U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
Foreign Agricultural Service

NOTICE OF FUNDING OPPORTUNITY
Cross-Border Plant Health Support in Africa

Application Submission Deadline: August 9, 2024

Summary
The U.S. Department of Agriculture, Foreign Agricultural Service, Trade and Regulatory Capacity Building, announces this funding opportunity to support the Technical Agricultural Assistance Program by issuing a new award(s). This opportunity is available to state agricultural experiment stations, state cooperative extension services, all colleges and universities, other research or education institutions and organizations, federal and private agencies and organizations, individuals, and any other organization, whether foreign or domestic and is intended to facilitate trade into and among African nations through improved plant health regulatory systems.

A. Program Description

The Foreign Agricultural Service (FAS) is a trade agency within the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) with the mission to promote U.S. agricultural exports. FAS seeks to liberalize global agricultural trade by supporting the global development of a strong rules-based trading system. Building on years of collaboration, USDA partners with the African Union (AU) to help develop and operationalize continental Sanitary and Phytosanitary (SPS) systems, to include collaboration with the Regional Plant Protection Organization (RPPO), the African Union Inter-African Phytosanitary Council (AU-IAPSC). AU-IAPSC has the mission to develop, promote and coordinate sustainable plant health systems among continental, regional and national actors for increased agricultural production and market access. They coordinate and provide support to the protection of plant resources for the welfare and economic development in the Member States (MS) of the AU. The objectives of the collaboration include facilitating trade, strengthening Africa's agricultural food systems, increasing food security, and mitigating the adverse effects of climate change by improving countries' ability to prepare and respond to new pest outbreaks using transparent, risk-based approaches. The projects will build on past collaborative efforts between FAS, the AU, and its Regional Economic Communities (RECs) and Member States.

Supported projects will further the implementation of the AU SPS Policy Framework and Plant Health Strategy for Africa (PHSA) and will build on prior activities aligning pesticide regulatory guidelines, implementing electronic (ePhyto) certification, and risk-based border inspection. The projects will improve phytosanitary communication and knowledge to strengthen institutional capacity and coordination for plant health systems. Activities will boost risk- and science-based phytosanitary policies and standards that facilitate trade through the strengthening of, and collaboration with, AU-IAPSC and/or RECs. This includes but is not limited to:

- Providing technical expertise in the implementation of trade facilitating AU-IAPSC and REC programs and activities
- Partnering with RECs to implement trade facilitating phytosanitary activities in support of the AU SPS Policy Framework, PHSA and the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA)
- Expanding on ongoing work related to risk-based phytosanitary border inspection and e-certification through working with AU-IAPSC, RECs, and the AfCFTA Secretariat as appropriate
- Providing technical support to AU-IAPSC and connecting with other ongoing initiatives such as the African Phytosanitary Program
- Supporting the development of continental and regional phytosanitary guidelines and policies in partnership with AU-IAPSC and RECs

A thorough understanding of the PHSA, the SPS Policy Framework, the AfCFTA and the Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Program (CAADP) is vital. Proposals should link with ongoing efforts from the International Plant Protection Convention (IPPC) under the Africa Phytosanitary Program (APP) as well as any efforts developed for Africa under other USDA initiatives. Successful applicants will propose a program of teaching, research, and/or extension activities to strengthen Africa's plant health systems and facilitate trade through transparent, risk-based approaches.

USDA technical support will reinforce PHSA adoption and implementation of the SPS Policy Framework at national, regional, and continental levels and lay the foundation for increased agricultural development and trade of safe food products under the AfCFTA.

Funding Opportunity Number
USDA-FAS-10960-0700-10.-24-001

Assistance Listing Number
10.960 Technical Agricultural Assistance

Authorizing Legislation
National Agricultural Research, Extension, and Teaching Policy Act of 1977, PL 95-113, as amended, 7 USC § 3291

B. Federal Award Information

Total Available Federal Funding: $277,000

The initial funding amount will be $277,000. Subject to availability of funding, a cumulative total of $2,000,000 may be available throughout the period of performance of the award. See Section H, Other Information, for additional information on incremental funding.

Anticipated Number of Awards:	2
Cost Share/Match Requirement:	None/Not Required
Projected Period of Performance Start:	September 1, 2024
Projected Period of Performance End:	August 31, 2027

Type of Assistance Instrument:
USDA/FAS anticipates that a Cooperative Agreement will be funded pursuant to this funding opportunity.

This type of agreement provides for substantial involvement between USDA/FAS and/or other USDA agencies, and the selected applicant in the performance of the project. This may include:

- close monitoring of the successful applicant's performance to verify the results proposed by the applicant;
- collaboration during performance of the scope of work;
- in accordance with 2 CFR 200.317 and 2 CFR 200.318, review of proposed procurement;
- approving qualifications of key personnel (USDA will not select the recipient's employees or contractors; but may disallow costs for specific individuals where required by statute or regulation); and
- review and comment on reports prepared under the cooperative agreement (the final decision on the content of reports rests with the recipient).

Additional Awards
USDA/FAS reserves the right to make additional awards under this solicitation, consistent with Agency policy and guidance, if additional funding becomes available after the original selections are made. Any additional selections for awards will be made no later than 6 months after the original selection decisions.

No Awards
USDA/FAS reserves the right to make no awards under this competition.

C. Eligibility Information

Eligible Applicants:
State agricultural experiment stations, State cooperative extension services, all colleges and universities, other research or education institutions and organizations, Federal and private agencies and organizations, individuals, and any other organization, whether foreign or domestic.

All applicants must have an active registration in the U.S. Government System for Award Management (www.sam.gov) before the application submission deadline of the announcement; applicants with inactive, expired, pending, or excluded listings will be deemed ineligible. Exceptions, waivers, or extensions will not be considered. Please contact the program officer(s)

listed in Section G, Federal Awarding Agency Contact, if you have questions about this requirement. Applicants with inactive, expired, pending, or excluded listings will be deemed ineligible. Exceptions, waivers, or extensions will not be considered. Please contact the program officer(s) listed in Section G, Federal Awarding Agency Contact, if you have questions about this requirement.

Threshold Criteria
Cost Share/Match Requirement: None/Not Required

Ineligible activities: If an application is submitted that includes any ineligible tasks or activities, that portion of the application will be ineligible for funding and may, depending on the extent to which it affects the application, render the entire application ineligible for funding.

Application packages submitted on expired/inactive standard forms, will be deemed ineligible. Applicants must ensure they are utilizing the active/nonexpired forms available on grants.gov.

Multiple Applications/Awards
An individual applicant may submit more than one application in response to this NOFO, and may be offered more than one award.

In cases where a single entity is selected for more than one award, USDA/FAS may request to combine the corresponding application(s) into a single award for ease of administration.

Substantial Compliance
All applications will be reviewed for eligibility and must meet the eligibility requirements described in Section C to be considered eligible. Applicants deemed ineligible for funding consideration as a result of the threshold eligibility review will be notified 5 business days of the ineligibility determination.

Applications must substantially comply with the application submission instructions and requirements set forth in Section D of this solicitation or else they will be rejected. However, where a page limit is expressed in Section D with respect to the application, or parts thereof, pages in excess of the page limitation will not be reviewed. Applicants are advised that readability is of paramount importance and should take precedence in application format, including selecting a legible font type and size for use in the application.

While these guidelines may establish the minimum type size requirements, applicants are advised that readability is of paramount importance and should take precedence in selection of an appropriate font for use in the application.

Evidence of Eligibility
Applicants are responsible for including documentation, if necessary, establishing that they meet the stated eligibility requirements, when it is not immediately obvious. Applicants should not presume that USDA/FAS is sufficiently familiar with their organization that this is unnecessary, and USDA/FAS will not make assumptions as to the nature of the applicant's organization.

D. Application and Submission Information

This announcement contains all information necessary to apply to this funding opportunity.

Deadline for Question Submission: August 2, 2024
Applicants may submit questions about this funding opportunity to the Section G contact.

Submission Dates and Times
Application Submission Deadline: August 9, 2024 at 11:59pm EDT (UTC -04:00)
Applications received after this time will not be accepted. Applicants are advised to make their submissions 1-2 days before this deadline in case of computer problems.

Anticipated Award Date: August 30, 2024

Content and Form of Application Submission
A complete application package must include:

- Standard Form SF-424, Application for Federal Assistance, showing the Unique Entity Identifier, and signed by the applicant, submitted on active nonexpired form.
- Standard Form SF-424A, Budget Information for Non-Construction Programs, showing the budget categorization and submitted on active nonexpired form. Applicants are advised to consult 2 CFR 200 Subpart E for guidance on proper categorization of cost items. An improper categorization will not itself be grounds for a determination of ineligibility but may delay approval and/or adversely impact the application's evaluation scoring.
- A detailed budget and narrative, in which cost items are quantified and described in sufficient detail to enable USDA/FAS to independently determine that the proposed costs are reasonable and allowable for the project and consistent with applicable regulations.
    - Since this award will be incrementally funded, the detailed budget and narrative should reflect a total of up to $2,000,000 for 3 years with a break down for every year, including $277,000 for the first year.
- A detailed project narrative or plan of operation must include:
    - A description of the activities to be undertaken, described in detail, with outputs and expected outcomes described qualitatively and quantitatively, indicating locations, timelines, optimal staffing level, and qualified personnel, and other factors that will demonstrate a well-designed activity in support of the objectives described in Section A. (Optimal staffing level refers to an adequate number of personnel in place to undertake the activities within the period of performance. Qualified personnel are those with demonstrated, successful practical experience implementing similar projects). To the extent that the application will need to identify additional staff or partners to undertake the work within the period of performance, a clear and reasonable plan should demonstrate how technical capacity will be evaluated and how partnership will occur.
    - The links between the proposed activities, program goals, and impacts should be stated, while being realistic, effective, and sound. The logic of the project should follow a chain of cause-and effect relationships with no significant causal gaps from one level in the causal hierarchy to the next.

- The applicant should demonstrate knowledge of SPS-related trade challenges, risk-based approaches, science-based policy, international capacity building approaches and regional harmonization African regulatory bodies, the IPPC, policies and regulations by USDA and other federal agencies, key agreements and documents such as the PHSA and AfCFTA, the construction and domestication process for sanitary and phytosanitary measures, risk management, pest management, inspection and border management, and an ability to gather data for and advise decisionmakers on policy documents.
- The applicant demonstrates awareness of what past efforts have succeeded or failed in improving plant health outcomes in Africa, and what peripheral issues must be worked around to achieve objectives
- Awareness of contextual factors for the target markets that may impact the type of activities reasonably expected to be successful or unsuccessful, such as entrenched policy positions, cultural norms, language skills needed, past or ongoing initiatives, proposed/existing regulations, target region needs and priorities, applicant's response in the target region, and/or regional trade agreements.
- The manner and extend to which the activities and measured progress will be made known to the general public and policymakers in the target region(s), and the anticipated effectiveness of such dissemination.
- A brief description of how the applicant will approach logistical hurdles and incorporate mid-course corrections to add or modify activities based on new or priority trade opportunities or barriers.
- Documents should demonstrate professional organization and formatting with limited spelling and grammatical errors.
- A description of applicant's experience with designing and implementing Monitoring and Evaluation (M & E) functions. Include a proposed results framework, theory of change and performance indicator table that illustrates how the proposed activities will advance the program goals and objectives described in Section A; and how to recognize progress/success through direct, objective, adequate, and practical criteria.

- Standard Form SF-LLL, Disclosure of Lobbying Activities, if applicable to the applicant

Programmatic Capability and Past Performance

Submit a list of federally [and/or non-federally] funded assistance agreements (assistance agreements include Federal grants and cooperative agreements but not Federal contracts) that your organization performed within the last three years (no more than 5 agreements, and preferably USDA or USDA/FAS agreements) and describe:

(i) whether, and how, you were able to successfully complete and manage those agreements; and

(ii) your history of meeting the reporting requirements under those agreements including whether you adequately and timely reported on your progress towards achieving the expected outputs and outcomes of those agreements (and if not, explain why not) and whether you submitted acceptable final technical reports under the agreements; and

(iii) your organizational experience and plan for timely and successfully achieving the objectives of the proposed project, and your staff expertise/qualifications, staff knowledge, and resources or the ability to obtain them, to successfully achieve the goals of the proposed project.

In evaluating applicants under these factors in Section E, USDA/FAS will consider the information provided by the applicant and may also consider relevant information from other sources, including information from USDA/FAS files and from current/prior grantors (e.g., to verify and/or supplement the information provided by the applicant). If you do not have any relevant or available past performance or past reporting information, please indicate this in the application and you will receive a neutral score for these factors (a neutral score is half of the total points available in a subset of possible points). If you do not provide any response for these items, you may receive a score of 0 for these factors.

Unique entity identifier and System for Award Management (SAM)
Each applicant is required to:

(i) Have an active registration in SAM before submitting its application;
(ii) Have assented to the federal assistance certifications in the SAM platform;
(iii) Provide a valid Unique Entity Identifier (UEI) in its application; and
(iv) Continue to maintain an active SAM registration with current information at all times during which it has an active Federal award or an application or plan under consideration by a Federal awarding agency.

SAM.gov Registration Instructions
Organizations applying to this funding opportunity must have an active SAM.gov registration. If you have never done business with the Federal Government, you will need to register your organization in SAM.gov. If you do not have a SAM.gov account, then you will create an account using login.gov[1] to complete your SAM.gov registration. SAM.gov registration is FREE. The process for entity registrations includes obtaining Unique Entity ID (UEI), a 12-character alphanumeric ID assigned an entity by SAM.gov, and requires assertions, representations and certifications, and other information about your organization. Please review the Entity Registration Checklist for details on this process.

Entities outside the United States (defined at 2 CFR 200.1 as "foreign organizations" and "foreign public entities") must obtain a NATO Commercial and Government Entity (NCAGE) Code prior to SAM.gov registration An NCAGE is required for all foreign entities prior to registering in SAM.gov. You can complete the registration once you enter the NCAGE. You can submit your request for an NCAGE Code by going to the NATO Support Activity (NSPA) NCAGE Request Tool at CAGE/NCAGE Code Request which contains detailed instructions.

If you have done business with the Federal Government previously, you can check your entity status using your government issued UEI to determine if your registration is active. SAM.gov requires you renew your registration every 365 days to keep it active.

[1] Login.gov a secure sign in service used by the public to sign into Federal Agency systems including SAM.gov and Grants.gov. For help with login.gov accounts you should visit http://login.gov/help.

Please note that SAM.gov registration is different than obtaining a UEI only. Obtaining an UEI only validates your organization's legal business name and address. Please review the Frequently Asked Question on the difference for additional details.

Organizations should ensure that their SAM.gov registration includes a current e-Business (EBiz) point of contact name and email address. The EBiz point of contact is critical for Grants.gov Registration and system functionality.

Contact the Federal Service Desk for help with your SAM.gov account, to resolve technical issues or chat with a help desk agent: (866) 606-8220. The Federal Service desk hours of operation are Monday – Friday 8am – 8pm ET.

Intergovernmental Review
Executive Order 12372, Intergovernmental Review of Federal Programs, may be applicable to awards resulting from this announcement. USDA implemented the Executive Order in 2 CFR 415.5. USDA/FAS may require applicants selected for funding to provide a copy of their application to their State Point of Contact (SPOC) for review. These reviews are not required before submitting an application. Only applicants that USDA/FAS selects for funding under this announcement are subject to the Intergovernmental Review requirement. For more information about USDA's implementation for Intergovernmental Review, please visit https://www.usda.gov/ocfo/federal-financial-assistance-policy/intergovernmental-review#:~:text=Executive%20Order%20(EO)%2012372%2C,of%20proposed%20Federal%20financial%20assistance.

Funding Restrictions
Generally, funds may not be used in any manner that is prohibited by applicable regulations, including 2 CFR Part 200, 2 CFR Part 400, and any program-specific regulations identified in Section A. Awards issued pursuant to this notice of funding opportunity may only be used for the purpose set forth in the award, consistent with the statutory authority for the award. Capital expenses, such as the purchase of equipment, not entirely attributable to this award, must be pro-rated.

For example, agreement funds and other support may not be used for matching contributions for other federal grants or cooperative agreements, lobbying, or intervention in federal regulatory or adjudicatory proceedings. Federal employees are prohibited from acting as an agent of the applicant in any capacity (paid or unpaid) on any proposal submitted under this program. Also, federal funds may not be used to sue the Federal Government or any other government entity.

Compensation for personal services: Employees, consultants, or other personnel, including those of subrecipients, and regardless of the method of engagement, may not exceed the pro-rata equivalent of ES-III on the Executive Schedule (for 2024, $204,400 per year, $781.61 per day, or $97.70 per hour). . Non-monetizable fringe benefits, such as health insurance coverage, are not included to this ceiling.

Indirect Costs: In general, costs incurred for a common or joint purpose benefitting more than one cost objective but not readily assignable to specific awards, without effort disproportionate

to the results achieved, are considered indirect costs. These may include facilities not specific to individual projects, enterprise-wide services such as IT, and enterprise management. Pursuant to USDA Departmental Regulation DR2255-001, a Negotiated Indirect Cost Rate Agreement (NICRA) with a cognizant U.S. Government agency will be honored, except where prohibited by statute.

Other Submission Information
Applications should be submitted by email to the program officer(s) listed in Section G

Applicants who require assistance with any USDA-managed computer system should reach out to the program officer(s) listed in Section G, Federal Awarding Agency Contact, at least 5 business days in advance of the application submission deadline. Applicants should provide as much detail as possible to facilitate resolution of the issue.

E. Application Review Information

Review and Selection Process
In all cases, the agency will conduct an initial responsiveness review of all applications submitted to determine:

1) the application was submitted on time as specified in this announcement (See Section D. Application and Submission Information);
2) the applicant is eligible (see Section C. Eligibility Information);
3) all the required forms and documents are submitted no later than the Application Submission Deadline specified in Section D. Application and Submission Information, Content and Form of Application Submission.

If an applicant is determined to be ineligible or an application is determined to be incomplete, the agency will notify the applicant prior to commencing with evaluation of applications, usually within 5 business days of the Application Submission Deadline. An applicant that feels such a determination is made in error may request reconsideration, highlighting evidence supporting their claim, by email to the program officer(s) listed in Section G, Federal Awarding Agency Contact, within 3 business days of notification.

Prior to selection, the agency may contact the highest-ranking applicants to seek clarification and to negotiate technical and programmatic aspects of the application. If an application includes a subaward, FAS may request to speak with all parties included in the application to ensure sufficient planning and coordination has taken place prior to making an award.

Evaluation Criteria
Applicants will be evaluated based on the extent and quality to which they demonstrate that they have the capabilities, staff, and resources to successfully perform the project as described in Section A**.** Applicants will be evaluated based on the extent to which they present a clear and convincing vision of the project reflective of the identified needs as described in Section A**.**

Factor 1: Technical approach and feasibility (30 Points)

The applicant will be evaluated on the extent and quality to which they demonstrate the merit of the proposed activities, including applicability and connection to the NOFO goal in Section A; the extent to which the proposed activities are germane to the issue/objectives described, and link to success in achieving objectives.

- The overall project plan and design is relevant to the specified objectives outlined in the program objectives of Section A of this NOFO. The logic of the project follows a chain of cause-and-effect relationships with no significant causal gaps from one level in the causal hierarchy to the next (10 points).
- The applicant's proposal describes a realistic, effective, and sound approach, including a description of high-quality methods or analytical rigor for achieving the program objectives described in Section A. (10 points).
- The applicant's proposal clearly states specific outputs, outcomes, personnel and a proposed timeline (5 points).
- The applicant's proposal clearly addresses how they will approach logistical hurdles and mid-course corrections of planning and implementing activities (5 points).

Factor 2: Applicant's technical expertise, capacity, and ability (25 Points)
The applicant will be evaluated on the extent and quality to which they demonstrate that they, including subrecipients, if any, have the technical expertise and capacity to implement the project described in a credible, effective, and time-bound manner, including:

- The applicant´s proposal demonstrates knowledge of the subject area at technical, governmental, and international levels, including, but not limited to,: African regulatory bodies, the IPPC, policies and regulations by USDA and other federal agencies, key agreements and documents such as the PHSA and AfCFTA, the construction and domestication process for sanitary and phytosanitary measures, risk management, pest management, and inspection and border management, and an ability to gather data for and advise decisionmakers on policy documents (10 points).
- The applicant demonstrates awareness of what past efforts have succeeded or failed in improving plant health outcomes in Africa, and what peripheral issues must be worked around to achieve objectives (5 points).
- The applicant´s proposal demonstrates prioritization of phytosanitary concerns that disrupt trade (5 points)
- The applicant´s proposal demonstrates sufficient qualified personnel to undertake the activities described in their application. Sufficiently qualified personnel are those with demonstrated, successful practical experience implementing similar projects. To the extent that the applicant will need to identify additional staff or partners to undertake the work within the allotted time, a clear and reasonable plan should demonstrate how technical capacity will be evaluated and how partnership will occur (5 points).

Factor 3: Impact of the proposed activities (30 Points)
The applicant will be evaluated on the extent and quality to which they explain the potential impacts resulting from the proposed activities including:

- Regulatory impacts are defined and detailed with regard to ability to facilitate trade, strengthen Africa's agricultural food systems, increase food security, and mitigate the adverse effects of climate change by improving countries' ability to prepare and respond to new pest outbreaks using transparent, risk-based approaches. The applicant should clearly explain the scope of the proposed program including the market access or trade benefits expected, as well as an explanation of short- and long-term impacts of international capacity building activities (15 points).
- The applicant´s proposal clearly describes experience with designing and implementing a Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) Plan. A proposed results framework, theory of change and a proposed performance indicator table clearly illustrates how the proposed activities will advance the PHSA the NOFO goal and objectives described in Section A; and how to recognize progress/success through direct, objective, adequate, and practical criteria (15 points).

Factor 4: Cost-effectiveness (5 Points)
Applications will be evaluated on the reasonableness, cost-effectiveness, and adequacy of the proposed budget to accomplish the project. The budget will be evaluated on cost savings, where available, and the inclusion of a budget narrative for each line item. For cost effectiveness, the agency will consider "value for money" in its evaluation of the program. This factor does not consider the cost alone, but rather the cost relative to the value for the work to be performed. Note that the agency's available funding will not exceed the anticipated cumulative funding amount shown in Section B.

Factor 5: Professional formatting, spelling, and grammar (5 Points)
The applicant will be evaluated on the extent to which their scope of work and budget documents are detailed, organized, in-scope, and appropriate including demonstration of professional organization and formatting throughout the project narrative and supporting documents with limited spelling and grammatical errors.

Factor 6: Past Performance (5 Points)
Applicants who performed federally funded assistance agreements in the last 3 years, will also be evaluated based on their ability to successfully complete and manage the proposed project considering their:

- Past performance in successfully completing and managing the assistance agreements identified in response to Section D of the solicitation.
- History of meeting the reporting requirements under the assistance agreements identified in response to Section D of the solicitation including whether the applicant submitted acceptable final technical reports under those agreements and the extent to which the applicant adequately and timely reported on their progress towards achieving the expected outputs and outcomes under those agreements and if such progress was not being made whether the applicant adequately reported why not.
- Organizational experience and plan for timely and successfully achieving the objectives of the proposed project

Note: In evaluating applicants under the first two items of this factor, USDA/FAS will consider the information provided by the applicant and may also consider relevant information from other sources including agency files and prior/current grantors (e.g., to verify and/or supplement the information supplied by the applicant). If you do not have any relevant or available past

performance or past reporting information, please indicate this in the application and you will receive a neutral score for these subfactors (a neutral score is half of the total points available in a subset of possible points). If you do not provide any response for these items, you may receive a score of 0 for these factors.

Integrity in Performance
Prior to making a Federal award, the Federal awarding agency is required by 31 USC 3321 and 41 USC 2313 to review information available through any OMB-designated repositories of government-wide eligibility qualification or financial integrity information. Therefore application evaluation criteria may include the following risk based considerations of the applicant: (1) financial stability; (2) quality of management systems and ability to meet management standards; (3) history of performance in managing federal award; (4) reports and findings from audits; and (5) ability to effectively implement statutory, regulatory, or other requirements.

Prior to making a Federal award with a total amount of Federal share greater than the simplified acquisition threshold, currently $250,000, the federal agency is required to review and consider any information about the applicant that is in the designated integrity and performance system accessible through SAM.gov (currently FAPIIS).

- An applicant, at its option, may review information in the designated integrity and performance systems accessible through SAM.gov and comment on any information about itself that a Federal awarding agency previously entered and is currently in the designated integrity and performance system accessible through SAM.gov.
- The Federal awarding agency will consider any comments by the applicant, in addition to the other information in the designated integrity and performance system, in making a judgment about the applicant's integrity, business ethics, and record of performance under Federal awards when completing the review of risk posed by applicants as described in 2 CFR § 200.206

Conflict of Interest
The Applicant's Conflict of Interest (COI) Point of Contact as defined in USDA/FAS Conflict of Interest Policy must notify the USDA/FAS contact identified in Section G of this solicitation of any actual or potential conflict of interest that they are aware of that may provide the Applicant with an unfair competitive advantage in competing for USDA/FAS financial assistance awards within 10 calendar days of becoming aware of the conflict of interest. Examples of an unfair competitive advantage include but are not limited to situations in which an USDA/FAS employee reviewed and commented on or drafted all or part of an applicant's application. Note that USDA/FAS does not generally consider receiving information from an USDA/FAS employee limited to whether the applicant or the applicant's proposed project is eligible to compete for funding to confer an unfair competitive advantage. In addition, assistance agreements made under this solicitation will include a term and condition notifying recipients of their COI disclosure obligations and responsibilities under the award including the need to have systems in place to address, resolve and disclose COIs to USDA/FAS.

F. Federal Award Administration Information

Federal Award Notices
Successful applicants will be notified of the status of their application/award by email. This notification is not authorization to proceed, and such notification should be construed as provisional.

Administrative and National Policy Requirements
All successful applicants for all grant and cooperative agreements are required to comply with the applicable General Administrative Terms and Conditions, which can be found at https://www.fas.usda.gov/grants/general_terms_and_conditions/default.asp. The applicant is presumed to have read, understood, and accepted these terms when accepting a USDA/FAS award. Applicants with questions about the applicable terms should contact the program officer(s) listed in Section G, Federal Awarding Agency Contact.

The applicable Terms and Conditions will be for the last year specified at that URL.

Before accepting an award, the applicant should carefully read the award package for instructions on administering the award and the terms and conditions associated with responsibilities under Federal Awards. Recipients must accept all conditions in this NOFO as well as any Special Terms and Conditions in the Notice of Award to receive an award under this program.

Subaward and Executive Compensation Reporting
Applicants must ensure that they have the necessary processes and systems in place to comply with the subaward and executive total compensation reporting requirements established at 2 CFR 170, unless they quality for an exception from the requirements, should they be selected for funding.

Mandatory Disclosures
As required by 2 CFR 200.113, non-federal entities or applicants for a Federal award must disclose, in a timely manner, in writing to the Federal awarding agency or pass-through entity all violations of Federal criminal law involving fraud, bribery, or gratuity violations potentially affecting the Federal award. Failure to make required disclosures can result in any of the remedies described in 2 CFR 200.339 including suspension and debarment.

Reporting
Financial Reports, using form SF-425, Federal Financial Report (FFR), must be submitted quarterly, for the periods ending March 31, June 30, September 30, and December 30, within 30 days of the end of the reporting period. A final financial report must be submitted within 120 days of the end date of the agreement.

Performance Progress Reports must be submitted quarterly, for the periods ending March 31, June 30, September 30, and December 30, within 30 days of the end of the reporting period. A final performance progress report must be submitted within 120 days of the end date of the agreement. The recipient may use any appropriate format for performance progress reports, provided the report includes:

a) A comparison of actual accomplishments to those projected for the period;
b) The reasons why established goals were not met, if appropriate; and

c) Additional pertinent information including, when appropriate, analysis and explanation of cost overruns or high unit costs.

Recipients are encouraged to include photographs and other supplemental material in performance progress reports. For awards in which the total lifetime value exceeds $500,000, additional reporting may be required as described in Appendix XII to 2 CFR 200.

Monitoring
USDA/FAS through its authorized representatives, has the right, at all reasonable times, to make site visits to review project accomplishments and management control systems and to provide such technical assistance as may be required. During site visits, USDA/FAS will review recipients' files related to the program.

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

Closeout
Within 120 days after the end of the period of performance, recipients must submit a final FFR and final progress report detailing all accomplishments and a qualitative summary of the impact of those accomplishments throughout the period of performance. After final reports have been reviewed and approved by the agency, and any residual amount due to the recipient or due to be returned to the agency, the award is subject to closeout. Acceptance of final reports by the agency constitutes a closeout of the award with no further notice or obligation to either party. This acceptance will indicate the period of performance has expired, and any remaining funds will be deobligated. Records must be retained for a minimum of three years after the final reports are submitted.

G. Federal Awarding Agency Contact

For all inquiries, contact:

Name: Chizoba Ezenwa
Email Address: Chizoba.Ezenwa@usda.gov
Phone Number: 202-924-3137
Hours of Operation: 9:00-17:00 EDT

Name: Carrie Johnson
Email Address: Carrie.Johnson2@usda.gov
Phone Number: 202-772-4841
Hours of Operation: 9:00-17:00 EDT

H. Other Information

Incremental Funding

These awards will be incrementally funded with a potential cumulative total of $2,000,000 over the 3-year period of performance. The first year of funding will be $277,000. The detailed budget and narrative should reflect a total budget of up to $2,000,000 for 3 years with a break down for every year, including $277,000 for the first year.
All incremental funding will be based on funding availability, satisfactory performance, and other applicable considerations.

Budget Revisions

Transfers of funds between direct cost categories in the approved budget when such cumulative transfers among those direct cost categories exceed ten percent of the total budget approved in this Award require written approval from the agency. The total budget amount may not be increased without a bilaterally executed amendment to the award.

Post-award program income

In the event program income becomes available to the recipient post-award, it is the recipient's responsibility to notify the USDA/FAS Program Manager to explain how that development occurred, as part of their request for guidance and/or approval. If approval is granted, an award modification will be issued with an explanatory note in the remarks section of the face page concerning guidance and/or options pertaining to the recipient's approved request. All instances of program income shall be listed in the progress and financial reports.

Electronic Signatures

Consistent with the Electronic Signatures in Global and National Commerce Act (ESIGN Act), USDA/FAS uses and accepts electronic signatures for application and award documents. USDA/FAS will neither solicit nor send physical copies of documents.