The Department of Agriculture (USDA) – Foreign Agricultural Service (FAS)
Global Programs

Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO)
Enabling Agricultural Innovation for Food Security and Trade: Capacity Building for Developing Seed Systems and Adopting Agricultural Biotechnology in Asia and Africa

NOTE: If you are going to apply for this funding opportunity and have not obtained a Data Universal Numbering System (DUNS) number and/or are not currently registered in the System for Award Management (SAM), please take immediate action to obtain a DUNS Number, if applicable, and then to register immediately in SAM at www.sam.gov. It may take 4 weeks or more after you submit your SAM registration before your registration is active in SAM. Detailed information regarding DUNS and SAM is also provided in Section D of this NOFO, subsection, Content and Form of Application Submission.

In addition to obtaining a DUNS number and registering in SAM, you must also obtain Level 2 eAuthentication to apply for this funding opportunity in ezFedGrants. You must submit an online form requesting access. Normally you will receive an email within 24 hours of your submission, if your request is approved. After this occurs, you will need to schedule an appointment with an LRA. Once you meet with the LRA, your Level 2 eAuthentication should be granted within 2 to 3 days after that meeting. See Section D of this NOFO for detailed information.

A. Program Description

Program Overview

A key strategic goal for the U.S. Government (USG) and of the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) is to conduct international outreach and communication regarding the role and importance of science-based and risk proportionate decision-making for the adoption of existing and emerging agricultural biotechnologies as a tool for enabling innovation and helping address challenges to the sustainability of agriculture and global food security in the twenty-first century.

The USDA Foreign Agricultural Service (USDA/FAS) seeks to partner with a U.S. land-grant university to carry out trainings and provide technical assistance for select Asian and African decision-makers, technical experts, and stakeholders focusing on informed strategies for enabling the science-based adoption of agricultural biotechnologies, including incorporating biotechnology into national and regional initiatives to modernize and strengthen seed systems for innovation.

The purpose of this program is threefold: 1) To enhance understanding of policymakers and stakeholders in the Philippines of the role of modern biotechnology in agricultural innovation, and how such biotechnological innovations can be adopted with appropriate science- and risk-based considerations; 2) To enhance the understanding of African country governments' policymakers and technical experts with responsibilities relevant to the African Union of the role of modern biotechnology in agricultural innovation, and how such biotechnological innovations can be adopted with appropriate science- and risk-based considerations, especially for seed production

and trade; and 3) To identify and share ways in which biotechnological innovations can advance food security, and what trade policies in the Philippines and in the African Union may be needed to help ensure access by their farmers to such innovations.

Program Objectives and Priorities

The Program objectives are:

a) Deliver tailored trainings for select Asian and African officials, technical experts, and stakeholders on key considerations for enabling the science- and risk-based adoption of agricultural biotechnologies, to include applications in plants and animals.
b) Provide technical assistance to policymakers and regional stakeholders on successfully incorporating biotechnology and innovative breeding techniques into seed sector improvement initiatives, such as ensuring availability of high-quality seeds for small-scale producers. The land grant university will work with select developing country governments, regional organizations, and biotechnology stakeholder groups to support the successful deployment of agricultural biotechnology products. Work in this area may include consulting and technical assistance to incorporate biotechnology into seed system improvement initiatives; support for commercial or public sector research and development of genetically engineered or genome edited plants and/or animals; targeted outreach to key stakeholders in host governments; or other activities that enable adoption of agricultural biotechnology in Asia and Africa, in consultation with USDA/FAS.
c) Ensure information sharing and increased awareness among participants of different patterns of adoption of agricultural biotechnologies among countries/regions, and of differences with approaches to seed sectors, and their impacts.
d) Based on the input of the Asian and African participants, develop action plans for country/regional efforts moving forward on technical assistance activities, identifying key issues and gaps in needs and capacity building,
e) Develop science-based, risk proportionate regulatory approaches that further regional regulatory alignment and cooperation that facilitates deployment of agricultural innovation.

The trainings may take place on the campus of the university partner, in Asian and African partner countries, or virtually, over the period of the award (Fiscal Year 2021–2022). The trainings will be tailored to the needs and interests of the Asian and African audiences, reflecting the most recent knowledge and status of relevant policy and programmatic efforts and partnerships, and will include engagement by recognized U.S. and international technical and policy experts from a range of relevant disciples and fields (e.g., regulatory sciences, social scientists, legal experts, and experienced agricultural economic development practitioners). The trainings will address both country-specific issues and, where appropriate, regional collaboration, as well as general information sharing to provide all participants with a strong understanding of how different experiences and approaches to the adoption of emerging agricultural biotechnologies globally may be shaping varying results for improved outcomes for farmers, the environment, and other evidence and cost-benefit considerations.

The land grant university will collaborate with USDA/FAS in the design and implementation of the trainings (virtual and/or in person), in the selection of countries, regional bodies, and experts, and in identifying indicators and measures of success.

Specifically:

I. U.S Training:

1. An Executive Course on GM technologies and Precision Biotechnology for policymakers. This activity aims to encourage deeper understanding and appreciation for a science-and evidence-based policy framework conducive to the advancement of biotechnological innovations.

The activity is envisioned as a one-week executive course designed to educate participants on modern biotechnology, related national and international policies, biosafety regulation compliance, potential impacts of biotechnology policies and regulations, and socioeconomic considerations in decision making. The course shall include site visits to various state-of-the-art facilities for biotechnology to reinforce the participants' learning experience.

Target participants are policymakers and regulators from the Philippines (5 participants) and African Union (AU) countries (3 participants), either in separate or single training, which shall include an evaluation of participants' increase in knowledge from the training.

2. Short-term training on any or all of the following topics: a. risk analysis of GM animals for food; b. advanced training on risk analysis of GM crops, targeting senior technical officers and middle-level managers in five government agencies implementing the Philippine Joint Department Circular on regulations on modern biotech; c. advanced training on risk management and risk communication; d. Laboratory tours, and sharing of experiences on the use of gene editing tools CRISPR-Cas, ZFN, TALEN, and ODM) and other plant breeding innovation methods; e. new breeding techniques for Philippine Department of Agriculture (DA) researchers to improve the breeding programs of Philippine Department of Agriculture f. Biotechnology tools for rapid and precise detection of pests, diseases, and food contaminants to improve regulatory services; and, g. Use of bioinformatic tools for genomics studies. Trainings shall include an evaluation of participants' increase in knowledge on topics listed above.

Target participants (5 participants) include personnel from Philippine DA agencies directly involved in risk analysis of GM products as well as DA Biotech Center researchers.

II. Regional Training for the African Union:

3. Conduct a Seed Biotechnology Regional Workshop in Ethiopia, for the African Union, for 10-15 participants.

Issued By
Foreign Agricultural Service, Global Programs, Agricultural Economic Development

Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance (CFDA) Number and Title
10.960 Technical Agricultural Assistance

Notice of Funding Opportunity Title
Enabling Agricultural Innovations for Sustainable Food Security: Biotechnology and Seeds Systems in Asia and Africa

NOFO Number
USDA-FAS-10960-0700-10.-20-0025
Authorizing Authority for Program
National Agricultural Research, Extension, and Teaching Policy Act of 1977, PL 95-113, as amended, 7 USC §§ 3319a

Appropriation Authority for Program
Further Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2020 (PL 116-94)

Announcement Type
New

B. Federal Award Information

Award Amounts, Important Dates, and Extensions

Available Funding for the NOFO: Up to $350,000

Projected Number of Awards: 1

Period of Performance: 25 months

Projected Period of Performance Start Date(s): September 15, 2020

Projected Period of Performance End Date(s): October 15, 2022

Extensions may be allowable, please see Section H. Additional Information to see how to requests one should the need arise.

Anticipated Award Date: September 15, 2020

Cost Share or Match requirements: A cost match or cost share is not required.

Funding Instrument:

Cost-Reimbursable Agreement. Note that indirect costs, by law, cannot exceed 10% of direct costs under this agreement instrument. FAS has no authority to waive this ceiling.

Notwithstanding the above, FAS will not assume direction, prime responsibility, or a dominant role in the implementation of the activities covered by this Agreement. Consistent with this concept, the dominant role and prime responsibility will reside with the recipient, although specific tasks and activities may be shared among the recipient and FAS.

Subawards are allowable under the agreement if included in the original application.

C. Eligibility Information

Eligible Applicants

State cooperative institutions and other colleges and universities in the United States.

Eligibility Criteria

All applicants must have an active registration in the SAM database at www.sam.gov – pending or expired registrants are not eligible. This requirement must be met by the closing date of the announcement and will not be waived. Please contact the program officer listed if you have questions about this requirement.

Maintenance of Effort (MOE)

MOE is not allowable.

D. Application and Submission Information

Address to Request Application Package

This NOFO represents the full application information. For additional information or questions, please contact the program officer(s) listed in Section G.

Key Dates and Times

Date Posted to ezFedGrants & Grants.gov: June 26, 2020

Application Start Date: June 26, 2020

Application Submission Deadline: August 17, 2020 11:59:59 PM EDT *Applications not received by this deadline will not be considered.*

Anticipated Funding Selection Date: August 31, 2020

Anticipated Award Date: September 15, 2020

Content and Form of Application Submission

Institutions must be able to host multiple groups over the period of performance and should submit a proposal following the guidelines below:
Required forms and certifications, including:

- Standard Form 424, signed by the applicant
- SF-LLL, Disclosure of Lobbying Activities, when warranted.
- Standard Form 424A. This should be accompanied by a detailed budget worksheet and a detailed budget narrative (NOTE: A budget narrative must be provided). All line items should be described in sufficient detail that would enable FAS to determine that the costs are reasonable and allowable for the project per federal regulations. Definitions of cost items are listed below.
  - **a.** **Personnel**: Costs of employee salaries and wages. For each staff person, provide the name (if known), title, time commitment to the project as a percentage of a full-time equivalent (FTE), annual salary, and grant funded salary. Do not include the costs of consultants. Consultants are to be included under "Contractual."
  - **b.** **Fringe Benefits**: Costs of employee fringe benefits unless treated as part of an approved indirect cost rate. Provide the method used to calculate the proposed rate amount. If a fringe benefit has been negotiated with, or approved by, a cognizant federal agency, **attach a copy of the negotiated fringe benefit agreement**. If no rate agreement exists, provide a breakdown of the amounts and percentages that comprise fringe benefit costs such as health insurance, FICA, retirement insurance, taxes, etc. Identify the base for allocating these fringe benefit expenses. (Attach the agreement to the application package.) For foreign entities this may not apply.
  - **c.** **Travel**: Costs of project-related travel by employees of the applicant organization (do not include costs of sub-contractor or consultant travel). For each proposed trip, provide the purpose, number of travelers, travel origin and destination, number of days, and a breakdown of costs for airfare, lodging, meals, car rental, and incidentals. The basis for the airfare, lodging, meals, car rental, and incidentals must be provided, such as past trips, current quotations, Federal Travel Regulations, etc.
  - **d.** **Equipment**: Equipment is not allowed for this award. Equipment is defined as any article of nonexpendable, tangible personal property having a useful life of more than one year and an acquisition cost which equals or exceeds the lesser of (a) the capitalization level established by the organization for financial statement purposes, or (b) $5000. For each type of equipment requested, provide a description of the equipment, the cost per unit, the number of units, the total cost, and a plan for use on the project, as well as use or disposal of the equipment after the project ends. An applicant organization that uses its own definition for equipment should provide a copy of its policy or section of its policy which includes the equipment definition.

    NOTE 1: Acquisition cost means the net invoice unit price of an item of equipment, including the cost of any modifications, attachments, accessories, calibration and maintenance services, or auxiliary apparatus necessary to make it usable for the purpose for which it is acquired. Ancillary charges, such as taxes, duty, protective in-transit insurance, freight, and installation shall be included in or excluded from acquisition cost in accordance with the organization's regular written accounting practices.

NOTE 2: Prior to the purchase of equipment in the amount of $5000 or more per unit cost, the Recipient must obtain the written approval from FAS, unless the equipment was approved in the initial award. The Recipient shall maintain an annual inventory, which will include a brief description of the item, serial number and amount of purchase for equipment purchased with grant funds, or received under a grant, and having a $5000 or more per unit cost. The inventory must also identify the sub-award under which the equipment was purchased. Maintenance and insurance will be the responsibility of the Recipient. Title of equipment will remain with the Recipient until closeout when disposition will be provided in writing by FAS within 120 days of submission of final reports.

e. **Supplies**: Supplies are tangible personal property other than that included in the equipment category if the acquisition cost is less than the lesser of the capitalization level established by the non-Federal entity for financial statement purposes or $5,000, regardless of the length of its useful life. Specify general categories of supplies and their costs. Show computations and provide other information which supports the amount requested. A computing device is a supply.

f. **Contractual**: Costs of all contracts for services and goods and subawards that further the work of the project. Sub-contractors, sub-awardees, and/or sub-grantees that do not perform technical work (i.e., landscapers, trash collectors, etc.) belong under other cost categories such as equipment, supplies, construction, other, etc.

Include third party evaluation contracts (if applicable) and contracts with secondary recipient organizations. Demonstrate that all procurement transactions will be conducted in a manner to provide, to the maximum extent practical, open and free competition. Identify proposed sub-contractor work and the cost of each sub-contractor. Provide a detailed budget for each sub-contractor that is expected to perform work estimated to be $25,000 or more, or 50% of the total work effort, whichever is less.

- Identify each planned subcontractor and its total proposed budget. Each subcontractor's budget and supporting detail should be included as part of the applicant's budget narrative.
- Provide the following information for each planned subcontract: a brief description of the work to be subcontracted; the number of quotes solicited and received, if applicable; the cost or price analysis performed by the applicant; names and addresses of the subcontractors tentatively selected and the basis for their selection; e.g., unique capabilities (for sole source subcontracts), low bidder, delivery schedule, technical competence; type of contract and estimated cost and fee or profit; and, affiliation with the applicant, if any.
- All required flow down provisions in the award must be included in any subcontract.

g. Other Direct Costs: Any other items proposed as direct costs. Provide an itemized list with costs, and state the basis for each proposed item.

h. Indirect Costs: This will be a cost reimbursable agreement issued under 7 USC § 3319a. University indirect costs for cost reimbursable agreements are limited to 10% of modified total direct costs (MTDC).

- A narrative description of the proposed activities, no longer than (6) six pages how it will be administered, the role(s) of proposed personnel, and how it fits in with the recipient's broader programs.
- Briefly demonstrate flexibility to account for potential program changes and the ability to respond to unforeseen circumstances
- An illustrative timeline for activities to be undertaken.

The SF-424 and SF-424A can be completed within the ezFedGrants platform. However, the other required forms must be downloaded from the Forms sections on Grants.gov or will be sent to you upon request to the program officer(s) named in Section G.

Please be aware that OMB Memorandum 18-24: Strategies to Reduce Grant Recipient Reporting Burden has been approved. Various required forms needed to apply for Federal Financial Assistance no longer need to be completed individually at time of application. They are covered in the Financial Assistance Certifications Report.

Effective January 1, 2020, the Financial Assistance Certifications are a common set of certifications and representations required by Federal statutes or regulations in accordance with the grants guidance under Title 2 of the Code of Federal Regulations (2 CFR 200.208 Certifications and Representations). Those non-Federal entities who intend to apply for, or are already recipients of Federal grants or agreements, must read and agree to the corresponding certifications and representations. Registrants who reply yes to the questions are required to keep these certifications and representations current, accurate, and complete as part of their entity registration.

FAS will verify in SAM.gov that the proper forms are completed, and if they have not been, you will be contacted and directed to do so. Your award will not be issued until the proper forms are completed within the SAM.gov portal.

Unique Entity Identifier and System for Award Management (SAM)

Each applicant is required to:

(i) Be registered in SAM (https://www.sam.gov) before submitting its application;
(ii) Provide a valid DUNS number in its application; and
(iii) Continue to maintain an active SAM registration with current information at all times during which it has an active Federal award or an application or plan under consideration by a Federal awarding agency.

The Federal awarding agency may not make an award to an applicant until the applicant has complied with all applicable DUNS and SAM requirements and, if an applicant has

not fully complied with the requirements by the time the Federal awarding agency is ready to make a Federal award, the Federal awarding agency may determine that the applicant is not qualified to receive a Federal award and use that determination as a basis for making a Federal award to another applicant.

Before you can apply, you must have a DUNS number, be registered in SAM, and have access to the ezFedGrants website at https://grants.fms.usda.gov

Applicants are encouraged to register early. The registration process can take approximately four weeks to be completed. Therefore, registration should be done in sufficient time to ensure it does not impact your ability to meet required submission deadlines.

DUNS number. Instructions for obtaining a DUNS number can be found at the following website: http://www.dnb.com/duns-number.html
The DUNS number must be included in the data entry field labeled "Organizational DUNS" on the Standard Forms (SF)-424 forms submitted as part of this application.

System for Award Management. In addition to having a DUNS number, applicants applying electronically through ezFedGrants must register with SAM. Step-by-step instructions for registering with SAM can be found here:

www.sam.gov

Failure to register with SAM will result in your application being rejected during the submissions process.

ezFedGrants System Access and Electronic Signature

Level 2 eAuthentication. The next step in the registration process is to obtain a Level 2 eAuthentication account that will allow access to the ezFedGrants system. Instructions for getting a Level 2 eAuthentication account can be obtained by emailing ezFedGrants-cfo@usda.gov.

If you experience any issues with self-registration or have eAuthentication-related questions, please contact the eAuthenticationHelpDesk for assistance:
By email to eAuthHelpDesk@usda.gov

Requesting a role in ezFedGrants. After obtaining eAuthentication, users will need a role in the system. Descriptions of the roles available and instructions on how to request a role can be obtained by emailing ezFedGrants@cfo.usda.gov.

Electronic Signature. Applications submitted through ezFedGrants constitute a submission as electronically signed applications. When you submit the application through ezFedGrants, the name of your Signatory Official on file will be inserted into the signature line of the application.

If you experience difficulties accessing information or have any questions please email the Helpdesk at ezFedGrants-cfo@usda.gov.

The Federal awarding agency may not make a Federal award to an applicant until the applicant has complied with all applicable DUNS and SAM requirements and, if an applicant has not fully complied with the requirements by the time the Federal awarding agency is ready to make a Federal award, the Federal awarding agency may determine that the applicant is not qualified to receive a Federal

Intergovernmental Review
An intergovernmental review may be required. Applicant(s) must contact their State's Single Point of Contact (SPOC) to comply with the State's process under Executive Order 12372 (https://www.archives.gov/federal-register/codification/executive-order/12372.html) Name and addresses of the SPOCs are maintained at the Office of Management and Budget's home page at:

https://www.whitehouse.gov/wp-content/uploads/2019/02/SPOC-February-2019.pdf

Funding Restrictions
Generally, funds may not be used in any manner that is prohibited by 2 CFR Part 200 and 2 CFR Part 400, or the Notice of Funding Opportunity.

Compensation for personal services (whether classified as personnel, contractual services, or any other form) may not exceed the pro-rated equivalent of Step III of the Executive Schedule. For calendar year 2019, this is $176,900 per year; $680.38 per day; or $85.05 per hour. Non-monetized fringe benefits are generally excluded from this ceiling, however, a federally-negotiated fringe benefits rate agreement may be required if fringe benefits appear to be unusually high.

FAS agreement funds may only be used for the purpose set forth in the award, and must be consistent with the statutory authority for the award. Agreement funds and non-monetary 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 serving in any capacity (paid or unpaid) on any proposal submitted under this program. Federal employees may not receive funds under this award. In addition, federal funds may not be used to sue the Federal Government or any other government entity.

These funds cannot be used for construction purposes, general purpose acquisitions (no particular scientific, technical, or programmatic purpose), equipment exceeding $5,000 per item, entertainment, capital improvements, thank you gifts, or other expenses not directly related to the project

Management and Administration (M&A) Costs:
M&A costs are not allowable.

Indirect Facilities & Administrative (F&A) Costs.
Indirect F&A costs means those costs incurred for a common or joint purpose benefiting more than one cost objective and not readily assignable to the cost objectives specifically benefited without effort disproportionate to the results achieved.

This will be a cost reimbursable agreement issued under 7 USC § 3319a. University indirect costs for cost reimbursable agreements are limited to 10% of modified total direct costs (MTDC).

Other Submission Requirements
All applications must be submitted electronically as indicated above.

E. Application Review Information

Application Evaluation Criteria
Prior to making a Federal award, the Federal awarding agency is required by 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 federal award; (4) reports and findings from audits; and (5) ability to effectively implement statutory, regulatory, or other requirements.

Review and Selection Process
In all cases, the Program Manager will conduct an initial responsiveness review of all applications submitted to determine if the submission is complete and followed the rules outlined in this announcement. This review will ensure the following: 1) the application was submitted on time as specified in this announcement (See Section D. Application and Submission Information), 2) the applicant is eligible (see Section C. Eligibility Information), 3) all the required forms and documents are submitted timely as outlined (See Section D. Application and Submission Information, Content and Form of Application Submission) and the 4) the organization can achieved the stated outcomes. If an applicant is determined to be ineligible (see Section C. Eligibility Information) or an application is determined to be non-responsive, FAS will notify the applicant.

All responsive and eligible applications will be reviewed as described below:

1. FAS will assemble reviewers which may include both federal and non-federal reviewers to review the eligible applications. Reviews of submitted applications will be conducted either on site or by remote review.
2. Technical reviewers will review each eligible application against the evaluation criteria. The reviewers will ensure that the organization is capable of delivering the programs/activities as described in the announcement based on the applicant's project narrative. The reviewers will assign a score and provide summary comments based on the evaluation criteria identified above. Evaluation Criteria: the evaluation criteria

must be directly related to key aspects of the project. The criteria must be measurable with an associated point range. It is a best practice, but not required, that the entire review criteria score range should be out of 100. From the scoring process, a recommendation list or letter will be composed and sent to the selecting official. Applications scoring less than 60/100 will not be considered for funding.

3. An application may be selected for a post-review quality control and possible rescoring if it received significantly diverging scores and comments from reviewers.
4. The second part of the application review process includes an internal review panel consisting of FAS staff, and the selecting official reviewing the recommendation list which will display the highest ranked applications. From this list this internal review panel will make final funding recommendations. The internal review panel may take applications out of rank order in consideration of strategic program priorities, such as:
    a. Geographic distribution
    b. Incorporation of minority-serving institutions
5. FAS will perform an additional review of the applicant organizations which may include a teleconference with or site visit to up to the top three applicant organizations' offices which come within 10 points of the top score. This review will include reviewing audit reports, publicly available materials and/or government databases, or conducting additional reviews of its key personnel and may have a bearing on award outcome. FAS may request additional materials from the applicant as part of this review, including:
    - The summary letter from the applicant's most recent audit report, and
    - Documentation of previous grant award completion that includes the name of the grantor, amount awarded, and whether the grant recipient sufficiently completed the requirements of the grant award (e.g., a final close-out report, certification of grant award completion, etc.)
6. After the technical review and before making final funding decisions, FAS may contact the highest ranking applicants to seek clarification and to negotiate technical and programmatic aspects of the application. If an application includes a sub-awardee, 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.

In addition, the following applies:
i. Prior to making a Federal award with a total amount of Federal share greater than the simplified acquisition threshold as defined by 48 CFR § 2.101, is required to review and consider any information about the applicant that is in the designated integrity and performance system accessible through SAM (currently FAPIIS).

ii. An applicant, at its option, may review information in the designated integrity and performance systems accessible through SAM and comment on any information about itself that a Federal awarding agency previously entered and is currently in the designated integrity and performance system accessible through SAM.

iii. The agency will consider any comments by the applicant, in addition to the other information in the designated integrity and performance system, in making a judgment about the applicant's integrity, business ethics, and record of performance under Federal

awards when completing the review of risk posed by applicants as described in 2 CFR §200.205 Federal awarding agency review of risk posed by applicants.

Factor 1: Technical Approach and Feasibility	***30 percent***
Factor 2: Management Approach	***30 percent***
Factor 3: Cost effectiveness	***20 percent***
Factor 4: Past Performance and Regional Expertise	***20 percent***

Factor 1: Technical Approach and Feasibility (30 percent)

i. The applicant's technical approach will be evaluated based on the soundness, thoroughness of the approach to implementing the training activities and achieving outcomes.
ii. Description of practical and best-practice methods for achieving the project's objectives and outcomes.
iii. Description of specific outputs, outcomes, and a proposed turnaround timelines.
iv. Approach to aligning and coordinating with USDA/FAS agriculture and economic growth programmatic investments.

Factor 2: Management Approach (30 percent)

i. Outline of management approach that describes the management structure, relational links and lines of communication.

Factor 3: Cost effectiveness (20 percent)

The agency will consider the "value for money" in its evaluation of the program. This factor does not consider the cost alone, but rather the cost relative to the value for the work to be performed. Note that the agency's available funding may not exceed the amount shown in part B.

Factor 4: Past Performance (20 percent)

Demonstration of regional and subject matter expertise. Past programs, with similar objectives, described by the applicant in their proposal, will be positively reviewed.

Confidentiality and Conflict of Interest

Technical and cost proposals submitted under this funding opportunity will be protected from unauthorized disclosure in accordance with applicable laws and regulations. FAS may use one or more support contractors in the logistical processing of proposals. However, funding recommendations and final award decisions are solely the responsibility of FAS personnel.

FAS screens all technical reviewers for potential conflicts of interest. To determine possible conflicts of interest, FAS requires potential reviewers to complete and sign conflicts of interest and nondisclosure forms. FAS will keep the names of submitting institutions and individuals as well as the substance of the applications confidential except to reviewers and FAS staff involved in the award process. FAS will destroy any unsuccessful applications after three years following the funding decision.

F. Federal Award Administration Information

Notice of Award

Notice of award will be given to the institution via email. This email is not an authorization to begin performance. The notice of Federal award, signed by the Deputy Administrator of Global Programs, is the authorizing document through electronic means. It should also indicate if there are any pass-through obligations that successful applicants are required to meet upon receiving award funds, including specific timeline requirements.

Administrative Policy Requirements

All successful domestic applicants for all grant and cooperative agreements are required to comply with Standard Administrative Terms and Conditions, which are available online at:

https://www.fas.usda.gov/grants/general_terms_and_conditions/default.asp

The applicable Standard Administrative Terms and Conditions will be for the last year specified at that URL, unless the application is to continue an award first awarded in an earlier year. In that event, the terms and conditions that apply will be those in effect for the year in which the award was originally made unless explicitly stated otherwise in subsequent mutually-agreed amendments to the award.

Before accepting the award the Recipient should carefully read the award package for instructions on administering the grant award and the terms and conditions associated with responsibilities under 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.

Federal Financial Reporting Requirements

The Federal Financial Reporting Form (FFR), as known as the SF-425, must be submitted for each quarter ending March 31, June 30, September 30, and December 31. Reporting must be filed within 30 days after the end of the reporting period, with a final report submitted within 90 days of the end of the agreement. The required form is available online at: https://www.gsa.gov/portal/forms/download/149786

Program Performance Reporting Requirements

Performance Progress Reporting must be submitted for each quarter ending March 31, June 30, September 30, and December 31. Reporting must be filed within 30 days after the end of the reporting period, with a final report submitted within 90 days of the end of the agreement, and should include details the activities undertaken and progress made.

Monitoring

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, FAS will review recipients' files related to the funded program.

As part of any monitoring and program evaluation activities, recipients must permit FAS, upon reasonable notice, to review related records and to interview the organization's staff and clients regarding the program, and to respond in a timely and accurate manner to FAS requests for information relating to their program.

Close Out Reporting Requirements
Within 90 days after the end of the period of performance, or after an amendment has been issued to close out a grant, whichever comes first, recipients must submit a final FFR and final progress report detailing all accomplishments and a qualitative summary of the impact of those accomplishments throughout the period of performance.

Acceptance of final reports by the agency 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, as described in 2 CFR 200.333

The recipient is responsible for returning any funds that have been drawn down or reimbursed but remain as unliquidated on recipient financial records.

G. Awarding Agency Contact Information

Contact and Resource Information

Clemen G. Gehlhar
Phone: +1-202-720-1891
Email: clemen.gehlhar@usda.gov

Pace Lubinsky
Phone: +1- 202 384 4856
Email: Pace.Lubinsky@usda.gov

1400 Independence Ave, SW
Washington, DC 20250-1033

Hours of Operation: 8:30AM – 5:00PM EST

Note: Mail service to USDA offices is currently suspended, therefore, USDA recommends questions be addressed by phone or email.

Inquiries will be returned within 24 working hours (3 business days). All questions must be received no later than 16 working hours (2 working days) prior to submission deadline, except the point of contact will confirm receipt of proposals upon request

H. Additional Information

1. Extensions

Extensions to this program are allowed. Applicants may request an extension in order to complete all project activities. The request must be submitted 60 days prior to the expiration of the performance period. Requests for extensions are subject to approval.

2. Prior Approval of Pre-Award Costs
The Recipient shall not request reimbursement for costs incurred pertaining to the operation of the project, program, or activities prior to the approved project period.

3. Budget Revisions
a. Transfers of funds between direct cost categories in the approved budget when such cumulative transfers among those direct cost categories exceed ten percent of the total budget approved in this Award require prior written approval.

b. The Recipient shall obtain prior written approval for any budget revision that would result in the need for additional resources/funds.

c. The Recipient is not authorized at any time to transfer amounts budgeted for direct costs to the indirect costs line item or vice versa, without prior written approval.

4. Post-award program income
In the event program income becomes available to the recipient post-award, it is the recipient's responsibility to notify the FAS Program Manager to explain how that development occurred, as part of their request for guidance and/or approval. The Program Manager will review approval requests for program income on a case-by-case basis; approval is not automatic. Consistent with the policy and processes outlined in 2 C.F.R. Part 200, pertinent guidance and options, as determined by the type of recipient and circumstances involved, may be approved by the Grant Officer. If approval is granted, an award modification will be issued with an explanatory note in the remarks section of the face page concerning guidance and/or options pertaining to the recipient's approved.