§ 4284.1009 Limitations on awards.

The maximum grant award for an agriculture innovation center shall be in an amount that does not exceed the lesser of $1,000,000 or twice the dollar amount of the resources (in cash or in kind) that the eligible entity demonstrates are available, or have been committed to be made available, to the eligible entity.

§ 4284.1010 Application processing.

(a) Applications. USDA will solicit applications on a competitive basis by publication of one or more Requests for Proposals (RFPs). Unless otherwise specified in the applicable RFP, applicants must file an original and one copy of the required forms and a proposal.

(b) Required forms. The following forms must be completed, signed and submitted as part of the application package. Other OMB approved forms may be required. This will be published in the applicable RFP:

1. “Application for Federal Assistance.”
2. “Budget Information—Non-Construction Programs.”
3. “Assurances—Non-Construction Programs.”

(c) Proposal. Each proposal must contain the following elements. Additional elements may be published in the applicable RFP:

1. Title Page.
2. Table of Contents.
receives grant funding under this subpart. These suggested criteria are not binding on USDA.

(vi) Agricultural Community Support. Evidence of support from the local agricultural community should be included in this section. Letters in support should reflect that the writer is familiar with the provisions of the Plan for the Center, including the stated goals.

Evidence of support can take the form of making employees available to the Center, service as a board member and other in-kind contributions.

(vii) Strategic Coordination and Alliances. Describe arrangements in place or planned with end users (processing and distribution companies and regional grocers) as well as arrangements with entities having technical research capabilities, broad support from the agricultural community in the state or region, significant coordination with end users (processing and distribution companies and regional grocers), strategic alliances with entities having technical research capabilities and a focused delivery plan for reaching out to the producer community.

(viii) Capacity. Evidence of the ability of the grantee(s) to successfully establish and operate a Center. A description of the grantee’s track record in providing services similar to those listed for Producer Services or evidence that the entity has the capability to provide Producer Services. Resumes of key personnel should be included in this section. Past successes should be described in detail, with a focus on lessons learned, best practices, familiarity with producer problems in Value-Added ventures, and how these barriers are best overcome should be elaborated on in this section. For every challenge identified, the applicant should demonstrate how they are addressed in the Work Plan (see paragraph (c)(5)(iv) of this section). All successes should include a monetary estimate of the Value-Added achieved.

(ix) Legal structure. Provide a description of the legal relationship between the grantee(s) and the proposed Center. If the Center is to be an independent corporate entity, provide copies of the corporate charter, bylaws and other relevant organizational documents.