

NOTICE OF FUNDING OPPORTUNITY
Norman E. Borlaug International Agricultural Science and Technology Fellowship
Program FY2026

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1. Basic Information

1.1 Executive Summary

The U.S. Department of Agriculture, Foreign Agricultural Service, Fellowship Programs, announces this funding opportunity to support the Norman E. Borlaug International Agricultural Science and Technology Fellowship Program by issuing a new award. This opportunity is available to State cooperative institutions or other colleges and universities in the United States, as defined at [7 U.S.C. § 3103](#). This program is intended to support applied research, extension, and education collaborations between U.S. researchers and their foreign counterparts from selected emerging market economies.

Benefits to the United States: This program makes America more prosperous by strengthening trade and expanding and developing new markets with current and potential trading partners.

1.2 Federal Agency Name

United States Department of Agriculture, Foreign Agricultural Service (USDA/FAS)

1.3 Funding Opportunity Title

Borlaug Fellowship Program FY2026

1.4 Announcement Type

New Announcement

1.5 Funding Opportunity Number

USDA-FAS-10777-0700-107-26-0001

1.6 Assistance Listing Number

10.777 Norman E. Borlaug International Agricultural Science and Technology Fellowship

1.7 Funding Details

<u>Total Available Federal Funding:</u>	\$2,625,000.00
<u>Anticipated Number of Awards:</u>	6
<u>Total Available Funding per Award:</u>	up to \$750,000 (approximately \$75,000 per Participant)

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

1.8 Key Dates

Deadline for Question Submission: June 15, 2026

Application Submission Deadline: August 14, 2026 at 11:59pm Eastern Daylight Time

Webinar for Applicants:

June 30, 2026 at 11:00am Eastern Daylight Time

Microsoft Teams meeting

Join: <https://teams.microsoft.com/meet/291176632737906?p=tkmU4HWFIBurBUxdof>

Meeting ID: 291 176 632 737 906

Passcode: Jt3nj3G2

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Dial in by phone

[+1 202-650-0123,,437807573#](#) United States, Washington

[Find a local number](#)

Phone conference ID: 437 807 573#

1.9 Agency Contact Information

For all inquiries, contact:

Name: Nicola Sakhleh

Email Address: Nicola.Sakhleh@usda.gov

Phone Number: 202-720-4228

Hours of Operation: 8:00am – 4:30pm Eastern Daylight Time

2. Eligibility

2.1 Eligible Applicants

State cooperative institutions or other colleges and universities in the United States, as defined at [7 U.S.C. § 3103](#).

For consortia, all participating institutions must be eligible.

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. More information about SAM.gov registration can be found in [Section 9](#), Other Information.

2.2 Substantial Compliance

All applications will be reviewed for eligibility and must meet the eligibility requirements described above to be considered eligible. Applicants deemed ineligible for funding consideration as a result of the threshold eligibility review will be notified within seven calendar days of the ineligibility determination.

Applications must substantially comply with the application submission instructions and requirements set forth in Section 4, Application Contents and Format, of this solicitation or they will be deemed ineligible for funding consideration.

2.3 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, and USDA/FAS will not make assumptions as to the nature of the applicant's organization.

2.4 Funding Restrictions

Generally, funds may not be used in any manner that is prohibited by applicable regulations, including [2 C.F.R. Part 200](#) and [2 C.F.R. Part 400](#). 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 2026, \$209,600 per year, \$806.15 per day, or \$100.77 per hour). Non-monetizable fringe benefits, such as health insurance coverage, are not included in this ceiling.

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. For cooperative agreements with nonprofit institutions, indirect costs may not exceed 10% of direct costs, as stipulated at [Section 704](#) of Agriculture, Rural Development, Food and Drug Administration, and Related Agency Appropriations Act, 2026.

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

2.5 Multiple Applications

An individual applicant may submit more than one application in response to this notice of funding opportunity and may be offered more than one award.

2.6 Cost Share/Match Requirement

Cost sharing is not required but encouraged.

3. Program Description

USDA identifies and selects individuals from eligible countries who specialize or have experience in agricultural education, research, extension, or other related fields (the "Participants") based on the alignment of their specialties with topics of importance to U.S. agricultural trade. USDA then places the Participants at U.S. research institutions for up to 12 weeks. Participants are each paired with U.S. researchers at their institutions (the "Mentors") to

promote collaborative scientific exchange and build agricultural networks. These programs are expected to contribute to U.S. agricultural trade by enabling science-based policy changes that move the needle on sanitary and phytosanitary trade issues, barriers to trade, and other trade challenges. Hence, the programs aid in increasing export opportunities for American farmers and making America more prosperous. The goal of the Borlaug Fellowship Program is to increase these countries' capacity for agricultural research, extension, and participation in international trade. It is hoped that selected host institutions and Mentors will share the knowledge gained through the program in their classrooms and through extension work with their faculty, students, extension officers, and constituents; and that they will continue to maintain professional contacts with the Participants after their departure from the United States.

Objectives

The selected institution(s) will design and implement separate research programs to meet each of the proposed research topic goals and objectives as outlined in the appendix section. The selected institution(s) will also include leadership and communications training to help the Participants better communicate research conducted under their Fellowship to policy makers in their respective countries and help implement science-based agricultural policies.

Research Topic Descriptions:

Please see the appendix for full Research Topic Descriptions:

- [Advancing Regulatory Approaches for Genetic Engineering Corn and Soy - Vietnam](#)
- [Trade Facilitation for U.S. Genetic Engineering Corn and Soy - Thailand](#)
- [Genetic Engineering Risk Assessment - Indonesia](#)
- [Advancing Regulatory Approaches for Genetic Engineering of Plants - Morocco & Tunisia](#)
- [Genome Editing - Egypt](#)
- [Advancing New World Screwworm Risk Modeling - Mexico](#)

3.1 Authorizing Statutes and Regulations

National Agricultural Research, Extension, and Teaching Policy Act of 1977, PL 95-113, as amended, [7 U.S.C. § 3319j](#).

3.2 Type of Assistance Instrument

USDA/FAS anticipates that a Cooperative Agreement will be funded pursuant to this funding opportunity.

This type of agreement includes statutory limitations related to indirect costs.

4. Application Contents and Format

4.1 Complete Application Package

A complete application package must include:

- [Standard Form SF-424](#), Application for Federal Assistance, showing the Unique Entity ID, and signed by the applicant.

- [Standard Form SF-424A](#), Budget Information for Non-Construction Programs, showing the budget categorization. Applicants are advised to consult [2 C.F.R. Part 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 scoring.
- A detailed budget narrative, in which cost items are clearly identified, correspond to the appropriate cost category, and 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.
 - Indirect costs capped at 10% for cooperative agreements with nonprofit institutions under section 704 of the Agriculture, Rural Development, Food and Drug Administration, and Related Agency Appropriations Act, 2026.
 - The applicant should budget for the Participants’ international flights to and from the United States.
- A detailed project narrative or plan of operation that addresses the following:
 - Indicate the name of the institution applying to host Participants (the “applicant”).
 - Indicate the name of the research topic for which the applicant is applying (see appendix).
 - Indicate the proposed place(s) of performance within the United States.
 - Include a narrative description and detailed proposed agenda for the research topic selected from the appendix, including but not limited to training concepts to be covered under the selected topic, possible field demonstrations or visits, leadership development, term break activities, cultural activities, etc.
 - Identify the skills or knowledge expected to be acquired by the Participants by the end of the program.
 - Include a narrative description of how the program will be administered, including logistical elements (travel arrangements, housing, site visits, etc.) and the expertise and roles of the university faculty, support staff, and collaborating scientists, including potential Mentors identified to participate.
 - Provide a summary of relevant institutional capabilities specifically related to the research topic for which the applicant is applying, and a description of how regional and university resources, including the presence of relevant agricultural practices in the region, would be used to enhance the program.
 - Describe the international experience and expertise of the applicant, including information about the applicant’s established networks and experience with international adult education.
 - Demonstrate an understanding of the cultural contexts and needs of Participants.
 - Demonstrate flexibility within the training plan to account for potential program changes and explain the applicant’s ability to respond to unforeseen circumstances.
 - Include a quality assurance plan and a risk mitigation/response plan explaining how unforeseen problems that could arise would be addressed and by whom.
 - Ensure the project narrative or plan of operation is organized, written in English, is free of excessive grammatical and spelling errors, contains any source information properly cited, and is submitted in PDF format.

- 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 us in the application.

4.2 Specific Application Formats

Applicants should ensure they are using active, i.e. non-expired, versions of standard forms. The use of an expired standard form will not itself be grounds for a determination of ineligibility but may delay processing of an applicant selected for award.

There are no page limitations and formatting requirements (including, but not limited to, font and font size, margins, paper size, and color limitations) for applications.

4.3 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.

4.4 Proprietary Information

Applicants should generally refrain from including the details of proprietary information in applications. In cases where, in the applicant's judgement, the inclusion of proprietary information is essential to application review and scoring, the applicant should clearly indicate information it wishes to designate as proprietary.

4.5 Other Application Information

Successful applicants must submit the following information after USDA/FAS notification of our intent to make a Federal award, but prior to a Federal award, if the applicant request for funding or the intended award amount is over \$100,000:

- [Grants.gov Lobbying Form](#)
- [Standard Form SF-LLL](#), Disclosure of Lobbying Activities, if applicable to the applicant

5. Submission Requirements and Deadlines

5.1 Address to Request Application Package

This notice of funding opportunity contains all information required to submit a complete application package.

5.2 Unique Entity ID and System for Award Management (SAM)

Each applicant must:

- (i) Be registered in SAM before submitting its application;
- (ii) Provide a valid unique entity ID in its application; and
- (iii) Continue to maintain an active registration in SAM with current information at all times during which it has an active Federal award or an application or plan under consideration by a federal agency.

5.3 Submission Instructions

Applications must be submitted through the ezFedGrants system at <https://grants.fms.usda.gov/>

USDA-managed computer systems require applicants to have an identity-proofed account through the login.gov platform, and in some cases may require at least two persons. Identity-proofing and subsequent registration with any USDA-managed computer system may take several days, and applicants who do not already have system access should begin the registration process immediately, even if they are unsure they will apply to this funding opportunity.

Applicants who require assistance with any USDA-managed computer system must reach out to the agency contact listed in Section 1, Agency Contact Information, prior to the application submission deadline date in Section 5.4, Submission Dates and Times. USDA/FAS strongly encourages applicants to reach out at least 5 business days in advance of the application submission deadline to ensure resolution prior to the application submission deadline date. Applicants should provide as much detail as possible to facilitate resolution of the issue. USDA/FAS will make a reasonable effort to resolve the issue and in rare cases may offer alternative avenues for application submission. If applicants do not contact USDA/FAS prior to the application submission deadline date and submit an application package through an alternative method, their application will be deemed ineligible.

5.4 Submission Dates and Times

Application Submission Deadline: August 14, 2026, 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.

5.5 Intergovernmental Review

Not applicable.

6. Application Review Information

6.1 Eligibility Threshold Review

USDA/FAS will conduct an eligibility threshold review of all applications submitted to determine that:

- The applicant is eligible, as defined in Section 2, Eligibility;
- The application was submitted by the application submission deadline date and time as specified in Section 5, Submission Requirements; and
- The applicant submitted a complete application, including all required forms and documents as defined in Section 4.1, Submission Requirements.

An application that does not include all documentation required by this notice of funding opportunity at the time of application, including documentation required in SAM.gov, will be deemed ineligible.

If an applicant is determined to be ineligible, USDA/FAS 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 was made in error may request reconsideration, highlighting evidence supporting their claim, by email to the program officer(s) listed in Section 1, Agency Contact Information, within 3 business days of notification. If USDA/FAS determines an error occurred during the application submission and/or eligibility

review process, the application will rejoin the group of eligible Participants and continue to the merit review process.

Applicants are advised that readability is of paramount importance and should take precedence in the application.

6.2 Review Criteria

Applicants will be evaluated by the extent and quality to which they demonstrate that they have the capabilities, staff, resources, and equipment to successfully perform the project as described in the following factors. Scoring will also be based on the applicant's ability to clearly articulate and detail its capacity to address the following factors in its proposal.

Expertise and Experience (30 Pts)

The applicant will be evaluated on the extent and quality to which they demonstrate how the program objectives will be achieved through their appropriate technical background, expertise and abilities, and program plans, including:

- Define and detail experience with international training and adult education (20 Pts)
 - Applicant's explanation of their experience with international training and adult-education.
- Define and detail Mentor(s) and other support staff qualifications (10 Pts)
 - Applicant's demonstration of their proposed Mentors' background and advanced training and how it can match the skills of Borlaug Fellowship Program Participants.
 - Applicant's explanation of how other appropriate collaborating scientists or staff might be identified and utilized in the program to meet any of the objectives which the proposed Mentor(s) cannot address.

Overall Program (30 Pts)

The applicant will be evaluated on the extent and quality to which they demonstrate that the overall program design is strategically aligned and relevant to the stated objectives, including:

- Program design, applicability, and alignment (15 Pts)
 - Applicant's explanation of their ability to align with the selected research topic.
 - Applicant's explanation of their ability to align research topics with USDA/FAS's agricultural programs, policies, and development/extension goals, and those of the Participants' country.
 - Applicant's demonstration of their experience and knowledge of relevant agricultural conditions within the Participants' country or similar location.
 - Applicant's demonstration of how the overall program plan and design is relevant to the objectives and background.
 - Applicant's explanations of their international expertise and ability to address cultural considerations of the Participants, including the applicant's ability to tailor the training and research program implementation to the needs of the Participants.
 - Applicant's demonstration of how regional and university resources, including the presence of relevant agricultural practices in the region, would be used to enhance the program.

- Program implementation plans and strategies including: (15 Pts)
 - Applicant’s explanation of the overall program plan, how the institution will be involved to ensure the stated goals and objectives of the topic are met.
 - Applicant’s explanation of the following details in their implementation plans:
 - Mentor pre-program visit(s) (if applicable)
 - Participants’ USDA headquarters visit
 - Participants’ university orientation
 - Field demonstrations and/or field visits (if applicable)
 - Participants’ leadership and policy-oriented development
 - Participants’ World Food Prize participation (if applicable)
 - Participants’ cultural opportunities
 - Participants’ post-program USDA headquarters visit
 - Mentor return visit(s) post-program
 - Applicant’s explanation of the following strategies and plans showcasing their flexibility and ability to respond in the event of unforeseen circumstances:
 - Risk Mitigation and Response Plan
 - Quality Assurance Plan

Professional Detailed Budget and Budget Narrative (30 Pts)

The applicant will be evaluated on the reasonableness, cost-effectiveness, and adequacy of the proposed budget to accomplish the program, along with the extent to which the budget documents are detailed, organized, in-scope, and appropriate, including:

- Appropriate and detailed content included (15 Pts)
 - Applicant’s demonstration that the proposed budget is appropriate for the activities and requirements for the program and the number of Participants.
 - Applicant’s use of the detailed budget table that utilizes cost item categories and includes appropriate cost savings where available.
 - Applicant’s explanation of proposed staff, including their role in the program.
- Budget narrative and budget table including (15 Pts)
 - Applicant’s use of a clear budget narrative accompanying the budget table to address each line item therein.
 - Applicant’s demonstration of successful rounding and calculating with final budget narrative numbers exactly matching the budget table line items, rounded to the cent.

Spelling, Grammar, and Completeness of Proposal (10 Pts)

The applicant will be evaluated on the completeness of their submission including:

- Applicant’s project narrative and supporting documents are complete with limited spelling and grammatical errors (10 Pts)

6.3 Review and Selection Process

The agency will convene a review panel to review the eligible applications against the evaluation criteria described above. USDA/FAS documents that reviewers, whatever their affiliation, are free from a conflict of interest that would affect their assessment of an applicant, whether positively or negatively.

The reviewers will ensure that the applicant can deliver the programs/activities, as described in the announcement based on the applicant's project narrative and assign a score and provide summary comments based on the evaluation criteria identified above. The review panel will make a recommendation list to the selecting official, who is not a member of the panel.

The selecting official may select applications out of rank order in consideration of strategic program priorities. Selection determinations are final and cannot be appealed.

Prior to selection, the agency may contact the highest-ranking applicants to seek clarification and to discuss programmatic aspects of the application. If an application includes a subaward, USDA/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.

Each Research Topic Description listed in the appendix will receive one award.

6.4 Risk Review

Prior to making a Federal award, the Federal awarding agency is required by [2 C.F.R. 200.206](#), [31 U.S.C. § 3321](#) and [41 U.S.C. § 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 a 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 \$350,000, the Federal agency must review and consider any information about the applicant that is in the responsibility/qualification records available in SAM.gov ([41 U.S.C. § 2313](#)).

- An applicant can review and comment on any information in the responsibility/qualification records available in SAM.gov.
- Before making decisions in the risk review required by [2 C.F.R. 200.206](#), the Federal awarding agency will consider any comments by the applicant along with information available in the responsibility/qualification records in SAM.gov.

7. Award Notices

Applicants will be notified of the status of their application/award by email. Notification to successful applicants is not authorization to proceed, and such notification should be construed as provisional until an award document has been signed by authorized officials of USDA/FAS and the recipient.

Award documents will be transmitted by email to the individuals or offices who submitted them, or to those persons or offices that USDA/FAS believes, to the best of its information, are proper. The applicant is recommended to ensure that the agency is provided with the correct point(s) of contact.

8. Post-Award Requirements and Administration

8.1 Administrative and National Policy Requirements

All successful applicants for all grant and cooperative agreements are required to comply with the applicable General Terms and Conditions, which can be found at https://fas.usda.gov/grants/general_terms_and_conditions. The applicant is presumed to have read, understood, and accepted these terms when accepting a USDA/FAS award. USDA/FAS will specify in the terms and conditions of all final awards all termination provisions that apply, including terminations for all reasons specified in [2 C.F.R. § 200.340\(a\)](#). Applicants with questions about the applicable terms should contact the program officer(s) listed in Section 1, Agency Contact Information.

Before accepting an award, the applicant should carefully read all award documents for instructions on administering the award and the terms and conditions associated with responsibilities of 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.

8.2 Reporting

Financial Reporting

Financial Reports, using form [SF-425](#), Federal Financial Report (FFR), must be submitted annually, within 30 days of the end of the reporting period. A final financial report must be submitted within 120 days after the end date of the period of performance pursuant to [2 C.F.R. § 200.328\(d\)](#).

Performance Reporting

A performance progress report must be submitted annually, within 30 days of the end of the reporting period. A final performance progress report must be submitted no later than 120 calendar days after the end date of the period of performance. The recipient may use any appropriate format for performance progress reports, provided the report includes:

- a) A comparison of actual accomplishments to the established goals 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 the performance report.

Financial and Performance reports must be submitted through the ezFedGrants system at <https://grants.fms.usda.gov/>. USDA/FAS may authorize alternative means of submission for recipients who demonstrate a bona fide need.

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 Part 170](#), should they be selected for funding.

Closeout

No later than 120 calendar days after the end date of the period of performance or after an amendment has been issued to close out a USDA/FAS financial assistance agreement, whichever comes first, recipients must submit a final financial report 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 is disbursed, the award is subject to closeout. Acceptance of final reports by USDA/FAS 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.

8.3 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 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, recipients must permit USDA/FAS, upon reasonable notice, to review assistance agreement-related records and to interview the organization's staff and other knowledgeable persons regarding the program, and to respond in a timely and accurate manner to agency requests for information relating to the program.

8.4 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 1, Agency Contact Information, 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.

8.5 Mandatory Disclosures

As required by [2 C.F.R. § 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 C.F.R. § 200.339](#) including suspension and debarment.

8.6 Performance Expectations

Assignment of a Principal Investigator (Training Coordinator)

The applicant must designate a contact person as the Principal Investigator (PI) responsible for coordinating all administrative and programmatic arrangements.

Assignment of a Mentor

A key component of the program is matching the Participants with Mentor(s). The applicant will select appropriate Mentor(s) for one-on-one work with each Participant for the duration of the program. Participants will be identified post-award.

- A single Mentor may be assigned to more than one Participant simultaneously. Both the Principal Investigator (PI) and the Mentor(s) must hold a position at the eligible U.S. institution applying for this opportunity.
- The Mentor(s) will establish a professional relationship with the Participants, providing guidance and training related to the research topic.
- The Mentor(s) will work with the Participants before arrival to develop work plans and discuss appropriate site visits and other arrangements.
- The Mentor(s) will provide the agreed upon work plan through the PI to USDA/FAS for consultation and approval approximately 2 weeks before the commencement of the program.
- The Mentor(s) agrees to commit a significant amount of time each week for work with the Participants during the program.
- The Mentor(s) may commit to visit the Participants in their countries prior to Participant arrival in the United States (if electing to conduct a pre-Fellowship visit).
- The Mentor(s) will continue communicating with Participants beyond the end of the program in the U.S. and will visit the Participants in their countries during the “Mentor Return Visit.”
- The Mentor(s) will submit annual progress reports that summarize all program activities conducted.
- The Mentor(s) may assign other faculty members to assist with training and research activities.
- The Mentor(s) should include a leadership component in the program, such as a training course, workshop, or other suitable activity that provides leadership experience for the Participants.

Mentor Pre-Fellowship Visit

- The Mentor(s) may work with the Participants to plan a pre-Fellowship visit to their home country. The trip should occur before the program begins.
- The Mentor(s) should use the trip to evaluate the work environment and institutional capabilities, and to begin establishing a relationship with the Participants to ensure a productive and appropriately aligned program.
- The PI must provide USDA/FAS with an agenda for all Pre-Fellowship Visit(s), including goals and objectives, and an itinerary, three weeks prior to the trip. Mentor travel information must be provided for emergency contact purposes and country clearance (if required by the cognizant FAS Overseas Office).
- The Mentor(s) must provide a trip report highlighting the trip’s activities and results through the PI to USDA/FAS within 30 days after the visit.

- The Mentor(s) should plan to meet with the USDA/FAS Attaché or staff from the U.S. Embassy while they are traveling, if feasible. USDA/FAS can assist with coordination prior to the trip.
- The applicant will budget for the airfare, other travel and hotel expenses, and meals and incidental costs (see M&IE below) for the Mentor(s) while in the Participant's home country.

USDA/FAS Headquarters Orientation and Debrief Visits (DC Visits)

- The USDA/FAS- Washington D.C. orientation and debrief visits are a required component of the Borlaug Fellowship Program.
- USDA/FAS will provide an agenda, and speakers for the USDA orientation and debrief.
- The orientation should occur within the first week of the Participants arriving in the U.S. and the wrap-up session should occur within the last week of the Participants leaving the U.S.
- The applicant should organize, coordinate, and pay for the travel to, in, and from Washington, D.C., for the orientation and wrap-up visits at the USDA headquarters. This can include but is not limited to arranging per diem, lodging, air and ground transportation to/from, as well as in, Washington, D.C. These elements should all be budgeted.
- USDA will organize the USDA headquarters portion of the visit.
- USDA will consult with the applicant to determine the visit dates following the award and establishment of funding agreements.

World Food Prize Attendance

- Should the program timeline overlap with the World Food Prize dates, Participants should attend the World Food Prize. Mentors, or an authorizing representative, from the hosting university must accompany the Participants.
- If applicable, the applicant will budget for transportation of the Participants and Mentors/representatives to and from Des Moines, Iowa.
- If applicable, the applicant will budget for lodging allowance and M&IE for the Participants and Mentors/representatives in Des Moines (at the Federal Government rates).
- USDA will provide an agenda and programming to the Participants and Mentors/representatives in Des Moines.

Mentor Follow-up Visit

- The Mentor Follow-up Visit is a required component of the Borlaug Fellowship Program.
- The Mentor(s) will work with the Participants to plan a follow-up visit to the Participants in their home country. The trip must occur within 6 months to 1 year after the program ends and no later than 3 months before the end of the agreement.
- The Mentor(s) will follow up with the Participants for an additional year after their visit to assess the impact of the program.

- The PI will provide USDA/FAS with an agenda for each Mentor’s reciprocal visit, including goals and objectives, three weeks prior to the trip. The Mentor’s travel information must be provided for emergency contact purposes and country clearance (if required by the cognizant FAS Overseas Office).
- The Mentor(s) will provide a trip report highlighting the trip’s activities and results through the PI to USDA/FAS within 30 days after the visit.
- The Mentor(s) should plan to meet with the USDA/FAS Attaché or staff from the U.S. Embassy while they are traveling, if feasible. USDA/FAS can assist with coordination prior to the trip.

Travel, Transportation, and Housing

- The applicant will budget for economy class, international airfare for each Participant from their home to Washington, D.C., and on to the hosting university.
- The applicant will budget for economy class, international airfare from the university to Washington, D.C., and on to each Participant’s home after the USDA debrief visit.
- The applicant will budget for economy class, domestic airfare for a Mentor or an authorized university representative to accompany the Participants for the Washington, D.C. USDA visits.
- The applicant will budget for, arrange, and purchase all domestic travel related to the program, including transportation to and from Des Moines, Iowa for the World Food Prize should the program timeline overlaps with the World Food Prize dates.
- The applicant will provide housing for the Participants for the duration of the research program, taking into account gender and cultural norms.
- The applicant will pay lodging fees directly. The applicant will not require the Participants to pay for their lodging expenses, whether through reimbursement or advance payment.
- Lodging will include a private bedroom, private or shared bathroom, access to a laundry room, and access to a kitchen with pots, pans, and utensils.
- Necessities, such as sheets, towels, and cleaning supplies, will be provided for each Participant’s use. The Participants should not have to pay for these items.
- Lodging will be within walking distance of the campus/training location or easily accessible by public transportation.
- If public transportation is required to access campus/training location, the applicant will provide the Participants with a bus pass or proper allowance for transportation expenses.
- When planning lodging options, the applicant should check with the Participants and account for any special dietary restrictions or preferences, or accessibility needs.

Meals and Incidentals (M&IE)

- The applicant will provide each Participant with daily M&IE for the duration of their Fellowship.
- Daily M&IE allowance may not exceed current GSA per diem rates.
- The applicant can determine the frequency of per diem allotments, but the Participants must receive per diem within the first week of the program. The PI must inform the Participants and USDA/FAS immediately if this cannot be accommodated.

Emergency Health Insurance

- The Participants will not be required to purchase their own health insurance.
- The applicant is not required to purchase emergency health insurance for each Participant for the duration of stay. USDA/FAS will provide Participants with J-1 Visa compliant emergency health insurance.
- USDA/FAS will inform the Participants as to what is covered under health insurance policy, especially highlighting that pre-existing medical conditions are not covered.
- The applicant should alert USDA/FAS staff immediately if any health/medical conditions arise for the Participants during the program.

Visa Support

- DS-2019/J-1 visa support for Participants and related SEVIS requirements will be provided by USDA/FAS.

Communication

- The applicant will initiate contact with the Participants as soon as possible after signing of the agreement and final selection of Participants.
- The applicant will develop the research program in consultation with USDA/FAS and the Participants, and Mentors should customize each work plan in consultation with the Participants.
- The applicant will keep USDA/FAS informed regarding any logistical or program planning.
- The applicant will notify USDA/FAS immediately upon Participants' physical arrival and departure from the U.S. to comply with U.S. Department of Homeland Security requirements.
- The applicant will provide USDA/FAS with the Participants' temporary U.S. address and phone number, and emergency contact numbers for the PI, Mentor, or other appropriate institution personnel. This information is required so that Participants can be reached in the event of an emergency.

Program

- The applicant will provide educational materials and supplies to each Participant necessary for their full participation in the program.
- The applicant will pay for all fees related to the program, such as (but not limited to) administrative fees and laboratory fees.
- The applicant will arrange relevant field visits as applicable for the program.
- The applicant should organize and offer appropriate cross-cultural activities for the purpose of sharing language, culture, or history in accordance with J-1 Visa requirements.
- The applicant will submit to USDA/FAS annual performance and financial reports as well as the final performance and financial reports after the completion of the program. Reports should include a summary of activities, accomplishments, any programs that occurred, and photographs when possible.

- The Mentor(s) should help ensure that Participants complete the Post-Program Evaluation provided by USDA/FAS.

Orientation

- The PI/Training Coordinator will communicate directly with the Participants at least four to eight weeks before their arrival in the U.S. to ensure that all pertinent information is provided, including:
 - Name and contact information of PI/Training Coordinator
 - Name and contact information of Mentor(s)
 - Institution information, weather information, and clothing needs
 - Housing and M&IE allowance
 - Program plan and anticipated site visits
 - Professional development expectations
 - Reminder to bring any necessary prescription medications
- The Institution will provide an orientation upon the Participants' arrival to acquaint them with the campus and community resources, such as:
 - Explanation and demonstration of local bus/transportation and grocery options
 - Explanation of cultural and legal expectations as visitors to the U.S.
 - Safety and security protocol
- USDA will provide a welcome and orientation packet for Participants upon arrival during the DC visit.

9. Other Information

9.1 Extensions

Extensions to this program are permitted, subject to approval.

9.2 No Awards

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

9.3 SAM.gov Registration Instructions

Organizations applying for 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.gov¹ to complete your SAM.gov registration. SAM.gov registration is FREE. The process for entity registrations includes several steps and validations and is not complete until the registration is shown as Active. Please review the [Entity Registration Checklist](#) for details on this process.

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 is 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, 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 issues or chat with a help desk agent: (866) 606-8220. The Federal Service desk hours of operation are Monday – Friday 8am – 8pm ET.

9.4 Faith-Based Organizations

Faith-based organizations may apply for an award on the same basis as any other organization, as set forth at, and subject to the protections and requirements of, [7 C.F.R. Part 16](#) and any applicable constitutional and statutory requirements, including [42 U.S.C. § 2000bb](#) et seq. USDA/FAS will not, in the selection of recipients, discriminate for or against an organization on the basis of the organization's religious character, motives, or affiliation, or lack thereof, or on the basis of conduct that would not be considered grounds to favor or disfavor a similarly situated secular organization.

A faith-based organization that participates in this program will retain its independence from the Government and may continue to carry out its mission consistent with religious freedom and conscience protections in federal law. Religious accommodations may also be sought under many of these religious freedom and conscience protection laws.

A faith-based organization may not use direct Federal financial assistance from USDA/FAS to support or engage in any explicitly religious activities except when consistent with the Establishment Clause of the First Amendment and any other applicable requirements. An organization receiving Federal financial assistance also may not, in providing services funded by USDA/FAS, or in their outreach activities related to such services, discriminate against a program beneficiary or prospective program beneficiary on the basis of religion, a religious belief, a refusal to hold a religious belief, or a refusal to attend or participate in a religious practice.

Appendix

U.S. Department of Agriculture Foreign Agricultural Service

Advancing Regulatory Approaches for Genetically Engineered Corn and Soy Vietnam

RESEARCH TOPIC DESCRIPTION

The Borlaug Fellowship Program is requesting the design and delivery of a training program for up to five Participants from Vietnam on Advancing Regulatory Approaches for Genetically Engineered Corn and Soy. Participants will be specialists in genetic engineering research and regulation from government agencies and government-affiliated institutions. Participants may include researchers, regulators, policymakers, policy advisors, and risk assessors.

The program aims to streamline the Government of Vietnam's approach to safety risk assessments of food and feed products derived from genetically engineered crops, particularly GE corn and soybeans. Participants should learn about the U.S. regulatory system for GE products and how risk assessment is coordinated among government agencies. The Participants should also learn about how U.S. regulation and risk assessments of GE crops engineered using foreign DNA differ from GE crops developed through genome editing.

Each Participant will be paired with a Mentor to develop a proposal with an action plan for streamlining feed and food safety risk assessment processes of GE derived products across the Government of Vietnam's regulatory agencies. Specific program plans will be tailored to the expertise and experience of the Participants once they are selected.

The objective of this training program is for Participants to develop a coordinated approach to GE product food and feed safety risk assessments that will align their government with U.S. regulatory policies and increase export market access in Vietnam for U.S. GE corn and soybeans.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

The applicant shall ensure that Participants develop competencies in the following areas:

- U.S. food and feed safety regulatory system for genetically engineered products
- GE regulatory policies and processes that streamline coordination across government agencies
- U.S. regulation of GE products engineered with foreign DNA vs. genome editing
- Safety risk analysis and assessment of GE products
- International policies and standards – CODEX, Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety, Intellectual Property Rights

PERIOD OF PERFORMANCE

This consecutive up to 12-week program should be implemented before September 30, 2027.

**U.S. Department of Agriculture
Foreign Agricultural Service**

**Trade Facilitation for U.S. Genetically Engineered Corn and Soy
Thailand**

RESEARCH TOPIC DESCRIPTION

The Borlaug Fellowship Program is requesting the design and delivery of a training program for up to five Participants from Thailand focusing on Trade Facilitation for U.S. Genetically Engineered Corn and Soy. The Participants will be specialists in genetic engineering research and regulation from government agencies and government-affiliated institutions. Participants may include researchers, regulators, policymakers, policy advisors, and risk assessors.

The program aims to encourage the Government of Thailand to adopt genetic engineering (GE) regulation policies that are science-based, transparent, and facilitate trade for GE derived agricultural products, particularly U.S. GE corn and soybeans used in livestock feed. Participants should learn about the U.S. regulatory system for GE products and how food and feed safety risk assessments are coordinated among government agencies. The Participants should learn about how U.S. regulation and risk assessments of GE crops engineered with foreign DNA differ from GE crops developed through genome editing.

Each Participant will be paired with a Mentor to develop a proposal with an action plan to advance Thailand's genetic engineering regulatory system. Specific program plans will be tailored to the expertise and experience of the Participants once they are selected.

The objective of this training program is for the Participants to promote science-based, transparent, and efficient GE product food and feed safety regulation policies and procedures in Thailand that reduce trade barriers and facilitate market access for U.S GE corn and soybeans exports.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

The applicant shall ensure that Participants develop competencies in the following areas:

- U.S. regulatory system for genetically engineered food and feed products
- GE regulatory policies and processes that streamline coordination across government agencies
- U.S. regulation of GE products engineered from foreign DNA vs. Genome editing
- Safety risk analysis and assessment of GE products
- International policies and standards – CODEX, Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety, Intellectual Property Rights

PERIOD OF PERFORMANCE

This consecutive up to 12-week program should be implemented before September 30, 2027.

**U.S. Department of Agriculture
Foreign Agricultural Service**

**Genetic Engineered Product Risk Assessment
Indonesia**

RESEARCH TOPIC DESCRIPTION

The Borlaug Fellowship Program is requesting the design and delivery of a training program for up to five Participants from Indonesia. The Participants will be specialists in agricultural genetic engineering (GE). Participants may include researchers, regulators, policymakers, policy advisors, and risk assessors.

This program aims to streamline the Government of Indonesia's approach to food and feed safety risk assessments of products derived from genetically engineered crops, particularly GE corn and soybeans. Participants should learn about the U.S. regulatory system for GE products and how risk assessments are coordinated among government agencies. The Participants should also learn about how U.S. regulation and risk assessments of GE crops engineered with foreign DNA differ from GE crops developed through genome editing.

Each Participant will be paired with a Mentor to develop a proposal with an action plan for streamlining feed and food safety risk assessment processes for GE derived products across the Government of Indonesia's regulatory agencies. Proposals may focus on new food safety testing methods, procedures to enhance efficiency, or optimizing interagency coordination. Specific program plans will be tailored to the expertise and experience of the Participants once they are selected.

The objective of this training program is for Participants to develop a coordinated approach to GE product food and feed safety risk assessments that will align their government with U.S. regulatory policies and increase export market access for U.S. GE corn and soybeans to Indonesia.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

The applicant shall ensure that Participants develop competencies in the following areas:

- U.S. regulatory system for genetically engineered food and feed products
- GE regulatory policies and processes that streamline coordination across government agencies
- U.S. regulation of GE products engineered with foreign DNA vs. genome editing
- Safety risk analysis and assessment of GE products
- International policies and standards – CODEX, Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety, Intellectual Property Rights

PERIOD OF PERFORMANCE

This consecutive up to 12-week program should be implemented before September 30, 2027.

**U.S. Department of Agriculture
Foreign Agricultural Service**

**Advancing Regulatory Approaches for Genetic Engineering of Plants
Morocco & Tunisia**

RESEARCH TOPIC DESCRIPTION

The Borlaug Fellowship Program is requesting the design and delivery of a training program for up to ten Participants from Morocco and Tunisia (total of up to five Participants per country as a cohort). These Participants will be agricultural genetic engineering specialists. Participants may include researchers, policymakers, policy advisors, and risk assessors.

The program aims to encourage the governments of Morocco and Tunisia to adopt genetic engineering (GE) regulation policies that are science-based, transparent, and facilitate trade for GE derived agricultural products, particularly U.S. corn, soybeans, and distiller's dried grains (DDGS). Participants should learn about the U.S. regulatory system for GE products and how food and feed safety risk assessments are coordinated among government agencies. They should also learn about how U.S. regulation and risk assessment of GE crops engineered with foreign DNA differ from GE crops developed through genome editing.

Each Participant will be paired with a Mentor to develop a proposal with an action plan to advance Morocco and Tunisia's genetic engineering regulatory system. Specific program plans will be tailored to the expertise and experience of the Participants once they are selected.

The program's objective is to assist the governments of Morocco and Tunisia in establishing science-based, risk-proportionate regulations and policies that increase market access for U.S. agricultural genetic engineered corn, soybeans, and DDGs.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

The applicant should ensure that the Participants increase their knowledge in the following areas:

- U.S. regulatory system for genetically engineered food and feed products
- GE regulatory policies and processes that streamline coordination across government agencies
- U.S. regulation of GE products engineered from foreign DNA vs. Genome editing
- Safety risk analysis and assessment of GE products

PERIOD OF PERFORMANCE

This consecutive up to 12-week program should be implemented before September 30, 2027.

**U.S. Department of Agriculture
Foreign Agricultural Service**

**Genome Editing
Egypt**

RESEARCH TOPIC DESCRIPTION

The Borlaug Fellowship Program is requesting the design and delivery of a research program for up to five Participants from Egypt. These Participants will be researchers from government agencies and research institutions, including advisors to policymakers, who work within the genome editing field.

The aim of this research program is to support Egypt's understanding of the science behind genome editing in addition to understanding the United States' science-based regulatory framework for genome-edited food and feed crops.

Each Participant will work individually with a university Mentor to develop a genome editing research project. Mentoring should focus on tools and techniques for genome editing plants for resistance to abiotic and biotic stressors, such as drought, soil salinity, insect damage, and weed pressure. These research projects should ideally lead to long-term collaborations between the Participants and U.S. experts in genome editing, along with greater understanding of the United States' science-based standards. Specific program plans will be tailored to the expertise and experience of the Participants once they are selected.

The objective of the program is to build acceptance in Egypt of the safety and science behind genome editing and increase overall market access for U.S. exports of food and feed products derived from genetic engineering to Egypt.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

The applicant should ensure that the Participants increase their knowledge in the following areas:

- Genome editing techniques and applications focused on abiotic and biotic stress resistance.
- United States' science-based approach to genome editing regulation.
- Examples of how gene editing can contribute to food security.

PERIOD OF PERFORMANCE

This consecutive up to 12-week program should be implemented before September 30, 2027.

**U.S. Department of Agriculture
Foreign Agricultural Service**

**Advancing New World Screwworm Risk Modeling
Mexico**

RESEARCH TOPIC DESCRIPTION

The Borlaug Fellowship Program is requesting the design and delivery of a research program for up to four Participants from Mexico who are working on New World Screwworm risk modelling. Participants will include modelling specialists from Mexico's National Service for Health, Safety, and Agri-food Quality (SENASICA) and research institutions.

The program's objective is to protect the prosperity of America's livestock industry by collaborating with Mexico on tools to detect New World Screwworm (NWS) and prevent this parasite from crossing the border into the United States. The research program will be no more than (up to) 12 weeks in duration.

NWS infected cattle have recently been confirmed in Northern Mexico and pose a serious risk to the health and productivity of U.S. livestock across the border. This program on Advancing New World Screwworm Risk Modelling in Mexico should train Participants on the latest methodologies in predictive risk modelling. This program will enable collaboration between U.S. and Mexican government agencies and research institutions on the rapid development of predictive risk models for NWS.

Each Participant will be paired with a Mentor for individual training and to develop a plan for joint research on NWS risk modelling in Mexico. NWS researchers from the USDA's Agricultural Research Service (ARS) and Animal Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) should be included in the Participants' training whenever possible.

The objective of the program is the joint creation of a dynamic risk-mapping tool, enabling the U.S. and Mexico to allocate surveillance (trapping) and sterile fly release efforts with optimized, data-driven precision, thereby maintaining the integrity of the bilateral eradication program and safeguarding North American agricultural trade as well as the health and productivity of U.S. livestock.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

The applicant shall ensure that Participants develop competencies in the following areas:

- New methodologies and tools for risk modelling
- Data ingestion pipelines
- Model calibration
- Interpretation of high-resolution risk maps to forecast NWS incursion pathways

PERIOD OF PERFORMANCE

This consecutive 4–12-week training should be implemented before September 30, 2027.