

Notice of Funding Opportunity Federally Recognized Tribes Extension Program

FUNDING YEAR: Fiscal Year (FY) 2026

APPLICATION DEADLINE: June 08, 2026

ANTICIPATED PROGRAM FUNDING: \$4,000,000

AVERAGE INDIVIDUAL AWARD \$102,000
RANGE:

FUNDING OPPORTUNITY NUMBER: USDA-NIFA-SLBCD-011858

ASSISTANCE LISTING NUMBER: 10.500

ANNOUNCEMENT

National Institute of Food and Agriculture
United States Department of Agriculture

Assistance Listing Number (ALN): The Federally Recognized Tribes Extension Program (FRTEP) is listed in the Assistance Listings under number 10.500.

Table 1: Key Dates and Deadlines

Task Description	Deadline
Application:	5:00 P.M. Eastern Time, June 08, 2026 [Ref to Part I, C of this NOFO]
Applicants Comments:	Within six months from the issuance of this notice (<i>NIFA may not consider comments received after the sixth month</i>)

The United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), to the extent permitted by law, will no longer make grants or otherwise fund programs or activities that improperly discriminate on the basis of race or sex, including discrimination in the name of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion policies. Instead, USDA will prioritize merit and efficiency. USDA recognizes programs and initiatives will have the greatest impact when these programs and initiatives put American farmers, ranchers, and foresters first by:

- solving the most pressing challenges they face;
- protecting America’s food, fuel, and fiber supply to enhance national security;
- supporting production of healthy and safe food for consumers;
- expanding and developing domestic markets;
- training the next generation of agriculturalists; and
- fueling innovation to keep American farmers at the forefront of productivity.

The National Institute of Food and Agriculture (NIFA) is committed to advancing these principles and encourages applicants to actively engage farmers, ranchers, and foresters when applying for funding opportunities to ensure relevancy and adherence to them. NIFA also encourages agricultural leaders to engage in the peer review panel process to ensure American producers are better served through research, education, and extension activities.

Projects submitted under this NOFO should align with [USDA Secretary’s Memorandum 1078-020](#) Directive on Departmental Research and Development Priorities:

1. Increasing Profitability of Farmers and Ranchers
2. Expanding Markets and Creating New Uses of U.S. Agricultural Products
3. Protecting the Integrity of American Agriculture from Invasive Species
4. Promoting Soil Health to Regenerate Long-Term Productivity of Land
5. Improving Human Health through Precision Nutrition and Food Quality

Stakeholder Input. NIFA seeks comments on all Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO) 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 NOFOs and uses

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. Please use the following subject line: Response to the Federally Recognized Tribes Extension Program NOFO.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This notice identifies the objectives for Notice of Funding Opportunity Federally Recognized Tribes Extension Program (FRTEP) projects, deadlines, funding information, eligibility criteria for projects and applicants, and application forms and associated instructions.

NIFA requests applications for the FRTEP for FY 2026. The amount available for this program in FY 2026 is approximately \$4.0 million. This NOFO will begin a new four-year continuation funding cycle.

The intent and mission of this competitive grant program is to:

1. Establish an Extension presence and support Extension outreach on Federally Recognized Indian Reservations and Tribal jurisdictions of Federally Recognized Tribes.
2. Provide resources to address long-standing needs among Federally Recognized Tribes.
3. Continue the Land-grant mission of providing education and research-based knowledge to those who might not otherwise receive it.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

ANNOUNCEMENT 2

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY 4

TABLE OF CONTENTS 5

TABLE OF KEY INFORMATION..... 6

PART I. FUNDING OPPORTUNITY DESCRIPTION 7

A. Legislative Authority 7

B. Purpose and Priorities 7

PART II. AWARD INFORMATION 9

A. Available Funding..... 9

B. Application Restrictions..... 9

C. Project and Grant Types..... 9

D. Ethical Conduct of Funded Projects 10

PART III. ELIGIBILITY INFORMATION..... 11

A. Eligibility Requirements 11

B. Cost Sharing or Matching 11

PART IV. APPLICATION AND SUBMISSION 12

A. Method of Application..... 12

B. Content and Form of the Application 12

C. Funding Restrictions 16

PART V. APPLICATION REVIEW REQUIREMENTS 17

A. NIFA’s Evaluation Process..... 17

B. Evaluation Criteria 17

C. Organizational Management Information..... 19

D. Application Disposition 19

PART VI. AWARD ADMINISTRATION 20

A. General..... 20

B. Administrative and National Policy Requirements..... 20

C. Expected Program Outputs and Reporting Requirements 20

PART VII. OTHER INFORMATION 21

A. Use of Funds and Changes in Budget..... 21

B. Confidential Aspects of Applications and Awards..... 22

C. Regulatory Information..... 22

D. Language Access Services..... 22

APPENDIX I: AGENCY CONTACT..... 23

APPENDIX II: GLOSSARY OF TERMS..... 24

APPENDIX III: DEFINITIONS 25

TABLE OF KEY INFORMATION

Table 1: Key Dates and Deadlines..... 2
Table 2: Program Key Information..... 8
Table 3: Steps to Obtain Application Materials..... 12
Table 4: Help and Resources 12
Table 5: Key Application Instructions..... 13

PART I. FUNDING OPPORTUNITY DESCRIPTION

A. Legislative Authority

The Secretary of Agriculture, acting through NIFA, shall establish appropriate extension education programs on Indian Reservations and Tribal jurisdictions ([7 U.S.C. 5930](#)). This program is listed under Section 3(d) of the Act of May 8, 1914, Smith-Lever Act, ch. 79, 38 Stat. 372, [7 U.S.C. 341 et seq.](#) Section 7403 of the Food, Conservation, and Energy Act of 2008 (FCEA) (P.L. 110-246) amended section 3(d) of the Smith-Lever Act to require funds to be awarded competitively.

B. Purpose and Priorities

The FRTEP, under assistance listing 10.500, will establish an extension presence and support extension outreach on Federally Recognized Indian Reservations and Tribal jurisdictions of Federally Recognized Tribes. This NOFO will begin a new four-year continuation funding cycle. The Project Director (PD) and/or Co-PD must attend one PD meeting during each project year.

The FRTEP seeks to continue the Land-grant mission of providing education and research-based knowledge to those who might not otherwise receive it. The program provides funding for Extension programs that address the unique needs of Tribal communities. The FRTEP supports the development and delivery of informal education and outreach activities, aiming to improve the quality of life and economic well-being of individuals and families on Tribal lands. Examples of extension outreach activities include but are not limited to: youth development programs, including 4-H for Tribal youth; farm and ranch productivity and management; management of natural resources; economic and workforce development; and human health and well-being.

NIFA encourages projects involving innovative agricultural technologies, including artificial intelligence (AI), that equip Tribal communities with the foundational knowledge and skills necessary to adapt to and thrive in an increasingly digital society and expose community members to educational and career pathways in AI for food and agricultural sciences.

The FRTEP programs supports [USDA Secretary's Memorandum 1078-010](#) *Clarifying the Application of Certain Executive Order to Federally Recognized Indian Tribes, American Indian Tribal Citizens, and the Native Hawaiian Community*.

Table 2: Program Key Information

	Title	Description
Program Code:	LP	
Program Code Name:	FRTEP	
ALN:	10.500	
Project Type:	Extension Projects	
Grant Type:	Standard	
Application Deadline	June 08, 2026	
Grant Duration:	48 Months	
Anticipated # of Awards:	37	
Minimum Award Amount:	\$102,000	
Maximum Award Amount:	\$102,000	

PART II. AWARD INFORMATION

A. Available Funding

The funds available for the FRTEP in FY 2026 is approximately \$4,000,000. Of this amount, approximately \$3,774,000 will be available to fund the first year of new projects as new continuation awards. Similar funding levels may be awarded for up to an additional three years, provided performance has been satisfactory, funding is available for this purpose, and continued support is in the best interests of the Federal Government and the public. USDA is not committed to funding any particular application or to making a specific number of awards.

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 NOFO.

B. Application Restrictions

NIFA will evaluate applications using the criteria described in [Part V](#) of this NOFO.

Applications for FY 2026 are limited to the following application types:

1. **New application.**—New applications will be evaluated using the criteria described in [Part V](#) of this NOFO and are subject to the due dates herein (see [Appendix III](#) for definition).

C. Project and Grant Types

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

1. Project Types

Extension Projects. Single-function Extension Projects conduct programs and activities that deliver science-based knowledge and informal educational programs to people, enabling them to make practical decisions. Delivery may range from community-based to national audiences and use communication methods from face-to-face to electronic or combinations thereof. Extension Projects may also include related matters such as certification programs, in-service training, client recruitment and services, curriculum development, instructional materials and equipment, and innovative instructional methodologies appropriate to informal educational programs.

Extension Projects must address one or more of the following key strategic actions:

- a. Support nonformal education to increase food and agricultural literacy of youths and adults;
- b. Promote science-based agricultural literacy by increasing understanding and use of food and agricultural science data, information, and programs;
- c. Build science-based capability in people to engage audiences and enable informed decision making;
- d. Develop new applications of instructional tools and curriculum structures that increase technical competency and ensure global competitiveness;
- e. Offer nonformal learning programs that increase accessibility to new audiences at the rate at which new ideas and technologies are tested and/or developed at the community-scale; and

- f. Develop programs that increase public knowledge and citizen engagement leading to actions that protect or enhance the Nation's food supply, agricultural productivity, community vitality, and/or public health and well-being.

These projects should lead to measurable, documented changes in learning, actions, or conditions in an identified audience or stakeholder group and should synthesize and incorporate a wide range of the latest relevant research results.

2. Grant Types

Standard Grants. Standard Grants support targeted original Extension projects. An eligible individual institution, independent branch campus, or branch institution of a state system may submit a grant application for project activities to be undertaken principally on behalf of its own students or faculty, and to be managed primarily by its own personnel. The applicant executes the project without the requirement of sharing grant funds with other project partners.

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 FRTEP must meet all the requirements discussed in this NOFO. 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 [About Grants](#) provides highly recommended information about grants and other resources to help understand the Federal awards process.

1862, 1890, and 1994 Land-grant Colleges and Universities are eligible to apply to the FRTEP (See [Part I, A](#) for legislative authority). Visit NIFA's [Land-grant University Directory](#) to view a list of NIFA Land-grant Colleges and Universities (1862, 1890, and 1994). Land-grant Colleges and Universities may subcontract to organizations not eligible to apply, provided such organizations are necessary for the conduct of the project.

USDA **will not accept** competitive applications for grants and cooperative agreements submitted for dangerous gain-of-function research, as defined in [Section 8 of E.O. 14292](#).

Duplicate or Multiple Submissions. Duplicate or multiple submissions are not allowed. NIFA will disqualify both applications if an applicant submits duplicate or multiple submissions.

B. Cost Sharing or Matching

No Match Required.—The FRTEP has 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 NOFO electronically; no other method or response is accepted. The electronic application for this NOFO and additional resources are available on [Grants.gov](https://www.grants.gov) and [Grants 101](#). **Table 3** provides instructions on how to obtain an electronic application. **Part III** of the [NIFA Grants Application Guide](#) contains detailed information regarding the [Grants.gov](https://www.grants.gov) registration process. [The NIFA Grants Application Guide](#) is contained in the specific funding opportunity package or a sample of the guide can be found [here](#). When applying for a NIFA award, it is important to reference the version of the guide that is included in the specific funding opportunity application package.

Table 3: Steps to Obtain Application Materials

Steps	Action
Step One: Register	<i>New Users</i> to Grants.gov must register early with Grants.gov prior to submitting an application).
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-SLBCD-011858 , 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 Support
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 Customer service business Hours 24/7, except Federal holidays .	Email: grantapplicationquestions@usda.gov Business hours: Monday thru Friday, 7a.m. – 5p.m. ET, except Federal holidays .

B. Content and Form of the Application

The [NIFA Grants Application Guide](#) is part of the corresponding application package for this NOFO. The NOFO overrides the [NIFA Grants Application Guide](#) if there is a discrepancy between the two documents. 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 NOFO. 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 NIFA Grants Application Guide)
Attachments must be in a portable document format (PDF) format.	Part IV
Check the manifest of submitted files to verify attachments are in the correct format.	Part IV
Conduct an administrative review of the application before submission.	Part IV
Follow the submission instructions.	Part IV
Provide an accurate email address, where designated, on the SF-424 R&R.	Part V
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 90 days of the application deadline.	N/A

SF 424 R&R Cover Sheet. See **Part V** of the [NIFA Grants Application Guide](#) for the required certifications and assurances.

SF 424 R&R Project/Performance Site Location(s). See **Part V** of the [NIFA Grants Application Guide](#).

R&R Other Project Information Form. See **Part V** of the [NIFA Grants Application Guide](#).

1. **Field 7. Project Summary (PS)/Abstract.** The PS must show how the project goals align with the goals of the FRTEP. See **Part V** of the [NIFA Grants Application Guide](#) for instructions and suggested templates.

The PS must:

- a. Include the project title (must be descriptive of the project and the Tribe served)
- b. Include a concise project description (not to exceed 250 words)
- c. Include a statement of project objectives
- d. Include the name of the Tribe to be served and affiliated Tribe(s) and/or organizations of all PDs and Co-PDs
- e. Indicate if a FRTEP award has been received in previous years

2. **Field 8. Project Narrative (PN).** The PN must not exceed 15 1.5-spaced pages of written text and up to three 1.5-spaced additional pages for figures and tables. The PN must be formatted using 1-inch margins and 12-point, Times New Roman font. The font size for tables should be no smaller than 11 points, Times New Roman. The page limits outlined here ensure fair 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. Applicants should organize the PN using the sections below and include the section titles as prompts for each section. The PN must include all the following:

- a. **Introduction.** Provide a brief introduction to the Land-grant Institution's Cooperative Extension Service and the Tribal community to be served. Describe the current problem, situation, or opportunity to be addressed and explain why it is important. Discuss the project's alignment with the Land-grant Institution's long-range goals and the commitment of the applicant's institution and key personnel to execute the project and increase extension outreach capacity on the Reservation or Tribal jurisdiction served. Specify the qualifications of the personnel who will be directly engaged with the project including their expertise in working on reservations with Tribal communities.
- b. **Rationale and significance.** Describe the potential benefit of the proposed project to the Tribal community. Explain how the project addresses community needs and concerns and enhances participants' lives. Describe the significance of the extension project to U.S. agriculture, noting any critical impact on human health and well-being and rural communities.
- c. **Community and audience analysis.** Identify the intended target population(s) of the Extension project. Provide evidence that the applicant has gathered input from the Tribe to understand and align with the needs and concerns of the community. Describe the process used to identify, gather, and analyze input and feedback from stakeholders. A memorandum of understanding with the Tribe(s) served is required and must be included as a PDF attachment in Field 12—Add Other Attachments.
- d. **Objectives and anticipated outcomes.** Provide a clear, concise, and logically numbered list of project objectives. Describe the anticipated outcomes associated with each of the project objectives. Outcomes must describe specific changes or results that may occur because of the project and that will constitute "success" for the initiative. Outcomes may include benefits realized through project activities such as changes in participants' skills, behavior, or quality of life, and positive changes in conditions in the community served or reductions in negative conditions.
- e. **Approach.** Clearly and concisely state the activities the project team will implement to accomplish each of the stated objectives. Describe how resources and personnel will be used to conduct the project. Describe the strategy to enhance communication, data sharing, and reporting of project outcomes and impacts to stakeholders and partners. Explain how the approach will contribute to the success of the project. Outline the process for review by an Institutional Review Board (IRB) if activities involving human subjects are planned at any time during the proposed project. If the project involves Extension activities using vertebrate animals under the jurisdiction or control of the institution, outline the process for review by an Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee (IACUC).
- f. **Collaborative relationships.** Detail any collaborative work or plans for cooperation with a 1994 Land-grant Institution, Tribal Department, Tribal outreach office, and/or other Tribal entities. Describe how FRTEP personnel will build or continue building relationships with their partners. Detail any institutional involvement and/or support.
- g. **Project timeline.** Illustrate the progress and successful implementation of the project over the four-year award period by providing an integrated timeline of project activities, major milestones, assessment, and reporting. Plan for a tentative project

- start in September 2026 and develop the project timeline accordingly. If key or other personnel must be hired to advance the project, address the timeline for hiring and how the project will progress in the event of delayed hiring. Address the timeline for IRB and/or IACUC review, if applicable. The use of a table or Logic Model is acceptable for this section.
- h. **Project Evaluation.** Explain how project activities and outcomes will be measured to determine the extent to which the stated objectives have been achieved. Describe how quantitative metrics, feedback from project stakeholders, and participant success stories will be used to demonstrate the impact of the project on the target audience, convey value to stakeholders and the institution, inform project planning, and indicate the potential for project persistence beyond the period of USDA support. Indicate who on the project team will provide the project assessment oversight.
 - i. **Summary of previous work.** Provide a summary of previous work with the Tribe served. For applicants with no prior FRTEP or Tribal Extension project, explain in detail how stakeholder feedback from prior work with the Tribe/Tribal Community is incorporated into this project and how this project builds upon previous work with the Tribe/Tribal Community. For applicants with a current or previous FRTEP or Tribal Extension project, describe the institution’s and FRTEP project team’s relationship with the Tribe/Tribal Community. Explain in detail how stakeholder feedback from prior work is incorporated into this project and how this project builds upon previous successes and relationships with the Tribe/Tribal Community. Detail what key personnel learned from the previous project and outline how this project will address any realized or perceived pitfalls seen in the previous project. Describe the extent to which the project efficiently used the allocated budget to meet project objectives. Discuss any lapse in service and describe any actions taken to address continuity of service to the Tribe/Tribal Community.
3. **Field 12. Add Other Attachments.** See **Part V** of the [NIFA Grants Application Guide](#).
- a. **Data management plan (DMP).** 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 must clearly describe the expected data type and format, plans for storing and preserving the data during and after the project, and the procedures for data access, sharing, and protection. The DMP must not exceed 2 1.5-spaced pages. Save the DMP as “DMP” in PDF format. The DMP will be considered during the merit review process (see [Part V, B](#) of this NOFO, [NIFA’s Data Management Plan](#)).
 - b. **Memorandum of Understanding (MOU).** An MOU with the served Tribe outlining the responsibilities of both the FRTEP and the Tribe is required. The MOU must include a detailed scope of work for both the Tribe and the Land-grant Institution. Save the letter(s) as “MOU_ Organization Name_ Tribe” in PDF format. The MOU will be considered during the merit review process.

R&R Senior/Key Person Profile (Expanded). See **Part V** of the [NIFA Grants 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** of the [NIFA Grants Application Guide](#)).

R&R Budget. See **Part V** of the [NIFA Grants Application Guide](#).

1. Indirect costs (IDC) are not permitted.
2. Prepare a budget for each of the four years of the project (**\$102,000 per year**) plus a cumulative four-year budget of \$408,000.
3. **Budget Justification.** A detailed budget narrative should be provided for each project year. There should be a direct correlation between the items in the budget, the activities described in the PN, and the budget justification. Each item in the budget must be justified in the proposal. Costs (e.g., salary and wages, materials, equipment, travel, etc.) must be broken down and itemized rather than shown as lump sums. While budgets should account for necessary travel, virtual or hybrid meetings may be considered.
4. All subawards must include a budget and budget narrative for each year they are part of the grant.
5. **Project Director Meeting.** The PD or Co-PD must attend one PD meeting during each project year. Reasonable travel expenses must be included as part of the project budget.

Supplemental Information Form. See **Part V** of the [NIFA Grants Application Guide](#).

1. **Field 2. Program to which the applicant is applying.** Enter the program name “Federally Recognized Tribes Extension Program (FRTEP)” and the program code “LP.” Accurate entry is critical.
2. **Field 8. Conflict of Interest List.** See **Part V** of the [NIFA Grants Application Guide](#).

C. Funding Restrictions

1. **No Indirect Costs (IDC).** IDC is not authorized for this NOFO.
2. The following costs, although not all-inclusive, are not permitted:
 - a. Entertainment, including tickets to shows or sporting events
 - b. Meals (except when provided to maintain the continuity of a meeting)
 - c. Alcoholic beverages
 - d. Costs associated with banquets and award ceremonies
 - e. Awards and Certificates of Achievement
 - f. Expenses not directly related to the program (e.g., childcare services, kitchen help, etc.)
 - g. Renovation and refurbishment of research, Extension, and education space
 - h. Tuition remission
 - i. Incentives

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 set forth in this NOFO. All administrative requirements must be met in order for the application to proceed to the next level of review. Second, a scientific peer-review process will be used to technically evaluate applications that have met 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, taking into account 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., agricultural producers, range or forest managers/operators, researchers, educators, evaluators, 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 the reviewer's area of expertise, geographic area, and entity type, as appropriate.
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

The criteria below are not equal in merit but are listed in descending order of importance. NIFA will use the following criteria to evaluate applications to this program:

1. **Potential for advancing the quality of Tribal Extension.** This criterion assesses the project's likelihood of having an impact upon and advancing the quality of food, agriculture, natural resources, workforce development, and youth development by strengthening institutional capacities to meet clearly delineated needs in Tribal communities. The extent to which the proposed project enhances participants' lives and benefits Tribal stakeholders, rural communities, Indian Country, and U.S agriculture is included.
2. **Previous work.** This criterion considers previous work with the Tribe/Tribal Community through a FRTEP, Tribal Extension, or other work with the Tribe/Tribal Community. Stakeholder involvement in project development, implementation, and evaluation is demonstrated and clearly aligns with USDA, stakeholder, and community needs and concerns. This includes the extent to which the previous project met or exceeded stated project objectives. The project shows continuity of work from prior Extension projects or other projects with the Tribe/Tribal Community and shows the benefit to stakeholders. Project evaluations clearly demonstrate a need for project continuation and conveys the value and impact of the work with the Tribe/Tribal Community.
3. **Proposed approach and cooperative linkages.** This criterion evaluates the soundness of the proposed approach including objectives, methodology, timetable, expected outcomes, and identification and dissemination of project impacts. Project objectives, activities, and outcomes are clearly described, appropriate, and aligned. Anticipated outcomes and impacts are relevant to the participants, Tribal community, and Indian Country. A clear plan is articulated for project management, including time allocated for attainment of objectives and delivery of products, maintenance of partnerships, and strategies to communicate outcomes and impacts to stakeholders and the public. The extent to which the quality of support provided to the applicant's institution through its partnerships and collaborative initiatives, and on the potential cooperative linkages likely to evolve as a result of this project, is included.
4. **Institutional capability and capacity building.** This criterion gauges the institution's capability to implement and provide the support required to advance and sustain Extension outreach capacity. The extent to which (1) the Land-grant Institution's long-range goals are aligned with the project; and (2) the institution is committed to the project, has adequate institutional resources (e.g., support personnel, facilities, equipment, etc.) available to execute the project, and plans for project continuation or expansion beyond the period of USDA support, is included. If a partner organization or community collaborators will be included in the project, their involvement, including roles and responsibilities, is clear and defined. The extent to which the MOU with the Tribe served provides a framework for successful collaboration and outreach is included.
5. **Key personnel.** This criterion assesses the adequacy of the number and qualifications of key personnel. The extent to which: (1) key personnel have provided continuity of service to the project; and (2) have sufficient expertise and time to implement project objectives, establish and maintain partnerships, and assess and disseminate project outcomes and impacts, is included. The number of other personnel involved in the project is adequate to support the project. The extent to which other personnel have been involved in project development is included.

6. **Budget and cost-effectiveness.** This criterion gauges the extent to which the budget clearly allocates sufficient resources to carry out Extension activities that will lead to desired outcomes. Budget line items are sufficiently itemized and justified to determine the necessity and reasonableness of the costs to carry out project activities and achieve project objectives. The extent to which the project maximizes the use of limited resources and optimizes educational value for the dollar is included. Budget allocations between the applicant and any collaborating organization(s) are appropriate for the amount of time committed to the project by the subawardee(s), if applicable.
7. **Project evaluation.** This criterion assesses the proposed project evaluation and performance monitoring plans. The project evaluation methods used to identify, gather, and analyze feedback from project stakeholders and participants are reasonable and appropriate for Extension activities. The process to measure project objectives and assess impact is consistent with the project timeline. The extent to which assessment results and feedback from participants are communicated to the institution and stakeholders and is used to inform project planning is included. The project identifies the key person(s) who will monitor and report project performance.
8. **Data management plan.** This criterion evaluates the soundness of the institution's Data Management Plan (DMP). The DMP is appropriate, clearly described, and feasible. It assesses the extent to which the DMP describes: (1) the expected data type and format; (2) plans for storing and preserving the data during and after the project; and (3) the procedures for data access, sharing, and protection.

C. Organizational Management Information

Applicants must submit specific management information prior to an award and update the information as needed. Applicants may only need to provide an update if there was a change in previously provided 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 NOFO. 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 NOFO may be used only for the purpose for which they are granted in accordance with the program-specific laws and regulations, NIFA General Awards Administrative Provisions ([7 CFR part 3430, subparts A through E](#)), USDA Regulations for Grants and Agreements ([2 CFR Chapter IV](#)), Office of Management and Budget Uniform Guidance ([2 CFR part 200](#)), [NIFA-specific terms and conditions](#), [USDA General Terms and Conditions for Federal Awards](#), and approved budget and project plans

The Notice of Award document will provide pertinent instructions and information as described in [2 CFR 200.211](#).

B. Administrative and National Policy Requirements

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

C. Expected Program Outputs and Reporting Requirements

Output and reporting requirements are included in the [award terms and conditions](#). If there are any program or award-specific award terms, they will be identified in the Award Notice.

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 required);
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 [2 CFR Part 300 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, [48 CFR Part 31, Contract Cost Principles and Procedures](#);
5. Transfer of funds budgeted for participant support costs to other categories of expense ([2 CFR 200.456 Participant support costs](#));
6. Sub-awarding, transferring or contracting out of any work under a Federal award, including fixed amount sub-awards (see [2 CFR 200.333, 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;
7. Changes in the approved cost-sharing or matching provided by the non-Federal entity;
8. The need for additional Federal funds to complete the project;
9. Salary rates of pay exceeding an Executive Level IV salary range (see “Rates of Pay for the Executive Schedule” under the “Executive & Senior Level Employee Pay Tables” header at <https://www.opm.gov/policy-data-oversight/pay-leave/salaries-wages/>) require prior NIFA approval. This rate does not include any fringe benefits, general and administrative (G&A), overhead, or other expenses. Requests for approval must include the salary rate of pay and a justification for the rate and be sent to the Authorized Departmental Officer (ADO) to awards@usda.gov;
10. No more than 50 percent of the total dollars of this award may be subcontracted to another party(ies) without prior written approval of the ADO, except subcontracts to Federal agencies;
11. Transferring funds between the construction and non-construction work under a Federal award; and
12. A no-cost extension (meaning, an extension of time that does not require the obligation of additional Federal funds) of the period of performance, other than any one-time extension authorized by the Federal agency in accordance with paragraph 2 CFR 200.308(g)(2). All requests for no-cost extensions should be submitted at least 10 calendar days before the conclusion of the period of performance. The Federal agency may approve multiple no-cost extensions under a Federal award if not prohibited by Federal statute or regulation.

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](#).

D. Language Access Services

NIFA offers language access services, such as interpretation and translation of vital information, free of charge. If you need interpretation or translation services, please [visit NIFA Language Access Services](#).

APPENDIX I: AGENCY CONTACT

For Programmatic questions please email: NIFATribalprograms@usda.gov

For administrative questions related to;

1. Grants.gov, see [Part IV](#) of this NOFO
2. Other NOFO or application questions, please email grantapplicationquestions@usda.gov
3. Awards under this NOFO, please email awards@usda.gov

U.S. Postal Mailing Address:

National Institute of Food and Agriculture
U.S. Department of Agriculture
P.O. Box 419205, MS 10000
Kansas City, MO 64141-6205

Courier/Package Delivery Address:

National Institute of Food and Agriculture
U.S. Department of Agriculture
2312 East Bannister Road, MS 10000
Kansas City, MO 64141-3061

APPENDIX II: GLOSSARY OF TERMS

Glossary of Terms

Agriculture and Food Research Initiative – AFRI
Artificial Intelligence – AI
Assistance Listing Number – ALN
Authorized Departmental Officer – ADO
Authorized Representative – AR
Agricultural Research, Extension, and Education Reform Act of 1998 – AREERA
Coordinated Agricultural Project – CAP
Centers of Excellence – COE
Data Management Plan – DMP
Federally Recognized Tribes Extension Program – FRTEP
Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee – IACUC
Institutional Review Board – IRB
Memorandum of Understanding – MOU
National Institute of Food and Agriculture – NIFA
Notice of Funding Opportunity – NOFO
Project Director - PD
Project Narrative - PN
Project Summary - PS
Research, Education, and Economics – REE
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.

Definitions

Continuation Award:

An award instrument by which NIFA agrees to support a specified level of effort for a predetermined period of time with a statement of intention to provide additional support at a future date, provided that performance has been satisfactory, appropriations are available for this purpose, and continued support would be in the best interest of the Federal Government and the public.

Matching:

The process through which a grant recipient matches 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.