APPLICATION AND SUBMISSION INFORMATION

All Office of Management and Budget standard forms necessary for CIG submission are posted on the following web site: Grants.gov - Forms Repository.

A. How to Obtain Materials
The announcement for this CIG funding opportunity can be found on the following web site: www.grants.gov

B. Content and Format
Applications must contain the content, format, and information set forth below in order to receive consideration for funding. Applicants should not assume prior knowledge on the part of NRCS or others as to the relative merits of the project described in their application. Applicants must submit only one original copy of the application in the following format:
- Each page must be on numbered 8½" x 11" white paper that has one-inch margins; and
- The text of the application must be typed single spaced in a font no smaller than 12-point.

Applications must include all required forms and narrative sections described below. Applications that fail to comply with the required content and format will not be considered for funding. If submitting applications for more than one project, submit a separate application for each project. Material exceeding stated page limits will not be considered.

1) **Application Form:** (Standard Form 424 Application for Federal Assistance) Applicants must submit this document for each project application. Standard Form 424 can be downloaded from Grants.gov - Forms Repository.

2) **Project Summary:** (Three (3) page maximum in length) Applicants must submit a brief description including the information below.
   a) Project title;
   b) Project start and end dates;
   c) Project director name, and contact information (including e-mail);
   d) Names and affiliations of project collaborators;
   e) Project purpose;
   f) Project area/location; and
   g) Project summary.

3) **Project Description:** The description must include the following information and is limited to 15 pages in length. Pages in excess of the 15-page limit will be discarded and not evaluated.
   a) Project background: Describe the issue or problem, and the history of, and need for, the proposed innovation. Provide evidence that the proposed innovation has been studied sufficiently to indicate a good probability for

success of the project.

b) Project objectives: Be specific using qualitative and quantitative measures, if possible, to describe the project's purpose, goals, and relation to the categories/special interest areas selected in Section I.D. Describe how the project is innovative.

c) Project methods: Describe clearly the methodology of the project and the tools or processes that will be used to implement the project.

d) Location and size of project or project area: Describe the location of the project and the relative size and scope (e.g., acres, farm types, demographics, etc.) of the project area. Provide a map, if possible.

e) EQIP eligible producer participation: Estimate the number of EQIP eligible producers involved in the project, and describe the extent of their involvement (Note: Producers receiving direct or indirect payments through participation in a CIG project must also meet the EQIP eligibility requirements).

f) Project action plan and timeline: Provide a table listing project actions, timeframes, and associated milestones through project completion. Anticipated project start date of **September 1, 2013**.

g) Project management: Give a detailed description of how the project will be organized and managed. Include a list of key project personnel, their relevant education or experience, and their anticipated contributions to the project. Explain the level of participation required in the project by governmental and non-governmental entities. Identify who will participate in monitoring and evaluating the project, including their institutional affiliations and qualifications for conducting project monitoring and evaluation.

h) Project deliverables/products: Provide a list of specific deliverables and products that will allow NRCS to monitor project progress and payment. The proposal shall include a set of technical deliverables designed to evaluate the performance and broader applicability of the project being proposed for implementation. In addition to project-specific deliverables, selected applicants will be required to provide the following:
   1) Semi-annual reports;
   2) Supplemental narratives that explain and support payment requests;
   3) A final report;
   4) Performance items specific to the project that indicate progress
   5) A new technology and innovative approach fact sheet; and
   6) Participation in at least one NRCS sponsored event during the grant period.

i) Benefits or results expected and transferability: Identify the results and benefits to be derived from the proposed project activities, and explain how the results will be measured. Identify project beneficiaries, i.e., agricultural producers by type, region, or sector; rural communities; and municipalities. Explain how these entities will benefit. In addition, describe how results will be communicated to others via outreach activities.

j) Project evaluation: Describe the methodology or procedures to be followed to evaluate the project, determine technical feasibility, and quantify the results of the project for the final report. Grant recipients will be required to provide a

semi-annual progress report, quarterly financial reports, and a final project report to NRCS. Instructions for submitting quarterly reports will be detailed in the grant agreement.

4) **Assessment of Environmental and Social Impacts:** Describe and assess the potential environmental and social impacts of the proposed project. The description of the potential environmental and social impacts must address all potential beneficial and adverse impacts of the proposed action. A full description and assessment of the potential impacts to all environmental resources must be disclosed. The length of the analysis should be commensurate with the complexity of the project proposed and the environmental resources impacted directly, indirectly, or cumulatively. Where possible, information on environmental impacts should be quantified, such as number of acres of wetlands impacted, amount of carbon sequestration estimated, etc. Environmental resources include soil, water, air, plants, animals and energy, as well as other resources protected by law, regulation, Executive Order, and agency policy. In addition to describing impacts, applicants are required to assess the significance or degree of potential environmental impact of the proposed project on environmental resources. Applicants may consult with Brandon Smith, New Hampshire NRCS Agronomist, USDA-NRCS, Federal Building, 2 Madbury Rd., Durham, New Hampshire 03824 or brandon.smith@nh.usda.gov concerning the scope of what should be addressed in this section of the application.
Note: Please be aware that applications for projects with potentially adverse impacts may need to be modified in order to achieve acceptable and beneficial levels of environmental impact. NRCS may choose not to select projects that cannot be modified.

5) **Budget Information:** The budget portion of the application consists of the three parts described below. The budget information must include the following information and is limited to 12 pages in length.
   a) **Standard Form (SF) 424A** Budget Information- Non-Construction Programs: Fill in all spaces as appropriate. Section B, Item 6, column 1 should reflect the NRCS funds and Column 2 should reflect the cost share funds. If your cost share is from multiple sources, you may show that in the remaining columns of Item 6. This form is the summary budget for the project.
   b) Detailed Budget Description: A specific item-by-item breakdown of the totals provided in Item 6 of the SF-424A should be provided. This detail should show what individual costs were added together to arrive at the totals presented in each of Object Class Categories on the SF-424. The format of this information, which can be in a chart, spreadsheet, table, etc., should be readable in 8 ½" by 11" printable pages.   The information needs to be presented in such a way that the evaluators and NRCS can readily understand what expenses will be incurred to support the project. The breakdown of the federal share and the cost share should be shown separately as in the SF-424A, not combined. This may be in separate

documents or in different sections of the same one. Items provided to NRCS in the budget details should include, but are not limited to, the following:

    6a. Personnel; A list of personnel, their salary, hourly rate, hours, % time.

    6b. Fringe Benefits: % of salary, differing rates for different staff.

    6c. Travel: basis for airfare, mileage rate (NTE Federal govt. rate), per diem, hotel, car rental, how many trips, how many days, number of staff.

    6d. Equipment: type of equipment, cost per item, per batch, per load, quantity.

    6e. Supplies: type of supplies, cost per item, per batch, per load, quantity (a general statement such as "office supplies $3,000" is not acceptable).

    6f. Contractual; Cost of each subcontract – the total of all subcontracts should be shown on the SF-424, but an itemized budget should be provided for each potential subcontract. The budgets for the subcontracts should follow this same format and be submitted with your proposal.

    6g. Construction: N/A.

    6h. Other: Cost per item, per batch, per load, quantity.

c) Budget Narrative: Provide a detailed narrative in support of the budget for the project, broken down by each project year. Discuss how the budget specifically supports the proposed activities. Explain how budget items are essential to achieving project objectives. Justify the project cost effectiveness and include justification for personnel and consultant salaries with a description of duties. In addition to the information above, any subcontractors and consultants must also submit a statement of work. The budget narrative should support the federal funds requested and the cost share.

6) Indirect Costs

a. Applicants wishing to claim indirect costs must have a federally approved indirect cost rate. The approved indirect cost rate must be included in the application package.

b. An indirect cost rate not to exceed 15 percent may be approved for applicants without a federally approved indirect cost rate. To be considered for an indirect cost rate not to exceed 15 percent, applicants must submit an indirect cost rate proposal with the application which includes:

    1) Applicant's written policy for allocating and identifying direct and indirect costs

    2) Contact person information regarding who prepared proposal

    3) Breakdown of indirect salaries by position title and amount.

    4) Line item expenditure description and how the costs are being allocated between direct and indirect.

    5) Applicant's tax identification number.

    6) Signed certification that certify all costs in proposal are allowable under OMB cost principles; costs treated as indirect have not been claimed as direct; and similar types of costs have been accounted for consistently and the Federal government will e notified of any account changed that would affect the rate. Signature should be of approving official for applicant or applicant's chief financial officer.

c. If applicant does not have a federally approved indirect cost rate, it is at the agency's (NRCS) discretion whether to allow indirect cost.

7) **Matching:** Applications must include written verification of commitments of matching support (including both cash and in-kind contributions) from non-federal third parties.

Cash Match
For any third party cash contributions, a separate pledge agreement is required for each contribution, signed by the authorized organizational representative of the contributing organization and the applicant organization, which must include: (1) the name, address, and telephone number of the contributor, (2) the name of the applicant organization, (3) the title of the project for which the contribution is made, (4) the dollar amount of the cash contribution, and (5) a statement that the contributor will pay the cash contribution during the grant period.

In-Kind Match
"In-kind" refers to non-cash contributions of goods or services made by third-party individuals or organizations to support projects. Examples of "in-kind" contributions include work done by unpaid volunteers and donations of supplies, facilities, or equipment. In-kind contributions must be necessary to accomplish program activities and verifiable.

For any third-party in-kind contributions, a separate pledge agreement is required for each contribution, signed by the authorized organizational representatives of the contributing organization and the applicant, which must include: (1) the name, address, and telephone number of the contributor, (2) the name of the applicant's organization, (3) the title of the project for which the contribution is made, (4) a good faith estimate of the current fair market value of the third-party in-kind contribution, and (5) a statement that the contributor will make the contribution during the grant period.

The sources and amounts of all matching support from non-applicants must be summarized on a separate page and placed in the application immediately following the summary of matching support (matching support means a budget narrative broken down by year).

The value of applicant contributions to the project will be established in accordance with the applicable cost principles. Applicants should refer to OMB Circulars and Cost Principles for additional guidance and other requirements relating to matching and allowable costs.

8) **Declaration of Previous CIG Projects Involvement:** Identify any previously awarded CIG projects related to this proposal and any of their principal investigators. Detail the purpose, outcomes to date, and how this new proposal relates to the previous award.

9) **Declaration of EQIP Eligible Producer Eligibility and Involvement:** Applicants must include a statement indicating that the proposed project will involve EQIP eligible producers and describe and certify their level of involvement in the project. Proposals that do not involve EQIP eligible producers are ineligible for a CIG award.

10) **Certifications:** Standard Form (SF) 424B - Assurances, Non-construction Programs. All applications must include this document. The SF-424B may be found at: Grants.gov - Forms Repository or by contacting the State office. In addition, applicants, by signing and submitting an application, assure and certify that they are in compliance with the following federal regulations:
   - 2 CFR Part 417, Government wide Debarment and Suspension (Non-procurement)
   - 7 CFR Part 3018, New Restrictions on Lobbying
   - 2 CFR Part 421, Government wide Requirements for Drug Free Workplace (Financial Assistance)

11) **DUNS Number:** A Dun and Bradstreet (D&B) Data Universal Numbering System (DUNS) number is a unique nine-digit sequence recognized as the universal standard for identifying and keeping track of over 70 million businesses worldwide. CIG applicants must obtain a DUNS Number. Information on how to obtain a DUNS number can be found at: http://fedgov.dnb.com/webform or by calling 1-866-705-5711. Please note that the registration may take up to 14 business days to complete.

12) **System for Award Management (SAM) Registration:** SAM is a database that serves as the primary government repository for contractor information required to conduct business with the Federal Government. This database is also used as a central location for maintaining organizational information for individuals or entities seeking and receiving Federal grants. CIG applicants must register with SAM. To register, go to: https://www.sam.gov/portal/public/SAM/. Please allow a minimum of 15 days to complete the registration.

13) **Appropriations Restrictions:** Awards made under this solicitation are subject to the provisions contained in the Agriculture, Rural Development, Food and Drug Administration, and Related Agencies Appropriations Act, 2012 (P.L. No. 112-55), Division A, Sections 738 and 739 regarding corporate felony convictions and corporate federal tax delinquencies.

C. How to Submit an Application
Applicants may submit applications electronically through Grants.gov. Alternatively, applications may be submitted via express mail, overnight courier service, or U.S. Postal Service to the addresses listed below. All applications must contain all of the elements of a complete package and meet the requirements described above. Instructions for electronically submitting the required standard forms, and

instructions for adding attachments are posted on Grants.gov. Grants.gov provides date and time stamps on applications submitted through its website.   All applications regardless of how they are submitted must be received by 4:00 PM EDT **May 17, 2013**.

Note: NRCS is not responsible for any technical malfunctions or web site problems related to Grants.gov . Applicants should send an e-mail with their application package in advance of the submission deadline to avoid problems, in addition to filing their application in Grants.gov.

Mail to:

Betty Anderson, Acting Grants & Agreement Specialist
USDA-NRCS
Federal Building, 2 Madbury Road,
Durham, New Hampshire 03824-2043
Phone 603-868-9931 x 136
Email: betty.anderson@nh.usda.gov

Note: Applicants must submit only one signed original copy of each project application. Applications submitted by fax will not be considered. The use of Federal Government postage-paid envelopes, e-mail and/or equipment in filing applications is a violation of federal law and will disqualify you from consideration.

A. Due Date

Applications must be received in New Hampshire NRCS State Office in Durham by 4:00 p.m. EDT on **May 17, 2013**. The applicant assumes the risk of any delays in application delivery. Applicants are strongly encouraged to submit completed applications early to ensure timely receipt by NRCS.

B. Acknowledgement of Submission

NRCS will acknowledge receipt of timely applications via e-mail. An applicant who does not receive such an e-mail acknowledgement within 10 days of their submission but believes he/she submitted a timely application must contact the NRCS program contact below within 10 days. Failure to do so will result in the application not being considered.

CIG Program Manager:

James Spielman,
Acting Assistant State Conservationist for Programs
USDA-NRCS
Federal Building, 2 Madbury Road
Durham, New Hampshire 03824
Phone: (603) 868-7581
E-mail: james.spielman@nh.usda.gov

C. Withdrawal

Applications may be withdrawn by written notice at any time before selections are made. Applications may be withdrawn by the applicant, or by an authorized representative.

D. Funding Restrictions

CIG funds may not be used to pay any of the following costs unless otherwise permitted by law, or approved in writing by the Authorized Departmental Officer in advance of incurring such costs:

1) Costs above the amount of funds authorized for the project;
2) Costs incurred prior to the effective date of the grant;
3) Costs which lie outside the scope of the approved project and any amendments thereto;
4) Entertainment costs, regardless of their apparent relationship to project objectives;
5) Compensation for injuries to persons, or damage to property arising out of project activities;
6) Consulting services performed by a Federal employee during official duty hours when such consulting services result in the payment of additional compensation to the employee; and,
7) Renovation or refurbishment of research or related spaces, the purchase or installation of fixed equipment in such spaces, and the planning, repair, rehabilitation, acquisition, or construction of buildings or facilities.

This list is not exhaustive. Questions regarding the allowances of particular items of cost should be directed to the administrative contact person listed on Part VII.

E. Review

Applications will be screened for completeness and compliance with the provisions of this notice. Incomplete applications will be eliminated from competition, and notification of elimination will be e-mailed to the applicant. Complete applications will be evaluated by a technical peer review panel based on the Application Evaluation Criteria identified in the application instructions in section V.B.

Applications, along with their technically-based recommendations from the peer review groups, will then be forwarded to the Grant Review Board. The Grant Review Board will make its recommendations for project approval to the NRCS State Conservationist who will make the final selections.

F. Patents and Inventions

Allocation of rights to patents and inventions shall be in accordance with 7 CFR §3019.36. USDA receives a royalty-free license for Federal Government use, reserves the right to require the patentee to license others in certain circumstances, and requires that anyone exclusively licensed to sell the invention in the United States must normally manufacture it domestically.

G. Environmental Review Requirements

The Council on Environmental Quality's National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) regulations at 40 CFR parts 1500-1508 and the NRCS regulation that implements NEPA at 7 CFR part 650 require that an environmental review be prepared for actions where the agency has discretion and control. Accordingly, NRCS financial assistance under the CIG program requires compliance with these regulations. As part of the application packet, applicants are required to provide environmental information pertaining to their project to help NRCS determine the appropriate documentation required to comply with NEPA and NRCS regulations. If the application is selected for funding, the NRCS Program Contact and NRCS Environmental Liaison will coordinate with the selected applicant concerning documentation for compliance with NEPA. The selected applicant will be required to prepare and pay for the preparation of the appropriate NEPA document (e.g., Environmental Assessment or Environmental Impact Statement if required for NEPA compliance). Grant funding cannot be approved until the environmental review requirements demonstrating compliance with NEPA are met.