

**AGRICULTURE & FOOD RESEARCH INITIATIVE COMPETITIVE GRANTS PROGRAM  
FOUNDATIONAL & APPLIED SCIENCE - USDA NIFA CHECKLIST/INTERNAL REVIEW CHECK**

<b>PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR:</b>	
<b>RFA:</b>	<a href="https://www.nifa.usda.gov/sites/default/files/2023-07/FY23-AFRI-FAS-RFA-MOD2.pdf">https://www.nifa.usda.gov/sites/default/files/2023-07/FY23-AFRI-FAS-RFA-MOD2.pdf</a>
<b>GRANTS.GOV APPLICATION GUIDE:</b>	<a href="https://www.nifa.usda.gov/nifa-22-001-nifa-grants-application-guide">https://www.nifa.usda.gov/nifa-22-001-nifa-grants-application-guide</a>
<b>AFRI RESOURCES/TEMPLATES:</b>	<a href="https://nifa.usda.gov/resource/afri-request-applications-resources">https://nifa.usda.gov/resource/afri-request-applications-resources</a>
<b>FUNDING OPPORTUNITY NUMBER &amp; PROGRAM AREA CODE :</b>	
<b>SUBMISSION TYPE (NEW, RESUBMISSION, RENEWAL):</b>	
<b>TITLE: ( MAX. 140 CHARACTERS)</b>	
<b>LETTER OF INTENT DUE DATE (IF APPLICABLE):</b>	
<b>APPLICATION DUE DATE &amp; TIME:</b>	
<b>ORS CONTACT:</b>	
<b>BUDGET INFORMATION:</b>	Amount \$

<b>Formatting Requirements</b>
<p><b>Attachments</b> must be created as a typed or word-processed document.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Use font no smaller than 12 point, regardless of line spacing.</li> <li>Use at least 1-inch margins.</li> <li>Number each page of an attachment sequentially.</li> <li>The RFA will indicate if page limitations apply.</li> </ul> <p><b>PDF File Format</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>NIFA requires that attachments be in .pdf file format to preserve the layout and appearance of submitted documents.</li> </ul> <p><b>File Name Restrictions</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>File names of .pdf attachments must be limited to 50 characters.</li> <li>Names may not include special characters (e.g., &amp;, -, *, %, /, #), periods (.), blank spaces or accent marks.</li> <li>An underscore (example: Attached_File.pdf) may be used to separate a filename.</li> <li>File names must be unique. No other attachment in the application package may have the same file name.</li> </ul> <p><b>File Protections</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The .pdf attachment must <u>not</u> be password protected. Lead institutions of multi-organization applications must ensure that documents from collaborators are not password protected. Attach PDF files to your application</li> <li>There is a paper clip icon on the left side of the page in every application. Do not attach documents with this function. If you attach documents under this function your application will be incomplete and cause errors.</li> </ul>

- ❖ Detailed information for preparing each section, can be found in Part IV C of the RFA:  
<https://www.nifa.usda.gov/afri-request-applications-resources>

## LIST OF REQUIRED DOCUMENTS:

\_\_\_\_\_ **Project Summary/Abstract** - save file as 'ProjectSummary'

\_\_\_\_\_ Template: <https://nifa.usda.gov/resource/application-support-templates>.

\_\_\_\_\_ Less than 250 words

\_\_\_\_\_ List the names, organizations of all PDs/co-PDs

\_\_\_\_\_ Title of the project at the top of the page (less than 140 characters)

\_\_\_\_\_ Includes: overall project goal(s) and supporting objectives; plans to accomplish project goal(s); and relevance of the project to the goals of the program.

\_\_\_\_\_ **Project Narrative** (18-page limit) - save file as 'ProjectNarrative'

\_\_\_\_\_ May not exceed a total of **18 pages with 12-point font** and line spacing not exceeding six lines of text per vertical inch, including all figures and tables. For Sabbatical, Equipment, Seed (Strengthening or New Investigator) grants, **7 pages maximum**.

\_\_\_\_\_ *Response to Previous Review* -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 (does not count against the 7- or 18-page limit) and

\_\_\_\_\_ The 7- or 18-page Project Narrative, as required (see Part IV, C(3b), above).

\_\_\_\_\_ *Progress Report (if applicable)*

\_\_\_\_\_ *Global engagement (if applicable)*

### \_\_\_\_\_ a. Introduction

Clear statement of the long-term goal(s) and supporting objectives of the proposed project.

Summarize the body of knowledge or past activities that substantiate the need for the proposed project.

Describe ongoing or recently completed activities significant to the proposed project including the work of key project personnel.

Include preliminary data/information pertinent to the proposed project.

This section should include in-depth information on the following, when applicable:

(1) Estimates of the magnitude of the issues and the relevance to stakeholders and ongoing state-federal food and agricultural research, education, and extension programs;

(2) The role of stakeholders in problem identification, planning, implementation, and evaluation, as appropriate; and

(3) Reasons for performing the work at the proposed institution.

*\*All works cited should be referenced.*

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## **b. Rationale and Significance**

1. Concisely present the rationale behind the proposed project;
2. Describe the specific relationship of the project's objectives to one of the Program Area Priorities. Applications that do not address at least one Program Area Priority will not be reviewed; and
3. Clearly describe the potential long-range improvement in and sustainability of U.S. agriculture and food systems. These purposes are described under Purpose and Priorities in Part I, B. Any novel ideas or contributions that the proposed project offers should also be discussed in this section.

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## **c. Approach**

1. Objectives: All applications must include a statement of objectives or specific aims of the proposed project in clear, concise, complete, and logically arranged terms.
2. Methods: Explicitly state the procedures or methodology you will apply in the proposed project.

This section should include, but not necessarily be limited to, descriptions of:

- a. Stakeholder involvement, if applicable, in problem identification, planning, implementation, and evaluation;
  - b. Proposed project activities, listed sequentially;
  - c. Techniques to be employed in this project, including their feasibility and rationale;
  - d. Expected results;
  - e. How extension and education activities, if applicable, will be evaluated;
  - f. How data will be analyzed or interpreted;
  - g. Plans to communicate results to appropriate audiences, including relevant scientific peers, stakeholders and the public, as appropriate;
  - h. Pitfalls that might be encountered; and
  - i. Limitations to proposed procedures.
3. Project Timetable: The proposal must outline all important phases as a function of time, year by year, for the entire project, including periods beyond the grant funding period.

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## **Center of Excellence (OPTIONAL; Find more info & FAQs here: <https://nifa.usda.gov/centers-excellence>)**

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

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

(B) In addition to any applicable matching requirements, the ability of the center of excellence to leverage available resources by using public-private partnerships among agricultural industry groups, institutions of higher education, and the Federal Government in the implementation of the proposed

research and/or extension activity outlined in this application. Resources leveraged should be commensurate with the size of the award;

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

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

Additionally, where practicable (not required), center of excellence applicants should describe proposed efforts to improve teaching capacity and infrastructure at colleges and universities (including land-grant colleges and universities, cooperating forestry schools, certified Non-Land Grant Colleges of Agriculture (NLGCA) (list of certified NLGCA is available at NIFA website, and schools of veterinary medicine).

**Bibliography & References Cited** (no page limit) - save file as 'BibliographyReferencesCited'.

Each reference must include the names of all authors (in the same sequence in which they appear in the publication), the article and journal title, book title, volume number, page numbers, and year of publication.

**Facilities & Other Resources** (no page limit) - save file as 'FacilitiesOtherResources'.

This information is used to assess the capability of the organizational resources available to perform the effort proposed.

Identify facilities to be used (Laboratory, Animal, Computer, Office, Clinical and Other). If appropriate, indicate their capacities, pertinent capabilities, relative proximity, and extent of availability to the project.

Describe only those resources that are directly applicable to the proposed work. Provide any information describing the Other Resources available to the project (e.g., machine shop, electronic shop) and the extent to which they would be available to the project.

**Equipment** (no page limit) - save file as 'Equipment'.

List major items of equipment already available for this project and, if appropriate, identify location and pertinent capabilities. If you plan to request funds to purchase items of nonexpendable equipment necessary to conduct and successfully complete the proposed project, refer to Field C. of the R&R Budget for information about including those items in the budget.

### **Other Attachments:**

Attach files to provide any other project information not provided above or in accordance with the announcement and/or agency-specific instruction. Multiple files may be attached.

Include the following items in Other Attachments, as appropriate:

- Cooperation and Institutional Units Involved. Identify each institutional unit contributing to the project and designate the lead institution or institutional unit when submitting a cooperative, multi-institutional or multidisciplinary application. Clearly define the programmatic roles, responsibilities, and budget for each institutional partner.

- Appendices to Project Narrative. Appendices to the Project Narrative are allowed if they are directly germane to the proposed project. Do not use the addition of appendices to circumvent the text and/or figures and tables page limitations.
- Collaborative Arrangements. Fully explain and justify formal consulting or collaborative arrangements with others, should such arrangements be necessary.
- Provide a CV or resume for any consultant(s) or collaborator(s) if known at the time of application. In addition, provide evidence (e.g., letter of support) that the identified collaborators involved have agreed to render these services. You must also provide additional information on consultants and collaborators in the budget portion of the application.

\_\_\_\_ **Key Personnel Roles** (2-page limit) - save file as 'KeyPersonnel'.

\_\_\_\_ **Logic Model Chart** (2-page limit) - save file as 'LogicModel'.

\_\_\_\_ Activities

\_\_\_\_ Outputs

\_\_\_\_ Outcomes of the proposed project

<https://nifa.usda.gov/resource/integrated-programs-logic-model-planning-process>

\_\_\_\_ **Management Plan** (3-page limit) - save file as 'ManagementPlan'.

\_\_\_\_ Organizational chart

\_\_\_\_ Administrative timeline

\_\_\_\_ Description of how the project will be governed

\_\_\_\_ Strategy to enhance coordination, collaboration, communication, and data sharing & reporting

\_\_\_\_ How the project will be sustained beyond termination of award

\_\_\_\_ Advisory group of principal stakeholders, partners, and professionals to assess and evaluate the quality, expected measurable outcomes, and potential impacts for the proposed research, education and/or extension.

\_\_\_\_ Include rationale for their role, and how they will function effectively to support the goals and objectives of the project

\_\_\_\_ Demonstrate how partners and stakeholders contribute to project assessment on an annual basis.

\_\_\_\_ **Data Management Plan** (2-page limit) - save file as 'DataManagementPlan'.

\_\_\_\_ Plan to manage and disseminate the data generated

- For the guidelines on preparation and inclusion of a DMP in your application, see [Data Management Plan for NIFA-Funded Research, Education and Extension Projects](#) at NIFA website. Also included on the web page are FAQs and information about accessing examples of DMPs. In addition, general guidelines for Data Management Planning for USDA agencies are available at the [National Agricultural Library website](#).
- The DMP must :  
Expected Data Type - Describe the type of data (e.g., digital, non-digital), how it will be generated, and whether the data are primary or metadata.

- Research examples may include lab work, field work and surveys
- Education examples may include number of students enrolled/participated, degrees granted, curriculum and training products
- Extension examples may include outreach materials, number of stakeholders reached, number of activities and assessment questionnaires

Data Format- For scientific data to be readily accessible and usable it is critical to use appropriate community recognized standard and machine-readable formats when they exist. If the data will be managed in domain-specific workspaces or submitted to public databases, indicate that their required formats will be followed. Regardless of the format used, the data set must contain enough information to allow independent use (understanding, validation and analysis) of the data.

Data Storage and Preservation - Data must be stored in a safe environment with adequate measures taken for its long-term preservation. Applicants must describe plans for storing and preserving their data during and after the project and specify the data repositories if they exist. Databases or data repositories for long-term preservation may be the same that are used to provide Data 2 Sharing and Public Access. Estimate how much data will be preserved and state the planned retention period. Include any strategies, tools, and contingency plans that will be used to avoid data loss, degradation, or damage.

Data Sharing, Protection and Public Access - Describe your data access and sharing procedures during and after the grant. Name specific repositories and catalogs as appropriate. Include a statement, when applicable, of plans to protect confidentiality, personal privacy, proprietary interests, business confidential information, and intellectual property rights. Outline any restrictions such as copyright, confidentiality, patent, appropriate credit, disclaimers, or conditions for use of the data by other parties.

Roles, Responsibilities and Reporting - State the party or parties who will ensure DMP implementation. This item is particularly important for multi-investigator and multi-institutional projects. Provide a contingency plan in case key personnel leave the project. Consider the following questions: What resources will be needed for the DMP? If funds are needed, have they been added to the budget request and budget narrative? Projects must budget sufficient resources to develop and implement the proposed DMP.

Applicants are encouraged to consider using platforms, catalogs and workspaces provided by USDA (e.g., the Ag Data Commons), and include adequate funds in the budget to support data management and submission fees as required by the platforms, catalogs, etc. Successful projects should monitor the implementation of the DMP throughout the life of the project and after, as appropriate. Implementation of the DMP must be a component of annual and final reports to NIFA (REEport) and include progress in data sharing (publications, database, software, curriculum, outreach materials, etc.). The final report should also describe the data that was produced during the award period and the components that will be stored and preserved (including the expected duration) after the award ends. The DMP should be compliant with the Research Terms and Conditions that govern NIFA-funded projects. The DMP is not intended to be a replacement for other grant reporting requirements.

<https://www.nifa.usda.gov/data-management-plan-nifa-funded-research-education-extension-projects>

**Documentation of Collaboration** (No page limit) - save file as 'Collaboration'.

Letter(s) of support that collaborators involved have agreed to render services.

The applicant also will be required to provide additional information on consultants and collaborators in the budget portion of the application.

Provide a vitae or resume for any consultant(s) or collaborator(s) if known at the time of application

\_\_\_\_\_ Letter of support that the collaborators involved have agreed to render these services.

\_\_\_\_\_ **Biographical Sketch** (2-page limit, not including publications listings) – per PD, co-PD, senior associate, and other professional personnel. save file as 'BiographicalSketch' followed by the last name of the PD or co-PD

Include:

\_\_\_\_\_ Author identifier (ORCID, <https://orcid.org>) of the researcher if available

\_\_\_\_\_ Digital Object Identifier (DOI) of all publications where possible

\_\_\_\_\_ Education and Training

\_\_\_\_\_ Research and Professional Experience

\_\_\_\_\_ Collaborators and Affiliations (for conflicts of interest), Publications and Synergistic Activities.

The vitae should include a presentation of academic and research credentials, as applicable (e.g., earned degrees, teaching experience, employment history, professional activities, honors and awards, and grants received). Include a chronological list of all publications in refereed journals during the past 4 years, including those in press. Also, list only those non-refereed technical publications that have relevance to the proposed project. List all authors in the same order as they appear on each paper cited, along with the title and complete reference as these usually appear in journals.

\_\_\_\_\_ **Current & Pending Support** (no page limit) - save file as 'CurrentPendingSupport'.

**Suggested Template:** <https://www.nifa.usda.gov/application-support-templates>

\_\_\_\_\_ Current and Pending Support information required for personnel with PD or co-PD indicated as their project role even if they receive no salary support from the project(s)

\_\_\_\_\_ Record information for active and pending projects, including this proposal "designated"

\_\_\_\_\_ No zeros - all current efforts to which project director(s) and other senior personnel have committed a portion of their time must be listed, whether salary for the person involved is included in the budgets of the various projects or not.

\_\_\_\_\_ Total award amount for the entire award period, including indirect costs.

\_\_\_\_\_ Time committed should not exceed 100% of effort for concurrent projects. NIFA will not fund an application that duplicates or overlaps substantially with an application already funded (or to be funded) by another organization or agency.

\_\_\_\_\_ **Budget by ORS Rep:** \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ **Budget Justification** by: \_\_\_\_\_ (no page limit)  
save file as 'BudgetJustification'

**Subcontract Arrangements:**

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

\_\_\_\_\_ **Letters of commitment** (including proposed amount of subaward)

\_\_\_\_\_ **Statement of work**

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

Note: Separate budgets are required only for sub awardee/consortium organizations that perform a substantive portion of the project. If creating Subaward Budget, use the R&R Subaward Budget Attachment and attach as a separate file on the R&R Budget Attachment(s) form.

\_\_\_\_\_ **Supplemental Information** - Up to 5 key words

\_\_\_\_\_ **Conflict of Interest List** (no page limit)

template <https://www.nifa.usda.gov/application-support-templates>

\_\_\_\_\_ Combine all COIs into one document to upload

**Potential Additional Attachments (if applicable):**

- ☐ *Preprints – limited to 2 preprints (optional)* - Limited to 2 preprints. Title the attachment as 'Preprints' in the document header and save file as 'Preprints'.
- ☐ *Appendices to Project Narrative* – Appendices to the Project Narrative are allowed if they are directly germane to the proposed project. Do not use the addition of appendices to circumvent the text and/or figures and tables page limitations.

After receipt of your application through Grants.gov, NIFA will send you two email messages.

- The first will confirm NIFA's receipt of your application.
- The second will indicate whether NIFA has accepted OR declined to review the application.