Capacity Building Grants for Non-Land Grant Colleges of Agriculture Program (NLGCA)

Fiscal Year (FY) 2018 Request for Applications (RFA)

APPLICATION DEADLINE: May 25, 2018

ELIGIBILITY: See Part III, A of RFA

United States Department of Agriculture
National Institute of Food and Agriculture

NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF FOOD AND AGRICULTURE; U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

CAPACITY BUILDING GRANTS FOR NON-LAND GRANT COLLEGES OF AGRICULTURE PROGRAM (NLGCA)

INITIAL ANNOUNCEMENT

CATALOG OF FEDERAL DOMESTIC ASSISTANCE: This program is listed in the Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance under **10.326.**

DATES: Applications must be received by **5 p.m. Eastern Time** on **May 25, 2018**. Applications received after this deadline will normally not be considered for funding (see Part IV, C of this RFA). Comments regarding this request for applications (RFA) are requested within six months from the issuance of this notice. Comments received after that date will be considered to the extent practicable.

STAKEHOLDER INPUT: We at the National Institute of Food and Agriculture (NIFA) seek your comments about this RFA. We will consider your comments when we develop the next RFA for the program, if applicable, and we'll use them to 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)). Submit your written stakeholder comments by the deadline set forth in the DATES portion of this notice via email to Policy@nifa.usda.gov. (This email address is only for receiving comments regarding this RFA and *not* for requesting information or forms.) In your comments, please state that you are responding to the Capacity Building Grants for Non-Land Grant Colleges of Agriculture Program RFA.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY: NIFA requests applications for the Capacity Building Grants for Non-Land Grant Colleges of Agriculture Program (NLGCA) for fiscal year (FY) 2018 to make competitive grants to NLGCA Institutions to assist in maintaining and expanding their capacity to conduct education, research, and outreach/extension activities related to food, agriculture, natural resources, and human sciences (FANH). The anticipated amount available for grants in FY 2018 is approximately $4.8 million. This RFA is being released prior to the passage of an appropriations act for FY 2018. Enactment of additional continuing resolutions or an appropriations act may affect the availability or level of funding for this program.

This notice identifies the objectives for **NLGCA** projects, deadline dates, funding information, eligibility criteria for projects and applicants, and application forms and associated instructions needed to apply for a NLGCA grant.

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PART I—FUNDING OPPORTUNITY DESCRIPTION

A. Legislative Authority

This program is administered under the provisions of Section 1473F of the National Agricultural Research, Extension, and Teaching Policy Act of 1977 (NARETPA), as added by Section 7138 of the Food, Conservation, and Energy Act of 2008, (7 USC 3319i).

B. Purpose and Priorities

The National Institute of Food & Agriculture (NIFA) is designated as the lead Federal Agency that supports higher education in the food and agricultural sciences (FANH). In this context, NIFA has specific responsibility to initiate and support projects to strengthen higher education teaching programs in the food and agricultural sciences.

The purpose of this program is to assist NLGCA Institutions in maintaining and expanding their capacity to conduct education, research, and outreach/extension activities relating to the FANH sciences. NLGCA Institutions may use the funds to maintain and expand capacity:

(A) to successfully compete for funds from Federal grants and other sources to carry out educational, research, and outreach/extension activities that address priority concerns of national, regional, State, and local interest;

(B) to disseminate information relating to priority concerns to:
(i) interested members of the agriculture, renewable resources, and other relevant communities;
(ii) the public; and
(iii) any other interested entity;

(C) to encourage members of the agriculture, renewable resources, and other relevant communities to participate in priority education, research, and outreach/extension activities by providing matching funding to leverage grant funds; and

(D) through:
(i) the purchase or other acquisition of equipment and other infrastructure (not including alteration, repair, renovation, or construction of buildings);
(ii) the professional growth and development of the faculty of the NLGCA Institution; and
(iii) the development of graduate assistantships.

NIFA is soliciting applications for the NLGCA Program that will align to the mission and goals of the following:

(1) USDA Strategic Plan (http://nifa.usda.gov/resource/usda-strategic-plan-fy-2014-2018), specifically addressing Goal 1.
(2) USDA Research, Education and Economics (REE) Action Plan (March 2014 version, https://nifa.usda.gov/resource/ree-action-plan), specifically addressing Goal 6.
(3) NIFA Strategic Plan (2014-2018) (https://nifa.usda.gov/resource/nifa-strategic-plan-

fy2014-fy2018), specifically addressing Strategic Goal No. 1.

Program Priorities

Applications that address the national challenge to increase the number and diversity of students entering food and agriculture-related science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) disciplines are encouraged.

Applications are encouraged to submit proposals that will result in building linkages with other institutions (including other colleges and universities, units of State governments, and private sector entities) having a significant ongoing commitment to the food and agricultural sciences generally and to the specific Need Area(s) for which a grant is requested (see below). The goals of such joint initiative should include maximizing the development and use of limited resources (including faculty, facilities, and equipment) by generating a critical mass of expertise and activity focused on a targeted Need Area(s); increasing cost-effectiveness through achieving economies of scale; strengthening the scope and quality of a project's impact; and promoting coalition building likely to transcend the project's lifetime and lead to future ventures

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. NLGCA teaching applications must demonstrably incorporate a leadership development component to equip students with technical and leadership abilities upon graduation.

Specific activities may include:

- Developing practical applications to increase understanding of leadership roles, including critical thinking, problem solving, and communication skills; ethics and professionalism; and working in teams;
- Connecting the academic classroom experience with daily leadership roles and organizational activities;
- Providing opportunities for mentoring and shadowing; and
- Organizing leadership academies, workshops, trainings, etc.

Incorporation of Social Sciences and Enhancing Impacts

The NLGCA Program supports social and behavioral science disciplines and applications that embrace multi-disciplinary efforts that integrate biological and social sciences. The social and behavioral sciences are 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 diets; and alleviating poverty by fostering economic opportunity. The incorporation of social sciences can result in relevant expertise and professional skills employers anticipate and value.

Global engagement:

> NIFA supports global engagement that advances U.S. agricultural goals. To attain the agency's goals for U.S. agriculture, global competence of our nation's agricultural workforce, and safe and nutritious food security in a growing world, NIFA recognizes that collaboration with international partners can contribute to advances in U.S. agriculture. In an increasingly interconnected world, these U.S. advances may have global importance. Thus, applications in response to NIFA programs are strongly encouraged to include collaborations with international partners, but may only be submitted by eligible U.S. institutions. Such applications may include subcontracts to international partners or other institutions and must clearly demonstrate benefits to the U.S. Additional guidance on including international activities is provided on the NIFA Global Engagement Programs webpage" https://nifa.usda.gov/program/global-engagement-programs.

NLGCA encourages, but does not require, projects that develop content suitable for delivery through eXtension (https://extension.org/).

PART II—AWARD INFORMATION

A. Available Funding

The anticipated amount available for NLGCA grants in FY 2018 is approximately $4.8 million. This RFA is being released prior to the passage of an appropriations act for FY 2018. Enactment of additional continuing resolutions or an appropriations act may affect the availability or level of funding for this program. There is no commitment by USDA to fund any particular application or to make a specific number of awards.

The Automated Standard Applications for Payment System (ASAP), operated by the Department of Treasury's Bureau of the Fiscal Service, is the designated payment system for awards resulting from this RFA. For more information see https://www.fiscal.treasury.gov/fsservices/gov/pmt/asap/asap_home.htm.

Key Information:

Program Code Name: Capacity Building Grants for Non-Land Grant Colleges of Agriculture
Program Code: NLGCA
CFDA: 10.326
Maximum # of Awards per Institution: 2
Maximum # of Applications per institution: NA
Submission Due Date: May 25, 2018 (5:00pm Eastern Time)

Project Types	Project Duration	Total Maximum Award
Regular	2-3 years	$150,000
Planning/Conference	2-3 years	$30,000
Collaborative-Joint	2-3 years	$300,000
Collaborative-LCI	3 years	$750,000

B. Types of Applications

In FY 2018, you may submit applications to the NLGCA Program as one of the following grant types of requests:

New application. This is a project application that has not been previously submitted to the NLGCA Program. We will review all new applications competitively using the screening for administrative requirements, review panel evaluation of proposals using evaluation criteria and selection process described in Part V—Application Review Requirements.

Resubmitted application. This is an application that had previously been submitted to the NIFA but not funded. Project Directors (PDs) must respond to the previous review panel summary (see Response to Previous Review, Part IV). We must receive resubmitted applications by the relevant due dates. We will evaluate resubmitted applications in competition with other pending applications in the appropriate area to which they are assigned and review them according to the same evaluation criteria (Part V, B) as new applications. If you are submitting a resubmission application, enter the NIFA-assigned proposal number of the previously-submitted application in the Federal field (Field 4 on the form).

C. Activity and Project Types

1. Activity Types

The NLGCA Program is accepting applications for four activity types (described below in this subpart):

- **a.** Education
- **b.** Research
- **c.** Outreach/Extension
- **d.** Integrated

Each of the Activity Types include Need Areas. Applications must demonstrate how the chosen Activity Type and Need Area will support the legislatively authorized purpose of this program, listed in Part I. B. Projects must address a demonstrated and/or documented issue/problem/challenge of national, regional, state, or local interest within the FANH sciences. This can be undertaken through a variety of mechanisms, approaches, or strategies within the Activity Type.

a. <u>Education Projects</u>:

Applications with an education/teaching focus must address at least one of the following six **Education Need Areas** (II.C.1.a. 1-6) listed directly below. Proposed education focused activities must support for-credit coursework (academic curriculum), leading to a degree within the broadly defined FANH sciences. Projects must be innovative; have potential for adoption by other academic institutions; exhibit broad-based applicability beyond a single course or an individual instructor; have a strong potential for institutionalization; and must be supported by evidence based studies, publications, or practices.

<u>Education Need Areas</u>:

1) Curriculum Design, Materials Development, Library Resources and Instruction Delivery Systems

To enhance the NLGCA Institution's capacity to promote new and improved curricula, instructional materials, and other learning resources to increase the quality of curricula in order to attract, recruit, and retain students in the FANH sciences fields. The objective of the Need Area is to stimulate the development and use of exemplary education models and materials incorporating the most recent advances in subject matter and research on teaching and learning theory. Projects should include integration of research, education and extension/outreach and be multidisciplinary. Learner-centered instructional techniques, or other improvements in teaching and student learning are encouraged. Projects must demonstrate how the product or education program will reach large audiences efficiently and effectively, provide hands-on learning experiences, extend learning beyond the classroom, reinforce recent research on how to motivate students to learn, retain, apply, and transfer knowledge, skills, and competencies, and/ or integrate and synthesize knowledge. The choice for which strategy to employ must be based on the most current research or studies and references must be included.

Projects may emphasize, but are not limited to: the development of courses of study, degree programs, and instructional materials; 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; the use of new approaches to the study of traditional subjects; the introduction of new subjects; or new applications of knowledge pertaining to agriscience and agribusiness content. The end goal is to have these activities fully institutionalized so they can be sustained and not just a one-time activity, in order to show impacts on the institution's educational capacity.

2) Scientific Instrumentation for Education

To provide students and faculty in science oriented courses with suitable and modern equipment that involves them in work essential for food and agricultural sciences education and research programs. Applications may include, but are not limited to: acquiring new, state-of-the-art instructional, laboratory, classroom, and research scientific equipment; upgrading existing equipment, or replacing non-functional or obsolete equipment.

3) Student Recruitment, Retention, and Educational Equity

To enhance educational equity for under-represented students, and to strengthen student recruitment and retention programs in order to promote the future strength of the Nation's professional and technical workforce in the food and agricultural sciences. Applications may include, but are not limited to: projects to attract increased numbers of students from under-represented groups; engagement with communities/collaborators/or other partners in utilizing or employing students and graduates; development and/or implementation of agricultural and science literacy programs at the high school level; and, mentoring programs and other initiatives for student retention.

4) Experiential Learning

To further the development of student scientific and professional competencies through experiential learning programs. The projects might include, but are not limited to: experiential learning in laboratory research or field-based internships that support topics in FANH sciences; establish instructional methodologies which engage students in experiential learning opportunities (i.e. service learning, case studies, or undergraduate research projects); or career and higher education counseling.

5) Professional Development for Faculty Members

To enhance the NLGCA Institution's capacity to advance faculty development in the areas of teaching competency and leadership, subject matter expertise, or student recruitment and advising skills, in order to better advise and provide students the experience or knowledge that will encourage them to pursue advanced postsecondary degrees in the FANH sciences, or prepare them for the food and agricultural sciences workforce. Training of targeted faculty recipients can be formal or informal and must be relevant to the identified educational needs of the students, who will be the beneficiaries of such faculty development. Any faculty recipient of support must meet the requirements of an eligible participant.

6) Collaborative Interaction with Other Academic Institutions

To enhance the NLGCA institution's capacity to promote partnerships with secondary, two-year postsecondary, or other postsecondary academic institutions to support postsecondary instruction (i.e., providing coursework targeted at undergraduate students, but that may also be available for advanced placement credit for secondary students; for transfer credit from associate-degree programs into baccalaureate-level programs; or for postsecondary faculty development that includes research sabbaticals), in order to encourage and facilitate transfer and matriculation into postsecondary programs within the food and agricultural sciences. Emphasis between secondary and higher education institutions may focus on, but is not limited to, the development and use of articulation agreements, 2+2 or other similar arrangements (meaning completing an associate's degree in two years and then a bachelor's in two years, or any other composite of schooling leading to a higher degree) advanced placement credit transfer, or the sharing of faculty and facilities. Partnerships, collaborative arrangements and shared resources between institutions (including course credit sharing arrangements) are encouraged.

Projects must contribute to the academic community's understanding about how new strategies are transferred to diverse settings and about how they impact student learning. Evaluation plans shall explore opportunities for adapting new strategies in diverse educational settings. Projects that specifically address challenges to achieving widespread adoption of proven practice are especially encouraged. **Note: NLGCA grant funding may not be used to provide student scholarships or other tuition-remission activity**

b. <u>Research Projects</u>:

Applications with a research focus must address at least one of the following **Research Need Areas** (II.C. 1. b.1-3) listed directly below. **Research Need Areas** may encourage student assistantships. Such student learning opportunities must emphasize team-oriented, problem-solving, decision-making situations in the context of addressing real-world research experiences. Projects addressing student assistantships must: (1) demonstrate how the experience will produce qualified and well trained graduates; (2) contain an evaluation process involving both the faculty or mentor to assure that students meet project objectives; and (3) document that the field of science under consideration is experiencing a shortage of scientific and professional personnel, and how the project plans to address this deficiency. Individual students may be supported under this opportunity for up to three years (including summers, semesters, or semester breaks). Requested grant funds may be used as stipends for students while they are working in research/field settings. (**However, a NLGCA grant <u>may not</u> fund student scholarships or other tuition-remission activity**). Students will be required to prepare written and oral summaries of the experiential learning gained through this opportunity. To attract high-caliber students, stipends should be competitive with alternative employment options. A modest amount of funds may be requested for materials/supplies to facilitate a student's broad exposure to research/field techniques and methodologies. Grant recipients are encouraged to take advantage of any related paid internship opportunities provided by County, State, Federal, business and industry sources.

Research Need Areas:

1) Studies and Experimentation in Food and Agricultural Sciences
To advance the body of knowledge within the FANH sciences, projects addressing this Need Area are encouraged to focus on multidisciplinary and interdisciplinary research activities addressing systems oriented, critical issues, rather than single, discipline-specific research studies.

2) Applied Studies in the Food and Agricultural Sciences
To apply the body of knowledge in those natural and social sciences that comprise the food and agricultural sciences to address real-world problems, including applied research activities focusing on community and economic development issues related to food, nutrition, conservation, and renewable natural resources.

3) Centralized Research Support Systems
To innovate and establish centralized research support systems (including but not limited to: technology-based information delivery systems, digital or physical storage and maintenance of data, and expert service centers) that meet national needs or serve regions of NLGCA institutions, or provide research support more economically, thereby freeing up resources for other research uses.

c. Outreach/Extension Projects:

Applications with an outreach/extension focus must address at least one of the following **Outreach/Extension Need Areas** (II.C. 1. c. 1-7) listed directly below. Outreach/Extension projects generally focus on a primary, targeted, beneficiary consisting of individuals and communities outside of a formal, academic program setting. Applications may choose to develop studies that have relevancy and application within the communities that these institutions serve.

Outreach/Extension Need Areas:

1) 4-H, or Other, Similar Youth Development Activity
To cultivate important life skills in youth that build character and assist them in making appropriate life and career choices. At-risk youth targeted in such projects shall be encouraged to participate in academic retention and enrichment programs.

2) FANH Sciences
To improve research and educational programs that help individuals learn new ways to produce income through alternative enterprises; improve marketing strategies and management skills; and assist farmers, ranchers, and foresters to improve productivity through sound resource management strategies and marketing.

3) Leadership Development
To train outreach/extension professionals and volunteers to deliver programs in agriculture, gardening, health and safety, family and consumer issues; and to support Agriculture in the Classroom, 4-H youth development, or other similar programs that encourage greater involvement and leadership roles within the community.

4) Natural Resources
To inform landowners and homeowners how to use natural resources wisely and to protect the environment with educational programs.

5) Human, Family and Consumer Sciences
To help families become resilient and healthy by teaching nutrition, food preparation skills, positive child care, parenting, family communication, financial management, and health care strategies.

6) Community and Economic Development
To assist local governments, community, and non-profit organizations to investigate and create viable options for economic and community development.

7) Technology-based Information Delivery Systems
To promote improvements in the delivery of benefits of food and agricultural sciences to producers and consumers, particularly those who are currently disproportionately low in receipt of such benefits.

d. Integrated Projects:

An Integrated Project includes at least two of the three functions of the agricultural knowledge system (i.e., education, research, and outreach/extension) within a project. The functions addressed in the project must be focused around a problem or issue and must be interwoven throughout the life of the project to complement and reinforce one another. The functions should be interdependent and necessary for the success of the project and no more than two-thirds of the project's budget may be focused on a single component.

For Integrated projects that include an Education component, note that routine use of graduate and postdoctoral students as personnel on research projects is not considered education for the purposes of this program. Only students actively engaged in the scholarship of research or outreach/extension projects are considered as education. Actively engaged students may contribute to presentations, articles, posters, and other expressions of scholarship that reflect their own work on the PD's project.

For Integrated projects that include an Outreach/Extension component, activities will synthesize and incorporate a wide range of relevant research results. However, research-related activities such as publication of papers or speaking at scientific meetings are not considered "Outreach/Extension" for the purpose of an Integrated Project.

2. Project Types

The following is a list of available project types under this RFA.

(a) Regular. 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. Applicants from a single institution may request up to $150,000 (total, not per year) for a Regular Project.

(b) Planning Activity/Conference. Applicants in this Project Type may request up to $30,000 (total conference, not per year) to facilitate strategic planning session(s) required of faculty, industry, professional association, community leaders, or other necessary participants for the specific purpose of developing a formal plan leading to a subsequent submission of a collaborative grant as described directly below in D.3.a. and b. **A Planning Activity/Conference grant application may not be submitted in the same year for which a collaborative grant application for the same project is also submitted.**

(c) Collaborative. Collaborative Grants support projects with at least one additional partner or a multi-partner approach Collaborative Grants should build linkages to generate a critical mass of expertise, skill and technology to address education/teaching programs related to the food, agricultural, and natural resources, and human sciences. Grants can reduce duplication of efforts and/or build capacity and should be organized and led by a strong applicant with documented project management knowledge and skills to organize and carry out the initiative. The partners must share grant funds (see explanation of required funds distribution percentage among partners in the definition).

1) Joint Grants (Applicant + One or more partners).
   Applicants may request up to $300,000 (total, not per year) for a Joint Project Proposal. In a Joint Grant, the applicant executes the project with assistance from at least one additional partner. The partner(s) must share grant funds (see explanation of required funds distribution percentage among partners in the definition of a Joint Project Proposal in Part VIII, D.).

2) Large-scale comprehensive initiatives (LCI) (Applicant + two or more partners).
   Applicants may request up to $750,000 (total, not per year) for a large-comprehensive initiative (LCI) Project Proposal. In an LCI Project Proposal, the applicant executes the project with assistance from at least two additional partners. Additional partners must share grant funds (see explanation of required funds distribution percentage among partners in the definition of a LCI Project Proposal in Part VIII, E.). An LCI project differs from a Joint Project Proposal in project scope and impact. LCI Project Proposals must support a multi- partner approach to solving a **major state or regional challenge** facing the agricultural sciences at the postsecondary level. LCI Project Proposals are characterized by multiple partners (each providing a specific expertise) organized and led by a strong applicant with documented project management ability to organize and carry out the initiative.

   Note: LCI Projects must include both the R&R Budget and the R&R Subaward Budget Attachment Forms. The forms shall clearly identify the total grant funding anticipated for the applicant and each partner to demonstrate the required sharing percentage. All expenditures for the applicant and all partners shall be further itemized in the Budget Justification. LCI Project Proposal funds do not have to be divided equally among project years, nor do they need to be divided equally among project partners.

LCI projects must include a statement on expected impacts of the project as well as an Evaluation Plan to measure success.

D. Responsible and Ethical Conduct of Research

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 shall, upon request, make available to NIFA the policies, procedures, and documentation to support the conduct of the training.

For information about the Responsible and Ethical Conduct of Research, see http://nifa.usda.gov/responsible-and-ethical-conduct-research.

PART III—ELIGIBILITY INFORMATION

A. Eligible Applicants

Applications may only be submitted by a Non-Land Grant College of Agriculture (NLGCAs) certified as such by the National Institute of Food and Agriculture. In order for an institution to qualify as a NLGCA, it must be a public college or university offering a baccalaureate or higher degree in the study of food and agricultural sciences, as defined in 7 U.S.C. 3103(9). A list of NLGCA's certified by NIFA can be found at https://nifa.usda.gov/resource/nlgca-list. Award recipients may subcontract to organizations not eligible to apply to this grants program, providing such organizations are necessary for the conduct of the project.

Section 7101 of the Agricultural Act of 2014 required NIFA to establish a process through which institutions may apply for designation as a NLGCA. To request that NIFA provide certification of NLGCA status, an Authorized Representative must go to: http://www.nifa.usda.gov/webform/request-non-land-grant-university-designation and complete a web-based form indicating the institution meets the qualifications. Within 30 days of submission, NIFA will provide the administrative point of contact specified on the request, with a certification of NLGCA designation or a response indicating why the request for certification is being denied. You must attach this certification to your application in order to be eligible to apply (see Part IV, B, 3. Field 12).

Additionally, section 7101 of the Agricultural Act of 2014 (Public Law 113-79), amended 7 U.S.C. 3103 to allow Hispanic-serving Agricultural Colleges and Universities (HSACUs) and State-certified non-land-grant institutions eligible to receive funds under the McIntire-Stennis Cooperative Forestry Act of 1962 to opt out of their respective designation to qualify as Non-Land Grant Colleges of Agriculture. Please see the Federal Register Notice published on May 22, 2014 for more information (https://www.federalregister.gov/articles/2014/05/22/2014-11851/process-for-non-land-grant-college-of-agriculture-nlgca-designation).

Institutions that are eligible to receive funds under the McIntire-Stennis Cooperative Forestry Program and did not opt out of that status by October 13, 2015, will not be eligible to request designation as NLGCA and submit applications in response to this RFA.

For the purposes of this program, the individual branches of a college or university that are separately accredited as degree-granting institutions as indicated per the Official List of Certified Non-Land Grant Colleges of Agriculture, are treated as separate institutions, and are therefore eligible to apply for NLGCA Program awards. Separate branches or campuses of a college or university that are not individually accredited as degree-granting institutions are not treated as separate institutions, and are therefore not eligible to submit an application. Accreditation must be conferred by an agency or association recognized by the Secretary of the U.S. Department of Education.

NLGCA applicants may submit (as the lead applicant) any number of applications in response to this RFA; however, your institution will be limited to a maximum of two (2) grant awards as the lead (applicant) institution. Your institution may participate in any number of NLGCA-funded projects as a partner institution in any given year. However, a Project Director is limited to one funded-project, for which they are the lead Project Director in the FY.

Failure to meet an eligibility criterion by the application deadline may result in the application being excluded from consideration or, even though an application may be reviewed, will preclude NIFA from making an award.

B. Cost Sharing or Matching

NIFA does not require matching support for this grants program and matching resources will not be factored into the review process as evaluation criteria.

PART IV—APPLICATION AND SUBMISSION INFORMATION

A. Electronic Application Package

Only electronic applications may be submitted via Grants.gov to NIFA in response to this RFA. We urge you to submit early to the Grants.gov system. For information about the pre-award phase of the grant lifecycle see http://www.grants.gov/web/grants/learn-grants/grants-101/pre-award-phase.html.

New Users of Grants.gov

Prior to preparing an application, we recommend that the Project Director/Principal Investigator (PD/PI) first contact an Authorized Representative (AR, also referred to as Authorized Organizational Representative, or AOR) to determine if the organization is prepared to submit electronic applications through Grants.gov. If not (e.g., the institution/organization is new to the electronic grant application process through Grants.gov), then the one-time registration process must be completed **PRIOR** to submitting an application. It can take as long as two weeks to complete the registration process so it is critical to begin as soon as possible. In such situations, the AR should go to **"Register," in the top right corner of the Grants.gov web page (or go to** http://www.grants.gov/web/grants/register.html**), for information on registering the institution/organization with Grants.gov.** Part II,1 of the NIFA Grants.gov Application Guide contains detailed information regarding the registration process. Refer to item 2, below, to locate the "NIFA Grants.gov Application Guide."

Steps to Obtain Application Package Materials

To receive application materials:

1. You must download and install a version of Adobe Reader compatible with Grants.gov to access, complete, and submit applications. For basic system requirements and download instructions, see http://www.grants.gov/web/grants/applicants/adobe-software-compatibility.html. Grants.gov has a test package that will help you determine whether your current version of Adobe Reader is compatible.

2. To obtain the application package from Grants.gov, go to http://www.grants.gov/web/grants/applicants/download-application-package.html and enter the funding opportunity number where appropriate

   Funding Opportunity Number: USDA-NIFA-NLGCA-006540.

   Click "Search." On the displayed page, click the corresponding link to continue. A Grant Application Package is tied to a particular funding opportunity. You may submit an application ONLY to the particular funding opportunity to which the Grant Application Package is associated.

   Contained within the application package is the "NIFA Grants.gov Application Guide." This guide contains an introduction and general Grants.gov instructions, information about how to use a Grant Application Package in Grants.gov, and instructions on how to complete the application forms.

If you require assistance to access the application package (e.g., downloading or navigating Adobe forms) **or submitting the application,** refer to resources available on the Grants.gov website (https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/support.html). Grants.gov assistance is also available at:

Grants.gov customer support
800-518-4726 Toll-Free or 606-545-5035
Business Hours: 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Closed on federal holidays.
Email: support@grants.gov

Grants.gov iPortal (see https://grants-portal.psc.gov/Welcome.aspx?pt=Grants): Top 10 requested help topics (FAQs), Searchable knowledge base, self-service ticketing and ticket status, and live web chat (available 7 a.m. - 9 p.m. EST).
Have the following information available when contacting Grants.gov:

a. Funding Opportunity Number (FON)
b. Name of agency you are applying to
c. Specific area of concern

B. Content and Form of Application Submission

Electronic applications are to be prepared following Parts V and VI of the NIFA Grants.gov Application Guide. This guide is part of the corresponding application package (see Section A of this part). The following is **additional information** you need to prepare an application in response to this RFA. **If there is discrepancy between the two documents, the information contained in this RFA is overriding.**

Note the attachment requirements (e.g., PDF) in Part III, Section 3 of the guide. ANY PROPOSALS THAT ARE NON-COMPLIANT WITH THE REQUIREMENTS (e.g., content format, PDF file format, file name restrictions, and no password protected files) WILL BE AT RISK OF BEING EXCLUDED FROM NIFA REVIEW. Grants.gov does not check for NIFA required attachments or whether attachments are in PDF format; see Part III, Section 6.1 of the guide for how to check the manifest of submitted files. Partial applications will be excluded from NIFA review. We will accept subsequent submissions of an application until close of business on the closing date in the RFA (see Part V, 2.1 of the NIFA Grants.gov Application Guide for further information).

For any questions related to the preparation of an application, review the NIFA Grants.gov Application Guide and the applicable RFA. If assistance is still needed for preparing application forms content, contact:

a. Email: electronic@nifa.usda.gov
b. Phone: 202-401-5048
c. Business hours: Monday through Friday, 7 a.m. – 5 p.m. EST, excluding federal holidays.

1. SF 424 R&R Cover Sheet

Information related to the questions on this form is dealt with in detail in Part V, 2 of the NIFA Grants.gov Application Guide. See Part V, Section 2.17 of the NIFA Grants.gov Application Guide for the required certifications and assurances (e.g., Prohibition Against Entities Requiring Certain Internal Confidentiality Agreements).

2. SF 424 R&R Project/Performance Site Location(s)
Detailed information related to the questions on this form is available in Part V, 3 of the NIFA Grants.gov Application Guide.

3. R&R Other Project Information Form
Detailed information related to the questions on this form is available in Part V, 4 of the NIFA Grants.gov Application Guide.

a. Field 7. Project Summary/Abstract.
The summary should also include the relevance of the project to the goals of NLGCA. See Part V. 4.7 of NIFA Grants.gov Application Guide for further instructions and a link to a suggested template.

b. Field 8. Project Narrative.
NOTE: The Project Narrative shall not exceed 18 pages of written text (planning grants should not exceed 10 pages) and up to five additional pages for figures and tables. We have established this maximum 23 pages) to ensure fair and equitable competition. The Project Narrative must include all of the following:

Formatting of the Project Narrative is: 12 pt. font, New Times Roman, 1 inch margins, 1.5 spaced. Tables and Charts can be 10 pt. font and single spacing.

a. Introduction:

In the first line of the introduction include one or two codes from the following list of discipline codes (if your project includes an international component you must include I as one of the codes):

G- General Food, agricultural and human sciences (includes multidisciplinary projects)
M- Agribusiness (includes Management, Marketing, and Agricultural Economics)
E- Agricultural/Biological Engineering
S- Agricultural Social Sciences (includes Agricultural Education, Agricultural Communications, and Rural Sociology)
A- Animal Sciences
Q- Aquaculture
C- Conservation and Renewable Natural Resources (includes Forestry)
J- Entomology – Animal
T- Entomology – Plant
L- Environmental Sciences/Management
F- Food Science/Technology and Manufacturing
N- Human Nutrition
H- Human Sciences/Family and Consumer Sciences (excludes Human Nutrition)
I- International Education/Research (enhancement of U.S. programs)
P- Plant Sciences and Horticulture
B- Related Biological Sciences (includes General/Basic Biotechnology, Biochemistry, and Microbiology)
D- Soil Sciences
V- Veterinary Medicine/Science
W- Water Science

O- Other (Describe only if not listed above)

Include a clear statement of the long-term goal(s) and supporting objectives of the proposed activities. Summarize the body of knowledge or other past activities that substantiate the need for the proposed project. Describe ongoing or recently completed significant activities that relate to the proposed project including the work of key project personnel. Include preliminary data/information pertinent to the proposed project. In addition, this section is to include in-depth information on the following, when applicable:

(1) Estimates of the magnitude of the issues and the relevance to stakeholders and ongoing state-federal food and agricultural research, education, and extension programs; and
(2) Reasons for performing the work at the proposing institution.

b. Objectives: All applications must include a statement(s) of specific aims of the proposed effort in clear, concise, complete, and logically arranged terms.

c. Methods: Explicitly state the procedures or methodology you will apply to the proposed effort. This section is to include, but not necessarily be limited to, descriptions of:

(1) Stakeholder involvement in problem identification, planning, implementation, and evaluation;
(2) Proposed project activities, listed sequentially;
(3) Techniques to be employed in this project, including their feasibility and rationale;
(4) Expected results;
(5) How extension and education activities will be evaluated;
(6) How data will be analyzed or interpreted;
(7) Plans to communicate results to stakeholders and the public;
(8) Pitfalls that might be encountered; and
(9) Limitations to proposed procedures.

d. Project Timetable: The proposal outline is to include all important phases as a function of time, year by year, for the entire project, including periods beyond the grant funding period.

e. Logic Model: Applications must include elements of a logic model detailing the activities, outputs, and outcomes of the proposed project. This information may be provided as a narrative or formatted into a logic model chart. The logic model planning process is a tool that should be used in developing projects before writing the proposal. Two additional pages are allowed for this information. More information and resources related to the logic model planning process are provided at https://nifa.usda.gov/resource/logic-model-planning-process.

f. Evaluation Plan:
All projects, with the exception of planning grants, must have an evaluation plan as part of the Project Narrative (see Part IV, B.3., Field 8, 2.d.). The evaluation plan must include 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 in achieving its goals and for identifying positive and negative findings when the project is completed.

The project budget must contain funding to either hire an outside project evaluator, or to present

convincing evidence that an appropriate evaluator is already on staff and available to provide assistance with assessment and evaluation throughout the life of the project. As a guide, up to 10 percent of grant funds may be used to support this purpose.

The evaluation results will be reported both annually and in the final performance report (Part VI. D.). In addition to other measures that are project specific, the evaluation must include:

1. Student/faculty or other stakeholder learning and engagement;
2. The number of students/faculty or other stakeholders impacted by the project as a result of the proposed activities, either directly (through stipends, experiential learning opportunities, workshops, teaching experiences, etc.) or indirectly (through taking a developed course or program, or participating in a recruitment or retention program);
3. A summation of who benefited the most (and the least) from the project;
4. An explanation of what revisions, improvements, or enhancements you would make, funding permitting, to increase the value of this project in the future; and
5. Ideas about how to make projects like yours more cost-effective.

Response to Previous Review (if applicable):
This requirement only applies to Resubmitted Applications described in Part II, B. The Project Narrative attachment is to include two components: 1) a one-page response to the previous review (containing the previous proposal number in the first line) titled "Response to Previous Review" as the first page of the attachment and 2) the 23 page Project Narrative, as required (see Part IV, C. 3. b., above). The one-page "Response to Previous Review" does not count against the 23-page limit of the Project Narrative.

c. Field 12. Add Other Attachments
See Part V. Section 4.12 of the NIFA Grants.gov Application Guide (Field 12 on the form) for instructions regarding mandatory Felony Convictions or Tax Delinquent Status.

Non-Land Grant College of Agriculture (NLGCA) Certification. If you claim exemption from the new matching requirements as a NLGCA, then you must attach the NLGCA certification letter you requested and received from NIFA. Title the attachment 'NLGCA Certification' and save the file as 'NLGCACertification.' To request certification as an NLGCA, complete the form at http://www.nifa.usda.gov/form/form.html. Note that certification can take up to 30 days from submission of request form. **See Part III Section 3.1 of the NIFA Grants.gov Application Guide for NIFA attachment specifications.**

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 impacts 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 found at https://nifa.usda.gov/resource/recommended-format-submitting-expected-impacts

Recommended Format for Submitting Expected Impacts

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.

4. R&R Senior/Key Person Profile (Expanded)

Detailed information related to the questions on this form is available in Part V, 5 of the NIFA Grants.gov Application Guide. This section of the guide includes instructions about senior/key person profile requirements, and details about the biographical sketch and the current and pending support, including a link to a suggested template for the current and pending support.

5. R&R Personal Data – As noted in Part V, 6 of the NIFA Grants.gov Application Guide, the submission of this information is voluntary and is not a precondition of award. Part V.6 also notes the importance and use of the information.

6. R&R Budget
Detailed information related to the questions on this form is available in Part V, 7 of the NIFA Grants.gov Application Guide.

For further information and instructions regarding indirect costs, refer to Part V, section 7.9 of the NIFA Grants.gov Application Guide. For indirect cost funding restrictions, refer to Part IV, D. of this RFA.

During the tenure of a grant, PDs must attend at least one National Project Director's meeting in Washington DC, or any other announced location. The purpose of the meeting will be to discuss project and grant management, opportunities for collaborative efforts, future directions for education reform, and opportunities to enhance dissemination of exemplary end products/results of the projects. Reasonable travel expenses to attend this meeting may be included in the application's budget under travel expenses.

7. Supplemental Information Form
Detailed information related to the questions on this form is available in Part VI, 1 of the NIFA Grants.gov Application Guide.

Field 2. Program to which you are applying. Enter the program code name (i.e., enter "Capacity Building Grants for Non-Land Grant Colleges of Agriculture") and the program code (i.e., enter "NLGCA"). Note that accurate entry of the program code is very important for proper and timely processing of an application.

Field 8. Conflict of Interest List. See Part VI, 1.8 of the NIFA Grants.gov Application Guide for further instructions and a link to a suggested template.

C. Submission Dates and Times

We recommend that you conduct an administrative review of the application before submission of it via Grants.gov to ensure that it complies with all preparation instructions. An application checklist is included in Part VII of the NIFA Grants.gov Application Guide to assist with this review. The application should be checked for the following required items that might be overlooked (this is not an exhaustive list):

- Logic Model
- Current and Pending Support
- Curriculum vitae for PD and Co-PDs
- Conflict of Interest form
- NLGCA certification

Instructions for submitting an application are included in Part IV, Section 1.5 of the NIFA Grants.gov Application Guide.

Applications must be received by Grants.gov by **5 p.m. Eastern Time on May 25, 2018**. Applications received after this deadline will normally not be considered for funding.

If you have trouble submitting an application to Grants.gov, you should FIRST contact the Grants.gov Help Desk to resolve any problems. Keep a record of any such correspondence. See Part IV. A for Grants.gov contact information.

We send email correspondence to the AR regarding the status of submitted applications. We strongly encourage you to provide accurate email addresses, where designated, on the SF-424 R&R Application for Federal Assistance.

If the AR has not received correspondence **from NIFA** regarding a submitted application within 30 days of the established deadline, contact the Agency Contact identified in Part VII of the RFA and request the proposal number assigned to the application. **Failure to do so may result in the application not being considered for funding by the peer review panel. Once the application has been assigned a proposal number, you should cite this number on all future correspondence.**

D. Funding Restrictions

Section 713 of the Consolidated and Further Continuing Appropriations Act, 2017 (Pub. L. 115-31) limits indirect costs to 30 percent of the total Federal funds provided (or 42.857 percent of total indirect costs) under each award. Similar language may be included in the FY 2018 appropriation, therefore, when preparing budgets, you should limit your request for the recovery of indirect costs to the lesser of your institution's official negotiated indirect cost rate or the equivalent of 30 percent of total Federal funds awarded. See Part V section 7.9 of the NIFA Grants.gov Application Guide for further indirect cost information.

The use of grant funds to plan, acquire, or construct a building or facility is not allowed under this program. With prior approval, and in accordance with the cost principles set forth in 2 CFR part 200, some grant funds may be used for minor alterations, renovations, or repairs deemed necessary to retrofit existing teaching or research spaces in order to carry out a funded project. However, requests to use grant funds for such purposes must demonstrate that the work is essential to achieving the major purpose of the project. Grant funds may not be used for endowment investing.

Consistent with other competitive grant programs, NIFA has determined that grant funds awarded under this authority may not be used for student tuition remission, on-campus room and board, academic fees or other financial assistance (no scholarships or fellowships). Further, promotional items (e.g., T-shirts and other give-a-ways) and food functions (e.g., cookouts or other social meal gatherings) are considered 'entertainment' expenses, and are, therefore, also not allowed under NLGCA.

Faculty and students receiving Federal funds from this grants program for developmental activities or educational costs must be an eligible participant as defined in Part VIII, D – Definitions).

E. Other Submission Requirements

You should follow the submission requirements noted in Part IV, Section 1.5 in the document entitled "NIFA Grants.gov Application Guide."

For information about the **status of a submitted application**, see Part III, Section 6 of the NIFA Grants.gov Application Guide.

PART V—APPLICATION REVIEW REQUIREMENTS

A. General

We evaluate 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 technical review panel will evaluate applications that meet the administrative requirements.

We select reviewers based upon their training and experience in relevant scientific, extension, or education fields, taking into account the following factors:

- 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;
- the need to include experts from various areas of specialization within relevant scientific, education, or extension fields;
- 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;
- 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;
- the need to maintain a balanced composition with regard to minority and female representation and an equitable age distribution; and
- 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 **NLGCA** will recommend that your project be approved for support from currently available funds or be declined due to insufficient funds or unfavorable review.

NLGCA reserves the right to negotiate with the PD/PI and/or with 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.

We will send copies of reviews, ***not*** including the identity of reviewers, and a summary of the panel comments to the PD after the review process has been completed.

B. Evaluation Criteria

A reviewer's written evaluation entails two levels of assessment. First, the reviewer summarizes how well the application addressed each evaluation criterion. After the application has been assessed for strengths and weaknesses of each criterion, the reviewer then evaluates the overall likelihood that the project will have significant outcome and impact. These written reviews are used to begin panel discussions with other reviewers serving on the peer review panel. Through these discussions, peer review panelists come to consensus on the final rating and ranking of proposals. A complete description of NIFA's peer review process can be found at the NIFA website:

https://nifa.usda.gov/sites/default/files/resource/NIFA-Peer-Review-Process-for-Competitive-Grant-Applications_0.pdf

We will use the evaluation criteria below to review applications submitted in response to this RFA. The criteria below are not equal in merit but are listed in descending order of importance. Applications are evaluated primarily for overall merit, with emphasis placed on the proposed approach to advance quality of education, research or Outreach/ Extension using sound program management and strong cooperative linkages in order to build institutional capacity:

1. Potential for Advancing the Quality of Education, Research or Outreach/Extension.
This criterion is used to assess the likelihood that the project will have an impact upon and advance the quality of FANH sciences education, research or outreach/extension by strengthening institutional capacities to meet clearly delineated needs. Elements considered include institutional long-range goals, identification of a problem or opportunity to be addressed, justification for the project, innovation, advancing multidisciplinary and/or problem- based focus, and potential for adoption by other institutions and contribution to current body of knowledge in areas addressed. The proposed project must also show how it will contribute to the legislatively authorized purpose of this program. Potential project impacts must be stated.

2. Proposed Approach and Cooperative Linkages.
This criterion evaluates the soundness of the proposed approach including objectives, methodology, plan of operation, timetable, expected products and results, project evaluation, and dissemination plans. The project evaluation plan will be reviewed to determine the appropriateness of the methodologies to be used in assessing the accomplishment of stated products, results and measurable outcomes from the project. The proposed approach will be evaluated based on the soundness of the research concepts and educational principles, which may be documented through background literature or actual institutional data. Emphasis is placed on the quality of education, research or outreach/extension support provided to the applicant institution/organization through its partnerships and collaborative initiatives, and on the potential cooperative linkages likely to evolve as a result of this project. The application will also be reviewed to assess the effectiveness in addressing any perceived pitfalls and alternative strategies or approaches

3. Institutional Capability and Capacity-Building.
This criterion relates to the institution's capability to perform the project and the degree to which the project will strengthen its teaching, research or outreach/extension capacity. Elements considered include the institution’s commitment to the project, the adequacy of institutional resources (administrative, facilities, equipment, and/or materials) available to carry out the project, potential for academic or research enhancement, and plans for project continuation or expansion beyond the period of USDA support. Level of institutional data provided to show the institution’s ability to support the proposed project.

4. Key Personnel.
This criterion relates to the adequacy of the number, qualifications and expertise of key persons who will develop and carry out the project, and the qualifications of project personnel who will provide for the assessment of project results and impacts and the dissemination of these findings.

5. Budget and Cost-Effectiveness.
This criterion relates to the extent to which the total budget adequately supports the project and is cost effective. Elements considered include the necessity and reasonableness of costs to carry out project activities and achieve project objectives; the appropriateness of budget allocations between the applicant and any collaborating institution(s); the adequacy of time committed to the project by key project personnel; and the degree to which the project maximizes the use of limited resources, optimizes value for the dollar, achieves economies of scale, leverages additional funds, and focuses expertise and activity on high-priority education, research or outreach/extension.

C. Conflicts of Interest and Confidentiality

During the peer evaluation process, we take extreme care to prevent any actual or perceived conflicts of interest that may impact review or evaluation. See http://www.nifa.usda.gov/business/competitive_peer_review.html for further information about conflicts of interest and confidentiality as related to the peer review process.

D. Organizational Management Information

Specific management information relating to an applicant shall be submitted one-time, with updates on an as-needed basis. This requirement is part of the responsibility determined prior to the award of a grant identified under this RFA, if such information has not been provided previously under this or another NIFA program. We will provide you copies of forms recommended for use in fulfilling these requirements as part of the pre-award process. Although an applicant may be eligible based on its status as one of these entities, 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 involved or a determination that an applicant is not responsible based on submitted organizational management information).

E. Application Disposition

An application may be withdrawn at any time before a final funding decision is made regarding the application. Each application that is not selected for funding, including those that are withdrawn, will be retained by NLGCA for a period of three years.

PART VI—AWARD ADMINISTRATION

A. General

Within the limit of funds available for such purpose, the NIFA awarding official shall make grants to those responsible, 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 shall 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 at 7 CFR part 3430, subparts A through E.

B. Award Notice

The award document will provide pertinent instructions and information including, at a minimum, the information described in 2 CFR 200.210.

See http://www.nifa.usda.gov/business/awards/awardterms.html to view current NIFA award terms and conditions.

C. Administrative and National Policy Requirements

Several federal statutes and regulations apply to grant applications considered for review and to project grants awarded under this program. These may include, but are not limited to, the ones listed on the NIFA web page – http://nifa.usda.gov/federal-regulations.

NIFA Federal Assistance Policy Guide—a compendium of basic NIFA policies and procedures that apply to all NIFA awards, unless there are statutory, regulatory, or award-specific requirements to the contrary—is available at http://nifa.usda.gov/policy-guide.

Responsible and Ethical Conduct of Research - Refer to Part II, D for more information.

D. Expected Program Outputs and Reporting Requirements

The output and reporting requirements are included in the award terms and conditions (see http://www.nifa.usda.gov/business/awards/awardterms.html for information about NIFA award terms). If there are any program or award-specific award terms, they will be identified in the award. Project Directors Meeting: During the tenure of a grant, Project Director(s) must attend at least one national Project Directors meeting in Washington, D.C., or any other announced location. The purpose of the meeting will be to discuss project and grant management, opportunities for collaborative efforts, future directions for education reform, and opportunities to enhance dissemination of exemplary end products/results.

PART VII—AGENCY CONTACTS

Applicants and other interested parties are encouraged to contact:

Programmatic Contact –

Dr. Ariela Zycherman; National Program Leader, Division of Community and Education; National Institute of Food and Agriculture; 4341 Waterfront Centre, 800 9th Street, SW Washington, DC 20024; Telephone: (202) 720-0384: E-mail: NLGCA@nifa.usda.gov

Administrative/Business Contact –

Adriene Woodin; Branch Chief, Office of Grants and Financial Management; National Institute of Food and Agriculture; 1400 Independence Avenue SW, Stop 2201 Washington, DC 20250-2201; Telephone: (202) 401-4326; Fax: (202) 401-1804; Email: awoodin@nifa.usda.gov.

Rochelle McCrea; Team Leader, Team I; Office of Grants and Financial Management; National Institute of Food and Agriculture; 1400 Independence Ave., SW; STOP 2271 Washington, DC 20250-2271; Telephone: (202) 401-2880; Fax: (202) 401-6271; Email: rmccrea@nifa.usda.gov.

PART VIII—OTHER INFORMATION

A. Use of Funds; Changes

1. 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.

2. 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:

(i) Change in the scope or the objective of the project or program (even if there is no associated budget revision requiring prior written approval).

(ii) Change in a key person specified in the application or the federal award.

(iii) The disengagement from the project for more than three months, or a 25 percent reduction in time devoted to the project, by the approved project director or principal investigator.

(iv) The inclusion, unless waived by the federal awarding agency, of costs that require prior approval in accordance with 2 CFR 200 Subpart E—Cost Principles of this part 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 Part 31, "Contract Cost Principles and Procedures," as applicable.

(v) The transfer of funds budgeted for participant support costs as defined in §200.75 Participant support costs to other categories of expense.

(vi) Unless described in the application and funded in the approved federal awards, the subawarding, transferring or contracting out of any work under a federal award, including fixed amount subawards as described in §200.332 Fixed amount subawards. This provision does not apply to the acquisition of supplies, material, equipment, or general support services.

(vii) Changes in the approved cost-sharing or matching provided by the non-federal entity.

(viii) The need arises for additional federal funds to complete the project.

The awardee will be subject to the terms and conditions identified in the award. See http://www.nifa.usda.gov/business/awards/awardterms.html for information about NIFA award terms.

B. Confidential Aspects of Applications and Awards

When an application results in an award, it becomes a part of the record of NIFA transactions, available to the public upon specific request. Information that the Secretary of Agriculture determines to be of a confidential, privileged, or proprietary nature will be held in confidence to the extent permitted by law. Therefore, any information that the applicant wishes to have considered as confidential, privileged, or proprietary should be clearly marked within the application. We will retain for three years a copy of an application that does not result in an award. Such an application will be released only with the consent of the applicant or to the extent required by law. An application may be withdrawn 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. Definitions

Refer to 7 CFR 3430, Competitive and Noncompetitive Non-formula Financial Assistance Programs--General Award Administrative Provisions, and Subpart L – Capacity Subpart L—Capacity Building Grants for Non-Land Grant Colleges of Agriculture Program, for applicable definitions for this NIFA grant program.

Agriculture, renewable resources, and other similar disciplines means specifically for this NLGCA Program- those **food and agricultural sciences** topical areas defined below.

Capacity Building means enhancing and strengthening the quality and depth of an institution's research and academic programs as evidenced by its: faculty expertise, scientific and technical resources, research environment, curriculum, student experiential learning opportunities, scientific instrumentation, library resources, academic standing and racial, ethnic, or gender diversity of its faculty and student body, faculty and student recruitment and retention programs, and organizational structures and reward systems for attracting and retaining first-rate research and teaching faculty or students.

Citizen or national of the United States means (1) a citizen or native resident of a State; or, (2) a person defined in the Immigration and Nationality Act, 8 U.S.C. 1101(a) (22), who, though not a citizen of the United States, owes permanent allegiance to the United States.

"College" and "university" – From 7 U.S.C. 3103, mean an educational institution in any State which: (i) 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, (ii) is legally authorized within such State to provide a program of *education* beyond secondary education, (iii) provides an educational program for which a bachelor's degree or any other higher degree is awarded, (iv) is a public or other nonprofit institution, and (v) is accredited by a nationally recognized accrediting agency or association. Inclusions: The terms "college" and "university" include research foundations maintained by a college or university.

Education – See 'Teaching", below.

Eligible institution means a NLGCA institution (non-land-grant college of agriculture), as defined in this Section below.

Eligible participant means an individual who is a citizen or national of the United States as defined

in this section.

Food and agricultural sciences,– from 7 USC Section 3103, means basic, applied, and developmental research, extension, and teaching activities in food and fiber, agricultural, renewable energy and natural resources, forestry, and physical and social sciences, including activities relating to the following:

(a) Animal health, production, and well-being.
(b) Plant health and production.
(c) Animal and plant germ plasm collection and preservation.
(d) Aquaculture.
(e) Food safety.
(f) Soil, water, and related resource conservation and improvement.
(g) Forestry, horticulture, and range management.
(h) Nutritional sciences and promotion.
(i) Farm enhancement, including financial management, input efficiency, and profitability.
(j) Home economics (Family and Consumer Sciences).
(k) Rural human ecology.
(l) Youth development and agricultural education, including 4-H clubs.
(m) Expansion of domestic and international markets for agricultural commodities and products, including agricultural trade barrier identification and analysis.
(n) Information management and technology transfer related to agriculture.
(o) Biotechnology related to agriculture.
(p) The processing, distributing, marketing, and utilization of food and agricultural products.

Joint grant means an application for a project: (1) which will involve the applicant institution working in cooperation with one or more other entities not legally affiliated with the applicant institution, including other schools, colleges, universities, community colleges, junior colleges, units of State government, private sector organizations, or a consortium of institutions; and (2) where the applicant institution and each cooperating entity will assume a significant role in the conduct of the proposed project. To demonstrate a substantial involvement with the project, the applicant institution/organization submitting a joint project proposal must **retain at least 30 percent but not more than 70 percent of the awarded funds and no cooperating entity may receive less than 10 percent of awarded funds.** Only the applicant institution must meet the definition of an *eligible institution*/organization as specified in this RFA; other entities participating in a joint project proposal are not required to meet the definition of an *eligible institution*/organization.

Large-scale, Comprehensive Initiative (LCI) grant means an application for a project: (1) which will involve the applicant institution/organization working in cooperation with **two or more** other entities not legally affiliated with the applicant institution, including other schools, *college*s, *universities*, community colleges, junior colleges, units of State government, private sector organizations, or a consortium of institutions; and (2) where the applicant institution and each cooperating entity will assume a significant role in the conduct of the proposed project. To demonstrate a substantial involvement with the project, **the applicant institution/organization submitting a LCI proposal must retain at least 30 percent but not more than 70 percent of the awarded funds and no cooperating entity may receive less than 10 percent of awarded funds.** Only the applicant institution must meet the definition of an *eligible institution* as

specified in this RFA; other entities participating in a *joint project proposal* are not required to meet the definition of an *eligible institution*. LCI Project Proposals must support a multi-partner approach to solving a major state or regional challenge in agricultural sciences education at the postsecondary level. LCI Project Proposals are characterized by multiple partners (each providing a specific expertise) organized and led by a strong applicant with documented project management ability to organize and carry out the initiative.

NLGCA institution (non-land-grant college of agriculture) – From 7 U.S.C. Section 3103, means a public *college* or *university* offering a baccalaureate or higher degree in the study of agriculture or forestry. **Exclusions - The terms "NLGCA Institution" and "non-land grant college of agriculture" do not include** (and, therefore, the following institutions **are not eligible to apply** to this grants program):

1. Hispanic-serving agricultural colleges and universities:
A list of the institutions certified and eligible to apply as HSACUs for grants under FY 2018 RFAs, including this RFA, will be made available at http://nifa.usda.gov/resource/official-list-hispanic-serving-agricultural-colleges-and-universities-hsacu. Institutions appearing on the list are granted HSACU certification by the Secretary of Agriculture for the period starting Oct. 1, 2017, and ending Sept. 30, 2018. Certifications are valid for FY 2018 only. Email additional questions on HSACU eligibility to hsacu@nifa.usda.gov.; or

2. Any institution designated under:
    a. the Act of July 2, 1862 (commonly known as the "First Morrill Act"; 7 U.S.C. 301 et seq., or the '1862 Land-Grants');
    b. the Act of August 30, 1890 (commonly known as the "Second Morrill Act") (7 U.S.C. 321 et seq., or the '1890 Land-Grants');
    c. the Equity in Educational Land-Grant Status Act of 1994 (Public Law 103-382; 7 U.S.C. 301 note, or the '1994 or Tribal Colleges Land-Grants'); or
    d. Public Law 87-788 (commonly known as the "McIntire-Stennis Cooperative Forestry Act") (16 U.S.C. 582a et seq.).

Outcomes means specific, measurable project results and benefits that, when assessed and reported; indicate the project's plan of operation has been achieved. Measurable outcomes include:

- Results are intended or unintended consequences of the project, (e.g., "...additional course materials now available online to reinforce student learning during non-classroom hours");
- Products may be actual items or services acquired with funds, (e.g., "…mechanisms and content to transition existing course(s) or elements of course(s) for Web-based access" or "created new and innovative prevention and intervention initiatives"); and
- Impacts are a measure of the results by comparing 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".)

Regular grant means a proposal for a project: (1) where the applicant institution will be the sole entity involved in the execution of the project; or (2) which will involve the applicant institution

and one or more other entities, but where the involvement of the other entity or entities does not meet the requirements for a *joint project proposal* as defined in this section.

Sustainable Agriculture. From 7 USC Section 3103, means an integrated system of plant and animal production practices having a site-specific application that will, over the long-term: (A) satisfy human food and fiber needs; (B) enhance environmental quality and the natural resource base upon which the agriculture economy depends; (C) make the most efficient use of nonrenewable resources and on-farm resources and integrate, where appropriate, natural biological cycles and controls; (D) sustain the economic viability of farm operations; and (E) enhance the quality of life for farmers and society as a whole.

Teaching and education - From 7 USC Section 3103, means formal classroom instruction, laboratory instruction, and practicum experience in the food and agricultural sciences and matters relating thereto (such as faculty development, student recruitment and services, curriculum development, instructional materials and equipment, and innovative teaching methodologies) conducted by *colleges* and universities offering baccalaureate or higher degrees.

Underrepresented means proportionate representation as measured by degree recipients that is less than the proportionate representation in the general population: (i) As indicated by (A) The most current edition of the Department of Education's Digest of Education Statistics; (B) The National Research Council's Doctorate Recipients from United States Universities; or (C) Other standard statistical references, as documented by national survey data submitted to and accepted by the Secretary on a case-by-case basis.