     ii. If applicable, plans for coordination and/collaboration with other qualified entities and their roles and responsibilities (see item f. Management and Collaboration Plan below)
     iii. Proposed project activities, listed sequentially
     iv. Techniques to be employed in this project, including their feasibility and rationale
     v. Plans to communicate results to stakeholders and the public
     vi. Pitfalls that might be encountered, and
     vii. Limitations to proposed procedures.
e. **Project Evaluation Plan:** Explicitly state the outputs and outcomes expected from the proposed project. Explain the data gathering procedures (qualitative and/or quantitative) that will be used to monitor and assess progress toward intended project outcomes. When describing the measurement instruments you plan to use (surveys, interviews, focus groups, measures of class performance, cost-benefit analyses, etc.), be sure to mention why they are appropriate to gauging success. Evaluation plans must contain baseline data when available or describe how baseline data will be obtained for monitoring outcomes. A plan for tracking students/trainees after graduation and/or to assess the communities they will be serving to measure impact your project has on addressing shortage situations should be described. Finally, the Evaluation Plan should contain measures of the following:
     i. student/trainee learning or engagement
     ii. the number of students/trainees/teachers impacted by your project as a result of the proposed activities
     iii. the number of students/trainees serving or planning to serve veterinary shortage situations, *and*
     iv. return on investment i.e., the trainee's impacts relieving veterinary shortage situations.
f. **Management and Collaboration Plan:** Applicants are encouraged to use approximately two of the 12 pages for this section. It is critical to have a clearly articulated management plan that describes the roles and functions of all key personnel and, where applicable, partners, collaborators and organizations, as related to the proposed project. For projects proposing coordination between two or more entities, include: time allocated by each partner for attainment of objectives; key roles of each partner and collaborator; and plan for administration of the proposed project and its maintenance and partnerships. Describe the plans for coordination, communication, data sharing and reporting among members of the project team and stakeholder groups. Describe the commitment of the organization and partners to this

project; and how the collaboration and its impact will be sustained beyond the period of the award. An applicant's failure to provide the requested information in the Management and Collaboration Plan may preclude NIFA from making an award. In addition, letters of commitment signed by the Authorized Representative (AR) of the partnering organizations demonstrating that the partners involved have agreed to abide by the Management Plan should be provided (see "Other Attachments" below).

g. **Project Timetable:** The proposal should outline all important phases and major milestones as a function of time, year by year, for the entire project, including periods beyond the grant funding period.

The following Table summarizes the section of the project narrative for EET applications, suggests an approximate number of pages to allocate to each section, and shows the evaluation criteria most relevant to each section:

Table 9: EET Project Narrative

Narrative Section	Suggested # of Pages	Related Evaluation Criteria (see Part V, B. of this RFA)
Problem Identification and Significance	1	Relevancy
Background	1.5	Relevancy; Expertise, Experience, and Institutional Resources
Objectives	1	Relevancy; Technical Merit
Methods	4	Technical Merit; Collaborations; Achievability
Project Evaluation Plan	2	Technical Merit
Management and Collaboration Plan	2	Achievability; Expertise, Experience, and Institutional Resources
Project Timetable	0.5	Achievability
Figures and Tables (optional)	3	Must be relevant to proposed project; extended narrative in these 3 pages will be rejected

Field 8. Project Narrative for RPE applications. The project narrative must not exceed 7, *1.5 spaced*, pages of written text and up to 2, *1.5 spaced*, additional pages for figures and tables (the font size for tables should be no smaller than 11 point, Times New Roman). The page limits outlined here ensure fair and equitable competition. Appendices to the project narrative are allowed if they are directly related to the proposed project. Use Table 10 as a guideline for organizing the project narrative. Applications will be evaluated based upon what is included in this section. Do not add appendices to circumvent the page limit.

The RPE project narrative must include all the following:

a. **Problem Identification:** Clearly state the perceived problem(s) occurring in the veterinary shortage situation you are applying to serve as stated by the State Animal Health Officials (SAHO) or from your professional knowledge. (Note that veterinary

shortage situation nominations clearly state the specific problems and needs on page two of the shortage nomination form).

b. **Introduction and background:** Describe the scope of the clinic's current practice (# of clients, # of farms, # of herds, # of farm calls weekly, monthly and yearly, how it is equipped, etc.). State why the clinic is professionally, geographically, and functionally poised to effectively relieve the veterinary shortage area to which the clinic is applying to serve. Provide supporting information that substantiates the need for the proposed resources.

c. **Objectives:** Include a clear statement of the goal(s) and supporting objectives of the proposed services. All applications must include a statement(s) of overarching aims, and goals and corresponding specific objectives of the proposed effort in clear, concise, complete, and logically arranged terms. For example, describe what is expected to be accomplished in each of the three years of the grant project period. Objectives should focus on the project period and may also consider any potential long-term impacts beyond the period of funding.

d. **Approach:** The proposed services should match the needs specified in the shortage nomination form. Explicitly describe the strategies, tactics and/or business plan you will employ, using the resources specifically acquired through support from this grant, to achieve stated goals and objectives. Where applicable, this section may include, but not necessarily be limited to, descriptions of:

    i. Planned stakeholder/client involvement in veterinary service prioritization, planning, implementation, and evaluation; include a description of the relationships with local community leaders and producers in identifying best strategies to mitigate veterinary service shortages, and most effective methods of evaluating and effectiveness of strategies employed;

    ii. Describe proposed activities over the three-year grant period;

    iii. Justification of expense for equipment and its clinical use, tracking number of clients, farms, or number of animals that the new equipment will provide enhancement of services;

    iv. Business or veterinary services (including consultants) to be employed, including feasibility and rationale;

    v. Education or extension activities that will be offered (if funds are requested to establish mobile facilities) including the amount of time that will be devoted to these activities;

    vi. Methods used to collect, analyze, and interpret evaluation/impact data;

    vii. Plans to communicate increased/ enhanced services to clients in the veterinary shortage situation area;

    viii. Plans to communicate results to stakeholders and the public;

    ix. Pitfalls that might be encountered and

    x. Limitations to proposed activities.

e. **Anticipated Results**
Estimate the magnitude of the impact of the proposed practice enhancements on local livestock, livestock operators, and local economic vitality and to ongoing state-federal interests including health of animal populations, food safety, food security, and public health. For example, describe how the funds will help you serve more clients. These

estimates should be supported by appropriate metrics (e.g., percent increase in clientele base or service radius; increase in number of livestock served; decreased rates of morbidity or mortality, or other measures of animal health and productivity; number of community outreach events presented and number of attendees; projected impact on clientele profits and/or sustainability; projected return on investment from equipment purchased or staff supported).

    f. **Project Timetable.**
The proposal should outline important phases and major milestones as a function of time, year by year, for the entire project, including periods beyond the grant funding period. Timetable must meet the minimum 3 years.

The following table summarizes the sections of the project narrative for RPE applications, suggests an approximate number of pages to allocate to each section, and shows the evaluation criteria most relevant to each section:

Table 10: RPE Project Narrative

Narrative Section	Suggested # of Pages	Related Evaluation Criteria (see Part V, B. of this RFA)
Problem Identification	0.5	Technical Merit
Introduction and Background	1	Expertise and Experience; Technical Merit
Objectives	1	Technical Merit
Approach	3	Technical Merit
Anticipated Results	1	Technical Merit
Project Timeline	0.5	Technical Merit
Figures and Tables (optional)	2	Must be relevant to proposed project; extended narrative in these 2 pages will be rejected

3. Field 12, Add Other Attachments. See **Part V** of the NIFA Grants Application Guide. Other attachments may include the following documents.

    A. **Resubmitted applications.** If you submitted this same or a similar application in the past and it was declined for an award you are required to submit a response to the previous review and must check box number 8 "resubmission" on the SF 424. The response to previous review must not exceed 1, *1.5 spaced*, page titled: "RESPONSE TO PREVIOUS REVIEW" and saved as: "ResponsetoPreviousReview." This is a response to the stated weaknesses and should include how you have made adjustments based on the previous panel's summary of your proposal. If desired, additional comments may be included in the text of the project narrative subject to the page limitations of that section. The response to previous review must be saved as a PDF and uploaded as an additional document.

B. For EET applications. Commitment Letters – PDF attachment(s). No page limits. For projects proposing partnering, collaboration or coordination, letters of commitment from all participating parties (signed by the AR of the collaborating organization) stating that the collaborators involved have agreed to their stated roles in the project and have agreed to abide by the Management and Collaboration Plan. Letters from other organizations or people whose participation is important to the success of the project, committing those collaborators to specific roles, are also encouraged. Title the attachment(s) as 'Letter of Commitment – Organization Name' in the document header and save file as 'Letter of Commitment _ Organization Name'. Other more general letters of support (i.e., from those who are not committing to a specific role in the project) are not needed and should not be included.

C. **For all RPE applications.** RPE applicants are required to submit the nomination form for the veterinary shortage situation they wish to serve as an additional attachment. To do this, review the Veterinary Shortage Situation Map for the correct fiscal year you are applying. Download the nomination form (as a PDF) and save it to your computer. You will upload the nomination form as an attachment with your application materials. All RPE applicants must submit a map that clearly identifies the location of the practice, the service area of the practice, and the counties of service identified on the veterinary shortage situation nomination form. The map must be submitted as a PDF. Two example maps are provided on the Veterinary Services Grant Program webpage.

D. **For Type I applications.** A second map is required for applicants to Type I veterinary shortage situation areas. This map must display that the Type I veterinary shortage situation is eligible as *rural* on the USDA Property Eligibility Map. To search eligibility, enter the street, city, and state of the center of the veterinary shortage situation area the practice will serve. The search will indicate if the Type I shortage is in an eligible area. Select the print option on the webpage to save the map as a PDF. This map must be included with your application as a pdf.

For EET and RPE. R&R Senior/Key Person Profile (Expanded). Fill all required fields as it applies to your grant application. See **Part V** of the **NIFA Grants Application Guide** for profile requirements, details about the biographical sketch, and suggested support templates.

4. **For EET and RPE. R&R Personal Data**. This information is voluntary and is not a precondition of award (see **Part V** of the **NIFA Grants Application Guide**).

For EET and RPE. R&R Budget. Fill in all areas of the R&R budget sheet as it relates to your grant**.** See **Part V** of the **NIFA Grants Application Guide.**

For EET and RPE. Budget Justification. The budget justification must not exceed 5, *1.5 spaced* pages of written text, pictures, and numbers (the font size for tables should be no smaller than 11 point, Times New Roman). The page limits outlined here ensure fair and equitable competition. The budget justification should include a brief description of how funds will be used for specific activities or equipment.

Indirect costs (IDC) – See Part IV C of this RFA for funding restrictions regarding indirect costs, USDA NIFA Policy on Indirect Costs, and **Part V** of the **NIFA Grants Application Guide** for additional information.

For EET and RPE Data Management Plan. A data management plan is required for this program. These data should support the anticipated results and reporting of outcomes. Applicants should clearly articulate how the project director (PD) and co-PDs plan to manage and disseminate the data generated by the project. The data management plan will be considered during the merit review process (see Part V B of this RFA, and **Part V.320** of the **NIFA Grants Application Guide** and NIFA's Data Management Plan). If you need help in preparing a data management plan or have questions about what constitutes a data management plan for this role (including questions about data privacy, etc.), please contact the NIFA program contacts listed at the end of this RFA. We conduct a webinar associated with this RFA each year and we point to resources that will assist with this task.

The data management plan can be one paragraph and must be no longer than one page. The data management plan must be attached as a PDF with your application materials. The data management plan must include a description of:

1. **Expected data type:**
   a. **EET examples include:** Education: number of students enrolled/participated, course enhancements, and training products; Extension: outreach materials, number of stakeholders reached, number of activities, and assessment questionnaires.
   b. **RPE examples include:** Documentation of enhancement of services provided in the shortage area based on the categories of funding described in the budget justification.
2. **Data format:** The selected data format is at the discretion of the Project Director.
3. **Data storage and preservation:** Data must be stored in a secure environment with adequate measures taken for the length of the program and three years after grant end date. Applicants must describe plans for storing and preserving their data during and after the project. Include any strategies, tools, and contingency plans that will be used to avoid data loss, degradation, or damage.
4. **Data sharing, protection, and public access:** Include a statement, when applicable, of plans to protect confidentiality, personal privacy, proprietary interests, business confidential information, and intellectual property rights.
5. **Roles and responsibilities:** State who will implement the data management plan.

For EET and RPE. Supplemental Information Form. See **Part V.300** of the **NIFA Grants Application Guide**

1. Field 2. Program to which the applicant is applying. Enter the program name according to Table 11 below. Accurate entry is critical.

Table 11: Program Names and Codes

Program Name	Code to enter
VSGP EET	VSGPE
VSGP RPE	VSGPR

2. Field 8. Conflict of Interest List. See **Part V.300** of the NIFA Grants Application Guide

C. Funding Restrictions

For RPE Program:

No Indirect Cost (IDC*)*. For RPE grants, indirect costs are not allowable. Shared overhead costs may be requested but must be limited to 50% of the total Federal funds requested.

For EET Program:

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

PART V. APPLICATION REVIEW REQUIREMENTS

A.   NIFA's Evaluation Process
NIFA evaluates each application in a two-part process. First, we screen each application to ensure that it meets the administrative requirements set forth in this RFA. All administrative requirements must be met in order for the application to proceed to the next level of review. Second, a scientific peer-review process by a review panel will be used to technically evaluate applications that have met the administrative requirements **(see** NIFA Peer Review Process**)**.

Scientific Peer Review Process:
NIFA selects reviewers for the review panel based upon their training and experience in relevant scientific, extension, or education fields, taking into account the following factors:
1. 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;
2. the need to include experts from various areas of specialization within relevant scientific, education, or extension fields;
3. 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;
4. 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;
5. The need to maintain a balanced composition with regard to race, ethnicity, gender representation, and an equitable age distribution.
6. the need to include reviewers who can judge the effective usefulness of each application to producers and the general public.

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

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

After the review process has been completed, NIFA sends copies of reviews, _not_ including the identity of reviewers, and a summary (if applicable) of the review panel comments to the PD.

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

B.   Evaluation Criteria
Different criteria and differently composed peer review panels will be used to evaluate EET proposals and RPE proposals, as described below. We will use the evaluation criteria below to review applications submitted in response to this RFA.

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 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: NIFA Peer Review Process for Competitive Grant Applications. NIFA will use the following criteria to evaluate this RFA:

EET Grant Applications Review Criteria:

Applications with collaborations between or among qualified entities are typically considered stronger proposals.

Relevancy and Innovation (weight =20%) – Explanation and documentation that the project is directed toward relieving the veterinarian shortage situation and is innovative or novel in its approach. In addition, relevancy can be evaluated by the description of the necessity of the skills being developed for the target audience, the inclusion of stakeholders in the conceptualization and development of project activities, the degree of exposure of 11th and 12th grade students to career opportunities in food animal medicine, and demonstrated awareness of previous and alternative training and education programs.

Technical Merit (weight = 50%) - will be evaluated on the basis of:
1. Clarity and delineation of objectives, activities and outcomes;
2. Conceptual adequacy of the proposed activities to meet the needs of the targeted audience and mitigating veterinarian shortage situations including suitability and feasibility of the approach;
3. Expected outputs and outcomes as indicated in Evaluation Plan;
4. Science-based knowledge, skills, and capabilities gained are related to mitigating veterinarian shortage situations and will enhance and sustain human capital beyond the life of the project;
5. Adequacy of evaluation plans to include number and expertise of evaluation team members and the strength of the measurements to assess outcomes and/or impact on both the shortage areas and their communities;
6. Adequacy of plans to communicate results to stakeholders and the public;
7. Sustainability of the project, including (where applicable) partnerships and collaborations, beyond the life of the grant;
8. Compliance with targeted categories of trainees (including 11th and 12th grade students, if applicable); and
9. Reasonableness of the budget for planned activities. (While the size of the budget is not an evaluation criterion, the reviewers will be asked to evaluate whether it matches logically with the program described in the narrative and is cost-effective.)

Achievability (weight = 20%) – Probability of success of the project given the level of originality, target audience and budget for each activity. Importance will be given to description of potential pitfalls and how they will be addressed. There should be

sufficient time commitment of Project Directors for project activities including management. The plans for management and collaborative arrangements of the proposed project should be adequate, e.g., time allocated for systematic attainment of objectives; clearly defined project roles and relationships among the key participants and collaborators; plan for decision-making; and plan for administration of the proposed project and its maintenance, partnerships, and collaborative efforts.

Expertise, Experience, and Institutional Resources (weight = 10%) – Includes the expertise of consultants and collaborators, sufficiency of the educational facilities and equipment for the proposed education and outreach methods. Importance will be given to the demonstration of expertise through successful multi-year experience in education, outreach, and mentoring and/or technical assistance in veterinary medicine supporting agriculture. Also important are qualifications of applicant (individual or team) to conduct the proposed project activities and in evaluating project outcomes; and demonstrable institutional/organizational experience and competence in serving the needs of the identified target audience.

RPE Grant Applications Review Criteria:

Expertise and Experience (weight = 30%) – Importance will be given to the demonstration of knowledge, skills, abilities, and experience of key personnel relative to veterinary shortage situation area needs and resources requested to address the activities and needs on the nomination form.

Technical Merit (weight = 70%) - will be evaluated on the basis of:

1. Clarity and delineation of objectives, activities and outcomes;
2. Clarity of current practice operations to include baseline metrics (e.g., current service radius, number and location of clients within the veterinarian shortage situation, current number of calls/visits);
3. Value of proposed equipment, overhead, and/or mobile practice facilities to the goal of mitigating the veterinarian shortage situation;
4. Content and delivery approach(es) for education or extension activities (if funds are to be used to purchase or expand mobile facilities), including time commitment, size and demographics of intended audiences (e.g., X hours of educational opportunities to X number of producer groups, 4-H chapters, and/or community groups representing X number of people per month, year, or project period), and the degree of exposure, if any, of 11th and 12th grade students to career opportunities in food animal medicine;
5. Conceptual adequacy of the proposed activities to meet the needs of the veterinarian shortage situation (e.g., how will services be established or expanded, market/client recruitment or development strategies);
6. Likelihood to achieve proposed outcomes, including realistic benchmarks for assessing progress and assessing outcomes for their clients and community (e.g., increasing clientele in shortage area by X% each year of grant period; increased average number of farm calls per month from X to Y over the life of the grant; improving clients' profits by X% through enhanced diagnosis, treatment, or management); and

7. Reasonableness of the budget for proposed resources. (While the size of the budget is not an evaluation criterion, reviewers will be asked to comment on whether it matches logically with the program described in the narrative.)

C. Organizational Management Information

Applicants must submit specific management information prior to an award and update the information as needed. Applicants may only need to provide an update if there was a change in previously provided information under this or another NIFA program. NIFA provides the requisite forms during the pre-award process. Although an applicant may be eligible for award under this program, there are factors that may exclude an applicant from receiving federal financial and nonfinancial assistance and benefits under this program (e.g., debarment or suspension of an individual, or a determination that an applicant is not responsible).

D. Application Disposition

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

PART VI. AWARD ADMINISTRATION

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

Award Notice. The award document will provide pertinent instructions and information as described in 2 CFR 200.211 (see NIFA's Terms and Conditions).

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

PART VII. OTHER INFORMATION

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

Changes in Budget or Project Plans. In accordance with 2 CFR 200.308, awardees must request prior approval from NIFA for the following program or budget-related reasons (the awardee is subject to the terms and conditions identified in the award):
1. Change in the scope or the objective of the project or program without prior written approval (even if there is no associated budget revision requiring).
2. Change in a key person specified in the application or the federal award.
3. Disengagement from the project for more than three months, or a 25 percent reduction in time devoted to the project.
4. Inclusion of costs that require prior approval in accordance with 2 CFR 200 Subpart E (Cost Principles), or 45 CFR Part 75 Appendix IX, (Principles for Determining Costs Applicable to Research and Development under Awards and Contracts with Hospitals), or 48 CFR, unless waived by the federal awarding agency,
5. 48 CFR Part 31, Contract Cost Principles and Procedures;
6. Transfer of funds budgeted for participant support costs to other categories of expense (2 CFR 200.456 Participant support costs);
7. Sub-awarding, transferring or contracting out of any work under a federal award, including fixed amount sub-awards (see 2 CFR 200.333, Fixed Amount Sub-awards), unless described in the application and funded in the approved federal awards. This provision does not apply to the acquisition of supplies, material, equipment, or general support services.
8. Changes in the approved cost-sharing or matching provided by the non-federal entity; and
9. The need for additional federal funds to complete the project.

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

C.   Regulatory Information
This program is not subject to the provisions of Executive Order 12372, which requires intergovernmental consultation with state and local officials. Under the provisions of the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995 (44 U.S.C. Chapter 35), the collection of information requirements contained in this notice have been approved under OMB Document No. 0524-0039.

APPENDIX I: AGENCY CONTACT

Programmatic Contacts
Robert M. Smith, DVM, PhD, DACVN
National Program Leader
Robert.m.Smith@usda.gov
202 445-3468

Kathe E. Bjork, DVM, PhD, MSPH
National Program Leader
Kathe.e.Bjork@usda.gov
816-591-7415

For administrative questions related to;
1. Grants.gov, see Part IV of this RFA
2. Other RFA or application questions, please email grantapplicationquestions@usda.gov
3. Awards under this RFA, please email awards@usda.gov

U.S. Postal Mailing Address:
National Institute of Food and Agriculture
U.S. Department of Agriculture
P.O. Box 419205, MS 10000
Kansas City, MO 64141-6205

Courier/Package Delivery Address:
National Institute of Food and Agriculture
United States Department of Agriculture
2312 East Bannister Road, MS 10000
Kansas City, MO 64141-3061

APPENDIX II: GLOSSARY OF TERMS AND ACRONYMS

Glossary of Terms

Authorized Representative - AR
Automated Standard Application for Payments - ASAP
Code of Federal Regulations - CFR
Doctor of Veterinary Medicine - DVM
Education, Extension, and Training - EET
Full Time Equivalent - FTE
Fiscal Year - FY
Frequently Asked Questions - FAQ
Indirect Cost - IDC
National Agricultural Research, Extension, and Teaching Policy Act - NARETPA
National Institute of Food and Agriculture - NIFA
National Veterinary Medical Services Act - NVMSA
Office of Management and Budget - OMB
Project Director - PD
Portable Document Format - PDF
Request for Application - RFA
Rural Community Development Initiative - RCDI
Rural Practice Enhancement - RPE
System for Award Management - SAMS
Total Federal Funds Awarded - TFFA
Unique Entity ID - UEI
Veterinary Medicine Loan Repayment Program - VMLRP
Veterinary Services Grant Program   - VSGP
Veterinary services Grant Program – Rural Practice Enhancement - VSGPR
Veterinary Services Grant Program – Education, Extension, and Training - VSGPE
United States Department of Agriculture - USDA

APPENDIX III: DEFINITIONS

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

Definitions

Continuation Award:

> An award instrument by which NIFA agrees to support a specified level of effort for a predetermined period of time with a statement of intention to provide additional support at a future date, provided that performance has been satisfactory, appropriations are available for this purpose, and continued support would be in the best interest of the federal government and the public.

Education Activity or Teaching Activity:

> Means formal classroom instruction, laboratory instruction, and practicum experience in the food and agricultural sciences and other related matters such as faculty development, student recruitment and services, curriculum development, instructional materials and equipment, and innovative teaching methodologies.

Extension Activity:

> Means an act or process that delivers science-based knowledge and informal educational programs to people, enabling them to make practical decisions.

Insular Area:

> Means the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, Guam, American Samoa, the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, the Federated States of Micronesia, the Republic of the Marshall Islands, the Republic of Palau, and the Virgin Islands of the United States.

Matching:

> The process through which a grant recipient match awarded USDA funds with cash and in-kind contributions on a dollar-for-dollar basis. The matching funds must derive from non-Federal sources.

New Application:

> An application not previously submitted to a program.

Resubmitted Application:

> A project application that was previously submitted to a program, but the application was not funded.

Rural Area:

> Defined in section 343(a) of the Consolidated Farm and Rural Development Act (7 U.S.C. 1991(a)).