

DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE**Cooperative State Research,
Education, and Extension Service****National Research Initiative
Competitive Grants Program Fiscal
Year 1999: Amendment of Solicitation
of Applications and Request for Input**

AGENCY: Cooperative State Research, Education, and Extension Service, USDA.

ACTION: Notice of Amendment of Solicitation of Applications Fiscal Year 1999 National Research Initiative Competitive Grants Program and Request for Input.

SUMMARY: This notice amends the fiscal year (FY) 1999 Solicitation of Applications for competitive grant awards in agricultural, forest, and related environmental sciences under the National Research Initiative (NRI) Competitive Grants Program published at 63 FR 46110, August 28, 1998. This amendment replaces the estimated amounts of funds available in each research program area with the actual amounts available and imposes a lower indirect cost ceiling in accordance with subsequent legislation. This amendment also adds a new research program area and new topics within two previously published research program areas. By this notice, the Cooperative State Research, Education, and Extension Service (CSREES) additionally solicits stakeholder input from any interested party regarding the FY 1999 NRI solicitation of applications for use in the development of the next request for proposals for this program.

DATES: This amendment does not alter the original deadlines for receipt of proposals as set forth previously in this solicitation of applications as published on August 28, 1998 (63 FR 46110). Proposals submitted in response to the amended research topics for animal genome and genetic mechanisms and for agricultural systems must be postmarked by February 15, 1999. Proposals submitted in response to the new research program area Epidemiological Approaches to Food Safety must be postmarked by April 5, 1999. Comments regarding this solicitation of applications are requested within six months from the issuance of this notice. Comments received after that date will be considered to the extent practicable.

For Further Information Contact: USDA/CSREES/NRI, Stop 2241, 1400 Independence Ave., SW, Washington, D.C. 20250-2241. Phone: (202) 401-5022. E-mail: nricgp@reeusda.gov.

Written comments should be submitted by first-class mail to: Office of Extramural Programs; Competitive Research Grants and Awards Management; USDA-CSREES; STOP 2299; 1400 Independence Avenue, SW; Washington, D.C. 20250-2299, or via e-mail to: RFP-OEP@reeusda.gov. In your comments, please include the name of the program and the fiscal year solicitation of applications to which you are responding.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:**Table of Contents**

Stakeholder Input
Authority and Applicable Regulations
Conflicts of Interest
Project Types and Eligibility Requirements
 I. Conventional Projects
 II. Agricultural Research Enhancement Awards
Funding Categories for FY 1999
Research Opportunities
Application Materials
Materials Available on Internet
Electronic Subscription to NRI Documents
NRI Deadline Dates

Stakeholder Input

CSREES is soliciting comments regarding this solicitation of applications from any interested party. These comments will be considered in the development of the next request for proposals for the program. Such comments will be forwarded to the Secretary or his designee for use in meeting the requirements of section 103(c)(2) of the Agricultural Research, Extension, and Education Reform Act of 1998 (Pub. L. 105-185). This section requires the Secretary to solicit and consider input on a current request for proposals from persons who conduct or use agricultural research, education, or extension for use in formulating the next request for proposals for an agricultural research program funded on a competitive basis.

In your comments, please include the name of the program and the fiscal year solicitation of applications to which you are responding. Comments are requested within six months from the issuance of the solicitation of applications. Comments received after that date will be considered to the extent practicable.

Authority and Applicable Regulations

The authority for this program is contained in 7 U.S.C. 450i(b). Under this program, subject to the availability of funds, the Secretary may award competitive research grants, for periods not to exceed five years, for the support of research projects to further the programs of the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA).

Regulations applicable to this program include the following: (a) the regulations governing the NRI, 7 CFR part 3411, which set forth procedures to be followed when submitting grant proposals, rules governing the evaluation of proposals and the awarding of grants, and regulations relating to the post-award administration of grant projects; (b) the USDA Uniform Administrative Requirements for Grants and Agreements with Institutions of Higher-Education, Hospitals, and Other Non-Profit Organizations, 7 CFR part 3019; (c) the USDA Uniform Federal Assistance Regulations, 7 CFR part 3015; (d) the USDA Uniform Administrative Requirements for Grants and Cooperative Agreements to State and Local Governments, 7 CFR part 3016; and (e) 7 U.S.C. 3103, which defines "sustainable agriculture."

Conflicts of Interest

For the purpose of determining conflicts of interest in accordance with 7 CFR part 3411.12, the academic and administrative autonomy of an institution shall be determined by reference to the January 1998 issue of the Codebook for Compatible Statistical Reporting of Federal Support to Universities, Colleges, and Nonprofit Institutions, prepared by Quantum Research Corporation for the National Science Foundation. Copies may be obtained from Quantum Research Corporation, 7315 Wisconsin Avenue, Suite 400W, Bethesda, MD 20814.

Project Types and Eligibility Requirements

The project types for which proposals are solicited include:

I. Conventional Projects

(a) Standard Research Grants: Research will be supported that is fundamental or mission-linked, and that is conducted by individual investigators, co-investigators within the same discipline, or multidisciplinary teams. Any State agricultural experiment station, college, university, other research institution or organization, Federal agency, national laboratory, private organization, corporation, or individual may apply. Proposals submitted by non-United States organizations will not be considered for support.

(b) Conferences: Scientific meetings that bring together scientists to identify research needs, update information, or advance an area of research are recognized as integral parts of research efforts. Any State agricultural experiment station, college, university,

other research institution or organization, Federal agency, national laboratory, private organization, corporation, or individual is an eligible applicant in this area. Proposals submitted by non-United States organizations will not be considered for support.

II. Agricultural Research Enhancement Awards

To contribute to the enhancement of research capabilities in the research program areas described herein, applications are solicited for Agricultural Research Enhancement Awards. Such applications may be submitted by any State agricultural experiment station, college, university, other research institution or organization, Federal agency, national laboratory, private organization, corporation, or individual; however, further eligibility requirements are defined in 7 CFR part 3411.3(d) and restated in the FY 1999 NRI Program Description. Applications submitted by non-United States organizations will not be considered for support. However, United States citizens applying as individuals for Postdoctoral Fellowships may perform all or part of the proposed work at a non-United States organization. Agricultural Research Enhancement Awards are available in the following categories:

(a) Postdoctoral Fellowships
 (b) New Investigator Awards
 (c) Strengthening Awards: Institutions in USDA EPSCoR entities are eligible for strengthening awards. For FY 1999, USDA EPSCoR states consist of the following:

Alaska
 Arkansas
 Connecticut
 Delaware
 Hawaii
 Idaho
 Maine
 Mississippi
 Montana
 Nevada
 New Hampshire
 New Mexico
 North Dakota
 Rhode Island
 South Carolina
 South Dakota
 Utah
 Vermont
 West Virginia
 Wyoming

For FY 1999, other USDA-EPSCoR entities consist of the following:

American Samoa
 District of Columbia
 Guam
 Micronesia
 Northern Marianas

Puerto Rico
 Virgin Islands

Investigators at small and mid-sized institutions (total enrollment of 15,000 or less) may also be eligible for Strengthening Awards. An institution in this instance is an organization that possesses a significant degree of autonomy, as determined by reference to the January 1998 issue of the "Codebook for Compatible Statistical Reporting of Federal Support to Universities, Colleges, and Nonprofit Institutions", prepared by Quantum Research Corporation for the National Science Foundation. Copies may be obtained from Quantum Research Corporation; 7315 Wisconsin Avenue; Suite 400W; Bethesda, MD 20814.

Institutions which are among the top 100 universities and colleges, except those in USDA EPSCoR states, are ineligible for strengthening awards. The top 100 institutions excluding those in USDA EPSCoR states, as listed in the table "Federal obligations for science and engineering research and development to the 100 universities and colleges receiving the largest amounts, ranked by total amount received, by agency: fiscal year 1996" of the "Survey of Federal Science and Engineering Support to Universities, Colleges, and Nonprofit Institutions" (National Science Foundation, accessible through the Internet at www.nsf.gov/sbe/srs/sfsucni/start.htm), are as follows:

Baylor College of Medicine
 Boston University
 California Institute of Technology
 Carnegie-Mellon University
 Case Western Reserve University
 Colorado State University
 Columbia University
 Cornell University
 CUNY Mount Sinai School of Medicine
 Duke University
 Emory University
 Florida State University
 Georgia Institute of Technology
 Harvard University
 Indiana University
 Iowa State University of Science and Technology
 Johns Hopkins University
 Louisiana State University (All Campuses)
 Massachusetts Institute of Technology
 Medical College of Wisconsin
 Michigan State University
 New York University
 North Carolina State University at Raleigh
 Northwestern University
 Ohio State University
 Oregon Health Sciences University
 Oregon State University
 Pennsylvania State University
 Princeton University
 Purdue University
 Rockefeller University
 Rutgers, the State University of New Jersey
 Stanford University

State University of New York at Stony Brook
 State University of New York at Buffalo
 Texas A&M University
 Thomas Jefferson University
 Tufts University
 Tulane University
 University of Alabama Birmingham
 University of Arizona
 University of California Santa Barbara
 University of California San Francisco
 University of California Irvine
 University of California San Diego
 University of California Davis
 University of California Los Angeles
 University of California Berkeley
 University of Chicago
 University of Cincinnati
 University of Colorado
 University of Florida
 University of Georgia
 University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign
 University of Illinois Chicago
 University of Iowa
 University of Kansas
 University of Kentucky (All Campuses)
 University of Maryland Baltimore Prof Sch
 University of Maryland College Park
 University of Massachusetts Amherst
 University of Massachusetts Med Schl
 Worcester
 University of Medicine and Dentistry of New Jersey
 University of Miami
 University of Michigan
 University of Minnesota
 University of North Carolina Chapel Hill
 University of Pennsylvania
 University of Pittsburgh
 University of Rochester
 University of Southern California
 University of Texas at Austin
 University of Texas Health Science Center
 Houston
 University of Texas Health Sci. Center San Antonio
 University of Texas MD Anderson Cancer Center
 University of Texas Medical Branch Galveston
 University of Texas SW Medical Center Dallas
 University of Virginia
 University of Washington
 University of Wisconsin Madison
 Vanderbilt University
 Virginia Polytech Institute and State University
 Virginia Commonwealth University
 Wake Forest University
 Washington University
 Wayne State University
 Woods Hole Oceanographic Institute
 Yeshiva University, New York

See the FY 1999 NRI Program Description for complete details on programs and eligibility.

Funding Categories for FY 1999

CSREES is soliciting proposals, subject to the availability of funds, for support of high priority research of importance to agriculture, forestry, and related environmental sciences, in the following research categories with the available funding:

- Natural Resources and the Environment (\$19,177,982).
- Nutrition, Food Quality, and Health (\$14,947,581).
- Plant Systems (\$38,255,800).
- Animal Systems (\$27,076,707).
- Markets, Trade, and Policy (\$4,304,510).
- New Products and Processes (\$7,670,370).

Support for research opportunities listed below may be derived from one or more of the above funding categories based on the nature of the scientific topic to be supported.

Pursuant to 7 U.S.C. 450i(b)(10), no less than 10 percent (\$11.1M) of the available funds listed above will be made available for Agricultural Research Enhancement Awards (excluding New Investigator Awards), and no more than 2 percent (\$2.2M) of the available funds listed above will be made available for equipment grants. Further, no less than 30 percent (\$33.4M) of the funds listed above shall be made available for grants for research to be conducted by multidisciplinary teams, and no less than 40 percent (\$44.6M) of the funds listed above shall be made available for grants for mission-linked systems research.

Pursuant to section 711 of the Agriculture, Rural Development, Food and Drug Administration, and Related Agencies Appropriations Act for Fiscal Year 1999, (section 101(a) of Pub. L. No. 105-277), CSREES is prohibited from paying indirect costs exceeding 14 percent of the total Federal funds provided under each award on competitively awarded research grants.

Research Opportunities: In addition to those published in the **Federal Register** August 28, 1998, (63 FR 46110) CSREES is soliciting proposals, for support of high priority research of importance to agriculture, forestry, and related environmental sciences, in the following Research Program areas:

Epidemiological Approaches for Food Safety: Deadline date: April 5, 1999.

Anticipated Program: Based on availability of funds, CSREES anticipates a future NRICGP solicitation of applications for a United States Rice Genome Sequencing Project Program, to be jointly administered by USDA, the National Science Foundation and Department of Energy.

CSREES is broadening the scope of existing program areas in the following manner:

Animal Genetics and Genome: In addition to topics solicited in the **Federal Register** announcement of August 28, 1998, (63 FR 46110) CSREES encourages research proposals on Animal Genome Basic Reagents and

Tools. Deadline Date remains at February 15, 1999.

Agricultural Systems: In addition to topics solicited in the **Federal Register** announcement of August 28, 1998, (63 FR 46110) CSREES encourages systems research that will impact the small or mid-sized producer, land manager or land owner. Deadline date remains at February 15, 1999.

Application Materials

The FY 1999 Supplemental NRI Program Description, which contains research topic descriptions, and the NRI Application Kit, which contains detailed instructions on how to apply and the requisite forms, are available on the NRI home page, www.reeusda.gov/nri. Paper copies of these application materials may be obtained by sending an e-mail with your name, complete mailing address (not e-mail address), phone number, and materials that you are requesting to psb@reeusda.gov. Materials will be mailed to you (not e-mailed) as quickly as possible. Alternatively, paper copies may be obtained by writing or calling the office indicated below.

Proposal Services Unit, Office of Extramural Programs, Cooperative State Research, Education, and Extension Service, U.S. Department of Agriculture, STOP 2245, 1400 Independence Ave., SW, Washington, D.C. 20250-2245, Telephone: (202) 401-5048.

Materials Available on Internet

The following are among the materials available on the NRI home page (www.reeusda.gov/nri).

NRI Program Description

This document is available for the current fiscal year, and describes all of the NRI funding programs. To apply for a grant, it is also necessary to obtain the NRI Application Kit.

NRI Supplemental Program Description

This document is available for supplemental programs or emphasis areas offered for the current fiscal year. To apply for a grant, it is also necessary to obtain the NRI Application Kit.

NRI Application Kit

This document contains guidelines for proposal preparation and the requisite forms.

NRI Abstracts of Funded Research

The abstracts available on this searchable database are nontechnical abstracts written by the principal investigator of each individual grant, starting with FY 1993. Each entry also

includes the title, principal investigator(s), awardee institution, dollar amount, and proposal number for each grant. The first two digits of the proposal number indicate the fiscal year in which the proposal was submitted.

NRI Annual Report

The NRI Annual Reports starting with FY 1995 are available. These reports include descriptions of the program concept, the authorization, policy, inputs to establish research needs, program execution, and outcomes, including relevant statistics. Also included are examples of recent research funded by the NRI.

Electronic Subscription to NRI Documents

The NRI mailserver will notify subscribers when publications such as its Program Description or Abstracts of Funded Research are available electronically on the World Wide Web. Subscribers will not receive the document itself, but instead will receive an e-mail containing an announcement regarding the document's availability on the NRI home page.

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NRI Deadline Dates

The following fixed dates have been established for proposal submission deadlines for this supplementary Solicitation of Applications. To be considered for funding in any fiscal year, proposals must be transmitted by the date listed below (as indicated by postmark or date on courier bill of lading). When the deadline date falls on a weekend or Federal holiday, transmission must be made by the following business day.

Programs offered in any fiscal year depend on availability of funds and deadlines may be delayed due to unforeseen circumstances. Consult the pertinent NRI solicitation in the **Federal Register**, the NRI Program Description, or the NRI home page (www.reeusda.gov/nri) for up-to-date information.

Postmarked dates	Program codes	Program areas
February 15, 1999	43.0	Animal Genome and Genetic Mechanisms.
	100.0	Agricultural Systems.
April 5, 1999	31.1	Epidemiological Approaches to Food Safety.

Done at Washington, D.C., this 28 day of
December 1998.

Colien Hefferan,

*Acting Administrator, Cooperative State
Research, Education, and Extension Service.*

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