Food Safety Outreach Competitive Grants Program

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FY 2017 Request for Applications (RFA)

APPLICATION DEADLINE: June 6, 2017

ELIGIBILITY: See Part III, A of RFA

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

Food Safety Outreach Competitive Grants Program

INITIAL ANNOUNCEMENT

CATALOG OF FEDERAL DOMESTIC ASSISTANCE: This program is listed in the Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance under 10.328.

DATES: Applications must be received by **5:00 p.m. Eastern Time** on June 6, 2017. 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: We at the National Institute of Food and Agriculture (NIFA) seek 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. (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 **Food Safety Outreach Competitive Grants Program** RFA.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY: NIFA requests grant applications for the Food Safety Outreach Competitive Grants Program for fiscal year (FY) 2017. The Food Safety Outreach Program at NIFA was established to complement and expand the National Food Safety Training, Education, Extension, Outreach, and Technical Assistance Competitive Grants Program, first initiated in FY 2015. That Program established regional centers to facilitate work across their regions to increase the understanding and adoption of established food safety standards, guidance, and protocols established under the Food Safety Modernization Act (FSMA). In FY 2017, the Food Safety Outreach Program will focus on delivery of customized training to members of the target audiences. New projects will focus on, but are not limited to, addressing knowledge and resource gaps for the target audience in the areas of pre- and post-harvest water testing and sampling, soil amendments, developing supply chain programs, and/or developing food safety plans. The program will continue to fund projects that develop bilingual and culturally appropriate training resources. Grant applications will be solicited directly from those in local communities - to include those from community-based organizations, non-governmental organizations, food hubs, farm cooperatives, extension, and other local groups. Successful awardees will be required to interact with regional centers by reporting project outcomes to the centers. This will ensure that activities and efforts are well integrated with the national infrastructure. The amount available to support this program in FY 2017 is approximately $4.8 million. This RFA is being released prior to the passage of budget appropriations for FY 2017. Enactment of additional continuing resolutions or appropriations may affect the availability or level of funding for this program. This

RFA identifies the objectives for the Food Safety Outreach Program, the eligibility criteria for applicants, the requirements for the projects, and the application forms and associated instructions needed to apply for a Food Safety Outreach Program competitive grant.

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PART I—FUNDING OPPORTUNITY DESCRIPTION

A. Legislative Authority and Background

On January 4, 2011, the Food Safety Modernization Act (FSMA) (www.fda.gov/fsma) was signed into legislation. Section 209 of the Act amended the Food and Drug Cosmetic Act, 21 U.S.C. 391 et seq. by adding section 1011, Subsection (d) entitled "National Food Safety Training, Education, Extension, Outreach and Technical Assistance Program". Under the program, competitive grants are to be awarded to projects that develop and implement FSMA-related food safety training, education, extension, outreach, and technical assistance to owners and operators of small and medium-sized farms, beginning farmers, socially disadvantaged farmers, small processors or small fresh fruit and vegetable merchant wholesalers. In 2015, NIFA and the Food and Drug Administration collaborated to establish the National Food Safety Training, Education, Extension, Outreach and Technical Assistance Competitive Grant Program. In 2017, the network of trainers and available resources will be built upon to provide customized training to the target audience. The program will focus on, but not be limited to, projects that address knowledge and resource gaps in pre- and post-harvest water testing and sampling, soil amendments, developing supply chain programs, and/or developing food safety plans. The Food Safety Outreach Program will continue to fund projects that develop bilingual and culturally appropriate training resources. FSMA requires that competitive grant programs be carried out in accordance with Section 405 of the Agricultural Research, Extension, and Education Reform act of 1998 (AREERA). Thus the authority for the Food Safety Outreach Program is under Section 405 of AREERA (7 U.S.C. 7625).

For information about stakeholder input and how it was used in developing the RFA, see Part VIII,F.

B. Purpose and Priorities

In FY 2017, new projects will focus on, but are not limited to addressing knowledge and resource gaps for the target audience in the areas of pre- and post-harvest water testing and sampling, soil amendments, developing supply chain programs, and/or developing food safety plans. Proposals that address bilingual and culturally sensitive training resources are encouraged.

The Food Safety Outreach Program will support projects that encourage local communities, community based- and non-governmental organizations, universities, extension, state and federal agencies to develop and implement food safety outreach programs that facilitate the integration of FSMA food safety guidelines into a variety of agricultural production and processing systems, including conventional, sustainable, and organic systems, among others. The program is well aligned with the [NIFA](#), [REE](#), and [USDA](#) Strategic Plans, and it addresses sub-goals 1.6 and 1.7 of Goal 1 of the NIFA strategic plan. The program addresses Goals 5 and 6 of the 2014 USDA Research, Education, and Economics (REE) Action Plan.

PART II—AWARD INFORMATION

A. Available Funding

The amount available for NIFA support of this program in FY 2017 is approximately $4.8 million. The funds will be awarded through competitive grants. There is no commitment by USDA to fund any particular application or to make any specific number of awards or project types. This RFA is being released prior to the passage of budget appropriations for FY 2017. Enactment of additional continuing resolutions or appropriations may affect the availability or level of funding for this program.

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

B. Types of Applications

In FY 2017, applicants may submit new applications or resubmitted applications to the Food Safety Outreach Program:

New application. This is a project application that has not been previously submitted to the Food Safety Outreach Program. All new applications will be reviewed competitively using the selection process and evaluation criteria described in Part V—Application Review Requirements.

Resubmitted Application. This is an application that had previously been submitted to the Food Safety Outreach Program but not funded. Project Directors (PD) must respond to the previous review panel summary. We must receive resubmitted applications by the relevant due dates. We will evaluate resubmitted applications in competition with other pending applications in appropriate areas to which they are assigned, and will be reviewed according to the same evaluation criteria (Part V, B) as new applications.

C. Project Types

In FY 2017, applications will be accepted for three (3) project types: 1) Pilot Projects; 2) Community Outreach Projects; and 3) Multistate Education and Training Projects. Individual Project Directors may submit only one application to the overall program in FY 2017.

    (1) Pilot Projects (Up to $50,000 per award)

    Pilot Projects will support the development and implementation of new and potentially high-risk, high-impact food safety education and outreach programs in local communities that address the needs of small, specialized audiences from among the various target groups. For example, Pilot Projects may target non-traditional, niche, or hard-to-reach audiences, including those with cultural or language barriers. Project teams are encouraged to identify the specific training and education needs within their communities, and then to develop and

implement food safety education and outreach programs that meet the very specific needs of those communities. In other words, Pilot Projects will support the development and implementation of highly customized food safety education and outreach programs where no current community programs for food safety education exist. This project type is optimally aimed at novice food safety educators with limited food safety training experience. Thus, where needed, Regional Centers will assist in providing support for Pilot Project teams by helping them identify and modify customized training curricula, by conducting train-the-trainer sessions, and by helping project teams develop mechanisms for reporting program outcomes.

(2) Community Outreach Projects (Up to $150,000 per award)

Community Outreach Projects will support the growth and expansion of already-existing food safety education and outreach programs currently offered in local communities. These projects will enable existing programs to broaden their scope by reaching out to a larger number of participants, or to expand the programs to new and broader audiences. In addition, Community Outreach Projects will enable existing education and training curricula and other resources to be modified to ensure that they are consistent with new FSMA guidelines (see
https://www.fda.gov/Food/GuidanceRegulation/FSMA/ucm247559.htm#PC_Rules) and that they meet the needs of expanded audiences. New audiences should include those from a variety of agricultural production and processing systems.

(3) Multistate Education and Training Projects (Up to $400,000 per award)

The Multistate Education and Training Projects will support the development of multi-county, state-wide, or multi-state food safety education and outreach programs. These projects will encourage collaborations among counties and states sharing common food safety concerns, even though they may not necessarily be located within the same region. For example, Multistate Education and Training Projects will enable collaborations located in states as distant as California, Arizona, and Florida. These collaborating states may share very similar food safety issues, produce the same or similar types of commodities, or market their products to similar audiences. Potential applicants must be capable of developing and modifying food safety education and training curricula and other resources to meet new FSMA guidelines
(https://www.fda.gov/Food/GuidanceRegulation/FSMA/ucm247559.htm#PC_Rules) for a variety of agricultural production and processing systems.

D. Responsible and Ethical Conduct of Research

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

documentation to support the conduct of the training. See https://nifa.usda.gov/responsible-and-ethical-conduct-research.

PART III—ELIGIBILITY INFORMATION

A. Eligible Applicants

Applications may only be submitted by:

- The Cooperative Extension Service for a U.S. state or territory;
- Non-government organizations and/or community based organizations representing owners and operators of farms, small food processors, or small fruit and vegetable merchant wholesalers that has a commitment to public health and expertise in administering programs that contribute to food safety;
- Federal, State, local, or tribal agencies;
- An institution of higher education (as defined in Section 101(a) of the Higher Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 1001(a)) or a foundation maintained by an institution of higher education; or
- A collaboration of two or more eligible entities.

Project Directors for the National Coordination Center and the Regional Centers funded under the FY 2015 National Training, Education, Extension, Outreach, and Technical Assistance Competitive Grants Program and the FY 2016 Food Safety Outreach Program are **not eligible** to apply for new awards under the FY 2017 Food Safety Outreach Program. However, Co-Project Directors and other project collaborators are eligible to apply under this RFA.

Award recipients may subcontract to organizations not directly eligible to apply provided such organizations are necessary for the conduct of the project. Failure to meet an eligibility criterion by the application deadline may result in the application being excluded from consideration or, even though an application may be reviewed, will preclude NIFA from making an award.

B. Cost Sharing or Matching

When a grant provides a particular benefit to a specific agricultural commodity, the grant recipient must match awarded USDA funds with cash and in-kind contributions on a dollar-for-dollar basis from non-federal sources (see Part IV, B. 6. for details).

NIFA may waive the matching funds requirement for a grant if we determine that:

(a) The results of the project, while of particular benefit to a specific agricultural commodity, are likely to be applicable to agricultural commodities generally; or

(b) The project involves a minor commodity, the project deals with scientifically important research, and the grant recipient is unable to satisfy the matching funds requirement.

In accordance with section 1492 of the National Agricultural Research, Extension, and Teaching Policy Act of 1977 (7 U.S.C. 3371), as added by section 7128 of the Agricultural Act of 2014 (Pub. L. 113-79), for grants awarded after October 1, 2014, the recipient of an award from the

Food Safety Outreach Program must provide funds, in-kind contributions, or a combination of both, from sources other than funds provided through such grant in an amount that is at least equal to the amount awarded by NIFA unless one of the exemptions described herein is applicable. Note that NIFA included information at http://www.nifa.usda.gov/business/awards/matching_require.html to further assist you in determining if you must meet the new matching requirement.

The matching funds requirement does not apply to grants awarded:

1. To a research agency of the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA); or
2. To an entity eligible to receive funds under a capacity and infrastructure program (as defined in section 251(f) (1) (C) of the Department of Agriculture Reorganization Act of 1994, 7 U.S.C. 6971(f) (1) (C)), including a partner (see FAQs #4) of such an entity.

Entities eligible to receive funds under a capacity and infrastructure program and exempt from the matching funds requirement include:

a. 1862 Land-grant Institutions, including State Agricultural Experiment Stations receiving funding under the Hatch Act of 1887
b. 1890 Land-grant Institutions
c. 1994 Land-grant Institutions
d. Entities eligible to receive funds under the of Continuing Animal Health and Disease, Food Security, and Stewardship Research, Education, and Extension Program Funds — Capacity and Infrastructure Program (CIP)
e. Hispanic-Serving Agricultural Colleges and Universities (HSACU)
f. Insular Area Schools Eligible to Receive Funds from the Distance Education/Resident Instruction Grant Programs
g. Entities eligible to receive funds under the of McIntire-Stennis Cooperative Forestry Program Funds
h. Non-Land Grant Colleges of Agriculture (NLGCA) – (for exemption from the new matching requirement, these applications must include NLGCA certification, see instructions for requesting certifications at http://www.nifa.usda.gov/form/form.html, and for attaching the certification in Part IV, B. of this RFA).
i. Entities eligible to receive funds under a program established under section 1417(b) of the National Agricultural Research, Extension, and Teaching Policy Act of 1977 (7 U.S.C. 3152(b)), including: (1) 1890 Institution Teaching, Research, and Extension Capacity Building Grants Program; (2) Higher Education Challenge Grants Program; (3) Higher Education Multicultural Scholars Program; and (4) Food and Agricultural Sciences National Needs Graduate and Postgraduate Fellowship Grants Program.
j. Individual public or private, nonprofit Alaska Native-Serving and Native Hawaiian-Serving Institutions of higher education (see 20 U.S.C. 1059d).

A proposal submitted in response to this RFA may indicate that the work will be completed by multiple entities as a collaborative partnership. All partners must have a substantial involvement in the project throughout the life of the project. If a partnership among multiple entities is proposed, the proposal must clearly identify the following:

1) A narrative of each entity's clearly established role in the project;
2) How each entity involved as a partner on the project will contribute to execution of project objectives, determination of experimental design, development of the project work plan and time table, and submission of collaborative, timely reports; and
3) A comprehensive project budget that reflects each entity's financial or third party in-kind contribution (see section 2 of 7 CFR 3430 or section 96 of 2 CFR part 200) to the total project budget costs.

If a proposal indicates that the work on the project will be completed by multiple entities as partners, and at least one entity is exempt from the matching requirement under #2 above, the entire project will be exempt from the matching requirement regardless of whether all entities involved are otherwise exempt. Any partner entity can serve as the lead entity on the project. All partners must be significantly involved in the project.

After proposals have been recommended for award, NIFA will determine if the submitted proposal and proposed division of work reflects substantial involvement of all entities involved. If a proposal is recommended for award to a lead entity not otherwise exempt from the matching requirement and the proposal does not reflect substantial involvement of at least one partner that is exempt under #2 above, then the matching requirement will apply. Exemption from the matching requirement for an entity not otherwise exempt is limited to the project for which it is a partner.

Waiver of Match - NIFA may waive the matching funds requirement for a recipient for one year with respect to a competitive grant that involves research or extension activities that are consistent with the priorities established by the National Agricultural Research, Education, Extension and Economics Advisory Board (NAREEEAB) for the year involved. To determine whether proposed activities are consistent with the priorities of the NAREEEAB, please refer to the 2014 Research, Education and Economics Action Plan. Instructions for requesting a waiver are included in Part IV, B. of this RFA.

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/learn-grants/grants-101/pre-award-phase.html.

New Users of Grants.gov

Prior to preparing an application, we recommend that the Project Director/Principal Investigator (PD/PI) first contact an Authorized Representative (AR, also referred to as Authorized Organizational Representative or AOR) to determine if the organization is prepared to submit electronic applications through Grants.gov. If 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/applicants/adobe-software-compatibility.html. Grants.gov has a test package that will help you determine whether your current version of Adobe Reader is compatible.

2. To obtain the application package from Grants.gov, go to 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-FSMA-006355

   From the search result, click "Select Package" to access the application package. A Grant Application Package is tied to a particular funding opportunity. You may submit an application ONLY to the particular funding opportunity to which the Grant Application Package is associated.

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

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

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

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

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

- Phone: 202-401-5048
- Business hours: Monday through Friday, 7 a.m. – 5 p.m. ET, excluding federal holidays.

1. SF 424 R&R Cover Sheet

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

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

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

3. R&R Other Project Information Form

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

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

b. Field 8. Project Narrative.

NOTE: The Project Narrative for the **Multi-state Education and Training Projects must not exceed a total of 20 pages** of written text with 12 point font, regardless of whether it is single- or double-spaced, including all figures and tables. The Project Narrative for the **Pilot Projects and Community Outreach Projects must not exceed a total of 10 pages** of written text with 12 point font, regardless of whether it is single- or double-spaced, including all figures and tables. Appendices to the Project Narrative will be accepted only if they are directly related to the proposed project and they provide information that reviewers would need to adequately review the application. Appendices are to be included in Field 12, Other Attachments.

The Project Narrative must include all of the following:

a. Introduction: Include a clear statement of the long-term goal(s) and supporting objectives of the proposed activities. Summarize the body of knowledge or other past activities that substantiate the need for the proposed project. Describe ongoing or recently completed significant activities that relate to the proposed project including the work of key project personnel. Include preliminary data/information pertinent to the proposed project. In addition, this section should include in-depth information on the following, when applicable:
(1) Estimates of the magnitude of the issues and their relevance to stakeholders.
(2) The role of stakeholders in problem identification, planning, implementation, and evaluation as appropriate.
(3) Reasons for performing the work at the proposing institution or organization.

b. Objectives: All applications must include a statement(s) of specific aims of the proposed effort in clear, concise, complete, and logically arranged terms.

c. Methods: Explicitly state the procedures or methodology you will apply to the proposed effort. This section should include but not necessarily be limited to, descriptions of:

> (1) Stakeholder involvement in problem identification, planning, implementation and evaluation;
> (2) Proposed project activities, listed sequentially;
> (3) Techniques to be employed in this project, including their feasibility and rationale;
> (4) Expected results;
> (5) How outreach and education activities will be evaluated;
> (6) How data will be analyzed or interpreted;
> (7) Plans to communicate results to stakeholders, NIFA staff and the public;
> (8) Pitfalls that might be encountered; and
> (9) Limitations to proposed procedures.

d. Project Timetable: The proposal should outline all important phases as a function of time, year by year, for the entire project, including periods beyond the grant funding period.

c. Field 9. Bibliography & References Cited.
No page limit. Submit as an attachment in PDF format. Title the attachment as "Bibliography & References Cited" in the document header and save file as "BibliographyReferencesCited".
All work cited in the text should 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.
See Part V. Section 4.12 of the NIFA Grants.gov Application Guide (Field 12 on the form) for instructions regarding mandatory Felony Convictions or Tax Delinquent Status. The following are additional instructions,

Project Management - PDF Attachment. No page limit.
Provide a brief summary of key staff managing this project and their functions. The project management summary should also include timelines for activities and reporting, as well as letters of support for collaborative efforts with other institutions. For educational and training programs, provide documentation of program coordination with the appropriate local and/or community partners involved. Title the attachment as "Project Management" in the document header and save file as "Project Management".

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

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

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

Matching. If you conclude that the project meets the criteria for a waiver and you wish to seek approval for a waiver (as specified under Part III, B.), **a justification should be included in the Budget Narrative**. NIFA will consider this justification when determining final matching requirements. NIFA retains the right to make final determinations regarding matching requirements.

For those projects where a waiver is not sought, applications shall include written verification of commitments of matching support (including both cash and fair market value of in-kind contributions) from third parties (non-federal sources) in an amount at least equal to the amount awarded by the Federal government. Written verification means:

(a) For any third party cash contributions, a separate pledge agreement for each donation submitted on Donor Organization letterhead and signed by the authorized representative of the donor organization and the applicant organization, which must include: (1) the name, address, and telephone number of the donor; (2) the name of the applicant organization; (3) the title of the project for which the donation is made; (4) the dollar amount of the cash donation; and (5) a statement that the donor will pay the cash contribution during the grant period.

(b) For any third party in-kind contributions, a separate pledge agreement for each contribution submitted on Donor Organization letterhead and signed by the AR of the donor organization and the applicant organization, which must include: (1) The name, address, and telephone number of the donor; (2) the name of the applicant organization; (3) the title of the project for which the donation is made; (4) a good faith estimate of the current fair market value of the third party in-kind contribution including a basis for the estimate; and (5) a statement that the donor will make the contribution during the grant period.

Summarize on a separate page the sources and the amount of all matching support from outside the applicant organization and place that information in the proposal as part of the Budget Justification attachment (see Field K on the Form R&R Budget).

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. The following are additional instructions.

a. **Field 2. Program to which you are applying.** Enter the program code name (i.e., enter "**Food Safety Outreach Program**") and the program code (i.e., enter "**A4182**"). 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. 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.

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 June 6, 2017.** 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 AOR (Authorized Organizational Representative) 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 AOR 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

NIFA has determined that grant funds awarded under this authority may not be used for:

- General Purpose Equipment – Equipment which does not have a particular scientific, technical, or programmatic purpose. It includes passenger carrying vehicles, , etc.;

- Entertainment – Banquets, awards ceremonies, and meals for persons not in a travel status, tickets to shows or sporting events, and alcoholic beverages;

- Incentives – Federal funds may not be used to offer targeted program participants incentives (e.g., fast-food coupons, gift certificates, etc.) to entice participation. This is prohibited under the OMB Guidance;

- Renovation or refurbishment of research, education, or extension space;

- Purchase or installation of fixed equipment in such space;

- Planning, repair, rehabilitation, acquisition, or construction of buildings or facilities; and

- Miscellaneous – Any expense that is not directly related to the program or project would be considered unallowable. Costs such as child-care services hired so a person can attend a meeting or kitchen help hired to prepare refreshments for a field day, promotional or thank-you gifts such as T-shirts, coffee mugs, or canvas carry-all bags are unallowable because they are not directly related to the project plan.

- Section 713 of the Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2016 (Pub. L. 114-113) limits indirect costs to 30 percent of the total federal funds provided (or 42.857 percent of total direct costs) under each award. Similar language may be included in the FY 2017 appropriation, therefore, when preparing budgets, you should limit your request for the recovery of indirect costs to the lesser of your institution's official negotiated indirect cost rate or the equivalent of 30 percent of total Federal funds awarded. See Part V section 7.9 of the NIFA Grants.gov Application Guide for further indirect cost information.

E. Other Submission Requirements

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

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

PART V—APPLICATION REVIEW REQUIREMENTS

A. General

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

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

- 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;
- the need to include experts from various areas of specialization within relevant scientific, education, or extension fields;
- the need to include other experts (e.g., producers, range or forest managers/operators, and consumers) who can assess relevance of the applications to targeted audiences and to program needs;
- the need to include experts from a variety of organizational types (e.g., colleges, universities, industry, state and federal agencies, and private profit and non-profit organizations) and geographic locations;
- the need to maintain a balanced composition with regard to minority and female representation and an equitable age distribution; and
- the need to include reviewers who can judge the effective usefulness of each application to producers and the general public.

After each peer review panel has completed its deliberations, the responsible program staff of the Food Safety Outreach Program will recommend that your project be approved for support from currently available funds or be declined due to insufficient funds or unfavorable review.

The Food Safety Outreach 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.

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

B. Evaluation Criteria

The following evaluation criteria will be used to review applications for **Pilot Projects** submitted in response to this RFA.

1. Objectives
This criterion is used to assess how well the proposed Pilot Projects:

a. Identify and address the specific food safety education and training needs of various target audiences within local communities;

b. Develop and implement community-based, potentially high-impact food safety education and training programs that are consistent with FSMA guidelines; and

c. Address the needs of small, non-traditional, niche, or hard-to-reach audiences, including those with educational, cultural or language barriers.

2. Methods

This criterion is used to assess the procedures for:

a. Developing or modifying food safety education and training curricula that are consistent with the FSMA guidelines;

b. Identifying food safety education and training needs in target non-tradition, niche, and hard-to-reach audiences;

c. Developing or modifying food safety education and training curricula that specifically target non-traditional, niche, and hard-to-reach audiences, including those with educational, cultural or language barriers; and

d. Developing a communications plan for interacting with respective Regional Centers and for reporting project outcomes. Both quantitative and qualitative measures may be used to report outcomes. Measures may include, but are not limited to, new or novel education and training materials developed or modified for use by specific target audiences, new or novel delivery mechanisms developed and implemented for specific target audiences, specific commodities or common food safety issues addressed, specific target audiences, including niche, hard-to-reach, or underserved audiences identified and trained, best practices identified for specific target audiences, number of education and training sessions conducted, participants reporting changes in knowledge and /or behavior as a result of participation in education and training sessions.

3. Key Personnel and Project Management

This criterion is used to assess management of the proposed project, including the roles and responsibilities of key project staff, which include:

a. Clearly defining the roles and responsibilities of key staff in the overall management of the project;

b. Developing a timeline that includes benchmarks for key events that address the project objectives;

c. Identifying key personnel responsible for collecting project outcome data, reporting project outcomes and interacting with staff at the respective Regional Centers;

d. Developing strong partnerships with those in local communities that enable them to address the needs of non-traditional, niche, and hard-to-reach audiences; and

e. Coordinating food safety education and training efforts with local communities involved in the project.

4. Budget and Budget Justification

This criterion is used to assess how well the proposed budget:

a. Adequately supports project activities that are consistent with the proposed objectives;

b. Incorporates innovative approaches for making use of currently available resources within local communities, while supporting development and implementation of new

resources that are critical for meeting the food safety education and training needs of target audiences; and

    c. Allocate and justify resources to key personnel responsible for managing and conducting the project activities.

The following evaluation criteria will be used to evaluate applications for **Community Outreach Projects** submitted in response to this RFA:

1. Objectives

This criterion is used to assess how well the Community Outreach Projects:

    a. Identify and justify specific food safety education and training needs and other resources for various target audiences within local communities;

    b. Support the growth and expansion of already-existing food safety education and training programs within communities, and ensure that they are consistent with new FSMA guidelines (see https://www.fda.gov/Food/GuidanceRegulation/FSMA/ucm247559.htm#PC_Rules); and

    c. Leverage partnerships with non-governmental organizations, community-based organizations, extension, food hubs, farm cooperatives and/or others who typically work with owners and operators of small and/or medium-sized farms, beginning farmers, socially disadvantaged farmers, small processors, and small fresh fruit and vegetable merchant wholesalers.

2. Methods

This criterion is used to assess the procedures for:

    a. Further developing and expanding already-existing community-based food safety education and training programs and other resources. Programs may be expanded to reach a greater number of participants, or to reach new audiences not currently targeted by the existing programs;

    b. Developing a communications plan for interacting with respective Regional Centers and for reporting project outcomes to the Regional Centers; and

    c. Developing a plan for evaluating the outcomes of the project, collecting outcome data, and reporting project outcomes to the respective Regional Centers. Both quantitative and qualitative measures may be used in the evaluation. Measures may include, but are not limited to, new or novel education and training materials developed or modified for use by specific target audiences, new or novel delivery mechanisms developed and implemented for specific target audiences, specific commodities or common food safety issues addressed, specific target audiences, including niche, hard-to-reach, or underserved audiences identified and trained, best practices identified for specific target audiences, number of education and training sessions conducted, participants reporting changes in knowledge and /or behavior as a result of participation in education and training sessions.

3. Key Personnel and Project Management

This criterion is used to assess management of the proposed project, including the roles and responsibilities of key project staff, which include:

    a. Clearly defining the roles and responsibilities of key staff in the overall management of the project;

b. Developing a timeline that includes benchmarks for key events that address the project objectives;

c. Identifying key personnel responsible for collecting project outcome data, reporting project outcomes and interacting with staff at the respective Regional Centers;

d. Developing strong partnerships with those in local communities that enable them to address the needs of non-traditional, niche, and hard-to-reach audiences; and

e. Coordinating food safety education and training efforts with local communities involved in the project.

4. Budget and Budget Justification

This criterion is used to assess how well the proposed budget:

a. Adequately supports project activities that are consistent with the proposed objectives;

b. Incorporates innovative approaches for making use of currently available resources within local communities, while supporting development and implementation of new resources that are critical for meeting the food safety education and training needs of target audiences; and

c. Allocate and justify resources to key personnel responsible for managing and conducting the project activities.

The following evaluation criteria will be used to evaluate applications for **Multistate Education and Training Projects** submitted in response to this RFA:

1. Objectives

This criterion is used to assess how well the **Multistate Education and Training Projects:**

a. Support the development of multi-county, state-wide, or multi-state food safety education and outreach programs and other resources that are consistent with the FSMA guidelines;

b. Encourage collaborations among counties and states sharing common food safety concerns, commodities, or production and processing practices; and

c. Leverage partnerships with non-governmental organizations, community-based organizations, extension, food hubs, farm cooperatives and/or others who typically work with owners and operators of small and/or medium-sized farms, beginning farmers, socially disadvantaged farmers, small processors, and small fresh fruit and vegetable merchant wholesalers.

2. Methods

This criterion is used to assess the procedures for:

a. Building and maintaining partnerships among collaborating counties and states that are not necessarily located in the same regions. For example, Multistate Education and Training Projects would support collaborations among California, Arizona, and Florida;

b. Developing a communications plan for interacting with respective Regional Centers and for reporting project outcomes to the Regional Centers; and

c. Developing a plan for evaluating the outcomes of the project, collecting outcome data, and reporting project outcomes to the respective Regional Centers. Both quantitative and qualitative measures may be used in the evaluation. Measures may include, but are not limited to, new or novel education and training materials developed or modified for use by specific target audiences, new or novel delivery mechanisms developed and

implemented for specific target audiences, specific commodities or common food safety issues addressed, specific target audiences, including niche, hard-to-reach, or underserved audiences identified and trained, best practices identified for specific target audiences, number of education and training sessions conducted, participants reporting changes in knowledge and/or behavior as a result of participation in education and training sessions.

3. Key Personnel and Project Management

This criterion is used to assess management of the proposed project, including the roles and responsibilities of key project staff, which include:

a. Clearly defining the roles and responsibilities of key staff in the overall management of the project;
b. Developing a timeline that includes benchmarks for key events that address the project objectives;
c. Identifying key personnel responsible for collecting project outcome data, reporting project outcomes and interacting with staff at the respective Regional Centers;
d. Developing strong partnerships with those in local communities that enable them to address the needs of non-traditional, niche, and hard-to-reach audiences; and
e. Coordinating food safety education and training efforts with local communities involved in the project.

4. Budget and Budget Justification

This criterion is used to assess how well the proposed budget:

a. Adequately supports project activities that are consistent with the proposed objectives;
b. Incorporates innovative approaches for making use of currently available resources within local communities, while supporting development and implementation of new resources that are critical for meeting the food safety education and training needs of target audiences; and
c. Allocate and justify resources to key personnel responsible for managing and conducting the project activities.

C. Conflicts of Interest and Confidentiality

During the peer evaluation process, we take extreme care to prevent any actual or perceived conflicts of interest that may impact review or evaluation. See 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.

D. 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).

E. Application Disposition

An application may be withdrawn at any time before a final funding decision is made regarding the application. Each application that is not selected for funding, including those that are withdrawn, will be retained by the Food Safety Outreach 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, the information described in 2 CFR 200.210.

See http://www.nifa.usda.gov/business/awards/awardterms.html to view current NIFA award terms and conditions.

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 may include, but are not limited to, the ones listed on the NIFA web page – http://nifa.usda.gov/federal-regulations.

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

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.

All three project types have common programmatic design to ensure alignment with the National Training, Education, Extension, Outreach, and Technical Assistance Competitive Grants Program. To fulfill this purpose, the following requirements will be included in awards as program-specific terms and conditions:

- Each successfully funded project team must develop a communication plan for NIFA approval within the first year. The communication plan must describe how they will interact with their respective Regional Centers and a strategy for collecting data and reporting the outcomes of all Pilot Projects, Community Outreach Projects, and Multistate Education and Training Projects to the respective Regional Centers. Where needed, Regional Center staff will assist Project Directors with developing the communication plan and reporting mechanisms. Regional Center staff will be responsible for reporting overall project outcomes to the National Coordination Center. The National Coordination Center will collate the individual project outcomes, develop best practices based on those project outcomes, and report overall outcomes of the program to national program staff at NIFA and FDA.

- Project outcomes that are reported to the Regional Centers may include a variety of qualitative (descriptive) and/or quantitative (metrics) measures. Quantitative and qualitative measures may include, but are not limited to: 1) New or novel education, training materials, and resources for specific target audiences; 2) New or novel delivery mechanisms developed and implemented for specific target audiences; 3) Specific commodities or common food safety issues addressed; 4) Specific target audiences, including niche, hard-to-reach, or underserved audiences identified and trained; 4) Best practices identified and applied by specific target audiences; 5) Number of education and training sessions conducted; 6) Number of participants in training and education programs; or 7) Number and percent of participants reporting changes in knowledge and/or behavior as a result of participation in education and training sessions.

- The Project Director will be responsible for managing all technical and programmatic aspects of the grant and will be responsible for appropriately acknowledging NIFA's funding support in publications, public announcements, news releases, and other media sources.

- The Project Director for the Community Outreach and Multistate Education and Training Project teams will be responsible for attending annual meetings with NIFA and FDA staff, staff at the Regional Coordination Centers, and staff at the National Coordination Center beginning in the second year of the award. During the annual meeting, Project Directors will report on the progress of their projects, share updates on modified training materials or curricula, and report on interim programmatic outcomes. The Project Directors for the Pilot Projects are not required to attend annual meetings. Instead, they will be required to participate in regularly-scheduled informational teleconferences hosted by staff at the Regional Centers, NIFA and FDA.

PART VII—AGENCY CONTACT

Applicants and other interested parties are encouraged to contact:

Programmatic Contacts:

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Institute of Food Safety and Nutrition, Food Safety Division
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Administrative/Business Contact –
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Ms. Towanda DeShazo
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PART VIII—OTHER INFORMATION

A. Use of Funds; Changes

1. Delegation of Fiscal Responsibility

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

2. Changes in Budget or Project Plans

In accordance with 2 CFR 200.308, awardees must request prior approval from NIFA for the following program or budget-related reasons:
(i) Change in the scope or the objective of the project or program (even if there is no associated budget revision requiring prior written approval).

(ii) Change in a key person specified in the application or the federal award.

(iii) The disengagement from the project for more than three months, or a 25 percent reduction in time devoted to the project, by the approved project director or principal investigator.

(iv) The inclusion, unless waived by the federal awarding agency, of costs that require prior approval in accordance with 2 CFR 200 Subpart E—Cost Principles of this part or 45 CFR Part 75 Appendix IX, "Principles for Determining Costs Applicable to Research and Development under Awards and Contracts with Hospitals," or 48 CFR Part 31, "Contract Cost Principles and Procedures," as applicable.

(v) The transfer of funds budgeted for participant support costs as defined in §200.75 Participant support costs to other categories of expense.

(vi) Unless described in the application and funded in the approved federal awards, the sub-awarding, transferring or contracting out of any work under a federal award, including fixed amount sub-awards as described in §200.332 Fixed amount sub-awards. This provision does not apply to the acquisition of supplies, material, equipment, or general support services.

(vii) Changes in the approved cost-sharing or matching provided by the non-federal entity.

(viii) The need arises for additional federal funds to complete the project.

The awardee will be subject to the terms and conditions identified in the award. See http://www.nifa.usda.gov/business/awards/awardterms.html for information about NIFA award terms.

B. Confidential Aspects of Applications and Awards

When an application results in an award, it becomes a part of the record of NIFA transactions, available to the public upon specific request. Information that the Secretary 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.

C. Regulatory Information

For the reasons set forth in the final Rule related Notice to 2 CFR part 415, subpart C , 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.

D. 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.

E. Materials Available on the Internet

Food Safety Outreach program information will be made available on the NIFA web site at http://nifa.usda.gov/food-safety-outreach-program. The following are among the materials available on the web page:
1. More information about upcoming FSO 2017
2. Frequently Asked Questions
3. Tip Sheets Proposal Development
4. Webinar – Program Overview
5. Stakeholder Input