

**Agriculture and Food Research Initiative (AFRI)
Competitive Grants Program Foundational Program
FY 2017 Request for Applications
AGRICULTURE ECONOMICS AND RURAL COMMUNITIES (AERC)**

Application Deadline – varies by program, see RFA

Total Program Funds – Approximately \$18 million

Proposed Budget Requests – Requests exceeding the budgetary guidelines will not be reviewed.

- Standard Grants must not exceed \$500,000 total (including indirect costs) for up to 4 years.
- Conference grants (up to \$50,000)
- Food and Agricultural Science Enhancement (FASE) grants, see RFA (link below)

Integrated or Research only Projects (Integrated projects must include research and at least one other function: education or extension; project director/applicant must be from a college or university)

Small and Medium-Sized Farms -- This program area priority will accept either research-only or integrated project applications to address priorities and related issues focusing on the development and/or adoption of new models to assist agricultural (farm, forest, or ranch) landowner/manager decision making with respect to appropriate scale management strategies and technologies to enhance economic efficiency and sustainability, including the viability and competitiveness of small and medium-size dairy, poultry, livestock, crop, forestry, and other operations. Contact – Dr. Denis Ebodaghe (202) 720-4385 or debodaghe@nifa.usda.gov Proposals due: 7/28/17

Innovation for Rural Entrepreneurship and Communities (IREC) – This Program is designed to support rigorous theoretical and empirical efforts to create or assess innovative approaches for advancing economic opportunities for rural entrepreneurs and communities. Projects may evaluate the institutional, social, or economic factors affecting decision making and policy development to enhance the economic growth and well-being of rural communities. Contact – Dr. Robbin Shoemaker (202) 720-5468 or rshoemaker@nifa.usda.gov or Dr. Wesley Dean (202) 689-4286 or wesley.dean@nifa.usda.gov. Proposals due: 7/27/17

Research Projects (Research only)

Economics, Markets and Trade -- This priority research area encourages the development of theories, methods and applications of economics. It encourages applications in the following broad areas: agricultural market structure and performance; international trade; agricultural production and resource use; consumer behavior; farm labor and immigration and policy; agricultural policy design and impacts; technology development and adoption; and science and innovation policy.. Contact – Dr. Robbin Shoemaker (202) 720-5468 or rshoemaker@nifa.usda.gov Proposals due: 7/6/17

Environmental and Natural Resource Economics -- This Program Area Priority examines the interrelationship of natural resources and the environment with agriculture and rural communities. Research projects funded through this priority will advance economic theories, methods, tools, analyses and applications that contribute to understanding an ecological approach to agriculture (including forestry and aquaculture) embracing production and sustainable resource management simultaneously. Contact – Dr. Robbin Shoemaker (202) 720-5468 or rshoemaker@nifa.usda.gov Proposals due: 6/15/17

NEW Program!

Social Implications of Emerging Technologies -- Advancements in gene drive research have tremendous potential for transforming agriculture and will likely continue to expand as genome editing tools, such as Clustered Regularly Interspaced Short Palindromic Repeats (CRISPR) become more refined. The National Academy of Sciences recommended that research is needed to understand the scientific, ethical, regulatory, and social consequences of developing and releasing gene-drive modified organisms. Further, a collaborative, multidisciplinary, and cautionary approach is needed before gene drive technologies are released. The critical lesson learned from our experience with new genetic technologies is that public trust in science begins with and requires ongoing transparency and open deliberation of the implications of science for society. Research Project applications must address the following:

- Assess the broad social, ethical, legal and other potential impacts that gene drive/genome editing technologies may pose for society, agricultural markets, consumer preferences, and other domains.
- Involve a range of disciplines including scientists, legal scholars, bioethicists, social scientists and researchers from the humanities, the general public, and other stakeholders to assess the technology's merits and risks and pursue an open and effective means to involve the public in deliberation over these issues. Contact – Dr. Robbin Shoemaker (202) 720-5468 or rshoemaker@nifa.usda.gov, Dr. Wesley Dean (202) 689-4286 or wesley.dean@nifa.usda.gov, and Dr. Ed Kaleikau (202) 401-1931 or ekaleikau@nifa.usda.gov

Letter of Intent is requested; LOI deadline – June 1, 2017 (5:00 p.m. Eastern Time). **Submit of Letter of Intent to:** ET-LOI@nifa.usda.gov. LOI due: 6/1/17; proposals due: 8/17/17

Link to AFRI Foundation Program RFA:

<https://nifa.usda.gov/funding-opportunity/agriculture-and-food-research-initiative-foundational-program>