

Outreach and Assistance for Socially Disadvantaged Farmers and Ranchers Competitive Grants Program

FY 2011 Request for Proposals Request for Proposals

Application Deadline: February 15, 2011



Office of Advocacy and Outreach

U.S. Department of Agriculture

**OFFICE OF ADVOCACY AND OUTREACH
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE**

REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

FUNDING OPPORTUNITY TITLE: OUTREACH AND ASSISTANCE FOR SOCIALLY DISADVANTAGED FARMERS AND RANCHERS COMPETITIVE GRANTS PROGRAM

ANNOUNCEMENT TYPE: Request for Proposals (RFP)

FUNDING OPPORTUNITY NUMBER: OAO-00003

CATALOG OF FEDERAL DOMESTIC ASSISTANCE (CDFA) NUMBER: 10.443

This program is listed in the Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance under number 10.443, Outreach and Assistance for Socially Disadvantaged Farmers and Ranchers Competitive Grants Programs.

DATES: Applications must be received by Grants.gov by close of business (COB) on February 15, 2011 (5:00 p.m. Pacific Standard Time) or mailed and post marked on or before February 15, 2011. Applications received after this deadline or postmarked after this deadline will not be considered for funding.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY: The Office of Advocacy and Outreach (OAO) requests applications for the Outreach and Assistance for Socially Disadvantaged Farmers and Ranchers Competitive Grants Program (OASDFR). This announcement seeks applications from eligible organizations able to provide outreach and technical assistance to socially disadvantage farmers, ranchers and forest landowners (SDFRFL) within a defined geographic area in a linguistically appropriate manner. The intent of this portion of the OASDFR program is to focus specifically on connecting socially disadvantaged farmers, ranchers and forest landowners to USDA programs. Approximately \$19 million will be available through this RFP.

Scope of Work. Proposed activities must assist socially disadvantaged farmers, ranchers and forest landowners in two or more of the priority areas:

1. Assist SDFRFL in owning and operating farms, ranches and forest land areas;
2. Assist SDFRFL in participating equitably in the full range of USDA programs
3. Assist current and prospective SDFRFL in a linguistically appropriate manner; and
4. Provide other innovative agricultural related outreach and technical assistance and education to SDFRFL; and

Award Information. The total estimated funding expected to be available for awards under this competitive opportunity is 19 million for outreach, education, assistance and technical assistance to SDFRFL. These funds are made available for the following:

1. Title 7 chapter 55 section 2279 (a)(1)(2), authorizes funds for grants to eligible community-based organizations and institutions to provide outreach and technical assistance to encourage and assist SDFRFL
2. OASDFR Supplemental Funding for the extension of projects for existing OASDFR active grantees. The intended purpose of these grant extensions are to provide outreach and technical assistance and increase the participation of socially disadvantage farmers, ranchers and forest land owners participation in agricultural programs offered by the Department. *Section X of this RFP identifies the funding process for supplemental funds.*

Multiple submissions are not invited for new grant proposals, as referenced in the award information above, number 1. However, current OASDFR Active Grantees can apply for funds available under 1 and 2. New OASDFR Applicants can only apply under 1 above. Applications will be reviewed consistent with their relevant applicant pools.

Funding Opportunities Description. The approximate funds available for FY 2011 for Outreach and Assistance for SDFRFL are \$19,000,000: Title 7 chapter 55 section (a)(1)(2), and *Supplemental Grant Funds.*

Maximum Grant Amount and Term of Grant.

The Agency will fund up to \$1,200,000 per grant for project activities identified in this RFP. Annual budgets for such projects must not exceed 400,000 per year. **Proposed project periods are not to exceed three years.**

Partial Funding. In appropriate circumstances, the Agency reserves the right to partially fund certain proposals by funding discrete portions or phases of proposed projects. If the Agency decides to partially fund a proposal, it will do so in a manner that does not prejudice any applicants or affect the basis upon which the proposal was evaluated and selected for award, and therefore maintains the integrity of the competition and selection process.

Other Important Information Regarding this RFP

Electronic Application Submission through Grants.gov is Requested. Organizations considering making application are strongly encouraged to begin immediately with the registration process through Grants.gov. See Part IV. for complete details and guidance on the registration and electronic submission processes and requirements. Date and time deadlines will be strictly followed.

Application Checklist and Instructions are found at the end of the RFP in Part VIII. F. and G. It is essential that applicants read both the RFP and the Application Instructions in order to find

guidance on completing federal forms and to find templates for additional forms to be uploaded with the final application.

Electronic Subscription to OASDFR Announcements:

If you would like to receive notifications of all new announcements pertaining to the OASDFR RFP, you can register via Grants.gov at <http://www.grants.gov/search/subscribeAdvanced.do>.

- Enter the e-mail address at which you would like to receive the announcements
- Enter “10.443” for CFDA Number
- Select “Subscribe to Mailing List”

Other criteria may be selected; however, your e-mail address and the CFDA number are the only data required to receive OASDFR announcements. You do not need to be a registered user of Grants.gov to use this service. You may modify your email subscriptions or unsubscribe at any time.

PART I—FUNDING OPPORTUNITY DESCRIPTION

A. Legislative Authority and Background

Section 14004 of the Food, Conservation, and Energy Act of 2008 (FCEA) (P.L. 110-246) amended Section 2501(a) of the Food, Agriculture, Conservation, and Trade Act of 1990, Pub. L. 101-624, (7 U.S.C. 2279 (a)), which authorizes the Secretary to make grants to eligible institutions and organizations so that they may provide outreach and technical assistance to encourage and assist socially disadvantaged farmers and ranchers to own and operate farms and ranches and to participate equitably in the full range of agricultural programs offered by the Department.

The authorization was amended to require that the outreach and technical assistance being provided be used exclusively (1) to enhance coordination of the outreach, technical assistance, and education efforts authorized under agriculture programs; and (2) to assist the Secretary in (i) reaching current and prospective socially disadvantaged farmers or ranchers in a linguistically appropriate manner; and (ii) improving the participation of those farmers and ranchers in Department programs.

B. Purpose and Priorities

The primary purpose of OASDFR is to deliver outreach and technical assistance to assure opportunities for socially disadvantaged farmers and ranchers to successfully acquire, own, operate, and retain farms and ranches, and to assure equitable participation in the full range of USDA programs. Applications must contain documentation of the socially disadvantaged group that is being targeted for assistance (see Part VIII, E., definitions 33 and 34) and justification as to why the targeted group is appropriate for assistance under this program.

Proposed activities must assist socially disadvantage farmers, ranchers and forest landowners in two or more of the priority areas:

1. Assist SDFRFL in owning and operating farms, ranches and forest land areas;

2. Assist SDFRFL in participating equitably in the full range of USDA programs;
3. Assist current and prospective SDFRFL in a linguistically appropriate manner;
4. Provide Outreach and education to SDFRFL on the USDA class action and claims processes; and
5. Provide other innovative agricultural related outreach and technical assistance and education to SDFRFL.

C. Program Priority Areas

The goal of USDA agricultural programs, accompanied by specific funding for socially disadvantaged farmers and ranchers, is to increase the participation of those groups of Department Programs (RMA, AMS, NIFA, RD, FSA, NRCS). Given that goal, the specific focus for projects funded by this RFP is to enhance the coordination of the outreach, technical assistance, and education efforts authorized under agriculture programs; and improving the participation of those farmers and ranchers in Department Programs; and to assist in reaching current and prospective socially disadvantaged farmers or ranchers in a linguistically appropriate manner.

PART II— AWARD INFORMATION

A. Available Funding

The approximate funds available for FY 2011 for Outreach and Assistance for SDFRFL are \$19,000,000 for: Title 7 chapter 55 section 2279(a)(1)(2), and Supplemental Grant Funds. *The Supplemental Grant funds process is discussed in PART X of this RFP.*

B. Types of Applications

In response to this RFP, all applications should be submitted to OASDFR as “New”. Previously submitted applications for this OASDFR grant will not meet the specified criteria and should not be resubmitted. All new applications will be reviewed competitively using the selection process and evaluation criteria described in Part V—Application Review Requirements.

C. Project Type

In response to this RFP, the Agency will support Standard projects (This is a grant instrument by which the Agency agrees to support a specified level of effort for a predetermined project period without the announced intention of providing additional support at a future date).

Applicants are encouraged to coordinate with other existing regional projects, as well as establish close working relationships with the USDA offices within the defined geographic area of service. Projects that increase SDFRFL participation in USDA programs; provide outreach and technical assistance in a linguistically appropriate manner; build on existing information networks; and offer innovative or expanded activities are encouraged.

PART III—ELIGIBILITY INFORMATION

A. Eligible applicants.

Applications must state in their narratives how they comply with the following eligibility requirements:

(a) Any community-based organization, network, or coalition of community-based organizations that:

- Has demonstrated experience in providing agricultural education or other agriculturally related services, including technical assistance, to socially disadvantaged farmers, ranchers, and forest landowners during the three-year period preceding the submission of the application;
- Has provided to the Secretary documentary evidence of work with, and on behalf of (i.e., advocacy group) socially disadvantaged farmers, ranchers, and forest landowners during the three-year period preceding the submission of an application for assistance under this program (documentary evidence shall include a narrative with specific information regarding: the scope of past projects; the number of socially disadvantaged farmers, ranchers, and forest landowners served or located in the area served by the organization; activities conducted; community involvement; and copies of prior agreements, press releases, news articles, and other contemporaneous documents supporting the narrative); and
- Does not engage in activities prohibited under Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986. An organization is ineligible if: (1) part of the organization's net earnings inures to the benefit of any private shareholder or individual; (2) a substantial part of the organization's normal activities involve carrying on propaganda, or otherwise attempting, to influence legislation; and (3) the organization participates in, or intervenes in, any political campaign on behalf (or in opposition to) any candidate for public office.

(b) An institution of higher education that is accredited by an accrediting agency or state approval agency recognized by the U.S. Secretary of Education as a "reliable authority as to the quality of postsecondary education" within the scope of the Higher Education Act (HEA) of 1965, as amended. An institution on probation at the time of application is ineligible.

Applications may be submitted by any of the following:

- An 1890 institution, including Tuskegee University and West Virginia State College (as defined in the Agricultural Research, Extension, and Education Reform Act of 1998 (7 U.S.C. 7601));
- A 1994 institution (as defined in section 532 of the Equity in Educational Land-Grant Status Act of 1994 (7 U.S.C. 301 note));

- An Indian Tribal Community College or an Alaska Native Cooperative College;
- A Hispanic-serving educational institution (as defined in section 1404 of the National Agricultural Research, Extension, and Teaching Policy Act of 1977 (7 U.S.C. 3103)); and
- Any other institution of higher education (as defined in the Higher Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 1001)) that has demonstrated experience in providing agriculture education or other agriculturally related services to socially disadvantaged farmers, ranchers, and forest landowners in a region.

(c) An Indian tribe (as defined in section 4 of the Indian Self-Determination and Education Assistance Act (25 U.S.C. 450b)) or a national tribal organization that has demonstrated experience in providing agriculture education or other agriculturally related services to socially disadvantaged farmers, ranchers, and forest landowners in a region.

B. Cost Sharing or Matching

The Agency does not require matching support for this program and matching resources will not be factored into the review process as evaluation criteria.

PART IV—APPLICATION AND SUBMISSION INFORMATION

A. Content of Application

There are four major pieces to this application:

- How required four Elements (see Part I. B.) will be accomplished (Project Narrative)
- Who (individuals and their associated organizations) will be responsible for their accomplishment and those individuals' qualifications (Key Personnel descriptions)
- How each of the four elements will be funded (SF 424A Budget and Budget Narrative)
- How it all ties together, including timeframes for accomplishment and deliverables (Program of Work)

Each of these four pieces must align with each other, meaning the activities to accomplish each element and the personnel it will require to accomplish each should be stated clearly in the Project Narrative and the qualifications of those personnel (the Project Director and other senior professionals) should be clearly stated in the Key Personnel descriptions. The cost to accomplish each Element should be easily tracked in the Budget form (SF 424A) and supported in the Budget Narrative. The Program of Work will summarize the activities and responsible parties by Element, including a timetable.

In addition to these major portions of the application, several other forms, including certifications of compliance with federal policies and laws, are required in order to complete the application. Given the requirement to use certain federal forms, it is sometimes confusing as to how it all fits together. Please read through this section entirely to see all requirements, and also

use the detailed information provided in Part VIII. G. Additional Application Instructions, to assist in completing the standard forms in this RFP.

For additional assistance, feel free to contact the Program Contact for the OASDFR as listed:

Email: oasdf@osec.usda.gov

Phone: 202-720-6350, Business hours are M-F, 7:00 am – 5:00 pm ET.

WEEKLY CONFERENCE CALLS are held Tuesdays from 2:30 - 3:30 to answer questions regarding the FY2011 OASDFR RFP. Conference calls will be held for the duration of the open RFP period.

Call in number: 800-867-6144, passcode: 2631

E-mail questions in advance to OASDFR@osec.usda.gov. Questions received 24 hours prior to the call are answered on the call.

Necessary Documents. The Application Package available at Grants.gov, this RFP, and the Application Instructions found at the end of it, will guide applicants through the process of assembling the application. Electronic applications should be prepared according to the Grants.gov instructions.

Acquire a DUNS Number. A DUNS number is required to submit an application in Grants.gov. The Office of Management and Budget requires that all businesses and nonprofit applicants for Federal funds include a DUNS (Data Universal Numbering System) number in their application for a new award or renewal of an existing award. A DUNS number is a unique nine-digit sequence recognized as the universal standard for identifying and keeping track of entities receiving federal funds. The identifier is used for tracking purposes and to validate address and point of contact information for federal assistance applicants, recipients, and subrecipients. The DUNS number will be used throughout the grant life cycle. Obtaining a DUNS number is a free, one-time activity. Obtain a DUNS number by calling 1-866-705-5711 or by applying online at www.dnb.com.

Acquire or Renew Registration with the Central Contractor Registration (CCR) Database. CCR registration is required to receive funding. OAO requires that all applicants for federal financial assistance maintain current registrations in the Central Contractor Registration (CCR) database. The CCR database is the repository for standard information about federal financial assistance applicants, recipients, and subrecipients. Organizations that have previously submitted applications via Grants.gov are already registered with CCR. Please note, however, that applicants must update or renew their CCR registration at least once per year to maintain an active status. Information about CCR registration procedures can be accessed at www.ccr.gov.

Electronic Signature. Applications submitted through Grants.gov constitute submission as electronically signed applications. The registration and e-authentication process establishes the Authorized Organization Representative (AOR). When you submit the application through Grants.gov, the name of your authorized organization representative on file will be inserted into the signature line of the application. Applicants must register the individual who is able to make legally binding commitments for the applicant organization as the AOR. Helpful information to

assist with electronic submission is found in Part VIII. H. in the Application Instructions at the end of this RFP.

The following is a narrative description of the four major components and suggestions for information to include in each, as well as information on additional required forms. **If any discrepancy between the Grants.gov and these RFP instructions exists, the information contained in this RFP is overriding and is to be followed.** Follow the Application Instructions and use the Application Checklist provided at Part VIII. F. to be certain that all required parts are included in the application.

1) Required Forms found in the Application Package on Grants.gov

a. Application for Federal Assistance, OMB Standard Form 424 – Grants.gov form. This form will be part of the Application Package downloaded from Grants.gov. The Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance Number (block 10) is 10.443, Outreach and Assistance for Socially Disadvantaged Farmers and Ranchers Competitive Grants Programs. Please complete this form in its entirety (including your zip + 4 which is your zip code plus the additional 4 digit code).

Detailed instructions for completing the fields on this form are contained in Part VIII. G., Application Instructions, found at the end of this RFP.

b. Budget Information for Non-Construction Programs. Standard Form 424 A – Grants.gov form. This form will be part of the Application Package downloaded from Grants.gov. **NOTE:** It is necessary to fit the funding needs of this RFP into the format offered on the SF 424A; therefore, please read the directions provided in Part VIII. G. carefully. For additional assistance, please contact the OASDFR program contact listed at the end of this section.

c. Assurances – Non-Construction Programs – SF-SF424B – Grants.gov form.

Note: Successful applicants will be required to sign and submit additional Certifications related to Drug-Free Workplace and Debarment and Suspension at the time of grant award.

d. Community-based organizations, network, or coalition of community-based organizations must submit:

1. Articles of Incorporation;
2. Documentary evidence of work with, and on behalf of, socially disadvantaged farmers, ranchers and forest landowners; and
3. Prior Year Annual Budget

Community –based organizations, network, or coalition of community-based organizations that do not submit the Articles of Incorporation, Documentary evidence of

work with, and on behalf of, socially disadvantaged farmers, ranchers and forest landowners, Prior Year Annual Budget will not be considered for funding under this RFP.

2) Mandatory Attachments

NOTE: follow the list of Attachments as shown below and on the Application Checklist in Part VIII. F. at the end of this RFP. Title each file in the document header as shown on the Application Checklist and save the file with that same name. Include the file name again in the document footer, accompanied by a page number. Some of the required items are to be created by the applicant as a Word document, but each must be converted to and saved as a Portable Document Format or PDF file. Some of the required elements should use the templates, provided as fillable PDF forms, and downloaded as part of the Application Package or found at the end of this RFP in the Application Instructions.

All Attachments will be uploaded to the Attachments Form found as one of the required forms in the Application Package. It acts as an Attachment cover sheet.

a. Project Summary – Attachment 1. Submit as PDF document.

The Project Summary is limited to **350 words** (approximately one page, single spaced, 12 pt. font). The Project Summary must indicate the geographic area and by whom (by which organization) each of the required Elements listed in Part I. B. will be accomplished. The importance of a concise, informative Project Summary cannot be overemphasized. Lastly, applications requesting **supplemental funding**, according to the Award Information above item 3, must indicate such a request in their project summary.

b. Project Narrative – Attachment 2 Submit as PDF document.

PLEASE NOTE: The Project Narrative must be double-spaced with 1-inch margins, not exceeding 10 pages of 8 ½ by 11 inches, using a standard 12-point font, preferably Times New Roman. Pages must be numbered “1 of 10,” etc. The project abstract, tables, charts, pictures, etc., including all captions, legends, keys, subtext, etc., may be single-spaced, and will not count in the 10-page limit. All pages, including those with figures and tables, should be numbered sequentially. Applications exceeding the applicable page limitation will be at risk of being excluded from OAO review. These maximums have been established to ensure fair and equitable competition.

The project narrative should provide reviewers with enough information to effectively judge the merits of the application under the evaluation criteria listed in Part V. It is critical that applications (1) adequately define and establish the existence of the needs of SDFRFL; (2) adequately identify the experience of the organizations taking part in delivering the assistance; (3) identify the geographic area of service; (4) make a reasonable prediction of the potential impact of their project upon SDFRFL.

The Project Narrative should include all of the following:

1) Introduction – Begin by stating the applicant’s (and partners’) reason for responding to this RFP. Why does the applicant feel this project is needed, and what makes this group well-suited to accomplishing its objectives?

2) Geographic area to be served, with justification of why that area is appropriate for a project targeted at work with a socially disadvantaged group that has in the past been among those expressing the most program complaints against USDA.

3) Applicant Organization and Collaborative Arrangements, if applicable. Share the ways in which all Elements will be accomplished by an organization qualified to undertake that work. How is it that the single organization, or the partnership proposed, makes sense for the geographic area to be served? What are the relevant characteristics and experience of the organization(s) involved that make it (them) qualified to succeed at this work?

If a single applicant organization possesses all of the skills and capacity necessary to accomplish the required components of this RFP, that should be documented. If, alternatively, it is proposed that a partnership of eligible organizations will accomplish the objectives, those arrangements should be fully described. A Letter of Commitment signed by the Authorized Organization Representative (AOR) for each of the partner organizations collaborating on the project should be included in Attachment 9, described later in this section. The AOR should be the Chief Executive Officer of the organization or a person senior enough in the institution to be held accountable for commitments by the organization. It should specifically state which of the grant’s components the organization has agreed to undertake. Those partnership commitments should also be reflected the budget and budget narrative.

If consultants are needed to accomplish tasks, those individuals should be identified and fully justified as well. Information on how requested grant funds will be allocated to support the work of collaborators and consultants is also required in the budget portion of the application.

When appropriate, the project should be coordinated with the efforts of other State and/or national programs. Those other efforts which can add value to the work performed under this grant should be referenced here and may be further documented in Letters of Support.

4) Accomplishment of Required Elements – This section should include, but not necessarily be limited to:

- A description of the proposed project activities in the sequence in which it is planned to carry them out;
- Techniques, procedures, or methodologies to be employed, including their feasibility and the rationale for their use in this project;
- Ability to perform the work in a linguistically and culturally appropriate manner;
- Means by which data will be analyzed;

- Kinds of results expected;
- Participating Departmental Programs
- Pitfalls that might be encountered; and
- Best practices and plans on dissemination of models.

5) Evaluation Component – Applications need to incorporate a project evaluation component that will permit a qualitative and quantitative assessment of expected project impacts. Such assessments need to relate to increases in participation rates in USDA programs, increases in the ownership of farming and ranching operations, increases in farm and ranch outputs (sales by volume and/or price), and/or decreases in foreclosures and other adverse actions.

c. Key Personnel - Attachment 3. Submit as PDF Document.

It is expected that most, if not all, of the key personnel responsible for assuring each of the Elements is accomplished will be identified in this attachment. Any individuals who are not named should be identified by the qualifications the individual who will be hired to perform the activities will have, if the grant is funded.

The roles and responsibilities of each Project Director (PD) and/or collaborator should be clearly described, and the qualifying and relevant experience, education and publications of the PD and each co-PD, and other key personnel, should be stated in no more than 2 pages for each. Vitae are not to be attached; relevant publications should be included within the two pages.

It will be assumed from the individual's inclusion as a Key Personnel that he or she is expressing commitment of the time necessary to accomplish the tasks for which he/she is shown as being responsible within the Elements description in the Project Narrative.

d. Budget Narrative – Attachment 4. Submit as PDF Document.

It is strongly recommended that applicants use the Budget Detail & Narrative by Element template provided in Part VIII. G. below and as a PDF document in the Application Package. An excel format of this file may be obtained by sending an email to oasdf@osec.usda.gov.

The budget narrative should provide detail that fully describes the costs associated with each Element by object category. Not only should line item costs be identified, but supporting narrative should justify or explain the funds requested. In the budget narrative the costs for overall grants and project management should be detailed separately from Element 1 (to which the funding is attached in the SF 424A). All grants management costs should be fully supported by the budget narrative.

If other funding sources are committed to the accomplishment of the project, they should be described in the narrative as well. Those contributions should be cash or fully documented in-kind contributions. For example, the contribution of .20 of an FTE of a university statistician to assist in the data analysis should be documented, but the use of a computer or other office equipment should not be claimed as an in-kind contribution. Only those contributions necessary to show to reviewers the ability to accomplish all portions of the required Elements should be described in the Supporting Narrative sections of the template.

Subawards, or subcontracting, that the lead applicant will undertake must also be fully explained. The amount of funding each participating institution is proposed to receive by this proposal should be clearly identified, and each should be detailed on a separate Budget Detail & Narrative by Element (template in Part VIII. below). NOTE: The lead applicant must utilize at least 50% of the total funds requested. Any partner organization proposed to receive a subcontract must also be an eligible organization as stated in Part III. A. above. No more than three subcontracts are allowed. Each recipient of funding should be fully aware of federal cost principles and use of funds restrictions as detailed in the Administrative and National Policy Requirements listed in Part VI. C. below.

Only items or services that are necessary for the successful completion of the project will be funded as permitted under the relevant statutes and the applicable Federal Cost principles. Salaries of project personnel should be requested in proportion to the effort that they would devote to the project.

e. Program of Work – Attachment 5. Submit as PDF Document.

The Program of Work is used to provide a timeframe for task accomplishment and to link together key elements of the application in one summary format. Use the Program of Work template provided in the Application Package.

f. Results from prior OASDFR funded support – Attachment 6. Submit as PDF Document. If the PD or a co-PD has received OASDFR support (formerly referred to as 2501 program) in the past 5 years, information on documented qualitative and quantitative results from that prior funding is required. This information should include a statement identifying a linkage, if one exists, between those prior results and the objectives of this funding round. This information will be used in the review of the application. 1 Page Limit per award. See recommended template in Part VIII. G. below or as an Attachment to the Application Package.

g. Appendices to the Application – Attachment 7 Submit as PDF Documents.

Letters of Commitment and Letters of Support are to be attached as appendices; scan and attach them as PDF documents.

The addition of appendices should not be used to circumvent or go beyond the page limitations.

B. Form of Application Submission - Electronic Submission Requirements and other submission requirements.

1. In FY 2011, OASDFR will only accept electronic application submissions with all documents and attachments utilizing the portable document format (PDF) technology. It is expected that grants will be submitted through Grants.gov. Be aware that additional time is required to complete the electronic application process. Submitting through Grants.gov allows for electronic signatures and reduces the need to print, scan, and upload documents.

Only if the applicant experiences significant technical difficulties with Grants.gov, may the application be submitted electronically directly to OAO. NOTE: it will only be accepted if OAO is provided evidence that the applicant had successfully completed registration with Grants.gov. It is essential that organizations which intend to apply to this funding opportunity begin the Grants.gov registration process immediately. Limitations on data storage capacity within OAO and the need to transmit applications to reviewers in electronic format make it extremely difficult to accept applications directly to OAO or in paper format. In the rare circumstance that an eligible applicant organization lacks access to the Internet, that organization should communicate by with the program staff of the OASDFR to obtain permission to submit the application in hard-copy paper format. Any alternative electronic submissions must be directed to the following email account.

Email: oasdf@osec.usda.gov

Phone: 202-720-6350, Business hours are M-F, 7:00 am – 5:00 pm ET.

See Part VIII. H. Helpful Information to Assist with Electronic Submission, at the end of this RFP, for assistance with registration with Grants.gov and electronic submission.

2. All hard copy applications must be submitted by Close of Business (COB), 5:00 p.m. Pacific Time, on February 15, 2011. Applications received after the applicable deadline will not be considered for funding. Again, it is the expectation that applications will be submitted via Grants.gov; only prior approval due to lack of Internet access as described above, or documentation of technical difficulties within the Grants.gov portal, or extreme circumstances, such as severe weather conditions, will be acceptable reasons for an alternative means of submission.
3. Note the attachments must be submitted using the Portable Document Format (PDF). Any proposals containing non-PDF documents will be excluded from Agency review. It is necessary to require PDF documents in order to assure the information is the original work of the applicant containing commitments the applicant can be held accountable to; PDF documents cannot be altered by others during the transmission process.
4. Section IV above identifies all requires items for proposals to be considered for funding. Partial applications will be excluded from Agency review.
5. With documented prior approval, resubmitted applications will be accepted until close of business on the closing date in the RFP.

C. Submission Dates and Times

Electronic applications must be submitted to Grants.gov by COB on February 15, 2011 (5:00 p.m., Pacific Standard Time). Applications received after this deadline electronically will not be considered for funding. Applications mailed directly to the

Agency (having received prior permission to do so) must be postmarked on or before the close date of this RFP. Mailed applications must be submitted to:

U. S. Department of Agriculture
Departmental Administration
Office of Advocacy and Outreach
ATTN: Lavinia Panizo
1400 Independence Avenue, S.W.
Rm. 520-A, Whitten Building, stop 9821
Washington, D.C. 20250-9821

The receipt of all applications will be acknowledged by e-mail. Therefore, applicants are strongly encouraged to provide accurate e-mail addresses, where designated, on the SF-424 Application for Federal Assistance.

If the AOR has not received a confirmation message from OAO within 30 days of submission of the application, please contact 202-720-6350 and request the proposal number assigned to the application.

If you have any questions related to preparing an application for electronic submission, contact:

Email: osadfr@osec.usda.gov

Phone: 202-720-6350, Business hours are M-F, 7:00 am – 5:00 pm ET.

If you have any questions related to Grants.gov, contact:

Email: support@grants.gov

Toll Free: 1-800-518-4726, 24 hours/day, 7 days/week, excluding Federal holidays.

D. Funding Restrictions

- Applicants must have a current Negotiated Indirect Cost Rate Agreement (NICRA) in order to be awarded recovery of indirect costs. Recovery may be up to the rate stated in the NICRA; however, it should be recognized that the amount of indirect cost recovery requested limits the availability of funds to provide direct service to socially disadvantaged farmers and ranchers.
- Funds may not be used for the renovation or refurbishment of research spaces (including energy retrofitting); purchase or installations of fixed equipment in such spaces; or planning, repair, rehabilitation, acquisition, or construction of buildings or facilities.
- No more than one-half of the total funds available may be subcontracted to third parties, and it is expected that each such third party would be an eligible organization as listed in Part III.A. No more than three subcontracts are allowed.

PART V—APPLICATION REVIEW REQUIREMENTS

A. General

Each application will be evaluated in a two-part process.

- First, each application will be screened to ensure that it meets the administrative requirements as set forth in the regulations and RFP.
- Second, applications that meet these requirements will be technically evaluated by a review panel. A number of expert reviewers will conduct a merit review based on the evaluation criteria. Final approval of those applications recommended for award will be made by the Assistant Secretary for Administration. Final approval will take into consideration diversity in geographic areas and socially disadvantaged groups identified for service by the applicants.

Reviewers will be selected based upon training and experience in relevant fields including outreach and technical assistance, extension and education, statistical and ethnographic data collection and analysis, agriculture and agricultural programs of USDA, and ability to deliver services in a linguistically and culturally appropriate manner. Reviewers will be drawn from a diverse group of subject matter experts placed on review panels that are balanced in terms of gender, ethnicity, age, and professional expertise and education.

The individual reviewers will assess the applications based upon each of the required components of the project, as specified in the evaluation criteria listed below.

B. Evaluation Criteria

The Agency will use weighted criteria to evaluate the eligible proposals. The highest-ranking applicants will be selected based on the allocation of funds available. Each proposal will be evaluated and numerically rated on each criteria, based solely on the information contained in the proposal. Each proposal will contain a project summary that indicates the geographic area, the type of project, measurable accomplishments and the benefit to socially disadvantage farmers, ranchers and forest landowners for receiving Supplemental Funding under this RFP.

Application narratives must address the following OASDFR goals:

- 1) The number of socially disadvantaged farmers, ranchers, and forest landowners that the applicant proposes to assist;
- 2) The number of **prospective** socially disadvantaged farmers, ranchers, and forest landowners that the applicant proposes to assist;
- 3) The number of USDA programs that socially disadvantaged farmers, ranchers, and forest landowners are introduced to and encouraged to participate in Departmental Programs;

- 4) The number of counties served;
- 5) Organizations who provide services to SDFRFL who have annual budgets of:
 \$501,001 or More, \$300,001 to \$500,000, \$300,000 or less;
- 6) The number of partnerships and organizational collaborations; and
- 7) Ability to to educate SDFRFL on the class action and claims processes.

Final panel reviewer instruction will be provided to all participating panelists prior to evaluation scoring.

Scoring Methodology

The following scoring methodology is applied to the peer review process for all solicitations within the OASDFR Program. The Project Narrative will be scored according to the above criteria.

The weight associated with each category will be customized by solicitation and a weighted score will be calculated for each application.

Peer review instructions for the solicitation will explain the scoring method.

Scoring does not dictate funding decision; it is one of the variables used to make funding decisions.

Scores are pre-decisional and are for internal information only.

The scoring procedure is as follows:

Each reviewer will rate each criterion for a given application on a scale from 0 (unacceptable) to 10 (excellent).

Each criterion is assigned a weight (percentage) defined for that solicitation. Total criteria weight must equal 100 percent.

Each criterion score is multiplied by 10 and then by the weighing percentage to determine the weighted score. The sum of the weighted scores equals the overall application score.

For those panels where there is a significant variance in scores and comments, OASDFR will provide a skilled, experienced facilitator to guide a consensus review where the reviewers discuss the areas where there is significant variance in scores.

C. Conflicts of Interest and Confidentiality

During the review process, extreme care will be taken to prevent any actual or perceived conflicts of interest that may impact review or evaluation. Those applying to serve on review panels will be required to complete a statement identifying current activities in related fields, professional relationships with potential applicants, and other information that will aid OAO in assuring fair and equitable review of applications.

Names of submitting institutions, 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.

PART VI—AWARD ADMINISTRATION

A. General

All funds granted by the Agency under this RFP 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 (7 CFR part 3015 and 7 CFR part 3019).

B. Award Notice

The USDA award document shall include at a minimum the following:

1. Legal name and address of performing organization or institution to whom the Administrator has awarded a grant 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 grant number assigned by the Department;
5. Project period, specifying the amount of time the Department intends to support the project without requiring re-competition for funds;
6. Total amount of Departmental financial assistance approved by the Administrator during the project period;
7. Legal authority(ies) under which the grant is awarded;
8. Appropriate Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance (CFDA) number;
9. Approved budget plan for categorizing allocable project funds to accomplish the stated purpose of the grant award; and

10. Certifications regarding Lobbying, Debarment and Suspension (AD 1047), and Drug-Free Workplace (AD 1049). These will have to be completed, signed, and submitted prior to grant award.

11. Other information or provisions deemed necessary by OAO to carry out its respective granting activities or to accomplish the purpose of a particular grant.

C. Expected Program Outputs, Performance Measures, and Reporting Requirements

For applications recommended for funding, instructions on preparing and submitting project documentation will be provided to the applicant by the agency contact. **Documentation must be submitted before OAO funds will be released.**

1) Program Outputs and Reporting Requirements

Applications that are funded will establish, with the advice and concurrence of the OAO, a timeframe for accomplishment of each of the required components of the project. Quarterly progress reports will be required for the duration of the project. A summary report on each component, presenting data, analysis, findings, and recommendations, as appropriate, will be expected of each grantee, again in a timeframe that is established with OAO. Failure to provide reports of adequate substance or in a timely fashion may result in renegotiation of the grant amount or termination of the grant award and project.

At this time the OAO is undertaking the establishment of its data collection and storage methodologies; thus, further details on these reporting expectations will be forthcoming and communicated to successful applicants. However, it is a basic expectation that data will be collected and reported in a sound manner, that findings and recommendations will be supported by data and other evidence, and that project activities and accomplishments will be conveyed in concise and accessible language. Both the qualifications of key personnel and the project budget should reflect the need to produce reports of professional caliber.

If a project is funded, the Project Director will be required to attend a Project Director meeting to be held at the commencement of the project. Reasonable travel expenses should be included as part of the project budget.

2) Performance Measures

Successful grantees will be required to maintain data describing the outputs of the funded activity. Several of the outputs expected by this RFP are qualitative, as in determination of the causes and nature of the barriers between socially disadvantaged farmers and ranchers within the region of service and USDA agencies. Others can be measured quantitatively. Below is a preliminary list of the performance measures likely to be established for grant recipients; a final list will be established at the commencement of the grant period. *Applicants that receive funding should be aware that documentary evidence (including the names of individual served) should be retained in their program files as support for the claim on numbers served when reporting on the Performance Measures below.*

- Number of socially disadvantaged farmers and ranchers and prospective farmers and ranchers within region interviewed regarding utilization of USDA programs and services

- Number of socially disadvantaged farmers and ranchers and prospective farmers and ranchers within region who are provided outreach and technical assistance, by category of service (telephone, personal individual meeting, group meeting)
- Number of outreach and/or technical assistance contacts delivered to socially disadvantaged farmers and ranchers
- Number of socially disadvantaged farmers and ranchers who request services from USDA field offices
- Number of socially disadvantaged farmers and ranchers who make application to USDA for new program assistance
- Number of socially disadvantaged farmers and ranchers who receive new assistance applied for
- Number of socially disadvantaged farmers and ranchers who make application for modification or servicing of existing USDA funded project, grant, or loan
- Number of socially disadvantaged farmers and ranchers who receive modification or servicing of existing project, grant, or loan
- Number of units of land (acres being farmed, acres receiving conservation measures, yards of soil moved, or other appropriate measure) receiving treatment through applications assisted by grantee
- Number of socially disadvantaged farmers and ranchers who rate the services of the applicant as successful in assisting the agricultural producer in determining whether or not to apply for USDA programs and similar business decisions
- Number of socially disadvantaged farmers and ranchers who avoid foreclosure or other servicing actions that would have a negative effect on farm and ranch operations as a result of assistance funded by this grant award
- Amount of increase in farm and ranch outputs (e.g. sales by volume or price) by those socially disadvantaged farmers and ranchers who receive assistance funded by this grant award
- Amount of increase in farm and ranch income of those socially disadvantaged farmers and ranchers who receive assistance funded by this grant award
- Amount of increase in farm and ranch ownership among those socially disadvantaged farmers and ranchers who receive assistance funded by this grant award

PART VII—AGENCY CONTACT

Applicants and other interested parties are encouraged to contact the Office of Advocacy and Outreach or mail or federal express to:

U. S. Department of Agriculture
 Departmental Administration
 Office of Advocacy and Outreach
 1400 Independence Avenue, S.W.
 Rm. 520-A, Whitten Building, stop 9821
 Washington, D.C. 20250-9821

OASDFR Hotline: (202) 720-6350 or 800-880-4183

E-mail: oasdf@osec.usda.gov.

PART VIII—OTHER INFORMATION

A. Access to Review Information

Upon written request from the applicant, a summary of the panel comments, not including the identity of the reviewers, will be sent to the applicant after the review and awards process has been completed.

Applicants are reminded that in order to achieve the diversity in geographic area and socially disadvantaged groups desired, and given the limited amount of funding available, that many meritorious applications will not be able to be funded.

B. Use of Funds; Changes

Modifications of the statement of work, or changes in the grantee's budget may be approved by the Agency provided, in the Agency's opinion, the modification is justified and there is a likelihood that the grantee can accomplish the goals set out and approved in the statement of work during the period of the modifications.

C. Confidential Aspects of Applications and Awards

When an application results in a grant, it becomes a part of the record of OAO transactions, available to the public upon specific request. Information that OAO 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 a grant will be retained by the OAO 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

The Outreach and Assistance to Socially Disadvantaged Farmers and Ranchers grant program has been declared exempt from Executive Order 12371, a process for intergovernmental review. The provisions of the Paperwork Reduction Act to apply and are noted on the standard forms used in this application.

E. OASDFR Application Checklist

Applicants should be certain that each of the forms listed below has been downloaded as part of the Application Package.

At the time of submission, applicants should be certain that each of the Grants.gov forms and Mandatory Attachments listed below have been completed and uploaded to Grants.gov.

NOTE: Depending upon the software the applicant has on his or her computer, it may be necessary to complete forms, print them out, scan them, and re-save the scanned document on the applicant's computer in order to upload completed documents. Applicants should begin immediately to investigate their computer's compatibility with downloading, creating, and saving documents in PDF format. See Part VIII. H. below for more information on electronic submission.

Grants.gov forms – these forms will be downloaded as part of the Application Package (found at Grants.gov; Basic Search, input CDFA number 10.443)

Downloaded Submitted

<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	SF 424 – Application for Federal Assistance
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	SF 424A – Budget Information, Non-Construction Programs
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	SF 424B – Assurances –Non-Construction Programs
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Attachments (cover page for Attachments grantee will provide)

Attachments

Submission Instructions:

1. Label the Attachments as stated below and save them with that file name on computer.
2. Each Attachment should be labeled and paginated in the footer, for example:

Attachment 1 - Project Summary

3. Each Attachment that is created as a Word document must be converted to a PDF document, saved to the applicant's computer, then uploaded to the Attachments cover page which will have been downloaded from Grants.gov in the Application Package. Attachments 5, 6, and 7 should utilize the fillable PDF templates provided in the Application Package and found in the Application Instructions below.

Mandatory Attachments

Downloaded Submitted

<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Attachment 1 – Project Summary
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Attachment 2 – Project Narrative
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Attachment 3 – Key Personnel (all Key Personnel statements should be included and paginated in one document)
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Attachment 4 – Budget Narrative – see suggested template in Application Instructions, below, and provided as a PDF template in

the Application Package. Budget Detail & Narrative by Element

Attachment 5 – Program of Work (form provided below on p.34)

Attachment 6 – Previous Results

Optional Attachments

Attachment 7 – Letters of Commitment and Letters of Support

F. Additional Application Instructions

Instructions for completing SF 424 Application for Federal Assistance

Detailed instructions can also be found at <http://www.grants.gov/techlib/SF424Instructions.pdf>

Field 1. Type of Submission – Application

Field 2. Type of Application – New

Fields 3. – 7. Not applicable for OASDFR applications; leave blank.

Field 8. Applicant Information –

- a. This must be the legal name of the applicant organization (See Part III. A, Eligible Applicants to assure organization is eligible to apply).
- b. Employer or Taxpayer Identification Number (assigned by the IRS)
- c. DUNS number, obtained at time of Grants.gov registration
Visit http://www.dnb.com/us/duns_update/ to retrieve it if necessary
- d. Complete all appropriate fields including zip code + 4
- e. Complete if applicable
- f. This should be the Project Director responsible for substantive accomplishment of the project; complete and accurate information is essential

Field 8. Type of Application – Only ‘New’ applications are permitted.

Field 9. Type of Applicant – Applicant may select up to three descriptors. NOTE – if more than one organization is committed to the accomplishment of this project, through Letters of Commitment, those organizations should be described by selecting the appropriate applicant type in the second and third descriptor choices.

Field 10. Name of Federal Agency - Select United States Department of Agriculture

Field 11. CFDA Number: 10.443;

CFDA Title: Outreach and Assistance to Socially Disadvantaged Farmers and Ranchers

Field 12. Funding Opportunity Number: OAO-00002

Title: same as Field 11.

Field 13. Leave blank

Field 14. Areas Affected by Project Create a table such as the one below (Word or Excel, convert it to PDF) and upload it as an attachment when completing this form. A PDF form of this table is provided as a template in the Application Package.

STATE	Counties
Primary Socially Disadvantaged Group (by race or ethnicity)	

Field 15. Title - Give a descriptive title to the project and indicate **if you are requesting consideration for funding under “Other Projects”**.

Do not upload Attachments at this point in the application.

Field 16. Congressional Districts - Complete Congressional Districts for both lead applicant’s primary office and the project area.

Field 17. Proposed Project Start Date and End Date – Please select the start date of the project at least two months after the submission due date for the program. Choose the end date to correspond to the end of the 12th month after the start date.

Field 18. Estimated Funding – Enter only the Federal portion, which is the amount of money being requested from the OASDFR program in this application.

Field 19. E.O. 12372 – Select c. the OASDFR grant program is not subject to State review.

Field 20. Federal debt – complete if applicable

Field 21. Official Acceptance of Responsibility – complete all fields highlighted in yellow.

Instructions for completing SF 424A Budget Information for Non-Construction Programs

Read these instructions completely and carefully. Applicant will need to work collaboratively with any other partner organizations anticipated in order to compile a budget within the maximum program award amount of \$400,000. Applicant and partner organizations will also be providing significant budget information in the Budget Detail & Narrative by Element attachments.

Section A. Applicants will note that the SF 424-A (from the SF 424A Family on grants.gov) is presented such that applicants may provide budget information for four “Grant Program Functions or Activities”. Label blocks 1., 2., 3., and 4. with Elements 1., 2., 3., and 4. Insert 10.443 in column (b) for each Element. The budget established for each function should correspond with the funding requested to accomplish each of the required Elements established in Part I. B. The funding requested will be entered in column Federal (e) for new grants. Leave columns (c) and (d) blank.

The additional costs of grants management should be clearly established within Element 1. Overall grant management costs (Project Director, financial manager, clerical) should be included in the costs for Element 1 in the SF 424A (which is a summary document), add the descriptor “Plus Grants Management Costs” to the Element 1. label in column (a). In addition, grants or project management costs must be detailed in a separate Budget Detail & Narrative by Element (see below).

In order to establish total costs for each Element, and for the grants management overall, it will be necessary to establish detailed costs according to the line items in Section B. That detailed cost breakdown should be submitted as part of the Budget Detail & Narrative attachments (see 7. below). Doing the Budget Detail & Narrative calculations first will significantly aid applicants in compiling the budget figures for the SF 424A.

Section B. Applicants will aggregate costs by object class category within each of the four Elements, i.e, total personnel costs from within Element 1. will be presented in 6.(1) a. Block 7. Program Income will be blank, as no fees should be charged to accomplish any of the required Elements. Again, doing the Budget Detail & Narrative calculations first will significantly aid applicants in compiling the budget figures for the SF 424A. This form will also assist in determining the Indirect Charges allowed to be charged for recovery by applicants. Remember indirect cost recovery requested must be included within the maximum award amount.

Section C. This section is to be left blank. In order to judge applicant’s effectiveness in utilizing federal grant dollars evenly across applications, applicants should not report additional funds available in this section, including matching funds, which are not a requirement of this grant. If the applicant has other sources of funding committed to the accomplishment of one or more of the Elements, that may be noted in the Budget Detail & Narrative attachments.

Section D. Working with each Element budget, estimate the cash needs for the total project by each of the four quarters of the grant.

Section E. Label each of the blocks 16., 17., 18., and 19. with the associated Elements 1., 2., 3., and 4. Remember that overall grants management costs should be included in Element 1. The

total for (b) First year should be derived from the total given on page one of this form in column (e).

The budget should include reasonable amounts to attend the annual two day Project Director meeting in Washington, D.C. This cost should be included in the Element where Grants Management costs are detailed.

Section F. Indirect Costs – See Part IV. Section D., Funding Restrictions, of this Part for indirect cost information.

Direct Charges (Field 21) is the total federal funds requested, less the amount of indirect cost recovery requested. Indirect costs allowed for projects submitted under this announcement will be limited to the current cost recovery rate (NICRA) the applicant has negotiated with the federal government. Documentation of a current and valid negotiated rate should be available in the applicant's files. The total Indirect Charges (indirect cost recovery requested) should be entered in Field 22. Together they comprise the total amount of grant funds requested.

Additional information on completing the SF 424A can be found at http://www.grants.gov/assets/DraftInstructionsSF424%20A_DOL.pdf ; however, applicants are cautioned that these instructions do not reflect the four required Element approach necessary to show use of funds for this RFP.

SF 424B – Assurances for Non-Construction Programs is self-explanatory.

Mandatory Attachments

As part of the Application Package, applicants will have downloaded a form simply titled Attachments Form. Applicants will see that it actually contains 15 lines where Attachments can be uploaded by clicking on Add Attachment, then searching the applicant's computer for the appropriate file name (through the browser window) then clicking on Insert (or Save).

It is critical that applicants save the attachment files using both the Attachment number and the file name as the document name, for example: Attachment 1 – Project Summary. Some files, such as the Key Personnel documents or the Budget Detail & Narrative by Element forms, will have to be accumulated by the applicant into a single attachment and paginated sequentially before it is uploaded. Word processing software such as Microsoft Word provides instructions in the Help function on how to accomplish that.

It is also critical that the applicant upload the files in order. The Attachments Form will assist in this process.

See templates for Attachments 5, 6, and 7 at the end of these Application Instructions in Word format; they are available as fillable PDF files as part of the Application Package. All other attachments should be created by applicants as Word files then converted to PDFs.

G. Helpful Information to Assist with Submission Requirements

Grants.gov has a comprehensive Applicant User's Guide as well as helpful online tutorials and a 24/7 Support Desk available at 1-800- 518- GRANTS. Applicants are encouraged to use these assistance resources as they provide step by step detail on how to navigate Grants.gov.

Further suggestions:

1. START RIGHT NOW with the Grants.Gov registration process. It will require the applicant to obtain a DUNS number and to register with the federal government's CCR system. Information and assistance on these registration procedures can be found at http://www.grants.gov/applicants/organization_registration.jsp
2. 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>.
3. Applications for this grant program should be submitted through the Grants.gov website. To access the electronic application via Grants.gov, go to www.grants.gov, under the "Apply for Grants" heading on the left side of page and click on "Download a Grant Application Package." Enter the CFDA number 10.443 in the appropriate box to search by Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance (CFDA) number. *If Internet access in order to get the application package is a barrier to applying, please contact the program contact listed below immediately to gain assistance in accessing the application package.*
4. Electronic Submission. An electronic time stamp is generated within the system when the application is successfully received by Grants.gov. The applicant will receive an acknowledgement of receipt and a tracking number from Grants.gov with the successful transmission of their application. Applicants should print and save the receipt.
5. Grants.gov will provide either an error or a successfully received transmission message. The Grants.gov Support desk reports that some applicants abort the transmission because they think that nothing is occurring during the transmission process. Please be patient and give the system time to process the application. Uploading and transmitting many files will take some time to be processed.
6. Customer Support. The Grants.gov website provides customer support via (800) 518-GRANTS (this is a toll-free number) or through email at support@grants.gov 24 hours a day, seven days a week to address Grants.gov technology issues. Callers will be issued a ticket number to document that they had called to seek assistance. Applicants should keep that number in their records in case problems occur with timely submission. For technical assistance on program related questions, contact the numbers listed in Section VII. Agency Contact.

If you have any questions related to preparing an application for electronic submission, contact:

Email: oasdf@osec.usda.gov

Phone: 202-720-6350, Business hours are M-F, 7:00 am – 5:00 pm ET.

If you have any questions related to Grants.gov, contact:

Toll Free: 1-800-518-4726, Business hours are M-F, 7:00 am – 9:00 pm ET, excluding Federal holidays.

Budget Detail & Narrative– By Element – Attachment 4

This is a suggested format for the applicant to use for the detailed budget/costs breakdown. Each cost item and its accompanying narrative should clearly show how the total charge for that item was determined.

NOTE: One of these Element Budget Details should be completed for each partner that will be receiving grant funds to accomplish the Element. If the partner has other funds (its own or from another grant) that it will be using to accomplish the objectives of this project, those should be explained in the supporting narrative.

A separate Element Budget Detail should be provided for Project Management; due to space limitations on the SF 424A, these costs are contained on the SF 424A within Element 1.

Element: _____ **Applicant Organization:** _____
Organization that will accomplish this work: _____

A. Salaries and Wages. Provide Names and/or Titles of key project personnel				
Name/Title of Position	Full Time Monthly Salary	% FTE Paid by Grant	No. of Months	Grant Funds
	\$			\$
	\$			\$
	\$			\$
	\$			\$
				\$
Subtotal for Salaries				\$
B. Fringe Benefits. If more than one rate is used, list each rate and the wage or salary base.				
Rate	Total Wage or Salary Base at That Rate		Grant Funds	
	\$		\$	

	\$	\$
Subtotal for Fringe Benefits		\$
Supporting Narrative. For this section of the Element budget, briefly explain the cost components.		

C. Travel. Grants may not pay higher than the federally approved (GSA) rates. See www.gsa.gov/perdiem for current rates.						
Key Persons (by job title) Traveling on Grant	Estimated Travel Days	Per Diem Per Day	Total Per Diem	Estimated Travel Cost Per Day	Total Mileage/ Vehicle	Total Estimated Travel Cost
		\$	\$	\$	\$	\$
		\$	\$	\$	\$	\$

		\$	\$	\$	\$	\$
		\$	\$	\$	\$	\$
		\$	\$	\$	\$	\$
Subtotal for Travel			\$	\$	\$	\$

Supporting Narrative. For this section of Element budget, briefly explain the cost components.

D. Equipment. OMB Circular A-122 defines equipment as items costing \$5,000 or greater. In the unlikely event that the applicant is requesting funding for such equipment, detail it here.

Equipment	Cost
	\$
	\$
Subtotal for Equipment	\$

Supporting Narrative. For this section of the Element budget, briefly explain the cost components.

E. Supplies. Include consumable supplies and materials to be used in the project, by category. Include items of expendable equipment, i.e., equipment costing less than \$500 or with an estimated useful life of less than two years. Equipment costing more than that should be listed in the Other Costs category (Category G, below). Printing costs should be included in Other.

Category	Item	Grant Funds	Total
		\$	\$

		\$	\$
		\$	\$
		\$	\$
		\$	\$
		\$	\$
		\$	\$
		\$	\$
Subtotal for Supplies			\$
Supporting Narrative. For this section of the Element budget, briefly explain the cost components.			

F. Consultant/Contractual Fees. This should include payments for professional and technical consultants participating in the project. Recall, these funds should be very limited and may require prior OAO approval before grant award it made.					
Name/Title	Purpose of Contract	Duration of Contract	Contract Cost	Additional Expense (e.g.	Total

		(months)		Travel)	
			\$	\$	\$
			\$	\$	\$
			\$	\$	\$
			\$	\$	\$
Subtotal for Consultant/Contractual Fees			\$	\$	\$

Supporting Narrative. For this section of the Element budget, briefly explain the cost components.

--

G. Construction. The OASDFD grant does not fund construction activities.

H. Other Costs. This should include the cost of necessary activities such as duplication and printing, long distance telephone calls, equipment rental, postage, and other services not previously listed. List equipment items in excess of \$500, and other items not previously listed.

Item or Service	Monthly Cost (estimate)	% of Monthly Cost Charged to Grant	Number of Months	Total Cost Charged to Grant
	\$	\$	\$	\$
	\$	\$	\$	\$

	\$	\$	\$	\$
	\$	\$	\$	\$
	\$	\$	\$	\$
	\$	\$	\$	\$
Subtotal for Other Costs				\$
Supporting Narrative. For this section of the Element budget, briefly explain the cost components.				

Total Budget for this Organization in this Element		
Object Class Category	Grant Amount	
A. Personnel	\$	
B. Fringe Benefits	\$	
C. Travel	\$	
D. Equipment	\$	
E. Supplies	\$	
F. Consulting/Contractual	\$	
G. Construction (not authorized)	Not Applicable	
H. Other (Services, etc.)	\$	
Total	\$	
INDIRECT COSTS. If indirect costs will be charged to the grant, the maximum rate allowed is 22%. Complete the table below to calculate the amount of indirect cost associated with this organization's participation in this Element of the project. The lead applicant will assemble all indirect costs associated with the grant and include them on the SF 424A, Section B., line J.		
* Total of Costs from items A – G to which the Indirect cost rate applies	Current Approved Indirect Cost Rate Percentage (NICRA)	Indirect Cost Rate Amount
\$	%	\$

Attachment 5 PROGRAM OF WORK

For each of the four required Elements, identify the key tasks/objectives, responsible entity, completion date, partners involved, and the deliverables at the completion of the task or subtask. Modify the tables as necessary. Add a fifth table to reflect tasks associated with overall management of the grant. Each Element should begin on a new page.

Element 1: (List each Element objectives identified in Project Narratives).	Responsible Entity	Completion Date	Partners likely to assist with Elements	Deliverables
TASKS/Objectives: (List key tasks and subtasks, if applicable, associated with each Element).	If applicable, which of the partner organizations is responsible entity for task.	Identify expected completion date by quarter of the requested grant award.	The role that partner and collaborating organizations will have in assisting with each task/subtask.	Description of the measurable result/outcome of the task completion.
1.				
2.				
3.				
4.				
5.				

Element 2: (List each Element objectives identified in Project narratives)	Responsible Entity	Completion Date	Partners likely to assist with Elements	Deliverables
TASKS/Objectives: (List key tasks and subtasks, if applicable, associated with each Element).	If applicable, which of the partner organizations is responsible entity for task.	Identify expected completion date by quarter of the requested grant award.	The role that partner and collaborating organizations will have in assisting with each task/subtask.	Description of the measurable result/outcome of the task completion.
1.				
2.				
3.				
4.				
5.				

Element 3: (List each Element objectives identified in Project Narratives).	Responsible Entity	Completion Date	Partners likely to assist with Element	Deliverables
TASKS/Objectives: (List key tasks and subtasks, if applicable, associated with each Element).	If applicable, which of the partner organizations is responsible entity for task.	Identify expected completion date by quarter of the requested grant award.	The role that partner and collaborating organizations will have in assisting with each task/subtask.	Description of the measurable result/outcome of the task completion.
1.				
2.				
3.				
4.				
5.				

Element 4: (List each Element objectives identified in Project Narratives).	Responsible Entity	Completion Date	Partners likely to assist with Element	Deliverables
TASKS/Objectives: (List key tasks and subtasks, if applicable, associated with each Element).	If applicable, which of the partner organizations is responsible entity for task.	Identify expected completion date by quarter of the requested grant award.	The role that partner and collaborating organizations will have in assisting with each task/subtask.	Description of the measurable result/outcome of the task completion.
1.				
2.				
3.				
4.				
5.				

Overall Management: (List each Element objectives identified in Project Narratives).	Responsible Entity	Completion Date	Partners cooperation needed to complete project	Deliverables
TASKS/Objectives: (List key tasks and subtasks, if applicable, associated with each Element).	If applicable, which of the partner organizations is responsible entity for task.	Identify expected completion date by quarter of the requested grant award.	The information that partner and collaborating organizations will have to provide to accomplish task.	Description of the measurable result/outcome of the task completion.
1.				
2.				
3.				
4.				
5.				

PART X—Supplemental Funding

1. FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES DESCRIPTION

This notice announces the timeframe to submit pre-applications for OASDFR Supplemental Funding for the extension of projects for existing OASDFR active grantees. The intended purpose of these grant extensions are to increase the participation of socially disadvantage farmers, ranchers and forest land owners participation in agricultural programs offered by the Department.

2. AWARD INFORMATION

Applications for Supplemental Funding FY 2011 will only be accepted through the date and time listed in this notice. Since the OASDFR Program has the ability to adjust grant levels, final loan and grant levels will fluctuate, and are subject to the availability of funding. Active grantees, who are selected to receive supplemental funds, can only receive a one year extension on their existing active grant and up to \$400,000. Active grantees who receive supplemental funds can also apply for additional funding in the same fiscal year.

3. ELIGIBILITY INFORMATION

Eligibility consideration for supplemental funding are active OASDFR Grantees.

4. APPLICATION AND SUBMISSION INFORMATION

Required Forms found in the Application Package on Grants.gov

- a. **Application for Federal Assistance, OMB Standard Form 424 – Grants.gov form.** This form will be part of the Application Package downloaded from Grants.gov. The Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance Number (block 10) is 10.443, Outreach and Assistance for Socially Disadvantaged Farmers and Ranchers Competitive Grants Programs. Please complete this form in its entirety (including your zip + 4 which is your zip code plus the additional 4 digit code).
- b. **Budget Information for Non-Construction Programs. Standard Form 424 A – Grants.gov form.** This form will be part of the Application Package downloaded from Grants.gov. **NOTE:** It is necessary to fit the funding needs of this RFP into the format offered on the SF 424A.
- c. **Project Summary.** Submit as PDF document. The Project Summary is limited to **350 words** (approximately one page, single spaced, 12 pt. font). The Project Summary must indicate the geographic area, the type of project, measurable accomplishments and the benefit to socially disadvantage farmers, ranchers and forest landowners for receiving Supplemental Funding under this RFP.

5. EVALUATION CRITERIA

The Agency will use weighted criteria to evaluate the eligible proposals. The highest-ranking applicants will be selected based on the allocation of funds available. Each proposal will be evaluated and numerically rated on each criteria, based solely on the information contained in the proposal. Each proposal will contain a project summary that indicates the geographic area, the type of project, measurable accomplishments and the benefit to socially disadvantage farmers, ranchers and forest landowners for receiving Supplemental Funding under this RFP.

Application narratives must address the following OASDFR goals:

- 1) The number of socially disadvantaged farmers, ranchers, and forest landowners that the applicant proposes to assist;
- 2) The number of **prospective** socially disadvantaged farmers, ranchers, and forest landowners that the applicant proposes to assist;
- 3) The number of USDA programs that socially disadvantaged farmers, ranchers, and forest landowners are introduced to and encouraged to participate in Departmental Programs;
- 4) The number of counties served;
- 5) Organizations who provide services to SDFRFL who have annual budgets of:
\$501,001 or More, \$300,001 to \$500,000, \$300,000 or less; and
- 6) The number of partnerships and organizational collaborations.

Final panel reviewer instruction will be provided to all participating panelists prior to evaluation scoring.

PART XI -Scoring Methodology

The following scoring methodology is applied to the peer review process for all solicitations within the OASDFR Program. The Project Narrative will be scored according to the above criteria.

The weight associated with each category will be customized by solicitation and a weighted score will be calculated for each application.

Peer review instructions for the solicitation will explain the scoring method.

Scoring does not dictate funding decision; it is one of the variables used to make funding decisions.

Scores are pre-decisional and are for internal information only.

The scoring procedure is as follows:

Each reviewer will rate each criterion for a given application on a scale from 0 (unacceptable) to 10 (excellent).

Each criterion is assigned a weight (percentage) defined for that solicitation. Total criteria weight must equal 100 percent.

Each criterion score is multiplied by 10 and then by the weighing percentage to determine the weighted score. The sum of the weighted scores equals the overall application score.

The Agency will use weighted criteria to evaluate the eligible proposals. Each proposal will be evaluated and numerically rated on each criteria within the range provided, based solely on the information contained in the proposal. The highest-ranking applicants will be selected based on the allocation of funds available.

PART XI—Non-Discrimination Statement

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) prohibits discrimination in all of its programs and activities on the basis of race, color, national origin, age, disability, and where applicable, sex, marital status, familial status, parental status, religion, sexual orientation, political beliefs, genetic information, reprisal, or because all or part of an individual's income is derived from any public assistance program. (Not all prohibited bases apply to all programs.) Persons with disabilities who require alternative means for communication of program information (Braille, large print, audiotape, etc.) should contact USDA's TARGET Center at (202) 720-2600 (voice and TDD). To file a complaint of discrimination, write to USDA, Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights, Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights, 1400 Independence Avenue, S.W., Stop 9410, Washington, DC 20250-9410, or call toll-free at (866) 632-9992 (English) or (800) 877-8339 (TDD) or (866) 377-8642 (English Federal-relay) or (800) 845-6136 (Spanish Federal-relay). USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer.

PART XII - Appeal Process

All adverse determinations regarding applicant eligibility and the awarding of points as part of the selection process are appealable pursuant to Agency Regulations. Instructions on the appeal process will be provided at the time an applicant is notified of the adverse decision.

PEARLIE S. REED

Assistant Secretary for Administration for
the Office of the Secretary