REQUEST FOR APPLICATION

Resident Instruction Grants for Institutions of Higher Education in Insular Areas (RIIA)

Agriculture and Food Science Facilities and Equipment Program for Insular Areas (AGFEI)

MODIFICATION: This RFA is an updated version of the FY2020 - FY2021 solicitation. It includes only the references to FY 2021 funding; FY 2020 references have been eliminated.
Edits in red on pages 1, 2, 3, 6, 7, 9, 14 and 26.

FUNDING YEAR:	Fiscal Year 2021
APPLICATION DEADLINES:	FY 2021 - February 18, 2021
LETTER OF INTENT DEADLINE:	Not Required
AWARD AMOUNT:	Approximately $1,200,000
ASSISTANCE LISTING NUMBER:	10.308

INITIAL ANNOUNCEMENT

National Institute of Food and Agriculture, United States (U.S.) Department of Agriculture (USDA)

Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance. The Resident Instruction Grants program for Institutions of Higher Education in Insular Areas (RIIA) is listed in the Assistance Listings under the Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance number 10.308.

Table 1: Key Dates and Deadlines

Task Description	Deadline
Application:	Fiscal Year 2021: February 18, 2021 (All at 5:00 P.M. Eastern)
Letter of Intent:	Not Required
Applicants Comments:	Within six months from the issuance of this notice (*NIFA may not consider comments received after the sixth month*)

Stakeholder Input. The National Institute of Food and Agriculture (NIFA) seeks comments on all request for applications (RFAs) so it can deliver programs efficiently, effectively, with integrity, and with a focus on customer service. NIFA considers comments, to the extent possible when developing RFAs and use comments to help meet the requirements of Section 103(c)(2) of the Agricultural Research, Extension, and Education Reform Act of 1998 (7 U.S.C. 7613(c)(2)). Applicants may submit written comments to Policy@usda.gov (email is for comments only). Please use the following subject line: Response to the Resident Insular Grants Program for Institutions of Higher Education in Insular Areas (RIIA) RFA.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This notice identifies the objectives for RIIA and AGFEI projects, deadlines, funding information, eligibility criteria for projects and applicants, and application forms and associated instructions.

NIFA requests applications for the Resident Instruction Grants for Institutions of Higher Education in Insular Areas (RIIA) and the Agriculture and Food Sciences Facilities and Equipment (AGFEI) for land-grant colleges and universities in the Insular Areas for fiscal year (FY) 2021 to strengthen the capacity to carry out resident instruction, curriculum, and teaching programs in the food and agricultural sciences as well as to upgrade agriculture and food science facilities, and equipment necessary to conduct tropical and subtropical agricultural research. The anticipated amount available for grants in FY 2021 is approximately $1,200,000.

This RFA is being released prior to the passage of an appropriations act for FY2021. Enactment of additional continuing resolutions or an appropriations act may affect the availability or level of funding for this program.

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PART I. FUNDING OPPORTUNITY DESCRIPTION

A. Legislative Authority

This Funding Opportunity covers both the Resident Instruction Grants for Institutions of Higher Education in Insular Areas (RIIA) and the Agriculture and Food Sciences Facilities and Equipment (AGFEI) program. RIIA are authorized under 7 U.S.C 3363. The AGFEI program is authorized under 7 U.S.C. 3222b-2.

B. Purpose and Priorities

The purpose of these programs is to promote and strengthen the ability of eligible institutions in the Insular Areas to carry out education within the food and agricultural sciences.

RIIA projects:
(1) strengthen institutional educational capacities, including libraries, curriculum, faculty, scientific instrumentation, instruction delivery systems, and student recruitment and retention, in order to respond to identified State, regional, national, or international education needs in the food and agricultural sciences;

(2) attract and support undergraduate and graduate students in order to educate them in identified areas of national need in the food and agriculture sciences;

(3) facilitate cooperative initiatives between two or more insular area eligible institutions, or between those institutions and units of state government or organizations in the private sector, to maximize the development and use of resources such as faculty, facilities and equipment to improve food and agricultural sciences teaching programs; and

(4) conduct undergraduate scholarship programs to assist in meeting national needs for training food and agricultural scientists.

RIIA activities also support the creation, adaptation, of learning materials and teaching strategies to operationalize what we know about how students learn. Many of these concepts are identified in the National Research Council's publication: "*How People Learn*."

RIIA-funded projects shall also focus on imparting both technical knowledge as well as 'soft' skills such as communication, teamwork, and problem solving, as these are abilities expected by employers. These concepts can be found in the publication: Comparative Analysis of Soft Skills: What is Important for New Graduates?

AGFEI projects support activities to acquire or renovate facilities and relevant equipment necessary for conducting agricultural research and support tropical and subtropical agricultural research, including pest and disease research.

These programs are intended to broaden the undergraduate student experience by integrating opportunities to participate in research, education, and extension and to enhance collaborations with community colleges, Hispanic Serving Institutions, Alaska Native-Serving and Native Hawaiian-Serving Institutions, 1890 and 1994 land-grant institutions, and non-land grant college and universities of agriculture.

Leadership Skills Development. The development of leadership skills, knowledge, and qualities are necessary to prepare students for agricultural and related careers in the private sector, government, and academia. RIIA teaching applications must demonstrably incorporate a leadership development component to equip students with technical and leadership abilities upon graduation. Specific activities may include:

1. Developing practical applications to increase understanding of leadership roles, including critical thinking, problem solving, and communication skills; ethics and professionalism; and working in teams;

2. Connecting the academic classroom experience with daily leadership roles and organizational activities;
3. Providing opportunities for mentoring and shadowing; and
4. Organizing leadership academies, workshops, trainings, etc.

The RIIA and AGFEI programs are aligned with USDA Strategic Goal 4: Facilitate Rural Prosperity and Economic Development; Objective 4.1: Expand rural business opportunity and rural quality of life with access to capital; improved infrastructure, broadband access and connectivity; and support for workforce availability.

Table 2: Program Key Information

Title	Description
Programs Code:	AA-Q (AGFEI and RIIA)
Program Code Name:	Resident Instruction Grants Program for Higher Education in the Insular Areas (RIIA); Agriculture and Food Sciences Facilities and Equipment Program (AGFEI)
Assisting Listing Number	10.308
Project Type:	RIIA Education/Teaching Projects; AGFEI Facilities and
Grant Type:	Standard Grants, Planning Activity

Table 3: Standard Grant Key Information

Title	Description
Standard Grant Duration:	48 Months
Number of Applications Per Lead Institution RIIA: Number of Applications Per Lead Institution	3 2
Maximum # of Awards Per Institution:	3 [a maximum of 2 per type award—RIIA or AGFEI]
Maximum Award Amount:	Up to approximately $150,000
Total Funding Per Institution:	Approximately $450,000
Application Deadlines:	FY 2021- February 18, 2021

Table 4: Planning Activity Key Information

Title	Description
Planning Activity Duration:	Up to 24 Months
Number of Applications Per Lead	2
Maximum # of Awards Per Institution:	1
Maximum Award Amount:	Up to approximately $30,000
Total Funding Per Institution:	Approximately $30,000
Application Deadlines:	FY 2021- February 18, 2021

Applications for the RIIA program shall do the following:

1. Improve formal, postsecondary agricultural sciences education/instruction to ensure a competent and qualified workforce to serve the food and agricultural sciences and meet current and future national food and agricultural science needs.
2. Improve the economic health and viability of rural communities through the development of degree programs emphasizing new and emerging employment opportunities in food and agricultural sciences.
3. Increase the number and diversity of students who will pursue and complete a 2 or 4-year post-secondary education in the food and agricultural sciences, or Science Technology Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) disciplines.

Expected Products and Results. The RIIA program requires all project directors to provide appropriate metrics and describe the expected products and results, outcomes, and their potential impact on strengthening food, agricultural, natural resources and human sciences education, research and extension in the United States. Metrics to assess products, outputs and outcomes are to be clearly delineated in the proposal.

Incorporation of Social Sciences and Enhancing Impacts. The RIIA program supports social and behavioral science disciplines. RIIA projects that integrate social and biological sciences to provide experiential learning opportunities for students in applied research, and related community development programs are encouraged. Incorporation of social and behavioral sciences is important for addressing many of the challenges facing agriculture and rural communities, such as increasing global demand for food production in the face of limited natural resources; improving health and reducing obesity by engaging in heathy life styles and consuming heathy diets; and alleviating poverty by fostering economic opportunity.

PART II. AWARD INFORMATION

A. Available Funding

The anticipated amount available for RIIA and AGFEI grants in FY 2021 is approximately $1,200,000. USDA is not committed to fund any particular application or to make a specific number of awards. This RFA is being released prior to the passage of an appropriations act for FY2021. Enactment of additional continuing resolutions or an appropriations act may affect the availability or level of funding for this program.

The Automated Standard Application for Payments, operated by the Department of Treasury, Bureau of Fiscal Service, is the designated payment system for awards resulting from this RFA.

B. Application Restrictions

NIFA will evaluate applications using the criteria described in Part V of this RFA. Applications for FY 2021 are limited to the following applications types:

1. *New application*: New applications will be evaluated using the criteria described in Part V of this RFA and are subject to the due dates herein (see Appendix III for definition).
2. *Resubmitted application*: Resubmitted applications must include the respond to the previous review panel summary and are subject to the same criteria and due dates herein. Resubmitted applicants must enter the NIFA-assigned proposal number of the previously submitted application in the *Federal Field (Field 4)* on the application form (see Appendix III for definition).

C. Project and Grant Types

The following describes the types of *projects* or *grants* that are eligible for funding:

1. Project Types. Applicants must propose Education/Teaching or Facilities and Equipment. The RIIA program will only accept one project type: *Education/Teaching*. For the purposes of this RFA, an education or teaching activity is defined as formal classroom instruction, laboratory instruction, and practicum experience in the food and agricultural sciences supporting faculty development, student recruitment and services, curriculum development, instructional materials and equipment, and innovative teaching methodologies.

   RIIA Education/Teaching projects should focus on one or more of the "need areas" listed below. Please note that at least one of the "need areas" must be indicated on the Project Summary (See Part IV § B of this RFA).

   The AGFEI program will only accept one project type: *Facilities and Equipment.*

   The Facilities and Equipment Projects will focus on construction, acquisition, and remodeling of buildings, laboratories, and other capital facilities (including fixtures and equipment) necessary to conduct activities in tropical and subtropical agricultural research, including pest and disease research.

   Education or Teaching Projects need areas for FY 2021 are defined as Curricula Design, Materials Development, and Library Resources; Faculty Preparation and Enhancement for Teaching; Instruction Delivery Systems; Scientific Instrumentation for Teaching and Research; Student Experiential Learning; and Student Recruitment, Retention, and Educational Equity.

   Curricula Design, Materials Development, and Library Resources. Promote the development of courses of study and degree programs, new and improved curricula, and instructional materials and technology. Promote the acquisition of library resources

including books and journals relating to the food and agricultural sciences; and stimulate the use of new approaches to the study of traditional subjects, new research on teaching and learning theory, and new applications of knowledge.

Faculty Preparation and Enhancement for Teaching. Advance faculty development in the areas of teaching competency and leadership, subject matter expertise, or student recruitment and advising skills. Examples include, obtaining experience with recent developments and new applications; expanding competence in innovative technologies and new methods of instruction delivery; developing new skills in a field of science or education including student advising skills; or pursuing graduate-level study in a field related to the food and agricultural sciences.

Each faculty recipient of support for developmental activities must be an "eligible participant" please refer to: 7 CFR 3430, Competitive and Noncompetitive Non-formula Financial Assistance Programs--General Award Administrative Provisions, for applicable definitions for this NIFA grant program.

Instruction Delivery Systems. To encourage the use of alternative methods of delivering instruction to enhance the quality, effectiveness, and cost efficiency of teaching programs. Examples include incorporating alternative instructional methodologies that respond to differences in student learning styles; inter-institutional collaborations that deliver instruction in ways that maximize program quality and reduce unnecessary duplication; and consideration and implementation of innovative instructional techniques, methodologies, and delivery systems in response to advances in knowledge and technology.

Scientific Instrumentation for Teaching and Research. To provide students and faculty in science-oriented courses with suitable, up-to-date equipment in order to involve them in work central to scientific understanding and progress. Examples include acquiring new state-of-the-art instructional, laboratory, classroom, and research scientific equipment; upgrading existing equipment, or replacing obsolete equipment.

Student Experiential Learning. To develop scientific and professional competencies that provide students with opportunities to solve complex problems in the context of real-world situations. Examples include preparing future graduates to advance knowledge and technology; enhancing quality of life; conserving resources; and addressing community and economic development issues. Activities include internships, practicum experiences, study abroad opportunities, and participation with faculty on applied research and related community development projects.

Student Recruitment, Retention, and Educational Equity. To enhance educational equity for under-represented students, and strengthen student recruitment and retention programs in the food and agricultural sciences. Examples include: initiating new projects or supplementing current efforts to attract increased numbers of students from under- represented groups to enroll in food and agricultural degree programs; mentoring programs and other initiatives for student retention; and the provision of student financial support to attend college.

Additional Concerns. The use of students for only routine office, laboratory or fieldwork is not considered education for the purposes of this program. To consider a program as education related, students must be actively engaged in the scholarship of research activities.

2. Grant Types. Applicants must select the appropriate standard grant or planning activity.

   Standard Grant. This is an award instrument by which NIFA agrees to support a specified level of effort for a predetermined project period without the announced intention of providing additional support at a future date.

   Eligible institutions may submit a standard project application for project activities undertaken principally on behalf of its own students or faculty and managed primarily by its own personnel. Standard grant applicant executes the project without the requirement of sharing grant funds with other project partners.

   Grants awards may differ from the amounts requested in the application, and NIFA requires revised budgets and revised plans of work before making an award.

   The project period may range from 24 to 36 months.

   An eligible institution may submit no more than three applications to the RIIA or two applications to AGFEI. All applicants must meet the eligibility criteria as described in Part III of this RFA.

   Eligible applicants may receive up to two awards for RIIA and two awards for AGFEI, but no more than three awards total. Total award amount per institution will not exceed $450,000. Institutions receiving a grant under these programs are eligible to receive RIIA and/or AGFEI grants in subsequent years. Receiving a grant under any other authority does not affect eligibility for these RIIA or AGFEI grants programs.

   Planning Activity. Planning Activity Grants support scientific meetings that bring together educators to identify education/teaching needs, update information, or advance an area of education/teaching. Support for a limited number of meetings covering subject matter encompassed by this solicitation will be considered for partial or, if modest, total support. Individual planning activity grants must not exceed $30,000 for up to two years and are not renewable. Indirect costs are not permitted on Planning Activity grant awards.

D. Ethical Conduct of Funded Projects

In accordance with sections 2, 3, and 8 of 2 CFR Part 422, institutions that conduct USDA-funded extramural research must foster an atmosphere conducive to research integrity, bear primary responsibility for prevention and detection of research misconduct, and maintain and effectively communicate and train their staff regarding policies and procedures. In the event an application to NIFA results in an award, the Authorized Representative (AR) assures, through acceptance of the award that the institution will comply with the above requirements. Award recipients must, upon request, make available to NIFA the policies, procedures, and documentation to support the conduct of the training. See Responsible and Ethical Conduct of Research for further information.

PART III. ELIGIBILITY INFORMATION

A. Eligibility Requirements

Applicants for the RIIA and AGFEI program must meet all the requirements discussed in this RFA. Failure to meet the eligibility criteria by the application deadline may result in exclusion from consideration or, preclude NIFA from making an award. For those new to Federal financial assistance, NIFA's Grants Overview provides highly recommended information about grants and other resources to help understand the Federal awards process.

1. *Individual Institutions.* For the purposes of the RIIA program, an eligible institution is an institution of higher education, as defined in section 101(a) of the Higher Education Act of 1995 (20 U.S.C. 1001(a)); is located at an Insular Area; and has a demonstrable capacity to carry out teaching and extension programs in the food and agricultural sciences. All public or non-profit 2-year and 4-year accredited institutions of higher education that offer certificate/degree programs in the food and agricultural sciences are eligible. For the purposes of the AGFEI Program, only individual land-grant colleges and universities, and other institutions that have secured land-grant status through Federal legislation, and which are located at Insular Areas are eligible for awards under this RFA as individual applicants. The eight Insular Areas are:
    a. American Samoa,
    b. the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands,
    c. the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico,
    d. the Federated States of Micronesia,
    e. Guam,
    f. the Republic of the Marshall Islands,
    g. the Republic of Palau, and
    h. the United States Virgin Islands
2. *Branch Institutions of a Territory University System.* For the purposes of the RIIA and AGFEI programs, the individual branches of a territory university system that are separately accredited as degree-granting institutions are treated as separate, individual institutions eligible to apply for and receive awards, provided they otherwise satisfy the definition of "eligible institution" as specified above.
3. *Independent Branch Campuses.* Independent branch campuses of individual institutions may apply for and receive grant awards under this program, provided that they otherwise satisfy the definition of "eligible institution" as specified above.
4. *Certification of Eligibility.* At the time of application, each primary applicant will be required to demonstrate or certify that it is an eligible institution as defined by this RFA. A non-Land Grant institution must submit a letter signed by the institution's Authorized Representative (AR) certifying that it meets the requirements of an "eligible institution" as defined above. The AR must also certify the institution, or parent institution in the case of an independent branch campus.
    a. Admits as regular students only persons having a certificate of graduation from a school providing secondary education, or the recognized equivalent of such a certificate.
    b. Is legally authorized by the Territory in which it is located to provide a program of education beyond secondary education.

c. Provides an educational program for which the institution awards a bachelor's degree or provides not less than a 2-year program that is acceptable for full credit toward such a degree.
d. Is a public or other nonprofit institution; and is accredited by a nationally recognized accrediting agency or association, or if not so accredited, is an institution that has been granted pre-accreditation status by such an agency or association that has been recognized by the Secretary for the granting of pre-accreditation status, and the Secretary has determined that there is satisfactory assurance that the institution will meet the accreditation standards of such an agency or association within a reasonable time.

Eligibility documentation must be submitted as part of the applicant's Project Narrative. See Part IV § B, Field 8 of this RFA.

Duplicate or Multiple Submissions – duplicate or multiple submissions are not allowed. NIFA will disqualify both applications if an applicant submits duplicate or multiple submissions. For those new to Federal financial assistance, NIFA's Grants Overview provides highly recommended information about grants and other resources to help understand the Federal awards process.

B. Cost Sharing or Matching

No Match Required – The RIIA and AGFEI programs have ***NO*** matching requirement. NIFA will not factor matching resources into the review process as an evaluation criterion.

PART IV. APPLICATION AND SUBMISSION

A. Method of Application

Applicants must apply to this RFA electronically; no other method or response is accepted. The electronic application for this RFA and additional resources are available on Grants.gov and Grants 101. **Table 3** provides instructions on how to obtain an electronic application. **Part II § 1** of the NIFA Grants.gov Application Guide (Application Guide) contains detailed information regarding the Grants.gov registration process.

Table 3. Steps to Obtain Application Materials

Steps	Action
Step One: Register	New Users to Grants.gov must register early with Grants.gov prior to submitting an application (Register Here).
Step Two: Download Adobe	Download and Install Adobe Reader (see Adobe Software Compatibility for basic system requirements)
Step Three: Find Application	Using this funding opportunity number USDA-NIFA-RIGP-007856, search for application here: Opportunity Package.
Step Four: Assess Readiness	Contact an AR prior to starting an application to assess the organization's readiness to submit an electronic application.

Table 4: Help and Resources

Grants.gov Support	NIFA
Grants.gov Online Support Telephone support: 800-518-4726 Toll-Free or 606-545-5035 Email support: support@grants.gov Self-service customer based support: Grants.gov iPortal *Key Information: Customer service business Hours 24/7, except federal holidays.*	Email: policy@usda.gov *Key Information*: Business hours: Monday thru Friday, 7a.m. – 5p.m. ET, except federal holidays

B. Content and Form of the Application

The Application Guide is part of the corresponding application package for this RFA. The RFA overrides the Application Guide if there is a discrepancy between the two documents. NIFA will accept subsequent submissions to an application until the application deadline. However, applicants that do not meet the application requirements, to include partial applications, risk being excluded from NIFA's review. NIFA will assign a proposal number to all applications that

meet the requirements of this RFA. Applicants must refer to the proposal number when corresponding with NIFA. **Table 5** outlines other key instructions for applicants.

Table 5: Key Application Instructions

Instruction	References (All references are to the Application Guide)
Attachments must be in a portable document format (PDF) format.	**Part III § 3**
Check the manifest of submitted files to verify attachments are in the correct format.	**Part III § 6.1**
Conduct an administrative review of the application before submission.	**Part VII and**
Follow the submission instructions.	**Part IV § 1.5**
Provide an accurate email address, where designated, on the SF-424 R&R.	**Part IV § 1.5**
Contact the Grants.gov helpdesk for technical support, and keep a record of the correspondence.	N/A
Contact NIFA if applicant does not receive correspondence from NIFA regarding an application within ***30*** days of the application	N/A

SF 424 R&R Cover Sheet. See **Part V § 2** and **Part V § 2.17**of the Application Guide for the required certifications and assurances.

SF 424 R&R Project/Performance Site Location(s). See **Part V § 3** of the Application Guide.

R&R Other Project Information Form. See **Part V § 4** of the Application Guide.

1. Field 7. Project Summary (PS)/Abstract. The PS must not exceed 250 words and must show how the project goals align with the project goals of the RIIA and AGFEI programs. See **Part V § 4.7** of the Application Guide for instructions and suggested templates.
2. Field 8. Project Narrative (PN). The PN must not exceed 18 *1.5 spaced* pages of written text and up to 5 *1.5 spaced* additional pages for figures and tables (the font size for tables should be no smaller than 11 points, Times New Roman). The page limits outlined here ensure fair and equitable competition. Appendices to the PN are allowed if they are directly germane to the proposed project. Do not add appendices to circumvent the page limit. The PN must include all of the following:
    a. **Potential for Advancing the Quality of Education; Significance of the Problem**;
        i. *Identification of Educational Problem and Project Impact.* Briefly state the following: (1) the specific instructional problem/challenge (or opportunity) to be addressed; (2) the anticipated project audience; and (3) the project's target

objectives (what change in education is proposed?) and its anticipated, overall impact on improving the quality of food and agricultural sciences education.

ii. *Project Justification.* Summarize the body of knowledge justifying the need for the proposed project. Discuss how the project's Educational Need Area (Part II § C(1)) will be of value at the State, regional, national, or international level(s), and where applicable, how it will improve the food and agricultural science capabilities of students. Describe any previously funded projects, ongoing or recently completed, that are related to the proposed project.

iii. *Institutional Long-range Goals*. Explain how the project will help satisfy the institution/organization's high-priority objectives, or how the project is linked to and supported by the institution/organization's strategic plan.

iv. *Innovation.* Describe the proposal's creative approach to improving the quality of food and agricultural sciences education, solving an educational problem, or promoting programs that advance equal opportunity for all students. Using either actual experiences or literature background information, show why this approach was chosen.

v. *Multidisciplinary and/or Problem-based Focus.* Indicate how the project is relevant to multiple disciplines in food and agricultural sciences education and how the project will enhance students' understanding of complex agricultural systems. Also, discuss whether the project may be adapted by, or serve as a model for other institutions.

b. Proposed Approach and Cooperative Linkages

i. *Plan of Operation and Methodology.* Describe procedures for accomplishing the objectives of the project. Describe plans for management of the project to ensure its proper and efficient administration. Describe the way in which resources and personnel will be used to conduct the project.

ii. *Timetable.* Identify all important project milestones (performance targets that indicate when project goals will be met) and dates as they relate to project start-up, execution, evaluation, dissemination, and closeout.

iii. *Products, Results and Measurable Outputs.* Outline the expected products, results, measurable outputs, and their outcome (impact) on strengthening food and agricultural sciences education. **This is optional for Planning Activity grant applications**.

Note: *Make sure to differentiate among the three terms*: (1) "Products" may be actual items or services acquired with funds, e.g., "…developed three, new Web-based courses"; (2) "Results" are accomplishments related to the products, e.g., "...additional course materials now available online to reinforce student learning during non-classroom hours"; and (3) "Impacts" are the benefits to your audience. Impacts are the consequences of your project and the most critical elements in your Evaluation Plan. They are a measure of the results by comparison to what might have happened in the absence of the funded project, e.g., "…an observed, overall increase in student learning based upon 8% higher average test scores of those students who both attended class and used the supplemental, Web-based course materials".

iv. *Evaluation Plan.* All RIIA projects must have an Evaluation Plan that includes both a strategy for monitoring the project as it evolves (to provide feedback to

guide these efforts), as well as a strategy for evaluating the effectiveness of the project. Grantees are encouraged to obtain an independent evaluator to secure appropriate documentation of the project's outcomes and impacts. As a guide, up to 10% of the grant funds may be used to support this purpose.

v. *Dissemination Plans.* The application must document how project accomplishments (products, results and impacts…etc.) will be published or otherwise disseminated to the broadest extent throughout the academic community. This may include educational journals or other professional discipline publications, and presentations at regional or international conferences and workshops, including the RIIA Project Directors' Meeting. Discuss the institution/organization's commitment to disseminate project results and products and the potential for institutionalization. Identify target audiences and explain methods of communication. *This is optional for Planning Activity grant applications*.

vi. *Partnerships and Collaborative Efforts.* Explain how the project will maximize partnership and collaborative efforts to strengthen food and agricultural sciences education (e.g., involvement of faculty in related disciplines at the same institution, or cooperative activities with business or industry). Provide evidence, via letters from the parties involved in the partnership or collaborative arrangement

c. **Institutional Capability and Capacity Building**;

i. *Institutional/Organizational Commitment and Capability.* Demonstrate that the program administration is committed to this project and has the capability to ensure its completion.

ii. *Institutional/Organizational Resources.* Document the necessary institutional/organizational resources (administrative, facilities, equipment, and/or materials), and other appropriate resources, that will be made available to the project. Demonstrate how these resources, when combined with the support requested from USDA, will be adequate to carry out the activities of the project.

iii. *Academic Enhancement.* Document how this project will improve and strengthen teaching at the institution (including any partner institutions/organizations). Include how any project performance target(s) identified above (2.b., Timetable) will be incorporated into academic instruction at the institution. Discuss how the benefits to be derived from the project will transcend the applicant institution/organization or the grant period.

iv. *Continuation Plans.* Discuss the likelihood of, or specific plans for, continuation or expansion of the project beyond the period of USDA support. Describe how the institution's/organization's long-range budget or academic plan provides for the realistic continuation or expansion of the initiative undertaken by this project after the grant period ends. Explain the plans for eventual self-support built into the project, and the plans to institutionalize the program if it is successful. Describe any indications of other continuing non-Federal support. Provide details of the expected outcomes, and the targeted

audience that would benefit from the continuation of this project. *This is optional for Planning Activity grant applications.*

d. **Key Personnel**. Discuss the adequacy and specific attributes and project responsibilities of each key person associated with the project. Also include the background and qualifications of those personnel who will be responsible for assessing project results and administering the project evaluation and reporting process.

e. **Budget and Cost-effectiveness**;

   i. *Budget.* In addition to the separate, required budget forms and budget justification, discuss how the budget specifically supports the proposed project activities. Explain how such budget items as professional or technical staff time and salary, travel, equipment, etc., are necessary and reasonable to achieve project objectives. Justify that all funds requested from USDA are allocated adequately between the applicant and any collaborating institution/organization(s) and will be appropriate to carry out the activities of the project. If the application addresses more than one Educational Need Area (see Part II § C(1)), you must include estimates of the proportion of the funds requested from USDA that will support each respective area.

   ii. *Cost-effectiveness.* Justify the project's cost-effectiveness. Show how the project maximizes the use of limited resources, optimizes educational value for the dollar, achieves economies of scale, or leverages additional funds. For example, discuss how the project has the potential to generate a critical mass of expertise and activity focused on a need area

3. Field 12, Add Other Attachments. See **Part V § 4.12** of the Application Guide.

Response to Previous Review – PDF Attachment. 1 Page Limit. Title the attachment as 'Response to Previous Review' in the document header and save file as 'ResponsetoPreviousReview'. This requirement only applies to "Resubmitted Applications" as described under Part II, B., "Types of Applications". PDs must respond to the previous review panel summary on **no more than one page**, titled, "RESPONSE TO PREVIOUS REVIEW". If desired, additional comments may be included in the text of the Project Narrative, subject to the page limitations of that section.

Expected Outcomes – PDF Attachment. Title the attachment "Expected Outcomes" in the document header and save file as "ExpectedOutcomes." Please use a format, similar to what is provided below, to submit expected outcomes and attach it as the last page of the application. This data will be requested when a grant is recommended for an award. A fillable version of this document can be also found at Recommended Format for Submitting Expected Outcomes.

Figure 1. Expected Outcomes

Recommended Format for Submitting Expected Outcomes

Primary Project Function: (Choose one)		
EDUCATION: ☐	EXTENSION : ☐	RESEARCH: ☐
DATA FOR MSI PROGRAMS: 1890s, HSI, 1994s, ANNH, Insular		

Total expected impact during entire grant period	Expected Number
1. Number of farmers/community members to be served, for example, provided with training and/or new information regarding markets, technology, production practices, etc.	
2. Number of products to be developed for the education and training of students through grant funds during the project period	
2-A. curricula, academic programs	
2-B. recruitment/retention programs	
2-C. teaching or educational materials, distance education capability, experiential learning opportunities	
3. Number of faculty supported by this grant for professional development during the grant period: participation in sabbaticals, workshops, conferences, etc.	
4. Number of students who will indirectly benefit from the products produced from the grant during the grant period (i.e., using the curriculum/instrumentation, enrolled in the program, recruited or retained but not paid by the grant using scholarships, fellowships and assistantships).	
5. Number of male students to be directly supported by this grant (i.e., scholarships, fellowships, assistantships, internships included as a cost in your project budget) for undergraduate or post-graduate education	
6. Number of underrepresented[1] male students to be supported during the grant period (Provide the best estimate based on past experience)	
7. Number of female students to be directly supported by this grant (i.e., scholarships, fellowships, assistantships, internships included as a cost in your project budget) for undergraduate or post-graduate education	
8. Number of underrepresented[1] female students to be supported during the grant period (Provide the best estimate based on past experience)	
9. Number of students supported by this grant (i.e., scholarships, fellowships, assistantships) who are pursuing their degree	
9-A. Two year or other certificates	
9-B. Undergraduate or other 4 year degrees	
9-C. Master's degree	
9-D. Ph.D. degree	
9-E. Postdoctoral training	
10. Number of students who will be supported by this grant on an internship or other experiential learning opportunity	
10-A. Domestic experiences, with a government or non-governmental organization that is not affiliated with your university	
10-B. International experiences, including study abroad, educational travel longer than a month, etc.	

[1]underrepresented = those whose representation among food, agriculture, natural resources and human sciences professionals is disproportionately less than their proportion in the general population as indicated in standard statistical references, or as documented on a case-by-case basis by national survey data (e.g. the U.S. Department of Education's Digest of Education Statistics, U.S. Department of Agriculture's Food and Agricultural Education Information Systems, etc.).

Note

1. Please provide your best estimate based on past experiences, graduation rates, retention rates, etc.
2. Number of underrepresented students to be supported during the grant period (questions #6 and #8) should be less than or equal to total number of students supported by the grant (questions #5 and #7).
3. Response to question #9 should be the sum of 9-A through 9-E; Response to question #6 should be the sum of 10-A and 10-B.

R&R Senior/Key Person Profile (Expanded). See **Part V § 5** of the Application Guide for profile requirements, details about the biographical sketch, and suggested support templates.

R&R Personal Data. This information is voluntary and is not a precondition of award (see **Part V § 6** of the Application Guide).

R&R Budget. See **Part V § 7** of the Application Guide.

1. Match – If an applicant concludes that the matching requirements described under Part III § B of this RFA is not applicable to them; the applicant must include an explanation of

their conclusion in the *budget justification*. NIFA will consider this justification when determining final matching requirements or if required matching can be waived. NIFA retains the right to make final determinations regarding matching requirements.
Grants that require matching funds as specified under Part III § B of this RFA must list in their *budget justification* the matching sources, the identification of the entity(ies) providing the match, and the total pledged amount. A written verification of commitments of matching support (a pledge agreement) is not required. However, applicants are subject to the documentation, valuing and reporting requirements, as specified in 2 CFR Part 200, "Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards (the Uniform Guidance)," and 7 CFR 3430, "Competitive and Noncompetitive Non-Formula Federal Assistance Programs – General Award Administrative Provisions."

2. Indirect costs (IDC) – See Part IV § C of this RFA for funding restrictions regarding indirect cost, and **Part V 7.9** of the Application Guide for additional information.

Data Management Plan. A DMP is required for this program. Applicants should clearly articulate how the project director (PD) and co-PDs plan to manage and disseminate the data generated by the project. The DMP will be considered during the merit review process (see Part V § B of this RFA, Part III § 3.1 of the Application Guide and NIFA's Data Management Plan).

Supplemental Information Form. See **Part VI § 1** of the Application Guide.

1. Field 2. Program to which the applicant is applying. Enter the program name Resident Instruction Grants Program for Institutions of Higher Education in Insular Areas), and the program code (i.e., "AA-Q"). The AGFEI program will share the RIIA program code for this fiscal year. **Note that accurate entry of the program code is very important for proper and timely processing of an application**. Accurate entry is critical.
2. Field 8. Conflict of Interest List. See **Part VI § 1.8** of the Application Guide.

Representations Regarding Felony Conviction and Tax Delinquent Status for Corporate Applicants. This is required for corporate applicants. See **Part VI § 2** of the Application Guide for a description of the term, "corporation."

C. Funding Restrictions

Indirect Cost (IDC) not to exceed 30 percent of Total Federal Funds Awarded (TFFA) of the recipient. Section 1462(a) and (c) of the National Agricultural Research, Extension, and Teaching Policy Act of 1977 (NARETPA) limits IDC for the overall award to 30 percent of Total Federal Funds Awarded (TFFA) under a research, education, or extension grant. The maximum IDC rate allowed under the award is determined by calculating the amount of IDC using:

1. the sum of an institution's negotiated indirect cost rate and the indirect cost rate charged by sub-awardees, if any; or
2. 30 percent of TFFA.

The maximum allowable IDC rate under the award, including the IDC charged by the sub-awardee(s), if any, is the lesser of the two rates.

If the result of number one is the lesser of the two rates, the grant recipient is allowed to charge the negotiated IDC rate on the prime award and the sub-award(s), if any. Any sub-awards would be subject to the sub-awardee's negotiated IDC rate. The sub-awardee may charge its negotiated IDC rate on its portion of the award, provided the sum of the IDC rate charged under the award by the prime awardee and the sub-awardee(s) does not exceed 30 percent of the TFFA.

If the result of number two is the lesser of the two rates, then the maximum IDC rate allowed for the overall award, including any sub-award(s), is limited to 30 percent of the TFFA. That is, the IDC of the prime awardee plus the sum of the IDC charged by the sub-awardee(s), if any, may not exceed 30 percent of the TFFA.

In the event of an award, the prime awardee is responsible for ensuring the maximum indirect cost allowed for the award is not exceeded when combining IDC for the Federal portion (i.e., prime and sub-awardee(s)) and any applicable cost-sharing (see 7 CFR 3430.52(b)). Amounts exceeding the maximum allowable IDC are considered unallowable. See sections 408 and 410 of 2 CFR 200.

PART V. APPLICATION REVIEW REQUIREMENTS

A. NIFA's Evaluation Process

NIFA evaluates each application in a two-part process. First, we screen each application to ensure that it meets the administrative requirements as set forth in this RFA. Second, a scientific peer- review process will be used to technically evaluate applications that meet the administrative requirements using a review panel **(see NIFA Peer Review Process)**.

Scientific Peer Review Process:

NIFA selects reviewers for the review panel based upon their training and experience in relevant scientific, extension, or education fields, considering the following factors:

1. the level of relevant formal scientific, technical education, or extension experience of the individual, as well as the extent to which an individual is engaged in relevant research, education, or extension activities;
2. the need to include experts from various areas of specialization within relevant scientific, education, or extension fields;
3. the need to include other experts (e.g., producers, range or forest managers/operators, and consumers) who can assess relevance of the applications to targeted audiences and to program needs;
4. the need to include experts from a variety of organizational types (e.g., colleges, universities, industry, state and Federal agencies, and private profit and non-profit organizations) and geographic locations;
5. the need to maintain a balanced composition with regard to minority and female representation and an equitable age distribution; and
6. the need to include reviewers who can judge the effective usefulness of each application to producers and the general public.

After each peer review panel has completed its deliberations, the responsible program staff of NIFA will recommend that your project is either approved for support from currently available funds or declined due to insufficient funds or unfavorable review.

NIFA reserves the right to negotiate with the PD/PI and/or the submitting organization or institution regarding project revisions (e.g., reductions in the scope of work, funding level, period, or method of support) prior to recommending any project for funding.

After the review process has been completed, NIFA sends copies of reviews, *not* including the identity of reviewers, and a summary (if applicable) of the review panel comments to the PD.

Conflicts of interest. NIFA takes extreme care to prevent any actual or perceived conflicts of interest that may influence the review or evaluation (see NIFA Peer Review Process for Competitive Grant Applications).

B. Evaluation Criteria

NIFA will use the following criteria to evaluate this RFA:

1. Develop the evaluation criteria. Ensure that the guidance for developing the Project Narrative asks for sufficient information for the competitive review of applications according to the evaluation criteria. The evaluation criteria must provide applicants with the factors that the reviewers will use to evaluate and rank proposals; avoid evaluation criteria

that are yes/no in nature (e.g., presence of a resume) as it does not allow for a hierarchy for ranking purposes. Evaluation criteria must not be written like instructions of what should be included in the application (this should be included earlier in the RFA); they are to be consistent with the criteria that the RFA will be evaluated against.

2. A good evaluation articulates the elements that reviewers will use when reviewing and ranking applications. If Program opts to not assign points or percentages to each criterion, Program must indicate whether the evaluation criteria will be considered equally or if one or more criteria carry more weight than others—e.g., in descending order or ascending order of consideration.
3. Evaluation criteria must include suitability and feasibility of the Data Management Plan" Evaluation criteria cannot be yes/no but instead provide reviewers with the criteria to rate one proposal over another. For example, "A clear statement of long-term goals and supporting objectives to support the [program] is included" is close to a yes no question versus "The extent to which a clear statement of long-term goals and supporting objectives to support the [program] is included.]

C. Organizational Management Information

Applicants must submit specific management information relating to an applicant prior to an award and update the information as needed. Applicants may only have to update their information if they had previously provided the information under this or another NIFA program. NIFA provides the requisite forms during the pre-award process. Although an applicant may be eligible for award under this program, there are factors that may exclude an applicant from receiving federal financial and nonfinancial assistance and benefits under this program (e.g., debarment or suspension of an individual, or a determination that an applicant is not responsible).

D. Application Disposition

Applicants may withdraw at any time before NIFA makes a final funding decision. NIFA will retain all applications, including withdrawn applications and unfunded applications.

PART VI. AWARD ADMINISTRATION

A. General

Within the limit of funds authorized, the NIFA awarding official will make grants to responsible and eligible applicants whose applications are judged most meritorious under the procedures set forth in this RFA. The date specified by the NIFA awarding official as the effective date of the grant must be no later than September 30 of the federal fiscal year in which the project is approved for support and funds are appropriated for such purpose, unless otherwise permitted by law. The project need not be initiated on the grant effective date, but as soon thereafter as practical so that project goals may be attained within the funded project period. All funds granted by NIFA under this RFA may be used only for the purpose for which they are granted in accordance with the approved application and budget, regulations, terms and conditions of the award, applicable federal cost principles, USDA assistance regulations, and NIFA General Awards Administration Provisions,7 CFR part 3430, subparts A through E.

Award Notice. The award document will provide pertinent instructions and information as described in 2 CFR 200.210 (see NIFA's Terms and Conditions).

B. Administrative and National Policy Requirements

Several federal statutes and regulations apply to grant applications and the projects outlined in this RFA (some are listed here: Federal Regulations). Unless specifically noted by statue or award-specific requirements, NIFA Policy Guide applies to all NIFA awards.

PART VII. OTHER INFORMATION

A. Use of Funds and Changes in Budget

Delegation of fiscal responsibility. Unless the terms and conditions of the award state otherwise, awardees may not in whole or in part delegate or transfer to another person, institution, or organization the responsibility for use or expenditure of award funds.

Changes in Budget or Project Plans. In accordance with 2 CFR 200.308, awardees must request prior approval from NIFA for the following program or budget-related reasons (the awardee is subject to the terms and conditions identified in the award):

1. Change in the scope or the objective of the project or program without prior written approval (even if there is no associated budget revision requiring);
2. Change in a key person specified in the application or the federal award;
3. Disengagement from the project for more than three months, or a 25 percent reduction in time devoted to the project;
4. Inclusion of costs that require prior approval in accordance with 2 CFR 200 Subpart E (Cost Principles), or 45 CFR Part 75 Appendix IX, (Principles for Determining Costs Applicable to Research and Development under Awards and Contracts with Hospitals), or 48 CFR, unless waived by the federal awarding agency,
5. Part 31, Contract Cost Principles and Procedures;
6. Transfer of funds budgeted for participant support costs to other categories of expense (§200.75 Participant support costs);
7. Sub-awarding, transferring or contracting out of any work under a federal award, including fixed amount sub-awards (see Part 200 §200.332, Fixed Amount Sub-awards), unless described in the application and funded in the approved federal awards. This provision does not apply to the acquisition of supplies, material, equipment, or general support services;
8. Changes in the approved cost-sharing or matching provided by the non-federal entity; and
9. The need for additional federal funds to complete the project.

B. Confidential Aspects of Applications and Awards

When an application results in an award, it becomes a part of NIFA transaction records, which are available to the public. Information that the Secretary of Agriculture determines to be confidential, privileged, or proprietary in nature will be held in confidence to the extent permitted by law. Therefore, applicants should clearly mark any information within the application they wish to have considered as confidential, privileged, or proprietary. NIFA will retain a copy of an application that does not result in an award for three years. Such an application will be released only with the consent of the applicant or to the extent required by law. An applicant may withdraw at any time prior to the final action thereon.

C. Regulatory Information

This program is not subject to the provisions of Executive Order 12372, which requires intergovernmental consultation with state and local officials. Under the provisions of the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995 (44 U.S.C. Chapter 35), the collection of information requirements contained in this notice have been approved under OMB Document No. 0524-0039.

APPENDIX I: AGENCY CONTACT

Programmatic Contact

Name	Email	Telephone	Fax
Irma Lawrence	ilawrence@usda.gov	816-926-1905	N/A

For administrative questions related to:

- Grants.gov, see Part IV of this RFA
- Other RFA or application questions, please email policy@usda.gov
- Awards under this RFA, please email awards@usda.gov

NIFA's Mailing Address:
National Institute of Food and Agriculture
U.S. Department of Agriculture
2312 East Bannister Road
Mail Stop 10000 (ten thousand)
Kansas City, MO 64131

APPENDIX II: GLOSSARY OF TERMS

Name	Acronyms
Agriculture and Food Science Facilities and Equipment Program for Insular Areas	AGFEI
Authorized Representative	AR
Agricultural Research, Extension, and Education reform Act of 1998	AREERA
Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance	CFDA
Data Management Plan	DMP
National Agricultural Research, Extension, and Teaching Policy Act of 1977	NARETPA
National Institute of Food and Agriculture	NIFA
Project Director	PD
Project Investigator	PI
Request for Application	RFA
Research, Education, and Economics	REE
Resident Instruction Grants for Institutions of Higher Education in Insular Areas	RIIA
Science Technology Engineering and Mathematics	STEM
Teaching Federal Funds Awarded	TFFA
United States Department of Agriculture	USDA

APPENDIX III: DEFINITIONS

Refer to 7 CFR 3430 Competitive and Noncompetitive Non-formula Federal Assistance Programs – General Award Administrative Provisions for additional definitions.

Terms	Definitions
Matching	The process through which a grant recipient match awarded USDA funds with cash and in-kind contributions on a dollar-for-dollar basis. The matching funds must derive from non-Federal sources.
New Application	An application not previously submitted to a program.
Resubmitted Application	A project application that was previously submitted to a program, but the application was not funded.