Food Safety Outreach
Competitive Grants Program

2018 Request for Applications (RFA)

APPLICATION DEADLINE: June 7, 2018

ELIGIBILITY: See Part III, A of RFA

NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF FOOD AND AGRICULTURE; U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
Food Safety Outreach Program

INITIAL ANNOUNCEMENT

CATALOG OF FEDERAL DOMESTIC ASSISTANCE: This program is listed in the Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance under 10.328.

DATES: Applications must be received by **5 p.m. Eastern Time on June 7, 2018.** Applications received after this deadline will normally not be considered for funding (see Part IV, C of this RFA). Comments regarding this request for applications (RFA) are requested within six months from the issuance of this notice. Comments received after that date will be considered to the extent practicable.

STAKEHOLDER INPUT: We at the National Institute of Food and Agriculture (NIFA) seek your comments about this RFA. We will consider your comments when we develop the next RFA for the program, if applicable, and we'll use them to meet the requirements of section 103(c)(2) of the Agricultural Research, Extension, and Education Reform Act of 1998 (7 U.S.C. 7613(c)(2)). Submit your written stakeholder comments by the deadline set forth in the DATES portion of this notice via email to Policy@nifa.usda.gov. (This email address is only for receiving comments regarding this RFA and *not* for requesting information or forms.) In your comments, please state that you are responding to the Food Safety Outreach Program (FSOP) RFA.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY: NIFA requests applications for the Food Safety Outreach Program (FSOP) for fiscal year (FY) 2018 to develop and implement food safety training, education, extension, outreach and technical assistance projects that address the needs of owners and operators of small to mid-sized farms, beginning farmers, socially-disadvantaged farmers, small processors, or small fresh fruit and vegetable merchant wholesalers. These are audiences affected by new food safety guidelines established under the Food Safety Modernization Act (FSMA) (7 U.S.C. 7625) (www.fda.gov/fsma). In FY 2018, the FSOP will continue to build a national infrastructure for food safety outreach by soliciting new proposals for Regional Centers in the Northeast, North Central, Southern and Western Regions as defined by NIFA's Sustainable Agriculture Research and Education Program (http://www.sare.org/). One of the four Regional Centers will be designated as the Lead Regional Center responsible for national coordination, communication and assessment. FSOP will maintain a sustained focus on delivery of customized training to members of the target audiences by continuing to solicit Pilot Projects and Community Outreach Projects. New projects will focus on, but are not limited to, providing training and/or technical assistance that addresses knowledge and resource gaps for the target audiences in the areas of pre- and post-harvest water testing and sampling, soil amendments, developing supply chain programs, and/or developing food safety plans. The program will also continue to fund projects that develop bilingual and culturally appropriate training resources. Grant applications will be solicited directly from those in local communities - to include those from community-based organizations, non-governmental organizations, food hubs, farm cooperatives, extension, and other local groups. Successful Pilot awardees and Community

Outreach awardees will be required to interact with newly established Regional Centers by reporting project outcomes to the Centers. This will ensure that activities and efforts undertaken by all FY 2016-2018 awardees are well-integrated with the national Food Safety Outreach infrastructure established by NIFA and FDA beginning in FY 2015. The anticipated amount available for grants in FY 2018 is approximately $6.6 million.

This notice identifies the objectives for projects, deadline dates, funding information, eligibility criteria for projects and applicants, and application forms and associated instructions needed to apply for a FSOP grant.

Table of Contents

PART I—FUNDING OPPORTUNITY DESCRIPTION

A. Legislative Authority
On January 4, 2011, the Food Safety Modernization Act (FSMA) (www.fda.gov/fsma) was signed into legislation. Section 209 of the Act amended the Food and Drug Cosmetic Act, 21 U.S.C. 391 et seq. by adding section 1011, Subsection (d) entitled "National Food Safety Training, Education, Extension, Outreach and Technical Assistance Program". Under the program, competitive grants are to be awarded to projects that develop and implement FSMA-related food safety training, education, extension, outreach, and technical assistance to owners and operators of small and medium-sized farms, beginning farmers, socially disadvantaged farmers, small processors or small fresh fruit and vegetable merchant wholesalers. In FYs 2015-2017, NIFA and FDA collaborated to establish the National Food Safety Training, Education, Extension, Outreach and Technical Assistance Competitive Grant Program's national infrastructure and developed Pilot Projects, Community Outreach Projects, and Multistate Education and Outreach Projects. In FY2018, FSOP will continue to support the national infrastructure by soliciting new proposals for Regional Centers in the Northeast, North Central, Southern and Western Regions, as defined by NIFA's Sustainable Agriculture Research and Education Program (www.sare.org), while continuing to maintain a sustained focus on delivery of customized training to members of target audiences through Pilot Projects and Community Outreach Projects. Paragraph (d)(2) of FSMA requires that competitive grant programs be carried out in accordance with Section 405 of the Agricultural Research, Extension, and Education Reform Act of 1998 (AREERA) (7 U.S.C.7625).

B. Purpose and Priorities

In FY 2017, the Food Safety Outreach Program at NIFA built upon the national infrastructure, with a focus on delivery of customized training to very specific target audiences. In FY 2018, FSOP will maintain and continue to grow training, education, outreach and coordination across FSOP by soliciting for 4 new Regional Centers in the Northeast, North Central, Western, and Southern Region, as defined by NIFA's Sustainable Agriculture Research and Education Program (www.sare.org). FSOP will provide funding for new Pilot Projects and Community Outreach Projects, with new projects focused on, but not limited to addressing knowledge and resource gaps for target audiences and/or providing technical assistance to those responding to industry challenges such as pre- and post-harvest water testing and sampling, soil amendments, developing supply chain programs, and/or developing food safety plans. The FSOP will continue to encourage proposals that address bilingual and culturally sensitive training resources. Grant applications will be solicited directly from those in local communities - to include those from community-based organizations, non-governmental organizations, food hubs, farm cooperatives, land-grant universities, extension, and other local groups. This request for Applications (RFA) will solicit proposals for three project types: 1) *Pilot Projects* (awards range from $25,000-75,000); 2) *Community Outreach Projects* (awards range from $80,000- $150,000); and 3) *Regional Centers* ($800,000; an additional $200,000 awarded to (1) Lead Regional Center for a total budget of up to $1,000,000).

Pilot Projects will support the development of food safety education and outreach programs in local communities that address the needs of small, specialized audiences whose education needs

have not previously been adequately addressed. Pilot projects will focus on building the capacity of local groups to identify very specific needs within their communities, and to implement appropriately-customized food safety education and outreach programs to meet those specific needs. For example, Pilot Projects may target non-traditional, niche, or hard-to-reach audiences. In addition, they may target audiences for whom English is a second language. Where needed, Regional Centers will provide support and assistance for Pilot Project teams by aiding in the development of mechanisms for reporting program outcomes and providing food safety technical assistance when warranted.

Community Outreach Projects will support the growth and expansion of already existing food safety education and outreach programs currently offered in local communities; to include previously funded, successful Pilot Projects. In addition, these projects will enable existing programs to reach a broader target audience, provide technical assistance and/or to expand to new audiences. These projects will enable existing education and training curricula to be modified to ensure they are consistent with new FSMA rules and to ensure that they meet the needs of expanded audiences. New audiences may include those from a variety of agricultural production and processing systems.

Regional Center Projects will support the infrastructure of the program by coordinating information within and among the 4 regions to ensure that best practices for FSMA-related training, education, and technical assistance within local communities are translated to a national audience. Regional Center projects will ensure that there is continued education and training for a cadre of regional FSMA trainers and continue to provide trainings for both growers and processors. Further, the Regional Center projects will focus on development of implementation plans for extending technical assistance to the targeted audiences of farmers, processors and vendors in the respective regions. The implementation plan must include collaborations with non-governmental and community-based organizations with an established track record of working with target audiences. Implementation plans must address efforts to develop and modify food safety training curricula to meet new FSMA rules for a variety of agricultural production and processing systems. In addition, the implementation plan must include a continuity plan to seamlessly coordinate with currently active Regional Centers to avoid gaps in collaboration and communication across the region.

Regional Center projects will be funded at up to $800,000 each. For an additional $200,000, Regional Center project applicants may include objectives demonstrating an ability to provide a leadership role in coordinating all 4 of the regional projects by: 1) collecting program outcomes from each of the regions; 2) developing best practices for FSOP based on collated data from the 4 regions; and 3) review curricula to ensure consistency with FSMA guidelines. Only one of the Regional Centers will be selected to serve as the **Lead Regional Center** with a total overall budget of $1,000,000.

The Lead Regional Center will be responsible for identifying outcomes and impacts of the FSOP and communicate and coordinate across all active FSOP projects in the regions. In addition, the Lead Regional Center will serve as a communication and coordination liaison between NIFA, FDA, and FSOP to ensure funded training curricula and resources cover core

competencies related to FSMA. Lastly, the Lead Regional Center will develop a mechanism for collecting descriptive data, program outcomes, and best practices for funded projects.

In FY 2015 and 2016, a National Coordination Center and 4 Regional Centers were jointly funded by NIFA and FDA (https://nccfsma.org/). These projects are due to expire by January 2019. A continuity plan is highly recommended to seamlessly coordinate with the currently active National Coordination Center to facilitate a smooth transition.

NIFA supports global engagement that advances U.S. agricultural goals. To attain the agency's goals for U.S. agriculture, promotion of global competence of our nation's future agricultural workforce, and safe and nutritious food security in a growing world, NIFA recognizes that collaboration with international partners can contribute to advances for U.S. agriculture. Thus, applications in response to this program's RFA may include collaborations with international partners, but may only be submitted by eligible U.S. institutions. Such applications may include subcontracts to international partners or other institutions. Applications must clearly demonstrate benefits to the U.S. Additional guidance on including international activities is provided on the International Partnerships website.

The Food Safety Outreach Program will support projects that encourage those from local communities, community based- and non-governmental organizations, universities, extension, state and federal agencies to develop and implement food safety outreach programs that facilitate the integration of FSMA food safety guidelines into a variety of agricultural production and processing systems, including conventional, sustainable, and organic systems, among others. The program is well aligned with the REE Action Plan, and NIFA and USDA Strategic Plans. FSOP supports Strategic Goal 7.

C. Program Area Description

NIFA is soliciting applications for the FSOP under the following areas:

(1)   Pilot Projects ($25,000 - $75,000);
(2)   Community Outreach Projects ($80,000- $150,000); and
(3)   Regional Center Project (awards for up to $800,000 each; an additional $200,000 will be awarded to one (1) Lead Regional Center Project, for a total budget of $1,000,000.

Pilot Projects
Funding Level: $25,000-$75,000 per award for up to 13 awards
Period of Performance: Project period up to one year.
Program Code: A4182
Pilot Projects will support the development of food safety education and outreach programs in local communities that address the needs of small, specialized audiences whose education needs have not previously been adequately addressed. Pilot Projects will focus on building the capacity of local groups to identify very specific needs within their communities, and to implement appropriately-customized food safety education and outreach programs to meet those specific needs. For example, Pilot Projects may target non-traditional, niche, or hard-to-reach audiences.

In addition, they may target audiences for whom English is a second language. Where needed, Regional Centers will provide support and assistance for Pilot Project teams by aiding in the development of mechanisms for reporting program outcomes and providing food safety technical assistance when warranted.

Pilot Projects should:
    i.   Develop and implement customized food safety education and outreach programs for those working with various agricultural production and processing systems, including conservation systems, sustainable systems, organic farming systems, etc.; and
   ii.   Focus on developing and implementing education, outreach, and communication strategies to non-traditional, niche, or hard-to-reach audiences;

Community Outreach Projects
Funding Level: $80,000- $150,000 per award for up to 6 awards
Period of Performance: Project period up to 2 years
Program Code: A4182

Community Outreach Projects will support the growth and expansion of already existing food safety education and outreach programs currently offered in local communities; including previously funded, successful Pilot Projects. In addition, these projects will enable existing programs to reach a broader target audience, provide technical assistance and/or to expand to new audiences. These projects will enable existing education and training curricula to be modified to ensure they are consistent with new FSMA rules and to ensure that they meet the needs of expanded audiences. New audiences may include those from a variety of agricultural production and processing systems.
Community Outreach Projects should:
    i.   Be led by project teams who demonstrate a record of developing and maintaining community partnerships and working successfully to serve the educational needs of the target audiences identified; and
   ii.   Develop and implement customized food safety education and outreach programs for those working with various agricultural production and processing systems, including conservation systems, sustainable systems, organic farming systems, etc.

Regional Center Projects
Funding Level: Up to $800,000 each; an additional $200,000 will be awarded to one (1) Lead Regional Center Project, for a total budget of $1,000,000.
Period of Performance: Project period up to 3 years
Program Code: A4182

Regional Center Projects will maintain the infrastructure of the program by coordinating across their region and expand upon the implementation of FSMA-related training, education, and Technical Assistance to the intended audience. Education and training for a cadre of regional FSMA trainers must be developed, with a focus on an implementation plan for extending technical assistance to the targeted audiences of farmers, processors and vendors in the respective

regions. Regional Centers are expected to continue to provide trainings for both growers and processors.

Regional Center Project implementation plan must include:

i.   Collaborations with non-governmental and community-based organizations with an established track record of working with target audiences, and the capacity to develop and modify food safety training curricula to meet new FSMA rules for a variety of agricultural production and processing systems.

ii.   A continuity plan to seamlessly coordinate with currently active Regional Centers to avoid gaps in collaboration and communication across the region.

iii. An objective to address the coordination, communication and assessment supplement detailed below. Proposals without a coordination, communication, and assessment objective will not be considered for review.

Regional Center projects will be funded at up to $800,000 each. For an additional $200,000, Regional Center project applicants may include objectives demonstrating an ability to provide a leadership role in coordinating all 4 of the regional projects by: 1) collecting program outcomes from each of the regions; 2) developing best practices for FSOP based on collated data from the 4 regions; and 3) review curricula to ensure consistency with FSMA guidelines. Only one of the Regional Centers will be selected to serve as the **Lead Regional Center** with a total overall budget of $1,000,000.

The Lead Regional Center will be responsible identifying outcomes and impacts of the FSOP and communicate and coordinate across all active FSOP projects in the regions. In addition, the Lead Regional Center will serve as a communication and coordination liaison between NIFA, FDA, and FSOP to ensure funded training curricula and resources cover core competencies related to FSMA. Lastly, the Lead Regional Center will develop a mechanism for collecting descriptive data, program outcomes, and best practices for funded projects.

In FY 2015 and 2016, a National Coordination Center and 4 Regional Centers were jointly funded by NIFA and FDA (https://nccfsma.org/). These projects are due to expire by January 2019. A continuity plan is highly recommended to seamlessly coordinate with the currently active National Coordination Center to facilitate a smooth transition.

All three project types have common programmatic terms and conditions to ensure alignment across the Food Safety Outreach Program. To fulfill this purpose, the following communication terms and conditions will be followed:

- The Lead Regional Center will collate individual project outcomes, identify best practices based on those project outcomes, and report overall outcomes of the program to national program staff at NIFA and FDA. To compile outcomes, each successfully-funded project team must develop a communication plan to describe how they will interact with their respective Regional Centers. The communication plan must describe a strategy for

collecting data and reporting the outcomes of all Pilot Projects, Community Outreach Projects, and Regional Center Projects to either their associated Regional Centers or the Lead Regional Center.

- Project outcomes that are reported to the Lead Regional Centers and the Regional Centers may include a variety of qualitative (descriptive) and/or quantitative (metrics) measures. Quantitative and qualitative measures may include, but are not limited to: 1) New or novel education, training materials, and resources for specific target audiences; 2) New or novel delivery mechanisms developed and implemented for specific target audiences; 3) Specific commodities or common food safety issues addressed; 4) Specific target audiences, including niche, hard-to-reach, or underserved audiences identified and trained; 4) Best practices identified and applied by specific target audiences; 5) Number of education and training sessions conducted; 6) Number of participants in training and education programs; 7) Established baseline data (pre and post) to show the initial state of target group (community/niche group) with justification to verify and validate changes in knowledge, food safety practices, adapted best practices, FSMA compliance, market growth (farmers market/retail) etc.; and/or 8) Perform gap analysis to identify unaddressed challenges or those needing more development and attention.

- The Project Director will be responsible for managing all technical and programmatic aspects of the grant and will be responsible for appropriately acknowledging USDA-NIFA's funding support in publications, public announcements, news releases, and other media sources;

- The Project Director for the Pilot Projects, Community Outreach Projects and Regional Center Projects are responsible for attending annual meetings with NIFA and FDA staff, in the second year of the award. During the annual meeting, Project Directors will report on the progress of their projects, share updates on modified training materials or curricula, and report on interim programmatic outcomes.

PART II—AWARD INFORMATION

A. Available Funding

The anticipated amount available for FSOP grant in FY 2018 is approximately $6.6 million. There is no commitment by USDA to fund any particular application or to make a specific number of awards.

The Automated Standard Applications for Payment System (ASAP), operated by the Department of Treasury's Bureau of the Fiscal Service, is the designated payment system for awards resulting from this RFA. For more information see
https://www.fiscal.treasury.gov/fsservices/gov/pmt/asap/asap_home.htm.

B. Types of Applications

In FY 2018, you may submit applications to the FSOP Program in the following areas:

New application. This is a project application that has not been previously submitted to the FSOP Program. We will review all new applications competitively using the screening for administrative requirements, review panel evaluation of proposals using evaluation criteria and selection process described in Part V—Application Review Requirements.

Resubmitted application. This is an application that had previously been submitted to the NIFA but not funded. Project Directors (PDs) must respond to the previous review panel summary (see Response to Previous Review, Part IV). We must receive resubmitted applications by the relevant due dates. We will evaluate resubmitted applications in competition with other pending applications in the appropriate area to which they are assigned and review them according to the same evaluation criteria (Part V, B) as new applications. If you are submitting a resubmission application, enter the NIFA-assigned proposal number of the previously-submitted application in the Federal field (Field 4 on the form).

C. Project Types

1. Project Types
In FY 2018, applications will be accepted for three (3) project types: 1) Pilot Projects; 2) Community Outreach Projects; and 3) Regional Center Projects. Individual Project Directors may submit only one application to the overall program in FY 2018.

D. Responsible and Ethical Conduct of Research

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 shall, upon request, make available to NIFA the policies, procedures, and documentation to support the conduct of the training. See http://nifa.usda.gov/responsible-and-ethical-conduct-research for more information.

PART III—ELIGIBILITY INFORMATION

A. Eligible Applicants

Applications may only be submitted by:

- The Cooperative Extension Service for a U.S. state or territory;
- Non-government organizations and/or community based organizations representing owners and operators of farms, small food processors, or small fruit and vegetable merchant wholesalers that has a commitment to public health and expertise in administering programs that contribute to food safety;
- Federal, State, local, or tribal agencies;
- An institution of higher education (as defined in Section 101(a) of the Higher Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 1001(a)) or a foundation maintained by an institution of higher education;
- A collaboration of two or more eligible entities.

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.

Project Directors for the National Coordination Center and the Regional Centers funded under the FY 2015 National Training, Education, Extension, Outreach, and Technical Assistance Competitive Grants Program and the FY 2016 and 2017 Food Safety Outreach Program are not eligible to apply for new awards under the FY 2018 Food Safety Outreach Program. However, Co-Project Directors and other project collaborators are eligible to apply under this RFA. Applicants may subcontract to organizations not directly eligible to apply provided such organizations are necessary for the conduct of the project.

For those new to Federal financial assistance, a grants overview page is available on the NIFA website. This page includes information about free Grants 101 Training and other resources that are highly recommended for those seeking an understanding of Federal awards.

B. Cost Sharing or Matching

In accordance with Section 1492 of the National Agricultural Research, Extension, and Teaching Policy Act of 1977 (7 U.S.C. 3371), as added by section 7128 of the Agricultural Act of 2014 (Pub. L. 113-79), for grants awarded after Oct. 1, 2014, the recipient of an award from the FSOP program must provide funds, in-kind contributions, or a combination of both, from sources other than funds provided through such grant in an amount that is at least equal to the amount awarded by NIFA unless one of the exemptions described herein is applicable. Note that NIFA included information at http://www.nifa.usda.gov/business/awards/matching_require.html to further assist you in determining if you must meet the new matching requirement.

The matching funds requirement does not apply to grants awarded:

1. To a research agency of the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA); or
2. To an entity eligible to receive funds under a capacity and infrastructure program (as defined in section 251(f)(1)(C) of the Department of Agriculture Reorganization Act of 1994, 7 U.S.C. 6971(f)(1)(C)), including a partner (see Part VIII, D., Definitions, for definition of partnership) of such an entity.

Entities eligible to receive funds under a capacity and infrastructure program and exempt from the matching funds requirement include:

a. 1862 land-grant institutions, including State Agricultural Experiment Stations receiving funding under the Hatch Act of 1887;
b. 1890 land-grant institutions;
c. 1994 land-grant institutions;
d. Entities eligible to receive funds under the of Continuing Animal Health and Disease, Food Security, and Stewardship Research, Education, and Extension Program Funds — Capacity and Infrastructure Program (CIP);
e. Hispanic-Serving Agricultural Colleges and Universities (HSACU);
f. Insular area schools eligible to receive funds from the Distance Education/Resident Instruction Grant Programs;
g. Entities eligible to receive funds under the of McIntire-Stennis Cooperative Forestry Program Funds;
h. Non-Land Grant Colleges of Agriculture (NLGCA) – (for exemption from the new matching requirement, these applications must include NLGCA certification, see instructions for requesting certifications at http://www.nifa.usda.gov/form/form.html and for attaching the certification, in Part IV, B of this RFA);
i. Entities eligible to receive funds under a program established under Section 1417(b) of the National Agricultural Research, Extension, and Teaching Policy Act of 1977 (7 U.S.C. 3152(b)), including: (1) 1890 Institution Teaching, Research, and Extension Capacity Building Grants Program; (2) Higher Education Challenge Grants Program; (3) Higher Education Multicultural Scholars Program; and (4) Food and Agricultural Sciences National Needs Graduate and Postgraduate Fellowship Grants Program; and
j. Individual public or private, nonprofit Alaska Native-Serving and Native Hawaiian-Serving Institutions of higher education (see 20 U.S.C. 1059d).

Proposal submissions to this RFA may indicate that multiple entities will complete work as a collaborative partnership. All partners must have a substantial involvement in the project throughout the life of the project. Proposals for partnerships among multiple entities must clearly identify the following:

1) A narrative that clearly establishes each entity's role in the project;
2) How each project partner will contribute to execution of project objectives; determine experimental design; develop the project work plan and time table; and submit collaborative, timely reports; and
3) A comprehensive project budget that reflects each entity's financial or third party in-kind contribution (see section 2 of 7 CFR 3430 or section 96 of 2 CFR part 200) to the total project budget costs.

If a proposal indicates that multiple entities, as partners, complete work on the project, and at least one entity is exempt from the matching requirement under #2 above, the entire project will be exempt from the matching requirement. Any partner entity may serve as the lead entity on the project. All partners must be significantly involved in the project.

NIFA will examine proposals recommended for award to determine if the proposed division of work reflects substantial involvement of all entities involved. If a proposal is recommended for award to a lead entity that is not otherwise exempt from the matching requirement, and the proposal does not reflect substantial involvement of at least one partner that is exempt under #2 above, then the matching requirement will apply. Exemption from the matching requirement for an entity not otherwise exempt is limited to the project for which it is a partner.

Waiver of Match: NIFA may waive the matching funds requirement for a recipient for one year for a competitive grant that involves research or extension activities that are consistent with the priorities established by the National Agricultural Research, Education, Extension and Economics Advisory Board (NAREEEAB) for the year involved. Refer to the 2014 Research, Education and Economics Action Plan to determine whether proposed activities are consistent with the priorities of the NAREEEAB. See R&R Budget under Part IV, B, of this RFA.

PART IV—APPLICATION AND SUBMISSION INFORMATION

A. Electronic Application Package

Only electronic applications may be submitted via Grants.gov to NIFA in response to this RFA. We urge you to submit early to the Grants.gov system. For information about the pre-award phase of the grant lifecycle see http://www.grants.gov/web/grants/learn-grants/grants-101/pre-award-phase.html.

New Users of Grants.gov

Prior to preparing an application, we recommend that the Project Director/Principal Investigator (PD/PI) first contact an Authorized Representative (AR, also referred to as Authorized Organizational Representative, or AOR) to determine if the organization is prepared to submit electronic applications through Grants.gov. If not (e.g., the institution/organization is new to the electronic grant application process through Grants.gov), then the one-time registration process must be completed **PRIOR** to submitting an application. It can take as long as two weeks to complete the registration process so it is critical to begin as soon as possible. In such situations, the AR should go to **"Register," in the top right corner of the Grants.gov web page (or go to** http://www.grants.gov/web/grants/register.html**), for information on registering the institution/organization with Grants.gov.** Part II,1 of the NIFA Grants.gov Application Guide contains detailed information regarding the registration process. Refer to item 2, below, to locate the "NIFA Grants.gov Application Guide."

Steps to Obtain Application Package Materials

To receive application materials:
   a. You must download and install a version of Adobe Reader compatible with Grants.gov to access, complete, and submit applications. For basic system requirements and download instructions, see http://www.grants.gov/web/grants/applicants/adobe-software-compatibility.html. Grants.gov has a test package that will help you determine whether your current version of Adobe Reader is compatible.

   a. To obtain the application package from Grants.gov, go to http://www.grants.gov/web/grants/applicants/download-application-package.html and enter the funding opportunity number where appropriate

   Funding Opportunity Number: USDA-NIFA-FSMA-006549

   Click "Search." On the displayed page, click the corresponding link to continue. A Grant Application Package is tied to a particular funding opportunity. You may submit an application ONLY to the particular funding opportunity to which the Grant Application Package is associated.

Contained within the application package is the "NIFA Grants.gov Application Guide." This guide contains an introduction and general Grants.gov instructions, information about how to use a Grant Application Package in Grants.gov, and instructions on how to complete the application forms.

If you require assistance to access the application package (e.g., downloading or navigating Adobe forms) **or submitting the application,** refer to resources available on the Grants.gov website (https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/support.html). Grants.gov assistance is also available at:

> Grants.gov customer support
> 800-518-4726 Toll-Free or 606-545-5035
> Business Hours: 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Closed on federal holidays.
> Email: support@grants.gov

> Grants.gov iPortal (see https://grants-portal.psc.gov/Welcome.aspx?pt=Grants): Top 10 requested help topics (FAQs), Searchable knowledge base, self-service ticketing and ticket status, and live web chat (available 7 a.m. - 9 p.m. EST). Have the following information available when contacting Grants.gov:

> > a. Funding Opportunity Number (FON)
> > b. Name of agency you are applying to
> > c. Specific area of concern

B. Content and Form of Application Submission

Electronic applications are to be prepared following Parts V and VI of the NIFA Grants.gov Application Guide. This guide is part of the corresponding application package (see Section A of this part). The following is **additional information** you need to prepare an application in response to this RFA. **If there is discrepancy between the two documents, the information contained in this RFA is overriding.**

Note the attachment requirements (e.g., PDF) in Part III, Section 3 of the guide. <u>ANY PROPOSALS THAT ARE NON-COMPLIANT WITH THE REQUIREMENTS (e.g., content format, PDF file format, file name restrictions, and no password protected files) WILL BE AT RISK OF BEING EXCLUDED FROM NIFA REVIEW</u>. Grants.gov does not check for NIFA required attachments or whether attachments are in PDF format; see Part III, Section 6.1 of the guide for how to check the manifest of submitted files. Partial applications will be excluded from NIFA review. We will accept subsequent submissions of an application until close of business on the closing date in the RFA (see Part V, 2.1 of the NIFA Grants.gov Application Guide for further information).

For any questions related to the preparation of an application, review the NIFA Grants.gov Application Guide and the applicable RFA. If assistance is still needed for preparing application forms content, contact:
a. Email: electronic@nifa.usda.gov
b. Phone: 202-401-5048
c. Business hours: Monday through Friday, 7 a.m. – 5 p.m. EST, excluding federal holidays.

1. SF 424 R&R Cover Sheet
Information related to the questions on this form is dealt with in detail in Part V, 2 of the NIFA Grants.gov Application Guide. See Part V, Section 2.18 of the NIFA Grants.gov Application Guide for the required certifications and assurances (e.g., Prohibition Against Entities Requiring Certain Internal Confidentiality Agreements).

2. SF 424 R&R Project/Performance Site Location(s)
Detailed information related to the questions on this form is available in Part V, 3 of the NIFA Grants.gov Application Guide.

3. R&R Other Project Information Form
Detailed information related to the questions on this form is available in Part V, 4 of the NIFA Grants.gov Application Guide.

a. Field 7. Project Summary/Abstract.
The summary should also include the relevance of the project to the goals of FSOP. See Part V. 4.7 of NIFA Grants.gov Application Guide for further instructions and a link to a suggested template.

b. Field 8. Project Narrative.
NOTE: The Project Narrative shall not exceed 20 (Regional Center Projects) and 10 (Pilot Projects and Community Outreach Projects) pages of written text and up to 0 additional pages for figures and tables. We have established this maximum number of pages) to ensure fair and equitable competition. The Project Narrative must include all of the following:

The Project Narrative for the **Regional Center Projects must not exceed a total of 20 pages** of written text with 12 point font, regardless of whether it is single- or double-spaced, including all figures and tables. The Project Narrative for the **Pilot Projects and Community Outreach Projects must not exceed a total of 10 pages** of written text with 12 point font, regardless of whether it is single- or double-spaced, including all figures and tables. Appendices to the Project Narrative will be accepted only if they are directly related to the proposed project and they provide information that reviewers would need to adequately review the application.

The Project Narrative must include all of the following:
 a. Introduction: 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:
  (1) Estimates of the magnitude of the issues and their relevance to stakeholders.
  (2) The role of stakeholders in problem identification, planning, implementation,
  and evaluation as appropriate.
  (3) Reasons for performing the work at the proposing institution or organization.

b. Objectives: All applications must include a statement(s) of specific aims of the proposed effort in clear, concise, complete, and logically arranged terms.

c. Methods: Explicitly state the activities associated with the proposed effort. This section should include but not necessarily be limited to, descriptions of:

> (1) Stakeholder involvement in problem identification, planning, implementation and evaluation;
> (2) Proposed project activities, listed sequentially;
> (3) Techniques to be employed in this project, including their feasibility and rationale;
> (4) Expected results;
> (5) How outreach and education activities will be evaluated;
> (6) How data will be analyzed or interpreted;
> (7) Plans to communicate results to stakeholders, NIFA staff and the public;
> (8) Pitfalls that might be encountered; and
> (9) Limitations to proposed procedures.

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

1) Response to Previous Review (if applicable)
This requirement only applies to Resubmitted Applications or Resubmitted Renewal Applications as described in Part II, B. The Project Narrative <u>attachment</u> is to include two components: 1) a one-page response to the previous review (containing the previous proposal number in the first line) titled "Response to Previous Review" as the first page of the attachment and 2) the 10 (Community Outreach Projects and Pilot Projects) or 20 (Regional Center Projects) page Project Narrative, as required (see Part IV, C. 3. b., above). The one-page "Response to Previous Review" does not count against the page limit of the Project Narrative.

c. Field 12. Add Other Attachments
See Part V. Section 4.12 of the NIFA Grants.gov Application Guide (Field 12 on the form) for instructions regarding mandatory Felony Convictions or Tax Delinquent Status.

> **Non-Land Grant College of Agriculture (NLGCA) Certification**. If you claim exemption from the new matching requirements as a NLGCA, then you must attach the NLGCA certification letter you requested and received from NIFA. Title the attachment 'NLGCA Certification' and save the file as 'NLGCACertification.' To request certification as an NLGCA, complete the form at http://www.nifa.usda.gov/form/form.html. Note that certification can take up to 30 days from submission of request form. **See Part III Section 3.1 of the NIFA Grants.gov Application Guide for NIFA attachment specifications.**

4. <u>R&R Senior/Key Person Profile (Expanded)</u>
Detailed information related to the questions on this form is available in Part V, 5 of the NIFA Grants.gov Application Guide. This section of the guide includes instructions about senior/key person profile requirements, and details about the biographical sketch and the current and pending support, including a link to a suggested template for the current and pending support.

5. <u>R&R Personal Data</u> – As noted in Part V, 6 of the NIFA Grants.gov Application Guide, the submission of this information is voluntary and is not a precondition of award. Part V.6 also notes the importance and use of the information.

6. <u>R&R Budget</u>
Detailed information related to the questions on this form is available in Part V, 7 of the NIFA Grants.gov Application Guide.

Matching.
If you conclude that matching funds are not required as specified under Part III, B Cost-Sharing or Matching, you must include an explanation for your conclusion in the Budget Justification. We will consider this justification when determining final matching requirements or if required matching can be waived. NIFA retains the right to make final determinations regarding matching requirements.

For grants that require matching funds as specified under Part III, B, the Budget Justification must list matching sources along with the identification of the entity(ies) providing the match as well as the total dollar amount being pledged. NIFA is no longer requiring written verification of commitments of matching support (a pledge agreement). However, you are still subject to documentation, valuing and reporting requirements, etc. as specified in 2 CFR Part 200, "Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards (the Uniform Guidance)," 7 CFR 3430, "Competitive and Noncompetitive Non-Formula Federal Assistance Programs – General Award Administrative Provisions," and program-specific regulations, as applicable. In instances where match is required, any resulting award will require the signature of an Authorized Representative. Only when NIFA receives the award signed by the AR will award funds be released and available for drawdown.

You must establish the value of applicant contributions in accordance with applicable cost principles. Refer to 2 CFR Part 200, "Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards (the Uniform Guidance)," for further guidance and other requirements relating to matching and allowable costs.

Indirect Costs.
For further information and instructions regarding indirect costs, refer to Part V, section 7.9 of the NIFA Grants.gov Application Guide. For indirect cost funding restrictions, refer to Part IV, D. of this RFA.

7. <u>Supplemental Information Form</u>
Detailed information related to the questions on this form is available in Part VI, 1 of the NIFA
Grants.gov Application Guide.

4) **Field 2. Program to which you are applying.** Enter the program code name (i.e., enter
   "Food Safety Outreach Program") and the program code (i.e., enter "A4182"). Note that
   accurate entry of the program code is very important for proper and timely processing of an
   application.

5) **Field 8. Conflict of Interest List**. See Part VI, 1.8 of the NIFA Grants.gov Application
   Guide for further instructions and a link to a suggested template.

C. Submission Dates and Times

We recommend that you conduct an administrative review of the application before submission
of it via Grants.gov to ensure that it complies with all preparation instructions. An application
checklist is included in Part VII of the NIFA Grants.gov Application Guide to assist with this
review.

**Instructions for submitting an application are included in Part IV, Section 1.9 of the NIFA
Grants.gov Application Guide.**

Applications must be received by Grants.gov by **5 p.m. Eastern Time on June 7, 2018.**
Applications received after this deadline will normally not be considered for funding.

**If you have trouble submitting an application to Grants.gov, you should FIRST contact the
Grants.gov Help Desk to resolve any problems. Keep a record of any such correspondence.
See Part IV. A for Grants.gov contact information.**

We send email correspondence to the AR regarding the status of submitted applications. We
strongly encourage you to provide accurate email addresses, where designated, on the SF-424
R&R Application for Federal Assistance.

If the AR has not received correspondence **from NIFA** regarding a submitted application within
30 days of the established deadline, contact the Agency Contact identified in Part VII of the RFA
and request the proposal number assigned to the application. **Failure to do so may result in the
application not being considered for funding by the peer review panel. Once the
application has been assigned a proposal number, you should cite this number on all future
correspondence.**

D. Funding Restrictions

NIFA has determined that grant funds awarded under this authority may not be used for:

- General Purpose Equipment – Equipment which does not have a particular scientific, technical, or programmatic purpose. It includes passenger carrying vehicles, typewriters, furniture (tables, chairs, file cabinets, book cases, etc.), copy machines, fax machines, etc.;

- Entertainment – Banquets, awards ceremonies, and meals for persons not in a travel status, tickets to shows or sporting events, and alcoholic beverages;

- Incentives – Federal funds may not be used to offer targeted program participants incentives (e.g., fast-food coupons, gift certificates, etc.) to entice participation. This is prohibited under the OMB Guidance;

- Renovation or refurbishment of research, education, or extension space;

- Purchase or installation of fixed equipment in such space;

- Planning, repair, rehabilitation, acquisition, or construction of buildings or facilities; and

- Miscellaneous – Any expense that is not directly related to the program or project would be considered unallowable. Costs such as child-care services hired so a person can attend a meeting or kitchen help hired to prepare refreshments for a field day, promotional or thank-you gifts such as T-shirts, coffee mugs, or canvas carry-all bags are unallowable because they are not directly related to the project plan.

Section 713 of the Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2018 (Pub. L. 115-141) limits indirect costs to 30 percent of the total federal funds provided (or 42.857 percent of total direct costs) under each award. When preparing budgets, you should limit your request for the recovery of indirect costs to the lesser of your institution's official negotiated indirect cost rate or the equivalent of 30 percent of total Federal funds awarded. See Part V section 7.9 of the NIFA Grants.gov Application Guide for further indirect cost information.

E. Other Submission Requirements

You should follow the submission requirements noted in Part IV, Section 1.9 in the document entitled "NIFA Grants.gov Application Guide."

For information about the **status of a submitted application**, see Part III, Section 6 of the NIFA Grants.gov Application Guide.

PART V—APPLICATION REVIEW REQUIREMENTS

A. General

We evaluate each application in a two-part process. First, we screen each application to ensure that it meets the administrative requirements as set forth in this RFA. Second, a technical review panel will evaluate applications that meet the administrative requirements.

We select reviewers based upon their training and experience in relevant scientific, extension, or education fields, taking into account the following factors:

- 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;
- The need to include experts from various areas of specialization within relevant scientific, education, or extension fields;
- 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;
- 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;
- The need to maintain a balanced composition with regard to minority and female representation and an equitable age distribution; and
- 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 FSOP will recommend that your project be approved for support from currently available funds or be declined due to insufficient funds or unfavorable review.

FSOP reserves the right to negotiate with the PD/PI and/or with 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.

We will send copies of reviews, _not_ including the identity of reviewers, and a summary of the panel comments to the PD after the review process has been completed.

B. Evaluation Criteria

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 peer review 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 https://nifa.usda.gov/sites/default/files/resource/NIFA-Peer-Review-Process-for-Competitive-Grant-Applications_0.pdf.

The following evaluation criteria will be used to review applications for **Pilot Projects** submitted in response to this RFA. The evaluation criteria given below will be weighted equally.

1. Objectives
This criterion is used to assess how well the proposed Pilot Projects:
    a. Identify and address the specific food safety education and training needs of various target audiences within local communities;
    b. Develop and implement community-based, potentially high-impact food safety education and training programs that are consistent with FSMA guidelines; and
    c. Address the needs of small, non-traditional, niche, or hard-to-reach audiences, including those with educational, cultural or language barriers.

2. Methods
This criterion is used to assess the procedures for:
    a. Developing or modifying food safety education and training curricula that are consistent with the FSMA guidelines;
    b. Identifying food safety education and training needs in target non-tradition, niche, and hard-to-reach audiences;
    c. Developing or modifying food safety education and training curricula that specifically target non-traditional, niche, and hard-to-reach audiences, including those with educational, cultural or language barriers; and
    d. Developing a communications plan for interacting with respective Regional Centers and for reporting project outcomes.

3. Key Personnel and Project Management
This criterion is used to assess management of the proposed project, including the roles and responsibilities of key project staff, which include:
    a. Clearly defining the roles and responsibilities of key staff in the overall management of the project;
    b. Developing a timeline that includes benchmarks for key events that address the project objectives;
    c. Identifying key personnel responsible for collecting project outcome data, reporting project outcomes and interacting with staff at the respective Regional Centers;
    d. Developing strong partnerships with those in local communities that enable them to address the needs of non-traditional, niche, and hard-to-reach audiences; and
    e. Coordinating food safety education and training efforts with local communities involved in the project.

4. Budget and Budget Justification
This criterion is used to assess how well the proposed budget:
    a. Adequately supports project activities that are consistent with the proposed objectives;

b. Incorporates innovative approaches for making use of currently available resources within local communities, while supporting development and implementation of new resources that are critical for meeting the food safety education and training needs of target audiences; and

c. Allocate and justify resources to key personnel responsible for managing and conducting the project activities.

The following evaluation criteria will be used to evaluate applications for **Community Outreach Projects** submitted in response to this RFA. The evaluation criteria given below will be weighted equally.

1. Objectives

This criterion is used to assess how well the Community Outreach Projects:

a. Identify and justify specific food safety education and training needs and other resources for various target audiences within local communities;

b. Support the growth and expansion of already-existing food safety education and training programs within communities, and ensure that they are consistent with new FSMA guidelines;

c. Leverage partnerships with non-governmental organizations, community-based organizations, extension, food hubs, farm cooperatives and/or others who typically work with owners and operators of small and/or medium-sized farms, beginning farmers, socially disadvantaged farmers, small processors, and small fresh fruit and vegetable merchant wholesalers; and

d. Previously funded Pilot Projects should identify significant outcomes and impacts of the successful project and include a strong justification and detailed plans for expansion to a larger audience.

2. Methods

This criterion is used to assess the procedures for:

a. Further developing and expanding already-existing community-based food safety education and training programs and other resources. Programs may be expanded to reach a greater number of participants, or to reach new audiences not currently targeted by the existing programs;

b. Developing a communications plan for interacting with respective Regional Centers and for reporting project outcomes to the Regional Centers; and

c. Developing a plan for evaluating the outcomes of the project, collecting outcome data, and reporting project outcomes to the respective Regional Centers.

3. Key Personnel and Project Management

This criterion is used to assess management of the proposed project, including the roles and responsibilities of key project staff, which include:

a. Clearly defining the roles and responsibilities of key staff in the overall management of the project;

b. Developing a timeline that includes benchmarks for key events that address the project objectives;

c. Identifying key personnel responsible for collecting project outcome data, reporting project outcomes and interacting with staff at the respective Regional Centers;

d. Developing strong partnerships with those in local communities that enable them to address the needs of non-traditional, niche, and hard-to-reach audiences; and

e. Coordinating food safety education and training efforts with local communities involved in the project.

4. Budget and Budget Justification

This criterion is used to assess how well the proposed budget:

a. Adequately supports project activities that are consistent with the proposed objectives;

b. Incorporates innovative approaches for making use of currently available resources within local communities, while supporting development and implementation of new resources that are critical for meeting the food safety education and training needs of target audiences; and

c. Allocate and justify resources to key personnel responsible for managing and conducting the project activities.

The following evaluation criteria will be used to evaluate applications for **Regional Center and Lead Regional Center Projects** submitted in response to this RFA. The evaluation criteria given below will be weighted equally.

1. Objectives

This criterion is used to assess how well the **Regional Center Projects:**

a. Support the development of regional food safety education and outreach programs and other resources that are consistent with the FSMA guidelines;

b. Develop an implementation plan for extending technical assistance to the targeted audiences of small producers, processors and vendors in the respective regions.

c. Encourage collaborations among states sharing common food safety concerns, commodities, or production and processing practices;

d. Implement a plan to communicate, coordinate and assess projects within your region; and

e. Leverage partnerships with non-governmental organizations, community-based organizations, extension, food hubs, farm cooperatives and/or others who typically work with owners and operators of small and/or medium-sized farms, beginning farmers, socially disadvantaged farmers, small processors, and small fresh fruit and vegetable merchant wholesalers.

One Lead Regional Center will be selected. For those submitting applications as the Lead Regional Center, you must also address the following criteria in addition to those listed above.

f. Identify strategies to coordinate, communicate, and assess FSOP projects nationally;

g. Coordinate and communicate across NIFA, FDA, and FSOP to ensure communication;

h. Assess and review equivalent training curricula, and identify successful alternative and add-on curricula developed by FSOP and FDA funded projects;

i. Develop a system for tracking and reporting impact data on best practices, production styles, intended audiences, etc.; and
j. Develop a continuity plan for communicating with the currently funded National Coordination Center (http://nccfsma.org).

2. Methods
This criterion is used to assess the procedures for Regional Center Projects:
a. Build and maintaining partnerships among collaborating states within the same regions;
b. Develop a communications plan for interacting with Regional Centers, Pilot Projects, and Community Outreach Projects;
c. Assist awardees with developing plans to report outcomes; and
d. Collate outcomes data from awardees and share with Lead Regional Center.
In addition to the criterion identified above, the Lead Regional Center must also:
e. Collate outcomes from all Regional Centers and develop a mechanism to collect and publish best practices.

3. Key Personnel and Project Management
This criterion is used to assess management of the proposed project, including the roles and responsibilities of key project staff, which include:
a. Clearly defining the roles and responsibilities of key staff in the overall management of the project;
b. Developing a timeline that includes benchmarks for key events that address the project objectives;
c. Identifying key personnel responsible for collecting project outcome data, reporting project outcomes and interacting with staff at the respective Regional Centers;
d. Developing strong partnerships with those in local communities that enable them to address the needs of non-traditional, niche, and hard-to-reach audiences; and
e. Coordinating food safety education and training efforts with local communities involved in the project.

4. Budget and Budget Justification
This criterion is used to assess how well the proposed budget:
a. Adequately supports project activities that are consistent with the proposed objectives;
b. Incorporates innovative approaches for making use of currently available resources within local communities, while supporting development and implementation of new resources that are critical for meeting the food safety education and training needs of target audiences; and
c. Allocate and justify resources to key personnel responsible for managing and conducting the project activities.

C. Conflicts of Interest and Confidentiality

During the peer evaluation process, we take extreme care to prevent any actual or perceived conflicts of interest that may impact review or evaluation. See http://www.nifa.usda.gov/business/competitive_peer_review.html for further information about conflicts of interest and confidentiality as related to the peer review process.

D. Organizational Management Information

Specific management information relating to an applicant shall be submitted one-time, with updates on an as-needed basis. This requirement is part of the responsibility determined prior to the award of a grant identified under this RFA, if such information has not been provided previously under this or another NIFA program. We will provide you copies of forms recommended for use in fulfilling these requirements as part of the pre-award process. Although an applicant may be eligible based on its status as one of these entities, 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 involved or a determination that an applicant is not responsible based on submitted organizational management information).

E. Application Disposition

An application may be withdrawn at any time before a final funding decision is made regarding the application. Each application that is not selected for funding, including those that are withdrawn, will be retained by FSOP for a period of three years.

PART VI—AWARD ADMINISTRATION

A. General

Within the limit of funds available for such purpose, the NIFA awarding official shall make grants to those responsible, eligible applicants whose applications are judged most meritorious under the procedures set forth in this RFA. The date specified by the NIFA awarding official as the effective date of the grant shall be no later than September 30 of the federal fiscal year in which the project is approved for support and funds are appropriated for such purpose, unless otherwise permitted by law. 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 at 7 CFR part 3430, subparts A through E.

B. Award Notice

The award document will provide pertinent instructions and information including, at a minimum, the information described in 2 CFR 200.210.

See http://www.nifa.usda.gov/business/awards/awardterms.html to view current NIFA award terms and conditions.

C. Administrative and National Policy Requirements

Several federal statutes and regulations apply to grant applications considered for review and to project grants awarded under this program. These may include, but are not limited to, the ones listed on the NIFA web page – http://nifa.usda.gov/federal-regulations.

NIFA Federal Assistance Policy Guide—a compendium of basic NIFA policies and procedures that apply to all NIFA awards, unless there are statutory, regulatory, or award-specific requirements to the contrary—is available at http://nifa.usda.gov/policy-guide.

D. Expected Program Outputs and Reporting Requirements

The output and reporting requirements are included in the award terms and conditions (see http://www.nifa.usda.gov/business/awards/awardterms.html for information about NIFA award terms). If there are any program or award-specific award terms, they will be identified in the award.

PART VII—AGENCY CONTACT

Applicants and other interested parties are encouraged to contact:

Programmatic Contact –
Dr. Jodi Williams
National Program Leader, Food Safety
Institute of Food Safety and Nutrition, Food Safety Division
Location: Room 2380 Waterfront Centre
800 9th Street, SW
Washington, DC 20250
Phone: (202) 720-6145
Email: jwilliams@nifa.usda.gov

Dr. Dawanna James-Holly
Program Specialist, Food Safety, Food Science, and Food Technology
Institute of Food Safety and Nutrition, Food Safety Division
Location: Room 2450 Waterfront Centre
800 9th Street, SW
Washington, DC 20250
Phone: (202) 401-1950
Email: dholly@nifa.usda.gov

Dr. Melvin Carter
National Program Leader, Food Science and Technology
Institute of Food Safety and Nutrition
Location: Room 2448 Waterfront Center
800 9th Street, SW
Washington, DC 20250
Phone: (202) 734-0344
Email: Melvin.carter@nifa.usda.gov

Administrative/Business Contact –
Ms. Rochelle McCrea
Office of Grants and Financial Management
Awards Management Division
Location: Room 2160 Waterfront Centre
800 9th Street, SW
Washington, DC 20250
Phone: (202) 401-2880
Email: rmcrea@nifa.usda.gov

Ms. Towanda DeShazo
Office of Grants and Financial Management

Awards Management Division
Location: Room 2129 Waterfront Centre
800 9th Street, SW
Washington, DC 20250
Phone: (202) 401-4155
Email: TDeShazo@nifa.usda.gov

PART VIII—OTHER INFORMATION

A. Use of Funds; Changes

1. 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.

2. 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:
(i) Change in the scope or the objective of the project or program (even if there is no associated budget revision requiring prior written approval).

(ii) Change in a key person specified in the application or the federal award.

(iii) The disengagement from the project for more than three months, or a 25 percent reduction in time devoted to the project, by the approved project director or principal investigator.

(iv) The inclusion, unless waived by the federal awarding agency, of costs that require prior approval in accordance with 2 CFR 200 Subpart E—Cost Principles of this part 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 Part 31, "Contract Cost Principles and Procedures," as applicable.

(v) The transfer of funds budgeted for participant support costs as defined in §200.75 Participant support costs to other categories of expense.

(vi) Unless described in the application and funded in the approved federal awards, the subawarding, transferring or contracting out of any work under a federal award, including fixed amount subawards as described in §200.332 Fixed amount subawards. This provision does not apply to the acquisition of supplies, material, equipment, or general support services.

(vii) Changes in the approved cost-sharing or matching provided by the non-federal entity.

(viii) The need arises for additional federal funds to complete the project.

The awardee will be subject to the terms and conditions identified in the award. See http://www.nifa.usda.gov/business/awards/awardterms.html for information about NIFA award terms.

B. Confidential Aspects of Applications and Awards

When an application results in an award, it becomes a part of the record of NIFA transactions, available to the public upon specific request. Information that the Secretary of Agriculture determines to be of a confidential, privileged, or proprietary nature will be held in confidence to the extent permitted by law. Therefore, any information that the applicant wishes to have considered as confidential, privileged, or proprietary should be clearly marked within the application. We will retain for three years a copy of an application that does not result in an award. Such an application will be released only with the consent of the applicant or to the extent required by law. An application may be withdrawn at any time prior to the final action thereon.

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. Definitions

Refer to 7 CFR 3430, Competitive and Noncompetitive Non-formula Financial Assistance Programs--General Award Administrative Provisions, for applicable definitions for this NIFA grant program.

E. Materials Available on the Internet

Food Safety Outreach Program information will be made available on the NIFA web site at http://nifa.usda.gov/food-safety-outreach-program. The following are among the materials available on the web page:
  1. More information about upcoming FSOP 2018
  2. Frequently Asked Questions
  3. Tip Sheets Proposal Development
  4. Webinar – Program Overview