

address a common problem. These collaborations, where appropriate, may integrate the biological, physical, chemical, or social sciences.

Small and mid-sized institutions means academic institutions with a current total enrollment of 17,500 or less, including graduate and undergraduate as well as full- and part-time students. An institution, in this instance, is an organization that possesses a significant degree of autonomy. Significant degree of autonomy is defined by being independently accredited as determined by reference to the current version of the *Higher Education Directory*, published by Higher Education Publications, Inc., 6400 Arlington Boulevard, Suite 648, Falls Church, Virginia 22042 (703-532-2300).

Strengthening grants means funds awarded to institutions eligible for FASE grants to enhance institutional capacity, with the goal of leading to future funding in the project area, as well as strengthening the competitiveness of the investigator's research, education, and/or extension activities. Strengthening grants consist of standard and Coordinated Agricultural Project (CAP) grant types as well as seed grants, equipment grants, and sabbatical grants.

USDA EPSCoR States (Experimental Program for Stimulating Competitive Research) means States which have been less successful in receiving funding from AFRI, or its predecessor, the National Research Initiative (NRI), having a funding level no higher than the 38th percentile of all States based on a 3-year rolling average of AFRI and/or NRI funding levels, excluding FASE Strengthening funds granted to EPSCoR States, and small, mid-sized, and minority-serving degree-granting institutions. The most recent list of USDA EPSCoR States will be provided in the RFA.

§ 3430.303 Eligibility.

(a) *General.* Unless otherwise specified in the RFA or this subpart, eligible applicants for the grant program implemented under this subpart include:

(1) State agricultural experiment stations;

(2) Colleges and universities (including junior colleges offering an associate's degree);

(3) University research foundations;

(4) Other research institutions and organizations;

(5) Federal agencies;

(6) National laboratories;

(7) Private organizations or corporations;

(8) Individuals; and

(9) Any group consisting of 2 or more entities identified in paragraphs (a)(1) through (8) of this section.

(b) *Integrated projects.* Eligible entities for the integrated component under this subpart include:

(1) Colleges and universities;

(2) 1994 Institutions; and

(3) Hispanic-serving agricultural colleges and universities (as defined in section 1404 of the National Agricultural Research, Extension, and Teaching Policy Act of 1977 (7 U.S.C. 3103)).

(c) *FASE Grants.*

(1) *New investigator awards.* To be eligible to apply, a new investigator must be in the beginning of his/her career, without an extensive publication record, and must have less than 5 years of postgraduate, career-track experience. To be eligible to receive a grant, the new investigator may not have received competitively awarded Federal funds, with the exception of pre- or postdoctoral awards or NRI/AFRI Seed Grants. The AFRI RFA will contain specific instructions for New Investigator Grant eligibility, restrictions, and application preparation.

(2) *Pre- and postdoctoral fellowships.* The following eligibility requirements apply to applicants for pre- and postdoctoral fellowships.

(i) The doctoral degree of the applicant must be received not earlier than January 1 of the calendar year three years prior to the submission of the proposal and not later than nine months after the proposal due date; and

(ii) For pre-doctoral applications, the applicant must have advanced to candidacy by the application deadline.

(3) *Strengthening grants.* Eligibility for all strengthening categories includes:

(i) Small and mid-sized academic institutions that have had limited institutional success;

(ii) Degree-granting institutions and State agricultural experiment stations (SAES) in USDA Experimental Program for Stimulating Competitive Research (EPSCoR) states; and

(iii) Minority-serving institutions with limited institutional success.

§ 3430.304 Project Types and priorities.

For each RFA, NIFA may develop and include the appropriate types of projects and focus areas to address the needs of scientists and educators in advanced or early stages of their careers and the differences in institutional capabilities. Types of projects will be revisited periodically based on stakeholder input and as deemed appropriate by NIFA. Types of projects under AFRI include, but are not limited to, the following.

(a) Project Types.

(1) *Research projects.* Single-function fundamental and applied Research Projects are conducted by individual investigators, co-investigators within the same discipline, or multidisciplinary teams.

(2) *Education projects.* Single-function Education Projects provide funding to conduct classroom instruction, laboratory instruction, and practicum experience in the food and agricultural sciences and other related educational matters. Projects may include faculty development, student recruitment and services, curriculum development, instructional materials and equipment, and innovative teaching methods.

(3) *Extension Projects.* Single-function Extension Projects provide funding for programs and activities that deliver science-based knowledge and informal educational programs to people, enabling them to make practical decisions.

(4) *Integrated Projects.* Multifunction Integrated Projects bring together at least two of the three components of the agricultural knowledge system (*i.e.*, research, education, and extension) around a problem or issue. The functions addressed in the project should be interwoven throughout the life of the project and act to complement and reinforce one another. The

proposed research component of an Integrated Project should address knowledge gaps that are critical to the development of practices and programs to address the stated problem. The proposed education component of an Integrated Project should strengthen institutional capacities and result in curricula and related products that will be sustained beyond the life of the project. The proposed extension component of an Integrated Project should lead to measurable, documented changes in learning, actions, or conditions in an identified audience or stakeholder group. Appropriate project activities will be discussed in the RFA.

(b) Grant Types.

(1) *Standard Grants.* Standard Grants support targeted, original scientific Research, Education, Extension, or Integrated Projects.

(2) *Coordinated Agricultural Project (CAP) Grants.* A CAP is a type of Research, Education, Extension, or Integrated Project that supports large-scale multi-million dollar projects that promote collaboration, open communication, and the exchange of information; reduce duplication of effort; and coordinate activities among individuals, institutions, States, and regions. Integrated CAP grants address problems through multi-function projects that incorporate at least two of the three components of the agricultural knowledge system (*i.e.*, research, extension and education). Please note that there occasionally may be programs in which an Integrated CAP Grant is required to address all three components of the agricultural knowledge system. In a CAP, participants serve as a team that conducts targeted research, education and/or extension in response to emerging or priority area(s) of national need. A CAP contains the needed science-based expertise in research, education, and/or extension, as well as expertise from principle stakeholders and partners, to accomplish project goals and objectives.

(3) *Planning/Coordination Grants.* Planning/Coordination Grants provide assistance to applicants in the development of quality future CAP applications. Applications must articulate benefits accrued from formal planning activities and provide evidence of a