

Evaluation criterion	Weight
<p>This criterion relates to the degree to which the project will strengthen the research capacity of the applicant institution. In the case of a joint project proposal, it relates to the degree to which the project will strengthen the research capacity of the applicant institution and that of any other institution assuming a major role in the conduct of the project.</p> <p>(1) Institutional enhancement—Will the project help the institution to advance the expertise of current faculty in the natural or social sciences; provide a better research environment, state-of-the-art equipment, or supplies; enhance library collections related to the area of research; or enable the institution to provide efficacious organizational structures and reward systems to attract, hire and retain first-rate research faculty and students—particularly those from underrepresented groups?</p> <p>(2) Institutional commitment—Is there evidence to substantiate that the institution attributes a high-priority to the project, that the project is linked to the achievement of the institution's long-term goals, that it will help satisfy the institution's high-priority objectives, or that the project is supported by the institution's strategic plans? Will the project have reasonable access to needed resources such as scientific instrumentation, facilities, computer services, library and other research support resources?</p>	<p>15 points.</p> <p>15 points.</p>
<p>(d) Personnel Resources .....                      This criterion relates to the number and qualifications of the key persons who will carry out the project. Are designated project personnel qualified to carry out a successful project? Are there sufficient numbers of personnel associated with the project to achieve the stated objectives and the anticipated outcomes? Will the project help develop the expertise of young scientists at the doctoral or post-doctorate level?</p>	<p>10 Points</p>
<p>(e) Budget and cost-effectiveness:                      This criterion relates to the extent to which the total budget adequately supports the project and is cost-effective.</p> <p>(1) Budget—Is the budget request justifiable? Are costs reasonable and necessary? Will the total budget be adequate to carry out project activities? Are the source(s) and amount(s) of non-Federal matching support clearly identified and appropriately documented? For a joint project proposal, is the shared budget explained clearly and in sufficient detail?</p> <p>(2) Cost-effectiveness—Is the proposed project cost-effective? Does it demonstrate a creative use of limited resources, maximize research value per dollar of USDA support, achieve economies of scale, leverage additional funds or have the potential to do so, focus expertise and activity on a high-priority research initiative(s), or promote coalition building for current or future ventures?</p>	<p>10 points.</p> <p>5 points.</p>
<p>(f) Overall quality of proposal .....                      This criterion relates to the degree to which the proposal complies with the application guidelines and is of high quality. Is the proposal enhanced by its adherence to instructions (table of contents, organization, pagination, margin and font size, the 20-page limitation, appendices, etc.); accuracy of forms; clarity of budget narrative; well prepared vitae for all key personnel associated with the project; and presentation (are ideas effectively presented, clearly articulated, thoroughly explained, etc.)?</p>	<p>5 points</p>

**Subpart G—Submission of a Teaching or Research Proposal**

**§ 3406.21 Intent to submit a proposal.**

To assist NIFA in preparing for the review of proposals, institutions planning to submit proposals may be requested to complete Form NIFA-711, "Intent to Submit a Proposal," provided in the application package. NIFA will determine each year if Intent to Submit a Proposal forms will be requested and provide such information in the program announcement. If Intent to Submit a Proposal forms are required, one form should be completed and returned for each proposal an institution anticipates submitting. Submitting this form does not commit an institution to any course of action, nor does failure to send this form prohibit an institution from submitting a proposal.

**§ 3406.22 When and where to submit a proposal.**

The program announcement will provide the deadline date for submitting a proposal, the number of copies of each proposal that must be submitted, and the address to which proposals must be submitted.

**Subpart H—Supplementary Information**

**§ 3406.23 Access to peer review information.**

After final decisions have been announced, NIFA will, upon request, inform the principal investigator/project director of the reasons for its decision on a proposal. Verbatim copies of summary reviews, not including the identity of the peer reviewers, will be made