



United States
Department of
Agriculture

National Institute
of Food
and Agriculture

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The logo for the National Institute of Food and Agriculture (NIFA), featuring the letters "NIFA" in a white serif font against a dark background with a stylized sun or field graphic.

REQUEST FOR APPLICATIONS

Food and Agriculture Defense Initiative Extension Disaster Education Network

FUNDING YEAR: Fiscal Year (FY) 2023

LETTER OF INTENT DEADLINE: March 23, 2023

APPLICATION DEADLINE: May 11, 2023

ANTICIPATED PROGRAM FUNDING: \$382,400

FUNDING OPPORTUNITY NUMBER: USDA-NIFA-ES-009663

ASSISTANCE LISTING NUMBER: 10.304

INITIAL ANNOUNCEMENT
 National Institute of Food and Agriculture
 United States Department of Agriculture

Assistance Listing Number (ALN): The Food and Agriculture Defense Initiative Extension Disaster Education Network is listed in the Assistance Listings under number 10.304.

Table 1: Key Dates and Deadlines

Task Description	Deadline
Application:	5:00 P.M. Eastern, May 11, 2023 [Ref to Part I, C of this RFA]
Letter of Intent:	5:00 P.M. Eastern, March 23, 2023
Applicants Comments:	Within six months from the issuance of this notice (<i>NIFA may not consider comments received after the sixth month</i>)

Advancing Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Accessibility (DEIA). 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 request for applications (RFAs) so it can deliver programs efficiently, effectively, with integrity, and with a focus on customer service. NIFA considers comments to the extent possible when developing RFAs, and 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 FADI-EDEN RFA.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

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

The goal of the Food and Agriculture Defense Initiative Extension Disaster Education Network (FADI-EDEN) program is to maximize the resilience of the U.S. food and agriculture sector to biosecurity risks, extreme weather events and disasters, cyber threats, and other shocks. It is necessary to mitigate threats to sustain the overall competitiveness of U.S. agriculture to maintain an abundant food supply for people and livestock; to support the farmers, ranchers, and workers who drive the U.S. food and agriculture sector; and to sustain the vitality of rural communities, rural and urban agriculture infrastructure, and agricultural businesses.

Historically, a strength of the FADI-EDEN program has been its ties to the [Extension Disaster Education Network](#) which is a national, collaborative network of extension professionals who are dedicated to improved all-hazards management of domestic disasters.

The FADI-EDEN program will fund one Extension project that will address its priorities. The amount available in FY 2023 is approximately \$382,400 that will be provided on a continuation basis for a total of four years (FY 2024, FY 2025, and FY 2026) based on the availability of funding in subsequent years and on annual satisfactory performance of the project.

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PART I. FUNDING OPPORTUNITY DESCRIPTION

A. Legislative Authority

The Food and Agriculture Defense Initiative was authorized in section 1484 of [National Agricultural Research, Extension, and Teaching Policy Act of 1977 \(NARETPA\), 7 U.S.C 3351](#). Under this authority available to the Secretary, the Secretary shall use funds made available to carry out agricultural research, education, and extension activities for continuation of partnerships with institutions of higher education and other institutions to help form stable, long-term programs to enhance the biosecurity of the U.S. These agreements are issued using NIFA's authority section 1472 of the [National Agricultural Research, Extension, and Teaching Policy Act of 1977 \(NARETPA\), 7 U.S.C. 3318](#).

B. Purpose and Priorities

The goal of the Food and Agriculture Defense Initiative Extension Disaster Education Network (FADI-EDEN) program, under assistance listing 10.304, is to maximize the resilience of the U.S. food and agriculture sector to biosecurity risks, extreme weather events and disasters, cyber threats, and other shocks. It is necessary to mitigate threats to sustain the overall competitiveness of U.S. agriculture to maintain an abundant food supply for people and livestock; to support the farmers, ranchers, and workers who drive the U.S. food and agriculture sector; and to sustain the vitality of rural communities, rural and urban agriculture infrastructure, and agricultural businesses.

The FADI-EDEN program is aligned with the following:

Goal 1. Combat Climate Change to Support America's Working Lands, Natural Resources, and Communities

Goal 2. Ensure America's Agricultural System is Equitable, Resilient, and Prosperous

Goal 5. Expand Opportunities for Economic Development and Improve Quality of Life in Rural and Tribal Communities

USDA Strategic Plan FY 2022-2026 is found at <https://www.usda.gov/sites/default/files/documents/usda-fy-2022-2026-strategic-plan.pdf>

Diseases that affect livestock and backyard flocks can have a significant impact on animal health and production, live animal trade, and consumer confidence in meat and other animal products. Preventing the introduction and/or spread of plant pests and diseases is a critical component to plant life and health and are vital strategies to securing a crop production system that supports a safe and affordable food supply for people and livestock. Extreme weather events and disasters have been exacerbated by a changing climate. These weather events and disasters, caused by natural hazards such as droughts, floods, wildfires, tornadoes, derechos, and hurricanes, pose significant threats to the food and agriculture sector and can escalate biosecurity risks. As the food and agriculture sector becomes more dependent on technology and online services, cyber threat actors pose legitimate risks to breaching such systems.

The primary focus of the FADI-EDEN program is to help form sustainable efforts to enhance the biosecurity of the U.S. food and agriculture sector through extension activities. The purpose of this program is to enhance and expand the Cooperative Extension System's outreach activities

with a focus on biosecurity before, during, and after disasters using the U.S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS) [National Response Framework](#). The framework is designed to help jurisdictions, people, nongovernmental organizations, and businesses develop whole community plans; integrate continuity plans; build capabilities to respond to cascading failures among businesses, supply chains, and infrastructure sectors; and collaborate to stabilize community lifelines and restore services. The framework established an “all-hazards” approach to enhance the ability of the United States to manage domestic incidents which includes homeland security processes for disaster preparedness, response, recovery, and mitigation.

Historically, a strength of the FADI-EDEN program has been its ties to the [Extension Disaster Education Network](#) which is a national, collaborative network of extension professionals who are dedicated to improved all-hazards management of domestic disasters. Extension professionals who are engaged with EDEN (the Network) have expertise in agriculture and natural resources, individual and family health and well-being, positive youth development, and community and economic development. Through the Network, Extension professionals collaborate to respond to incidents that impact the U.S. food and agriculture sector; create and deliver educational resources and experiences aimed at the phases of the disaster management cycle (preparedness, response, recovery, and mitigation); develop and/or enhance their skills and expertise; and partner with local, state, regional, and federal organizations and agencies to strengthen collaborations and reduce duplication of efforts and services.

The FADI-EDEN program will fund one Extension project that will address the following priorities:

1. **Foster interdisciplinary and multi-state education and outreach programs** by addressing phases of biosecurity disasters and extreme weather events and disasters and actions carried out by cyber threat actors that can escalate biosecurity risks. Education and outreach activities include trainings, exercises, and curriculum or resource development.
2. **Build and/or enhance strategic partnerships** with local, state, and federal agencies, organizations, and networks within the realms of biosecurity and disasters that include but are not limited to the [National Animal Health Laboratory \(NAHLN\)](#); the [National Plant Diagnostic Network \(NPDN\)](#); [Federal Emergency Support Function #11/USDA APHIS](#), and the [Food & Agriculture Sector Councils](#). Identify ways to incorporate Cooperative Extension into response frameworks at the local, state, and national levels.
3. **Support collaboration** among state Cooperative Extension organizations by providing strategic administrative leadership to improve information exchange and outreach opportunities focused on disasters within the Network. Engage with the 1890 EDEN advisory group, 1994 Tribal Colleges and universities, and Sea Grant institutions.
4. **Facilitate coordination** within the Network, including with the EDEN officers, EDEN executive committee, and USDA NIFA, to support, where appropriate, operations and the Network’s [2023-2025 strategic plan](#), programmatic goals, impact reporting, and incident response. Develop and sustain methods that include a Network website to communicate with stakeholders and increase their awareness about the Network and provide educational resources to Cooperative Extension organizations and stakeholders.

Behavioral education and promotion of biosecurity and disaster education is important in planning for individual and community resiliency. Incorporation of social and behavioral sciences is key for addressing many of the challenges facing communities. Effective non-formal outreach programs and services in social and behavioral sciences can provide timely and adequate information to communities that lead to behavior change. Proposed projects are encouraged to include activities that integrate social and behavioral sciences in program design, implementation, and evaluation. Extension professionals and other relevant partners can employ these programs and services to sustain disaster education activities that successfully protect and enhance biosecurity, vitality, and resiliency of communities.

Traditional ecological knowledge is considered an acceptable topic of research, education, and extension for projects funded by this RFA, in pursuit of the FADI-EDEN program priorities, goals, and objectives.

Global Engagement. NIFA supports global engagement that advances U.S. agricultural goals. NIFA recognizes that collaboration with international partners may be necessary to attain the agency's goals for U.S. agriculture, promote global competence of our nation's future agricultural workforce, and promote safe and nutritious food security in a growing world. Therefore, although application to this RFA is limited to eligible U.S. institutions, applicants may collaborate with international partners, to include subcontracts to international partners or other institutions. Applications must clearly demonstrate benefits to the U.S.

For a program informational webinar please visit the [NIFA calendar](#) for dates, event registration, and link. If you need a reasonable accommodation to participate in any of the informational webinars listed, please contact the event host listed no later than 10 days prior to the event.

Table 2: Program Key Information

Title	Description
Program Code:	AA-G
Program Code Name:	FADI-EDEN
ALN:	10.304
Project Type:	Extension
Grant Type:	Cooperative Agreement
Letter of Intent Deadline	March 23, 2023
Application Deadline	May 11, 2023
Grant Duration:	12 months
Anticipated # of Awards:	1

PART II. AWARD INFORMATION

A. Available Funding

The amount available for the FADI-EDEN program in FY 2023 is approximately \$382,400, with an annual renewal for a total of four years (FY 2024, FY 2025, and FY 2026) based on availability of funding in subsequent years and satisfactory performance of the project.

The award will be issued as a cooperative agreement, which is a legal instrument reflecting a relationship between the United States Government and a State, local government, or other recipient when:

1. The principal purpose of the relationship is to transfer a thing of value to the State, local government, or other recipient to carry out a public purpose of support or stipulation authorized by a law of the United States instead of acquiring (by purchase, lease, or barter) property or service for the direct benefit or use of the United States Government; and
2. Substantial involvement is expected between the executive agency and the State, local government, or other recipient when carrying out the activity contemplated in the agreement ([31 USC 6305](#)).

Through the cooperative agreement, NIFA agrees to:

1. Assign a National Program Leader (NPL) with appropriate expertise who will monitor the project as it is being implemented and operated, maintain communication between project director(s) and key personnel and the EDEN executive committee, and make recommendations concerning planning and procedures to be followed to ensure that objectives are being fulfilled.
2. Provide FY 2023 funds in the approximate amount of \$382,400 for project costs that are allowable, allocable, and reasonable as specified on the Notice of Award and the budget.
3. Review and, if determined appropriate, approve annual plans of work, progress reports, and financial status reports.
4. Coordinate with the project director(s) to review the annual progress reports and the final technical report to determine effectiveness.
5. Provide technical assistance and guidance regarding the project's evaluation methods as needed.

NIFA is issuing the cooperative agreement on a continuation basis. A continuation award is an award instrument by which NIFA agrees to support a specified level of effort for a pre-determined 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.

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

B. Application Restrictions

NIFA will evaluate applications using the criteria described in [Part V](#) of this RFA. Application for FY2023 is limited to the following application types:

1. *New application*: New applications will be evaluated using the criteria described in [Part V](#) of this RFA and are subject to the due dates herein (see [Appendix III](#) for definition).

C. Project and Grant Types

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

1. Project Type: Applicants must propose an **Extension** project.
2. Grant Type: Applicants must select a **Cooperative Agreement** grant.

D. Ethical Conduct of Funded Projects

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

PART III. ELIGIBILITY INFORMATION

A. Eligibility Requirements

Applicants for the FADI-EDEN program must meet all the requirements discussed 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.

In accordance with section 1472(c) of the [National Agricultural Research, Extension, and Teaching Policy Act of 1977 \(NARETPA\)](#), applicants may be: State agricultural experiment stations, State cooperative extension services, all colleges and universities, other research or education institutions and organizations, Federal and private agencies and organizations, individuals, and any other contractor or recipient, either foreign or domestic, to further research, extension, or teaching programs in the food and agricultural sciences of the Department of Agriculture. Failure to meet an eligibility criterion by the 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.

Duplicate or Multiple Submissions – submissions of duplicate or predominantly overlapping applications is 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 those new to Federal financial assistance, NIFA's [Grants Overview](#) provides highly recommended information about grants and other resources to help understand the Federal awards process.

B. Cost Sharing or Matching

No Match Required - The FADI-EDEN program has **NO** matching requirement. NIFA will not factor matching resources into the review process as an evaluation criterion.

PART IV. APPLICATION AND SUBMISSION

A. Letter of Intent

A Letter of Intent (LOI) is strongly recommended for the FADI-EDEN program in FY 2023. Although a letter of intent does not enter into the review of a subsequent application, the information that it contains allows program staff to estimate the potential review workload and plan the review. Letters of Intent will be reviewed by NIFA scientific program staff to plan for appropriate expertise for the peer review panel and to ensure that the proposed project fits appropriately within priorities of the FADI-EDEN program.

Please submit the LOI by email to Dr. Deborah Reyome, Program Specialist, at deborah.reyome@usda.gov with a cc: to Dr. Ashley Mueller, National Program Leader, at ashley.mueller@usda.gov by 5:00 p.m. Eastern on March 23, 2023. NIFA will only accept PDF file submissions.

Applicants will receive notification of LOI acceptance by March 30, 2023. After March 30, 2023, a full application can be submitted to this funding opportunity.

The LOI must be formatted as follows: 1) 1-inch margins, 2) Times New Roman, 12-point font, and 3) Single-spaced text with double spaces between paragraphs, and 4) Page size must be letter (i.e., 8.5 inches by 11 inches) and submitted as a PDF (Portable Document Format) file.

The LOI is limited to 3 pages. On Page 1, the LOI must include: 1) The name, professional title, department, institution, and email address of the project director (PD) and name, professional title, department, and institution of all collaborating investigators (co-PDs). On Pages 2-3, the LOI must include: 2) Descriptive project title, 3) Objectives, 4) Approach or Methodology, and 5) Potential impacts and expected outcomes.

B. Method of Application

Applicants must apply to this RFA electronically; no other method or response is accepted. The electronic application for this RFA and additional resources are available on [Grants.gov](https://www.grants.gov) and [Grants 101](#). **Table 3** provides instructions on how to obtain an electronic application. **Part III** of the [NIFA Grants Application Guide](#) contains detailed information regarding the [Grants.gov](https://www.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 3. Steps to Obtain Application Materials

Steps	Action
Step One: Register	<i>New Users</i> to Grants.gov must register early with Grants.gov prior to submitting an application (Register Here).
Step Two: Download Adobe	Download and Install Adobe Reader (see Adobe Software Compatibility for basic system requirements).

Step Three: Find Application	Using this funding opportunity number USDA-NIFA-ES-009663 search for application here: Opportunity Package .
Step Four: Assess Readiness	Contact an AR prior to starting an application to assess the organization’s readiness to submit an electronic application.

Table 4: Help and Resources

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

C. Content and Form of the Application

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 7** outlines other key instructions for applicants.

Table 5: 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 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. See **Part V** of the [NIFA Grants Application Guide](#) for the required certifications and assurances.

SF 424 R&R Project/Performance Site Location(s). 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 (PS)/Abstract. The PS must show how the project goals align with the project goals of the FADI-EDEN program. See **Part V** of the [NIFA Grants Application Guide](#) for instructions and suggested templates. The PS must include the following elements: 1) Project title, 2) list of project director and co-project directors and institution/organization affiliations, and 3) concise description of the project (250 words or less).
2. **Field 8.** Project Narrative (PN). The PN must not exceed 30 pages; this page limit includes the project’s logic model and any tables and figures. The page limit ensures fair and equitable competition. The PN must be formatted as follows: 1) 1-inch margins, 2) Times New Roman, 12-point font, and 3) *1.5 spaced* text.

A one-page Table of Contents is permitted, and it does not count towards the PN’s 30-page limit. Appendices to the PN are allowed if they are directly germane to the proposed project. Do not add appendices to circumvent the page limit.

For the PN section of the application, applicants must use section headings listed below by indicating section letter and title. Applicants must keep the contents of sections separate; do not combine sections of the PN. For example, do not indicate that the response for Section B is in Section D. The PN must include the following sections and address the prompts provided:

A. Introduction

- a. Describe the critical elements in addressing the resilience of the U.S. food and agriculture sector related to biosecurity risks, extreme weather events and disasters, cyber threat actors, and other shocks. Estimate the magnitude of such issues and their relevance to stakeholders.

B. Rationale and Significance

- a. Provide background information on the applicant institution’s capabilities and capacity to implement the FADI-EDEN project.

- b. Describe how the project will build upon or expand related outputs and deliverables of [previously funded FADI-EDEN projects](#).
- c. If applicable, describe ongoing or recently completed significant activities related to the proposed project. Include information or preliminary data pertinent to the proposed project.

C. Goals and Objectives

- a. Describe the long-term goal(s) of the proposed project in the areas of 1) fostering interdisciplinary and multi-state education and outreach programs, 2) building and/or enhancing strategic partnerships, 3) supporting collaboration within Cooperative Extension, and 4) facilitating coordination within EDEN (the Network).
- b. Define objectives for the proposed project. The objectives must relate to FADI-EDEN program priorities. Explain the target audience and/or end users of project deliverables, and present clear, concise, complete, and logically arranged objectives that are in alignment with project goals.
- c. Each objective must have an action plan that describes a reasonable scope of activities that can be accomplished within the resource and time constraints of the cooperative agreement.

D. Approach or Methodology

- a. Describe activities and techniques that will be used to implement the project, including their feasibility, rationale for use, and how they support the stated objectives.
- b. Describe the administrative approaches that will be used to support Network operations. These approaches include but are not limited to collaborating with the EDEN executive committee, Network outreach that includes maintenance of the Network's website, the development and maintenance of educational resources, support for an incident response coordination system (i.e. Response Notes), and the management of subawards, if applicable.
- c. Identify tactics that will be used to build or enhance partnerships.
- d. Define how the project deliverables and outcomes will be communicated to the Network, Cooperative Extension broadly, USDA NIFA, and stakeholders.
- e. Acknowledge the limitations and anticipated challenges related to carrying out the project and describe the ways in which those limitations and challenges will be addressed.
- f. If applicable, describe how the applicant proposes to transition the project from the existing cooperating institution to the applicant institution.

E. Project Management Plan

- a. If the proposed FADI-EDEN project represents collaboration between two or more partners, provide an explanation of how the relationship and communication will be managed.

- b. Identify the fiscal and administrative oversight activities that will be used for the project. Such activities may include how the EDEN executive committee, the Network, and USDA NIFA are informed about project developments. The project budget will include a breakdown of costs; do not describe the budget in this section.
- c. If applicable, describe activities to be performed by subaward recipients. Define the process for subawards, which includes pre-award, award, and post-award management strategies. Post-award management strategies include impact reporting and monitoring sub-awardee performance.

F. Project Performance Assessment

- a. Describe the expected outcomes of the project. Define outcomes from the outlined activities. Be as specific as possible in describing the linkages among activities, outputs, and different types of outcomes (e.g., changes in participant knowledge, awareness, competency, behavior, or changes in condition).
- b. Indicate how outcomes will be measured and explain how the project activities will be evaluated.
- c. Indicate who on the project team will provide the project performance assessment oversight. Applicants are strongly encouraged to include people with expertise in and skills related to project performance measurement or evaluation and who can help develop the monitoring plan, and, if feasible, participate in carrying out the plan.

G. Project Timeline

- a. Show the progress and successful implementation of the project over the 4-year award period. Relate the project timeline to the project objectives.
- b. Describe the activities, with milestones, the partner/collaborator roles (if applicable), and verifiable indicators.

H. Institutional Involvement

- a. Describe roles and responsibilities for key staff, including percent of time each will dedicate to the project.
- b. Applicants who intend for partners to implement portions of their proposed projects must describe each partner's roles and responsibilities. Describe relevant work that demonstrate each partner's ability to successfully execute the proposed project.
- c. Partners may jointly or individually provide leadership for different objectives or activities. If applicable, describe the roles of partners' key staff on the proposed project and percent of time each will dedicate to the project.

I. Logic Model

- a. A logic model must be included. The PN page limit includes the logic model. A logic model is a conceptual tool for planning and evaluation. It displays the sequence of actions that describe what project inputs, outputs,

and outcomes. There are many variations on the specific composition of a logic model. NIFA has developed a [generic logic model](#).

3. **Field 12**, Add Other Attachments. See **Part V** of the [NIFA Grants Application Guide](#).

- a. **Commitment Letters.** No page limit. Letters of commitment from all partners (signed by the Authorized Representative (AR) of the partnering organization) stating that the partners involved have agreed to their stated roles in the project and have agreed to abide by the Management Plan. Letters from other organizations or people whose participation is important to the success of the project, committing those collaborators and partners to specific roles, are also encouraged. Title the attachment(s) as ‘Letter of CommitmentOrganization Name’ in the document header and save file ‘LetterofCommitment_OrganizationName’. 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.
- b. **Bibliography.** No page limit. Title the attachment as “BibliographyReferencesCited.” All work cited in the proposal should be referenced in this section of the application. All references must be complete, include titles and all co-authors, conform to an acceptable journal format, and be listed in alphabetical order using the last name of the first author or listed by number in the order of citation. Do not add any other attachments not specifically requested in this RFA. Specifically, do not attach examples of curricula or other appendices. Attaching additional narrative or figures or tables other than those specifically requested in this RFA will result in disqualification from review.

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

R&R Personal Data. This information is voluntary and is not a precondition of award (see **Part V** of the [NIFA Grants Application Guide](#)).

R&R Budget. See **Part V** of the [NIFA Grants Application Guide](#).

1. Indirect costs (IDC) – See [Part IV, C](#) of this RFA for funding restrictions regarding indirect cost, and **Part V** of the [NIFA Grants Application Guide](#) for additional information.

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

Supplemental Information Form. See **Part V** of the [NIFA Grants Application Guide](#).

1. **Field 2.** Program to which the applicant is applying. Enter the program name FADI-EDEN and the program code AA-G. Accurate entry is critical.

2. **Field 8.** Conflict of Interest List. See **Part V** of the [NIFA Grants Application Guide](#).

D. Funding Restrictions

Legislative mandated Indirect Cost (IDC). [Section 704 of the Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2023 \(Pub. L. 117-328\)](#) limits indirect costs for FADI-EDEN to 10 percent of the total direct cost of the agreement. Therefore, when preparing budgets, applicants must limit their requests for recovery of indirect costs not to exceed 10 percent of total direct costs.

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 will be used to technically evaluate applications that have met the administrative requirements using a review panel (see [NIFA Peer Review Process](#)).

Scientific Peer Review Process:

NIFA selects reviewers for the review panel based upon their training and experience in relevant scientific, extension, or education fields, taking into account the following factors:

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, researchers, public health practitioners, educators, consumers, and commercial reviews) 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 NIFA program staff will recommend that your project is either approved for support from currently available funds or declined due to insufficient funds or unfavorable review.

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

After the review process has been completed, NIFA sends copies of reviews, *not* including the identity of reviewers, and a summary (if applicable) of the review panel comments to the PD.

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

B. Evaluation Criteria

NIFA will use the following criteria, weighted equally, to evaluate proposals submitted to the FADI-EDEN program:

1. **Potential for Enhancing and Expanding the Cooperative Extension System's Outreach Activities with a Focus on Biosecurity Before, During, and After Disasters.** This criterion is used to assess the likelihood that the project will have an impact on sustainable efforts to enhance the biosecurity of the U.S. food and agriculture sector through extension activities. Elements considered include alignment of project goals and objectives, alignment with the FADI-EDEN program priorities and USDA's Goals, justification for the project, and innovation.
2. **Proposed Approach and Cooperative Linkages.** This criterion is used to assess the soundness of and alignment among the proposed goals and objectives, activities, collaborations and partnerships, management plan, outcomes and timeline as these relate to the successful development and delivery of the proposed project. Factors include those identified in the project narrative. Emphasis is placed on how the project will be managed, quality partnerships and collaborative initiatives including with the EDEN executive committee and the Network, and on the potential cooperative linkages likely to evolve because of the proposed project.
3. **Institutional Capacity.** This criterion relates to the institution's capacity to implement the project and the degree to which the project will strengthen its capacity. Elements include the institution's commitment to the project, the adequacy of institutional resources (i.e., administrative, facilities, equipment, materials, and processes for managing subawards, if applicable) available to carry out the project and plans for project continuation or expansion beyond the period of USDA support.
4. **Key Personnel.** This criterion relates to the adequacy of the number and qualifications of key persons who will develop and carry out the project, and the qualifications of project personnel who will lead the assessment of project results and impacts and dissemination of these findings.
5. **Outcome Evaluation Plan.** This criterion is used to assess the proposed evaluation plan and project performance monitoring. Elements include the soundness of the proposed evaluation approach including delineation of appropriate objectives, methodology, plan of operation, timetable, logic model, expected products and results, performance metrics/targets, and dissemination plans. Factors include those activities identified in the project narrative.
6. **Budget and Cost-Effectiveness.** This criterion relates to the extent to which the total budget adequately supports the project and is cost-effective. Elements considered include the necessity and reasonableness of costs to carry out project activities and achieve project objectives; the appropriateness of budget allocations between the applicant and any collaborating partner(s); the adequacy of time committed to the project by key project personnel; and the degree to which the project maximizes the use of limited resources, optimizes educational value for the dollar, and achieves economies of scale.

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 statute or award-specific requirements, [NIFA Federal Assistance Policy Guide](#) applies to all NIFA awards.

C. Expected Program Outputs and Reporting Requirements

The output and reporting requirements are included in the award terms and conditions (see Award Terms and Conditions for information about NIFA award terms). If there are any program or award-specific award terms, they will be identified in the award. In addition, the following are required for this program:

For a new NIFA award, the awardee is required to submit project initiation information and annual and summary reports into NIFA's electronic, web-based inventory system (REReport). This will facilitate both awardee submissions of initial award information and subsequent subcontracted project information, project outcomes, and provides transparency via public access to information on Federally funded projects.

The awardee is expected to submit progress reports to NIFA and the EDEN executive committee and to submit a final technical report to NIFA and the EDEN executive committee. The awardee is also expected to provide written monthly updates on project progress during EDEN executive committee meetings.

The awardee will also be required to provide data and information, as needed, through USDA-sponsored evaluation activities and calls for programmatic data.

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](#).

D. Limited English Proficiency

NIFA offers language access services, such as interpretation and translation of vital information, free of charge. If you need interpretation or translation services, please visit [NIFA Language Access Services](#) or contact Lois Tuttle, Equal Opportunity Specialist, at Lois.Tuttle@usda.gov or (443) 386-9488.

APPENDIX I: AGENCY CONTACT

Program Contacts

Dr. Ashley Mueller
National Program Leader
ashley.mueller@usda.gov
402-405-3122

Dr. Deborah Reyome
Program Specialist
deborah.reyome@usda.gov

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

Glossary of Terms

Agriculture and Food Research Initiative – AFRI

Assistance Listing Number – ALN

Authorized Representative – AR

Agricultural Research, Extension, and Education Reform Act of 1998 – AREERA

Coordinated Agricultural Project – CAP

Centers of Excellence – COE

Data Management Plan – DMP

Extension Disaster Education Network – EDEN

Food and Agriculture Defense Initiative - FADI

National Institute of Food and Agriculture – NIFA

Project Narrative - PN

Project Summary - PS

Request for Application – RFA

Research, Education, and Economics – REE

United States Department of Agriculture – USDA

APPENDIX III: DEFINITIONS

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

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.

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.

Renewal Application:

A project application that seeks additional funding for a project beyond the period that was approved in an original or amended award.

Resubmitted Application:

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

Resubmitted Renewal Application:

A project application that requests additional funding for a project beyond the period that was approved in the original award. This is an application that had previously been submitted for renewal to but not funded.