requested shall not exceed 50 percent of the cost of the equipment. Unless eligible for a waiver (as described in §3430.306(b)(2)), the Project Director is responsible for securing the required non-Federal funds. No installation, maintenance, warranty, or insurance expenses may be paid from these awards, nor may these costs be part of the matching funds.

(*3*) *Seed Grant*. A Seed grant is intended to provide funds to enable investigators to collect preliminary data in preparation for applying for a Standard Research, Standard Education, Standard Extension, or Integrated Grant. The grants are not intended to fund stand-alone projects, but rather projects that will lead to further work applicable to one of the priority areas in AFRI.

(*4*) *Sabbatical grants*. A Sabbatical grant is intended to provide an opportunity for faculty to enhance their capabilities through sabbatical leaves.

§3430.305 Funding restrictions.

(a) *Construction*. Funds made available under this subpart shall not be used for the construction of a new building or facility or the acquisition, expansion, remodeling, or alteration of an existing facility (including site grading and improvement, and architect fees).

(b) *Indirect costs*. Subject to §3430.54, indirect costs are allowable. However, indirect costs are not allowed on pre- and postdoctoral grants, equipment grants, or conference grants.

§3430.306 Matching requirements.

(a) *General*. Matching funds are not required as a condition of receiving grants under this subpart except as provided in paragraphs (c) and (d) of this section.

(b) *Indirect costs*. Use of indirect costs as in-kind matching contributions is subject to §3430.52(b).

(c) *Equipment grants*.

(1) Except as provided in paragraph (c)(2) of this section, the amount of an equipment grant may not exceed 50 percent of the cost of the special research equipment or other equipment acquired using funds from the grant.

(2) *Waiver*. The Secretary may waive all or part of the matching requirement under paragraph (c)(1) of this section in the case of a college, university, or research foundation maintained by a college or university that ranks in the lowest ⅓ of such colleges, universities, and research foundations on the basis of Federal research funds received, if the equipment to be acquired using funds from the grant costs not more than $25,000, and has multiple uses within a single project or is usable in more than 1 project.

(d) *Applied research grants*. As a condition of making a grant for applied research, the Secretary shall require the funding of the grant to be matched with equal matching funds from a non-Federal source if the grant is for applied research that is:

(1) Commodity-specific; and

(2) Not of national scope.

§3430.307 Coordination and stakeholder input requirements.

(a) *Stakeholder input*. In making grants under this Part, NIFA shall solicit and consider input from persons who conduct or use agricultural research, extension, or education in accordance with section 102(b) of the Agricultural Research, Extension, and Education Reform Act of 1998 (7 U.S.C. 7612(b)).

(b) *Allocation of funds to high-priority research*. To the maximum extent practicable, the Secretary, in coordination with the Under Secretary, shall allocate grants under this subpart to high-priority research as defined in section 1672 of Food, Agriculture, Conservation, and Trade Act of 1990, 7 U.S.C. 5925. NIFA shall take into consideration, when available, the determinations made by the Advisory Board.

§3430.308 Duration of awards.

The Secretary may set award limits up to 10 years based on priorities and stakeholder input, subject to other statutory limitations. The duration of individual awards may vary as specified in the RFA and is subject to the availability of appropriations.

§3430.309 Priority areas.

NIFA will award competitive grants in the following areas:

(a) Plant health and production and plant products. Plant systems, including:

(1) Plant genome structure and function;

(2) Molecular and cellular genetics and plant biotechnology;

(3) Conventional breeding, including cultivar and breed development, selection theory, applied quantitative genetics, breeding for improved food quality, breeding for improved local adaptation to biotic stress and abiotic stress, and participatory breeding;

(4) Plant-pest interactions and biocontrol systems;

(5) Crop plant response to environmental stresses;

(6) Unproved nutrient qualities of plant products; and

(7) New food and industrial uses of plant products.

(b) Animal health and production and animal products. Animal systems, including:

(1) Aquaculture;

(2) Cellular and molecular basis of animal reproduction, growth, disease, and health;

(3) Animal biotechnology;

(4) Conventional breeding, including breed development, selection theory, applied quantitative genetics, breeding for improved food quality, breeding for improved local adaptation to biotic stress and abiotic stress, and participatory breeding;

(5) Identification of genes responsible for improved production traits and resistance to disease;

(6) Improved nutritional performance of animals;

(7) Improved nutrient qualities of animal products and uses; and

(8) The development of new and improved animal husbandry and production systems that take into account production efficiency, animal well-being, and animal systems applicable to aquaculture.

(c) Food safety, nutrition, and health. Nutrition, food safety and quality, and health, including:

(1) Microbial contaminants and pesticides residue relating to human health;

(2) Links between diet and health;

(3) Bioavailability of nutrients;

(4) Postharvest physiology and practices; and

(5) Improved processing technologies.

(d) Renewable energy, natural resources, and environment. Natural resources and the environment, including:

(1) Fundamental structures and functions of ecosystems;

(2) Biological and physical bases of sustainable production systems;

(3) Minimizing soil and water losses and sustaining surface water and ground water quality;

(4) Global climate effects on agriculture;

(5) Forestry; and

(6) Biological diversity.

(e) Agriculture systems and technology. Engineering, products, and processes, including:

(1) New uses and new products from traditional and nontraditional crops, animals, byproducts, and natural resources;

(2) Robotics, energy efficiency, computing, and expert systems;

(3) New hazard and risk assessment and mitigation measures; and

(4) Water quality and management.

(f) Agriculture economics and rural communities. Markets, trade, and policy, including:

(1) Strategies for entering into and being competitive in domestic and overseas markets;

(2) Farm efficiency and profitability, including the viability and competitiveness of small and medium-sized dairy, livestock, crop and other commodity operations;

(3) New decision tools for farm and market systems;

(4) Choices and applications of technology;

(5) Technology assessment; and

(6) New approaches to rural development, including rural entrepreneurship.

§ 3430.310 Allocation of AFRI funds.

(a) *General.* The Secretary shall decide the allocation of funds among research, education, extension, and integrated multifunctional projects in an appropriate manner and in accordance with the allocation restrictions found in this section.