The Department of Agriculture (USDA) – Foreign Agricultural Service (FAS)
Trade Policy and Geographic Affairs
Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO)
Non-Competing Funding for the University of Minnesota for
International Agricultural Trade Research Consortium (IATRC)

A. Program Description

Issued By
Foreign Agricultural Service, Trade Policy and Geographic Affairs (TPGA)

Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance (CFDA) Number
10.960

CFDA Title
Technical Agricultural Assistance

Notice of Funding Opportunity Title
International Agricultural Trade Research Consortium (IATRC)

NOFO Number
USDA-FAS-10960-0200-10.-20-0006

Authorizing Authority for Program
National Agricultural Research, Extension, and Teaching Policy Act of 1977, as amended, Public Law 095-113, as amended, 7 USC § 3291(a)(3)

Appropriation Authority for Program
Further Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2020

Announcement Type
New

Program Overview, Objectives, and Priorities

FAS values the IATRC as a fruitful partnership between academics and other researchers in agricultural trade and trade policy on one hand and government trade policy practitioners on the other hand to better understand directions in trade policies themselves and their impacts on markets.

To ensure FAS objectives are met, we are requesting that the following tasks be performed:

- Provide FAS with a project plan for use for external peer review;

- Provide necessary office space, including storage for IATRC materials, a computer, email and internet access for personnel assigned to the project;
- Assign professional personnel as needed to carry out the agreed upon cooperative and administrative work;
- Conduct conference planning and meeting management for the IATRC General Meetings and for IATRC Symposia.

B. Federal Award Information

Award Amounts, Important Dates, and Extensions

Available Funding for the NOFO: $75,000
Subject to the availability of funding

FAS/TPGA intends to fund up to $75,000 in support of this program for one award. FAS/TPGA anticipates incrementally funding this award for $15,000 a year over five years beginning in fiscal year 2020.

Projected number of Awards: 1

Period of Performance: 60 months

Projected First Budget Period: October 1, 2020 to September 30, 2021

Projected Period of Performance Start Date(s): October 1, 2020

Projected Period of Performance End Date(s): September 30, 2025

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

Funding Instrument

Cost Reimbursable Agreement

FAS shall:

- Furnish joint supervision or consultant services for the project and provide such data and information as are available to the Agency;
- Pay travel and per diem expenses of all Agency employees involved in the project;
- Support the involvement of FAS economists in IATRC meetings and activities, as funds permit.

C. Eligibility Information

Eligible Applicants

The University of Minnesota, Applied Economics / Agricultural Education / IATRC

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.

Eligibility Criteria

Not applicable

Other Submission Requirements and Information

Not applicable

Maintenance of Effort (MOE)

There is no maintenance of effort requirement for this program. Requests for funds under this announcement shall not be used to take the place of activities described in the application that are currently supported with other funding. Also, grant funds shall not be used to support activities that are a normal part of the organization's operations.

Cost Share or Match

There is no cost share or match required for this program.

D. Application and Submission Information

Key Dates and Times

Application Start Date: August 12, 2020

Application Submission Deadline: August 31, 2020 5:00:00 PM Eastern Daylight Time

Applications not received by this deadline will not be considered.

Anticipated Funding Selection Date: September 4, 2020

Anticipated Award Date: September 11, 2020

Address to Request Application Package

This NOFO represents the full application information.

Applications will be processed through the ezFedGrants portal at https://grants.fms.usda.gov – prospective applicants are encouraged to register for this portal. Applicants that are unable to access the ezFedGrants portal should

contact the program manager for alternative submission instructions. Note that if selected, registration is a requirement of performance.

For a hardcopy of the full NOFO, please write or fax a request to:

Steve Neff – Program Manager
Phone: 202-690-0855
Email: steve.neff@usda.gov

Content and Form of Application Submission

- Standard Form 424, signed by the applicant
- Project Narrative. Please discuss how your organization will accomplish the outcomes described in Section A of this NOFO. The outcomes FAS want to see accomplished are:
    - Holding general meetings of the membership;
    - Conducting trade policy and analysis symposia targeted to the needs of trade policy decision makers and their staff and the interests of the public;
    - Creating working papers for the purpose of sharing preliminary research;
    - Creating commissioned papers for wider dissemination, designed to address current policy-relevant topics; and
    - Maintaining a website.
- 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.

    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, subgrants or contractors. Consultants, subgrants and contractors 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.)

c. Travel: Costs of project-related travel by employees of the applicant organization (do not include costs of sub-contractor, subgrantees 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 an unallowable cost under cost-reimbursable agreements.

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 that further the work of the project. Do not put sub-contractors, sub-awardees, and/or sub-grantees that do not perform work to further the project. This includes the types of sub-contractors, sub-awardees, and/or sub-grantees that work for the Prime awardee exclusively, (i.e., landscapers, trash collectors, etc.) These costs 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.

- In this section also include subgrantees. Provide information for each planned subgrant. Identify each planned subawardee and its total proposed budget. Include a brief description of the work to be performed.

g. Other Direct Costs: Any other items proposed as direct costs that do not fall under the budget categories listed above. Provide an itemized list with costs, and state the basis for each proposed item.

h. Indirect Costs: If indirect costs are included in the budget, include in the budget narrative a description of how the indirect costs were calculated. Include the following information:

- Indirect cost percentages used;
- Indirect cost base;
- How the indirect cost base was calculated;
- How the indirect cost was calculated.

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).

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 question are required to keep these certifications and representations current, accurate, and complete as part of their entity registration.

All of the terms do not apply to foreign entities however all entity types receiving financial assistance from FAS must respond yes because the Lobbying Disclosure term does apply to foreign entities along with being registered in SAM. All other terms do not apply to foreign entities.

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 (unless the applicant is an individual or Federal awarding agency that is excepted from those requirements under 2 CFR §25.110(b) or (c), or has an exception approved by the Federal awarding agency under 2 CFR §25.110(d)) is required to:

(i) Be registered in SAM 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 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 award and use that determination as a basis for making a Federal award to another applicant.

FAS is using ezFedGrants, which is an electronic grants management system. Applicant(s) with electronic access are required to submit their applications electronically through the ezFedGrants portal.

Before you can apply, you must have a DUNS number, be registered in SAM, and have access to the ezFedGrants website.

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, or by reviewing the ezFedGrants Job Aids at https://nfc.usda.gov/FSS/ClientServices/ezFedGrants/index.php.

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, or by reviewing the ezFedGrants Job Aids at https://nfc.usda.gov/FSS/ClientServices/ezFedGrants/index.php.

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 (seehttps://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.

Also, FAS grant 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. Grant 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. Also, federal funds may not be used to sue the Federal Government or any other government entity.

Equipment costs are not allowable under this award.

In addition, this will be a cost reimbursable agreement issued under 7 U.S.C. 3319a; therefore, University indirect costs are limited to 10% of the direct costs.

Management and Administration (M&A) Costs.

M&A costs are not allowable.

Indirect Facilities & Administrative (F&A) Costs.

Indirect costs are capped at 10%.

Other Submission Requirements

Not applicable

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

The Program Manager will ensure the application is submitted on time as specified in this announcement. Also, the Program Manager will ensure the organization is capable of delivering the programs/activities as described in the announcement based on the applicant's project narrative.

F. Federal Award Administration Information

Notice of Award

Notice of award will be sent to the institution via email or via the ezFedGrants portal, signed by the Deputy Administrator. The project should not begin until the start date of the Period of Performance. The notice of award will indicate if there are any pass-through obligations that successful applicants are required to meet upon receiving award funds, including specific timeline requirements.

Administrative and National Policy Requirements

All successful applicants for all grant and 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 potential awardee 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.

Reporting

Annual financial and performance reports must be submitted through the ezFedGrants platform.

Federal Financial Reporting Requirements. The Federal Financial Reporting Form (FFR) is available online at:

https://www.gsa.gov/portal/forms/download/149786

1. Annual Financial Reports. The Recipient shall submit an annual report to the Program Manager via ezFedGrants no later than 30 days after the end of the budget period. The report is due on October 30.

2. Final Financial Report. The Recipient shall submit the Final Performance to the Program Manager no later than 90 days after the end of the Project Period end date. The report shall be submitted via the ezFedGrants portal.

Program Performance Reporting Requirements.

1. Annual Performance Reports. The Recipient shall submit an annual report to the Program Manager via ezFedGrants no later than 30 days after the end of the budget period. The report is due on October 30.

*If the performance report contains any information that is deemed proprietary, the Recipient will denote the beginning and ending of such information with the following heading: ******PROPRIETARY INFORMATION*******

2. Final Performance Report. The Recipient shall submit the Final Performance to the Program Manager no later than 90 days after the end of the Project Period end date. The report shall be submitted via the ezFedGrants portal. The final report must include an executive summary and final summary abstracts for each activity (sub-project).

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 grant recipients' files related to the grant-funded program.

As part of any monitoring and program evaluation activities, grant recipients must permit FAS, upon reasonable notice, to review grant-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 grant 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.

If applicable, an inventory of all construction projects that used funds from this program has to be reported using the Real Property Status Report (Standard Form SF 429) available at:

https://www.gsa.gov/portal/forms/download/149866

After these reports have been reviewed and approved by TPGA a close-out notice will be completed to close out the award. The notice will indicate the period of performance as closed, list any remaining funds that will be de-obligated, and address the requirement of maintaining the grant records for three years from the date of the final FFR.

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 but remain as unliquidated on recipient financial records.

G. Awarding Agency Contact Information

Contact and Resource Information

Steve Neff – Program Manager
Phone: 202-690-0855
Email: steve.neff@usda.gov

Tamara Marshall-Jones – Agency Grants Management Officer
Phone: 202-720-0885
Email: Tamara Marshall-Jones@usda.gov

H. Additional Information

1. Extensions
Extensions to this program are allowed.
Applicants may request a no-cost 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 by FAS.

2. Prior Approval
The Recipient shall not, without the prior written approval of the FAS Program Manager, request reimbursement, incur costs or obligate funds for any purpose pertaining to the

operation of the project, program, or activities prior to the approved Budget Period/Performance 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 by the FAS Program Manager.

b. The Recipient shall obtain prior written approval from the FAS Program Manager 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 of the FAS Program Manager.

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 recipient's approved request. All instances of program income shall be listed in the progress and financial reports.