National Food and Agricultural Sciences Teaching, Extension, and Research Awards (TERA)

MODIFICATION: Pages cover sheet, 2, 11, 17

2019 Request for Applications (RFA)

APPLICATION DEADLINE: July 3, 2019

ELIGIBILITY: See Part III, A of RFA



United States Department of Agriculture

National Institute of Food and Agriculture

NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF FOOD AND AGRICULTURE

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

National Food and Agricultural Sciences Teaching, Extension, and Research Awards

INITIAL ANNOUNCEMENT

CATALOG OF FEDERAL DOMESTIC ASSISTANCE: This program is listed in the Assistance Listings under the Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance number 10.500.

DATES: Applications must be received by **5 p.m. Eastern Time** on **July 3, 2019**. Applications received after this deadline will normally not be considered for funding (see Part IV, C of this RFA). Comments regarding this request for applications (RFA) are requested within six months from the issuance of this notice. Comments received after that date will be considered to the extent practicable.

STAKEHOLDER INPUT: We at the National Institute of Food and Agriculture (NIFA) seek your comments about this RFA. We will consider your comments when we develop the next RFA for the program, if applicable, and we'll use them to meet the requirements of section 103(c)(2) of the Agricultural Research, Extension, and Education Reform Act of 1998 (7 U.S.C. 7613(c)(2)). Submit your written stakeholder comments by the deadline set forth in the DATES portion of this notice via email to Policy@nifa.usda.gov. (This email address is only for receiving comments regarding this RFA and *not* for requesting information or forms.) In your comments, please state that you are responding to the National Food and Agricultural Sciences Teaching Awards (TERA) RFA.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY: NIFA requests applications for the National Food and Agricultural Sciences Teaching, Extension, and Research Awards (TERA) for Fiscal Year (FY) 2019. The anticipated amount available for this cooperative agreement in FY 2019 is $100,000. This is a continuation grant with the opportunity to be funded $100,000 a year an additional three years based on funds availability.

This RFA identifies the objectives for the TERA projects, deadline dates, funding information, eligibility criteria for projects and applicants, and application forms and associated instructions needed to apply for a TERA cooperative agreement.

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PART I—FUNDING OPPORTUNITY DESCRIPTION

A. Legislative Authority

The National Food and Agricultural Sciences Teaching, Extension, and Research Awards (TERA) program is authorized in section 1417(i) of NARETPA (7 U.S.C. 3152(i)) amended by Section 7108 of P.L. 110-246. The Secretary of Agriculture, has delegated the authority to administer the program to NIFA. This RFA describes the annual (TERA) that honors excellence in College or University Teaching.

B. Purpose and Priorities

The purpose of TERA award is to recognize and promote excellence in teaching in the food and agricultural sciences within U.S. colleges and universities. For the purposes of this RFA, teaching is defined to include all aspects of developing human capital in order to help meet current and future national food, agricultural, natural resources, and human sciences (FANH) workplace needs. Examples of relevant activities under this project type include (but are not limited to) the following: formal classroom instruction; laboratory instruction; and practicum experience such as faculty development, student recruitment and services, curriculum development, and innovative teaching methodologies. It also includes activities that directly or indirectly contribute to student learning such as research, extension/outreach, and organizational arrangements needed for the proper functioning of the educational institution.

The 2019 National Food and Agricultural Sciences Teaching, Extension, and Research Awards (TERA) guidelines can be found at https://nifa.usda.gov/program/national-awards-excellence-college-and-university-teaching-food-and-agricultural-sciences.

By supporting innovative teaching, extension, research, and education, this program directly aligns with:

2018-2022 USDA Strategic Plan, Strategic Goal #4 -- Facilitate Rural Prosperity and Economic Development; Objective 4.1: Expand rural business opportunity and rural quality of life with access to capital; improved infrastructure, broadband access and connectivity; and support for workforce availability.

This program addresses the national priority of developing competent human capital for employment in the food, agriculture, natural resources, and human (FANH) sciences. NIFA, subject to the availability of funds, will administer this TAP project. This cooperative agreement program also addresses the national priority of developing competent human capital for employment in the food, agriculture, natural resources and human (FANH) sciences.

USDA is designated as the lead federal agency that supports higher education in the FANH sciences. In this context, NIFA has a specific responsibility to initiate and support projects that strengthen higher education teaching programs in these areas.

Program Goals include:

- Annually recognize and honor a select group of college and university teachers who excel at teaching;
- Help disseminate best practices in teaching through workshops, conferences, blogs, social media and other appropriate activities; and
- Increase the number and diversity of academic programs participating in TERA.

C. Program Area Description

Program Code-	TEACH
Program code Name-	TEACH
CFDA-	10.500
Project Type-	**……..**
Grant Type-	Cooperative Agreement
Grant Duration -	**4 years**
Maximum Award Amount -	$100,000

NIFA is soliciting Applications for the TERA program that aim to:

Recognize excellence in teaching, extension, and research in the FANH sciences at a college or university. The awarded administrator of this program will coordinate all required activities, including the solicitation of award nominations; publicizing the opportunities within the system; developing the evaluation criteria; assisting with the peer evaluation of applications; and ensuring national recognition for all award recipients selected through these independent procedures. At least one cash award will be made every fiscal year to a nominee selected.

Annually, NIFA will make awards to three categories of teachers:

Category 1 – Teachers who are primarily excellent in instruction; but also conduct significant research and/or extension activities, and contribute to the academic environment at the University.

Regional: A teacher selected from any of the four regions, and who is deemed by the review panel to exhibit sustained and meritorious teaching, and who has maintained at least eight consecutive years' experience in higher education teaching, as defined in this section. While a sustained pattern of meritorious activity is expected, this award does not recognize teaching longevity so much as it recognizes the quality of recent achievements involving teaching philosophy, methodology, and self-assessment aimed at improvement.

National: A recipient selected from the pool of potential Regional award recipients, from any of the four regions, and who is deemed by the review panel to exhibit sustained, meritorious, and exceptional teaching.

Category 2 – Teachers who are new to the teaching profession and have less than seven years of teaching experience**.**

New Teacher: A teacher selected from any of the four regions, who has demonstrated a commitment to a career in teaching and is deemed by the review panel to exhibit meritorious teaching, but who has no more than seven consecutive years of experience in higher education teaching, this does not include teaching assistant or instructor/lecturer positions.

Category 3 – Teachers who are not required to conduct research and/or extension/outreach but comparatively have a higher teaching load.

Teaching and Student Engagement – A teacher selected from any of the four regions who has more than seven years of experience in higher education teaching and is deemed by the review panel to exhibit meritorious teaching and significant levels of student engagement in formal and non-formal settings. Individuals in this category are those whose appointments are at least 75 percent focused on teaching.

For the purposes of this program, the four regions of the United States are defined as follows:

1. Northeast (CT, DE, ME, MD, MA, NH, NJ, NY, PA, RI, VT, WV, DC);
2. North Central (IL, IN, IA, KS, MI, MN, MO, NE, ND, OH, SD, WI);
3. Southern (AL, AR, FL, GA, KY, LA, MS, NC, OK, SC, TN, TX, VA, PR, USVI); and
4. Western (AK, AZ, CA, CO, HI, ID, MT, NV, NM, OR, UT, WA, WY, and any Insular Area Institution designated as a college or university within: Guam, American Samoa, the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, the Federated States of Micronesia, the Republic of the Marshall Islands, and the Republic of Palau).

Cooperative Agreement Recipient Responsibilities

Under guidance from NIFA, the recipient of this Specific Cooperative Agreement will perform the following program activities:

1. Broadly publicize the annual call for nominations process through various methods to increase visibility of the awards program among eligible institutions within the educational community.
2. Administer logistics for an annual award recipient selection panel meeting. Select and contract with a suitable meeting location and administer all travel expenses directly with panel members or coordinate a virtual meeting if necessary.
3. Work with the Association of Public and Land-Grant Universities (APLU) to provide logistical support for an annual, national awards ceremony to recognize award recipients and assist with other awards ceremony logistics.

4. As directed annually by NIFA, include award recipient background materials in the national award ceremony agenda and awards brochure. Also provide awards, nametags, and other necessary materials for the ceremony at the annual APLU meeting, where awardees are honored.
5. Work with APLU to organize and support annual, regional teaching improvement workshops, conferences, blogs, and other activities to disseminate teaching best practices. Ensure recent award recipients are invited and provided funds to attend each of the regional teaching improvement workshops to showcase and promote innovative teaching practices throughout the food and agricultural community. Submit teaching improvement content (speeches, materials and activities, etc.) obtained from these regional workshops to the Food and Agricultural Education Information System (FAEIS) and to NIFA staff who maintain the TERA website. This material may include content from the award recipients, as well as from other appropriate participants or sources, in order to disseminate best practices in teaching throughout the food and agricultural sciences academic system.
6. Work with NIFA's Division of Community and Education program staff to promote other, agreed-upon activities that improve teaching practices throughout the FANH sciences academic system. This can include the identification of best practices in teaching; collaboration with NIFA and APS in organizing and supporting events and activities to disseminate the selected best teaching practices around the nation.
7. Acquire plaques or other actual awards presented to each Award recipient.

Under the guidance of NIFA, and as a participant to this Specific Cooperative Agreement, the Association of Public and Land-Grant Universities (APLU) will perform the following activities:

1. Select and appoint a representative of the Academic Program Section (APS) of APLU as the Panel Manager for the Panel responsible for screening the TERA nominees and identifying the award winners.
2. Select a Panel and assign the nominations for review at a panel meeting that APS co-hosts, in consultation with the recipient of this cooperative agreement.
3. Select and recognize the award recipients at the APLU Winter Meetings, in consultation with NIFA and the recipient of this Cooperative Agreement.
4. Organize and support events and activities to disseminate the selected best teaching practices around the nation, in collaboration with NIFA and the recipient of this Cooperative Agreement.

Cooperative Agreement NIFA Responsibilities

NIFA will perform the following program activities:

1. Draft and publish the annual call for nominations for the TERA and share it with APLU.
2. Assist on the dissemination of Teaching Awards applications.
3. Accept nominations for the TERA, screen for eligibility and share it with NIFA to send to APLU.
4. Serve as the host for the annual award recipient selection panel meeting. Select, with grantee, the meeting location. Along with the Panel Manager, help select the Teaching Award Recipients.
5. Participate at the annual APLU Winter Meetings and help recognize the teaching award winners

6. PART II—AWARD INFORMATION

A. Available Funding

The anticipated amount available for TERA cooperative agreement in FY 2019 is $100,000 a year for four years, totaling $400,000. A continuation, noncompeting application for an additional funding/budget period within a previously approved project is contingent on the availability of the funds and the continued success of the project, as determined by the responsible National Institute of Food and Agriculture (NIFA) National Program Leader and Award Specialist.
. Enactment of continuing resolutions or an appropriations act may affect the availability or level of funding for this program.

A maximum of one application may be submitted per eligible institution. There is no commitment by USDA to fund any particular application or to make a specific number of awards.

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

B. Types of Applications

In FY 2019, you may only submit new applications to the TERA Program.

New application. This is a project application that has not been previously submitted to the TERA Program. We will review all new applications competitively using the screening for administrative requirements, review panel evaluation of proposals using evaluation criteria and selection process described in Part V—Application Review Requirements. This is a new application that may be continued with additional funding. The maximum duration of the award may be up to four years for a total of $400,000.

C. Project and Grant Types

Grant Types. This requests is for applications for a cooperative agreement.

Standard. This is an award instrument by which NIFA agrees to support a specified level of effort for a predetermined project period without the announced intention of providing additional support at a future date.

Table 1: Maximum Applications and Award and Due Date Maximum Applications and Award and Due Date:

Application Type	Maximum Applications per Institution	Maximum Amount per Award	Submission Due Date (5:00 pm Eastern)
New	1	$100,000/yr.	July 3, 2019

D. Responsible and Ethical Conduct of Research

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

PART III—ELIGIBILITY INFORMATION

A. Eligible Applicants

Applications may only be submitted by 1862 land-grant institutions, an institution eligible to receive funds under the Act of July 2, 1862 as amended (7 U.S.C. 301 et seq.). Failure to meet an eligibility criterion by the application deadline may result in the application being excluded from consideration or, even though an application may be reviewed, will preclude NIFA from making an award.

For those new to Federal financial assistance, a grants overview page is available on the NIFA website. This page includes information about free Grants 101 Training and other resources that are highly recommended for those seeking an understanding of Federal awards.

B. Cost Sharing or Matching

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

PART IV—APPLICATION AND SUBMISSION INFORMATION

A. Electronic Application Package

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

New Users of Grants.gov

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

Steps to Obtain Application Package Materials

To receive application materials:

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

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

   Funding Opportunity Number: USDA-NIFA-OP-006741

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

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

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

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

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

- Funding Opportunity Number (FON)
- Name of agency you are applying to
- Specific area of concern

B. Content and Form of Application Submission

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

Note the attachment requirements (e.g., PDF) in **Part III, Section 3** of the guide**.** Proposals that are non-compliant with the requirements (e.g., content format, PDF file format, file name restrictions, and no password-protected files) will be at risk of being excluded from NIFA review.

Grants.gov **does not** check for NIFA required attachments or whether attachments are in PDF format; see **Part III, Section 6.1** of the application guide for how to check the manifest of submitted files. Partial applications will be **excluded** from NIFA review. We will accept subsequent submissions of an application until close of business on the closing date in the RFA (see Part V, 2.1 of the NIFA Grants.gov Application Guide for further information).

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

- Email: electronic@nifa.usda.gov
- Phone: 202-401-5048

- Business hours: Monday through Friday, 7 a.m. – 5 p.m. ET, excluding federal holidays.

1. SF 424 R&R Cover Sheet

Information related to the questions on this form is dealt with in detail in Part V, 2 of the NIFA Grants.gov Application Guide. See Part V, Section 2.18 of the NIFA Grants.gov Application Guide for the required certifications and assurances (e.g., Prohibition against Entities Requiring Certain Internal Confidentiality Agreements).

2. SF 424 R&R Project/Performance Site Location(s)

Detailed information related to the questions on this form is available in Part V, 3 of the NIFA Grants.gov Application Guide.

3. R&R Other Project Information Form

Detailed information related to the questions on this form is available in Part V, 4 of the NIFA Grants.gov Application Guide.

a. **Field 7. Project Summary/Abstract.**

The summary should also include the relevance of the project to the goals of the National Food and Agricultural Sciences Teaching Awards cooperative agreement. See Part V. 4.7 of NIFA Grants.gov Application Guide for further instructions and a link to a suggested template.

b. Field 8. Project Narrative.

NOTE: The Project Narrative shall not exceed 10 double-spaced pages of written text and up 5 additional pages for figures and tables. We have established this maximum (15 pages) to ensure fair and equitable competition. The Project Narrative must include all of the following:

Potential for Advancing the Quality of Education: Goals Accomplishment

- **Process for identifying and honoring a select group of college and university teachers who excel at teaching**. Discuss how your institution will assist in identifying and honoring a select group of university teachers, as explained in Part I C. Clearly explain the roles of the Institution, the APLU and NIFA.

- **Process for disseminating the best practices in teaching**. Explain how the best teaching practices utilized by the honorees will be shared with a larger number of teachers and in turn, will benefit a large number of students. Explain the innovative approaches that can be used to derive long-term benefits.

- **Process for increasing the number and diversity of academic programs participating in TERA.** List and explain the process that will be used to increase the number and diversity of applications to the TERA program.

Capacity to Conduct the TERA Program Successfully

- **Interest and commitment of the institution for advancing education in the state and in the nation**. Explain other education related events/programs the institution

conducted and how it is related to advancing FANH disciplines. Discuss the intuition's experience in developing and sustaining such cooperative linkages.

- **Organizational capacity to administer a grant program of this nature**. Discuss the capacity of this institution to support the logistics needed for implementing the TERA program. i.e., travel for panelists, planning for events, communication, etc.

c. Field 12. Add Other Attachments
See Part V. Section 4.12 of the NIFA Grants.gov Application Guide (Field 12 on the form) for instructions for this field.

Indirect Costs. Section 713 of the Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2017 (Pub. L. 115-31) limits indirect costs to 10 percent of the total federal funds provided (or 42.857 percent of total direct costs) under each award. Similar language may be included in the FY 2019 appropriation. See Part V section 7.9 of the NIFA Grants.gov Application Guide for further indirect cost information.

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

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

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

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

- **Field 2. Program to which you are applying.** Enter the program code name "OP" and the program code "TEACH". Note that accurate entry of the program code is very important for proper and timely processing of an application.

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

8. Representations Regarding Felony Conviction and Tax Delinquent Status for Corporate Applicants

This is a required form for corporate applicants. See Part VI, 2 of the NIFA Grants.gov Application Guide for a description of the term, "corporation," and detailed information related to the questions on this form.

C. Submission Dates and Times

We recommend that you conduct an administrative review of the application before submission of it via Grants.gov to ensure that it complies with all preparation instructions. An application checklist is included in Part VII of the NIFA Grants.gov Application Guide to assist with this review. Please make sure your application includes the following:

- Project Narrative
- Project Summary
- Curriculum Vitae (CV) for Project Director (PD) and Co-PDs
- Current and Pending Support
- Conflict of Interests of all PD and Co-PDs
- Budget and Budget Narrative

Instructions for submitting an application are included in Part IV, Section 1.9 of the NIFA Grants.gov Application Guide.

Applications must be received by Grants.gov by **5 p.m. Eastern Time on**, July 3, 2019. Applications received after this deadline will normally not be considered for funding.

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

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

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

D. Funding Restrictions

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

factors that may exclude an applicant from receiving federal financial and nonfinancial assistance and benefits under this program (e.g., debarment or suspension of an individual involved or a determination that an applicant is not responsible based on submitted organizational management information).

E. Other Submission Requirements

You should follow the submission requirements noted in Part IV, Section 1.9 in the document entitled "NIFA Grants.gov Application Guide."

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

PART V—APPLICATION REVIEW REQUIREMENTS

A. General

We evaluate each application in a two-part process. First, we screen each application to ensure that it meets the administrative requirements as set forth in this RFA. Second, a technical review panel will evaluate applications that meet the administrative requirements.

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

- 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;
- need to include experts from various areas of specialization within relevant scientific, education, or extension fields;
- need to include other experts (e.g., producers, range or forest managers/operators, and consumers) who can assess relevance of the applications to targeted audiences and to program needs;
- need to include experts from a variety of organizational types (e.g., colleges, universities, industry, state and federal agencies, and private profit and non-profit organizations) and geographic locations;
- need to maintain a balanced composition with regard to minority and female representation and an equitable age distribution; and
- 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 TERA will recommend that your project be approved for support from currently available funds or be declined due to insufficient funds or unfavorable review.

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

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

B. Evaluation Criteria

The evaluation for this RFA entails two levels of assessment. A panel of reviewers will evaluate applications independently. The reviewers will assess how well the application addresses each evaluation criterion identified in this RFA, assess the overall strength and weaknesses of each criterion, and evaluate the overall likelihood that the project will have significant outcomes and impacts. The reviewers will than summarizes their review and assign a review score based on the criteria in this RFA.

After the independent reviews are completed, a peer review commences. The peer review includes a discussion with other reviewers serving on the peer review panel. The panel uses the summarized reviews to facilitate these discussions. Through these discussions, peer review panelists come to consensus on the final rating and ranking of proposals. See a complete description of NIFA's peer review process here: https://nifa.usda.gov/sites/default/files/resource/NIFA-Peer-Review-Process-for-Competitive-Grant-Applications_0.pdf

We will use the evaluation criteria below to review applications submitted in response to this RFA:

1. **Potential for Advancing Quality of Education: Goals Accomplishment**
   Innovativeness of the proposed approaches, ability to attract a large number and diversity of applicants, and the quality of benefits to teachers participating in proposed activities.

2. **Potential for Advancing Quality of Education: Institutional Capacity to conduct the program successfully.**
   What is the institution's capability to perform the project? Elements include the institution's commitment to the project, and the adequacy of institutional resources (administrative, facilities, equipment, and/or materials) available to carry out the project. Both past experience and future potential will be evaluated.

3. **Cooperative Linkages**
   Examine the soundness of the proposed approach to build cooperative linkages with the Academic Program Section of APLU and other educational institutions, including but not limited to land-grants, non-land grants, other minority serving institutions, etc., including plan of operation, timetable, expected products and results, evaluation, and dissemination plans.

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

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

C. Conflicts of Interest and Confidentiality

During the peer evaluation process, we take extreme care to prevent any actual or perceived conflicts of interest that may impact review or evaluation. See https://nifa.usda.gov/resource/nifa-peer-review-process-competitive-grant-applications for further information about conflicts of interest and confidentiality as related to the peer review process.

D. Organizational Management Information

Specific management information relating to an applicant shall be submitted one-time, with updates on an as-needed basis. This requirement is part of the responsibility determined prior to the award of a cooperative agreement identified under this RFA, if such information has not been provided previously under this or another NIFA program. We will provide you copies of forms recommended for use in fulfilling these requirements as part of the pre-award process. Although an applicant may be eligible based on its status as one of these entities, there are factors that may exclude an applicant from receiving federal financial and nonfinancial assistance and benefits under this program (e.g., debarment or suspension of an individual involved or a determination that an applicant is not responsible based on submitted organizational management information).

E. Application Disposition

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

PART VI—AWARD ADMINISTRATION

A. General

Within the limit of funds available for such purpose, the NIFA awarding official shall make cooperative agreements to those responsible, eligible applicants whose applications are judged most meritorious under the procedures set forth in this RFA. The date specified by the NIFA awarding official as the effective date of the cooperative agreement shall be no later than September 30 of the federal fiscal year in which the project is approved for support and funds are appropriated for such purpose, unless otherwise permitted by law. The project need not be initiated on the cooperative agreement effective date, but as soon thereafter as practical so that project goals may be attained within the funded project period. All funds granted by NIFA under this RFA may be used only for the purpose for which they are granted in accordance with the approved application and budget, regulations, terms and conditions of the award, applicable federal cost principles, USDA assistance regulations, and NIFA General Awards Administration Provisions at 7 CFR part 3430, subparts A through E.

B. Award Notice

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

See https://nifa.usda.gov/terms-and-conditions to view current NIFA award terms and conditions.

C. Administrative and National Policy Requirements

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

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

Responsible and Ethical Conduct of Research

Refer to Part II, D for more information.

D. Expected Program Outputs and Reporting Requirements

The output and reporting requirements are included in the award terms and conditions (see https://nifa.usda.gov/terms-and-conditions for information about NIFA award terms). If there are any program or award-specific award terms, they will be identified in the award.

Grantees are to submit initial project information and annual and summary reports to NIFA's electronic, Web-based inventory system that facilitates both grantee submissions of project outcomes and public access to information on Federally-funded projects. The details of these reporting requirements are included in the award terms and conditions. Details of annual and final technical reporting requirements also are included in the award terms and conditions.

For continuations, the annual "Federal Financial Report," Form SF-425, must be submitted with the application for subsequent funding in which case it may not cover a 12-month period. If this is the case (i.e., preliminary submission of the SF-425 is included in application), the annual submission (i.e., 12-month period) must also be submitted when due. If the organization's accounting system cannot support the generation of the preliminary information required for an SF-425, you must provide a statement to that effect in lieu of the form. Submit the form or statement as a PDF attachment to Field 12, Other Attachments, of the R&R Other Project Information form.

Further, an annual progress report must be electronically submitted through NIFA's electronic, Web-based inventory system within 90 days PRIOR to the end of the current budget period. Untimely submission of this report will delay processing of the incremental funding and failure to submit this report will result in the restriction of the funding increment.

PART VII—AGENCY CONTACT

Applicants and other interested parties are encouraged to contact:

Programmatic Contact –
Irma A. Lawrence
Division of Community and Education
Institute of Youth, Family, and Community
1400 Independence Avenue
Mail Stop 2251
Washington, DC 20250-2251
(202) 730-2082
ilawrence@nifa.usda.gov

Administrative/Business Contact –
Ms. Rochelle McCrea
Title: Team Leader, Branch II, Team I
Unit: Office of Grants and Financial Management
Location: 1400 Independence Avenue SW, Stop 2271
Phone: (202)-401-2880
Fax: (202) 401-6271
Email: rmccrea@nifa.usda.gov

PART VIII—OTHER INFORMATION

A. Use of Funds; Changes

1. Delegation of Fiscal Responsibility

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

2. Changes in Budget or Project Plans

In accordance with 2 CFR 200.308, awardees must request prior approval from NIFA for the following program or budget-related reasons:

- **a.** Change in the scope or the objective of the project or program (even if there is no associated budget revision requiring prior written approval).
- **b.** Change in a key person specified in the application or the federal award.
- **c.** The disengagement from the project for more than three months, or a 25 percent reduction in time devoted to the project, by the approved project director or principal investigator.
- **d.** The inclusion, unless waived by the federal awarding agency, of costs that require prior approval in accordance with 2 CFR 200 Subpart E—Cost Principles of this part or 45 CFR Part 75 Appendix IX, "Principles for Determining Costs Applicable to Research and Development under Awards and Contracts with Hospitals," or 48 CFR Part 31, "Contract Cost Principles and Procedures," as applicable.
- **e.** The transfer of funds budgeted for participant support costs as defined in §200.75 Participant support costs to other categories of expense.
- **f.** Unless described in the application and funded in the approved federal awards, the sub awarding, transferring or contracting out of any work under a federal award, including fixed amount sub awards as described in §200.332 Fixed amount sub awards. This provision does not apply to the acquisition of supplies, material, equipment, or general support services.
- **g.** Changes in the approved cost-sharing or matching provided by the non-federal entity.
- **h.** The need arises for additional federal funds to complete the project.

The awardee will be subject to the terms and conditions identified in the award. See https://nifa.usda.gov/terms-and-conditions for information about NIFA award terms.

B. Confidential Aspects of Applications and Awards

When an application results in an award, it becomes a part of the record of NIFA transactions, available to the public upon specific request. Information that the Secretary of Agriculture determines to be of a confidential, privileged, or proprietary nature will be held in confidence to the extent permitted by law. Therefore, any information that the applicant wishes to have

considered as confidential, privileged, or proprietary should be clearly marked within the application. We will retain for three years a copy of an application that does not result in an award. Such an application will be released only with the consent of the applicant or to the extent required by law. An application may be withdrawn at any time prior to the final action thereon.

C. Regulatory Information

This program is not subject to the provisions of Executive Order 12372, which requires intergovernmental consultation with state and local officials.

Under the provisions of the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995 (44 U.S.C. Chapter 35), the collection of information requirements contained in this notice have been approved under OMB Document No. 0524-0039.

D. Definitions

Refer to 7 CFR 3430, Competitive and Noncompetitive Non-formula Financial Assistance Programs--General Award Administrative Provisions, for applicable definitions for this NIFA cooperative agreement program.

E. Materials Available on the Internet

TERA program information will be made available on the NIFA website at https://nifa.usda.gov/program/national-awards-excellence-college-and-university-teaching-food-and-agricultural-sciences. The following are among the materials available on the web page:

1. 2018 Teaching Awards Nomination Form
2. Previous Teaching Awards Recipients
3. 2018 Teaching Awards Nomination Guidelines