

# Cooperative State Research, Education, and Extension Service, USDA - Supplement to Part II Full Text of Announcement

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## **Title:** International Cooperative Biodiversity Groups (ICBG)

**Request For Applications (RFA) Number:** RFA-TW-08-003

**Key Dates:** See NIH Solicitation

## Section IX. CSREES Information

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**STAKEHOLDER INPUT:** The Cooperative State Research, Education, and Extension Service (CSREES) is requesting comments regarding this RFA from any interested party. These comments will be considered in the development of the next RFA for the program, if applicable, and will be used to meet the requirements of section 103(c)(2) of the Agricultural Research, Extension, and Education Reform Act of 1998 (7 U.S.C. 7613(c)(2)). This section requires the Secretary to solicit and consider input on a current RFA from persons who conduct or use agricultural research, education and extension for use in formulating future RFAs for competitive programs. Written stakeholder comments on this RFA should be submitted in accordance with the deadline set forth in the DATES portion of this Notice.

Written stakeholder comments should be submitted by mail to: Policy, Oversight, and Funds Management Staff; Office of Extramural Programs; Cooperative State Research, Education, and Extension Service; USDA; STOP 2299; 1400 Independence Avenue, SW; Washington, DC 20250-2299; or via e-mail to: [RFP-OEP@csrees.usda.gov](mailto:RFP-OEP@csrees.usda.gov). (This e-mail address is intended only for receiving comments regarding this RFA and not requesting information or forms.) In your comments, please state that you are responding to the International Cooperative Biodiversity Groups (ICBG) joint solicitation.

### 1. FUNDING OPPORTUNITY DESCRIPTION

#### 1.A. Legislative Authority and Background

The authority to support research projects through this program is contained in 7 U.S.C. 450i(b). Under this authority, subject to the availability of funds, the Secretary may award competitive research grants, for periods not to exceed five years, for the support of research projects to further the programs of the USDA.

#### 1.B. Purpose and Priorities

CSREES Competitive Programs unit administers the NRI. The purpose of the NRI Program is to support research grants and integrated research, extension, and education grants that address key problems of National, regional, and multi-state importance in sustaining all components of agriculture (farming, ranching, forestry including urban and agroforestry, aquaculture, rural communities, human nutrition, processing, etc.). Program-specific regulations are codified at 7 CFR 3411.

For CSREES, a grant means the award by the Secretary of Agriculture for funds to an eligible organization or individual to assist in meeting the costs of conducting, for the benefit of the public, an identified project which is intended and designed to accomplish the purpose of the program as identified in these guidelines. NRI grants are available for research "to improve research capabilities in these agricultural, food, and environmental sciences". CSREES will support research objectives that improve the R&D technology transfer and education capacity of the U.S. grant recipient.

CSREES may also solicit applications for NRI funds through other announcements, including supplemental FY 2007 NRI RFAs, or in conjunction with multi-agency programs. Such announcements will be made public in the same manner as this announcement.

The program described herein was developed within the context of the authorized purposes of USDA research, extension, and education, and within the framework of the CSREES Strategic Plan. In addition, the NRI obtains input from Congress, the National Agricultural Research, Extension, Education, and Economics Advisory Board as well as many university, scientific, and agricultural committees and organizations.

## **2. AWARD INFORMATION**

### **2.A. Available Funding**

There is no commitment by USDA to fund any particular application or to make a specific number of awards. Approximately \$500,000 will be available to fund applications in FY 2007.

### **2.B. Type of Application**

Only "new" application will be funded under this solicitation.

## **3. ELIGIBILITY INFORMATION**

### **3.A. Eligible Applicants**

The eligibility requirements for the NRI are as follows: except where otherwise prohibited by law, State agricultural experiment stations, all colleges and universities, other research institutions and organizations, Federal agencies, national laboratories, private organizations or corporations, and individuals are eligible to apply for and to receive a competitive grant.

### **3.B. Eligible Individuals**

PIs for CSREES funds may be affiliated with any eligible entity.

### **3.C. Cost Sharing or Matching**

Cost sharing or matching is not required for NRI awards.

### **3.D. Funding Restrictions**

Sections 101 (a) and (c) of the Revised Continuing Appropriation Resolutions, 2007 (Pub. L. 110-5), limit indirect costs to 20 percent of the total Federal funds provided under each award. Therefore, when preparing budgets, applicants should limit their requests for recovery of indirect costs to the lesser of their institution's official negotiated indirect cost rate or the equivalent of 20 percent of total Federal funds awarded. Another method of assessing the maximum allowable indirect cost is to calculate 25 percent of the total direct costs.

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

Questions about allowable costs and financial or grants management matters should be directed to:

Ms. Carol Langguth  
Branch Chief  
Awards Management Branch  
1400 Independence Avenue, Mailstop 2255  
Washington, DC 20250  
Telephone: 202-401-4986  
FAX: 202-401-1804  
Email: clangguth@csrees.usda.gov

### **3.E. Other Submission Requirements**

## CRIS Reporting

CSREES grantees are required to submit initial project information and annual and summary reports to CSREES' 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>.

## **4. APPLICATION REVIEW REQUIREMENTS**

### **4.A. Conflicts of Interest and Confidentiality**

During the evaluation process, extreme care will be taken to prevent any actual or perceived conflicts of interest that may impact review or evaluation. For the purpose of determining conflicts of interest, the academic and administrative autonomy of an institution shall be determined by reference to the current Higher Education Directory, published by Higher Education Publications, Inc., 6400 Arlington Boulevard, Suite 648, Falls Church, Virginia 22042. Phone: (703) 532-2300. Web site: <http://www.hepinc.com>.

Names of submitting institutions and individuals, 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.

### **4.B. 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 CSREES program. CSREES 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)

### **4.C. CSREES Policy on Sharing of Findings, Data, and Other Project Products**

a. The PD is expected to publish or otherwise make publicly available the results of the work conducted under this award.

b. At such time as any article resulting from research work under this award is published in a scientific, technical, or professional journal or publication, two reprints of the publication clearly labeled with the award number and other appropriate identifying information should be sent to the programmatic contact identified in the award. This includes notifying the programmatic contact, via a listing clearly labeled with the award number, of any World Wide Web-based materials resulting from the work.

c. Copies of educational materials produced with project funds must be submitted as soon as they are available to the programmatic contact identified in the award. Five copies of educational publications and two copies of each audio-visual production are required. This includes notifying the programmatic contact, via a listing clearly labeled with the award number, of any World Wide Web-based materials resulting from the work..

## **5. AWARD ADMINISTRATION**

### **5.A. General**

Within the limit of funds available for such purpose, the awarding official of CSREES shall make grants to those responsible, eligible applicants whose applications are judged most meritorious under the procedures set forth in this RFA. The date specified by the awarding official of CSREES 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 CSREES 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, and the Department's assistance regulations (parts 3015 and 3019 of 7 CFR).

### **5.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 Administrator 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 Administrator 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.csrees.usda.gov/business/awards/awardterms.html> to view CSREES 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 CSREES to carry out its respective awarding activities or to accomplish the purpose of a particular award.

### **5.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:

- 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) and 7 CFR Part 3021—Governmentwide Requirements for Drug Free Workplace (Grants).

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 3052—USDA implementation of OMB Circular No. A-133, Audits of States, Local Governments, and Non profit Organizations.

7 CFR Part 3407—CSREES procedures to implement the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969, as amended.

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).

#### **5.D. Expected Program Outputs and Reporting Requirements**

Grantees are required to submit annual and summary evaluation reports via the CSREES Current Research Information System (CRIS). CRIS is an electronic, Web-based inventory system that facilitates both grantee submissions of project outcomes and public access to information on Federally-funded projects.

### **6. OTHER INFORMATION**

#### **6.A. Use of Funds; Changes**

##### **1. Delegation of Fiscal Responsibility**

Unless the terms and conditions of the award state otherwise, the awardee may not in whole or in part delegate or transfer to another person, institution, or organization the responsibility for use or expenditure of award funds.

##### **2. Changes in Project Plans**

a. The permissible changes by the awardee, PD(s), or other key project personnel in the approved project shall be limited to changes in methodology, techniques, or other similar aspects of the project to expedite achievement of the project's approved goals. If the awardee or the PD(s) is uncertain as to whether a change complies with this provision, the question must be referred to the Authorized Departmental Officer (ADO) for a final determination. The ADO is the signatory of the award document, not the program contact.

b. Changes in approved goals or objectives shall be requested by the awardee and approved in writing by the ADO prior to effecting such changes. In no event shall requests for such changes be approved which are outside the scope of the original approved project.

c. Changes in approved project leadership or the replacement or reassignment of other key project personnel shall be requested by the awardee and approved in writing by the ADO prior to effecting such changes.

d. Transfers of actual performance of the substantive programmatic work in whole or in part and provisions for payment of funds, whether or not Federal funds are involved, shall be requested by the awardee and approved in writing by the ADO prior to effecting such transfers, unless prescribed otherwise in the terms and conditions of the award.

e. The project period may be extended by CSREES without additional financial support, for such additional period(s) as the ADO determines may be necessary to complete or fulfill the purposes of an approved project, but in no case shall the total project period exceed five years. Any extension of time shall be conditioned upon prior request by the awardee and approval in writing by the ADO, unless prescribed otherwise in the terms and conditions of award.

f. Changes in Approved Budget: Unless stated otherwise in the terms and conditions of award, changes in an approved budget must be requested by the awardee and approved in writing by the ADO prior to instituting such changes if the revision will involve transfers or expenditures of amounts requiring prior approval as set forth in the applicable Federal cost principles, Departmental regulations, or award.

#### **6.B. Confidential Aspects of Applications and Awards**

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

#### **6.C. Regulatory Information**

For the reasons set forth in the final Rule related Notice to 7 CFR part 3015, subpart V (48 FR 29114, June 24, 1983), this program is excluded from the scope of the Executive Order 12372 which requires intergovernmental consultation with State and local officials. Under the provisions of the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995 (44 U.S.C. chapter 35), the collection of information requirements contained in this Notice have been approved under OMB Document No. 0524-0039.