

**NOTICE OF FUNDING OPPORTUNITY**  
**Coordinating Agricultural Development & Innovation (CADI) Armenia Exchanges:**  
**U.S. Food Safety Regulations and Standards Training Program**

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## **1. Basic Information**

### **1.1 Executive Summary**

The U.S. Department of Agriculture, Foreign Agricultural Service, Agricultural Economic Development, announces this funding opportunity to support the Technical Agricultural Assistance Program by issuing a new award. This opportunity is available to State cooperative institutions or other colleges and universities in the United States, as defined at 7 U.S.C. § 3103. The award makes America safer, stronger and more prosperous by providing Armenian public and private sector representatives a comprehensive understanding of U.S. food safety regulations and standards, equipping participants to implement and comply with these regulations effectively, ensuring safer food, greater U.S. regional influence, and greater market opportunity for American businesses.

Benefits to the United States:

- This program makes America stronger by enhancing the United States' strategic partnership with Armenia and advances trade priorities under the Trade and Investment Framework Agreement (TIFA) between both countries.
- This program makes America more prosperous by helping expand the business opportunities for U.S. companies exporting food and agricultural products, food safety technologies, and services to Armenia.

USDA/FAS is requesting the design and delivery of a technical training program for nine (9) Armenian public- and private-sector representatives on U.S. Food Safety regulations and standards. Participants are expected to include: (2) association/local NGO staff, (4) government officials, (1) researcher from an agricultural university, and (2) private sector/agribusiness company representatives. The participants will be recruited and selected by USDA/FAS. The training program is envisioned as being 1-2 consecutive weeks in duration. The host institution shall propose the place(s) of performance within the United States.

### **1.2 Federal Agency Name**

United States Department of Agriculture, Foreign Agricultural Service (USDA/FAS)

### **1.3 Funding Opportunity Title**

Coordinating Agricultural Development & Innovation (CADI) Armenia Exchanges: U.S. Food Safety Regulations and Standards Training Program

### **1.4 Announcement Type**

New Announcement

### **1.5 Funding Opportunity Number**

USDA-FAS-10960-0700-10.-25-0010

### **1.6 Assistance Listing Number**

10.960 Technical Agricultural Assistance

## **1.7 Funding Details**

Total Available Federal Funding: \$110,000.00  
Anticipated Number of Awards: 1

USDA/FAS reserves the right to make additional awards under this opportunity if additional funding becomes available after the original selections are made, consistent with agency policy and guidance. Any additional selections for awards will be made no later than 6 months after the original selection decisions.

## **1.8 Key Dates**

Deadline for Question Submission: May 6, 2026

Application Submission Deadline: May 14, 2026 at 11:59pm Eastern Daylight Time

## **1.9 Agency Contact Information**

For all inquiries, contact:

Name: Benjamin Kairn

Email Address: Benjamin.kairn@usda.gov

Phone Number: 202-720-0430

Hours of Operation: 8:00am – 4:30pm Eastern Standard Time

## **2. Eligibility**

### **2.1 Eligible Applicants**

State cooperative institutions or other colleges and universities in the United States, as defined at 7 U.S.C. § 3103.

All applicants must have an active registration in the U.S. Government System for Award Management ([www.sam.gov](http://www.sam.gov)) before the application submission deadline of the announcement. Applicants with inactive, expired, pending, or excluded listings will be deemed ineligible. Exceptions, waivers, or extensions will not be considered. More information about SAM.gov registration can be found in Section 9, Other Information.

### **2.2 Substantial Compliance**

All applications will be reviewed for eligibility and must meet the eligibility requirements described above to be considered eligible. Applicants deemed ineligible for funding consideration as a result of the threshold eligibility review will be notified within seven calendar days of the ineligibility determination.

Applications must substantially comply with the application submission instructions and requirements set forth in Section 4, Application Contents and Format, of this solicitation or they will be deemed ineligible for funding consideration.

### **2.3 Evidence of Eligibility**

Applicants are responsible for including documentation, if necessary, establishing that they meet the stated eligibility requirements, when it is not immediately obvious. Applicants should not presume that USDA/FAS is sufficiently familiar with their organization, and USDA/FAS will not make assumptions as to the nature of the applicant's organization.

## **2.4 Funding Restrictions**

Generally, funds may not be used in any manner that is prohibited by applicable regulations, including 2 C.F.R. Part 200 and 2 C.F.R. Part 400. Awards issued pursuant to this notice of funding opportunity may only be used for the purpose set forth in the award, consistent with the statutory authority for the award. Capital expenses, such as the purchase of equipment, not entirely attributable to this award, must be pro-rated.

For example, agreement funds and other support may not be used for matching contributions for other federal grants or cooperative agreements, lobbying, or intervention in federal regulatory or adjudicatory proceedings. Federal employees are prohibited from acting as an agent of the applicant in any capacity (paid or unpaid) on any proposal submitted under this program. Also, federal funds may not be used to sue the Federal Government or any other government entity.

Compensation for personal services: Employees, consultants, or other personnel, including those of subrecipients, and regardless of the method of engagement, may not exceed the pro-rata equivalent of ES-III on the Executive Schedule (for 2025, \$207,500 per year, \$795.02 per day, or \$99.38 per hour). Non-monetizable fringe benefits, such as health insurance coverage, are not included in this ceiling.

In general, costs incurred for a common or joint purpose benefitting more than one cost objective but not readily assignable to specific awards, without effort disproportionate to the results achieved, are considered indirect costs. These may include facilities not specific to individual projects, enterprise-wide services such as IT, and enterprise management. For cost-reimbursable agreements, indirect costs may not exceed 10% of direct costs, as stipulated at 7 U.S.C. § 3319a.

If an application is submitted that includes any ineligible tasks, activities, or cost items, that portion of the application will be deemed ineligible for funding and may, depending on the extent to which it affects the application, render the entire application ineligible for funding.

## **2.5 Multiple Applications**

An individual applicant may not submit more than one application in response to this NOFO and may not be offered more than one award.

## **2.6 Cost Share/Match Requirement**

Cost sharing is not required, but encouraged.

## **3. Program Description**

USDA/FAS is requesting the design and delivery of a training program on U.S. Food Safety regulations and standards for 9 Armenian mid- to senior-level officials from the public and private sector. Participants are expected to include: (2) association/local NGO staff, (4) government officials, (1) researcher from an agricultural university, and (2) private sector/agribusiness

company representatives. The participants will be recruited and selected by USDA/FAS, which will be completed after the close of this Notice of Funding Opportunity. The training program is envisioned as being 1-2 consecutive weeks in duration. The host institution shall propose the place(s) of performance within the United States.

The goal of the program is to provide a comprehensive understanding of U.S. food safety regulations and standards, equipping the Armenian participants with the knowledge and skills necessary to implement and comply with these regulations effectively, to strengthen bilateral trade with the United States, and reduce trade barriers for U.S. agricultural commodities and products. The program will provide the participants with an in-depth understanding of the U.S. regulatory system and internationally recognized, science-based food safety measures that facilitate international trade and benefit U.S. agricultural exports. The objective is to improve the participants' understanding of the U.S. food safety and regulatory systems and harmonize their food safety regulatory systems with evidence-based international standards, ultimately contributing to increased exports of U.S. agricultural commodities and products. Field visits to food processing sites and laboratories are encouraged to highlight how producers learn, implement, and comply with food safety regulations. Additional meetings with U.S. producer cooperatives, associations, and companies are also encouraged to demonstrate how private sector and the government work in partnership. The program design shall include a thorough understanding of U.S. Food Safety regulations and standards, including:

1. Understanding U.S. Food Safety Regulations
  - i. Standards (Codex, SPS regulations, ISO 17025)
  - ii. Traceability requirements, including the importance of traceability in the food supply chain and requirements for record-keeping.
  - iii. Risk-based assessments, risk analysis/management, including techniques for assessing and managing risks associated with food safety.
  - iv. U.S. regulatory entities and roles (FDA, APHIS, EPA, FSIS).
  - v. Interagency responses to WTO SPS and TBT notifications.
  - vi. Regulatory measures on biosafety/biotechnology.
  - vii. Food Safety Modernization Act (FSMA) implementation, including detailed explanation on its impact on food safety practices and regulations.
  - viii. Distinction between food safety and food quality (Ex: role of AMS in quality standards and grading)
  - ix. Regulations for food labeling, including nutritional information, allergens, and country of origin labeling.
  
2. Understanding Food Safety Principles and Implementation
  - i. Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Points (HACCP) principles, design and implementation Sanitation Standard Operating Procedures (SSOPs) for implementing Food Safety measures, including guidelines for maintaining sanitary conditions in food production and processing.
  - ii. Distribution chain, food safety during transport and storage.
  - iii. Qualitative and quantitative methods to assess risk.
  - iv. Food processing and systems.

- v. Food quality and handling, including best practices for safe handling, storage, and transportation of food products.
- vi. Monitoring, evaluation, and dissemination.
- vii. Certification and equivalence of Sanitary and Phytosanitary (SPS).
- viii. Good manufacturing practices, good agricultural practices & good laboratory practices, including standards for manufacturing, processing, packing, and holding food.
- ix. Industry role and partnerships.
- x. Inspection processes, including what inspectors look for and how inspections are conducted.
- xi. Consequences of non-compliance, including recalls, fines, and other enforcement actions.
- xii. Microbiological, chemical analysis and contamination hazards.
- xiii. Food safety public health alerts and recalls, including steps to take in the event of a food safety crisis, including recall procedures and communication strategies
- xiv. Response to foodborne illness outbreaks.
- xv. Food safety audits.
- xvi. Food preservation; food additive use (including food colorings).
- xvii. New technologies and innovations in food safety, (e.g. blockchain for traceability, advanced testing methods, etc.).

### 3. Understanding International Food Safety Standards and Trade

- i. Comparison of U.S. food safety standards with international standards and the importance of harmonization.
- ii. Pre-registration and post-registration.
- iii. Maximum residue levels.
- iv. Import/export requirements for food products.
- v. Nutritional and food safety education.

### 4. Real-World Examples

- i. Case studies of food safety incidents and how they were managed, highlighting lessons learned and best practices.
- ii. Visits to food production and processing facilities to see food safety practices and regulations in action.
- iii. Importance of training employees on food safety practices and regulatory compliance.
- iv. Consumer education on food safety and proper food handling practices.

#### **3.1 Authorizing Statutes and Regulations**

National Agricultural Research, Extension, and Teaching Policy Act of 1977, PL 95-113, as amended, 7 USC §§ 3291, 3319a.

#### **3.2 Type of Assistance Instrument**

USDA/FAS anticipates that a Cost-Reimbursable Agreement will be funded pursuant to this funding opportunity.

This type of agreement includes statutory limitations related to indirect costs.

#### **4. Application Contents and Format**

##### **4.1 Complete Application Package**

A complete application package must include:

- [Standard Form SF-424](#), Application for Federal Assistance, showing the Unique Entity ID, and signed by the applicant
- [Standard Form SF-424A](#), Budget Information for Non-Construction Programs, showing the budget categorization. Applicants are advised to consult 2 C.F.R. Part 200 Subpart E for guidance on proper categorization of cost items. An improper categorization will not itself be grounds for a determination of ineligibility but may delay approval and/or adversely impact the application's scoring.
- A detailed budget narrative, in which cost items are clearly identified, correspond to the appropriate cost category, and are quantified and described in sufficient detail to enable USDA/FAS to independently determine that the proposed costs are reasonable and allowable for the project and consistent with applicable regulations.
  - Indirect costs are statutorily capped at 10% for cost reimbursable agreements.
- A detailed project narrative or plan of operation including the following requirements:
  - The name of the institution applying to host the participants.
  - The proposed place(s) of performance within the United States.
  - The applicant's proposed approach to achieve the program objective: provide a comprehensive understanding of U.S. food safety regulations and standards, equipping the Armenian participants with the knowledge and skills necessary to implement and comply with these regulations effectively, and to strengthen bilateral trade with the United States and reduce trade barriers for U.S. agricultural commodities and products. The description should include but not be limited to topics to be covered, possible field visits and other activities. The applicant should also include a proposed agenda.
  - A description of how the award, including the logistical elements (e.g. domestic travel arrangements, accommodation booking, site visits, etc.), will be administered and the role of the university faculty and support staff.
  - A summary of relevant institutional capabilities for teaching international participants about applicable topics associated with the required learning objectives.
  - A brief description of the expertise and international experience of the applicant. This may include further information about the applicant's field and foreign experience.
  - An overview of the applicant's qualifications in international training and/or adult education, understanding of the cultural context and needs of the trainees, and knowledge of relevant agricultural, market, and/or trade conditions within the participants' country or a similar location. Including steps that will be taken for cultural relevancy for participants of varying backgrounds and religions, for instance dietary restrictions.
  - If necessary, other appropriate collaborating experts should be identified to meet any of the objectives which the applicant cannot address.

- The skills or knowledge expected to be acquired by the participants at the end of the program.
- Means of flexibility to account for potential program changes and the ability to respond to unforeseen circumstances; this should include information on how unforeseen problems that can arise will be addressed.
- Plan for evaluating and implementing the individual action plans produced by the participants to achieve individual learning outcomes to achieve the purpose of the training program, as detailed in Section 8.6.
- Application following designated format:
  - Clearly outline all aspects of the program plan – what is planned, how this will be conducted, and the anticipated results;
  - Be written in English and free of excessive grammatical and spelling errors; and
  - Cite source information and/or provide an explanation of the analysis undertaken.

#### **4.2 Specific Application Formats**

Applicants should ensure they are using active, i.e. non-expired, versions of standard forms. The use of an expired standard form will not itself be grounds for a determination of ineligibility but may delay processing of an applicant selected for award.

There are no page limitations and formatting requirements (including, but not limited to, font and font size, margins, paper size, and color limitations) for applications.

#### **4.3 Electronic Signatures**

Consistent with the Electronic Signatures in Global and National Commerce Act (ESIGN Act), USDA/FAS uses and accepts electronic signatures for application and award documents. USDA/FAS will neither solicit nor send physical copies of documents.

#### **4.4 Proprietary Information**

Applicants should generally refrain from including the details of proprietary information in applications. In cases where, in the applicant's judgement, the inclusion of proprietary information is essential to application review and scoring, the applicant should clearly indicate information it wishes to designate as proprietary.

#### **4.5 Other Application Information**

Successful applicants must submit the following information after USDA/FAS notification of our intent to make a Federal award, but prior to a Federal award, if the applicant request for funding or the intended award amount is over \$100,000:

- [Grants.gov Lobbying Form](#)
- [Standard Form SF-LLL](#), Disclosure of Lobbying Activities, if applicable to the applicant

### **5. Submission Requirements and Deadlines**

#### **5.1 Address to Request Application Package**

This Notice of Funding Opportunity contains all information required to submit a complete application package.

## **5.2 Unique Entity ID and System for Award Management (SAM)**

Each applicant must:

- (i) Be registered in SAM before submitting its application;
- (ii) Provide a valid unique entity ID in its application; and
- (iii) Continue to maintain an active registration in SAM with current information at all times during which it has an active Federal award or an application or plan under consideration by a federal agency.

## **5.3 Submission Instructions**

Applications must be submitted through the ezFedGrants system at <https://grants.fms.usda.gov/>. USDA-managed computer systems require applicants to have an identity-proofed account through the [login.gov](https://login.gov) platform, and in some cases may require at least two persons. Identity-proofing and subsequent registration with any USDA-managed computer system may take several days, and applicants who do not already have system access should begin the registration process immediately, even if they are unsure they will apply to this funding opportunity.

Applicants who require assistance with any USDA-managed computer system must reach out to the agency contact listed in Section 1, Agency Contact Information, prior to the application submission deadline date in Section 5.4, Submission Dates and Times. USDA/FAS strongly encourages applicants reach out at least 5 business days in advance of the application submission deadline to ensure resolution prior to the application submission deadline date. Applicants should provide as much detail as possible to facilitate resolution of the issue. USDA/FAS will make a reasonable effort to resolve the issue, and in rare cases may offer alternative avenues for application submission. If applicants do not contact USDA/FAS prior to the application submission deadline date and submit an application package through an alternative method, their application will be deemed ineligible.

## **5.4 Submission Dates and Times**

Application Submission Deadline: May 14, 2026 at 11:59pm EDT (UTC -04:00)

*Applications received after this time will NOT be accepted. Applicants are advised to make their submissions 1-2 days before this deadline in case of computer problems.*

## **5.5 Intergovernmental Review**

Not applicable.

## **6. Application Review Information**

### **6.1 Eligibility Threshold Review**

USDA/FAS will conduct an eligibility threshold review of all applications submitted to determine that:

- the applicant is eligible, as defined in Section 2, Eligibility;
- the application was submitted by the application submission deadline date and time as specified in Section 5, Submission Requirements; and

- the applicant submitted a complete application, including all required forms and documents as defined in Section 5, Submission Requirements.

An application that does not include all documentation required by this notice of funding opportunity at the time of application, including documentation required in SAM.gov, will be deemed ineligible.

If an applicant is determined to be ineligible, USDA/FAS will notify the applicant prior to commencing with evaluation of applications, usually within 5 business days of the Application Submission Deadline. An applicant that feels such a determination was made in error may request reconsideration, highlighting evidence supporting their claim, by email to the program officer(s) listed in Section 1, Agency Contact Information, within 3 business days of notification. If USDA/FAS determines an error occurred during the application submission and/or eligibility review process, the application will rejoin the group of eligible participants and continue to the merit review process.

Applicants are advised that readability is of paramount importance and should take precedence in application format, including selecting a legible font type and size for use in the application.

## **6.2 Review Criteria**

Applicants will be evaluated by the extent and quality to which they demonstrate that they have the capabilities, staff, resources, and equipment to successfully perform the project as described in the following factors. Scoring will also be based on the level of detail and how clearly the applicant's abilities to address these factors are outlined in the proposal.

**Technical Expertise (30 points)** Applications will be evaluated on the extent and quality to which they demonstrate they have the technical background as well as experience and knowledge of relevant agricultural conditions within Armenia.

**Experience (10 points)** Applications will be evaluated on the extent and quality to which they demonstrate experience in implementing international trainings and adult education programming.

**Training Plan (40 points)** Applications will be evaluated on the extent and quality to which the training program plan fulfills specific training objectives and is relevant to the general background of mid- to senior-level officials from the public and private sector, including (2) association/local NGO staff, (4) government officials, (1) researcher from an agricultural university, and (2) private sector/agribusiness company representatives. This includes appropriate site visits, public and private sector meetings and / or other activities.

**Budget (15 points)** Applications will be evaluated on the reasonableness, cost-effectiveness, and adequacy of the proposed budget to accomplish the project. The budget will be evaluated on cost savings, where available, and the inclusion of a budget narrative for each line item.

**Overall Quality (5 points)** Applications will be evaluated on comprehensiveness, completeness, and correct spelling and grammar.

### **6.3 Review and Selection Process**

The agency will convene a review panel to review the eligible applications against the evaluation criteria described above. USDA/FAS documents that reviewers, whatever their affiliation, are free from a conflict of interest that would affect their assessment of an applicant, whether positively or negatively.

The reviewers will ensure that the applicant can deliver the programs/activities as described in the announcement based on the applicant's project narrative and assign a score and provide summary comments based on the evaluation criteria identified above. The review panel will make a recommendation list to the selecting official, who is not a member of the panel.

The selecting official may select applications out of rank order in consideration of strategic program priorities. Selection determinations are final and cannot be appealed.

Prior to selection, the agency may contact the highest-ranking applicants to seek clarification and to negotiate technical and programmatic aspects of the application. If an application includes a subaward, USDA/FAS may request to speak with all parties included in the application to ensure sufficient planning and coordination has taken place prior to making an award.

### **6.4 Risk Review**

Prior to making a Federal award, the Federal awarding agency is required by [2 C.F.R. § 200.206](#), [31 U.S.C. § 3321](#) and [41 U.S.C. § 2313](#) to review information available through any OMB-designated repositories of government-wide eligibility qualification or financial integrity information. Therefore, application evaluation criteria may include the following risk-based considerations of the applicant: (1) financial stability; (2) quality of management systems and ability to meet management standards; (3) history of performance in managing a Federal award; (4) reports and findings from audits; and (5) ability to effectively implement statutory, regulatory, or other requirements.

Prior to making a Federal award with a total amount of Federal share greater than the simplified acquisition threshold, currently \$250,000, the federal agency must review and consider any information about the applicant that is in the responsibility/qualification records available in SAM.gov (41 U.S.C. § 2313).

- An applicant can review and comment on any information in the responsibility/qualification records available in SAM.gov.
- Before making decisions in the risk review required by 2 C.F.R. § 200.206, the Federal awarding agency will consider any comments by the applicant along with information available in the responsibility/qualification records in SAM.gov.

## **7. Award Notices**

Applicants will be notified of the status of their application/award by email. Notification to successful applicants is not authorization to proceed, and such notification should be construed as provisional until an award document has been signed by authorized officials of USDA/FAS and the recipient.

Award documents will be transmitted by email to the individuals or offices who submitted them, or to those persons or offices that USDA/FAS believes, to the best of its information, are proper. The applicant is recommended to ensure that the agency is provided with the correct point(s) of contact.

## **8. Post-Award Requirements and Administration**

### **8.1 Administrative and National Policy Requirements**

All successful applicants for all grant and cooperative agreements are required to comply with the applicable General Terms and Conditions, which can be found at [https://fas.usda.gov/grants/general\\_terms\\_and\\_conditions](https://fas.usda.gov/grants/general_terms_and_conditions). The applicant is presumed to have read, understood, and accepted these terms when accepting a USDA/FAS award. USDA/FAS will specify in the terms and conditions of all final awards all termination provisions that apply, including terminations for all reasons specified in 2 C.F.R. § 200.340(a). Applicants with questions about the applicable terms should contact the program officer(s) listed in Section 1, Agency Contact Information.

Before accepting an award, the applicant should carefully read all award documents for instructions on administering the award and the terms and conditions associated with responsibilities of Federal Awards. Recipients must accept all conditions in this NOFO as well as any Special Terms and Conditions in the Notice of Award to receive an award under this program.

### **8.2 Reporting**

#### **Financial Reporting**

Financial Reports, using form [SF-425](#), Federal Financial Report (FFR), must be submitted within 120 days after the end date of the period of performance pursuant to 2 C.F.R. § 200.328(d).

#### **Performance Reporting**

A final performance progress report must be submitted no later than 120 calendar days after the end date of the period of performance. The recipient may use any appropriate format for performance progress reports, provided the report includes:

- a) A comparison of actual accomplishments to the established goals for the period;
- b) The reasons why established goals were not met, if appropriate; and
- c) Additional pertinent information including, when appropriate, analysis and explanation of cost overruns or high unit costs.

Recipients are encouraged to include photographs and other supplemental material in performance report.

Financial and Performance reports must be submitted through the ezFedGrants system at <https://grants.fms.usda.gov/>. USDA/FAS may authorize alternative means of submission for recipients who demonstrate a bona fide need.

#### **Subaward and Executive Compensation Reporting**

Applicants must ensure that they have the necessary processes and systems in place to comply with the subaward and executive total compensation reporting requirements established at [2 C.F.R. Part § 170](#), should they be selected for funding.

#### Closeout

No later than 120 calendar days after the end date of the period of performance or after an amendment has been issued to close out a USDA/FAS financial assistance agreement, whichever comes first, recipients must submit a final financial report and final progress report detailing all accomplishments and a qualitative summary of the impact of those accomplishments throughout the period of performance. After final reports have been reviewed and approved by the agency, and any residual amount due to the recipient or due to be returned to the agency is disbursed, the award is subject to closeout. Acceptance of final reports by USDA/FAS constitutes a closeout of the award with no further notice or obligation to either party. This acceptance will indicate the period of performance has expired, and any remaining funds will be deobligated. Records must be retained for a minimum of three years after the final reports are submitted.

### **8.3 Monitoring**

USDA/FAS, through its authorized representatives, has the right, at all reasonable times, to make site visits to review project accomplishments and management control systems and to provide such technical assistance as may be required. During site visits, USDA/FAS will review recipients' files related to the program.

As part of any monitoring and program evaluation activities, recipients must permit USDA/FAS, upon reasonable notice, to review assistance agreement-related records and to interview the organization's staff and other knowledgeable persons regarding the program, and to respond in a timely and accurate manner to agency requests for information relating to the program.

### **8.4 Conflict of Interest**

The Applicant's Conflict of Interest (COI) Point of Contact as defined in USDA/FAS Conflict of Interest Policy must notify the USDA/FAS contact identified in Section 1, Agency Contact Information, of this solicitation of any actual or potential conflict of interest that they are aware of that may provide the applicant with an unfair competitive advantage in competing for USDA/FAS financial assistance awards within 10 calendar days of becoming aware of the conflict of interest. Examples of an unfair competitive advantage include but are not limited to situations in which an USDA/FAS employee reviewed and commented on or drafted all or part of an applicant's application. Note that USDA/FAS does not generally consider receiving information from an USDA/FAS employee limited to whether the applicant or the applicant's proposed project is eligible to compete for funding to confer an unfair competitive advantage. In addition, assistance agreements made under this solicitation will include a term and condition notifying recipients of their COI disclosure obligations and responsibilities under the award including the need to have systems in place to address, resolve and disclose COIs to USDA/FAS.

### **8.5 Mandatory Disclosures**

As required by 2 C.F.R. § 200.113, non-federal entities or applicants for a Federal award must disclose, in a timely manner, in writing to the Federal awarding agency or pass-through entity all violations of Federal criminal law involving fraud, bribery, or gratuity violations potentially

affecting the Federal award. Failure to make required disclosures can result in any of the remedies described in [2 C.F.R. § 200.339](#) including suspension and debarment.

### **8.6 Performance Expectations**

Before travel, the nine Armenian participants will develop individual action plans with the recipient pertaining to the objectives above, with the expectation that the recipient will aim to meet these individual learning needs during implementation and in conjunction with the program objective. USDA/FAS will provide a standard, individual action plan template for the recipient to utilize. Individual action plans shall be evaluated by the recipient to ensure that they are realistic, achievable within the timeframe given, reasonable in cost and complexity, and within the learning objectives of the program. Prior to participants' arrival and after the recipient's review of the individual action plans, the recipient shall provide an overview for USDA/FAS approval on the individual action plans and the recipients' plan to meet participants' needs.

After the program, the recipient shall include in their final report details on the implementation of individual action plans, report on progress, and, to the extent practicable, provide any additional follow-up necessary for participants to accomplish their individual action plans.

One USDA/FAS staff member and an Armenian from a USDA/FAS implementing partner organization will accompany the nine participants from Armenia to the United States and remain for the duration of the program. Travel expenses for the USDA/FAS staff person and the Armenian implementing partner do not need to be included in the proposal budget. Translation services under this award are not necessary. The duration of the training program is envisioned as being 1-2 weeks but is to be proposed by the applicant.

USDA/FAS will be entirely responsible for the recruitment of the participants. In addition, USDA/FAS will provide the Armenian participants with:

1. J-1 compliant Emergency Medical Insurance
2. DS-2019/J-1 visa support for participants and related SEVIS requirements

USDA/FAS will also provide a standard individual action plan template for the recipient to utilize. USDA/FAS will also inform the recipient of the recruitment timeline and final determination on the Georgian participants, including their respective business backgrounds. Lastly, unless otherwise discussed, USDA/FAS will arrange all meetings with U.S. government agencies.

Host Institution shall provide the Armenian participants with:

1. Ground transportation
2. Airfare for travel within the U.S. and per diem allowance
3. Secure and guaranteed lodging during the entire program
4. Travel insurance

Post-Award Performance Expectations:

1. Provide digital copies of the training highlights to each Armenian participant and to USDA/FAS.
2. Ensure that each Armenian participant completes a Training Program Evaluation (which will be provided by USDA/FAS).

3. Ensure development of an individual action plan by each participant. The recipient shall provide a copy of each participant's action plan to USDA/FAS.
4. Provide a pre-training questionnaire to determine participants' baseline knowledge of the learning objectives.
5. Provide post-training questionnaire to determine the knowledge gained in each of the learning objectives.
6. Provide an analysis of the pre- and post-training questionnaire.
7. Provide all transportation within the United States, including baggage fees, from the point of arrival to the point of departure. The recipient is not responsible for international airfare of participants.
8. Provide lodging in single occupancy, for all participants.
9. Offer appropriate cross-cultural activities for the purposes of sharing language, culture, or history in accordance with J-1 Visa requirements.
10. All meetings with Federal Government offices or officials must be initiated by USDA/FAS.

## **9. Other Information**

### **9.1 Extensions**

Extensions to this program are permitted, subject to approval.

### **9.2 No Awards**

USDA/FAS reserves the right to make no awards under this competition.

### **9.3 SAM.gov Registration Instructions**

Organizations applying for this funding opportunity must have an active SAM.gov registration. If you have never done business with the Federal Government, you will need to register your organization in SAM.gov. If you do not have a SAM.gov account, then you will create an account using [login.gov](https://login.gov)<sup>1</sup> to complete your SAM.gov registration. SAM.gov registration is FREE. The process for entity registrations includes several steps and validations and is not complete until the registration is shown as Active. Please review the [Entity Registration Checklist](#) for details on this process.

If you have done business with the Federal Government previously, you can check your entity status using your government issued UEI to determine if your registration is active. SAM.gov requires you renew your registration every 365 days to keep it active.

Please note that SAM.gov registration is different than obtaining a UEI only. Obtaining an UEI only validates your organization's legal business name and address. Please review the [Frequently Asked Question](#) on the difference for additional details.

Organizations should ensure that their SAM.gov registration includes a current e-Business (EBiz) point of contact name and email address. The EBiz point of contact is critical for Grants.gov Registration and system functionality.

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<sup>1</sup> Login.gov a secure sign in service used by the public to sign into Federal Agency systems including SAM.gov and Grants.gov. For help with login.gov accounts, visit [http://login.gov/help](https://login.gov/help).

Contact the [Federal Service Desk](#) for help with your SAM.gov account, to resolve technical issues or chat with a help desk agent: (866) 606-8220. The Federal Service desk hours of operation are Monday – Friday 8am – 8pm ET.

#### **9.4 Faith-Based Organizations**

Faith-based organizations may apply for an award on the same basis as any other organization, as set forth at, and subject to the protections and requirements of, 7 C.F.R. Part 16 and any applicable constitutional and statutory requirements, including [42 U.S.C. § 2000bb](#) et seq. USDA/FAS will not, in the selection of recipients, discriminate for or against an organization on the basis of the organization's religious character, motives, or affiliation, or lack thereof, or on the basis of conduct that would not be considered grounds to favor or disfavor a similarly situated secular organization.

A faith-based organization that participates in this program will retain its independence from the Government and may continue to carry out its mission consistent with religious freedom and conscience protections in Federal law. Religious accommodations may also be sought under many of these religious freedom and conscience protection laws.

A faith-based organization may not use direct Federal financial assistance from USDA/FAS to support or engage in any explicitly religious activities except when consistent with the Establishment Clause of the First Amendment and any other applicable requirements. An organization receiving Federal financial assistance also may not, in providing services funded by USDA/FAS, or in their outreach activities related to such services, discriminate against a program beneficiary or prospective program beneficiary on the basis of religion, a religious belief, a refusal to hold a religious belief, or a refusal to attend or participate in a religious practice.