

SMITH-LEVER SPECIAL NEEDS PROGRAM

2009 Request for Applications

APPLICATION DEADLINE:

May 26, 2009



U.S. Department of Agriculture

Cooperative State Research, Education, and Extension Service

**COOPERATIVE STATE RESEARCH, EDUCATION, AND EXTENSION SERVICE;
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE**

SMITH-LEVER SPECIAL NEEDS Program

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 close of business (COB) on **May 26, 2009** (5:00 p.m. Eastern Time). Applications received after this deadline will normally not be considered for funding. Comments regarding this request for applications (RFA) are requested within six months from the issuance of this notice. Comments received after that date will be considered to the extent practicable.

STAKEHOLDER INPUT: The Cooperative State Research, Education, and Extension Service (CSREES) is requesting comments regarding this RFA from any interested party. These comments will be considered in the development of the next RFA for the program, if applicable, and will be used 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)). This section requires the Secretary to solicit and consider input on a current RFA from persons who conduct or use agricultural research, education and extension for use in formulating future RFAs for competitive programs. Written stakeholder comments on this RFA should be submitted in accordance with the deadline set forth in the DATES portion of this Notice.

Written stakeholder comments should be submitted by mail to: Policy and Oversight Branch; Office of Extramural Programs; Cooperative State Research, Education, and Extension Service; USDA; STOP 2299; 1400 Independence Avenue, SW; Washington, DC 20250-2299; or via e-mail to: RFP-OEP@csrees.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 Smith-Lever Special Needs Program RFA.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY: CSREES announces the availability of grant funds and requests applications for the Smith-Lever Special Needs Program (Extension Special Needs) for fiscal year (FY) 2009 to support innovative extension education approaches to addressing risks, hazards and disasters. The Cooperative Extension Service (CES) has an important role in reducing the impact of disasters through extension education. The Extension Special Needs program sponsors targeted projects that enable CES to assist in preparing for, providing an educational response to, and recovering from disasters. Education programming funded by this program will help communities, families and individuals become more self-sustaining by strengthening and increasing their resiliency to disaster. Some types of hazards and disaster related events funded in previous years include uncertainties caused by losses of economic infrastructure, severe weather or other natural disasters, security breaches, human disease, or high consequence animal diseases and plant pests.

The amount available for support of this program in FY 2009 is approximately \$460,000.

This notice identifies the objectives for Extension Special Needs projects, the eligibility criteria for projects and applicants, and the application forms and associated instructions needed to apply. CSREES respectfully requests stakeholder input from interested party for use in the development of the next RFA for this program.

Table of Contents

PART I—FUNDING OPPORTUNITY DESCRIPTION 5
A. Legislative Authority and Background..... 5
B. Purpose and Priorities 5

PART II—AWARD INFORMATION 8
A. Available Funding 8
B. Types of Applications..... 8
C. Project Types 8

PART III—ELIGIBILITY INFORMATION..... 9
A. Eligible Applicants 9
B. Cost Sharing or Matching..... 9

PART IV—APPLICATION AND SUBMISSION INFORMATION..... 11
A. Electronic Application Package..... 11
B. Content and Form of Application Submission..... 12
C. Submission Dates and Times 16
D. Funding Restrictions..... 16
E. Other Submission Requirements..... 16

PART V—APPLICATION REVIEW REQUIREMENTS 17
A. General..... 17
B. Evaluation Criteria..... 17
C. Conflicts of Interest and Confidentiality..... 17
D. Organizational Management Information..... 18

PART VI—AWARD ADMINISTRATION 19
A. General..... 19
B. Award Notice 19
C. Administrative and National Policy Requirements..... 20

PART VII—AGENCY CONTACT 22

PART VIII—OTHER INFORMATION..... 23
A. Access to Review Information..... 23
B. Use of Funds; Changes 23
C. Confidential Aspects of Applications and Awards..... 24
D. Regulatory Information 24
E. Definitions..... 24

PART I—FUNDING OPPORTUNITY DESCRIPTION

A. Legislative Authority and Background

Section 7129 of the Food, Conservation, and Energy Act of 2008 (FCEA), re-authorizes Section 3(b) & (c) of the Smith–Lever Act, allowing the Secretary of Agriculture, acting through the Administrator of the Cooperative State Research, Education, and Extension Service (CSREES), to conduct competitive grant programs to State Extension Services at 1862 Land-Grant Institutions to support innovative, education-based approaches to addressing emergency preparedness and specific responses related to natural and man-made disasters.

B. Purpose and Priorities

There has been an increase in public awareness regarding the number and severity of disaster type critical incidents involving earthquakes, tsunamis, tornadoes, wildfire, drought, contagious disease, and terrorist events. The National Academy of Sciences Committee on Environment and Natural Resources and the Subcommittee on Disaster Reduction of the National Science and Technology Council have acknowledged the many effective roles that the Cooperative Extension System (CES) has played in disaster preparedness, response and remediation.

Within the states and territories, the CES has repeatedly served as the trusted community organization that has helped to enable families, communities, and businesses to successfully prepare for, respond to and cope with disaster losses and critical incidents. Once a disaster has occurred, the local extension outreach includes: 1) Communicating practical science-based risk information, 2) Developing relevant educational experiences and programs, 3) Working with individuals and communities to open new communication channels, and 4) Mitigating losses and facilitating recovery. Never was this more evident than after hurricanes Katrina, Rita and Wilma in 2005 and during the 2008 Midwestern Summer flooding. During and after these incidents, local Extension agents served as a critical communication node throughout affected urban and rural areas, particularly when traditional communication systems were temporarily overwhelmed or destroyed.

The Extension Special Needs RFA encourages proposals that specifically address one or more of the following six key target areas:

1. **Education and Technical assistance** through inter-disciplinary and multi-state disaster training programs and demonstration projects for problem solving, especially those which build upon already existing strengths, contribute to or expand the EDEN and/or eXtension educational materials related to disaster preparation, mitigation, response and recovery;
2. **Collaboration** with Federal, state and local agencies and other disaster relief organizations to support education and service activities that enhance recovery of impacted rural communities, schools, businesses and agricultural-based activities;
3. **Long range family, community and regional planning** projects that will enhance implementation of programs that serve public needs in preparation for, during and after emergency situations within impacted States and across impacted regions;

4. **Communication delivery** of key information that meets end-users' needs in a timely fashion with consideration of potentially limited communication channels due to disaster situations;
5. **Dissemination of credible, science-based information** that is reliable and easily accessible even if electronic access is compromised; and
6. **Integrated Research and Extension Planning Projects** (up to \$15,000) are intended to provide assistance to applicants in bringing together teams for the development of highly competitive grant proposals where extension personnel would apply for large grants (in excess of \$250,000) from other grant programs (e.g., the Agriculture and Food Research Initiative and etc...) and lead nationally important disaster prevention, protection and mitigation projects.

Fundable projects should support education and extension activities which:

1. Reduce risk through planning, disaster preparedness and emergency response by improving communication between the public, community leaders, state and Federal agencies;
2. Develop strategies and educational materials and/or programming in the area of emergency planning, infrastructure design and disaster recovery operation;
3. Develop community networks that provide real-time disaster education information; and/or
4. Develop or expand educational materials regarding disaster issues suitable for use and distribution by the [Extension Disaster Education Network](#) (EDEN) or the [eXtension](#) Community of Practice working with [disaster planning](#).

The Extension Special Needs Program provides limited resources for the CES to support innovative approaches in addressing risks, hazards and disasters. This program funds grants which assist communities, families and individuals to become more self-sustaining by strengthening and increasing their resiliency in response to uncertainties caused by losses of economic infrastructure, severe weather, human or animal diseases or security breaches. CSREES intends to fund Special Needs projects to implement applied scientific programs that serve public needs in preparation for, during and after local or regional emergency situations within impacted States. Extension Special Needs will also fund the development of educational programs and demonstration activities focusing on disaster preparedness, mitigation, response, and recovery.

Extension Special Needs has supported human science program development in disaster preparedness that increase knowledge, understanding and capacity to respond to disasters in urban and rural communities. Programming which reduces community vulnerability to critical incidents and increases their capacity for disaster response has effectively reduced citizen and community shock and stress to disaster incidents. Applications that bring timely CES engagement to bear on specific human needs related to emergency response and recovery, individual safety, and personal/public health and well-being will be considered. Applications that support education and service activities that provide and support local recovery efforts for impacted rural communities, schools, businesses and agriculture-based activities will also be considered.

Proposals are welcomed that add new or build upon existing web-based educational materials on the [Extension Disaster Education Network](http://www.eden.lsu.edu/) (EDEN) at <http://www.eden.lsu.edu/>. Also, disaster preparedness and mitigation proposals that contribute to and expand upon the current offerings of the [Agrosecurity and Floods eXtension Community of Practice](http://www.extension.org/disasters) will be considered. <http://www.extension.org/disasters>.

In FY 2009, funds will be available to support Integrated Research and Extension Planning Projects (IREP) to provide assistance to applicants in the development of highly competitive integrated proposals for submission to other funding sources to address nationally important disaster education issues. Applications will be considered for meetings which bring together extension personnel and researchers to develop proposals which will advance knowledge in the areas of disaster education, community and citizen protection and disaster response. IREP teams are expected to develop strong proposals that are likely to be highly competitive for large future awards (in excess of \$250,000) in such programs as the Agriculture and Food Research Initiative. Applicants should provide a list of team participants and define their expertise, proposal topic to be developed, an agenda for a regional or national discussion (i.e., regional or national meeting, web-interface) of the significance of the problem, and/or any other information that demonstrates that the problem and its scope can be developed into a competitive grant proposal.

The intent of these planning projects is to foster collaboration and networking opportunities to enhance the preparation of future high-quality grant applications that are national or regional in scope. Furthermore, an IREP project may be included as a supplement to a related Extension Special Needs proposal such as educational and technical assistance; collaboration; long range family, community, and regional planning; communication delivery; or dissemination of credible science based information. IREP projects are to last no more than one year with funding up to \$15,000.

PART II—AWARD INFORMATION

A. Available Funding

Grants will be awarded to successful applicants. There is no commitment by USDA to fund any particular application or to make a specific number of awards. Approximately \$460,000 will be available to fund applications in FY 2009.

B. Types of Applications

In FY 2009 applications may be submitted to the Special Needs Program as new or resubmitted applications, as described below:

1. **New application.** This is a project application that has not been previously submitted to the Special Needs Program. All new applications will be reviewed 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 Special Needs Program but not funded. Project Directors (PDs) must respond to the previous review panel summary. Resubmitted applications must be received by the relevant due dates, will be evaluated in competition with other pending applications in appropriate area to which they are assigned, and will be reviewed according to the same evaluation criteria as new applications.

C. Project Types

Special Needs projects have typically ranged from \$30,000 to \$120,000 in award size, however, the amount requested may vary depending on the urgency of the need(s) needs being addressed by the proposed project. For FY 2009, the Special Needs Program encourages applications that specifically address one or more of the following six key target areas:

1. **Education and Technical assistance** applications may be for project periods of up to 5 years;
2. **Collaboration** applications may be for project periods of up to 5 years;
3. **Long range family, community and regional planning** applications may be for project periods of up to 5 years;
4. **Communication delivery** applications may be for project periods of up to 5 years;
5. **Dissemination of credible, science-based information** applications may be for project periods of up to 5 years; and
6. **Integrated Research and Extension Planning Projects** applications may be for project periods of up to 1 year with proposed budgets not to exceed \$15,000 per proposal.

PART III—ELIGIBILITY INFORMATION

A. Eligible Applicants

Applications may be submitted with the approval of Extension Directors of 1862 Land-grant Institutions in the 50 states, American Samoa, Guam, Micronesia, Northern Marianas, Puerto Rico, and the U.S. Virgin Islands.

Award recipients may subcontract to organizations not eligible to apply provided such organizations are necessary for the conduct of the project. An applicant's failure to meet an eligibility criterion by the time of an application deadline will result in CSREES not accepting the application or, even though an application may be reviewed, will preclude CSREES from making an award.

B. Cost Sharing or Matching

Pursuant to rules and policies governing Section 3(b) & (c) of the Smith–Lever Act, as amended through Public Law 107-293, no allotment shall be made to a State under subsection (b) or (c), and no payments from the allotment shall be made to a State, in excess of the amount that the State makes available out of non-Federal funds for cooperative extension work.

1. To comply with the matching requirements of the Special Needs Program, applicants are required to provide 100 percent matching funds from non-federal sources for all proposed federal funds sought in the application. **In-kind and third party contributions are not allowed for the Smith-Lever Special Needs program.** Grant awards cannot be issued until ALL required matching has been documented and verified.
2. Matching Alternative.— Extension Directors may certify an offset of guaranteed non-Federal funds to your application. The signed certification of offset must be scanned and included as a PDF attachment (see Part IV.,B.,2.,c.,(1) for specific instructions).
3. Matching Exception.— Insular Areas: In lieu of the matching funds requirement, the insular areas of the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, Guam, and the Virgin Islands of the United States shall provide matching funds from non-Federal sources in an amount equal to not less than 50 percent of the grants awarded. The Secretary may waive this matching fund requirement for any fiscal year if the Secretary determines that the government of the insular area will be unlikely to meet the matching requirement for the fiscal year. Insular applicants may submit a waiver request as a PDF attachment to the application (see Part IV.,B.,2.,c.,(2) for specific instructions).

For all projects:

Matching: Applications shall include written verification of commitments of matching support from non-federal sources. Written verification means:

The sources and the amount of all matching support from outside the applicant organization should be summarized on a separate page and placed in the application as a part of the Budget

Justification attachment (see Field K on the Form SF 424 (R&R) Budget). Include the matching amount, the budget category for the match, and detail how the matching support, *from each source*, will be used (e.g., salary and position supported). Additionally, all pledge agreements must be included as a PDF attachment in Field K as well.

The value of applicant contributions to the project shall be established in accordance with the applicable cost principles. Applicants should refer to OMB Circulars A-21, Cost Principles for Educational Institutions; A-87, Cost Principles for State, Local, and Tribal Governments; 2 CFR Part 215, Uniform Administrative Requirements for Grants and Agreements With Institutions of Higher Education, Hospitals, and Other Non-Profit Organizations (OMB Circular A-110); for further guidance and other requirements relating to allowable costs.

Additional Budget Information

For Integrated Research and Extension Planning Projects: The budget for the planning activity may include an appropriate amount for transportation and subsistence costs for participants and for other related costs. Planning awards of federal funds will not exceed \$15,000 and are not renewable. Include an itemized breakdown of all support requested in the Budget Justification (Field K. of the R&R Budget).

PART IV—APPLICATION AND SUBMISSION INFORMATION

A. Electronic Application Package

Only electronic applications may be submitted via Grants.gov to CSREES in response to this RFA.

Prior to preparing an application, it is suggested that the 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 Grant.gov. If the organization is not prepared, the AR should see http://www.grants.gov/applicants/get_registered.jsp for steps for preparing to submit applications through Grants.gov.

The steps to access application materials are as follows:

1. In order to access, complete and submit applications, applicants must download and install a version of Adobe Reader compatible with Grants.gov. This software is essential to apply for CSREES Federal assistance awards. For basic system requirements and download instructions, please see http://www.grants.gov/help/download_software.jsp. To verify that you have a compatible version of Adobe Reader, Grants.gov established a test package that will assist you in making that determination. Grants.gov Adobe Versioning Test Package: <http://www.grants.gov/applicants/AdobeVersioningTestOnly.jsp>.
2. The application package must be obtained via Grants.gov, go to <http://www.grants.gov>, click on “Apply for Grants” in the left-hand column, click on “**Step 1: Download a Grant Application Package and Instructions**,” enter the funding opportunity number **USDA-CSREES-SLBCD-002134** 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 “CSREES Grants.gov Application Guide: A Guide for Preparation and Submission of CSREES Applications via Grants.gov.” 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 assistance is needed to access the application package (e.g., downloading or navigating Adobe forms), refer to resources available on the Grants.gov Web site first (<http://grants.gov/>). Grants.gov assistance is also available as follows:

- Grants.gov customer support
Toll Free: 1-800-518-4726
Business Hours: Monday through Friday 7:00 am – 9:00 pm Eastern Standard Time
Email: support@grants.gov

B. Content and Form of Application Submission

Electronic applications should be prepared following Part V and VI of the document entitled “A Guide for Preparation and Submission of CSREES Applications via Grants.gov.” This guide is part of the corresponding application package (see Section A. of this Part). The following is **additional information** needed in order 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., portable document format) in Part III section 3. of the Guide. ANY PROPOSALS CONTAINING NON-PDF DOCUMENTS WILL BE AT RISK OF BEING EXCLUDED FROM CSREES REVIEW. Partial applications will be excluded from CSREES review. With documented prior approval, resubmitted applications will be accepted until close of business on the closing date in the RFA.

If you do not own PDF-generating software, Grants.gov provides online tools to assist applicants. Users will find a link to “Convert Documents to PDF” on <http://grants.gov/assets/PDFConversion.pdf>.

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 CSREES 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 CSREES 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 CSREES Grants.gov Application Guide.

a. Field 6. Project Summary/Abstract. The summary should include the project name, short description, purpose, and the location. The summary should also include the relevance of the project to the goals of Extension Special Needs.

b. Field 7. Project Narrative.

PLEASE NOTE: The Project Narrative shall not exceed ten pages of written text regardless of whether it is single or double spaced. This maximum length has been established to ensure fair and equitable competition. Applications should provide the following program specific information in the Project Narrative:

(1) Introduction: Include information on the following in the order identified:

- i. Summarize the work to be performed in non-technical terms;
- ii. Concisely state the goal(s) of the proposed project;

- iii. Describe how this project will build upon or expand related work or programs;
- iv. Describe how the work on this project relates to the experience of key project personnel;
- v. Describe the involvement of stakeholders in developing project objectives and implementing results; and
- vi. Define the target audience and end users of this project.

(2) Objectives:

- i. Provide a brief review of the goal(s) stated in the Introduction; and
- ii. Present a clear, concise set of project objectives.

(3) Methods: Describe the procedures by objective for the proposed effort, include:

- i. Techniques and methods to be employed, including their feasibility and rationale for their use in this project; and
- ii. Timeline for education/extension/planning activities with milestones and verifiable indicators, which demonstrate progress.

c. Other Attachments (Field 11. on the Form) – PDF Attachment

(1) Certification of Offset. The application must contain a signed certification of offset signed by the Extension Director scanned into PDF format. A valid certification of offset must include the following:

- i. Institution Name
- ii. Detailed list containing the amount of guaranteed funds derived from non-Federal sources that are available and budgeted for expenditure for cooperative extension work in accordance with the provisions of the Smith-Lever Act of May 8, 1914, and amendments, thereto.

1. Sources and Amounts:

- a. State Appropriation
- b. County Appropriation
- c. Non-tax funds
- d. Total Guaranteed Funds

- iii. Extension Directors must further certify that the above reported non-Federal funds are in addition to those used in matching other Federal funds; that if any portion of the money thus guaranteed is not received from sources shown above, the State Cooperative Extension Service will either make up this deficiency from other non-Federal sources which may become available or report at the end of the fiscal year 2009 an equivalent unobligated balance of Federal funds derived from appropriations under the Act above mentioned, which will be deducted from the award amount.
- iv. Additionally, Extension Directors must certify that there has been satisfactory progress during fiscal year 2009 on the cooperative extension programs authorized under sections 3(b) and (c) of the Smith-Lever Act; that the expenditures of Federal funds for the support of these programs were in accordance with the laws and regulations governing their use; and that non-Federal matching (offset) funds have been obligated in accordance with the requirement.

- (2) Waiver Request. In lieu of the matching funds requirement, the insular areas of the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, Guam, and the Virgin Islands of the United States may attach a waiver request to the application. Waiver requests must clearly demonstrate that the government of the insular area will be unlikely to meet the matching requirement for the fiscal year.
- (3) Appendices to Project Description. Appendices to the Project Description may be attached if they are directly germane to the proposed project. The addition of appendices should not be used to circumvent the text and/or figures and tables page limitations.

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 CSREES Grants.gov Application Guide. A Senior/Key Person Profile should be completed for the PD/PI and each co-PD/PI, senior associate, and other key professional personnel. Also, **you must attach** “Current and Pending Support” information. See CSREES Grants.gov Application Guide, Part 4.3 for guidelines and information format for each senior/key person identified.

Note: Even if no funding is currently reported under the “Active” section of this attachment, you must still list information for this grant application under the “Pending” section of this attachment for each senior/key person identified.

5. R&R Personal Data – As noted in Part V, 6. of the CSREES Grants.gov Application Guide, the submission of this information is voluntary and is not a precondition of award. If completing the information, **do not enter any data in the field requesting the social security number.**

6. R&R Budget

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

Matching is required for this grant program as specified under Part III, B., the budget narrative should include written verification of commitments of matching support (see “Certification of Offset” in Part IV., B., 3., c., 1.).

7. Supplemental Information Form

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

- a. Field 2. Program Code. Enter the program code name (i.e., enter “Extension Special Needs Program (ESNP)”) and the program code (i.e., enter “**MB**”).
- b. Since funds in this program are awarded competitively, a Conflict of Interest list is necessary and should be submitted with the application. Attach a conflict of interest (COI) list for each senior/key person included in the R&R Senior/Key Person Profile. Prepare the (COI) list(s) following the instructions and format described in the *CSREES GRANTS.GOV APPLICATION GUIDE* (see Part VI., CSREES Supplemental Information Form, 1.8., Conflict of Interest List – (field 8 on the form). The Conflict of Interest list should be

submitted as a single attachment and contain, for each senior/key person, an alphabetical list of the names of individuals with whom they have a Conflict of Interest. The alphabetical list, with last name first, must contain the full name of each individual and the category of conflict marked with an “x”. Conflicts of Interest include:

- All thesis or postdoctoral advisees/advisors,
- All co-authors on publications within the past three years, including pending publications and submissions,
- All collaborators on projects within the past three years, including current and planned collaborations, and
- All persons in your field with whom you have had a consulting, financial arrangement, or other conflict-of-interest in the past three years including receiving compensation of any type (e.g., money, goods or services).

Note: Other individuals working in the applicant's specific area are not in conflict of interest with the applicant unless those individuals fall within one of the above categories. The program contact must be informed of any additional conflicts of interest that arise after the application is submitted.

C. Submission Dates and Times

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

Applications must be received by Grants.gov by COB (5:00 p.m. Eastern Time) on **May 26, 2009**. Applications received after this deadline will normally not be considered for funding.

Correspondence regarding submitted applications will be sent using e-mail. 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 CSREES** regarding a submitted application within 30 days of the established deadline, please contact the Program 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 or a delay in the issuance of an award. Once the application has been assigned a proposal number, this number should be cited on all future correspondence.**

D. Funding Restrictions

Indirect costs and tuition remission are not allowable and no funds will be approved for these purposes. Costs that are a part of the institution's indirect cost pool may not be reclassified as direct costs for the purpose of making them allowable.

E. Other Submission Requirements

The applicant should follow the submission requirements noted in the document entitled "A Guide for Preparation and Submission of CSREES Applications via Grants.gov."

PART V—APPLICATION REVIEW REQUIREMENTS

A. General

Each application will be evaluated in a 2-part process. First, each application will be screened to ensure that it meets the administrative requirements as set forth in this RFA. Second, applications that meet these requirements will be technically evaluated by a review panel.

Reviewers will be selected based upon 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, 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 to producers and the general public of each application.

B. Evaluation Criteria

The evaluation criteria below will be used in reviewing applications submitted in response to this RFA:

- Demonstrated evidence of urgency / need, size and scope of impact / benefits for existing and future emergency situations (regional and national), including the human element of citizens and needs within communities;
- Description of educational outreach activities that enhance emergency preparedness, post-disaster relief programs or activities with a focus on rapid recovery and reestablishment through Extension engagement; and
- Demonstrated evidence that the proposed educational components of the project will be relevant educational tools to be implemented at the county extension level and for utilization of existing electronic distribution media such as the Extension Disaster Education Network (EDEN) and/or eXtension.

C. Conflicts of Interest and Confidentiality

During the peer evaluation process, extreme care will be taken to prevent any actual or perceived conflicts of interest that may impact review or evaluation. For the purpose of determining conflicts of interest, the academic and administrative autonomy of an institution shall be determined by reference to the current Higher Education Directory, published by Higher Education Publications, Inc., 6400 Arlington Boulevard, Suite 648, Falls Church, Virginia 22042. Phone: (703) 532-2300. Web site: <http://www.hepinc.com>.

Names of submitting institutions and individuals, as well as application content and peer evaluations, will be kept confidential, except to those involved in the review process, to the extent permitted by law. In addition, the identities of peer reviewers will remain confidential throughout the entire review process. Therefore, the names of the reviewers will not be released to applicants.

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, as 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 CSREES program. CSREES will provide copies of forms recommended for use in fulfilling these requirements as part of the preaward process. Although an applicant may be eligible based on its status as one of these entities, there are factors which 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).

PART VI—AWARD ADMINISTRATION

A. General

Within the limit of funds available for such purpose, the awarding official of CSREES 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 awarding official of CSREES 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. It should be noted that 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 CSREES under this RFA shall be expended solely for the purpose for which the funds are granted in accordance with the approved application and budget, the regulations, the terms and conditions of the award, the applicable Federal cost principles, and the Department's assistance regulations (2 CFR 215, 2 CFR 220 and 2 CFR 230), and the Department's assistance regulations (parts 3015, 3019 and 3430 of 7 CFR).

B. Award Notice

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

- (1) Legal name and address of performing organization or institution to whom the Administrator 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 assigned by the Department;
- (5) Project period, specifying the amount of time the Department intends to support the project without requiring recompetition for funds;
- (6) Total amount of Departmental financial assistance approved by the Administrator during the project period;
- (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.csrees.usda.gov/business/awards/awardterms.html> to view CSREES 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 CSREES 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:

2 CFR Part 215 – Uniform Administrative Requirements for Grants and Agreements With Institutions of Higher Education, Hospitals, and Other Non-Profit Organizations (OMB Circular A-110).

2 CFR Part 220 – Cost Principles for Educational Institutions (OMB Circular A-21).

2 CFR Part 230 – Cost Principles for Non-Profit Organizations (OMB Circular A-122).

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 3015—USDA Uniform Federal Assistance Regulations, implementing OMB directives (i.e., OMB Circular Nos. A-21 and A-122, now codified at 2 CFR Parts 220 and 230) and incorporating provisions of 31 U.S.C. 6301-6308 (formerly the Federal Grant and Cooperative Agreement Act of 1977, Pub. L. No. 95-224), as well as general policy requirements applicable to recipients of Departmental financial assistance.

7 CFR Part 3017—USDA implementation of Governmentwide Debarment and Suspension (Nonprocurement) and 7 CFR Part 3021—Governmentwide Requirements for Drug Free Workplace (Grants).

7 CFR Part 3018—USDA implementation of Restrictions on Lobbying. Imposes prohibitions and requirements for disclosure and certification related to lobbying on recipients of Federal contracts, grants, cooperative agreements, and loans.

7 CFR Part 3019—USDA implementation of OMB Circular A-110, Uniform Administrative Requirements for Grants and Other Agreements With Institutions of Higher Education, Hospitals, and Other Nonprofit Organizations.

7 CFR Part 3052—USDA implementation of OMB Circular No. A-133, Audits of States, Local Governments, and Non profit Organizations.

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

7 CFR Part 3430 – CSREES Competitive and Noncompetitive Nonformula Grant Programs—General Grant Administrative Provisions.

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).

PART VII—AGENCY CONTACT

Applicants and other interested parties are encouraged to contact [Dennis D. Kopp](#); Assistant Administrator for Program and Analysis; Cooperative State Research, Education, & Extension Service; telephone: 202-690-0745; fax: 202-720-8987; e-mail: dkopp@csrees.usda.gov.

PART VIII—OTHER INFORMATION

A. Access to Review Information

Copies of reviews, not including the identity of reviewers, and a summary of the panel comments will be sent 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, the awardee 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. Changes in approved goals or objectives shall be requested by the awardee and approved in writing by the ADO prior to effecting such changes. In no event shall requests for such changes be approved which are outside the scope of the original approved project.

c. Changes in approved project leadership or the replacement or reassignment of other key project personnel shall be requested by the awardee and approved in writing by the ADO prior to effecting such changes.

d. 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, shall be requested by the awardee and approved in writing by the ADO prior to effecting such transfers, unless prescribed otherwise in the terms and conditions of the award.

e. The project period may be extended by CSREES without additional financial support, for such additional period(s) as the ADO determines may be necessary to complete or fulfill the purposes of an approved project, but in no case shall the total project period exceed five years. Any extension of time shall be conditioned upon prior request by the awardee and approval in writing by the ADO, unless prescribed otherwise in the terms and conditions of award.

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 CSREES 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 7 CFR part 3015, subpart V (48 FR 29114, June 24, 1983), 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 Grant Programs--General Grant Administrative Provisions](#), for the applicable definitions for this CSREES grant program.