

New Technologies for Ag Extension

FY 2007 Request for Applications

APPLICATION DEADLINE: April 16, 2007



U.S. Department of Agriculture



Cooperative State Research, Education, and Extension Service

**COOPERATIVE STATE RESEARCH, EDUCATION, AND EXTENSION SERVICE;
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE**

NEW TECHNOLOGIES FOR AG EXTENSION

INITIAL ANNOUNCEMENT

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

DATES: Electronic applications must be received by Grants.gov by close of business (COB) on April 16, 2007 (5:00 p.m. Eastern Time). Applications received after this deadline will normally not be considered for funding. Comments regarding this request for applications (RFA) are requested within six months from the issuance of this notice. Comments received after that date will be considered to the extent practicable.

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 Branch; 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. (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 New Technologies for Ag Extension RFA.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY: CSREES announces the availability of funds and requests applications for the New Technologies for Ag Extension (NTAE) Program for fiscal year (FY) 2007 to assist 1862 land-grant institutions, 1890 land-grant institutions, including Tuskegee University and West Virginia State University, and the Cooperative Extension System (CES) in furthering “eXtension”, a national web-based information and education delivery system. Both the land-grant institutions and the CES work to provide objective, scientific information to the public to answer questions and guide decisions. By creating web-based access to high-quality, non-duplicative, research-based information, eXtension can help them better serve the needs of their anywhere-anytime generation of users. In FY 2007, CSREES plans to support partial deployment of eXtension and enable a technology-conscious nation to make use of the valuable information and education that the CES has to offer. CSREES anticipates the amount available for support of this program in FY 2007 will be approximately \$1,425,000.

This notice identifies the objectives for NTAE projects, the eligibility criteria for projects and applicants, and the application forms and associated instructions needed to apply for a NTAE grant. CSREES additionally requests stakeholder input from any interested party.

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PART I–FUNDING OPPORTUNITY DESCRIPTION

A. Legislative Authority and Background

Public Law 110-5, Revised Continuing Appropriations Resolution, 2007, further amends Section 2 of the Continuing Appropriations Resolutions 2007 (Pub. L. 109-289, Division B), as amended by Public Law 109-369 and 109-383, to appropriate \$1,425,000 in payments for New Technologies for Ag Extension under Section 3(d) of the Smith-Lever– Act (7 U.S.C. 343(d)).

To learn more about the history of eXtension, its current activities, and future goals, see the eXtension Business Case and the 2005-2007 eXtension Long-Range Implementation Plan (both documents are available to the public at <http://about.extension.org/wiki/Planning>).

B. Purpose and Priorities

The purpose of the New Technologies for Ag Extension Program (NTAE) is to increase the capacity of each State to contribute expertise and content to the development of eXtension, a national web-based information and education delivery system that provides direct access to science-based educational resources from land-grant and other partner institutions about subjects of high importance to the general public. This initiative will dramatically change how the CES does business with its customers.

In FY 2007, CSREES plans to support partial deployment of eXtension and enable a technology-conscious nation to make use of the valuable information and education that the CES has to offer. NTAE funds complement, enhance, and accelerate the implementation of eXtension by building, enhancing, and maintaining the eXtension infrastructure, including the hardware, software, staffing, training, business agreements, and evaluation activities. The successful applicant will work within the context of the eXtension Business Case and the 2005-2007 eXtension Long-Range Implementation Plan (available at <http://about.extension.org/wiki/Planning>) and meet each of the following NTAE objectives:

1. Identify, acquire, and maintain state-of-the-art technology and software applications that support the primary business processes of eXtension;

The successful applicant should: (a) enhance and upgrade eXtension’s existing functionalities; (b) provide customer support, including help-desk staffing, web hosting, training, and software licenses for eXtension; and (c) provide infrastructure support for technical and architectural standards.

The eXtension collaborative workspace such as the “wiki” will be continuously upgraded and refined as more user friendly for experts to work virtually and effectively as they repackage, repurpose, and create educational content and pedagogy. Funds will be used to develop, test, and execute new software applications associated with the Content Management System (CMS), Learning Management System (LMS) and new middleware designed to track the activity of users on the eXtension site so the content teams can modify offerings to better meet the needs of the target audiences and public users. Funds will be used to support infrastructure such as help desks,

technical and architecture standards, and host configuration. This infrastructure will enhance collaboration by allowing for on-line submissions of FAQs and proposals, digital asset management, forums/blogs, wiki environments, interface the RDF Site Summary (RSS) feeds, online chat, streaming video, access to learning modules, usability testing, and performance benchmarking.

2. Recruit, hire, and retain innovative and high-quality leaders to create and manage eXtension for the collective vision, mission, values, and principles (available at <http://meta.extension.org/wiki/Mission>);

CSREES anticipates supporting core staff, as well as support staff (e.g., in the areas of network engineering, software applications, instructional content, and administration).

Funds will be used to form and support the “CSREES National eXtension Fellowship Program” for faculty interested in using sabbatical or other leave to contribute to the Initiative. The work of the Fellows’ might support applied and developmental research in electronic delivery of educational programs, studying the effects of eXtension on the transformation of the CES, or assisting in evaluating the efficacy of blending electronic and traditional ways of working on the quality of life for citizens. The successful applicant will use these funds to form, manage, and administer advisory and working groups in such area as technology, content management, editorial functions, diversity, institutional teams, evaluation, end users, internal and external partners.

3. Train an exceptional CES workforce that can meet the challenges of the 21st century by integrating the web-based resources of eXtension into their current mode of operations;

The current CES staff will become proficient in using eXtension by blending the electronic availability of education and expertise with their more traditional ways of working. Funds will be used to develop a national workforce development plan in this regard, and for implementing training on a national scale for all Extension workers utilizing eXtension. Funds will be used to design and test such blended models for rapid-response to high profile issues.

4. Develop and refine an array of current, effective, and legally binding contractual and financial instruments to support the business aspects of eXtension; and

The successful applicant will develop, refine, and institutionalize effective eXtension business models, including policies and practices in the areas of intellectual property, contracts, institutional branding, regional content, copyrights, licensing, sponsorship, fees, revenue sharing, and international agreements.

5. Develop and implement a comprehensive evaluation, and communications and marketing effort for eXtension.

Funds will support the general evaluation aimed at assessing the products and services of eXtension against the criteria of: 1) competitiveness in the information and education marketplace; and 2) the design of new and exceptional curricula for traditional and expanded audiences, as planned. The evaluation will include the design of appropriate performance metrics with expected outcomes and

impacts, and will align with the CSREES budget performance integration process. Funds will be used to design and implement a more comprehensive communications and marketing plan for eXtension as a whole and to support the individual Communities of Practice for analyzing potential markets, initial characterization of audience need for product and services, and for effectively marketing products and services to targeted users or Communities of Interest.

Applicants should note that eXtension is a Federal-State-Local partnership requiring full cooperation among land-grant institutions, State and county partners, the CES as a whole, and CSREES. The grantee is required to coordinate eXtension activities on behalf of all the partners in the CES.

PART II—AWARD INFORMATION

A. Available Funding

There is no commitment by USDA to fund any particular application. We anticipate making only one award in this program. After program administration costs, CSREES anticipates making approximately \$1,425,000 available in FY 2007. CSREES will continue to be involved with the funded project and with eXtension, in general, through its representation on the eXtension Governing Committee (ex-officio), Advisory Committees, and various task forces, and through its mentorship to the Communities of Practice (see the 2006 Annual Report, available online at http://about.extension.org/mediawiki/files/b/b4/EXtension_annual_report_06.pdf).

B. Types of Applications

In FY 2007, only new applications may be submitted to the NTAE program. This is a project application that has not been previously submitted to the NTAE Program. All new applications will be reviewed competitively using the selection process and evaluation criteria described in Part V—Application Review Requirements.

Each institution may submit a maximum of one NTAE application.

C. Project Type

In FY 2007, applications should be submitted for a 4-year project period as CSREES anticipates making this award as a continuation grant to reduce the administrative burden to the grant applicants. A continuation grant is an award for which an application is approved, but funds are awarded on an annual basis, subject to the availability of annual appropriations and satisfactory progress of the project.

The award made in FY 2007 will provide funds for the first year of the project.

PART III–ELIGIBILITY INFORMATION

A. Eligible Applicants

Only Extension Directors of 1862 land-grant institutions and 1890 land-grant institutions, including Tuskegee University and West Virginia State University, are eligible to submit an application and receive a NTAE award. Award recipients may subcontract to other organizations provided such organizations are necessary for the conduct of the project. Failure to meet an eligibility criterion by the application deadline will disqualify an applicant from consideration.

B. Cost Sharing or Matching

CSREES does not require matching or cost sharing support for this program, and matching resources will not be factored into the review process as evaluation criteria.

PART IV–APPLICATION AND SUBMISSION INFORMATION

A. Address to Request Application Package

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

Prior to preparing an application, it is suggested that the PD/PI first contact an Authorized Representative (AR) 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. Download and install PureEdge Viewer, a small, free program that provides access to the grant application. See http://www.grants.gov/resources/download_software.jsp#pureedge.
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-CSREES-OP-000525 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 “[CSREES Grants.gov Application Guide: A Guide for Preparation and Submission of CSREES 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 PureEdge forms, using PureEdge with a Macintosh computer), refer to resources available on the Grants.gov Web site first (<http://grants.gov/>). Grants.gov assistance is also available as follows:

- Grants.gov customer support
Toll Free: 1-800-518-4726
Business Hours: M-F 7:00 am – 9 pm Eastern Standard Time
Email: support@grants.gov

B. Content and Form of Application Submission

Electronic applications should be prepared following Part V and VI of the document entitled “[A Guide for Preparation and Submission of CSREES 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.

1. R&R Other Project Information Form

- a. Project Summary/Abstract (Field 6. on the Form). The summary should also include the relevance of the project to the goals of the program.
- b. Project Narrative (Field 7. on the Form).

PLEASE NOTE: The Project Narrative shall not exceed twenty (20) pages of written text including figures and tables and should be prepared using standard size (8 1/2" x 11") paper, one-inch margins, using no type smaller than 12 point font, and single- or double-spaced. Use an easily readable font face (e.g., Geneva, Helvetica, Times Roman). This maximum has been established to ensure fair and equitable competition. The Project Narrative must include all of the following:

- (1) **Introduction:** Describe past and current involvement with eXtension.
- (2) **Objectives and Procedures:** Discuss planned procedures for achieving each NTAE objective (listed in Part I, B.). For each task, identify key personnel involved, and timelines for achieving milestones. Where appropriate, describe how planned procedures align with the eXtension Business Case and the 2005-2007 eXtension Long-Range Implementation Plan published at <http://about.extension.org/wiki/Planning>.
- (3) **Collaborators:** List partner institutions and contacts' names, addresses, phone numbers, and e-mail addresses.
- (4) **Evaluation:** Provide a plan for evaluating accomplishments and outcomes that meet each NTAE objective (listed in Part I B.).

2. Budget

A four-year budget must be submitted with the proposal. Each budget year must not exceed the total available funding amount of \$1,425,000. The funding profile will be as follows: The initial funding period of each new award will be for twelve months, with subsequent funding for twelve months, twelve months, and the last increment will be for twelve months. The funding profile should be considered as proposals are being developed.

All funds must be obligated by the end of the five years or any unobligated funds are lost.

3. CSREES Supplemental Information Form

- a. Program Code (Field 2. on the Form). Enter the program code name "New Technologies for Ag Extension" and the program code AA-R.

b. Conflict of Interest (Field 8. on the Form). A conflict of interest list is required under this program.

C. Submission Date and Time

Applications must be received by Grants.gov by COB on April 16, 2007 (5:00 p.m. Eastern Time). Applications received after this deadline will normally not be considered for funding.

The receipt of all applications will be acknowledged by 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 has not received a confirmation message from CSREES within 30 days of submission of the application, please contact the Agency Contact identified in Part VII of the applicable RFA and request the proposal number assigned to the application. **Failure to do so may result in the application not being considered for funding by the peer review panel. 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, as amended, 7 U.S.C. 3319, indirect costs are not allowable costs under section 3(d) projects, and no funds will be approved for this purpose. Further, costs that are a part of an institution's indirect cost pool (e.g., administrative or clerical salaries) may not be reclassified as direct costs for the purpose of making them allowable.

E. Other Submission Requirements

The applicant should follow the submission requirements noted in the document entitled "[A Guide for Preparation and Submission of CSREES Applications via Grants.gov.](#)"

PART V–APPLICATION REVIEW REQUIREMENTS

A. General

Each application will be evaluated in a two-part process. First, each application will be screened to ensure that it meets the administrative requirements as set forth in Part IV of this RFA. Second, applications that meet these requirements will be technically evaluated by a review panel of peers. Reviewers may include State Extension Directors and/or Administrators, Deans of Agriculture at land-grant institutions, and CSREES National Program Leaders. To avoid potential conflicts of interest, the Agency will invite reviewers who have been, at most, minimally involved with the existing eXtension Governing Committee and current eXtension implementation activities.

Reviewers will be selected based upon training and experience in relevant scientific, extension, or education fields, taking into account the following factors: (a) the level of relevant formal scientific, technical education, or extension experience of the individual, as well as the extent to which an individual is engaged in relevant research, education, or extension activities; (b) the need to include as reviewers experts from various areas of specialization within relevant scientific, education, or extension fields; (c) the need to include as reviewers other experts (e.g., producers, range or forest managers/operators, and consumers) who can assess relevance of the applications to targeted audiences and to program needs; (d) the need to include as reviewers experts from a variety of organizational types (e.g., colleges, universities, industry, state and Federal agencies, private profit and non-profit organizations) and geographic locations; (e) the need to maintain a balanced composition of reviewers with regard to minority and female representation and an equitable age distribution; and (f) the need to include reviewers who can judge the effective usefulness to producers and the general public of each application. Based on the peer panel's review, the Agency Contact listed in Part VII makes the final recommendations for award to the authorized departmental officer who issues the notices of award.

B. Evaluation Criteria

The evaluation criteria below will be equally weighted in reviewing applications submitted in response to this RFA:

1. Planned procedures align with the eXtension Business Case and the 2005-2007 eXtension Long-Range Implementation Plan published at <http://about.extension.org/wiki/Planning>;
2. Objectives, procedures, and budget focus on eXtension infrastructure priorities stipulated in Part I, B. of this RFA;
3. Evidence concerning inclusive partnerships with the institutions and State Extension Services currently participating in eXtension is convincing; and
4. Capacity of staff to manage proposed project, including subcontracts, and deliver proposed outcomes according to the timelines provided and within the budget requested.

C. Conflicts of Interest and Confidentiality

During the peer 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.

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 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).

PART VI—AWARD ADMINISTRATION

A. General

Within the limit of funds available for such purpose, the awarding official of CSREES shall make awards 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 award 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 effective date of the award, but as soon thereafter as practical so that project goals may be attained within the funded project period. All funds awarded by CSREES under this RFA shall be expended solely for the purpose for which the funds are awarded in accordance with the approved application and budget, the regulations, the terms and conditions of the award, the applicable Federal cost principles, and the applicable Department's assistance regulations (e.g., parts 3015 and 3019 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 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 re-competition 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.

C. Administrative and National Policy Requirements

Several Federal statutes and regulations apply to grant applications considered for review and to projects 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 debt collection regulations.

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 Agreements With Institutions of Higher Education, Hospitals, and Other Non-Profit Organizations.

7 CFR Part 3021—USDA implementation of Government Requirements for Drug-Free Workplace (Financial Assistance)

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 and other institutions of higher education, in Federally assisted programs (implementing regulations are contained in 37 CFR Part 401).

D. Expected Program Outputs and Reporting Requirements

The Awardee is 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 awardee submissions of project outcomes and public access to information on Federally-funded projects.

PART VII-AGENCY CONTACT

Applicants and other interested parties are encouraged to contact Gregory Crosby, National Program Leader, eXtension, USDA, Cooperative State Research, Education, and Extension Service; Mail Stop 2210, 1400 Independence Avenue, SW, Washington, DC 20250-2210; telephone: (202) 401-6050; fax: (202) 401-1706; e-mail: gcrosby@csrees.usda.gov.

PART VIII–OTHER INFORMATION

A. Access to Review Information

Copies of reviews, not including the identity of reviewers, and a summary of the panel comments will be sent to the applicant PD after the review process has been completed.

B. 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. Changes in Project Period: 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: 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.

C. 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.

D. 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.

E. Definitions

For the purpose of this program, the following definitions are applicable:

1862 land-grant institution means a college or university eligible to receive funds under the Act of July 2, 1862 (7 U.S.C. 301 et seq.), commonly known as the First Morrill Act.

1890 land-grant institution, including Tuskegee University and West Virginia State University means a college or university eligible to receive funds under the Act of August 30, 1890 (7 U.S.C. 321 et seq.), commonly known as the Second Morrill Act, including Tuskegee University and West Virginia State University.

Administrator means the Administrator of CSREES and any other officer or employee of the Department to whom the authority involved is delegated.

Authorized departmental officer means the Secretary or any employee of the Department who has the authority to issue or modify grant and cooperative agreement instruments on behalf of the Secretary.

Authorized representative means the president, director, or chief executive officer or other designated official of the applicant organization who has the authority to commit the resources of the organization.

Continuation means is an award for which an application is approved, but funds are awarded on an annual basis, subject to the availability of annual appropriations and satisfactory progress of the project.

Department or USDA means the United States Department of Agriculture.

Grant means the award by the Secretary of 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.

Peer reviewers means experts or consultants qualified by training and experience in particular field of science, education, or technology to give expert advice on the scientific and technical merit of cooperative agreement applications of the relevance of those applications to one or more of the application evaluation criteria. Peer reviewers may be ad hoc or convened as a panel.

Prior approval means written approval evidencing prior consent by an authorized departmental officer.

Project means the particular activity within the scope of the program supported by an award.

Project director (PD) means the single individual designated by the awardee in the cooperative agreement application and approved by the Secretary who is responsible for the direction and management of the project.

Project period means the period, as stated in the award document, during which Federal sponsorship begins and ends.

Secretary means the Secretary of Agriculture and any other officer or employee of the Department of Agriculture to whom the authority involved is delegated.

F. CSREES' Grants.gov Implementation Plans

CSREES is continuing to develop its capacity to exchange proposal and grant data electronically with its grantees through [Grants.gov](http://www.grants.gov) and to process, review, and award proposals and grants electronically.

In Fiscal Year (FY) 2006, CSREES offered an electronic application option for select grant programs and partnered with five institutions to use Grants.gov Apply. CSREES utilized the SF-424 R&R (Research and Related) forms package (see 70 FR 9656, published in the Federal Register on February 28, 2005) along with CSREES Agency-specific forms and instructions to receive the electronic applications. These pilot activities were successful and provided lessons for applicants and CSREES.

As a result, for the FY 2007 (October 1, 2006-September 30, 2007) cycle, CSREES is requiring electronic submission through Grants.gov for some programs while providing a Grants.gov option for others. Please visit <http://www.csrees.usda.gov/funding/fy07changes.html> for information about

FY 2007 submission requirements by program. For more information about CSREES' Grants.gov plans, including important announcements, program implementation, and detailed requirements, see the CSREES' web site, http://www.csrees.usda.gov/business/other_links/egov/egov.html. The information on these web sites will be updated as appropriate. It is suggested that the sites be visited periodically for important updates.

G. DUNS Number

A Dun and Bradstreet (D&B) Data Universal Numbering System (DUNS) number is a unique nine-digit sequence recognized as the universal standard for identifying and keeping track of over 70 million businesses worldwide. A Federal Register notice of final policy issuance (68 FR 38402) requires a DUNS number in every application (i.e., hard copy and electronic) for a grant or cooperative agreement (except applications from individuals) submitted on or after October 1, 2003. Therefore, project directors should contact an AR to obtain the DUNS number or have the AR begin the steps needed to obtain one.

For information about how to obtain a DUNS number go to <http://www.grants.gov/RequestaDUNS>. Please note that the registration may take up to 14 business days to complete.