

Notice of Funding Opportunity

Scholarships for Students at 1890 Institutions (1890 Scholarships)

FUNDING YEAR: Fiscal Year (FY) 2026

APPLICATION DEADLINE: September 10, 2026

ANTICIPATED PROGRAM FUNDING: \$67,200,000

FUNDING OPPORTUNITY NUMBER: USDA-NIFA-1890SS-011978

ASSISTANCE LISTING NUMBER: 10.524

ANNOUNCEMENT

National Institute of Food and Agriculture
United States Department of Agriculture

Assistance Listing Number (ALN): The Scholarships for Students at 1890 Institutions (1890 Scholarships) Program is listed in the Assistance Listings under number 10.524.

Table 1: Key Dates and Deadlines

Task Description	Deadline
Application:	5:00 P.M. Eastern Time, September 10, 2026 [Ref to Part I, B of this NOFO]
Applicants Comments:	Within six months from the issuance of this notice (NIFA may not consider comments received after the sixth month)

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

- Solving the most pressing challenges they face;
- Protecting America's food, fuel, and fiber supply to enhance national security;
- Supporting production of healthy and safe food for consumers;
- Expanding and developing domestic markets;
- Training the next generation of agriculturalists; and
- Fueling innovation to keep American farmers at the forefront of productivity.

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

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

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

This NOFO supports [Executive Order 14041](#) *White House Initiative to Promote Excellence and Innovation at Historically Black College and Universities* to ensure that the Nation's HBCUs serve as beacons of educational excellence to build America's workforce.

Stakeholder Input. NIFA seeks comments on all NOFO so it can deliver programs efficiently, effectively, with integrity, and with a focus on customer service. NIFA considers comments to the extent possible when developing NOFOs and uses comments to help meet the requirements of Section 103(c)(2) of the Agricultural Research, Extension, and Education Reform Act of 1998 ([7 U.S.C. 7613\(c\)\(2\)](#)). Applicants may submit written comments to Policy@usda.gov. Please use the following subject line: Response to the Scholarships for Students at 1890 Institutions NOFO.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This notice identifies the objectives for the 1890 Scholarships Program projects, deadlines, funding information, eligibility criteria, application forms, and associated instructions. The anticipated amount available for grants in FY 2026 is approximately \$67,200,000. This NOFO will begin a new 5-year continuation funding cycle.

NIFA requests applications for the 1890 Scholarships Program for FY 2026 to provide multiple scholarships for students at each of the 1890 Land-grant institutions to support recruiting, engaging, retaining, mentoring, and training of graduate and undergraduate students, resulting in baccalaureate and graduate degrees in the food and agricultural sciences. Any individual receiving Federal funds from this program must be a citizen, national, or permanent resident of the United States of America as determined in accordance with Federal law.

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PART I. FUNDING OPPORTUNITY DESCRIPTION

A. Legislative Authority

Pursuant to the authority contained in Section 1446(b)(1) of the National Agricultural Research, Extension, and Teaching Policy Act of 1977 ([7 U.S.C. 3222a](#)), grants will be awarded under the 1890 Scholarships Program to the 1890 Land-grant institutions ([7 U.S.C. 321 et seq.](#)), including Tuskegee University, for purposes of awarding scholarships to students.

B. Purpose and Priorities

The purpose of the 1890 Scholarships Program, under Assistance Listing Number 10.524, is to provide scholarships to support recruiting, engaging, retaining, mentoring, and training of undergraduate and graduate students at the 1890 Land-grant institutions. These scholarships are intended to encourage outstanding students at 1890 institutions to pursue and complete baccalaureate and graduate (i.e., master's and doctoral) degrees in the food and agricultural sciences (see [Appendix III](#) for definition) that would lead to a highly skilled food and agricultural systems workforce.

NIFA is soliciting applications to award scholarships to individuals who:

1. Have been accepted for admission at an 1890 institution.
2. Will be enrolled at an 1890 institution no later than one year after the date of acceptance at the 1890 institution.
3. Intend to pursue a career in the food and agricultural sciences, including a career in agribusiness, energy, or financial management.

Applicants to the 1890 Scholarships Program are strongly encouraged to respond to this request with comprehensive, multi-year institutional plan for recruitment, retention, and graduation of students that includes measurable goals and ongoing evaluation for efficient use of USDA investments to:

1. Increase the number of domestic students who attain baccalaureate and graduate degrees in the food and agricultural sciences; and
2. Support scholars' intent to pursue a career in the food and agricultural sciences to meet the technologically advanced needs of the 21st century food and agricultural systems workforce.

Table 2: Program Key Information

Title Description	
Program Code:	SCST
Program Code Name:	1890 Scholarships
ALN:	10.524
Project Type:	Education Projects
Grant Type:	Standard Grants
Application Deadline	September 10, 2026
Grant Duration:	60 Months
Anticipated # of Awards:	19
Anticipated Award Amount:	\$5,557,890 per award

PART II. AWARD INFORMATION

A. Available Funding

The amount of funding available for the 1890 Scholarships Program in FY 2026 is approximately \$67,200,000 (\$57.6 million from HR1 and \$9.6 million in discretionary funding). Of this amount, approximately \$21.2 million will be available to fund the first year of new 1890 Scholarships projects as competitive awards. Similar funding amounts may be awarded for an additional four years as continuation awards. Future awards are contingent upon funding availability and satisfactory awardee performance. USDA is not committed to fund any particular application or to make a specific number of awards.

The [Automated Standard Application for Payments](#), operated by the Department of Treasury, Bureau of Fiscal Service, is the designated payment system for awards resulting from this NOFO.

B. Application Restrictions

NIFA will evaluate applications using the criteria described in [Part V](#) of this NOFO. Applications for FY 2026 are limited to the following application types:

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

Eligible institutions are allowed to submit one application per institution.

C. Project and Grant Types

The following describes the *project* and *grant* types that are eligible for funding:

1. Project Types.

Education Projects - Applicants may only submit proposals for Education Projects. Education Projects develop human capital relevant to overall program goals for U.S. agriculture. Projects must focus on developing skills necessary for entry and mid-level technical employment or for entering graduate programs in the food and agricultural sciences (see [Appendix III](#) for definition).

Education Projects must show direct alignment with the following:

- a. Increasing the number of domestic graduates with the necessary technical skills for entry-level positions in the food and agricultural sciences.
- b. Improving the technical competencies needed for the workforce to ensure that U.S. agriculture remains globally competitive.

2. Grant Types.

Standard Grants - Scholarships for baccalaureate and graduate (i.e., master's and doctoral) degrees within the food and agricultural sciences will be supported through Standard Grants.

D. Ethical Conduct of Funded Projects

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

PART III. ELIGIBILITY INFORMATION

A. Eligibility Requirements

Applications to the 1890 Scholarships Program may only be submitted by the nineteen 1890 Land-grant institutions ([7 U.S.C. 321 et seq.](#)), including Tuskegee University. Awards will only be provided to 1890 Land-grant institutions that have a competitive scholarships awards process in place (see [Part IV, B](#) of this NOFO, Field 8, b.).

Applicants must meet all requirements discussed in this NOFO. Failure to meet all eligibility criteria by the application deadline may result in exclusion from consideration or preclude NIFA from making an award. For those new to Federal financial assistance, NIFA's [About Grants](#) provides highly recommended information about grants and other resources to help understand the Federal awards process.

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

Student Eligibility as Scholars – Awards to Scholars are made by eligible institutions (grantees) receiving funds under this program. Scholars must:

1. Be an eligible participant (see [Appendix III](#) for definition). Any individual receiving Federal funds from this program must be a citizen, national, or permanent resident of the United States of America as determined in accordance with Federal law.
2. Have been accepted for admission at an 1890 institution.
3. Be enrolled at an 1890 institution no later than one year after the date of acceptance at the 1890 institution.
4. Study food and agricultural sciences (see [Appendix III](#) for definition).
5. Intend to pursue a career in the food and agricultural sciences, including a career in agribusiness, energy, or financial management.
6. Meet and maintain minimum GPA requirements as follows: (1) have a minimum cumulative 2.8 grade point average (GPA) for undergraduate students at the time of application, and maintain at least a 2.8 GPA on a quarter/semester and cumulative basis while receiving scholarship support; or (2) have a minimum cumulative 3.0 GPA for graduate students at the time of application, and maintain at least a 3.0 GPA on a quarter/semester and cumulative basis while receiving scholarship support.
7. Be enrolled as a full-time student, as defined by the institution, in a program of study in the food and agricultural sciences leading to an undergraduate or graduate (i.e., master's or doctoral) degree during each quarter/semester that he/she receives 1890 Scholarship support. However, the requirements for formal registration during part of this tenure may be waived if permitted by the policy of the grantee, provided that the Scholar is making satisfactory progress toward degree completion.

Regarding student eligibility, 1890 institutions have the discretion to identify a higher minimum cumulative GPA requirement, but that requirement cannot exceed a 3.2 GPA for undergraduate students and a 3.5 GPA for graduate students. Scholars must maintain this GPA

on a quarter/semester and cumulative basis while receiving scholarship support (i.e., if an 1890 institution establishes the minimum cumulative GPA requirement for student eligibility as a 3.0, Scholars must maintain at least a 3.0 GPA on a quarter/semester and cumulative basis while receiving scholarship support). The minimum GPA that is established by the 1890 institution should be consistent throughout the life of the program.

Scholarship recipients at the master's degree level who maintain satisfactory progress are eligible to receive grant support for a maximum of twenty-four (24) months during a thirty (30) month period. Scholarship recipients at the doctoral degree level who maintain satisfactory progress are eligible to receive grant support for a maximum of thirty-six (36) months within a forty-two (42) month period. Project Directors may contact NIFA program staff to request an exception if additional time is needed to complete degree requirements.

Under the 1890 Scholarships Program, eligible institutions may make partial and/or full scholarship awards. The following outlines additional documents associated with student eligibility.

Supporting Documents for High School Applications – 1890 institutions should consider the following documents/requirements regarding applications from high school students:

1. Privacy Act Advisory Statement and Release Form.
2. Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA).
3. Current Resume.
4. Statement of Purpose (500-800 words) describing the applicant's interest and intent to pursue a career in the food and agricultural sciences, including but not limited to long-term career goals, existing strengths, and how the scholarship will enhance the applicant's achievement of their goals.
5. Current official transcript with the school's seal and/or signature of an authorized school official (preferably through the most recent quarter/semester).
6. Letter of recommendation from High School Counselor.
7. Letter of recommendation from High School Teacher.
8. Signed and dated application (including the signature of the parent or guardian, if the applicant is under the age of 18).

Supporting Documents for Undergraduate/Graduate//Transfer Applications – 1890 institutions should consider the following documents/requirements regarding applications from college students (including transfer students):

1. Privacy Act Advisory Statement and Release Form.
2. FAFSA.
3. Current Resume.
4. Current official transcript with the institution's seal and/or signature of an authorized college or university official (preferably through the most recent quarter/semester).
5. Statement of Purpose (500-800 words) describing the applicant's interest and intent to pursue a career in the food and agricultural sciences, including but not limited to long-

term career goals, existing strengths, and how the scholarship will enhance the applicant's achievement of their goals.

6. Two letters of recommendation (one from either the Department Head or Dean, and the other from a faculty member).
7. Signed and dated application (including the signature of the parent or guardian, if the applicant is under the age of 18).

Within the framework of these guidelines, **all decisions with respect to the appointment of scholars** will be made by the 1890 institutions through a **formal selection process that includes** a committee comprised of the Dean of the school/college, Assistant/Associate Dean for Academics, and Department Chairs/Heads.

A Scholar who finds it necessary to interrupt his/her program of study due to health, personal, or other reasonable nonacademic and nondisciplinary reasons must be allowed to resume funded study at any time within 12 months of the interruption, provided there is adequate time remaining before the award expires. A Scholar who finds it necessary to interrupt his/her program of study more than one time cannot exceed 12 total months of cumulative leave without forfeiting 1890 Scholarship eligibility.

USDA **will not provide scholarships** to undergraduate or graduate students for dangerous gain-of-function research, as defined in [Section 8 of E.O. 14292](#).

B. Cost Sharing or Matching

No Match Required - The 1890 Scholarships Program has **NO** matching requirements. NIFA will not factor matching resources into the review process as an evaluation criterion. While not required, cost share is encouraged.

PART IV. APPLICATION AND SUBMISSION

A. Method of Application

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

Table 3. Steps to Obtain Application Materials

Steps	Action
Step One: Register	<i>New Users</i> to Grants.gov must register early with Grants.gov prior to submitting an application.
Step Two: Download Adobe	Download and Install Adobe Reader (see Adobe Software Compatibility for basic system requirements).
Step Three: Find Application	Using this funding opportunity number USDA-NIFA-1890SS-011978 , search for application here: Opportunity Package .
Step Four: Assess Readiness	Contact an AR prior to starting an application to assess the organization's readiness to submit an electronic application.

Table 4: Help and Resources

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

B. Content and Form of the Application

The NIFA Grants Application Guide is part of the corresponding application package for this NOFO. The NOFO overrides the NIFA Grants Application Guide if there is a discrepancy between the two documents. Applicants that do not meet the application requirements, to include partial applications, risk being excluded from NIFA's review. NIFA will assign a proposal number to all applications that meet the requirements of this NOFO. Applicants must refer to the proposal number when corresponding with NIFA. **Table 5** outlines other key instructions for applicants.

Table 5: Key Application Instructions

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

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

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

R&R Other Project Information Form. See **Part V** of the NIFA Grants Application Guide.

- Field 7. Project Summary (PS)/Abstract.** The PS must show how the project goals align with the project goals of the 1890 Scholarships Program. The applicant should use the NIFA template and adhere to the maximum limit of 250 words. See **Part V** of the NIFA Grants Application Guide for instructions and templates.
- Field 8. Project Narrative (PN).** The PN must not exceed **fifteen 1.5 spaced pages** of written text and up to **two 1.5 spaced** additional pages for figures and tables (the font size for tables should be no smaller than 11 points, Times New Roman). The page limits outlined here ensure fair competition. Appendices to the PN are allowed if they are directly related to the proposed project. Do not add appendices to circumvent the page limit. After converting the project narrative to PDF format, applicants should verify that the document does not exceed the page limit.

The PN must include all the following components:

- Potential for Building the Food and Agricultural Workforce.**
Discuss how the project will support Scholars' intent to pursue a career in the food and agricultural sciences (see [Appendix III](#) for definition). This section must address the following:

- i. Measurable objective(s) of how the scholarships will impact the institution, increase enrollment of domestic students in the food and agricultural sciences, improve retention rates, and support Scholars' completion of baccalaureate and graduate degrees in the food and agricultural sciences.
 - ii. Description of how the project will support Scholars' capacity to achieve competence in the food and agricultural sciences.
 - iii. Summary of relevant academic degree programs that are offered at the applicant institution and will be supported by the 1890 Scholarships Program.
 - iv. Description of how the project will support Scholars' intent to pursue a career in the food and agricultural sciences, including a career in agribusiness, energy and renewable fuels, or financial management.
- b. **Recruitment and Selection Plan (Competitive Scholarships Awards Process).**
Describe the competitive scholarships awards process that will govern the recruitment and selection of Scholars. This section must address the following:
 - i. Description of recruitment activities.
 - ii. Selection criteria (see [Part III](#), Student Eligibility of Scholars).
 - iii. Identification of all members of the scholarship recipient selection committee. This committee should consist of the Dean of the school/college, Assistant/Associate Dean for Academics, and Department Chairs/Heads; and
 - iv. Detailed timeline of activities (i.e., recruitment, selection).
- c. **Management Plan (Institutional Support Mechanisms).**
Provide a detailed description of: (1) how the scholarships will complement and not duplicate existing scholarships at the institution, (2) the management plan that will be implemented at the 1890 institution after the awarding of scholarships to students, and (3) the existing institutional support mechanisms that will be included as a part of the management plan. This section must address the following:
 - i. Development of Mentoring Plans for Scholars that provides a detailed description of the support and mentoring Scholars will receive from faculty, upper-level students, and other professionals, including a description of mentor roles and responsibilities, planned mentoring activities, and a timeline. Also describe the training and/or credentials of individuals who will serve as mentors and demonstrate their ability to leverage existing institutional resources for professional advising, tutoring services, career services, community engagement, and leadership services.
 - ii. Description of existing career development activities that will provide Scholars with a broad exposure to careers in the food and agricultural sciences (e.g., internships, fellowships).
 - iii. Mechanisms for monitoring Scholars' progress and performance (e.g., face-to-face meetings, virtual meetings).
 - iv. Description of opportunities for professional development, including participation in workshops and professional meetings.
 - v. Description of information, experiential learning, and/or other opportunities that will broaden the engagement and communication skills of Scholars.

- vi. Detailed project timeline to illustrate the progress and successful implementation of the project over the 5-year award period by providing an integrated timeline of project activities.
- d. **Reporting Capacity and Evaluation Plan.**
Describe the *institutional capacity* for collecting and reporting data and the *evaluation plan* that will be used to measure the success of the 1890 Scholarships Program. This section must address the following:
- i. Current tools, systems, and mechanisms that will be used to collect and report data, including the number of full and partial scholarships awarded and the amount of each scholarship.
 - ii. Strategies for evaluating the success of the institutional 1890 Scholarships Program as a whole.
 - iii. Strategies for incorporating feedback into the program to improve performance.
 - iv. Defined approach for longitudinal tracking of the Scholars after completion of the program.
3. **Field 12. Add Other Attachments.** See **Part V** of the NIFA Grants Application Guide. The following attachments must be included in the 1890 Scholarships application:
- a. **Institution/School/Department Goals and Objectives – PDF Attachment.**
Include an institutional letter indicating that the application is within the strategic plan of the institution in the food and agricultural sciences. The letter must describe which school or department at your institution would potentially benefit from funds to support student scholarships. The letter must be developed on official university letterhead and signed by the Dean of Agriculture, Agricultural Research Director, or Extension Administrator (limit to one page, PDF format). **The institutional letter is required for all grant applications.**
 - b. **Data Management Plan (DMP) – PDF Attachment.**
A DMP is required for this program. Applicants should clearly articulate how the project director (PD) and co-PDs plan to manage and disseminate data generated by the project. Include plans to protect confidentiality and personal privacy of the students. The DMP will be considered during the merit review process (see [Part V, B](#) of this NOFO, [NIFA's Data Management Plan](#)).
 - c. **Expected Outcomes – PDF Attachment.**
Title the attachment “Expected Outcomes” in the document header and save file as “ExpectedOutcomes.” Please use the table provided in [Figure 1](#) below to submit expected outcomes and attach it as the last page of the project narrative.

Figure 1: Expected Outcomes

Total Expected Impact During Entire Grant Period	Undergraduate Students	Graduate Students	Justification for Expected Numbers
Number of students directly supported by the 1890 Scholarships program (graduate and undergraduate). Also include a breakdown by student's major of study.			
Number of full scholarships provided (graduate and undergraduate)			
Number of partial scholarships provided (graduate and undergraduate)			
Total number of scholarships (full and partial) provided (graduate and undergraduate)			
Amount of funds awarded in full scholarships (graduate and undergraduate)			
Amount of funds awarded in partial scholarships (graduate and undergraduate)			
Total amount of funds awarded in full and partial scholarships (graduate and undergraduate)			

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

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

R&R Budget. See **Part V** of the NIFA Grants Application Guide.

1. Indirect Costs (IDC) – Not Permitted.
2. Prepare a budget for each of the five years of the project (approximately \$1,111,578 per year) as well as a cumulative 5-year budget of approximately \$5,557,890.
3. Funding requests for this program are **restricted to student scholarships**. Federal funds awarded for scholarships must **ONLY** be awarded to Scholars **to cover the following**:
 - i. **Tuition**
 - ii. **Student fees**
 - iii. **Room and board**
 - iv. **Textbooks (or e-books)**

4. Funding to support graduate students **cannot exceed 30 percent** of total annual funding.

Supplemental Information Form. See **Part V** of the NIFA Grants Application Guide.

1. **Field 2. Program to which the applicant is applying.** Enter the program name “(1890 Scholarships)” and the program code “(SCST)”. Accurate entry is critical.
2. **Field 8. Conflict of Interest List.** See **Part V** of the NIFA Grants Application Guide.

C. Funding Restrictions

No Indirect Costs (IDC). IDC is not authorized for this NOFO.

NIFA awards may not be used to support the procurement of unmanned aircraft systems to process, store, or transmit Federal information (as defined in [OMB Circular A-130](#)) unless the grant is specifically available for procurement of such equipment and grantees describe in their application how they will comply with the information security requirements outlined in Appendix B of [M-26-02 Ensuring Government Use of Secure Unmanned Aircraft Systems and Supporting United States Producers](#) and develop a risk-based approach to applying those requirements to procurement solicitations to potential vendors under the resulting Federal award. This information, if provided, will be evaluated by NIFA as part of its evaluation process. If such procurement is approved, specific information security requirements may be included in the terms and conditions of the grant to ensure that the grantees will incorporate those requirements in procurement solicitations of unmanned aircraft systems under the Federal award.

PART V. APPLICATION REVIEW REQUIREMENTS

A. NIFA's Evaluation Process

NIFA evaluates each application in a two-part process. First, we screen each application to ensure that it meets the administrative requirements set forth in this NOFO. All administrative requirements must be met in order for the application to proceed to the next level of review. Second, a scientific peer-review process will be used to technically evaluate applications that have met the administrative requirements using a review panel (see [NIFA Peer Review Process](#)).

Scientific Peer Review Process

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

1. The level of relevant formal scientific, technical education, or Extension experience of the individual, as well as the extent to which an individual is engaged in relevant research, education, or Extension activities.
2. The need to include experts from various areas of specialization within relevant scientific, education, or Extension fields.
3. The need to include other experts (e.g., agricultural producers, range or forest managers/operators, researchers, educators, evaluators, and consumers) who can assess relevance of the applications to targeted audiences and to program needs.
4. The need to include experts from a variety of organizational types (e.g., colleges, universities, industry, state and Federal agencies, and private profit and nonprofit organizations) and geographic locations.
5. The need to maintain a balanced composition with regard to the reviewer's area of expertise, geographic area, and entity type, as appropriate.
6. The need to include reviewers who can judge the effective usefulness of each application to producers and the general public.

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

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

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

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

B. Evaluation Criteria

A reviewer's written evaluation includes 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 outcomes and impacts. These written reviews are used to begin peer review 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 [here](#).

NIFA will use the evaluation criteria below to review applications submitted in response to this NOFO. Each of the following elements will be reviewed with equal weight:

1. Potential for Building the Food and Agricultural Workforce.

- a. Clear justification for the project that demonstrates a national, regional and/or local need for undergraduate and graduate students pursuing careers in the food and agricultural sciences (see [Appendix III](#) for definition).
- b. Strength of curriculum in the food and agricultural sciences to produce a well-prepared workforce.

2. Overall Approach and Quality of the Proposal.

- a. Detailed competitive scholarships awards process.
- b. Degree to which the proposal complies with the application guidelines. The proposal is enhanced by its adherence to instructions; accuracy of forms; well-prepared curriculum vitae for all key personnel associated with the project; and presentation. Also assessed is how effectively ideas are presented, clearly articulated, and thoroughly explained, as well as the inclusion of all required forms.

3. Management of the Institutional 1890 Scholarships Program.

- a. Comprehensive plan for retention of Scholars through the period of the grant.
- b. Strength of Mentoring Plan.
- c. Defined mechanisms for monitoring Scholars' progress and performance.
- d. Strategies for disseminating career and professional development opportunities to Scholars in support of their intent to pursue careers in the food and agricultural Sciences.
- e. Sufficient Data Management Plan.

4. Reporting Capacity and Evaluation.

- a. Demonstration of current capacity to collect and report data, including the number of full and partial scholarships awarded and the amount of each scholarship.
- b. Plan and methods for evaluating the success of the institutional 1890 Scholarships program as a whole.
- c. Plan for incorporating feedback into the program to improve performance.
- d. Defined approach for tracking of the Scholars after completion of the program, including the number of Scholars that work in the food and agricultural sciences following graduation.

C. Organizational Management Information

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

D. Application Disposition

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

PART VI. AWARD ADMINISTRATION

A. General

Within the limit of funds authorized, the NIFA awarding official will make grants to responsible and eligible applicants whose applications are judged most meritorious under the procedures set forth in this NOFO. The date specified by the NIFA awarding official as the effective date of the grant must be no later than September 30 of the Federal fiscal year in which the project is approved for support and funds are appropriated for such purpose, unless otherwise permitted by law. The project need not be initiated on the grant effective date, but as soon thereafter as practical so that project goals may be attained within the funded project period.

All funds granted by NIFA under this NOFO may be used only for the purpose for which they are granted in accordance with the program-specific laws and regulations, NIFA General Awards Administrative Provisions ([7 CFR part 3430, subparts A through E](#)), USDA Regulations for Grants and Agreements ([2 CFR Chapter IV](#)), Office of Management and Budget Uniform Guidance ([2 CFR part 200](#)), [NIFA-specific terms and conditions](#), [USDA General Terms and Conditions for Federal Awards](#), and approved budget and project plans.

Award Notice. The Notice of Award document will provide pertinent instructions and information as described in [2 CFR 200.211](#) (see [NIFA's Terms and Conditions](#)).

B. Administrative and National Policy Requirements

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

C. Expected Program Outputs and Reporting Requirements

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

PART VII. OTHER INFORMATION

A. Use of Funds and Changes in Budget

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

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

1. Change in the scope or the objective of the project or program without prior written approval (even if there is no associated budget revision required);
2. Change in a key person specified in the application or the Federal award;
3. Disengagement from the project for more than three months, or a 25 percent reduction in time devoted to the project;
4. Inclusion of costs that require prior approval in accordance with [2 CFR 200 Subpart E \(Cost Principles\)](#), or [2 CFR Part 300 Appendix IX, \(Principles for Determining Costs Applicable to Research and Development under Awards and Contracts with Hospitals\)](#), or [48 CFR](#), unless waived by the Federal awarding agency, [48 CFR Part 31, Contract Cost Principles and Procedures](#);
5. Transfer of funds budgeted for participant support costs to other categories of expense ([2 CFR 200.456 Participant support costs](#));
6. Sub-awarding, transferring or contracting out of any work under a Federal award, including fixed amount sub-awards (see [2 CFR 200.333, Fixed Amount Sub-awards](#)), unless described in the application and funded in the approved Federal awards. This provision does not apply to the acquisition of supplies, material, equipment, or general support services;
7. Changes in the approved cost-sharing or matching provided by the non-Federal entity;
8. The need for additional Federal funds to complete the project;
9. Salary rates of pay exceeding an Executive Level IV salary range (see “Rates of Pay for the Executive Schedule” under the “Executive & Senior Level Employee Pay Tables” header at <https://www.opm.gov/policy-data-oversight/pay-leave/salaries-wages/>) require prior NIFA approval. This rate does not include any fringe benefits, general and administrative (G&A), overhead, or other expenses. Requests for approval must include the salary rate of pay and a justification for the rate and be sent to the Authorized Departmental Officer (ADO) to awards@usda.gov;
10. No more than 50 percent of the total dollars of this award may be subcontracted to another party(ies) without prior written approval of the ADO, except subcontracts to Federal agencies;
11. Transferring funds between the construction and non-construction work under a Federal award; and
12. A no-cost extension (meaning, an extension of time that does not require the obligation of additional Federal funds) of the period of performance, other than any one-time extension authorized by the Federal agency in accordance with paragraph [2 CFR 200.308\(g\)\(2\)](#). All requests for no-cost extensions should be submitted at least 10 calendar days before the

conclusion of the period of performance. The Federal agency may approve multiple no-cost extensions under a Federal award if not prohibited by Federal statute or regulation.

B. Confidential Aspects of Applications and Awards

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

C. Regulatory Information

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

D. Language Access Services

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

APPENDIX I: AGENCY CONTACT

For Programmatic questions please email: 1890Scholarships.Applications@usda.gov

For Administrative questions related to:

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

U.S. Postal Mailing Address:

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

Courier/Package Delivery Address:

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

APPENDIX II: GLOSSARY OF TERMS

Glossary of Terms

Assistance Listing Number – ALN
Authorized Departmental Officer – ADO
Authorized Representative – AR
Data Management Plan – DMP
National Institute of Food and Agriculture – NIFA
Notice of Funding Opportunity – NOFO
Research, Education, and Economics – REE
United States Department of Agriculture – USDA

APPENDIX III: DEFINITIONS

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

Definitions

Continuation Award:

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

Eligible Participant:

Eligible participant means an individual who is a citizen, national, or permanent resident of the United States of America as determined in accordance with Federal law.

Food and Agricultural Sciences:

Per Section 1404 of the National Agricultural Research, Extension, and Teaching Policy Act of 1977, the term “food and agricultural sciences” means basic, applied, and developmental research, extension, and teaching activities in food and fiber, agricultural, renewable 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 and water 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.
- (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.

Matching:

The process through which a grant recipient match awarded USDA funds with cash and in-kind contributions on a dollar-for-dollar basis. The matching funds must derive from non-Federal sources.

New Application:

An application not previously submitted to a program.