Sustainable Agriculture Research and Education Professional Development Program

NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF FOOD AND AGRICULTURE; U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

SUSTAINABLE AGRICULTURE RESEARCH AND EDUCATION PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM (SARE-PDP)

INITIAL ANNOUNCEMENT - FY 2010

CATALOG OF FEDERAL DOMESTIC ASSISTANCE: This program is listed in the Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance under **10.500.**

DATES: Applicants can start applying for funding on **March 5, 2010**. Applications must be received by close of business (COB) on **July 14, 2010** (5:00 pm. Eastern Time).

The National Institute of Food and Agriculture (NIFA) often issues requests for applications (RFAs) that contain information divided in eight parts. All information in the eight parts is not necessary for requesting applications for these funds; however, the unnecessary parts are included herein and are denoted by "Reserved," in order to maintain the overall RFA structure for reference to RFAs by other documents.

PART I—FUNDING OPPORTUNITY DESCRIPTION

A. Legislative Authority and Background

The purpose of the Sustainable Agriculture Research and Education Professional Development Program (SARE-PDP) is to provide education and training for Cooperative Extension Service agents and other professionals involved in the education and transfer of technical information concerning sustainable agriculture in order to develop their understanding, competence, and ability to teach and communicate the concepts of sustainable agriculture to Cooperative Extension agents and to farmers and urban residents who need information on sustainable agriculture (section 1629 of the Food, Agriculture, Conservation and Trade Act of 1990 (FACTA), Pub. L. No. 101-624 (7 U.S.C. 5832). The funding is appropriated under section 3(d) of the Smith-Lever Act (7 U.S.C. 343). This request for application (RFA) is for the regional SARE-PDP host institutions to apply for funds to carry out the regional SARE-PDP programs under the direction of the SARE Regional Administrative Councils (7 U.S.C. 5812), and for selected national projects. Most SARE competitive grants are made by the SARE regions as subawards. Typically, approximately 80% of the award to a SARE regional host institution is used for subawards. Individuals and organizations interested in applying for SARE competitive grants should NOT respond to this funding opportunity; rather they should apply to the appropriate SARE regional program.
(See http://www.nifa.usda.gov/fo/sustainableagricultureresearchandeducation.cfm)

B. through C. – Reserved.

PART II – AWARD INFORMATION

A. Available Funding

There is no commitment by USDA to fund any particular application or to make a specific number of awards. Approximately $4.5 million **is** available to fund applications in FY 2010.

Awards issued as a result of this RFA will have designated the Automated Standard Applications for Payment System (ASAP), operated by the Department of Treasury's Financial Management Service, as the payment system for funds. For more information see http://www.nifa.usda.gov/business/method_of_payment.html.

B. Type of Application

In FY **2010**, only **new applications** may be submitted to the **SARE** Program. A new application is a project application that has not been previously submitted to the **SARE** Program.

C. Project Types

The project period for SARE-PDP regional host institution awards is a maximum of five (5) years, and budget proposals shall not exceed $1.25 million per proposal. SARE-PDP projects (other than regional host institution awards) may be invited for lesser amounts, and for a maximum of five (5) years. Specific instructions will be provided for invited SARE-PDP national projects in the communication accompanying the invitation from the regional host institution.

PART III—ELIGIBILITY INFORMATION

A. Eligible Applicants

Institutions eligible to be selected to serve as SARE-PDP regional host institutions or SARE-PDP national projects include 1862 and 1890 land-grant colleges or universities and the University of the District of Columbia. 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 preclude NIFA from reviewing an application or making an award.

B. Cost Sharing or Matching

Cost-sharing is not required under this program.

PART IV – APPLICATION AND SUBMISSION INFORMATION

A. Electronic Application Package

Only electronic applications may be submitted via Grants.gov to NIFA 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 NIFA 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-NIFA-SLBCD-002984** 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 "NIFA Grants.gov Application Guide: A Guide for Preparation and Submission of NIFA 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://www.grants.gov/). Grants.gov assistance is also available as follows:

   Grants.gov customer support
   Toll Free: 1-800-518-4726
   Business Hours: 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Closed on Federal Holidays.
   Email: support@grants.gov

See http://www.nifa.usda.gov/funding/electronic.html for additional resources for applying electronically.

B. **Content and Form of Application Submission**

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

Electronic applications should be prepared following Parts IV, V, and VI of the document entitled **"**NIFA Grants.gov Application Guide: A Guide for Preparation and Submission of NIFA 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 NIFA REVIEW. Partial applications will be excluded from NIFA review. With documented prior approval, resubmitted applications will be accepted until close of business (COB) on the submission deadline, July 14, 2010 (5:00 p.m. Eastern Time).

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 NIFA Grants.gov Application Guide.

a. Field 20. Pre-application – Do not fill out this portion of the form.

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 NIFA Grants.gov Application Guide.

3. R&R Other Project Information

Information related to the questions on this form is dealt with in detail in Part V, 4. of the NIFA Grants.gov Application Guide.

a. Project Summary/Abstract (Field 6. on the Form). The summary should also include the relevance of the project to the goals of SARE-PDP.

b. Project Narrative (Field 7. on the Form).

PLEASE NOTE: The Project Narrative must include all of the following: the outcomes and objectives of the proposal; the methods and procedures that are planned to achieve the objectives, including timing and proposed products and other outputs; and a brief rationale for how the project will achieve the SARE-PDP purpose in Part I of this RFA.

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

1) Subaward project narratives, if any, are to be included separately as PDF attachments

2) Required Attachments for SARE-PDP Regional Host Institution Applications Only (Does not

apply to invited national projects) – each requirement should be included as a separate PDF attachment with the title reflecting the nature of the requirement

a) List of Administrative Council members
b) List of Technical Committee members
c) Calls for Proposals for each program for which "streamlining" is in effect.

4. <u>R&R Senior/Key Person Profile</u>
Information related to the questions on this form is dealt with in detail in Part V, 5. of the NIFA 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 professional personnel.

5. <u>R&R Personal Data</u> – As noted in Part V, 6., 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. <u>R&R Budget</u>
Information related to the questions on this form is dealt with in detail in Part V, 7. of the NIFA Grants.gov Application Guide.

Note: The R&R Subaward Budget Attachment(s) Form is to be included for subaward budget.

7. <u>Supplemental Information Form</u>
Information related to the questions on this form is dealt with in detail in Part VI, 1. of the NIFA Grants.gov Application Guide.

a. Program Code (Field 2. on the Form). Enter the program code name (i.e., enter "Sustainable Agriculture Project") and the program code (i.e., enter "QX").

b. Conflict of Interest List (Field 8. on the Form). A conflict of interest list is not required under this program. Do not include a conflict of interest list.

C. Submission Date and Time

Instructions for submitting an application are included in Part IV, 1.9 of the NIFA Grants.gov Application Guide. Applications may be submitted beginning on **March 5, 2010**. Applications must be received by COB on **July 14, 2010** (**5:00 p.m. Eastern Time)**.

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 of the institution that submitted the application has not received correspondence **from NIFA** regarding a submitted application within 30 days of submission of the application, please contact the NIFA Program Contact and request the proposal number assigned to the application. **Failure to do so may result in 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

Pursuant to Section 1473 of the National Agricultural Research, Extension, and Teaching Policy Act of 1977 (91 Stat. 981), indirect costs are unallowable costs under this program, and no funds will be approved for this purpose. Costs that are a part of an institution's indirect cost pool may not be reclassified as direct costs for the purpose of making them allowable.

In addition, tuition remission is prohibited by Section 1473 of the National Agricultural Research, Extension, and Teaching Policy Act of 1977, as amended (7 U.S.C. 3319).

E. Other Submission Requirements

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

PART V – APPLICATION REVIEW REQUIREMENTS

A. through C. – Reserved.

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 NIFA program. NIFA 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

The date specified by the awarding official of NIFA 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 NIFA 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 (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 Director 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 Director 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.nifa.usda.gov/business/awards/awardterms.html to view NIFA 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 NIFA 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).

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).

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 3021—Governmentwide Requirements for Drug Free Workplace (Grants).

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—NIFA procedures to implement the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969, as amended.

7 CFR Part 3430 – NIFA Competitive and Noncompetitive Non-formula 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).

D. Expected Program Outputs and Reporting Requirements

Grantees are also required to submit initial project information and annual and summary reports to NIFA' Current Research Information System (CRIS). The CRIS database contains narrative project information, progress/impact statements, and final technical reports that are made

available to the public. For applications recommended for funding, instructions on preparation and submission of project documentation will be provided to the applicant by the agency contact. Documentation must be submitted to CRIS before CSREES funds will be released. Project reports will be requested by the CRIS office when required. For more information about CRIS, visit http://cris.csrees.usda.gov.

PART VII – AGENCY CONTACT

Applicants and other interested parties are encouraged to contact Rob Hedberg, National Program Leader—Sustainable Agriculture; Economic and Community Systems Unit; National Institute of Food and Agriculture ; U.S. Department of Agriculture STOP 2215; 1400 Independence Avenue, SW; Washington, DC 20250-2215. Telephone Number: 202-720-5384; fax: 202-720-6071; e-mail: rhedberg@nifa.usda.gov

PARTS VIII – Reserved.