USDA United States Department of Agriculture

# Conservation Innovation Grants, On-Farm Conservation Innovation Trials

## Fiscal Year 2023 Notice of Funding Opportunity



USDA-NRCS-NHQ-CIGOFT-23-NOFO0001312
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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

**Deadline date modifications: pgs. 3 and 29**

**Grants.gov user role instruction correction: pg. 20**

**Federal Awarding Agency Name:** U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA), Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS)

**Notice of Funding Opportunity Title:** Conservation Innovation Grants (CIG) On-Farm Conservation Innovation Trials for fiscal year (FY) 2023

**Notice of Funding Opportunity Number:** USDA-NRCS-NHQ-CIGOFT-23-NOFO0001312

**Assistance Listing:** This program is listed on Sam.gov under 10.912, Environmental Quality Incentives Program.

The System for Award Management (SAM) is an official website of the U.S. Government. There is no cost to use SAM.gov. Active SAM registration is a pre-requisite to the successful submission of grant applications through Grants.gov. Information collected in SAM support Federal agency processes to award contracts, grants and electronic payments.

**Notice of Funding Opportunity Summary**

NRCS is announcing the availability of CIG On-Farm Conservation Innovation Trials (On-Farm Trials) to stimulate the adoption and evaluation of innovative conservation approaches in partnership with agricultural producers. For 2023, applications will be accepted from eligible entities for projects addressing at least one of the following priorities: irrigation management technologies; feed management and enteric methane reduction; grazing lands; nutrient management; and soil health demonstration (SHD) trials. Up to $50 million is available for On-Farm Trials in 2023. On-Farm Trials projects may be between 3 and 5 years in duration.

For new users of Grants.gov, see Section IV for information about steps required before submitting your application through Grants.gov.

**Key Dates**

Applicants must submit their applications through Grants.gov by 11:59 pm Eastern Time on **November 3**, 2023. For technical issues with Grants.gov, contact Grants.gov Applicant Support at 1-800-518-4726 or support@grants.gov. Awarding agency staff cannot support applicants regarding Grants.gov accounts.

For inquiries specific to the content of the Notice of Funding Opportunity (NFO) requirements, contact the Federal awarding agency (Section VII of this NFO). Please limit questions to specific information contained in this NFO (such as dates, page numbers, clarification of discrepancies, etc.). Questions related to eligibility or the merits of a specific proposal will not be addressed.

A webinar for On-Farm Trials applicants is scheduled for September 13, 2023 at 3 p.m. Eastern Time. Information on how to participate in the Microsoft Teams webinar can be obtained through the following link and phone number:

Join on your computer or mobile app
Click here to join the meeting
Or call in (audio only)
+1 202-650-0123
Phone Conference ID: 565 622 505#

The agency anticipates making selections by January 15, 2024 and expects to execute awards by May 31, 2024. These dates are estimates and are subject to change.

**Federal Funding Floor and Ceiling Amounts**

The funding floor for this opportunity is $250,000, and the funding ceiling is $5 million. The funding floor is defined as the minimum amount for the Federal share per project agreement. The ceiling is the maximum amount for the Federal share per project agreement. These floor and ceiling numbers refer to the total project agreement amount, not any specific fiscal year or calendar year.

**Federal Financial Assistance Training**

The funding available through this NFO is Federal financial assistance. Grants 101 training is highly recommended for those seeking knowledge about Federal financial assistance. The training is free and available to the public through https://www.cfo.gov/grants-training/. It consists of five modules covering each of the following topics: (1) laws, regulations, and guidance; (2) financial assistance mechanisms; (3) uniform guidance administrative requirements; (4) cost principles; and (5) risk management and single audit.

# I. PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

On-Farm Trials is authorized under 16 U.S.C. 3839aa-8 and is authorized as part of the Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP). The Secretary of Agriculture delegated the authority to administer EQIP, including CIG, to the Chief of the NRCS. Half of the funds will be delivered through the Inflation Reduction Act, with the Secretary prioritizing proposals that utilize diet and feed management to reduce enteric methane emissions from ruminants, and the funds shall be available for 1 or more agricultural conservation practices or enhancements that the Secretary determines directly improve soil carbon, reduce nitrogen losses, or reduce, capture, avoid, or sequester carbon dioxide, methane, or nitrous oxide emissions, associated with agricultural production.

## A. Overview

The purpose of On-Farm Trials is to stimulate the evaluation and adoption of innovative conservation approaches in partnership with agricultural producers. For 2023, NRCS is implementing On-Farm Trials through eligible entities that will in turn work collaboratively with NRCS and agricultural producers to implement innovative approaches on private lands. On-Farm Trials supports the implementation of innovative approaches that have a positive conservation impact but which, for any number of reasons, have not yet been more widely adopted by producers.

On-Farm Trials funding is designed to provide technical assistance and incentive payments to producers to help compensate for risks associated with implementing new conservation practices, systems, and approaches. Evaluation is a key component of On-Farm Trials to ensure that environmental, financial, and social (to the extent possible) impacts of implementing innovative approaches are understood and can be used to inform future NRCS program, policy, and science activities.

The number of participating producers varies among On-Farm Trials projects, often reflecting the expense and complexity of the innovative approaches being implemented. Producer participants for past projects range from five to over a hundred. Single demonstration sites are not appropriate for On-Farm Trials, as projects need a sufficient number of sites for meaningful data collection and evaluation. Priority consideration will be given to projects that implement innovative conservation approaches applicable to a range of agricultural operation sizes and types.

Proposed projects must be performed in the United States or U.S. territories.

NRCS welcomes applications from partners working in urban agriculture settings. Many of the natural resource priority topics described below in section I.B are relevant to urban farm operations.

The SHD component of On-Farm Trials (see item I(B)(5)) focuses exclusively on implementation of conservation practices and systems that improve soil health. SHD awardees must agree to follow consistent soil health assessment protocols to evaluate the effects of practice and system implementation.

NRCS intends to use the results of On-Farm Trials project evaluations and analyses to explore modifying existing guidance documents, technical tools, conservation practice standards, and NRCS business practices.

## B. On-Farm Trials Priorities

Each year, NRCS identifies priority topics for On-Farm Trials. For FY 2023, On-Farm Trials applications must address one of the four priorities described in this section. Proposals may address more than one priority, but each proposal must clearly identify a primary priority. The primary priority selected by an applicant will determine which expert peer panel will review the application.

### 1. Feeding Management and Enteric Methane Reduction

Livestock feeding management is critical to conservation of natural resources and climate solutions. In recent years a tremendous amount of research and field work has elucidated the potential for some of the largest reductions of greenhouse gas emissions through advances in livestock feeding that reduce enteric methane emissions. Building on what is known, on-farm trials seek to fill in knowledge gaps related to applied feeding management for enteric methane emissions reduction. This priority explores what is critical to ensure that producers effectively harness conservation technologies (especially feed management practices) that have moved beyond the research stage and are ready for implementation. The following describes five sub priorities and gives examples of what proposed projects might address.

a. Dietary interventions and feed additives that reduce enteric methane emissions

This sub priority is focused on evaluating refinements in ruminant diet manipulation and diet nutrient composition targeted at long-term reduction of enteric methane emissions. Projects might address long-term potential and effects of forage to concentrate ratios, use of oils and fats, minerals and salts, or feed additives for enteric methane reduction.

b. Feeding and animal management approaches that reduce enteric methane emissions

This sub priority is focused on feeding and animal management activities that are targeted at reducing enteric methane emissions by livestock in confined situations and on grazing lands. Projects might address improvements in the form or delivery of feed in confined feeding situations or the management of grazing cattle diets for forage quality, forage intake, and supplementation strategies and their effects on estimated or measured enteric methane emissions.

c. On-farm tools and techniques that estimate, measure, or validate reduction of enteric emissions

This sub priority is focused on improvements and additions to existing tools and technologies that estimate or measure enteric methane emissions on the farm.

Tools and technologies might include computer models, unmanned aerial or ground vehicles, drones, satellites, remote sensing, or portable chambers. Projects that use technology for measurement and validation (rather than estimates or assumptions) are encouraged.

d. Hybrid enteric methane emission reduction

This sub priority is focused on using a combination of promising enteric methane reduction strategies or technologies on the farm to determine their combined effectiveness or their potential combined ineffectiveness. Projects might include combining promising interventions with different modes of action that may produce additive effects on enteric methane reduction. Similarly, projects might evaluate combining promising interventions that may interfere with each other, negatively affecting enteric methane reductions.

e. Social and economic implications of adopting new or different feeding technologies

This sub priority is focused on understanding the social, economic, and cultural phenomena associated with feeding management technologies to address natural resource concerns and reduce enteric methane emissions. Projects are encouraged that use trans-disciplinary teamwork, including coordination between social and behavioral scientists and economists to identify barriers and pathways to producers adopting new feeding technologies for enteric methane emission reduction across various scales and structures of agriculture. Projects might evaluate interactions and synergies among social, cultural, economic, and technologic approaches to feed management for enteric methane emission reduction that inform producer decision-making to achieve environmental outcomes.

2. **Irrigation Water Management Technologies**

NRCS seeks On-Farm Trials proposals to evaluate innovative water management systems that enhance a producer's ability to monitor irrigation needs effectively, manage irrigation practices efficiently, and increase water savings by using precision technologies. Innovative irrigation systems should focus on balancing producer needs with conservation benefits. Examples of innovative irrigation water management technologies include:

- Tools that measure plant distress, soil moisture, or that use indigenous irrigation scheduling techniques and automate irrigation through regular reporting to a centralized system.
- Technologies that combine as-applied irrigation and atmospheric data with crop growth models and soil data using cloud-based systems and devices, allowing producers to assess irrigation needs remotely or from a handheld device.
- Innovative approaches that address obstacles to adopting irrigation water management systems that use water more efficiently. These obstacles may include

substantial upfront costs of system installation, accessibility of systems (i.e., availability for purchase at mainstream retailers), ease of installation, and the need for system customization.

- Cost effective and low maintenance sensor technologies that monitor pertinent crop root zone variables (e.g., electrical, physical, and chemical) to inform irrigation decisions and automate variable rate irrigation in soilless agricultural systems (e.g., hydroponics, aeroponics, and aquaponics).

3. **Nutrient Management**

NRCS seeks On-Farm Trials applications that help producers achieve conservation benefits through efficient nutrient management directly addressing site risk for nutrient loss. Examples of innovative approaches under this priority include:

a. Innovative nutrient management that utilizes testing and monitoring to drive dynamic in-season adjustments to nutrient applications in real time. The goal is to better respond to climate change to increase efficiency and reduce nutrient loss from weather extremes. Innovations should include technologies that support real-time adjustments to site-specific nutrient management in both space and time.

b. Managing nutrients to specifically address each site's inherent risk for nutrient runoff to surface water and nutrient leaching to groundwater or drainage that flows to surface water.

c. Using site-specific 4R Nutrient Management (Nutrient Stewardship) integrated with nutrient recovery systems such as bioreactors, digesters, and multistage drainage strategies to mitigate nutrient losses as a complete conservation system.

d. Implementing SMART (right rate, timing, method, and source, including Enhanced Efficiency Fertilizers (EEF)) to better meet plant needs and reduce nitrogen and phosphorus leaching and runoff that can impact ground and surface water.

e. Using in-season nutrient management techniques (such as soil and plant tissue analysis or field observations to check for plant nutrient deficiency or toxicity) to mitigate potential nutrient losses.

4. **Grazing Lands**

NRCS seeks On-Farm Trials proposals to facilitate adopting new tools, technologies, and strategies that assist with improving and managing grazing lands in the United States at the ranch, farm, or urban interface scale. Innovative livestock grazing management practices used in conjunction with automated tools promote intensive grazing land management systems. These systems meet ecological and economic sustainability goals, such as maintaining and improving grazing lands and wildlife habitat, controlling invasive plants, and reducing large and small animal-predator (primarily carnivores) interactions on rangelands, pasturelands, and urban interface areas. They also optimize producer profitability and minimize risks.

Innovative practices and decision support tools that assist grazers at the farm/ranch or small-scale with improving grazing land health and animal welfare (both small and large animals) will also be considered in this priority area.

Examples of innovative technologies and approaches that applicants could address through this priority include:

- Evaluating low-cost, easy-to-use innovative tools, data analysis applications, and other diagnostic tools and sensors coupled with innovative herding and fence technologies to manage animal nutrient intake and livestock distribution for use on grazing lands to meet grazing land health attributes and other ecosystem services.
- Evaluating innovative methods that address prescriptive or targeted livestock management strategies that reduce wildfire risk and decrease invasive plant populations at the ranch, farm, or urban interface scale.
- Evaluating innovative methods that address and improve critical riparian and wetland habitat areas, minimize drought impacts, maintain and improve carbon sequestration, and provide options for nontraditional winter-feeding management practices at the farm or ranch scale.
- Evaluating methods that couple forage and animal production systems that can accurately establish preferred timing, duration, and frequency of animal use with implemented restoration practices to meet grazing management plan goals and objectives, including enhancing newly restored grazing lands.
- Evaluating systems-level analytical tools that allow for animal care and welfare, primarily from predation, at an individual or herd level by examining nonlethal predator control techniques to ensure long-term viability of livestock operations and carnivores sharing the landscape.
- Coordinating with independent livestock producers, local landowner groups, and collaborative stakeholder groups to implement and evaluate nonlethal predator control techniques for large and small animals, employing technologies such as turbo fladry fencing, LED solar powered guard lights and stereos, radio activated guard boxes, and other visual and audio deterrents. Other management practices could include non-lethal predator harassment techniques, guard dog placement, carcass-bone removal, and range riding (including an assessment of the complex ecological, economic, and social interactions of techniques employed).

5. **Soil Health Demo Trials**

Soil Health Demo (SHD) Trials supports on-farm demonstrations of Soil Health Management Systems (SHMS) and production systems being transitioned to a SHMS. A SHMS is a collection of management practices that focus on increasing soil carbon levels and improving soil health by addressing the soil health management principles of: (1) minimizing disturbance, (2) maximizing soil cover, (3) maximizing biodiversity, and (4) maximizing presence of living roots. SHD proposals must indicate which of the four soil health management principles the prospective project would address. Applicants are strongly encouraged to address all four principles. The

foundation of an SHMS is the development of one or more Soil Health Management Units (SHMU) that geographically embody one or more planning land units with similar soil type, land use, and management that can vary in size or acreage depending on soil texture, topography, and cropping system. A SHMU is like a conservation management unit but designed to assess soil health status and potential limitations on soil health indicators.

When the four soil health management principles are implemented together and adapted to a given production system (the SHMU), the principles and practices are synergistic and regenerate, build, and maintain soil health and provide critical ecosystem services. The conservation practices that make up a successful SHMS (one or more SHMUs) are adapted to address the diverse production systems, climates, ecosystems, and soils of a variety of operations to effectively build healthy, functioning soil. The objective of the SHD is to identify, document, and evaluate regionally successful approaches and outcomes of fully implemented or transitioning SHMS in varied production systems.

Comparative trials of full SHMS with similar systems that do not incorporate SHMS principles or systems that are transitioning to SHMS are desired. All SHD proposals should include baseline data, controls, and standard assessment methods, including information about the farm, geographic identification (through maps and geocoordinates) of each identified SHMU and SHDT sample site, and important information on the farming practices, tillage types, depths, number of passes, crops grown, crop yields, irrigation water quality test data, fertilization types, amounts, application methods, pest control, cover crops, soil health lab test data, and other management inputs requested by NRCS. See the Soil Health Demo Trials Soils Template posted on the CIG website for the full dataset that will be required for collection and submission. NRCS will consider this information during the proposal evaluation process (see more details in the "SHD Evaluations and Study" section I.D. below). All cover crops used must be identified by scientific name, common name, and variety (when relevant). SHD applications must also identify at least one of the following national SHD sub priorities. Applicants are encouraged to address multiple national sub priorities, to the extent practicable.

SHD National sub priorities:

- Designing SHMS for high disturbance production systems, such as potatoes, onions, sugar beets, and other root crops.
- Developing SHMS that include applying carbon amendments, such as compost or biochar with evaluations of the effects on soil carbon and soil health.
- Improving cover crop management in regions with specific challenges (e.g., timing of planting and termination in water-limited regions or pest management in humid regions).
- Integrating greater diversity in production systems, such as managing soil health on grazing land, perennial vegetation in cropping systems, integrated crop-livestock systems, or other diversification.

- Designing SHMS with adapted nutrient management strategies for improved water quality (e.g., systems that address dissolved reactive phosphorus and other phosphorus in the soil in cold climates and nutrient-threatened watersheds).
- Addressing any of the previous sub priorities within the context of climate change adaptation, resilience, or soil carbon stock changes, with special attention toward collecting data to define and quantify outcomes. If climate mitigation is part of an SHD proposal, the methods for estimating entity-scale emissions should follow the USDA report titled "Quantifying Greenhouse Gas Fluxes in Agriculture and Forestry: Methods for Entity-Scale Inventory."

## C. On-Farm Trials Evaluations

On-Farm Trials projects under all four priorities consist of two major components: (1) on-farm implementation of innovative conservation approaches and (2) evaluation of the impacts. The evaluation component includes assessment of the environmental, financial, and (to the extent possible) social impacts of implementing the innovations. Awardees must work closely with participating producers to ensure that sufficient data are collected to analyze these impacts, and they must ensure that producer privacy is maintained throughout the project and dissemination of project results.

Applications must describe the proposed evaluation approach, including collecting baseline data and using controls and methods for assessing financial and social impacts.

The NRCS Technical Note 200-ECN-4 provides guidance on developing conservation case studies and should also be considered in preparing the application; it is available on the NRCS's Developing Economic Case Studies website. In addition, a recent Environmental Defense Fund publication, developed with support from NRCS, provides guidance on analyzing farm financial outcomes and is another available resource.

Social evaluations can inform strategies to increase adoption of conservation practices and systems to encourage lasting change beyond the duration of an On-Farm Trials project. Social outcomes analyses consider the factors that go into a producer's decision to undertake conservation activities, how that producer's decision influences other producers, and any broader impacts on communities.

Partners interested in undertaking social evaluations may wish to refer to the Social Indicators Data Management and Analysis (SIDMA) tool. SIDMA was developed by the Great Lakes Regional Social Indicators Team, and provides resources for measuring, organizing, and analyzing social indicators related to conservation practices. While SIDMA was developed for use in water quality projects, extrapolation of its methods to other resource concerns is generally straightforward. To explore and use the online tool, visit the SIDMA website. Partners who conduct an analysis of social outcomes of their project should make sure that this effort is overseen by a qualified staff person or third party.

Applicants must describe their capability and capacity for carrying out On-Farm Trials evaluations. Applicants are encouraged to partner with organizations and individuals that have experience in carrying out environmental, economic, and social evaluations. Evaluation methods and approaches are subject to negotiation prior to execution of the On-Farm Trials agreement. Applicants must identify in their budget documents the amount of On-Farm Trials funding proposed for evaluation expenses.

**D. SHD Evaluations and Study**

Projects funded under the SHD priority must meet additional protocol, data collection, and evaluation requirements. Similar to the broader On-Farm Trials program, SHD projects must include a robust environmental and financial evaluation. However, unlike the broader On-Farm Trials program where a social evaluation is optional, SHD projects must also include an evaluation of the social effects of implementing soil health management systems and practices.

At a minimum, evaluations should include the following: (1) a short term (within crop season) assessment of the effectiveness of soil carbon amendments and soil health management practices (e.g., cover crop adoption) on soil health, crop health, vigor and yield, change in irrigation amounts applied (if applicable), changes in soil health indicators based on the soil lab test data, and other quantitative or qualitative data, as well as cost vs. benefit analysis; (2) a long term (life of the award) assessment including items listed in the "short term assessment"; and (3) overall recommendations to NRCS about the adoption of soil carbon amendments and their effects on crop production, soil health, cost vs. benefit, and other noteworthy findings.

Unique to SHD is the necessity of using common evaluation protocols and methods for assessing soil carbon changes and other soil health outcomes. Eligible entities must:

1. Use recommended NRCS standards in field and laboratory methods for soil carbon and other soil health indicator measurements, as defined in the Kellogg Soil Survey Laboratory Methods Manual, Version 6.0, Part 1: Current Methods (usda.gov) and Technical Note 450-06. This does not preclude inclusion of additional measurements beyond the identified NRCS minimum data collection requirements. Awardees must collaborate with NRCS soil health experts to ensure consistency in field and laboratory methods. The awardee will enter all soil test data into a NRCS-provided data system prior to the end of the award.

2. Work with State or local NRCS soil scientist to verify the soil map unit(s) and component(s) on which the trial site is located.

3. Collect all current and historic management information from participating producers (tillage, crop rotation, nutrient, and other input applications), and enter it into an NRCS-provided data system. A 5-year or longer management history is required to better capture long-term soil health impacts.

4. Collect all environmental and financial outcome data to include profitability (cost of production, current yield, and historic yield where available), and enter it into an

NRCS-provided data system. When available, include data such as effects of systems on infiltration rates, ground water recharge, plant available water, runoff, water quality, flooding, pest resilience, weather resilience, air quality, etc.

5. At a minimum, develop summary information on social outcomes and profiles of participating producers with information about why management changes were adopted, as well as challenges and benefits of the changes.

6. To facilitate broader adoption, provide details on how project results will be shared with producer communities, such as through on-farm field days and other activities. Implementing mentor groups to facilitate changing production systems is highly encouraged. Projects should be designed to assist with implementation and coordination so that opportunities for idea exchange occur between producers or service providers that have implementation experience and participants who are experiencing change.

7. Develop regionally-relevant production-specific and climate-specific SHMS templates for future producers, especially in cases where a novel approach is used to address specific resource concerns or challenging conditions.

The standard SHD dataset requirements and methods are available on the CIG website.

Any awarded SHD applications that propose to address carbon sequestration or reduced greenhouse gas emissions must use quantification methodologies that adhere to requirements found in the USDA report titled "Quantifying Greenhouse Gas Fluxes in Agriculture and Forestry: Methods for Entity-Scale Inventory."

Entities receiving an On-Farm Trials SHD award are required to submit their full data set through a data system that will be provided by NRCS. It is incumbent upon SHD partners to inform participating producers that geospatial, soil, conservation practice, and other information will be provided to NRCS and maintained in a confidential Federal database from which aggregated findings will be made available to the public without personally identifiable information. No database information will be shared with the public without a producer's consent. However, names of participating producers and any incentive payments received are subject to Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) requests.

# II. FEDERAL AWARD INFORMATION

## A. Available Funding

### 1. Estimated Funding

The Federal funding agency expects to award approximately $50 million through this opportunity. However, the agency retains the discretion to award a larger or lesser amount.

### 2. Start Dates and Performance Periods

Projects may be between 3 and 5 years in duration. Applicants should plan their projects based on an estimated project start date of May 31, 2024.

3. **Number of Awards**

   The agency expects to make between 10 and 20 awards.

### B. Type of Award

1. **Type of Federal Award**

   The agency plans to award grant agreements pursuant to this opportunity. Depending on the nature of a particular proposal received, the agency may elect to negotiate an alternate award type with the selected applicant.

2. **Eligibility of Renewal or Supplemental Project Applications**

   Applications for renewal or supplementation of existing projects are not eligible to compete with applications for new Federal awards. An application for renewal is an application submitted to continue an existing agreement that meets the objectives and requirements of this NFO. An application for supplementation of an existing project is an application that adds components to an existing agreement so that it will meet the objectives and requirements in this NFO.

## III. ELIGIBILITY INFORMATION

### A. Eligible Applicants

Applicants and applications must meet eligibility criteria by the application deadline to be considered for award. Eligible applicant type is determined by the implementing program statute. Applicant entities identified in the SAM.gov exclusions database as ineligible, prohibited or restricted, or excluded from receiving Federal contracts and certain Federal assistance and benefits will not be considered for Federal funding, as applicable to the funding being requested under this Federal program (2 CFR 200.206(d)).

Entity types that may meet these criteria include the following:

- city or township governments,
- county governments,
- for profit organizations other than small businesses,
- Native American tribal governments (Federally recognized),
- Native American tribal organizations (other than Federally recognized tribal governments),
- nonprofits having a 501(c)(3) status with the IRS (other than institutions of higher education),
- private institutions of higher education,
- public and state-controlled institutions of higher education,
- small businesses,

- special district governments, and
- state governments.

Individuals are not eligible applicants. Federal entities are not eligible applicants. Foreign entities are not eligible applicants.

For-profit entities are eligible for On-Farm Trials if their primary business is related to agriculture. Nonprofit entities are eligible for On-Farm Trials if they have experience working with agricultural producers. Governmental organizations that are not federal entities are eligible.

Eligible entities must have access to a sufficient number of producer participants to facilitate implementing On-Farm Trials of conservation practices and systems on private lands.

## B. Other

Any award made pursuant to this NFO will be made to a single entity. Applicants that apply as "partnerships" or other similar groupings must clearly describe the relationship between the applicant and the "partner" parties. In all but exceptional cases, an awardee/sub awardee relationship must be reflected in the award.

An applicant organization may submit more than one application for different projects or that propose different approaches. In the case of applications submitted as revisions or corrections to a previously submitted application under this NFO, the agency will consider the last application submitted prior to the established deadline.

Awards made pursuant to this NFO are not Farm Bill incentive contracts; therefore, the awards themselves are not limited by the payment limitation in 16 U.S.C. Chapter 58. However, any agricultural producers receiving a payment through participation in a project awarded under this NFO must meet the eligibility requirements of 7 CFR parts 12 and 1400 and have control of the land involved for the term of the proposed award period.

### 1. Producer Eligibility

Any producer who is an entity receiving an On-Farm Trials incentive payment must meet the EQIP eligibility requirements listed in 7 CFR 1466.6(b)(1) through (3):

- Be in compliance with the highly erodible land and wetland conservation provisions (7 CFR part 12).
- Be a legal entity, joint operation, Indian tribe, or native corporation who is engaged in agricultural production or forestry management or has an interest in the agricultural or forestry operation as defined in 7 CFR part 1400.
- Have control of the land involved for the term of the proposed contract period.

In addition, producers receiving On-Farm Trials incentive payments must meet the adjusted gross income requirements under Section 1001D(b)(1) of the 2018 Farm Bill (7 U.S.C. 1308-3a(a)(1)).

2. **Incentive Payments**

On-Farm Trials awards must include incentive payments (derived from the NRCS award funding) disbursed to agricultural producers on whose land project activities are being carried out. While On-Farm Trials incentives provided to producers can be a combination of cash and equipment/supplies, all projects must include some cash payments directly to producers. These payments compensate producers for adopting and evaluating new conservation approaches. Incentive payments may be comprised of foregone income reimbursement, land rental costs, conservation implementation-related equipment costs, construction costs, evaluation costs, or other considerations necessary to facilitate effective execution of an on-farm trial. Any land rental, equipment rental, or depreciation costs must be adequately justified. **Incentive payments must be paid directly to agricultural producers from entities receiving On-Farm Trials awards. Producers do not enter into contracts with NRCS.**

On-Farm Trials applications must include the overall amount of incentive payments the eligible entity intends to offer, the amount of incentive payments an individual producer may receive, and details on the composition of the incentive payments (e.g., cash vs. equipment/supplies/technical assistance).

The following provisions apply to On-Farm Trials funding:

a. NRCS requires that eligible entities work with NRCS staff to ensure that all producers receiving On-Farm Trials incentives are EQIP eligible and in compliance with the Farm Bill's adjusted gross income (AGI) limitation and highly erodible land and wetlands conservation provisions prior to disbursement of incentives. Non-EQIP eligible producers are allowed to participate in On-Farm Trials projects by providing data, but any direct benefits dispersed can only be applied to EQIP eligible participating producers.
b. Section 1704 (a)(3) of the 2018 Farm Bill (7 U.S.C. 1308-3a(b)(3)) states the Secretary may waive the AGI limit on a case by case basis, if the Secretary determines that environmentally sensitive land of special significance would be protected as a result of such a waiver. On-Farm Trials awardees may request AGI waivers for producer payments once their project commences.
c. Entities receiving On-Farm Trials awards are required to submit producer information and amounts of incentive payments made to individuals annually. This is required by the On-Farm Trials statute and will be a requirement of the award.
d. On-Farm Trials incentive payments do not count toward a producer's EQIP payment limitation under the 2018 Farm Bill (7 U.S.C. 1308-3a).

Section 1240B of the Food Security Act of 1985, 16 U.S.C. 3839aa-2(d)(2), prohibits duplicative payments. Entities receiving an On-Farm Trials award are responsible for

ensuring that incentive payments are not provided to a producer for a conservation practice, system, or approach for which the producer has already received, or is contracted to receive, funding through another NRCS or USDA program.

3. **NRCS Responsibilities**

   Successful On-Farm Trials projects require close collaboration and partnership between awardees and NRCS. NRCS will designate a technical contact to serve as the main technical liaison between NRCS and the awardee, and additional NRCS staff are likely to be engaged in On-Farm Trials projects.

   NRCS is required to provide technical oversight to each On-Farm Trials project. At a minimum, NRCS is required to ensure that participating producers are EQIP eligible and in compliance with the Farm Bill's AGI, highly erodible lands, and wetlands conservation provisions. In addition, NRCS is responsible for ensuring that On-Farm Trials projects and activities comply with the National Environmental Policy Act and other Federal, state, and local laws and regulations.

   NRCS may work with awarded partners to refine On-Farm Trials evaluation methodologies and will review project results for possible inclusion into NRCS publications and technical documents.

4. **Cost Sharing or Matching**

   There is no cost sharing or matching requirement for this opportunity. There is no competitive advantage to applicants who voluntarily provide a match.

5. **Technical Assistance**

   On-Farm Trials applicants must include the portion of the proposed award amount that will be applied to technical assistance. Technical assistance refers to all activities required to implement innovative conservation approaches on farm or ranch land. Technical assistance activities include conservation planning, design and engineering, and quality assurance and verification.

   The On-Farm Trials technical evaluation criteria in Section V of this notice makes clear that NRCS gives preference to partner entities that are able to wholly supply the technical assistance needed for On-Farm Trials projects, either on their own or through working with technical service providers or other qualified entities and individuals.

   Proposals must identify the individuals or entities providing technical assistance services and describe their qualifications. If these individuals or entities are not certified technical service providers or NRCS-certified conservation planners, applications must provide sufficient evidence that the individuals or entities are qualified to carry out implementation activities.

6. **Historically Underserved Farmers and Ranchers**

NRCS is committed to the success of our nation's Historically Underserved (HU) producers, businesses, and partners. HU producers play a vital role in securing a healthy agricultural economy for our country and are momentous leaders in protecting, enhancing, and sustaining our valuable natural resources. NRCS encourages proposal submissions from entities that represent or are focused on working with HU producers.

For the FY 2023 award process, at least 10 percent of the total funds available for On-Farm Trials are set aside for proposals that entirely benefit HU producers. This HU set aside will ensure that equity is incorporated in the planning and delivery of On-Farm Trials projects to align with NRCS's Justice40 goals.

To qualify under the EQIP rule for the HU set-aside, On-Farm Trials applicants must be:

a. a community-based organization comprised of, representing, or exclusively working with HU producers for the life of the project;

b. an entity developing an innovative conservation approach or technology specifically targeting the unique needs and limitations of HU producers for the life of the project; or

c. an 1890 or 1994 land-grant institution (7 U.S.C. 3222, *et seq.*), Hispanic-serving institution (20 U.S.C. 1101a), or other minority-serving institution, such as a historically Black college or university (20 U.S.C. 1061), a tribally controlled college or university (25 U.S.C. 1801), or Asian American and Pacific Islander-serving institution (20 U.S.C. 1059g) at the time of application.

In the narrative portion of their proposal, applicants applying under (b) must include the names of partners with a history of trusted relationships with HU producers. In addition, the project narrative must clearly describe how the project is designed to target the unique needs and limitations of HU producers.

The regulatory definitions of an HU farmer or rancher may be found at the NRCS Outreach and Partnerships web page.

To compete for set-aside funds, applicants must signal their intent by following the instructions in Section IV(C).

Applicants competing in the HU set-aside must meet all other requirements of this announcement, including addressing at least one CIG priority listed in this notice.

# IV. APPLICATION AND SUBMISSION INFORMATION

## A. Information for New Users of Grants.gov

### 1. Overview

While a Grants.gov account is not required to download an NFO and related documents, it is required to submit an application. If your organization has never applied through Grants.gov, please be aware that there are several steps you must take to register your organization before you can submit an application. **Completing those steps can take a significant amount of time, so plan accordingly.**

For information about the Grants.gov pre-award phase of the grant lifecycle see the Grants.gov Pre-Award Phase web page.

### 2. Register to Apply through Grants.gov

Carefully review the registration steps and gather information requested prior to beginning the registration process to avoid last-minute searches for required information. For assistance with the registration process, contact Grants.gov Applicant Support at 1-800-518-4726 or support@grants.gov.

Organizations must complete all steps to register (IV(A)(3)(a) through (e)). Complete organization instructions are included on the Grants.gov Organization Registration web page.

Although creating a Grants.gov account online can take only minutes, SAM registrations may take several weeks. Therefore, organizations should begin the process early to ensure they have sufficient time to complete registration and meet required application submission deadlines.

### 3. Steps to Register

a. Obtain a UEI: All entities applying for funding must have a UEI issued by SAM.gov. Applicants must enter the UEI in the data entry field labeled "UEI" on the Standard Form (SF) 424.

b. Register with SAM: All organizations must register with SAM to apply online through Grants.gov. SAM registration must be renewed annually. Part of the SAM registration process includes designating an Electronic Business (EBiz) point of contact (POC). **The EBiz POC plays an integral part in the organization's Grants.gov registration and application process.** The individual in that role must authorize all other roles in Grants.gov. For more detailed instructions for registering with SAM, refer to the Grants.gov "Step 2: Register with SAM" web page.

c. Create a Grants.gov Account: From the Grants.gov web page, click "Register" in the top right-hand corner and follow the on-screen instructions or refer to the detailed instructions on the Grants.gov Applicant Registration web page.

d. Add an Organization Applicant Profile to a Grants.gov Account: A profile in Grants.gov corresponds to a single applicant organization the user represents (i.e., an applicant) or an individual applicant. If you work for or consult with multiple organizations and have a profile for each, you may log in to one Grants.gov account to access all your grant applications. To add an organizational profile to your Grants.gov account, enter the UEI for the organization in the UEI field while adding a profile. For more detailed instructions about creating a profile on Grants.gov, refer to the Grants.gov Add Profile web page.

e. EBiz POC Authorized Profile Roles: After you register with Grants.gov and create an organization applicant profile, you must establish roles for individuals in the organization. The authorized organizational representative (AOR) role is critical; it gives an individual permission to complete and submit applications on behalf of the organization. Without this role, the organization cannot submit any applications. The request for role assignment will be routed to the organization's EBiz POC for approval. Once approved, the AOR can submit an application online. For more detailed instructions about creating a EBiz POC authorized profile on Grants.gov, refer to the Grants.gov EBiz POC Authorizes Profile Roles web page.

   Track Role Status: To track your role request, refer to the Grants.gov Track Profile Role Status web page.

4. **Electronic Signature**

   When applications are submitted through Grants.gov, the name of the organization applicant with the AOR role that submitted the application is inserted into the signature line of the application, serving as the electronic signature. The EBiz POC **must** authorize people who are able to make legally binding commitments on behalf of the organization as a user with the AOR role. **This step (step 3(e)) is often missed, and it is crucial for valid and timely submissions.**

5. **Workspace**.

   Workspace is a shared, online environment where members of a grant team may simultaneously access and edit different webforms within an application. For each NFO, you can create individual instances of a workspace. An applicant can start an application in Workspace and return to work on it later.

6. **Apply for an Opportunity**

   The following is an overview of applying through Grants.gov. For complete instructions on how to apply for opportunities, refer to the Grants.gov Workspace Overview web page.

a. Create a Workspace: Creating a workspace allows you to complete an application online and route it through your organization for review before submitting.

b. Complete a Workspace: Add participants to the workspace to work on the application together, complete all the required forms online or by downloading PDF versions, and check for errors before submission. The Workspace progress bar will display the status of your application process as you apply. As you apply using Workspace, you may click the blue question mark icon near the upper-right corner of each page to access context-sensitive help.

   - Adobe Reader: If you decide not to apply by filling out webforms you can download individual PDF forms in Workspace. The individual PDF forms can be downloaded and saved to your local device storage, network drives, or external drives, then accessed through Adobe Reader.

     Note: Visit the Grants.gov Adobe Software Compatibility web page to download the appropriate version of the software.

   - Mandatory Fields in Forms: In the forms, you will note fields marked with an asterisk and a different background color. These fields are mandatory and must be completed to successfully submit your application.

   - Complete the SF-424 Fields First: The forms are designed to fill in common required fields across other forms, such as the applicant's name, address, and UEI. Once it is completed, the information will transfer (i.e., prepopulate) to the other forms.

c. Submit a Workspace: Submit your application through workspace by clicking the "Sign and Submit" button on the "Manage Workspace" page, under the "Forms" tab. Grants.gov recommends submitting your application package at least 24-48 hours prior to the close date to ensure that you have enough time to correct any potential technical issues that may disrupt the application submission.

d. Track a Workspace Submission: After successfully submitting a workspace application, a Grants.gov tracking number (GRANTXXXXXXXX) is automatically assigned to the application. The number will be listed on the confirmation page that is generated after submission. Using the tracking number, access the "Track My Application" page under the "Applicants" tab or the "Details" tab in the submitted workspace.

   For additional training resources, including video tutorials, refer to the Grants.gov Applicant Training web page.

## B. Electronic Application Package

Applicants interested in applying to this NFO must submit their application through Grants.gov; the agency will not accept applications submitted by email, fax, courier, or any other method. Applicants are urged to submit early to the Grants.gov system.

For technical issues with Grants.gov, contact Grants.gov Applicant Support at 1-800-518-4726 or support@grants.gov. Awarding agency staff cannot support applicants regarding Grants.gov accounts.

**Address to Request Application Package**

All information necessary to apply for this opportunity is included in the Grants.gov opportunity announcement.

## C. Content and Form of Application Submission

The agency may choose not to consider applications that are incomplete or that fail to comply with the required content, format, and page limits.

To be considered for funding under this opportunity, an application must contain the following documents.

1. **Application Form**

   Complete the SF-424 Application for Federal Assistance. See instructions for completing the SF-424 located in the appendices section.

2. **Project Narrative**

   Each page must be numbered and have 1-inch margins. The text of the project narrative must be single spaced and typed in a standard typeface (e.g., Times New Roman, Arial, Courier) with no smaller than 12-point font. The project narrative must not exceed 18 pages. This page limitation applies to the project narrative only. In a document file titled "Project Narrative," provide the project narrative consisting of the following sections clearly labeled and **in this order**:

   a. Cover page

      Applications that fail to provide a cover page will be rejected in the first stage of screening.

      In one page, provide the following information:

      (1) The applicant entity name.
      (2) The project title.
      (3) The project duration in years.
      (4) The On-Farm Trials Federal funding amount requested.
      (5) The applicant's technical contact name, phone number, and email (usually the primary investigator, project director, or similar).
      (6) The applicant's administrative contact name, phone number, and email (usually the person responsible for invoicing and other administrative actions).
      (7) The geographic location of the project (list the states).

(8) The national priority that is addressed by the project. List **only one** of the following priorities: irrigation management technologies; grazing lands; feed management and enteric methane reduction; nutrient management; or SHD trial. If the proposal addresses more than one priority, you must select one primary priority for your application.
(9) State whether the project team has submitted this proposal to any other active funding opportunities. If yes, please list all.
(10) The number of participating producers that will receive incentives (this can be estimated).
(11) Number of participating HU producers, if any. If none, please note.
(12) Please state if you are competing for the HU set aside and note which of the following applies to the applicant:

- A community-based organization comprised of, representing, or exclusively working with HU producers for the life of the project;

- An entity developing an innovative conservation approach or technology specifically targeting the unique needs and limitations of HU producers for the life of the project; or

- An 1890 or 1994 land-grant institution (7 U.S.C. 3222 et seq.), Hispanic-serving institution (20 U.S.C. 1101a), or other minority-serving institution, such as a historically Black college or university (20 U.S.C. 1061), a tribally controlled college or university (25 U.S.C. 1801), or an Asian American and Pacific Islander-serving institution (20 U.S.C. 1059g) at the time of application.

(13) Project synopsis. Provide a brief description (two to four sentences) of the project that can be used in a public announcement if the project is funded. State the practice or technology that will be implemented through the on-farm trials, as well as the cropping systems or agricultural operation type targeted for participation and the key partners, if relevant.

b. Project abstract

In one page or less, provide a concise project summary that captures the issue or problem the project will address, the innovative approach to be employed, and the anticipated project results and key deliverables.

c. Background

Provide a short history of the development of the conservation approach or technology presented (cite significant publications as appropriate). Describe any challenges to broad adoption of the approach by agricultural producers.

d. Purpose and goals

Describe the purpose and overarching goals of this project.

e. Objectives

Describe the project's objectives and how it supports achieving the project goal using specific, measurable, and time-dependent targets.

f. Design and methods

Describe the methodology of the On-Farm Trials, including any tools or processes that will be used to implement it. Identify the individuals or entities providing technical assistance services and describe their qualifications.

g. Evaluation

Describe the methodology used to evaluate this project and quantify results, including proposed methods to evaluate the environmental and economic (and social, if feasible) results of the On-Farm Trials. Describe the individuals and entities scheduled to carry out the evaluation. For applicants of the SHD trials priority only, describe how the applicant and any partners intend to address and complete the NRCS minimum soil health data requirements required of all SHD applicants. Include the scale at which the evaluation will be conducted (e.g., farm scale or regional scale).

h. Incentive payments and producer involvement

Estimate the number of EQIP eligible producers proposed to participate in the On-Farm Trials. Describe whether these producers have been identified, and if not yet identified, clearly articulate the process that will be used to identify participating producers. Describe the composition and structure of the incentives that participating producers will receive. Include the amount of incentive payments that an individual producer may receive and provide details on the composition of the incentive payments (e.g., cash vs. equipment/supplies/technical assistance).

i. Historically Underserved Narrative

Describe the extent to which HU producers will be involved in this project. In particular:

(1) State which of the following HU communities will be served by the proposed project and describe how these groups or producers will be included in the project.

- Beginning Farmer or Rancher
- Limited Resource Farmer or Rancher
- Veteran Farmer or Rancher
- Socially Disadvantaged Farmer or Rancher
  - American Indians or Alaskan Natives
  - Asians

- Blacks or African Americans
- Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islanders
- Hispanics

(2) Describe how HU community groups or producers will benefit from the project.

(3) Describe the potential for project results to impact the broader HU producer community.

(4) Describe any previous experience working with HU groups or producers.

j. Project outcomes and benefits

Identify the expected benefits and outcomes of the project and forecast the lasting impact of project results. Identify project beneficiaries and how their agricultural operations will be affected by the project's conservation activities.

k. Project accomplishments and deliverables

Provide a list of specific deliverables that can be measured or presented so that both parties know the project is complete.

In addition to project-specific deliverables, CIG grantees are responsible for:

a. Participating in at least one event (e.g., conference or workshop) during the grant period where the grantee presents on the activities of the project.

b. Providing a closing event (this could be a webinar, field day, training event, etc., used to disseminate project results).

c. Submitting a final project overview describing the results of the On-Farm Trials.

l. Project action plan and timeline

Provide a list of project actions and deliverables relative to timeframes and associated project milestones through project completion.

m. Communications

Describe plans for communicating project results to producers and stakeholders.

n. Geographic location and size of project area

Identify the geographic location and the estimated size and scope (e.g., acres, farm types, demographics) of the project area. If project activities are carried out in multiple states, describe which project elements will take place in each state.

o. Project management

Describe how the project will be organized and managed. List the project partners and describe their role in the project. Provide brief descriptions of key technical personnel qualifications, their experience managing Federal awards, and their anticipated contributions to the project. Do not include a resume or curriculum vitae.

p. Assessment of environmental impacts

Describe any physical, chemical, or biological impacts to the environment from the activities of this project. Beneficial and adverse impacts are to be considered, highlighting and quantifying the natural environmental resources affected directly, indirectly, or cumulatively. See Section VI(B) for more instruction.

q. Declaration of previous CIG (if applicable)

If the applicant has previously received and managed a CIG award (either at the National or state levels), list for each award the CIG agreement number; the project title; award funding amount; and the year of expiration. Give a short summary of the completed project's results and impact. If the project is ongoing, provide the anticipated results. Note if this On-Farm Trials proposal builds on a prior CIG Classic award. For applicants with multiple previous awards, list all awards and describe the most recent awards as space allows.

If your proposal will include information collection from non-Federal sources, ensure the collection meets the requirements of the Paperwork Reduction Act. Surveys of individuals or entities that do not have prior approval from the Office of Management and Budget are generally prohibited. For additional guidance about allowable and unallowable activities, please visit the Digital.gov "Do I need Clearance" web page.

The following documents do not count toward the above stated page limit.

3. **References (if applicable)**

Enter a formatted list of any academic references used to support this proposal.

4. **Standard Form 424A, Budget Information – Non-Construction Programs**

Fill in all spaces as appropriate. Section B, Item 6, Column 1 should reflect the agency funds, and Column 2 should reflect the applicant's matching funds. This form is the summary budget for the project and should include the full project totals on pages 1 and 2. See the instructions for completing SF-424A located in the appendices. Refer to Section IV of this opportunity for information regarding indirect costs. Errors in the SF-424A with regard to classifying costs may be negotiated after selection.

5. **Budget Table**

   In an Excel document file titled "Budget Table," list line-items and amounts from the budget narrative (refer to Appendix E, Budget Table Template). The budget table serves as a reference and calculation check for the amounts listed in the budget narrative. **The budget table does not replace the need for line-item descriptions and amounts to be included in the budget narrative.**

6. **Budget Narrative**

   In a document file titled "Budget Narrative," list and justify the budget line-item totals broken down by year and sorted by the budget categories listed in SF-424A (refer to Appendix C, Budget Narrative Guidance, and Appendix D, Sample Budget Table and Narrative). Detail how the totals for each budget category were determined and demonstrate a clear connection between costs and the proposed project activities. See Appendix D for a sample budget narrative.

   A budget narrative should outline project details sufficiently enough to allow reviewers to evaluate the integrity of the proposed spending and should clarify project intent. Budgets should include specific information about the amount and structure of incentive payments to participating producers. Errors regarding classifying costs in the budget narrative may be negotiated after selection.

   Refer to the budget narrative guidance located at the end of this document for more information on procurement standards when including contracts for goods or services. **Sole-source contracting is prohibited without proper justification.** See Procurement Standards located at 2 CFR 200.317-327.

   Refer to the budget narrative guidance located in the appendices for information about making contract vs. subaward determinations.

   a. Include $6,000 in the budget for project travel required by NRCS in the first year. Any additional travel required for completion of the project must be considered additional to this $6,000.

   b. Build America, Buy American. The "Buy American" preference applies to Federal financial assistance awards that include construction components, even if the award is funded by both Federal and non-Federal funds. Subawards should conform to the terms and conditions of the Federal award from which they are established. A "Buy American" preference only applies to articles, materials, and supplies that are consumed in, incorporated into, or affixed to a construction project. Refer to the FPAC General Terms and Conditions web page for additional information.

   c. Indirect Costs Limitations. By statute, On-Farm Trials funds may not be used to pay for administrative (indirect) expenses of an eligible entity. Indirect costs may not be charged to the Federal budget of an On-Farm Trials award.

7. **Grants.gov Lobbying Form**

   Under 31 U.S.C. § 1352, an applicant or recipient must not use any federally appropriated funds (either annually appropriated and continuing appropriations) or matching funds under a grant or cooperative agreement award to pay any person for lobbying in connection with the award. Lobbying is defined as influencing or attempting to influence an officer or employee of any agency, a Member of Congress, an officer or employee of Congress, or an employee of a Member of Congress connection with the award. Submission of an application also represents the applicant's certification of the statements in 2 CFR part 418, Appendix A – Certification Regarding Lobbying.

8. **Statement of Current and Pending Support.**

   Submit a "Statement of Current and Pending Support" for each key personnel who will participate in the project. Use the template located in the "Related Documents" tab of the opportunity.

9. **Disclosure of Lobbying Activities**

   An SF-LLL, Disclosure of Lobbying Activities, must be submitted **only** if you (or your organization) have/has made or agrees to make any payment using non-appropriated funds for lobbying. See 2 CFR 418.110 for more information on when additional submission of this form is required.

10. **Disclosure of Potential Conflict of Interest**, if applicable

    In accordance with 2 CFR 400.2, applicants must maintain written standards of conduct covering conflicts of interest and governing the performance of their employees in the selection, award, and administration of Federal awards. No employee, officer, or agent may participate in the selection, award, or administration of a Federal award if he or she has an actual or potential conflict of interest. Such conflicts of interest would arise when the employee, officer or agent, any member of his or her immediate family, his or her partner, or an organization that employs or is about to employ any of the parties referenced, has a financial or other interest in, or a tangible personal benefit from, an applicant considered for a Federal award. The standards of conduct must provide for disciplinary actions to be applied for violations of such standards by officers, employees, or agents of the applicant.

    If the applicant has a parent, affiliate, or subsidiary organization that is not a state, local government, or Indian tribe, the applicant must also maintain written standards of conduct covering organizational conflicts of interest. Organizational conflict of interest occurs when an applicant is unable or appears to be unable to be impartial in conducting a Federal award action involving a parent company, affiliate, or subsidiary organization, related to the applicant's organization.

    Applicants must disclose in writing any potential conflicts of interest to the NRCS. Include the name of the individual, the name of the entity with which the individual

has a conflict, the nature of the financial or other interest, the value of the interest, and a description of how the interest relates to your application. Upload disclosures under "Other Attachments" (listed separately under "Optional Forms") in Grants.gov. **If no conflict exists, no submission is required.**

11. **Post Award Documentation**

    Not applicable.

12. **Unique Entity Identifier and System for Award Management**

    Each applicant (unless the applicant has an exception approved by the Federal awarding agency under 2 CFR 25.110(d)) is required to: (i) be registered in SAM before submitting an application; (ii) provide a valid UEI in its application; and (iii) continue to maintain an active SAM registration with current information at all times during which it has an active Federal award or an application or plan under consideration by a Federal awarding agency. The agency may not make a Federal award to an applicant until the applicant has complied with all applicable unique entity identifier and SAM requirements, and if an applicant has not fully complied with the requirements by the time the agency is ready to make an award, the agency may determine that the applicant is not qualified to receive a Federal award and use that determination as a basis for making a Federal award to another applicant.

    Entities must obtain a UEI and register in SAM prior to registering with Grants.gov. A description of each is below. Entities are strongly encouraged to apply early for their SAM registration.

    System for Award Management (SAM) Registration: To register, go to: https://www.sam.gov. The Federal Service Desk is available for registration assistance and can be contacted through the "Help" tab at the previously listed website.

    Awarding agency staff cannot support applicants regarding UEI or SAM issues.

## D. Submission Dates and Times and Correspondence

Applicants must apply through Grants.gov. Applications must be received by 11:59 pm Eastern Time (ET) on **November 3**, 2023. An application submitted or resubmitted after the deadline is late (an application is considered on time at 11:59.59 pm ET, but it is late at 12:00 am ET). Late submissions will not be reviewed or considered.

Grants.gov will provide either an error or a successfully received transmission in the form of an email sent to the individual designated as the AOR role who is attempting to submit the application. The Grants.gov Support Center reports that some applicants end the transmission because they think that nothing is occurring during the transmission process; be patient and give the system time to process the application.

If you have trouble submitting your application to Grants.gov, you should **first** contact the Grants.gov Help Desk to resolve any issues. Keep a record of any such correspondence. See Section IV(B) for Grants.gov contact information.

For applications successfully transmitted to Grants.gov before the deadline, the applicant with the AOR role who submitted the application will receive:

- an acknowledgement of receipt and a tracking number (GRANTXXXXXXXX) from Grants.gov, and
- an email with the official date/time stamp (this stamp is used to determine if the application was received prior to the deadline) and Grants.gov.

When the agency successfully retrieves the application from Grants.gov and acknowledges the download of submissions, Grants.gov will also provide an electronic acknowledgment of receipt of the application to the applicant.

## E. Intergovernmental Review

This funding opportunity is not subject to Executive Order 12372, "Intergovernmental Review of Federal Programs." When completing the SF-424, check block c, "Program is not covered by E.O. 13272."

## F. Funding Restrictions

Funds may not be used to pay any of the following costs unless otherwise permitted by law and approved in writing by NRCS in advance of incurring such costs:

1. Profit and management fees. Any funds awarded to for-profit entities must be used for reimbursement of award-related direct and indirect costs only.
2. Costs above the amount of funds authorized for the project.
3. Costs incurred prior to the effective date of the award, including time spent applying for this opportunity.
4. Costs that lie outside the scope of the approved project and amendments thereto.
5. Entertainment costs, regardless of their apparent relationship to project objectives.
6. Compensation for injuries to persons or damage to property arising out of project activities.
7. 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.

8. Capital expenditures for general purpose equipment, buildings, and land and for improvements to land, buildings, or equipment which materially increase their value or useful life. See 2 CFR 200.439 for additional information.

9. Meals may be charged to an award only if they are necessary to perform the project. For instance, meals (normally only lunches) that are a necessary part of the costs of meetings and conferences (i.e., required attendance for the continuity of a meeting), the primary purpose of which is the dissemination of information, are allowable, as are costs of transportation, rental of facilities, speakers' fees, and other items incidental to such meetings or conferences.

   Note: Meals consumed while in official travel status do not fall in this category. They are considered per diem expenses and should be reimbursed in accordance with the organization's established travel policies subject to statutory limitations or in accordance with Federal travel policies.

10. Costs normally charged as indirect costs may not be charged as direct costs without proper justification and agency approval. Proper justification includes documentation that the costs meet the criteria for allowability (see 2 CFR 200.403). Examples of such costs include rent, utilities, the costs of operating and maintaining facilities, and general administration and expenses, such as the salaries and expenses of executive officers, personnel administration, and accounting.

11. Salaries that are not commensurate with level of work are unallowable. All costs must be reasonable to be allowable (2 CFR 200.403), and 2 CFR 200.404 defines a cost as reasonable if, in its nature and amount, it does not exceed that which would be incurred by a prudent person under the circumstances prevailing at the time the decision was made to incur the cost. Salaries determined not to be reasonable compared to the level of work will be unallowable.

12. Software produced by non-domestic entities. Project budgets must not include costs (whether Federal costs or cost-share) for software developed by non-domestic entities if it will be used by the Federal government or hosted on Federal systems.

13. Refer to Section IV for applicable indirect cost restrictions, if any.

This list is not exhaustive. For additional information please refer to 2 CFR part 200, subpart E, Cost Principals.

# V. APPLICATION REVIEW INFORMATION

## A. Review and Selection Process

Applications will be screened for completeness and compliance with the provisions of this notice. Incomplete, noncompliant, or applications not meeting the formatting criteria may be eliminated from competition. In that event, the agency will send notification of elimination to the applicant. The agency intends to select and award without conducting any discussions or allowing applicants to correct deficiencies or omissions in their

applications. Consequently, applicants must ensure their applications are complete and accurate. However, while the agency intends to select without contacting applicants, it reserves the right to request applicants to revise their applications to correct deficiencies or omissions that it identifies. If this occurs, the agency will conduct discussions with all applicants, identify deficiencies and omissions for all, and give applicants an opportunity to submit a revised application by a common cut-off date. The agency may also contact individual applicants to clarify certain components of their applications.

Merit/technical reviews will be conducted by a technical review board nominated by the approving official. Risk reviews will be conducted by the FPAC Business Center, Grants and Agreements Division. The approving official will make the final award decisions. The approving official for this opportunity is the NRCS Chief.

Applications that pass the initial screening are then evaluated using a three-part process:

- Technical peer review panels composed of subject matter experts evaluate the applications against the On-Farm Trials Technical Criteria in V(B).
- NRCS state conservationists in the states where On-Farm Trials work is proposed evaluate the relevant applications for ethical concerns and potential duplication of effort and provide review comments.
- The NRCS Chief makes the final award selections.

## B. Merit/Technical Criteria

On-Farm Trials technical peer review panels use the following criteria, on a 100-point scale, to evaluate applications:

1. **Project Purpose, Innovation, and Scientific Approach (25 points)**

    - The project purpose is compelling and the rationale explicit for why On-Farm Trials of the innovative approach are needed.
    - The innovative conservation approach tested has applicability for a range of agricultural operation sizes and types.
    - The design and implementation of the project, including the method for determining the structure of incentive payments, is sound and based on accepted scientific methodology.
    - SHD only: The proposal indicates that all soil health assessments and methodologies are consistent with NRCS-approved assessments and methodologies.

2. **Project Management (25 points)**

    - Project management staff has experience managing (or demonstrates the ability to manage) a Federal financial award and working on the ground with agricultural producers, or the requisite experience managing similar projects.
    - The applicant agrees to be responsible for all technical assistance required to implement innovative approaches with producers. The proposal includes

qualifications of identified entities and individuals providing technical assistance to producers.
- The budget is justified and reasonable, and expenses are allowable.
- The proposal includes a plan for the substantive participation of HU producers.

3. **Evaluation Approach (25 points)**

   - A scientifically robust evaluation plan is described that incorporates the assessment of economic and social (to the extent possible) outcomes in addition to environmental benefits.
   - There is a sufficient plan for developing communications products related to project outcomes, and a plan for disseminating project results to agricultural producers and stakeholders.

4. **Project Outcomes (25 points)**

   - Project results are likely to lead to developing new or modifying existing guidance documents, technical tools, conservation practice standards, or NRCS business practices.
   - Project results and evaluation are likely to result in more widespread adoption of the approach.

## C. Administrative and Risk Criteria

Notice of selection after merit/technical evaluation does not guarantee that an applicant will receive an award. Following notification of selection for funding (see Section VI), staff from the FPAC Business Center, Grants and Agreements Division, conducts a final administrative and risk review of selected applications. The administrative review includes, but is not limited to, a check to ensure that NFO requirements were met (e.g., applicant meets eligibility criteria, application was submitted through Grants.gov by the established deadline, etc.), and proposed costs are allowable, allocable, and necessary. During this process, it may be necessary to request further documentation from the applicant (e.g., organizational information as part of the risk assessment, more detail regarding proposed costs, etc.).

In addition, to comply with the requirements at 2 CFR 200.206, the agency will conduct, at a minimum, the following risk review (additional steps may be taken).

The awarding agency will check SAM to ensure the applicant is not suspended or debarred, which would preclude receiving an award. In addition, prior to making a Federal award with a total Federal share greater than the simplified acquisition threshold ($250,000), the agency must review and consider any information about the applicant that is in the designated integrity and performance system accessible through SAM (the Federal Awardee Performance Integrity Information System, FAPIIS) (see 41 U.S.C. 2313 and 2 CFR 200.206(a)).

An applicant must meet the following standards to be considered for award:

1. **Financial Stability**

   The applicant maintains adequate financial resources or cash flow to meet its financial obligations on a routine basis in order to successfully complete any agreement it may be awarded.

2. **Quality of Management Systems and Ability to meet Management Standards prescribed in 2 CFR part 200**

   The applicant has a financial management system adequate to segregate and track Federal funds, and has adequate systems in place for (1) proper agreement administration; (2) compliance with the standards outlined in 2 CFR part 200 Section D for procurement, property, and records management; and (3) required financial and performance reporting.

3. **History of Performance**

   If the applicant has previously obtained a Federal financial assistance award, it must never have failed to materially comply with the Federal award terms and conditions and, furthermore, must have never had an award terminated on that basis.

Submission of an application constitutes certification that an applicant meets these standards (items 1 through 3). The agency may request documentation to substantiate the certification. Based on risk assessment, the agency may impose specific award conditions in accordance with 2 CFR 200.208.

**D. Awards Over the Simplified Acquisition Threshold (if applicable)**

1. Prior to making a Federal award with a total Federal share greater than the simplified acquisition threshold ($250,000), the agency must review and consider any information about the applicant that is in the designated integrity and performance system accessible through SAM, the Federal Awardee Performance Integrity Information System, FAPIIS. FAPIIS is a Federal database intended to serve as a Governmentwide source of information about the prior performance and compliance of Federal procurement contractors, grantees, and cooperative agreement holders (see 41 U.S.C. 2313 and 2 CFR 200.206(a)).

2. An applicant may review information in FAPIIS accessible through SAM and comment on any information that a Federal awarding agency previously entered.

3. The agency will consider any comments provided by the applicant, in addition to the other information in FAPIIS, when making a judgment about the applicant's integrity, business ethics, and record of performance under Federal awards when completing the review of risk posed by applicants as described in 2 CFR 200.206, Federal awarding agency review of risk posed by applicants.

# VI. FEDERAL AWARD ADMINISTRATION INFORMATION

## A. Federal Award Notices

The agency will provide notice that an application has been selected before it actually makes the Federal award. As such, the selection notification is not an authorization to begin work. Any pre-award costs incurred by the awardee will not be reimbursed. The Notice of Grant and Agreement Award (ADS-093) signed by the authorized agency official is the only authorizing document and will be provided electronically to the awardee's authorized official for signature.

Both successful and unsuccessful applicants will be notified of the award decision by letter.

## B. Administrative and National Policy Requirements

All project funds will be used in accordance with 2 CFR part 200 and the General Terms and Conditions, which are available at the FPAC Award Terms and Conditions web page.

Projects performed pursuant to this opportunity may be subject to the National Environmental Policy Act. If applicable, NRCS must work with awardees to complete an environmental review of each awarded project before project commencement. In addition, prior to any ground-disturbing activities related to NRCS funding, the awardee must work with NRCS staff to complete an environmental evaluation (EE) related to those activities. Awardees may be required to prepare or pay for preparation of an environmental assessment or environmental impact statement, should any environmental review find that an environmental assessment or impact statement is required.

In addition, a National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA) Section 106 review and consultation by an NRCS state or area office with consulting parties (such as the pertinent state historic preservation officer and federally recognized Indian tribes) may be required prior to the implementation of project activities that have the potential to impact cultural resources. NHPA Section 106, its implementing regulations (36 CFR part 800), and other related authorities, require Federal agencies to determine if a project has the potential to cause an impact to historic properties and, if so, the extent of any adverse impact and how it may be addressed. The NHPA review and compliance in accordance with Section 106 of NHPA and implementing regulations at 36 CFR part 800 must be completed by NRCS, and applicants may be required to pay for any cultural resource surveys needed for NRCS to assess project effects. More information on the applicant's role in the NHPA Section 106 process can be found on the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation website.

Under Section 7 of the Endangered Species Act (ESA) and implementing regulations at 50 CFR 402, consultation with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service or the National Marine Fisheries Service is also required for projects that may affect listed or proposed species or destroy or modify critical habitat. The ESA consultation must be completed by NRCS prior to the implementation of project activities that have the potential to impact species

or habitat protected under the ESA. More information on the Section 7 consultation process can be found at the Fish and Wildlife Service Consultation and Technical Service web page.

### C. Patents, Inventions and Copyrights

Allocation of rights to patents, inventions, and copyrights shall be in accordance with 2 CFR part 200. This regulation states that small businesses normally may retain the principal worldwide patent rights to any invention developed with USDA support. In accordance with 2 CFR part 200, this provision will also apply to commercial organizations for the purposes of CIG. USDA receives a royalty-free license for Federal 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. Regarding copyright, the grant recipient may copyright any work that is subject to copyright and was developed or acquired under an award. USDA reserves a royalty-free, nonexclusive, and irrevocable right to reproduce, publish, or otherwise use the work for Federal purposes and to authorize others to do so.

All tools produced must meet the accessibility of Electronic and Information Technology (EIT) requirements as specified in Section 508 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (29 U.S.C. § 794d) as amended by the Workforce Investment Act of 1998 (Pub. L. No. 105-220). Specifically, paragraph 508(a)(1) requires that when the Federal Government procures EIT, it must allow individuals with disabilities comparable access to use information and data that is provided to individuals without disabilities. All EIT that is subject to the 36 CFR 1194 standards will have a Section 508 acceptance test and will be validated upon acceptance. All maintenance for EIT that requires upgrades, modifications, installations, and purchases will adhere to the Section 508 standards and 36 CFR 1194. If you have specific questions regarding the applicability of this section, contact the awarding agency (see Section VII).

### D. Reporting

Reporting will follow the guidelines included in the agency's General Terms and Conditions, which are available at the FPAC Award Terms and Conditions Web page.

If the Federal share of any agreement awarded under this opportunity notice may include more than $500,000 over the period of performance, recipients must also comply with the post award reporting requirements reflected in Appendix XII of 2 CFR part 200 —Award Term and Condition for Recipient Integrity and Performance Matters.

Applicants that receive awards pursuant to this opportunity and any sub awardees must comply with the reporting requirements described at 2 CFR part 170 unless an exception applies. Applicants must ensure they have the necessary processes and systems in place to comply with those requirements. A list of exceptions can be found at 2 CFR 170.110(b).

Reporting details are included in the fully executed grant agreement. Reporting will generally include electronic submission of semiannual progress reports, annual financial status reports, and final reports.

### E. Audit Requirements

As required in 2 CFR part 200, Subpart F Audit Requirements, all U.S. states, local governments, Federally recognized Indian tribal governments, and non-profit organizations expending $750,000 or more in Federal award funds in a fiscal year must submit a Single Audit report for that year through the Federal Audit Clearinghouse's Internet Data Entry System.

## VII. FEDERAL AWARDING AGENCY CONTACT

For questions regarding this opportunity, please email the following individual, providing the opportunity number in the subject line:

Name: CIG Staff
Email: nrcscig@usda.gov
Send a copy to: FPAC.BC.GAD@USDA.GOV

## VIII. OTHER INFORMATION

Questions regarding this opportunity must be submitted to the Federal Awarding Agency contact identified in Section VII by email providing the NFO number in the subject line.

For technical issues with Grants.gov, please contact Grants.gov Applicant Support at 1-800-518-4726 or support@grants.gov. Awarding agency staff cannot support applicants regarding Grants.gov accounts.

### Freedom of Information Act

Applications are considered confidential information. Applications are not shared with individuals or entities seeking public disclosure through the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) without the consent of the applicant. More specifically, Executive Order 12600 and USDA FOIA regulation 7 CFR part 1, Subpart A requires the awarding agency to provide notice to applicants that a third party has requested copies of their business information and requires the awarding agency to consult with applicants regarding releasing their records.

### Government Obligation

The Federal Government is not obligated to award Federal funds as a result of this opportunity. Only authorized Federal officials can bind the Federal Government to the expenditure of funds.

Any award made pursuant to this NFO may be executed in any number of counterparts, each of which shall be deemed an original, but all of which together shall constitute one and the same instrument.

**U.S. Department of Agriculture Non-Discrimination Statement**

In accordance with Federal civil rights law and USDA civil rights regulations and policies, the USDA, its agencies, offices, and employees, and institutions participating in or administering USDA programs are prohibited from discriminating based on race, color, national origin, religion, sex, gender identity (including gender expression), sexual orientation, disability, age, marital status, family or parental status, income derived from a public assistance program, political beliefs, or reprisal or retaliation for prior civil rights activity, in any program or activity conducted or funded by USDA (not all bases apply to all programs). Remedies and complaint filing deadlines vary by program or incident.

Persons with disabilities who require alternative means of communication for program information (e.g., Braille, large print, audiotape, American Sign Language, etc.) should contact the responsible agency or USDA's TARGET Center at (202) 720-2600 (voice and TTY) or contact USDA through the Federal Relay Service at (800) 877-8339. In addition, program information may be made available in languages other than English.

To file a program discrimination complaint, complete the USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form, AD-3027, found on the Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights web page and at any USDA office or write a letter addressed to USDA and provide in the letter all of the information requested in the form. To request a copy of the complaint form, call (866) 632-9992. Submit your completed form or letter to USDA through one of the following:

mail: U.S. Department of Agriculture
Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights
1400 Independence Avenue, SW
Washington, D.C. 20250-9410

fax: (202) 690-7442

email: program.intake@usda.gov

USDA is an equal opportunity provider, employer, and lender.

# Contents

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ATTACHMENT 1: SF424A SAMPLE

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If applying to an opportunity on Grants.gov, complete the forms in the opportunity package. For all other applications, use the forms available on Grants.gov: https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/forms/sf-424-family.html

FBAC-BC GRANTS AND AGREEEMENTS WEBSITE
https://www.fpacbc.usda.gov/about/grants-and-agreements/apply-to-a-funding-opportunity/index.html

## 1. SF-424 PREPARATION

Instructions for new agreement applications only. Separate instructions apply to amendments.

Applicants must review these instructions to ensure that the form is completed correctly. This will reduce the likelihood that the form will need to be returned for correction and potentially delay execution of any resultant agreement.

Columns one and two below correlate to the blocks on the Form SF-425. Column 3 includes the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) Standard Form instructions, and the final column includes FPAC Agency specific guidance to be used to complete the form.

| Block | Field Name | SF-424 Instructions (V4.0) | FPAC Agency Guidance |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | Type of Submission | Select one type of submission in accordance with agency instructions.<br>• Pre-application<br>• Application<br>• Changed/Corrected Application - Check if this submission is to change or correct a previously submitted application. Unless requested by the agency, applicants may not use this form to submit changes after the closing date.<br>Required. | Select "Application" if this is the first application submitted. If updating an application recently submitted, choose Changed/Corrected Application. |
| 2 | Type of Application | Select one type of application in accordance with agency instructions. | Applicants should generally select "New". If, however, the applicable Notice of Funding Opportunity (NFO) allows the |

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| | | • New - An application that is being submitted to an agency for the first time.<br>• Continuation - An extension for an additional funding/budget period for a project with a projected completion date. This can include renewals.<br>• Revision - Any change in the federal government's financial obligation or contingent liability from an existing obligation. If a revision, enter the appropriate letter(s). More than one may be selected.<br>A: Increase Award<br>B: Decrease Award<br>C: Increase Duration<br>D: Decrease Duration<br>E: Other (specify)<br>AC: Increase Award, Increase Duration<br>AD: Increase Award, Decrease Duration<br>BC: Decrease Award, Increase Duration<br>BD: Decrease Award, Decrease Duration<br>Required. | submission of renewals or supplements (see section B of the NFO) and the application meets the NFO description of one of these categories, then choose "Continuation or Revision" and the appropriate letter(s). |
| 3 | Date Received | Enter date if form is submitted through other means as instructed by the Federal agency. The date received is completed electronically if submitted via Grants.gov.<br>Required. | Not completed by applicant. This is a required field and will be populated automatically by Grants.gov. |
| 4 | Applicant Identifier | Enter the entity identifier assigned by the Federal agency, if any, or the applicant's control number if applicable.<br>Optional. | Optional/not required. |
| 5a | Federal Entity Identifier | Enter the number assigned to your organization by the federal agency, if any.<br>Optional. | Leave blank. |
| 5b | Federal Award Identifier | For new applications, leave blank. For a continuation or revision to an existing award, enter the previously assigned federal award identifier number. If a changed/corrected application, enter the federal identifier in accordance with agency instructions. | Leave blank if you are submitting a new application (item 2). If submitting another type (e.g., renewal or supplement), enter the assigned Award Identifying Number (block 1 on the Notice of Grant and Agreement Award). If submitting a changed/corrected application in Grants.gov, include the Grants.gov tracking number for previously submitted |

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| | | Optional. | application. |
| 6 | Date Received by State | Leave this field blank. This date will be assigned by the state, if applicable.<br>Optional. | Leave blank. |
| 7 | State Application Identifier | Leave this field blank. This identifier will be assigned by the state, if applicable.<br>Optional. | Leave blank. |
| 8a | Applicant Legal Name | Enter the legal name of the applicant that will undertake the assistance activity. This is the organization that has registered with the System for Award Management (SAM). Information on registering with SAM may be obtained by visiting SAM.gov.<br>Required. | This name must be consistent with the name as registered in the System for Award Management (SAM). If the name in SAM is not correct, update it accordingly. If you are applying as an individual, use your legal name as in the Social Security system. |
| 8b | Applicant Employer/Taxpayer Identification Number (EIN/TIN) | Enter the employer or taxpayer identification number (EIN or TIN) as assigned by the Internal Revenue Service. If your organization is not in the US, enter 44-4444444.<br>Required. | This number must be consistent with the number in the applicant's SAM registration. If you are applying as an individual, use your Social Security number. |
| 8c | Unique Entity Identifier (UEI) | Enter the organization's UEI received from SAM. The UEI is a unique 12-character organization identifier. Information on registering with System for Award Management (SAM.gov) may be obtained by visiting the Grants.gov website.<br>Required. | As of April 2022, the SAM-assigned UEI replaces the DUNS. If you are applying as an individual, this field must be 00000000INDV. |
| 8d | Applicant Address | Enter address: Street 1 (required); City (required); County/Parish, State (required if country is US); Province; Country (required); 9-digit ZIP/Postal Code (required if country is US). If +4 does not exist for the address, enter "0000".<br>Required. | This address must be consistent with the address in the applicant's SAM registration. |
| 8e | Applicant Organizational Unit | Enter the name of the primary organizational unit, department, or division that will undertake the assistance activity.<br>Optional. | Not required. |
| 8f | Applicant Contact Information | Enter the first and last name (required), prefix, middle name, suffix, and title. Enter organizational affiliation if affiliated with an organization other than that in 7.a. Telephone | This does not necessarily need to be the person with authority to sign the application. It is a point of contact for agency staff to contact regarding the application. |

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| | | number and email (required); fax number. Required. | |
| 9 | Type of Applicant 1 | Select a minimum of one applicant type or select up to three applicant types in accordance with agency instructions. If "Other" is selected, then specify Other Type of Applicant in text box.<br>A. State Government<br>B. County Government<br>C. City or Township Government<br>D. Special District Government<br>E. Regional Organization<br>F. U.S. Territory or Possession<br>G. Independent School District<br>H. Public/State Controlled Institution of Higher Education<br>I. Indian/Native American Tribal Government (Federally Recognized)<br>J. Indian/Native American Tribal Government (Other than Federally Recognized)<br>K. Indian/Native American Tribally Designated Organization<br>L. Public/Indian Housing<br>M. Nonprofit<br>N. Private Institution of Higher Education<br>O. Individual<br>P. For-Profit Organization (Other than Small Business)<br>Q. Small Business<br>R. Hispanic-serving Institution<br>S. Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs)<br>T. Tribally Controlled Colleges and Universities (TCCUs)<br>U. Alaska Native and Native Hawaiian Serving Institutions<br>V. Non-US Entity<br>W. Other (specify)<br>Required. | The selection must be consistent with the entity type listed in the applicant's SAM registration. |

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| 10 | Name of Federal Agency | Enter the name of the federal agency from which assistance is being requested with this application. This information is pre-populated if submitting through Grants.gov.<br>Required. | Enter the applicable agency if not automatically populated:<br>• FSA-Farm Service Agency<br>• RMA-Risk Management Agency<br>• NRCS-Natural Resource Conservation Service<br>• FBC-Farm Production and Conservation Business Center |
| 11 | Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance Number/Federal Assistance Listing and Title a.k.a. Federal Assistance Listing | Enter the Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance number and title of the program under which assistance is requested, as found in the program announcement, if applicable. This information is pre-populated if using Grants.gov.<br>Required. | If not automatically populated, leave blank. |
| 12 | Funding Opportunity Number and Title | Enter the Funding Opportunity Number and title of the opportunity under which assistance is requested as found in the program announcement. This information is pre-populated if using Grants.gov.<br>Required. | If not automatically populated, enter the opportunity number and title. If unknown leave blank. |
| 13 | Competition Identification Number and Title | Enter the competition identification number and title of the competition under which assistance is requested, if applicable. These fields are pre-populated by Grants.gov if provided by the federal agency.<br>Optional. | Leave blank. |
| 14 | Areas Affected by Project (Cities, Counties, States, etc.) | This data element is intended for use only by programs for which the area(s) affected are likely to be different from the place(s) of performance reported on the SF-424 Project/Performance Site Location(s) Form. Add attachment to enter additional areas, if needed.<br>Optional. | Leave blank. |
| 15 | Descriptive Title of Applicant's Project | Enter a brief descriptive title of the project. Supporting documents may be attached if specified in agency instructions.<br>Optional. | Enter a concise but informative title for the project (maximum of 200 characters). |
| 16a | Congressional District of Applicant | 16a. Enter the applicant's congressional district.<br>Required. | Enter the Congressional district based on the physical address of the applicant as listed in the applicant's SAM registration. District numbers can be found at |

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| | | | http://www.house.gov/representatives/find/. |
| 16b | Congressional District(s) of Program/Project | 16b. Enter the primary district affected by the program or project. Enter in the following format: 2-character state abbreviation – 3 characters district number, e.g., CA-005 for California 5th district, CA-012 for California 12th district, NC-103 for North Carolina's 103rd district. If all congressional districts in a state are affected, enter "all" for the district number, e.g., MD-all for all congressional districts in Maryland. If nationwide, i.e., all districts within all states are affected, enter US-all. If the program/project is outside the US, enter 00.000. This optional data element is intended for use only by programs for which the area(s) affected are likely to be different than place(s) of performance reported on the SF-424 Project/Performance Site Location(s) form. Attach an additional list of program/project congressional districts, if needed.<br>Required. | District numbers can be found at http://www.house.gov/representatives/find/.<br>If an additional list of program/project congressional districts is to be attached to a Grants.gov opportunity, upload it under Other Attachments (listed as an Optional Form) in the Grants.gov Opportunity Package. |
| 17a | Proposed Project Start Date | Enter the proposed start date of the project.<br>Required. | If applying in response to a Grants.gov opportunity, refer to section B of the NFO. |
| 17b | Proposed Project End Date | Enter the proposed end date of the project.<br>Required. | If applying in response to a Grants.gov opportunity, refer to section B of the NFO. |
| 18a-g | Estimated Funding | Enter the amount requested, or to be contributed during the first funding/budget period by each contributor. Value of in-kind contributions should be included on appropriate lines, as applicable. If the action will result in a dollar change to an existing award, indicate only the amount of the change. For decreases, enclose the amounts in parentheses. For zero funding, enter 0.<br>Required. | Enter the project's total amount of funding for each category below. These values must be consistent with the values on the SF-424A and the Budget Narrative. Only include amounts for items b. through f. to meet the required cost-share/match, if any, identified in the NFO.<br>a. Federal: enter the amount of Federal funds being requested.<br>b. Applicant: enter cost share/match being provided by the applicant itself. Do not include cost share/match being provided by commitments from other sources; those amounts are to be included in items c., d., and e, as applicable.<br>c. State: enter the amount of any cost share/match |

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| | | | being provided by a State government entity.<br>d. Local: enter the amount of any cost share/match being provided by a Local government entity.<br>e. Other: enter the amount of any cost share/match being provided by a source other than those listed above.<br>f. Program Income: enter the amount of program income (if any) used for meeting cost share/match requirements (see 2 CFR 200.80 and 200.307).<br>g. Total: This field is automatically calculated. It is the sum of all amounts in the categories (items a. through f.) above. |
| 19 | Executive Order 12372 | Applicants should contact the State Single Point of Contact (SPOC) for Federal Executive Order 12372 to determine whether the application is subject to the State intergovernmental review process. Select the appropriate box. If "A." is selected, enter the date the application was submitted to the State.<br>Required. | Select the applicable response as to whether or not the application is subject to State review under state laws or procedures. Executive Order 12372 can be found athttps://www.archives.gov/federal-register/codification/executive-order/12372.html.<br>The Intergovernmental Review Single Point of Contact list can be found at https://www.whitehouse.gov/wp-content/uploads/2020/04/SPOC-4-13-20.pdf. |
| 20 | Federal Debt Delinquency | Select the appropriate box. This question applies to the applicant organization, not the person who signs as the authorized representative. Categories of federal debt include but may not be limited to delinquent audit disallowances, loans, and taxes. If yes, include an explanation in an attachment.<br>Required. | No additional instructions |
| 21 | Certification and Signature | To be signed and dated by the authorized representative of the applicant organization. Enter the first and last name (required), prefix, middle name, and suffix. Enter title, telephone number, fax number, and email. Fax number is not required. A copy of the governing body's authorization for you to sign this application as the official representative must be on file in the applicant's office. (Certain federal agencies may require that this authorization be submitted as part of the application.) If the application is submitted via Grants.gov, the | If not submitted through Grants.gov, the authorized representative must click the box. and provide either an ink signature or digital signature/digital certificate (cannot be a script font). |

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| | | signature of the authorized representative and the date signed are completed upon submission.<br>Required. | |

## 2. SF-424A PREPARATION

Applicants must review these instructions to ensure the form is completed correctly. This will reduce the likelihood that the form will need to be returned for correction and potentially delay execution of any resultant agreement.

| SECTION A – BUDGET SUMMARY | | | |
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| **Column** | **Field Name** | **Form SF-424A Instructions (V1.0)** | **FPAC Agency Guidance** |
| 1(a) | Grant Program Function or Activity | Enter the name of the activity or function.<br>At least one is required. | FPAC agencies do not require the project budget be broken down into separate programs, functions, or activities on this form. That level of detail, if desired, is reserved for the Budget Narrative which is a related, but separate document. Enter "Federal" in 1(a) and, if cost-share/match is required, enter "Non-Federal" in 2(a). Leave the remaining rows blank. |
| 1(b) | Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance Number | Enter the Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance Number.<br>At least one is required. | If not automatically populated, leave blank. Leave the remaining rows blank. |
| 1(c-d) | Estimated Unobligated Funds: Federal and Non-Federal | For new applications, leave Column (c) and (d) blank. For each line entry in Columns (a) and (b), enter in Columns (e), (f), and (g) the appropriate amounts of funds needed to support the project for the first funding period (usually a year).<br>For continuing grant program applications, submit these forms before the end of each funding period as required by the grantor agency. Enter in Columns (c) and (d) the estimated amounts of funds which will remain unobligated at the end of the grant funding period only if the federal grantor agency instructions provide for this. Otherwise, leave these columns blank. Enter in columns (e) and (f) the amounts of funds needed for the upcoming period. The amount(s) in Column (g) should be the sum of the amounts in Columns (e) and (f).<br>For supplemental grants and changes to existing grants, do not use Columns (c) and (d). Enter in Column (e) the amount of the increase or | Leave all rows of columns (c) and (d) blank. |

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| | | decrease of federal funds and enter in Column (f) the amount of the increase or decrease of non-federal funds. In Column (g) enter the new total budgeted amounts plus or minus, as appropriate, the amounts shown in Columns (e) and (f). The amount(s) in Column (go) should not equal the sum of the amounts in Columns (e) and (f). Conditionally required. | |
| 1(e) | New or Revised Budget: Federal | For new applications, leave Column (c) and (d) blank. For each line entry in Columns (a) and (b), enter in Columns (e), (f), and (g) the appropriate amounts of funds needed to support the project for the first funding period (usually a year).<br>For continuing grant program applications, submit these forms before the end of each funding period as required by the grantor agency. Enter in Columns (c) and (d) the estimated amounts of funds which will remain unobligated at the end of the grant funding period only if the federal grantor agency instructions provide for this. Otherwise, leave these columns blank. Enter in columns (e) and (f) the amounts of funds needed for the upcoming period. The amount(s) in Column (g) should be the sum of the amounts in Columns (e) and (f).<br>For supplemental grants and changes to existing grants, do not use Columns (c) and (d). Enter in Column (e) the amount of the increase or decrease of federal funds and enter in Column (f) the amount of the increase or decrease of non-federal funds. In Column (g) enter the new total budgeted amounts plus or minus, as appropriate, the amounts shown in Columns (e) and (f). The amount(s) in Column (g) should not equal the sum of the amounts in Columns (e) and (f). Conditionally required. | Enter the total amount of the Federal funds requested in Row 1, column (e). Leave the remaining rows column (e) blank. This amount must be consistent with the amount in Block 18a of the SF-424. |
| 1(f) | New or Revised Budget: Non-Federal | For new applications, leave Column (c) and (d) blank. For each line entry in Columns (a) and (b), enter in Columns (e), (f), and (g) the appropriate amounts of funds needed to support the project for the first funding period (usually a year). | Enter the total amount of the required Non-Federal cost share/match, if applicable, in Row 2, column (f) and leave the remaining rows of column (f) blank. This amount must be consistent with the total amount of Blocks 18b through 18f of the SF-424. |

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| | | For continuing grant program applications, submit these forms before the end of each funding period as required by the grantor agency. Enter in Columns (c) and (d) the estimated amounts of funds which will remain unobligated at the end of the grant funding period only if the federal grantor agency instructions provide for this. Otherwise, leave these columns blank. Enter in columns (e) and (f) the amounts of funds needed for the upcoming period. The amount(s) in Column (g) should be the sum of the amounts in Columns (e) and (f).<br>For supplemental grants and changes to existing grants, do not use Columns (c) and (d). Enter in Column (e) the amount of the increase or decrease of federal funds and enter in Column (f) the amount of the increase or decrease of non-federal funds. In Column (g) enter the new total budgeted amounts plus or minus, as appropriate, the amounts shown in Columns (e) and (f). The amount(s) in Column (go) should not equal the sum of the amounts in Columns (e) and (f). Conditionally required. | |
| 1(g) | Total | Total for Row 1(a) – 1(f). If using electronic form, these numbers are auto calculated.<br>Required. | This auto-calculates and must be consistent with the total amount in Block 18(a) of the SF424. |
| 5 | Totals | Total for each column. IF using electronic form, these numbers are auto calculated.<br>Required. | This auto-calculates. Block 5(g) is the total proposed application budget. |
| **SECTION B – BUDGET CATEGORIES** | | | |
| 6(1-2) | Grant Program Function or Activity 1 - 2 | In the column headings (1) through (4), enter the titles of the same programs, functions, and activities shown on Lines 1-4, column (a), Section A. When additional sheets are prepared for Section A, provide similar column headings on each sheet. For each Grant Program, Function or Activity, fill in the total requirements for funds (both federal and non-federal) by object class categories. If using the Budget Information form through Grants.gov, the Grant Program, Function, | The form will auto-populate "Federal" in the heading of Column 1. See the Budget Narrative Guidance https://www.fpacbc.usda.gov/about/grants-and-agreements/apply-to-a-funding-opportunity/index.html for guidance on what types of costs to include in each category.<br><br>The form will auto-populate "Non-Federal" in the heading of Column 2. See the Budget Narrative Guidance https://www.fpacbc.usda.gov/about/grants-and- |

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| | | or Activity is pre-populated by the Grant Program Function or Activity from column (A) in Section A – Budget Summary.<br>Required. | agreements/apply-to-a-funding-opportunity/index.html for guidance on what types of costs to include in each category. |
| 6(3-4) | Grant Program Function or Activity 3 - 4 | In the column headings (3) through (4), enter the titles of the same programs, functions, and activities shown on Lines 3-4, column (a), Section A. When additional sheets are prepared for Section A, provide similar column headings on each sheet. For each Grant Program, Function or Activity, fill in the total requirements for funds (both federal and non-federal) by object class categories. If using the Budget Information form through Grants.gov, the Grant Program, Function, or Activity is pre-populated by the Grant Program Function or Activity from column (A) in Section A – Budget Summary.<br>Required. | Leave all rows of this entire column blank. |
| 6(a) | Personnel | Enter funds required for purpose/column heading from the selected program. If not applicable, leave blank.<br>Optional. | Refer to Budget Narrative Guidance. This is an attachment to the NFO or is available at https://www.fpacbc.usda.gov/about/grants-and-agreements/apply-to-a-funding-opportunity/index.html. |
| 6(b) | Fringe Benefits | | |
| 6(c) | Travel | | |
| 6(d) | Equipment | | |
| 6(e) | Supplies | | |
| 6(f) | Contractual | | |
| 6(g) | Construction | | |
| 6(h) | Other | | |
| 6(i) | Total Direct Charges (sum of 6(a) thru 6(h)) | Sum of 6(a) thru 6(h). If using electronic form, these numbers are auto calculated.<br>Required. | This auto-calculates. |
| 6(j) | Indirect Charges | Enter the amount of indirect costs. If not applicable, leave blank.<br>Optional. | Refer to Budget Narrative Guidance, which is included as an attachment to the NFO or is available at https://www.fpacbc.usda.gov/about/grants-and-agreements/apply-to-a-funding-opportunity/index.html . |

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| 6(k) | TOTALS (sum of 6(i) thru 6(j)) | Enter the total of amounts on Lines 6i and 6j. (This amount is auto calculated if using Grants.gov.) For all applications for new grants and continuation grants, the total amount in column (5), Line 6k, should be the same as the total amount shown in Section A, Column (g), Line 5. For supplemental grants and changes to grants, the total amount of the increase or decrease as shown in Columns (1)-(4), Line 6k should be the same as the sum of the amounts in Section A, Columns (e) and (f) on Line 5. If using electronic form, these numbers are auto calculated.<br>Required. | Row 6(k) of Columns (1) and (2) will auto-populate; all other columns should be blank.<br><br>The total must be consistent with the Federal total in Section A (row 5 columns (e) and (f).<br><br>All costs must comply with the cost principles of 2 CFR Part 200, Subpart E – Cost Principles. All costs must be allowable (2 CFR 200.403), allocable to the agreement (2 CFR 200.405), and reasonable in amount (2 CFR 200.404). |
| 7 | Program Income | Enter the estimated amount of total income, if any, expected to be generated from this project. If not applicable, leave blank.<br>Optional. | If your project does not expect program income to be generated, leave this blank.<br><br>Program income (see 2 CFR 200.1) means gross income earned by the non-Federal entity that is directly generated by a supported activity or earned as a result of the Federal award during the period of performance except as provided in § 200.307(f). Program income includes but is not limited to income from fees for services performed, the use or rental or real or personal property acquired under Federal awards, the sale of commodities or items fabricated under a Federal award, license fees and royalties on patents and copyrights, and principal and interest on loans made with Federal award funds.<br><br>This is the amount expected but may not necessarily be what is achievable under a resultant agreement. |
| **SECTION C – NON-FEDERAL RESOURCES** | | | |
| 8(a) | Grant Program Function or Activity 1 | Name of the grant program from which funds will be derived. Defaults to the corresponding program name in section A; but may be overwritten if called for by the instructions for this funding opportunity.<br>Required. | This will auto-populate. |
| 8(b-d) | Grant Program Function or Activity 2 - 4 | Enter resources provided by the applicant for the selected program. If not applicable, leave blank.<br>Optional. | Leave blank. |

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| 8(e) | (e) Total of Non-Federal Resources for Grant Program sum of line (a) through (d) | Total Sum of 8(b) thru 8(d).<br>Required. | Leave blank. |
| 12(b) thru 12(e) | Total (sum of lines 8-11) | Total for each column. If using electronic form, these numbers are auto calculated.<br>Required. | |
| **SECTION D – FORECASTED CASH NEEDS** | | | |
| 13 | Federal Total for 1st Year | Sum of Federal 1st Quarter – 4th Quarter Forecasted Cash Needs. If using electronic form, these numbers are auto calculated.<br>Required. | Per agency guidance leave blank. |
| | Federal Forecasted Cash Needs for 1st Quarter – 4th Quarter | Enter the forecasted cash needs from federal sources for each quarter of the first program year. If not applicable, leave blank.<br>Optional. | Leave blank. |
| 14 | Non-Federal for 1st Year | Sum of Non-Federal 1st Quarter – 4th Quarter Forecasted Cash Needs. If using electronic form, these numbers are auto calculated.<br>Required. | Per agency guidance leave blank. |
| | Non-Federal Forecasted Cash Needs for 1st Quarter – 4th Quarter | Enter the forecasted cash needs from non-federal sources for each quarter of the first program year. If not applicable, leave blank.<br>Optional. | Leave blank. |
| 15 | TOTAL (sum of lines 13 and 14) | Total for each column. If using electronic form, these numbers are auto calculated.<br>Required. | Per agency guidance leave blank. |
| | Total Forecasted 1st Year | Total Sum of 1st Year Federal and Non-Federal Forecasted Cash Needs. If using electronic form, these numbers are auto calculated.<br>Required. | |
| | Total Forecasted 1st Quarter – 4th Quarter | Total each Quarter Federal and Non-Federal Forecasted Cash Needs. If using electronic form, these numbers are auto calculated.<br>Optional. | Leave blank. |
| **SECTION E – BUDGET ESTIMATES OF FEDERAL FUNDS NEEDED FOR BALANCE OF THE PROJECT** | | | |
| 16(a) | Grant Program | Name of the grant program from which funds will be derived. Defaults to the corresponding program name in section A; but may be | This will auto-populate. |

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| | | overwritten if called for by the instructions for this funding opportunity. Required. | |
| 16(b-d) | First Future Funding Period (year) – Third Future Funding Period (year) | Enter the estimated federal funds that will be required in each of the additional funding years for the selected program.<br>Optional. | Leave blank. |
| 16(e) | Fourth Future Funding Period (year) | Enter the estimated federal funds that will be required in the fourth funding year for the selected program.<br>Optional. | Leave blank. |
| 20 | Total (sum of lines 16-19) | Total Sum of Estimated Federal Funds needed for balance of project per year. Auto calculated. Required. | Leave blank. |
| **SECTION F – OTHER BUDGET INFORMATION** | | | |
| 21 | Direct Charges | Use this space to explain amounts for individual direct object class cost categories that may appear to be out of the ordinary or to explain the details as required by the Federal grantor agency. | Leave blank. |
| 22 | Indirect Charges | Enter the type of indirect rate (provisional, predetermined, final or fixed) that will be in effect during the funding period, the estimated amount of the base to which the rate is applied, and the total indirect expense. | |
| 23 | Remarks | Provide any other explanations or comments deemed necessary. | |

ATTACHMENT 1: SF424A SAMPLE

# BUDGET INFORMATION - Non-Construction Programs

OMB Number: 4040-0006
Expiration Date: 02/28/2022

## SECTION A - BUDGET SUMMARY

| Grant Program Function or Activity (a) | Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance Number (b) | Estimated Unobligated Funds | | New or Revised Budget | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | Federal (c) | Non-Federal (d) | Federal (e) | Non-Federal (f) | Total (g) |
| 1. Federal | | $ | $ | $ 113,850.00 | $ | $ 113,850.00 |
| 2. Non-Federal | | | | | 38,500.00 | 38,500.00 |
| 3. | | | | | | |
| 4. | | | | | | |
| 5. Totals | | $ | $ | $ 113,850.00 | $ 38,500.00 | $ 152,350.00 |

## SECTION B - BUDGET CATEGORIES

| 6. Object Class Categories | GRANT PROGRAM, FUNCTION OR ACTIVITY (1) Federal | (2) Non-Federal | (3) | (4) | Total (5) |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| a. Personnel | $ 80,000.00 | $ 28,000.00 | $ | $ | $ 108,000.00 |
| b. Fringe Benefits | 20,000.00 | 7,000.00 | | | 27,000.00 |
| c. Travel | 3,000.00 | | | | 3,000.00 |
| d. Equipment | | | | | |
| e. Supplies | 500.00 | | | | 500.00 |
| f. Contractual | | | | | |
| g. Construction | | | | | |
| h. Other | | | | | |
| i. Total Direct Charges (sum of 6a-6h) | 103,500.00 | 35,000.00 | | | $ 138,500.00 |
| j. Indirect Charges | 10,350.00 | 3,500.00 | | | $ 13,850.00 |
| k. TOTALS (sum of 6i and 6j) | $ 113,850.00 | $ 38,500.00 | $ | $ | $ 152,350.00 |
| | | | | | |
| 7. Program Income | $ | $ | $ | $ | $ |

## SECTION C - NON-FEDERAL RESOURCES

| (a) Grant Program | (b) Applicant | (c) State | (d) Other Sources | (e)TOTALS |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 8. Federal | $ | $ | $ | $ |
| 9. Non-Federal | | | | |
| 10. | | | | |
| 11. | | | | |
| 12. TOTAL (sum of lines 8-11) | $ | $ | $ | $ |

## SECTION D - FORECASTED CASH NEEDS

| | Total for 1st Year | 1st Quarter | 2nd Quarter | 3rd Quarter | 4th Quarter |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 13. Federal | $ | $ | $ | $ | $ |
| 14. Non-Federal | $ | | | | |
| 15. TOTAL (sum of lines 13 and 14) | $ | $ | $ | $ | $ |

## SECTION E - BUDGET ESTIMATES OF FEDERAL FUNDS NEEDED FOR BALANCE OF THE PROJECT

| (a) Grant Program | FUTURE FUNDING PERIODS (YEARS) | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | (b)First | (c) Second | (d) Third | (e) Fourth |
| 16. Federal | $ | $ | $ | $ |
| 17. Non-Federal | | | | |
| 18. | | | | |
| 19. | | | | |
| 20. TOTAL (sum of lines 16 - 19) | $ | $ | $ | $ |

## SECTION F - OTHER BUDGET INFORMATION

21. Direct Charges:

22. Indirect Charges:

23. Remarks:

**BUDGET NARRATIVE GUIDANCE (Appendix C)**

All costs must comply with the cost principles of 2 CFR Part 200, Subpart E – Cost Principles. All costs (both Federal and any non-Federal cost-sharing/match) that are part of an award must be:

- allowable (2 CFR 200.403),
- allocable to the agreement (2 CFR 200.405), and
- reasonable in amount (2 CFR 200.404).

A thorough budget narrative will aid the administrative review and processing of a recommended award. Amounts included in a budget and budget narrative are estimates; in the event of an award, payments will be based on actual expenditures. The following is guidance for your use in preparing a thorough budget narrative. The guidance follows the order of the budget items.

**COST-SHARING/MATCHING:** Not Required.

## PERSONNEL – Only include employees of applicant organization

This category includes salaries and wages of personnel of the applicant organization (i.e., employees) that will be working directly on the project. For each individual, identify their role and describe their contributions to the project. Also include their annual salary, percent of effort, and the period of time they will contribute to the project along with the associated funds requested for support. The following format is an appropriate way to provide the information.

Mr. Jones – Project Director. Accountable for assuring that all project activities are carried out in a timely, cost-efficient and responsible manner. He will provide oversight of daily activities and lead and direct the project toward accomplishment of the objectives of the project. He is responsible for the submission of the required reports.

| Salary | % effort | Project Duration | Funds Requested |
|---|---|---|---|
| $50,000 | 25% | 12 months | $12,500 |

## FRINGE BENEFITS – Only related to salaries identified under Personnel

Fringe benefits include, but are not limited to, the costs of leave (e.g., vacation, family-related, sick or military), employee insurance, pensions, and unemployment benefit plans. Also, see 2 CFR 200.431, Compensation-Fringe Benefits. Provide information about how fringe benefits are determined along with the amount requested.

| For instance: | Amt. Requested |
|---|---|
| Fringe benefits - 25% of salaries and wages ($12,500 @ 25%). | $3,125 |

## TRAVEL

Refer to your organization's travel policy for guidance on how to arrange travel. If your organization lacks a policy, it is expected that you follow the U.S. federal government policy, see http://www.gsa.gov/federaltravelregulation.

For the budget narrative, identify the total funds requested for travel. Provide as much detail as possible including purpose, destination, dates of travel, and number of individuals for each trip. If the dates of travel are not known, specify estimated length of trip. Identify what will be followed (e.g., organizational travel policies or government per diem rates). The following are a few examples of how to provide the information.

- 2 people - travel to Washington D.C. once per year for a two-day meeting [identify purpose of meeting].
  Airfare $800 x 2 for airfare = $1,600;
  Airport parking = $64
  Hotel for 3 nights x 2 @ $200 = $1,200;
  Meals for 2 days x 2 = $245;
  Rental car for 3 days @ $110/day = $330. Total for trip: $3,439
- Local travel for project manager is calculated at .50 per mile throughout primary service area x 326 miles/month x 12 months = $1,956.

## EQUIPMENT

Equipment is defined as an item of property that has an acquisition cost of $5,000 or more (unless the organization has established lower levels) and an expected service life of more than one year. List each item of equipment along with the applicable cost. Include justification of its need in accomplishing the goals of the project.

Example: To complete objectives #1 and #2, Refrigerated Trailer is required. XYZ Refrigerated Trailer, Model #123, at $5,555

These costs should only include the costs to purchase new equipment. The cost of renting or leasing equipment is not to be included in this category but instead, include under the Contractual category. If equipment is costly, include a lease vs purchase comparison in the budget narrative in support of route chosen.

## SUPPLIES

Supplies is defined in 2 CFR 200.94 as all tangible personal property other than those described in 2 CFR 200.33 Equipment. A computing device is a supply if the acquisition cost is less than the lesser of the capitalization level established by the non-Federal entity for financial statement purposes or $5,000, regardless of the length of its useful life. Suggest also viewing 2 CFR 200.453, Materials and Supplies Costs, Including Costs of Computing Devices, regarding the allowability of costs.

Indicate general categories of expendable supplies including an amount for each category. Caution: If a category is viewed as too general or the associated amount is too high, further itemization may be requested. Therefore, use good judgement in determining the level of detail to provide.

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Example: | General office supplies $50/mo. x 12 mo. = | $600 |
| | Postage $37/mo. x 8 mo. = | $296 |
| | Laptop Computer 1 x $900 = | $900 |
| | Printer 1 x $300 = | $300 |
| | Projector 1 x $900 = | $900 |
| | Copies 8000 copies x .10/copy = | $800 |

## CONTRACTUAL

This category includes consultants, contracts etc.

Consultants -- List the total costs for all consultant services. Identify each consultant, the services he/she will perform, total number of days, rate of pay, travel costs, per diem, and total estimated costs.

Contract -- A contract is defined in 2 CFR 200.22 as a legal instrument by which a non-Federal entity purchases property or services needed to carry out the project or program under a Federal award. The term as used in this part does not include a legal instrument, even if the non-Federal entity considers it a contract, when the substance of the transaction meets the definition of a Federal award or subaward (see §200.92 Subaward).

Explain the need for each agreement and how their use will support the purpose and goals of the project. For each contract, describe the associated activities, scope of work or services to be provided and how the costs were estimated. If budgeting for a procurement action, document if a solicitation process has occurred or if the contract will be a sole source.

Example:

- ABC Company: Training $250/individual x 3 staff 5 days = $ 750
- Amy White to provide Technical Assistant Services

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| 1FTE @ $25,000 + 20% Fringe Benefits of $5,000 = | $30,000 | |
| Travel at 2,000 miles @ .50 per mile = | $ 1,000 | |
| Training course | $ 175 | |
| Supplies @ $42.50 x 12 months = | $ 510 | |
| Telephone @ $40 x 12 months = | $ 480 | $32,165 |

- John Doe, Consultant $40 per hour x 220 hours for 12 month period = $ 8,800
- To Be Announced Outreach Coordinator Annual salary $30,000 x 10% level of effort/12 mths = $ 3,000

## CONSTRUCTION

Construction efforts are to be included under this category with the same level of detail as described under the "Other" category below.

## OTHER

Costs not fitting under one of the other categories are to be included under this category. The level of detail is to be commensurate with other categories. Producer incentive payments should be included in this category. Subawards should be included in this category. Per 2 CFR 200.92, a subaward is an award provided by a pass-through entity to a subrecipient for the subrecipient to carry out part of a Federal award received by the pass-through entity. It does not include payments to a contractor or payments to an individual that is a beneficiary of a Federal program. A subaward may be provided through any form of legal agreement, including an agreement that the pass-through entity considers a contract.

Example: Outreach Workshop

| | |
|---|---|
| Rental of facilities ($750/2 days) | $1,500 |
| Information technology services | $ 400 |
| Training packets (approx 125/$40 each) | $5,000 |
| Total | $6,900 |

Note: Percentage for contingencies is not an allowable cost.

## INDIRECT

By statute, On-Farm Trials funds may not be used to pay for administrative (indirect) expenses of an eligible entity.

2 CFR 200.56 defines *Indirect (F&A) costs* as those costs incurred for a common or joint purpose benefitting more than one cost objective, and not readily assignable to the cost objectives specifically benefitted, without effort disproportionate to the results achieved.

# SAMPLE BUDGET TABLE

| FEDERAL BUDGET | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Year 1 | Year 2 | Year 3 | Total |
| Personnel | $86,880 | $86,880 | $86,880 | $260,640 |
| Tom Smith | $45,000 | $45,000 | $45,000 | $135,000 |
| Mary Johnson | $15,000 | $15,000 | $15,000 | $45,000 |
| Undergraduate Student | $26,880 | $26,880 | $26,880 | $80,640 |
| Fringe | $22,882 | $22,882 | $22,882 | $68,645 |
| Faculty | $21,000 | $21,000 | $21,000 | $63,000 |
| Students | $1,882 | $1,882 | $1,882 | $5,645 |
| Travel | $3,360 | $6,750 | $6,750 | $16,860 |
| Plot prep and data collection | $3,000 | $3,000 | $3,000 | $9,000 |
| Demo plot overnight trips | $360 | $360 | $360 | $1,080 |
| Conference trips | $0 | $3,390 | $3,390 | $6,780 |
| Supplies | $4,000 | $4,000 | $3,000 | $11,000 |
| Field Supplies | $3,000 | $3,000 | $2,000 | $8,000 |
| Lab Supplies | $1,000 | $1,000 | $1,000 | $3,000 |
| Contractual | $83,000 | $85,500 | $85,500 | $254,000 |
| Contractor Name | $73,000 | $73,000 | $73,000 | $219,000 |
| Contractor Name | $0 | $2,500 | $2,500 | $5,000 |
| Contractor Name | $10,000 | $10,000 | $10,000 | $30,000 |
| Other | $55,000 | $105,000 | $55,000 | $215,000 |
| Incentive Payments | 50,000 | 100,000 | 50,000 | $200,000 |
| Testing and analysis | $5,000 | $5,000 | $5,000 | $15,000 |
| **TOTAL** | $255,122 | $311,012 | $260,012 | **$826,145** |

# SAMPLE BUDGET NARRATIVE

**NAME OF AWARDEE**
**Project Title**
**PROJECT TOTAL: $XXX**
**Federal Budget: $XXX**

## FEDERAL BUDGET:

### Personnel

Tom Smith, Project Director, annual salary of $90,000, 50% time commitment, will advise the project team,assist with demonstration plot establishment, data collection and analysis, and participate in project field days. Year 1: $45,000; Year 2: $45,000; Year 3: $45,000

Mary Johnson, research technician, annual salary of $60,000, 25% time commitment (3 calendar months) for three years. Establish the field and demonstration plots, function as the project manager, coordinating sub-award work, drafting reports and publications, and participating in all project field days. Year 1: $15,000; Year 2: $15,000; Year 3: $15,000.

Undergraduate students, paid hourly. Support is requested for four undergraduate students to assist with fieldwork (emergence counting, soil sample collection, planting, harvest, etc.) in each year of the project. These students will be employed approximately 4 months during the summer at $14/hr and 30 hr/week. Year 1: $26,880; Year 2: $26,880; Year 3: $26,880.

Total Personnel: Year 1: $86,880; Year 2: $86,880; Year 3: $86,880

### Fringe Benefits

Fringe benefits rates are as follows: 35% forfaculty and permanent staff; 7 percent for student hourly employees.

Faculty Fringe: Year 1: $21,000; Year 2: $21,000; Year 3: $21,000

Student Fringe: Year 1: $1,882; Year 2: $1,882; Year 3: $1,882

### Travel

Funds are requested to support travel for plot preparation and data collection trips, and travel to four field days within the States of New York and Pennsylvania. Estimated 5,000 mi/yr at a rate of $0.60/mi. Year 1: $3,000; Year 2: $3,000; Year 3: $3,000.

Funds are requested for overnight hotel stays at demonstration plot locations at the State hotel rate of $90/night, 4 times per year ($360/yr). Year 1: $360; Year 2: $360; Year 3: $360.

Funds are requested in the second and third year for three individual trips each year to scientific conferences based on the following estimates: Lodging - 3 nights x $150/night ($450); Per diem $50/day x 4 days ($200); Transportation: Airline travel to conference location - $400/flight + ground transportation - $50 + parking at airport - $30 ($480). Year 2: $3390; Year 3: $3390.

Total Travel: Year 1: $3,360, Year 2: $6,750, Year 3: $6,750.

**Equipment -** none

**Supplies**

Field and lab supplies: Funds are requested for the purchase of soil temperature and moisture probes and data logging systems ($2,000). Funds are also requested to purchase weed suppression technologies ($2,000), seeds ($1,000), and irrigation supplies ($3,000) for field plots. Funds are alsorequested for various lab supplies and sampling equipment ($3,000).

Total Supplies: Year 1: $4,000; Year 2: $4,000; Year 3: $3,000.

**Contractual/Subaward**

Three contractors:

All contractors were identified pursuant to a competitive process.

Contract with Acme Inc. ($219,000).
Acme Inc. will provide farmer outreach, recruitment and technical assistance for producer participants. Acme Inc. will provide outreach and technical assistance all three years of the project and will commit at least one full FTE level of effort. The cost also includes any necessary supplies.

Contract with Amazing Graphics and Marketing ($5,000)
Marketing team will use innovative digital marketing tools to reach producers and help gain interest. Team will develop graphics and video production to support program recruitment and teaching tools.

Contract with Innovative Technology ($30,000)
Contractor will help develop online tools to assist producers with conservation practices.

Total Contractual: Year 1: $83,000; Year 2: $85,500; Year 3: $85,500

**Construction** - None requested

**Other**

Farmer Incentive Payments.—An incentive of $100 an acre will be given to farmers to adopt the cover crop practices described in the project. This effectively pays rental cost. A few other incentives, such as seeds, will be given to farmers, but will not be part of the incentive payment. Estimated 2,000 acres will be enrolled in this project. Year 1: $50,000; Year 2: $100,000; Year3: $50,000.

Sample Testing & Analysis.—Basic nutrient testing and soil health testing will be done annually for all plots. Roughly 20 samples a year at $250/sample ($5,000/year).

Total Other Costs: Year 1: $55,000 Year 2: $105,000; Year 3: $55,000.

## FEDERAL BUDGET

| | Year 1 | Year 2 | Year 3 | Total |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Personnel | $0 | $0 | $0 | $0 |
| Name of team member | | | | $0 |
| Name of team member | | | | $0 |
| Name of team member | | | | $0 |
| Fringe | $0 | $0 | $0 | $0 |
| | | | | $0 |
| | | | | $0 |
| Travel | $0 | $0 | $0 | $0 |
| | | | | $0 |
| | | | | $0 |
| | | | | $0 |
| Supplies | $0 | $0 | $0 | $0 |
| | | | | $0 |
| | | | | $0 |
| | | | | $0 |
| Contractual | $0 | $0 | $0 | $0 |
| Contractor Name | | | | $0 |
| | | | | $0 |
| | | | | $0 |
| Other | $0 | $0 | $0 | $0 |
| | | | | $0 |
| | | | | $0 |
| | | | | $0 |
| Indirect (MUST BE $0) | $0 | $0 | $0 | $0 |
| No Indirect changes requested | $0 | $0 | $0 | $0 |
| **TOTAL** | $0 | $0 | $0 | **$0** |

**ON-FARMCONSERVATION INNOVATION TRIALS**
FISCAL YEAR 2023 APPLICATION PACKAGE CHECKLIST

**To be considered for funding under this opportunity, an application must contain the following documents:**

☐ **1. Project Narrative** (18 pages maximum consisting of the following sections in order):

A. Cover Page (one page maximum listing the following information):

- The applicant entity name.
- The project title.
- The project duration in years.
- The amount of On-Farm Trials Federal funding requested.
- The applicant's technical contact name, phone number and email.
- The applicant's administrative contact name, phone number and email.
- The geographic location of the project. List state(s).
- The national priority that is addressed by the project. List only one of the following priorities: Irrigation Management Technologies; Grazing Lands; Feed Management and Enteric Methane Reduction; Nutrient Management; or Soil Health Demonstration Trial.
- Whether the project team has submitted this proposal to any other active funding opportunities. If yes, please list.
- The number of participating producers that will receive incentives payments (can be an estimate).
- Number of participating historically underserved producers
- Please state if you are competing for the HU set aside, and if so, note which of the following applies to the applicant:
  i. A community-based organization comprised of, representing, or exclusively working with HU producers for the life of the project;
  ii. An entity developing an innovative conservation approach or technology specifically targeting the unique needs and limitations of HU producers for the life of the project; or
  iii. An 1890 or 1994 land-grant institution (7 U.S.C. 3222 et seq.), Hispanic-serving institution (20 U.S.C. 1101a), or other minority-serving institution, such as a historically Black college or university (20 U.S.C. 1061), a tribally controlled college or university (25 U.S.C. 1801), or an Asian American and Pacific Islander-serving institution (20 U.S.C. 1059g) at the time of application.
- Project synopsis. Provide a brief description (two to four sentences) of the project.

B. Abstract (one page maximum describing the following)

- The issue or problem addressed by the proposal
- The innovative conservation approach or approaches that are the focus of the project

- The cropping systems or agricultural operation type targeted for participation
- Project deliverables
- Anticipated project results

C. Project background
D. Project purpose and goals
E. Project objectives
F. Project design and methods
G. Project evaluation
H. Incentive payments and producer involvement
I. Historically underserved narrative
J. Project outcomes and benefits
K. Project accomplishments and deliverables
L. Project action plan and timeline
M. Communications
N. Geographic location and size of project area
O. Project management
P. Assessment of environmental impact
Q. Declaration of previous Conservation Innovation Grants (if applicable)

☐ **2. References**
☐ **3. Standard Form 424 Application for Federal Assistance**
☐ **4. Standard Form 424A**
☐ **5. Budget Table**
☐ **6. Budget Narrative**
☐ **7. Statement of Current and Pending Support**
☐ **8. Certification and Disclosure of Lobbying Activities**
☐ **9. Disclosure of Potential Conflict of Interest** (if applicable)

**SAM Registration-** In addition to submitting the documents listed above, each applicant is required to: (i) Be registered in SAM before submitting its application; (ii) provide a valid unique entity identifier in its application form SF424; and (iii) continue to maintain an active SAM registration with current information at all times during which it has an active Federal award or an application or plan under consideration by a Federal awarding agency.