



National Institute of Food and Agriculture

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

BIOENERGY, CLIMATE AND ENVIRONMENT  
FOOD PRODUCTION AND SUSTAINABILITY  
YOUTH, FAMILY AND COMMUNITY  
FOOD SAFETY AND NUTRITION  
INTERNATIONAL PROGRAMS

# NIFA

## Equipment Grants Program FY2024 RFA Announcement and Technical Assistance Webinar

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- This webinar will be recorded. Please be sure your microphone is muted.
- ***Zoom Tech Support*** = 1-888-799-0125, Option 2
- Throughout the presentation, you may type questions in the chat box.
- Slides and the recording from this conference will be posted to [Equipment Grant Program | NIFA \(usda.gov\)](https://www.usda.gov/equipment-grant-program/nifa)



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# Introductions

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# Topics We Will Cover

- NIFA Overview
- Program Overview
- Request for Applications (RFA) Details
- Proposal Evaluation Process
- Additional Information/Resources



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# NIFA Overview

## NIFA Overview

- **National Institute of Food and Agriculture (NIFA)** is the extramural science-funding agency within USDA's Research, Education and Economics mission area.
- NIFA **invests in and supports** initiatives that ensure the long-term viability of agriculture.
- NIFA provides **funding and strategic leadership** for programs that ensure groundbreaking discoveries in agriculture-related sciences and technologies reach the people who can put them into practice.

# Topics Covered by NIFA Programs



## Advanced Technologies

Bioenergy; Biotechnology;  
Nanotechnology



## Education

Minority Serving Institutions; Teaching  
and Learning; Workforce Development



## Food Science

Food Quality; Food Safety



## Animals

Animal Breeding; Animal Health;  
Animal Production; Aquaculture



## Environment

Climate Change; Ecosystems; Invasive  
Pests and Diseases



## Food and Nutrition Security

Nutrition; Obesity; Wellness



## Business and Economy

Markets and Trade; Natural Resource  
Economics; Small Business



## Farming and Ranching

Agriculture Safety & Technology; Farmer  
Education; Organic & Family Farms



## International

Global Engagement; Global  
Food Security



## Natural Resources

Forests; Grassland and Rangeland; Soil,  
Water, and Air



## Human Sciences

Community Vitality; Family Well-Being;  
Youth



## Plants

Crop Production; Pest  
Management; Plant  
Breeding; Plant Health





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# Equipment Grants Program Overview

# EGP Program: Purpose and Priorities

RFA Page #6

- Increase access to **shared** special purpose equipment/instruments for scientific research for use in the food and agricultural sciences programs.
- To enhance the **fundamental and/or applied** research capacity (Extension) both within and outside the proposing organization.
- Proposals to the EGP are for the acquisition of a **single**, well-integrated piece of equipment/instrument.
- An instrument acquired with support from EGP is expected to be **fully operational** by the conclusion of the **first year** of the project.

# Eligibility

## Colleges or Universities

- In general. The terms "college" and "university" mean an educational institution in any State, the District of Columbia, and any insular area which, (i) admits as regular students only persons having a certificate of graduation from a school providing secondary education, or the recognized equivalent of such a certificate, (ii) is legally authorized within such State to provide a program of education beyond secondary education, (iii) provides an educational program for which a **bachelor's degree or any other higher degree** is awarded, (iv) is a public or other nonprofit institution, **and** (v) is accredited by a nationally recognized accrediting agency or association.
- b. Inclusions. The terms "college" and "university" include a research foundation maintained by a college or university described in subparagraph (A)

## State Cooperative Institutions

- 1862 and 1890 land-grant institutions;
- State-certified Schools of Forestry as stipulated in accordance with 16 U.S.C.582a et seq. (the McIntire-Stennis Act of 1962);
- State Agricultural Experiment Stations located in the 50 States, the District of Columbia and the Insular Areas in accordance with 7 U.S. C. 361a et seq. (the Hatch Act of 1887);
- "Cooperative extension services" meaning the organizations established at the land-grant colleges and universities under the Smith-Lever Act of May 8, 1914 (38 Stat. 372–374, as amended; 7 U.S.C. 341–349), and section 209(b) of the Act of October 26, 1974 (88 Stat. 1428, as amended; D.C. Code, sec. 31–1719(b));
- Accredited schools or colleges of veterinary medicine or State agricultural experiment stations that conduct animal health and disease research in accordance with section 1433(c) of the National Agricultural Research, Extension, and Teaching Policy Act of 1977;
- Hispanic-serving institutions as defined in section 1101a of title 20; and
- Eligible institutions in insular areas including, 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.

# Application Submission & Award Limitations

RFA Page #13

- Eligible institutions may **not submit more than two applications** to this program as a lead institution.
  - Please work with your Office of Research/Sponsored Programs regarding your institution's process to select proposals for submission.
- **Limit to one award** per institution per fiscal year.
  - To receive an award in FY 2023, the lead institution may not have received more than two USDA-NIFA EGP awards as lead institution in the previous two EGP funding cycles.





# Project and Grant Types

RFA Page #10

## Project Types

Equipment

## Grant Types

Standard

# Project and Grant Type Description

RFA Page #10

## Project Type:

### Equipment Projects Only:

For the acquisition of research equipment - does not fund research project costs, including personnel costs, associated with the use of the equipment acquired with support from this program.

EGP projects support the purchase of equipment that will enhance the capacity (updates or expands existing equipment) or increases the capacity (acquires new equipment) at a research institution

## Grant Types:

### Standard Grants Only

- **Minimum funding request: \$25,000**
- **Maximum funding request: \$500,000**
- **Duration: 48 months**
- The instrument acquired using EGP funding is expected to be **fully operational by the end of the first year of the project period.**
- Remainder of the project period will document impacts and outcomes of the investment.

## Activities Funded

- EGP supports the acquisition of equipment for either fundamental or applied research at the applicant institution.
  - **Fundamental research** is research that increases knowledge or understanding of the fundamental aspects of phenomena, has the potential for broad application and has positive influence on the food and agriculture sciences.
  - **Applied research** includes field testing or expansion of the findings of fundamental research. It may involve outreach or cooperative extension to uncover practical ways in which new food and agriculture science knowledge can be advanced to benefit individuals and society.

# Activities Not Funded

RFA Page #8

- EGP does not:
  - Fund research, education, or extension project costs or personnel salaries or wages, including research or personnel that use equipment acquired with support from the program.
  - Fund common, general purpose ancillary equipment that would normally be found in a laboratory or is relatively easily procured by other funding source
  - Support the operation, consumable supplies, or maintenance of facilities, equipment, or research laboratories, or building, modifying or renovating facilities that house the acquired equipment.
  - Support the acquisition of a suite of instruments to outfit research laboratories/facilities.





# Cost Share or Matching

RFA Page #14

- **No matching is required.**
- Matching resources will not be factored into the review process as evaluation criteria.



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# Application Details and Documents

## Important Details

- To receive an award, the lead institution may not have received more than two EGP awards in the previous two EGP funding cycles.
- In FY2024, EGP will support the installation of equipment (but not the costs associated with building or modifying facilities to house the equipment), an extended equipment warranty for the duration of the award (48 months), and one-time equipment use training. Training and extended warranty costs must not exceed \$7,000 for each category. While extended warranty costs are allowed, continuing maintenance contracts are not.
- Duration: 48 months
- The instrument acquired using EGP funding is expected to be fully operational by the end of the first year of the project period.



# Application Details

RFA Page #9

- [EGP RFA is available online](#)
- [EGP FAQs are available online](#)
- **Application Deadline:** 5 p.m. (Eastern Time) **Wednesday, May 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2024**
  - Submitted through Grants.gov
- Total funding available in FY 2024: \$4,800,000
- Program Code: EGP
- Maximum\* funding per award: \$500,000
- Minimum funding per award: \$25,000
- Proposals per Institution: 2
- Awards per Institution: 1
- Grant Duration: 48 months

\* Program has flexibility to expand on the award types and related award amount they fund



# Key Documents

RFA Page #16

Key components of your Application:

- Project Summary/Abstract
- Project Narrative
- Bibliography/Reference List
- Data Management Plan
- Other Documents (See RFA and [NIFA Grants Application Guide](#))

# Project Narrative

RFA Page #16

- Project Narrative is **10 page limit** and will be strictly enforced.
  - **1.5 spacing, 1-inch margins**
  - 12 point Times New Roman font
  - Includes text, figures and tables
    - Tables may be single spaced
- Within 10 pages describe:
  - Research Equipment and need
    - Technical description, why is it needed, existence and availability of comparable instrumentation in close geographical proximity.
    - If an integrated instrument, define how it is well-integrated.
  - Research activities to be enabled
    - BRIEF description of research areas, how it will advance capacity at the institution, potential contributions to the field.

# Project Narrative cont'd

RFA Page #15

- Project Timeline and instrument location
  - Location of the instrument and how it will have shared-use access
  - Administrative timeline, coordination and collaboration management, project sustainability
  - Procedures for allocating the instrument time, if appropriate, and plans for attracting and supporting new users
- Cooperation and institutional involvement
  - Degree to which the project will strengthen the institution's fundamental or applied research
  - Institution's commitment to the project, the adequacy of institutional resources
  - Plans for equipment maintenance and use for the life of the instrument beyond the period of USDA support
- Applications exceeding the page limitation will be returned without review

# Data Management Plan

RFA Page #18

- Investigators must provide detailed (up to 2 pages) business and management plans including:
  - Expected data type
  - Data format
  - Data storage and preservation
  - Data sharing, protection and public access
  - Roles and responsibilities
- Title: ‘Management Plan’
  - Upload via Field 12 “Other Attachments” of the Research & Related Other Project Information form
- Please also review: [nifa.usda.gov/resource/data-management-plan-nifa-funded-research-projects](https://nifa.usda.gov/resource/data-management-plan-nifa-funded-research-projects)

# Application Submission

RFA Page #15

- NIFA only accepts **electronic** submission of applications.
- NIFA Grants Application Guide available: [nifa.usda.gov/resource/nifa-grantsgov-application-guide](https://nifa.usda.gov/resource/nifa-grantsgov-application-guide)
- Application documents **must be in Portable Document Format (PDF)** to be accepted by NIFA, including your narrative and budget justifications.
  - Grants.gov may allow other formats, but NIFA does ***not***
  - Do not use third-party PDF builders







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# Proposal Evaluation Process

# Evaluation Process

Proposals are assigned for review to at least 3 reviewers with expertise in the proposed topic.

Reviewers will produce individual reviews of each proposal, evaluating the strengths and weaknesses.

These written reviews are used to begin panel discussions with other reviewers serving on the peer-review panel.

Through these discussions, peer-review panelists come to consensus on the final rating and ranking of proposals.

# Evaluation Criteria

## Innovativeness of Proposed Approach

- Soundness of the proposed
- Justification of requested equipment
- Plan of operation, timetable, management plan,
- Supports innovation and multidisciplinary

## Potential Impact on Research Capacity

- Advances the quality of fundamental and/or applied research activities
- Strengthening institutional new or enhanced capacities
- Existence and/or availability of comparable instrument in close proximity
- Alignment with institutional long-range and with USDA's Goals

## Institutional Capability

- Capacity to acquire, install, operate the equipment
- Degree to which the equipment will strengthen its research capacity
- Institution's commitment to operation and maintenance of the equipment

## Budget and Cost-Effectiveness

- Total budget adequately supports the equipment acquisition
- Cost-effective
- Necessary and reasonable
- Maximizes the use of limited resources.

# Timeline of Competitive Programs

**1-2 months**

- Request for Applications (RFA) release
- Proposal writing and planning
- **Proposals due**

**2-3 months**

- Proposal under peer review
- Proposal funding notifications

**1-2 months**

- Awards are finalized and made

**On average, a competitive program takes about 3-5 months from the proposal due date to an award being made to an institution.**

**We will keep you updated as much as possible. We appreciate your patience!**

\* If your program takes longer due to additional steps, please change as needed



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## **Additional Information**



# Upcoming Events

- NIFA Events Calendar for upcoming deadlines, meetings and webinars: [nifa.usda.gov/events](https://nifa.usda.gov/events)
- Upcoming Request for Applications (RFA) release calendar: [nifa.usda.gov/upcoming-rfa-calendar](https://nifa.usda.gov/upcoming-rfa-calendar)

# Grant Resources

- Funding Opportunities: [nifa.usda.gov/grants/funding-opportunities](https://nifa.usda.gov/grants/funding-opportunities)
- Competitive Grants Flowchart: [nifa.usda.gov/competitive-grants](https://nifa.usda.gov/competitive-grants)
- NIFA Grant Resources: [nifa.usda.gov/grant-training](https://nifa.usda.gov/grant-training)
- NIFA Policy Guide: [nifa.usda.gov/policy-guide](https://nifa.usda.gov/policy-guide)
- Indirect Costs: [nifa.usda.gov/indirect-costs](https://nifa.usda.gov/indirect-costs)
- A Guide for Preparation and Submission of NIFA Applications via Grants.gov:  
[apply07.grants.gov/apply/opportunities/instructions/PKG00249520-instructions.pdf](https://apply07.grants.gov/apply/opportunities/instructions/PKG00249520-instructions.pdf)
- Information on Awarded Grants: [cris.nifa.usda.gov](https://cris.nifa.usda.gov)



# Questions?

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