

# **AgrAbility – Assistive Technology Program for Farmers with Disabilities**

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## **FY 2015 Request for Applications (RFA)**

**APPLICATION DEADLINE: May 14, 2015**

**ELIGIBILITY: See Part III, A of RFA**



United States  
Department of  
Agriculture

National Institute  
of Food and  
Agriculture

**NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF FOOD AND AGRICULTURE; U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE**

**AGRABILITY: ASSISTIVE TECHNOLOGY PROGRAM FOR FARMERS WITH DISABILITIES**

**INITIAL ANNOUNCEMENT**

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

**DATES:** Applications must be received by **5:00 p.m. Eastern Time on May 14, 2015**. Applications received after this deadline will normally not be considered for funding (see Part IV, C. of this RFA). Comments regarding this request for applications (RFA) are requested within 6 months from the issuance of this notice. Comments received after that date will be considered to the extent practicable.

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

NIFA offered outreach webinars on its center of excellence implementation February 26th and March 12th, 2015. A recording can be accessed on the [NIFA website](#). In the coming months, NIFA will be holding additional webinars to collect stakeholder input about our center of excellence implementation strategy. Details and access information will be posted on the [NIFA website](#). Comments and suggestions relative to centers of excellence should be sent to [Policy@nifa.usda.gov](mailto:Policy@nifa.usda.gov) by September 30th, 2015.

**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:** NIFA requests applications for the *Assistive Technology Program for Farmers with Disabilities* (from here on *AgrAbility*) for fiscal year (FY) 2015 to increase the likelihood that farmers, farm workers and farm family members with disabilities experience success in agricultural production. The amount available for support of this program in FY 2015 will be approximately \$4.2 million. NIFA anticipates that approximately \$3.5 million will be available for support of competitively awarded National AgrAbility Project (NAP) and State and Regional AgrAbility projects (SRAPs) eligible for continuation awards. The remainder of the funds will be used to support new SRAPs. Applications for the continuing NAP and SRAPs will be solicited via separate RFAs.

This notice identifies the objectives for AgrAbility projects, the eligibility criteria for projects and applicants, and the application forms and associated instructions needed to apply for an AgrAbility grant.

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## **PART I—FUNDING OPPORTUNITY DESCRIPTION**

### **A. Legislative Authority and Background**

The AgrAbility program is authorized under the Smith-Lever Act of May 8, 1914, as amended (7 U.S.C. 341 et seq.) and in Section 1680 of the Food, Agriculture, Conservation and Trade Act of 1990 (7 U.S.C. 5933), as amended. Section 7403 of the Food, Conservation, and Energy Act (FCEA) of 2008 (P.L. 110-246) amends section 3(d) of the Smith-Lever Act of 1914 [7 U.S.C. 343(d)] regarding eligibility.

Beginning in FY 1995, the eligibility to compete for AgrAbility funding was broadened to include 1890 Land-Grant Colleges and Universities, including Tuskegee University and West Virginia State University at any appropriated level. Beginning in FY 2009, the eligibility to compete for AgrAbility funding was further broadened to include the University of the District of Columbia. Beginning in FY 2014, the eligibility to compete for AgrAbility funding was further broadened to include Central State University as an 1890 land-grant designee.

Funding is provided under Section 3(d) of the Smith Lever Act line for *Farm Safety and Youth Farm Safety Education and Certification*.

### **B. Purpose and Priorities**

The AgrAbility program supports the United States rural communities by encompassing the USDA/NIFA's agricultural, social and human sciences. The program addresses:

- USDA Strategic Plan for FY 2014-2018 (*Goal 1. Assist Rural Communities to Create Prosperity so They Are Self-sustaining, Repopulating, and Economically Thriving; Objective 1.2: Increase agricultural opportunities by ensuring a robust safety net, creating new markets, and supporting a competitive agricultural system*);
- 2014 USDA's Research, Education, and Economics (REE) Action Plan, Goal 7 (Rural Prosperity/Rural-Urban Interdependence and Prosperity; specifically, *Strategy 3 of Goal 7: Support information and technology transfer and translational research, "transformational extension," to inform citizens and enable and support vibrant and resilient communities; and Strategy 4 of Goal 7: Build new partnerships with underserved and non-traditional populations*);
- NIFA Strategic Plan for 2014-2018 (*Goal 1: Catalyze Exemplary and Relevant Research, Education and Extension Programs; Sub-goal 1/1: Advance our Nation's ability to achieve global food security and fight hunger; and Sub-goal 1.7: Ensure the development of human capital, communities, and a diverse workforce through research, education, extension and engagement programs in food and agricultural sciences to support a sustainable agriculture system*).

The AgrAbility program increases the likelihood that farmers, farm workers and farm family members with disabilities will experience success in agricultural production. The program supports projects between State Cooperative Extension System and private nonprofit disability organizations who work in partnership to provide on-the-farm agricultural education and

assistance directed at accommodating disability in farm operations for individuals with disabilities, and their families, who engage in farming and farm-related occupations.

NIFA is soliciting applications for the AgrAbility Program under the following areas:

### **State and Regional AgrAbility Projects (SRAPs)**

AgrAbility increases the likelihood that individuals with disabilities and their families engaged in production agriculture (AgrAbility customers) become more successful. The program supports cooperative projects in which State Cooperative Extension based at either 1862 or 1890 land-grant universities subcontract to private, non-profit disability organizations. Measures of success may include improved access to agricultural and life activities, improvements in the financial stability of customers and increased capacity of the states and regions to deliver services this population requires in a timely and satisfying manner.

To address the specialized needs of AgrAbility customers, the program builds service capacity on national, regional, state, and local levels through **education** and **networking**. In the absence of capacity, projects provide **assistance** to customers. AgrAbility projects use **marketing** activities to direct the public to initiatives in AgrAbility-related education, networking and assistance.

#### **1. Education**

The AgrAbility program has particular interest in funding educational activities with the following elements:

- (a) Within the context of production agriculture, learning objectives focus on accommodating disabilities and avoiding secondary injuries in persons with disabilities;
- (b) Audience includes health, farm, and government service providers;
- (c) Delivery formats include authoring or adapting printable resources, live presentations taught in-person or remotely, recorded presentations that may encourage audience interaction, and internet presence; and
- (d) Means to appraise efficacy of AgrAbility educational efforts.

#### **2. Networking**

The program has particular interest in funding networking activities with the following elements:

- (a) Objectives encourage the sharing of information among, and the provision of services, value, or funds from, individuals or organizations not employed by AgrAbility;
- (b) Partners include customers, peer supporters, volunteer groups, university student groups, stakeholders, and public and private funding organizations;
- (c) Delivery formats include the donation of goods and services of direct benefit to AgrAbility customers; and
- (d) Means to appraise economic value of services rendered to AgrAbility and its customers.

### **3. Assistance**

Assistance addresses AgrAbility customer's immediate needs that are inadequately addressed by health, farm, and government service providers. This program has particular interest in funding assistance activities with the following elements:

- (a) Objectives focus on individualized consultative services that increase the likelihood that AgrAbility customers and their farm operations experience success;
- (b) Audience includes AgrAbility customers and others working on the same farms;
- (c) Delivery formats include product selection advice, accessibility and ergonomic recommendations; life activities and farm operations planning guidance; and advocacy to obtain service and financial aid. Assistance can occur in person or from a distance; and
- (d) Means to appraise successes experienced following intervention.

### **4. Marketing**

Marketing does not address education, networking, or assistance objectives but may make key audiences aware of an AgrAbility project and its initiatives. Appropriate marketing activities have the following elements:

- (a) Objectives concentrate on program or project awareness to the exclusion of information required to provide education, assistance, or facilitate networking;
- (b) Audience includes everyone;
- (c) Delivery formats include public appearances with displays and the production or distribution of program awareness materials, press releases, public service announcements, print advertisements, Web pages with awareness content, newsletters, or electronic notices; and
- (d) Means to link these activities with registration, information and consultation requests, and networking successes.

### **Stakeholder Input**

In December 2014, stakeholder's input was requested on the AgrAbility program in order to help NIFA programmatic leadership gather stakeholders' views on the FY 2014 AgrAbility RFA. Stakeholder's input was gathered in two ways: 1) via a public listening session, held as a webinar, on December 18, 2014; and 2) via written comments, which were accepted until close of business on December 30, 2014.

Comments shared by stakeholders focused on (1) introducing in the RFA some guidance for states which seek to collaborate with 1890 and 1994 Land Grant institutions but do not have the ability to do so due to their states not having 1890 and/or 1994 Land Grants; (2) continued support for no indirect costs; (3) ask for RFA to require more substantial and even level of engagement among institutions partnering on joint SRAPs; and (4) clarity in the RFA about whether cost sharing information provided by some applicants might be used in the applications review process to assign greater weight in the final funding recommendations.

These comments were taken into account during development of the FY 2015 RFA and greater clarity and guidance have been provided in Part III. Section A. (regarding "(1)"), Part III. Section B. (regarding "(4)"), and Part IV. Section b. Field 8 (regarding "(3)").

## C. Program Area Description

### State and Regional AgrAbility Projects (SRAPs)

**Program Area Code:** LQ (program code name is AgrAbility)

**Application Deadline:** May 14, 2015 (5:00 p.m. ET)

**Proposed Budget Requests:** Proposed budgets must not exceed \$180,000 per year for project periods of up to 4 years. Program anticipates making 3 new awards. Grant applications requesting more than \$180,000 per year will not be reviewed.

**Requested Grant Type:** Standard

**Program Area Contact:** Dr. Aida Balsano (202-720-4436 or [abalsano@nifa.usda.gov](mailto:abalsano@nifa.usda.gov))

Collaborations among 1862 and 1890 Land-Grant Institutions within or across state lines on joint, single grant applications are encouraged. Collaborations with Land Grant institutions not eligible to apply as lead institutions (such is the case with 1994 Land Grants), within or across state lines, are also encouraged. All such applications must show that Land Grant institutions collaborating on a joint SRAP proposal have a substantial and equitable involvement in the project throughout the life of the project.



## PART II—AWARD INFORMATION

### A. Available Funding

The amount available for NIFA support of this program in FY 2015 is approximately \$4.2 million. NIFA anticipates that approximately \$3.5 million will be available for support of competitively awarded NAP and SRAPs eligible for continuation awards. The remainder of funds will be used to support new SRAPs. Applications for the continuing NAP and SRAPs will be solicited via separate RFAs. Funds for new SRAPs is approximately \$700,000 and will be awarded through a competitive grants process described in this RFA. There is no commitment by USDA to fund any particular application or to make a specific number of awards.

Awards issued as a result of this RFA will have designated the Automated Standard Applications for Payment System (ASAP), operated by the Department of Treasury's Bureau of the Fiscal Service, as the payment system for funds. For more information see <http://fms.treas.gov/index1.html>.

### B. Types of Applications

In FY 2015, you may only submit an application to the AgrAbility program as one of the following types of requests:

- (1) **New application.** This is a project application that has not been previously submitted to the AgrAbility program. We will review all new applications competitively using the selection process and evaluation criteria described in Part V—Application Review Requirements.
- (2) **Resubmitted application.** This is an application that had previously been submitted to the AgrAbility program but not funded. Project Directors (PDs) must respond to the previous review panel summary (see Part IV, 7.d. Field 12. Other Attachments -- Response to Previous Review). Resubmitted applications must be received by the relevant due dates, will be evaluated in competition with other pending applications, and will be reviewed according to the same evaluation criteria as new applications.

### C. Project Types

In FY 2015, the AgrAbility program has established a maximum award size of \$180,000 per year. Applications requesting more than the maximum will not be considered for funding. Total project periods may not exceed 4 years.

Number of New Awards Anticipated for FY 2015	Estimated Minimum Award	Estimated Maximum Award
3	\$150,000	\$180,000

AgrAbility supports two project types – SRAPs and the National AgrAbility Project (NAP). In FY 2015, NIFA is not soliciting applications for a new NAP, but it does plan to continue funding the NAP and SRAPs eligible for continuation, and 3 new SRAPs.

Since SRAPs can improve their chances of success by cooperating with the NAP, both project types are explained below.

### **1. State and Regional AgrAbility Projects (SRAPs)**

SRAPs operate within a geographic area defined on the basis of counties, states, or both. SRAPs may function independently of each other. States with insufficient potential clientele to merit individual AgrAbility projects or seeking to partner with 1862, 1890 and/or 1994 institutions outside their state, may submit regional, multi-state proposals.

At a minimum, the primary applicant must subcontract to one private, non-profit disability organization.

Applicants proposing to serve remote or diverse potential customer populations may wish to form partnerships that include one or more Land Grant institutions, non-Land Grant institutions, Hispanic-serving institutions, or additional private non-profit organizations to effectively serve the entire qualifying population.

SRAPs receive support from, and submit documentation and reports to NAP. NIFA views the relationship between the SRAPs and the NAP as critical to the success of AgrAbility. Hence, prior to applying, applicants should contact the current NAP for detailed information concerning standard operating procedures, best field practices, and access to the NAP's library of AgrAbility-related instructional materials.

SRAP applicants may propose projects with budgets for a maximum duration of four years. The project period should begin approximately August 1, 2015. FY 2015 appropriations will fund the awarded project's first-year budget. Each project may submit a request for up to \$180,000 per year for each year of requested funding. Funding levels will be adjusted based on technical review of the projects and budget constraints. Multi-year funding will depend on the availability of funds and the demonstration of satisfactory progress. Thus, all proposals must include specific, measurable accomplishments for each project year.

SRAP commitments include: attending annual national training workshops with at least one representative from each of the lead university and non-profit disability organization partners (two-person minimum); participating in NAP-led efforts to collect project outcome and impact data across AgrAbility projects; and submitting annual and final reports to NIFA (see Part VI, D.). Applicants may request funds to pay for these commitments.

## 2. The National AgrAbility Project (NAP)

The NAP has a dual mission. It provides limited, on-demand SRAP-type services in geographic areas without SRAPs. But, more significant to the success of the program, the NAP helps SRAPs become more successful at meeting their objectives. NAP typically produces or recommends the education materials or forums, networking tactics, assistance protocols, and marketing products SRAPs adopt for their own use. NAP connects all SRAPs by: moderating information sharing forums; identifying, promoting, and addressing opportunities and challenges for AgrAbility; recognizing and capitalizing on economies of scale; and evaluating the program's impacts annually.

Annually, NAP develops and carries out the AgrAbility National Training Workshop (NTW). NTW educates project personnel in addition to the standard education audience. The workshop delivers a great number of sessions, including sessions focused on new staff orientation; staff development; forums for discussing pressing issues and project progress, successes and failures; and presentation of reports of interest to the entire program.

As noted earlier, NIFA views the relationship between SRAPs and NAP as critical to the delivery of a successful AgrAbility program. Because SRAPs symbiotically interact with NAP, failure to comply with NAP's operating, documentation, and reporting requirements will result in NAP suspending service to the non-compliant SRAP. Prior to applying, applicants should contact NAP for detailed information concerning standard operating procedures and best field practices.

Since FY 2008, Purdue University, in partnership with Goodwill Industries International Inc. and the Arthritis Foundation, has been serving as the NAP. Applicants may contact NAP at: the National AgrAbility Project; c/o Purdue University; Department of Agricultural and Biological Engineering; 225 S. University St.; West Lafayette, IN 47907-2093 Voice/TT (800) 825-4264; Fax: (765) 496-1356; Web: <http://www.agrability.org>.

All delivery formats, training, and educational programs should be marketed as the AgrAbility Project and use the AgrAbility logo (see below). Other branding on any materials produced through this grant requires consent of the NIFA program contact.



### D. Responsible and Ethical Conduct of Research

The responsible and ethical conduct of research (RCR) is critical for excellence, as well as public trust, in science and engineering. Consequently, we consider education in RCR essential to the preparation of future scientists. In accordance with sections 2, 3, and 8 of 2 CFR Part 422,

institutions that conduct USDA-funded extramural research must foster an atmosphere conducive to research integrity, bear primary responsibility for prevention and detection of research misconduct, and maintain and effectively communicate and train their staff regarding policies and procedures. In the event an application to NIFA results in an award, the Authorized Representative (AR) assures, through acceptance of the award that the institution will comply with the above requirements. Per award terms and conditions, grant recipients shall, upon request, make available to NIFA the policies, procedures, and documentation to support the conduct of the training.

Note that the training referred to herein shall be either on-campus or off-campus training. The general content of the ethics training will, at a minimum, emphasize three key areas of research ethics: authorship and plagiarism, data and research integration, and reporting misconduct. Each institution will be responsible for developing its own training system, as schools will need flexibility to develop training tailored to their specific student needs. Grantees should consider the Collaborative Institutional Training Initiative (CITI) program for RCR (<https://www.citiprogram.org/rcrpage.asp>). Typically this RCR education addresses the topics of: Data Acquisition and Management - collection, accuracy, security, access; Authorship and Publication; Peer Review; Mentor/Trainee Responsibilities; Collaboration; Conflict of Interest; Research Misconduct; Human Subject Research; and Use of Animals in Research.

## **PART III—ELIGIBILITY INFORMATION**

### **A. Eligible Applicants**

Applications may be submitted only by Cooperative Extension at 1862 Land-Grant Colleges and Universities including University of the District of Columbia, and 1890 Land-Grant Colleges and Universities, including the Central State University, Tuskegee University and West Virginia State University.

Applicants are expected to partner on their projects with private non-profit direct service disability organizations.

Award recipients may subcontract to organizations not eligible to apply (such as 1994 Land-Grant Colleges, Hispanic-Serving Institutions, eXtension) provided such organizations are necessary for the conduct of the project.

The 1862 and 1890 Land Grant institutions may partner with each other and/or other Land Grant institutions (e.g., 1994 Land Grants) on joint proposals.

#### In instances where a state does not have an 1890 or 1994 Land Grant institution:

- 1862 Land Grant institution may partner with any 1890 and/or 1994 Land Grant in their region;
- 1890 Land Grant institutions may partner with any 1994 Land Grant institution in their region.

Failure to meet an eligibility criterion by the time of application deadline may result in the application being excluded from consideration or, even though an application may be reviewed, will preclude NIFA from making an award.

### **B. Cost Sharing or Matching**

NIFA does not require matching or cost sharing support for this program, and matching resources will not be factored into the review process as evaluation criteria or during final ranking of proposals.

### **C. Centers of Excellence**

Pursuant to Section 7214 of the Agricultural Act of 2014 (Pub. L. 113-79), beginning in Fiscal Year 2015, for applicable competitive research and extension programs, NIFA will be recognizing and providing priority in the receipt of funding to applications from “centers of excellence” that have been established for purposes of carrying out research, extension, and education activities relating to the food and agricultural sciences. In July of 2014, NIFA held listening sessions and accepted written comments from stakeholders to inform NIFA’s implementation of the centers of excellence provision. Information from the webinars and a

summary of the input gathered are available on NIFA's website at [http://www.nifa.usda.gov/about/offices/legis/cntr\\_ex\\_webinar\\_documents.html](http://www.nifa.usda.gov/about/offices/legis/cntr_ex_webinar_documents.html).

A center of excellence is composed of 1 or more of the following entities that provide financial or in-kind support to the center of excellence. Therefore, an eligible applicant who wishes to be considered as a center of excellence must be one of the following entities that provides financial or in-kind support to the Center being proposed, as described in the grant application.

- (A) State agricultural experiment stations;
- (B) colleges and universities;
- (C) university research foundations;
- (D) other research institutions and organizations;
- (E) Federal agencies;
- (F) national laboratories;
- (G) private organizations, foundations, or corporations;
- (H) individuals; or
- (I) any group consisting of 2 or more of the entities described in (A) through (H).

Only CAP grants and standard grant applicants may be considered for COE designation. See Part IV, C. of this RFA for additional requirements that eligible applicants must meet to be considered a center of excellence.

## **PART IV—APPLICATION AND SUBMISSION INFORMATION**

### **A. Electronic Application Package**

Only electronic applications may be submitted via Grants.gov to NIFA in response to this RFA. We urge you to submit early to the Grants.gov system. For an overview of the Grants.gov application process see <http://www.grants.gov/web/grants/applicants/grant-application-process.html>.

#### **New Users of Grants.gov**

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

#### **Steps to Obtain Application Package Materials**

To receive application materials:

1. You must download and install a version of Adobe Reader compatible with Grants.gov to access, complete, and submit applications. For basic system requirements and download instructions, see <http://www.grants.gov/web/grants/support/technical-support/software/adobe-reader-compatibility.html>. Grants.gov has a test package that will help you determine whether your current version of Adobe Reader is compatible.
2. To obtain the application package from Grants.gov, go to <http://www.grants.gov/web/grants/applicants/apply-for-grants.html>. Under Step 1 click on “Download a Grant Application Package,” and enter the funding opportunity number

#### **Funding Opportunity Number: USDA-NIFA-SLBCD-005058**

in the appropriate box and click “Download Package.” From the search results, click “Download” to access the application package.

Contained within the application package is the “NIFA Grants.gov Application Guide.” This guide contains an introduction and general Grants.gov instructions, information

about how to use a Grant Application Package in Grants.gov, and instructions on how to complete the application forms.

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

Grants.gov customer support

800-518-4726 Toll-Free or 606-545-5035

Business Hours: 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Closed on [federal holidays](#).

Email: [support@grants.gov](mailto:support@grants.gov)

Grants.gov iPortal (see <https://grants-portal.psc.gov/Welcome.aspx?pt=Grants>):

Top 10 requested help topics (FAQs), Searchable knowledge base, self-service ticketing and ticket status, and live web chat (available 7 a.m. - 9 p.m. ET). Get help now!

Have the following information available when contacting Grants.gov:

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

## **B. Content and Form of Application Submission**

You should prepare electronic applications following Parts V and VI of the NIFA Grants.gov Application Guide. This guide is part of the corresponding application package (see Section A. of this Part). The following is **additional information** needed to prepare an application in response to this RFA. **If there is discrepancy between the two documents, the information contained in this RFA is overriding.**

**Note the attachment requirements (e.g., PDF) in Part III section 3. of the guide. ANY PROPOSALS THAT ARE NON-COMPLIANT WITH THE REQUIREMENTS (e.g., content format, PDF file format, file name restrictions, and no password protected files) WILL BE AT RISK OF BEING EXCLUDED FROM NIFA REVIEW. Grants.gov does not check for NIFA required attachments or that attachments are in PDF format; see Part III section 6.1 of the guide for how to check the manifest of submitted files. Partial applications will be excluded from NIFA review. We will accept subsequent submissions of an application until close of business on the closing date in the RFA (see Part V, 2.1 of the NIFA Grants.gov Application Guide for further information).**

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

- Email: [electronic@nifa.usda.gov](mailto:electronic@nifa.usda.gov)
- Phone: 202-401-5048
- Business hours: Monday through Friday, 7 a.m. – 5 p.m. ET, excluding federal holidays.



**1. SF 424 R&R Cover Sheet**

Information related to the questions on this form is dealt with in detail in Part V, 2. of the NIFA Grants.gov Application Guide.

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

Information related to the questions on this form is dealt with in detail in Part V, 3. of the NIFA Grants.gov Application Guide.

**3. R&R Other Project Information Form**

Information related to the questions on this form is dealt with in detail in Part V, 4. of the NIFA Grants.gov Application Guide.

**a. Field 7. Project Summary/Abstract.** The summary should include the relevance of the project to the goals of the AgrAbility program. See Part V. 4.7 of NIFA Grants.gov Application Guide for further instructions and a link to a suggested template.

All proposals must include a Project Summary page of 300 words or less. The summary page should include:

- Project title;
- Names and affiliated organizations of PD, Co-PDs, and key project personnel;
- Name of the partnering non-profit disability organization (if not already listed);
- Names of other partnering institutions/organizations (if not already listed);
- A brief description of main activities to be undertaken, focusing on: overall project goals, supporting objectives, and plans to accomplish project goals; and
- Funding amount requested.

**b. Field 8. Project Narrative.**

The Project Narrative shall not exceed 20 pages of written text regardless of whether it is single- or double-spaced, with standard Times New Roman 12-point font and 1-inch margins. Up to 6 additional pages are permitted for figures and tables. We have established this maximum (26 pages) to ensure fair and equitable competition.

Applicants requesting consideration of center of excellence status must include their justification within the 20-page limit of the project narrative.

The Project Narrative must have six distinct sections, titled:

Background and Problem Statement;

Objectives, Activities, and Timeline;

Division of Labor;

Management Plan;

Budget Justification;

Project Sustainability Plan.

**(a) Background and Problem Statement (30 pts)**

- Justify the need for the project by describing the nature and magnitude of the issue the project is seeking to address. Provide the most recent relevant data for the state(s) in which your proposed SRAP will be implemented, including data on the incidence of injuries and health issues in the farming population. Provide references for data. Explain and substantiate any assumptions made.
- Review related programs currently available in the state(s) in which your proposed AgrAbility project will operate. Address existing gaps and limitations among currently available programs/services your proposed SRAP intends to address.
- Clearly identify farming population(s) your proposed SRAP will reach out to and serve (e.g., in addition to farmers with disabilities in general, indicate if your SRAP will seek to serve specific farmer groups such as beginning farmers with disabilities, farmer veterans with disabilities, women farmers with disabilities, ethnic/racial and/or linguistic minority farmers with disabilities, etc.). Support for identifying these specific groups must be clearly reflected in the data and estimates provided for the state(s) in which the proposed SRAP will operate.
- Provide an estimate for how many new and returning farmers with disabilities you expect to serve directly during each year of the proposed project. Indicate what percentage of your SRAP clients, per year, will be from minority farmer groups you identified.
- If proposing to work with specific minority farmer groups, describe prior experience your SRAP team has had in addressing the needs of that target audience. Describe your ability and readiness to provide appropriate (i.e., ethnically-, racially-, linguistically- and socio-economically-sensitive) education, training, and outreach for such audience(s). For example, if you will be serving Spanish-speaking farmers, or Native American communities, how will you ensure that your outreach and services are culturally appropriate and understandable?
- Justify your institution's and team's ability to meet the gaps and limitations in services by detailing your accomplishments from similar projects. If the project involves collaboration between Land Grant Institutions, clearly identify each institution's relevant previous work that speaks to its ability to successfully participate on the proposed SRAP.
- Identify your non-profit direct service disability organization partner. Provide justification for selection of the non-profit disability organization partner. Clearly state the organization's previous and current work that make it a good fit for the proposed project. If the non-profit organization has worked with/served farming communities in the past, in general, and farmers with disabilities, in particular, please indicate so and describe how the organization's past experiences and successes will be used to ensure quality service for your SRAP customers.
- Clearly identify any other partners on the proposed project and briefly indicate how the organizations' past experiences and successes will contribute to the success of your proposed SRAP.
- If the proposed SRAP is currently funded by the AgrAbility program or has been funded by the AgrAbility program in the past, you must include also the following in your Introduction section:

- A brief history of the current/past SRAP project, including data on clients served, site visits/assessments made, the data trends over time, and the role of the non-profit disability organization and other partner(s) on the project;
- A brief account of participation in AgrAbility National Training Workshops;
- Description of to-date efforts to contribute to NAP-led national evaluation of SRAPs' outcomes and impacts. If the SRAP has not been able to make such contributions to date, briefly describe challenges faced and how those challenges will be addressed and overcome should your proposal be recommended for funding in FY 2015.
- Explain whether, how and at what level was the SRAP sustained since it last received funding from NIFA.

**(b) Objectives, Activities, and Timeline (30 pts)**

- Clear, concise, and logically arranged project goals, objectives, and activities.
  - Goals must address the statement of need(s) identified in the Introduction section of your proposal;
  - Objectives must link to goals and addressed program priorities listed in Part I, Section B.
  - Denote activities required to achieve each objective and identify target audience(s). The sum of activities under each objective must lead to completion of that objectives within the 4-year maximum project duration. For example, an educational module may be developed in year 1, pilot-tested in year 2, and implemented in years 3 and 4.
- For each activity, indicate desired outcome(s) and expected impacts. Group activities and associated outcomes by year of funding (2015, 2016, 2017 and 2018).
  - Under desired outcome(s), describe when (e.g., before and/or after a given activity) you plan to monitor your project outcomes and how you intend to measure them.
  - Outcomes monitoring plan should allow you to annually review outcomes achieved and to use results to inform, refine and adjust future project plans as needed.
  - If you intend to participate in SRAPs Outcome Evaluation (via NAP's Quality of Life Survey) make sure that is reflected in this section of your proposal.
- Provide an *Action Plan* table to show the relationships between goals, objectives, activities, desired outcomes, measures, and expected impacts.
- Provide a *Timeline* to demonstrate the duration and the sequence of project activities, as well as data collection times and division of labor (as noted in the next section of this RFA). Each objective may have multiple activities. Chart against a quarterly scale, so that the timeline depicts 4 years and 16 quarters.

**(c) Division of Labor (10 pts)**

- State Cooperative Extension System and non-profit disability organization partners may jointly or individually provide leadership for different objectives/activities.

- o List State Cooperative Extension System and non-profit disability organization partner(s) collaborating on the project. For each, briefly describe type of activities for which they will provide leadership. For further details regarding division of labor, refer readers to the project timeline;
- o Within the project timeline, include a column that shows responsibilities of the respective organizations under appropriate objectives/activities.
- o Land Grant Institutions submitting joint applications must demonstrate that the institutions' roles and responsibilities in regards to main aspects of project development, implementation and outcome evaluation will be equitable and appropriate;
- o Applicants may consult with the current SRAPs, the current NAP, or consumer advisory-type groups in developing disability organizations' role assignments.

**(d) Management Plan (10 pts)**

- o Provide a brief summary of key staff to be managing the proposed SRAP, their individual roles on the project, and percent of time they will be dedicating to the project. If the percentages are expected to change in Years 2, 3, or 4 of the proposed project, please indicate so and provide an explanation.
- o Describe how the relationship between the State Cooperative Extension System and the non-profit disability organization partner will be managed. If the proposed SRAP represents a collaboration between two or more Land Grant Institutions, provide an explanation of how the relationship between the agencies will be managed, as well as the relationship of each agency to the non-profit disability organization partner.
- o Describe the fiscal and administrative oversight provided by the Land Grant Institution(s) and the non-profit disability organization partner.
- o Indicate who on the team will provide the project outcomes evaluation oversight. In addition, describe planned interface with the non-profit disability organization partner around client demographics data and with NAP around SRAP client demographics data and Quality of Life Survey.

**(e) Budget (as below #6. R&R Budget) and Budget Justification (10 pts)**

- o There should be a direct relationship between the items in the budget and budget justification, as well as between budget justification and the objectives/activities contained in the Project Narrative.
- o Every item in the budget should be justified in the proposal. The amount of detail depends on the nature of the project and the breakdown of costs.
- o Proposed budgets should not exceed \$180,000 per year level nor request funding for more than 4 years in total.
- o Budget breakdown and justification need to be provided for each year of funding being requested.
- o Annual budgets should include estimated 4-day travel costs for 2 persons minimum (one representative from the Land-Grant Institution and one from the non-profit disability organization) to attend AgrAbility NTWs. SRAPS that represent a collaboration between two or more Land Grant Institution should include at least one representative from each of the institutions.

- o Applicants, especially those new to the AgrAbility program, are encouraged to consult with NAP in estimating costs associated with NTW attendance and project outcomes tracking.
- o In Budget Justification, costs (e.g., personnel, materials, travel, etc.) should be broken down and itemized rather than shown as lump sums.

**(f) Project Sustainability Plan (10 points)**

- o Describe steps you will undertake during the course of the proposed SRAP activities to ensure project's sustainability beyond the life of the NIFA AgrAbility grant. Include your proposed project sustainability activities in the proposal timeline.
- o Identify opportunities (e.g., resources, trainings, collaborations) you plan to tap-into/develop/enhance during the life of the proposed project that will help you sustain program operations after NIFA funding has expired.
- o Describe how you plan to track your project sustainability planning efforts during the course of the proposed SRAP implementation.

**(g) Center of Excellence Justification**

Applicants who wish to be considered as centers of excellence must provide a brief justification statement, as part of their Project Narratives and within the page limits provided, describing how they meet the standards of a center of excellence, based on the following criteria:

(A) the ability of the center of excellence to ensure coordination and cost effectiveness by reducing unnecessarily duplicative efforts regarding research, teaching, and extension in the implementation of the proposed research and/or extension activity outlined in this application;

(B) in addition to any applicable matching requirements, the ability of the center of excellence to leverage available resources by using public-private partnerships among agricultural industry groups, institutions of higher education, and the Federal Government in the implementation of the proposed research and/or extension activity outlined in this application. Resources leveraged should be commensurate with the size of the award;

(C) the planned scope and capability of the center of excellence to implement teaching initiatives to increase awareness and effectively disseminate solutions to target audiences through extension activities in the implementation of the proposed research and/or extension activity outlined in this application; and

(D) the ability or capacity of the center of excellence to increase the economic returns to rural communities by identifying, attracting, and directing funds to high-priority agricultural issues in support of and as a result of the implementation of the proposed research and/or extension activity outlined in this application.

Additionally, where practicable (not required), center of excellence applicants should describe proposed efforts to improve teaching capacity and infrastructure at colleges and

universities (including land-grant colleges and universities, cooperating forestry schools, certified Non-Land Grant Colleges of Agriculture (NLGCA) (list of certified NLGCA is available at [http://www.nifa.usda.gov/funding/pdfs/nlgca\\_colleges.pdf](http://www.nifa.usda.gov/funding/pdfs/nlgca_colleges.pdf)), and schools of veterinary medicine).

#### **4. R&R Senior/Key Person Profile (Expanded)**

Information related to the questions on this form is dealt with in detail in Part V, 5. of the NIFA Grants.gov Application Guide. This section of the Guide includes information about the people who require a Senior/Key Person Profile, and details about the Biographical Sketch and the Current and Pending Support, including a link to a suggested template for the Current and Pending Support.

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

#### **6. R&R Budget**

Information related to the questions on this form is dealt with in detail in Part V, 7. of the NIFA Grants.gov Application Guide.

#### **7. Supplemental Information Form**

Information related to the questions on this form is dealt with in detail in Part VI, 1. of the NIFA Grants.gov Application Guide.

**a. Field 2. Program to which you are applying.** Enter the program code name (i.e., enter “AgrAbility”) and the program code (i.e., enter “LQ”). Note that accurate entry of the program code is very important for proper and timely processing of an application.

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

**c. Field 9. Bibliography**

No page limit. Submit as an attachment in PDF format. Title the attachment as “BibliographyReferencesCited”.

All work cited in the proposal must be referenced in this section of the application. All references must be complete, include titles and all co-authors, conform to an acceptable journal format, and be listed in alphabetical order using the last name of the first author or listed by number in the order of citation.

**d. Field 12. Other Attachments**

- **Re-submitted Application’s Response to Previous Review - PDF Attachment.** One-page Limit. Title the attachment as “ResponseToPreviousReview”. This requirement only applies to “Resubmitted Applications” as described under Part II, B. (2), “Types of Applications”. PDs must respond to the previous review panel summary. If

desired, additional comments may be included in the text of the Project Narrative, subject to the page limitations of that section.

- **Letter of Commitment from the Non-Profit Partner** stating the non-profit organization's readiness to collaborate on the proposed SRAP and describing the organization's specific role on the project. Title the attachment as "NonProfitLetter".
- **Letter(s) of Commitment from other Collaborators on the Proposed SRAP** (e.g., 1862, 1890 or 1994 Land Grant Institutions, Minority Serving Institutions, eXtension.) The letters should state partner institution's readiness to collaborate on the proposed SRAP and describe the partner's specific role on the project.  
*(Note: If partnering with eXtension, you must have a letter of acknowledgement from eXtension and a letter of commitment from the Ag Safety and Health Community of Practice. For detailed guidance on how to partner with eXtension, go to <http://create.extension.org/node/2057>.)* Title the attachment(s) as, for example, "LGULetter", "MSILetter" or "eXtensionLetter".

### C. Submission Dates and Times

Prior to electronic submission of the application via Grants.gov, it is strongly recommended that an administrative review be conducted to ensure that an application complies with all application preparation instructions. An application checklist is included in Part VII of the NIFA Grants.gov Application Guide to assist with this review.

While the checklist should be used to check the application for completeness, the application should be checked for the following required item(s). This is not an exhaustive list of required items; it only serves to highlight required items that are sometimes overlooked by applicants:

- Project Summary
- Project Action Plan
- Timeline
- Bibliography
- Current and Pending Support forms
- Conflict of Interest forms
- Response to Previous Review
- Letters of Commitment

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

Applications must be received by Grants.gov by **5:00 p.m. Eastern Time on May 14, 2015**. Applications received after this deadline will normally not be considered for funding.

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

We send email correspondence to the AR regarding the status of submitted applications. Therefore, applicants are strongly encouraged to provide accurate e-mail addresses, where designated, on the SF-424 R&R Application for Federal Assistance.

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

#### **D. Funding Restrictions**

Pursuant to Section 1473 of the National Agricultural Research, Extension, and Teaching Policy Act of 1977 (NARETPA), as amended, 7 U.S.C. 3319, **indirect costs and tuition remission are not allowable costs under Section 3(d) of Smith-Lever funded projects, and no funds will be approved for this purpose.** Costs that are a part of an institution's indirect cost pool (e.g., administrative or clerical salaries) may not be reclassified as direct costs for the purpose of making them allowable.

Other unallowable costs include, but are not limited to, the following examples:

1. Entertainment Costs not permitted include banquets, award ceremonies, and meals for persons not traveling on behalf of the project, tickets to shows or sporting events, and alcoholic beverages.
2. Awards and Certificates of Achievement are disallowed by OMB Circular, A-21—Cost Principles for Educational Institutions.
3. Facility Costs not permitted include the renovation or refurbishment of research, education, or extension space; the purchase or installation of fixed equipment in such space; or the planning, repair, rehabilitation, acquisition, or construction of buildings or facilities.
4. Any expense not directly related to the program or project is considered unallowable. Examples include child-care services, kitchen help hired to prepare refreshments, and promotional or appreciation gifts such as clothing, coffee mugs, or bags.

#### **E. Other Submission Requirements**

**You should follow the submission requirements noted in Part IV, section 1.9 in the document entitled “NIFA Grants.gov Application Guide.”**

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



## **PART V—APPLICATION REVIEW REQUIREMENTS**

### **A. General**

We evaluate each application in a 2-part process. First, we screen each application to ensure that it meets the administrative requirements as set forth in this RFA. Second, a technical review panel will evaluate applications that meet the administrative requirements.

We select reviewers based upon their training and experience in relevant scientific, extension, or education fields, taking into account the following factors: (a) The level of relevant formal scientific, technical education, or extension experience of the individual, as well as the extent to which an individual is engaged in relevant research, education, or extension activities; (b) the need to include as reviewers experts from various areas of specialization within relevant scientific, education, or extension fields; (c) the need to include as reviewers other experts (e.g., producers, range or forest managers/operators, and consumers) who can assess relevance of the applications to targeted audiences and to program needs; (d) the need to include as reviewers experts from a variety of organizational types (e.g., colleges, universities, industry, state and federal agencies, and private profit and non-profit organizations) and geographic locations; (e) the need to maintain a balanced composition of reviewers with regard to minority and female representation and an equitable age distribution; and (f) the need to include reviewers who can judge the effective usefulness of each application to producers and the general public.

When each peer review panel has completed its deliberations, the responsible program staff of the AgrAbility program will recommend that the project: (a) be approved for support from currently available funds or (b) be declined due to insufficient funds or unfavorable review.

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

### **B. Evaluation Criteria**

Evaluation criteria that will be used in reviewing applications submitted in response to this RFA will encompass all areas of the project summary and narrative as outlined and described in Part IV, B. Section 3 (R&R Other Project Information Form), Fields 7-12. As such, proposals will be evaluated on whether or not they included information requested in this RFA; the quality of information provided; and the feasibility of project's successful completion given proposed objectives, associated activities, time, and partner(s) commitments. Each component of the Project Narrative is assigned a specific number of points, for a total of 100 points. The points are allocated as follows: Background and Problem Statement – 30 pts; Objectives, Activities, and Timeline – 30 pts; Division of Labor – 10 pts; Management Plan – 10 pts; Budget and Budget Justification – 10 pts; and Project Sustainability Plan – 10 pts.

### **C. Center of Excellence Status**

All eligible applicants will be competitively peer reviewed (as described in Part V, A. and B. of this RFA), and ranked in accordance with the evaluation criteria. Those that rank highly meritorious and requested to be considered as a center of excellence will be further evaluated by the peer panel to determine whether they have met the standards to be centers of excellence (Part III D. and Part IV C.). In instances where they are found to be equally meritorious with the application of a non-center of excellence, based on peer review, selection for funding will be weighed in favor of applicants meeting the center of excellence criteria. NIFA will effectively use the center of excellence prioritization as a “tie breaker”. Applicants that rank highly meritorious but who did not request consideration as a center of excellence or who are not deemed to have met the centers of excellence standards may still receive funding.

In addition, the applicant’s Notice of Award will reflect that, for the particular grant program, the applicant meets all of the requirements of a center of excellence. Entities recognized as centers of excellence will maintain that distinction for the duration of their period of performance or as identified in the terms and conditions of that award.

### **D. Conflicts of Interest and Confidentiality**

During the peer evaluation process, we take extreme care to prevent any actual or perceived conflicts of interest that may impact review or evaluation. See [http://www.nifa.usda.gov/business/competitive\\_peer\\_review.html](http://www.nifa.usda.gov/business/competitive_peer_review.html) for further information about conflicts of interest and confidentiality as related to the peer review process.

### **E. Organizational Management Information**

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

### **F. Application Disposition**

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

## **PART VI—AWARD ADMINISTRATION**

### **A. General**

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

### **B. Award Notice**

The award document will provide pertinent instructions and information including, at a minimum:

- (1) Legal name and address of performing organization or institution to which the director has issued an award under the terms of this request for applications;
- (2) Title of project;
- (3) Name(s) and institution(s) of PDs chosen to direct and control approved activities;
- (4) Identifying award number and the Federal Agency Identification Number assigned by NIFA;
- (5) Project period, specifying the amount of time NIFA intends to support the project without requiring re-competition for funds;
- (6) Total amount of financial assistance approved for the award;
- (7) Legal authority(ies) under which the award is issued;
- (8) Appropriate Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance (CFDA) number;
- (9) Applicable award terms and conditions (see <http://www.nifa.usda.gov/business/awards/awardterms.html> to view NIFA award terms and conditions);
- (10) Approved budget plan for categorizing allocable project funds to accomplish the stated purpose of the award; and

(11) Other information or provisions deemed necessary by NIFA to carry out its respective awarding activities or to accomplish the purpose of a particular award.

### **C. Administrative and National Policy Requirements**

Several federal statutes and regulations apply to grant applications considered for review and to project grants awarded under this program. These include, but are not limited to the ones listed below.

2 CFR Part 25, “Universal Identifier and Central Contractor Registration”

2 CFR Part 170, “Reporting Subaward and Executive Compensation Information”

2 CFR Part 175, “Award Term for Trafficking in Persons”

2 CFR Part 180, “OMB Guidelines to Agencies on Governmentwide Debarment and Suspension (Nonprocurement)”

2 CFR Part 182, “Governmentwide Requirements for Drug-Free Workplace (Financial Assistance)”

2 CFR Part 200, “Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards”

2 CFR Part 400, “Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards”

2 CFR Part 415, “General Program Administrative Regulations”

2 CFR Part 416, “General Program Administrative Regulations for Grants Cooperative Agreements to State and Local Governments”

2 CFR Part 417, “Nonprocurement Debarment and Suspension”

2 CFR Part 418, “New Restrictions on Lobbying”

2 CFR Part 421, “Requirements for Drug-Free Workplace (Financial Assistance)”

7 CFR Part 1, subpart A—USDA implementation of the Freedom of Information Act.

7 CFR Part 3—USDA implementation of OMB Circular No. A-129 regarding debt collection.

7 CFR Part 15, subpart A—USDA implementation of Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, as amended.

7 CFR Part 331 and 9 CFR Part 121—USDA implementation of the Agricultural Bioterrorism Protection Act of 2002.

7 CFR Part 3407—USDA procedures to implement the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969, as amended.

7 CFR 3430—Competitive and Noncompetitive Non-formula Financial Assistance Programs-- General Award Administrative Provisions.

NIFA Federal Assistance Policy Guide—a compendium of basic NIFA policies and procedures that apply to all NIFA awards, unless there are statutory, regulatory, or award-specific requirements to the contrary.

29 U.S.C. 794 (section 504, Rehabilitation Act of 1973) and 7 CFR Part 15b (USDA implementation of statute) —prohibiting discrimination based upon physical or mental handicap in federally-assisted programs.

35 U.S.C. 200 et seq. —Bayh Dole Act, controlling allocation of rights to inventions made by employees of small business firms and domestic nonprofit organizations, including universities, in federally-assisted programs (implementing regulations are contained in 37 CFR Part 401).

44 U.S.C. 3541 et seq. (Pub. L. 107-347) - Federal Information System Security Management Act of 2002 (FISMA), to improve computer and network security within the Federal Government. Applies to awardees if it will collect, store, process, transmit, or use information on behalf of NIFA.

#### **D. Expected Program Outputs and Reporting Requirements**

The output and reporting requirements are included in the award terms and conditions (see <http://www.nifa.usda.gov/business/awards/awardterms.html> for information about NIFA award terms). If there are any program or award-specific award terms, those, if any, will be identified in the award.

AgrAbility grantees must make every effort to ensure that farmers with disabilities can access the materials and services offered to them and their families. It is recommended that materials be in accessible formats, delivery of education and services be in accessible locations, World Wide Web materials comply with criteria in Section 508 of the Rehabilitation Act (29 U.S.C. 794(d)), and the CES or private, non-profit disability organization be accessible via Telephone Device for the Deaf.

At the end of the project's final year of funding, grantees are encouraged to prepare and submit a final report draft to the AgrAbility Program Contact at NIFA at least 60 days prior to Final Technical Report due date. The draft should summarize all significant activities undertaken towards meeting project objectives. The report should include basic demographics and total numbers of customers served; tables, graphs, and other figures (as appropriate) to facilitate

comparing targeted project outcomes with actual outcomes, aggregated for the entire project; final numbers of customers who showed/reported significant changes in learning, actions or conditions; list of all educational materials (including web links when appropriate) produced by the project; and success stories and pictures showcasing project impacts in measurable terms. The AgrAbility Program Contact will review the draft and provide feedback to the Project Director (PD). PD can then use the document as the basis for development of her/his Final Technical Reports, due to NIFA via REEport within 90 days of the expiration date of the award.

## PART VII—AGENCY CONTACT

Applicants and other interested parties are encouraged to contact:

Programmatic Contact:

**Aida Balsano, Ph.D.**

National Program Leader  
National Institute of Food and Agriculture  
U.S. Department of Agriculture  
Waterfront Centre  
800 9<sup>th</sup> St SW  
Room 4433  
Washington, D.C. 20024  
(202) 720 – 4436 (phone)  
(202) 720 – 9366 (fax)  
Email: [abalsano@nifa.usda.gov](mailto:abalsano@nifa.usda.gov)

Programmatic Contact for Applicants from 1890 Land Grant Institutions Seeking Clarifications about the FY 2015 AgrAbility RFA:

**Denis Ebodaghe, Ph.D.**

National Program Leader  
National Institute of Food and Agriculture  
U.S. Department of Agriculture  
Waterfront Centre  
800 9<sup>th</sup> St SW  
Room 3240  
Washington, D.C. 20024  
(202) 401 – 4385 (phone)  
(202) 720 – 9366 (fax)  
Email: [debodaghe@nifa.usda.gov](mailto:debodaghe@nifa.usda.gov)

Administrative/Business Contact:

**Bruce Mertz**

Team Leader, Team I  
Office of Grants and Financial Management  
National Institute of Food and Agriculture  
U.S. Department of Agriculture  
Waterfront Centre  
800 9<sup>th</sup> St SW  
Room 2174  
Washington, D.C. 20024  
(202) 401 – 5062 (phone)  
(202) 401 – 6271 (fax)  
Email: [bmertz@nifa.usda.gov](mailto:bmertz@nifa.usda.gov)

## **PART VIII—OTHER INFORMATION**

### **A. Access to Review Information**

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

### **B. Use of Funds; Changes**

#### **1. Delegation of Fiscal Responsibility**

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

#### **2. Changes in Project Plans**

a. The permissible changes by the awardee, PD(s), or other key project personnel in the approved project shall be limited to changes in methodology, techniques, or other similar aspects of the project to expedite achievement of the project's approved goals. If the awardee or the PD(s) is uncertain as to whether a change complies with this provision, the question must be referred to the Authorized Departmental Officer (ADO) for a final determination. The ADO is the signatory of the award document, not the program contact.

b. The awardee must request, and the ADO must approve in writing, all changes in approved goals or objectives prior to effecting such changes. In no event shall requests be approved for changes that are outside the scope of the original approved project.

c. The awardee must request, and the ADO must approve in writing, all changes in approved project leadership or the replacement or reassignment of other key project personnel, prior to effecting such changes.

d. The awardee must request, and the ADO must approve in writing, all transfers of actual performance of the substantive programmatic work in whole or in part and provisions for payment of funds, whether or not federal funds are involved, prior to instituting such transfers, unless prescribed otherwise in the terms and conditions of the award.

e. The project period may be extended without additional financial support, for such additional period(s) necessary to complete or fulfill the purposes of an approved project, but in no case shall the total project period exceed any applicable statutory limit or expiring appropriation limitation. The terms and conditions of award include information about no-cost extensions of the award and when ADO's prior approval is necessary.

f. Changes in Approved Budget: Unless stated otherwise in the terms and conditions of award, changes in an approved budget must be requested by the awardee and approved in writing by the



ADO prior to instituting such changes, if the revision will involve transfers or expenditures of amounts requiring prior approval as set forth in the applicable Federal cost principles, Departmental regulations, or award.

### **C. Confidential Aspects of Applications and Awards**

When an application results in an award, it becomes a part of the record of NIFA transactions, available to the public upon specific request. Information that the Secretary determines to be of a confidential, privileged, or proprietary nature will be held in confidence to the extent permitted by law. Therefore, any information that the applicant wishes to have considered as confidential, privileged, or proprietary should be clearly marked within the application. The original copy of an application that does not result in an award will be retained by the Agency for a period of three years. Other copies will be destroyed. Such an application will be released only with the consent of the applicant or to the extent required by law. An application may be withdrawn at any time prior to the final action thereon.

### **D. Regulatory Information**

For the reasons set forth in the final Rule related Notice to 2 CFR part 415, subpart C, subpart V, this program is excluded from the scope of the Executive Order 12372 which requires intergovernmental consultation with State and local officials. Under the provisions of the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995 (44 U.S.C. chapter 35), the collection of information requirements contained in this Notice have been approved under OMB Document No. 0524-0039.

### **E. Definitions**

Please refer to [7 CFR 3430, Competitive and Noncompetitive Non-formula Financial Assistance Programs--General Award Administrative Provisions](#), for applicable definitions for this NIFA grant program.