

Rural Youth Development Grants Program

FY 2008 Request for Applications

Application Deadline: May 21, 2008



U.S. Department of Agriculture



Cooperative State Research, Education, and Extension Service

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

RURAL YOUTH DEVELOPMENT GRANTS

INITIAL ANNOUNCEMENT

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

DATES: Applications must be received by close of business (COB) on **May 21, 2008** (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 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. (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 Rural Youth Development Grants Program RFA.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY: CSREES announces the availability of grant funds and requests applications for the Rural Youth Development Grants (RYD) Program for fiscal year (FY) 2008 to support the expansion of effective, high quality youth development programs for youth in rural areas and small towns. The amount available for support of this program in FY 2008 is approximately \$1,647,000.

This notice identifies the objectives for RYD projects, the eligibility criteria for projects and applicants, and the application forms and associated instructions needed to apply for a RYD grant. CSREES additionally requests stakeholder input from any interested party for use in the development of the next RFA for this program.

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PART I—FUNDING OPPORTUNITY DESCRIPTION

A. Legislative Authority and Background

Section 7412 of the Farm and Security Rural Investment Act of 2002 (P.L. 107-171) authorized the Secretary of Agriculture to make grants to youth serving organizations. The administrative regulations for this program are found at 7 U.S.C. 7630.

In February, 2002, nearly 1200 youth and adults representing over 600 youth organizations nationwide participated in the National Conversation on Youth Development in the 21st Century in Washington, DC. This forum produced a report that included recommendations regarding the future of youth programs and youth organizations. The recommendations focus on the importance of breaking down barriers to participation, especially for rural youth; enhancing opportunities for youth involvement in policy and decision-making; creating safe and inviting environments for youth activities; and improving access to information and technology. Participants suggested that national youth organizations collaborate to maximize resources and programs for youth. The report concluded that rural youth encounter economic and physical barriers that prevent their receiving adequate care, services, or resources necessary for healthy development. The Rural Youth Development Grants (RYD) program is intended to address these and other issues as specified in Part I.B.

B. Purpose and Priorities

As specified in 7 U.S.C. 7630, grants will be made to expand the youth development programs carried out by the eligible organizations in rural areas or small towns. The purposes of the RYD program are to:

- Support programs which address needs of rural youth; and
- Involve those youth in design and implementation of their educational activities.

Research, studies, and public opinion polls indicate there are several important issues facing rural youth that can be addressed through existing youth development organizations. The following list represents some, but certainly not all, of those issues. The literature reveals that rural youth:

- Experience less community interconnection of people due to long commute times of parents to work and children to school which leads to:
 - a. Lack of first hand observation of potential career opportunities;
 - b. Fewer adult role models for civic responsibility and volunteering; and
 - c. More unsupervised time, generally after-school.
- Experience geographic isolation due to distance between homes and towns, and a lack of public transportation;
- Are impacted by new populations moving into rural communities, increasing diversity;
- Have fewer physical locations in which to interact with peers and adults;

- Have limited programs and opportunities;
- Have limited employment opportunities, especially meaningful employment;
- Experience increased isolation and alienation due to high teacher turnover;
- Live in cultures characterized by prejudice, ethnocentricity and intolerance to nonconforming ideas that could lead to violence;
- Experiment with negative behaviors;
- Have seen a three fold increase in gang-related activity in many places;
- Have less access to health care, services and resources necessary to healthy development;
- Have access to technology at school, but not necessarily at home;
- Are more likely to live in poverty; and
- Are part of the growing epidemic of childhood obesity.

RYP funded programs can be delivered in-school and/or during out-of-school time, but should be in the context of connecting the formal classroom to real-life experience and vice versa.

Projects funded through the RYP program must work toward achieving the short-, medium-, and long-term outcomes for youths, adults, community leaders, and communities listed on the tables found on pages 6 and 7 under this section.

To measure long-term impacts on community well-being, a research based framework will be used. The framework outlines the following seven (7) areas, or “Community Capitals,” that can be improved: human, social, civic, cultural, natural, financial and built. For more information on community capitals, the Iowa State University web site has several resources. Two specific sites are: <http://www.ag.iastate.edu/centers/rdev/projects/commcap/7-capitalshandout.pdf> and <http://www.ag.iastate.edu/centers/rdev/pubs/Communitycapitals.pdf>.

Rural Youth Development Program Outcomes

Short Term Outcomes for Youth	Medium Term Outcomes for Youth	Long Term Outcomes
<p>Youth will develop knowledge, skills, & attitudes in:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • +communication • +conflict management/resolution • +decision-making • +goal setting • +problem solving • planning • team building • group facilitation • concepts of leadership, civic engagement and youth/adult partnerships • visionary thinking <p>Youth will develop positive attitudes and opinions of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • efficacy • self-confidence • inclusivity, pluralism and diversity <p>Youth are motivated to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • serve in leadership roles • become engaged in their communities • be of service to others <p>Youth have awareness and knowledge of elements of ethical leadership (character):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • trustworthiness • responsibility • respect • fairness • caring • citizenship <p>+primary outcomes</p>	<p>Youth Serve in:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • group decision-making roles within their youth organizations & schools • leadership roles in their youth organizations & schools • leadership roles in community organizations <p>Youth work in partnership with adults to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • facilitate community forums or conduct needs assessments to identify community needs • develop and implement action plans to address community needs • evaluate how community needs were met <p>Youth Demonstrate and Practice:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the competencies listed as “short term” • inclusivity, pluralism and valuing diversity • ethical leadership • motivation to be engaged in their communities • self-confidence and efficacy <p align="center">Continued on next page.</p>	<p>Improved <u>Human</u> Capital:</p> <p>Increased use of skills & abilities of local people; increased initiative, responsibility and innovation</p> <p>Young adults serve in leadership roles, serve as change agents, and are stakeholders in their communities</p> <p>Improved <u>Cultural</u> Capital:</p> <p>Increased cultural consciousness and engagement</p> <p>Improved <u>Social</u> Capital:</p> <p>Increased networks, communication, cooperation, trust</p> <p>Improved <u>Civic</u> Capital:</p> <p>Increased ability to secure resources for the community & active citizen participation</p> <p>Improved <u>Financial</u> Capital:</p> <p>Improved diverse and vital economies in areas such as new financial instruments established, new bond issues passed; outside funding obtained to improve infrastructure and business development; poverty reduction.</p> <p>Improved <u>Built</u> Capital:</p> <p>Infrastructure improved and strengthened in areas such as telecommunications; education facilities; government buildings; community buildings; transportation; business district; health care facilities; indoor recreational facilities; cultural facilities; housing; churches; city services; and energy services.</p>

<p>Short Term Outcomes for Adults Working With Youth</p> <p>Adults will develop knowledge and skills to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • work in partnership with youth in leadership roles • serve as mentors and role models • guide youth to learn the competencies, skills and attitudes listed above • engage the community in identifying community issues • create an action plan to address identified community issues • implement an action plan to address community needs • evaluate the implementation of the plan <p>Adults develop positive attitudes and opinions of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • youth as resources and equal partners • inclusivity, pluralism and diversity 	<p>Medium Term Outcomes for Adults Working with the Program</p> <p>Adults work in partnership with youth to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • identify community needs • develop and implement plans to address community needs. • evaluate plans to address community needs <p>Adults:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ensure that issues and activities reflect the diversity of the community. • actively seek, support, and engage youth in leadership roles • ensure that youth have an “authentic” voice • are effective mentors and role models 	<p>Long Term Outcomes</p> <p>Improved <u>Natural Capital</u>:</p> <p>Improvements in air, water, soil, biodiversity, landscape, scenery, outdoor recreation, wildlife, land development plans, ecosystems used for multiple community benefits.</p>
<p>Short Term Outcomes for Community Stakeholders</p> <p>Community stakeholders and decision-makers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • are aware of policies, resources, and/or supports needed to address community needs and support positive youth development • are engaged with youth in identifying and addressing community needs and evaluating the effectiveness of addressing those needs. • develop positive attitudes and opinions of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ youth as resources and equal partners ◆ inclusivity, pluralism and diversity 	<p>Medium Term Outcomes for Community Stakeholders</p> <p>Stakeholders and decision makers change policies</p> <p>Stakeholders and decision-makers provide resources and supports to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • identify community needs • develop and implement a plan to address community needs • evaluate the resulting community outcomes <p>Stakeholders:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ensure needs and activities reflect the diversity of the community, including youth • actively recruit, train, and support youth to serve on community boards and committees • genuinely consider youth voices and involve youth in decision-making 	<p>All long-term community capital outcomes on the previous page also apply to this page and the next page.</p>

C. Program Area Description

For purposes of the RYD RFA, the **PROGRAM NAME** is **RURAL YOUTH DEVELOPMENT GRANTS** and the **PROGRAM CODE** is **AA-H**.

The RYD program provides access to and opportunities for youth in rural areas through programs that:

- Provide constructive and encouraging relationships among youth and adults and youth and peers;
- Provide an array of youth development opportunities for youth to build competencies in areas such as mastery, independence, generosity, and sense of belonging;
- Provide access to multiple opportunities for youth to develop assets in the physical, intellectual, psychological, emotional, and/or social domains;
- Engage youth as partners in their own development and the development of their communities;
- Promote positive development so youth will be engaged in their communities and more likely to promote the well-being of other young people;
- Are effectively child and youth focused;
- Build human capital to reverse the “brain drain” caused by capable young people leaving rural communities;
- Build community institutions such as comprehensive community centers;
- Connect the formal classroom to real-life experience and use the community as context for learning; and
- Have sufficient scope, breadth, duration, frequency and intensity of engagement of young people to reach long-term positive outcomes.

Within the context of the intent of the funding, the issues facing rural youth, and the potential solutions outlined above, the broad goals of this funding include:

1. Rural children and youth have the knowledge, skills, attitudes and behaviors necessary to live productive, contributing, and fulfilling lives; and
2. Rural communities have increased economic opportunities and improved quality of life.

In FY 2008, an applicant may request a grant up to \$549,000 for a duration of 18 months.

PART II—AWARD INFORMATION

A. Available Funding

There is no commitment by USDA to fund any particular application or to make a specific number of awards. Pursuant to the Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2008 (P.L. 110-161) CSREES anticipates that approximately \$1,647,000 will be available to support up to four grants under the Rural Youth Development (RYD) grants program in FY 2008. Awards will be made on a competitive basis as a result of merit review and recommendations of a peer review panel.

B. Types of Applications

In FY 2008, applications may be submitted to the RYD Program as one of the following types of requests:

(1) **New application.** This is a project application that has not been previously submitted to the RYD Program. The only organizations eligible to submit new applications are the Girl Scouts of the United States of America, the National FFA Organization, the National 4-H Council, and the Boy Scouts of America. All new applications will be reviewed competitively using the selection process and evaluation criteria described in Part V (Application Review Requirements). Applications must contain Progress Reports on Project Management and Program Accomplishments (see Project Description, Part IV.B.2. and Part VI.D). If any organization referenced above has not been awarded funds in the past, the lack of Progress Reports and Program Accomplishments will not reflect negatively in scoring.

The program is considered to be a continuation of the purposes as established in 7 U.S.C. 7630. In FY 2008, applications should build on the goals, outcomes and program implementation strategies established in FY 2005/2006. The majority of the communities selected by the national organizations for funding in FY 2008 shall be the same ones funded in FY 2005/2006 as long as they are effective and demonstrating results. The majority of youth participating in the program should be involved for at least 2 years.

C. Project Types

In FY 2008, a proposal may request a grant up to \$549,000 for a duration of 18 months. Priority will be given to proposals that effectively demonstrate the capacity to develop programs that deliver desired outcomes as listed in Part I.B. of this RFA. It is strongly encouraged that a minimum of 50% of the funds received by the national organization be allocated to local communities. The amount allocated to local communities will be considered in scoring the application, as well.

PART III—ELIGIBILITY INFORMATION

A. Eligible Applicants

Pursuant to 7 U.S.C. Section 7630, only the Girl Scouts of the United States of America, the National 4-H Council, the Boy Scouts of America, and the National FFA Organization are eligible to apply. CSREES will accept only one application from each national organization. In FY 2008, RYD awards will be distributed to each of the four eligible organizations that submits an application in accordance with the requirements of this RFA if the application is found to be worthy of support through the peer review process. The amount awarded to each organization will be determined based on review and recommendations of a peer review panel.

Award recipients may subcontract to organizations not eligible to apply provided such organizations are necessary for the conduct of the project.

If an applicant fails to meet an eligibility criterion by the time of the application deadline, the application will be at risk of being excluded from CSREES review.

B. Cost Sharing or Matching

There are no matching requirements associated with the RYD program, and matching resources will not be factored into the review process as evaluation criteria.

PART IV—APPLICATION AND SUBMISSION INFORMATION

A. Electronic 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 Project Director (PD/PI) first contact an Authorized Organizational Representative (AOR/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-F4HN-001465** 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

See <http://www.csrees.usda.gov/funding/electronic.html> for additional resources for applying electronically.

B. Content and Form of Application Submission

Electronic applications should be prepared following Parts 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 CSREES Grants.gov Application Guide available with the Application Package at Grants.gov. **ANY PROPOSALS CONTAINING NON-PDF DOCUMENTS WILL BE AT RISK OF BEING EXCLUDED FROM CSREES REVIEW.** Partial applications will be excluded from consideration. With documented prior approval, resubmitted applications will be accepted until close of business (COB) on the closing date in the RFA.

If you do not own PDF generating software, Grants.gov provides online tools to assist applicants. Users will find a link to “[PDF Conversion Programs](#)” on (http://www.grants.gov/resources/download_software.jsp#pdf_conversion_programs).

1. SF 424 R&R Cover Sheet - (Required Form)

Complete all required fields. See Part V.2 of the CSREES Grants.gov Application Guide for specific details.

2. R&R Other Project Information Form (Required Form)

Information related to the questions on this form is dealt with in detail in Part V.3. of the CSREES Grants.gov Application Guide.

a. Project Summary/Abstract - (Field 6.)

The summary should be approximately 250 words. The names and affiliated organizations of all PDs and co-PDs should be listed on this form, in addition to the title of the project. The summary should be a self-contained, specific description of the activity to be undertaken and should focus on: overall project goal(s) and supporting objectives; plans to accomplish project goal(s); and relevance of the project to the goals of the RYD Grants program. The importance of a concise, informative Project Summary cannot be overemphasized.

b. Project Narrative (formerly Project Description) - (Field 7.)

PLEASE NOTE: The Project Narrative shall not exceed 17 pages of written text. This maximum has been established to ensure fair and equitable competition. The Project Narrative must include all of the following:

(i) Statement of Need, Site Location, and Scope of Project: From the list of issues facing rural youth (See Part I.B), select and specify those that will be addressed in this project.

- Briefly describe how this overall project will address the issues;

- Include the projected number of local programs to be funded and the number of youth and adults to be reached;
- Provide the criteria that will be used to select rural locations and the process for selecting new sites and/or continuing existing sites. Criteria to select new sites must be congruent with the elements in Part I.B of this RFA and must address the categories outlined below;
- Describe how youth will be involved in the design and implementation of the programs;
- Indicate whether any past RYD funds supported each local site and where past funds supported a site, describe the process used to justify continued funding;
- Starting with communities funded in FY 2005/2006, indicate the number of same communities funded by FYs 2006/2007 and 2007/2008. If the same communities were not funded for multiple years, give the justification; and
- Starting with youth participants in FY 2005/2006, indicate the number of same youth participating in FYs 2006/2007 and 2007/2008. If the same youth did not participate for multiple years, give the justification.

(ii) Youth Development Principles: From the information given in Part I.B that describes the types of programs and experiences that will address rural youth issues, provide a brief description of the community youth development principles and approaches that will be used in this project. Additional principles and approaches may be used if they are from the references listed below or documented in other research.

In preparing the project narrative, the following resources will provide additional information. It is strongly encouraged that these materials be reviewed before developing the application:

1. “Key Issues Facing Rural Youth.” Daniel F. Perkins. Southern Rural Development Center Series #228. Web site: <http://www.srdc.msstate.edu/publications/228.htm>.
2. “Community Programs to Promote Youth Development.” Jacquelynne Eccles and Jennifer Gootman, Eds., National Academy Press, Washington, DC. Web site: <http://www.nap.edu>.
3. The following materials are located on the National 4-H Headquarters web site at: <http://www.national4-Hheadquarters.gov>. (**Note: Although the materials refer to 4-H, the same elements and concepts apply to all youth development programs.**)
 - The 4-H Youth Development Environment. Cathann Kress, USDA (http://www.national4-hheadquarters.gov/library/4h_environment.pdf);
 - The 4-H Youth Development Ideals. Cathann Kress, USDA (http://www.national4-hheadquarters.gov/library/4h_ideals.pdf);
 - Habits of Remarkable 4-H Youth Development Programs. Cathann Kress, USDA (<http://www.national4-hheadquarters.gov/library/habits.pdf>);

- Meeting Needs of Youth. Cathann Kress, USDA
(<http://www.national4-hheadquarters.gov/library/4needsbrochure.pdf>);
- Issues Facing Rural Youth: A Compendium of Research, Reports, and Public Opinion Polls. Nancy Valentine and Jim Kahler, USDA, and Susan Cippoletti, Girl Scouts of the USA.; (<http://www.national4-hheadquarters.gov/library/ruralresearch.pdf>).
- 4-H Essential Elements. Cathann Kress, USDA
(<http://www.national4-hheadquarters.gov/library/elements.ppt>).

(iii) Outcomes and Indicators: Take the short- and medium-term outcomes for youth, adults, and community leaders outlined in the Table in Part I.B, and write the indicators that will be used to measure EACH outcome. If applicants articulate outcomes somewhat differently, they must be cross-referenced with the outcomes as stated in the Table. It must be clear that the indicators will link to the outcomes as stated in the Table. Provide clear, concise, complete, measurable, and logically arranged statements. Additional outcomes and indicators may be articulated as long as they are sufficiently linked to the goals of the project, are based on research, and supported with reference citations.

(iv) Program Design and Methodologies: Describe the types of program designs and strategies that will be used to meet the outcomes and indicators described above (e.g., after-school programs, teacher training, mentoring, internships, youth-adult partnerships, and technology clubs).

- Include scope and duration of the programs (e.g., youth will be engaged in approximately 25 weeks of the program for a total of 100 hours). If programs are of short duration, describe how they will link to ongoing programs and opportunities in the community to provide long-term positive experiences for youth;
- Describe how programs will link formal and non-formal education; and
- Explain the research base which supports the particular activities use to meet the stated objectives.

(v) Evaluation Methodologies: Describe the evaluation design and methodologies that will be used to measure the extent to which program outcomes and indicators are met.

(vi) Communication Plan: Briefly describe how results from this project will be communicated to stakeholders and the public.

(vii) Project Management: Provide a brief summary of key staff and their functions, time lines, accounting procedures (for funds used by the parent organizations and local sites), reporting, and collaborative efforts with the grantees.

c. Bibliography & References Cited - (Field 8)

All references to works cited should be complete, including titles and all co-authors, and should conform to an acceptable journal format. References are not considered in the page-limitation for the Project Narrative.

Other Attachments - (Field 11)

(i) Project Management Report - (Field 11)

FY 2008 applications for RYD grants must include a Summary of Progress Report for prior awards. Applicants funded in FYs 2005, 2006 & 2007 must include a summary of project management for the current RYD grants as part of their submission. This information will be used in the review of the application. It is limited to 3 pages (in addition to the 17 pages for the Project Narrative) and shall meet the same technical requirements as the rest of the application. The summary of progress shall address key project management issues. For each of the areas listed below, the summary shall indicate whether:

(1) The project is being implemented in accordance with the timelines and budgets reported in the FYs 2005, 2006 and 2007 applications; or

(2) The project has run into difficulties or fallen behind timelines or budgets reported in the FYs 2005, 2006 and/or 2007 applications. If this is the case, the summary shall include a description of the situation(s), corrective action(s), and the timeline for implementing the corrective action(s).

- Reaching objectives;
- Selecting communities based on national philosophy (see logic model on pages 6 and 7 of this RFA);
- Communicating results;
- Project leadership;
- Project budget; and
- Reporting

(ii) Program Accomplishment Report - (Field 11)

Applicants funded in FYs 2005, 2006 and 2007 must submit a program accomplishment report from previous year(s) of funding. It is limited to 10 pages (in addition to the 17 pages for the Project Narrative). The accomplishment report can be presented in a style, format, and/or medium of the organization's preference. At a minimum, it must include the extent to which program objectives, outcomes and indicators from local communities were met (community capital built), the extent to which program outcomes from the national RYD logic model were met, the scope of the program (actual versus projected numbers reached), and information requested for collaborative marketing products. See Part IV. D. for more information.

(iii) Appendices to Project Description - (Field 11)

Appendices to the Project Description are allowed if they are directly germane to the proposed project. The addition of appendices should not be used to circumvent the page limit.

(iv) Collaborative Arrangements - (Field 11)

If it will be necessary to enter into formal consulting or collaborative arrangements with others, such arrangements should be fully explained and justified. If consultants or collaborators are known at the time of application, vitae or resumes should be provided. In addition, evidence (e.g., letter of support) should be provided that the collaborators involved have agreed to render these services. Letter(s) of support must be dated and signed by the Authorized Organizational Representative (AOR/AR) who is approving the collaborative arrangement. Please submit this documentation as a separate PDF attachment.

3. R&R Senior/Key Person Profile (Expanded) - (Required Form)

Information related to the questions on this form is dealt with in detail in Part V.4. of the CSREES Grants.gov Application Guide.

Current and Pending Support – Each application must contain a complete listing of all active (current) projects. The listing must include the name of the project, source of funding (sponsor), the total amount of funding, and the effective and expiration date(s) of the project(s). See the CSREES Grants.gov Application Guide section 4.2 for further details. **Please note that this project should be reflected as the first item listed in the pending support section.**

4. R&R Personal Data – (Optional Form)

As noted in Part V.5. of the CSREES Grants.gov Application Guide, the submission of this information is voluntary and is not a precondition of award.

PLEASE DO NOT PROVIDE THE SOCIAL SECURITY NUMBER OF THE PROJECT DIRECTOR/PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR.

5. R& R Budget - (Required Form)

Information related to the questions on this form is dealt with in detail in Part V.6. of the CSREES Grants.gov Application Guide. Use the R&R Budget Form for the RYD program. Prepare a budget detailing the requested total support for the overall project period. It is strongly encouraged that a minimum of 50% of the funds received by the national organization be allocated to local communities. The amount allocated to local communities will be considered in scoring the application.

A budget narrative is required. All costs should be fully explained and justified. All budget categories, with the exception of Indirect Costs, for which support is requested, must be individually listed (with costs) in the same order as the budget and justified on a separate sheet and placed immediately behind the Budget form. If consulting, collaborative arrangements, or subcontractual arrangements are included in the application, these arrangements should be fully explained and justified. The rate of pay for any consultant must be included, if known at the time of application. Letters of intent or other evidence should be provided to show that collaborators have agreed to participate. For each arrangement involving the transfer of substantive

programmatic work or the provision of financial assistance to a third party, a proposed statement of work, curriculum vitae, budget and budget narrative must be supplied. In multi-state/territory applications, a budget and budget narrative must be included for each state/territory involved. The lead state/territory and each participating state/territory must be identified. **The Budget Narrative must be submitted as a PDF attachment.**

6. SF 424 (R&R) Subaward Budget Attachment - (Only required if the application includes subawards)

All subawards' budgets must be included in the R&R Subaward Budget Attachment and a Budget Justification which includes an explanation for each budget item. **Applicants will note that the R&R Subaward Budget Attachment(s) Form allows no more than 10 R&R Subaward Budget Files for a grant application.** Applicants are instructed to include any remaining subaward budget(s) under Field K. "Budget Justification", incorporating them as part of the required PDF attachment.

7. Supplemental Information Form - (Required Form)

Information related to the questions on this form is dealt with in detail in Part VI, 1. of the CSREES Grants.gov Application Guide.

a. Program Code (Field 2. on the Form). Enter the program code name: **RURAL YOUTH DEVELOPMENT GRANTS**; and the program code: PROGRAM CODE: **AA-H**.

b. Conflict of Interest List (Field 8. on the Form).

C. Submission Dates and Times

Instructions for submitting an application are included in Part IV, Section 1.9 of the CSREES Grants.gov Application Guide.

Applications must be received by Grants.gov by COB on **May 21, 2008** (5:00 p.m. Eastern Time). Applications received after this deadline will normally not be considered for funding.

Correspondence regarding submitted applications will be sent using 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 correspondence **from CSREES** regarding a submitted application within 30 days of submission of the application, please contact the Program 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

CSREES has determined that grant funds awarded under this authority may not be used for the renovation or refurbishment of facility space; the purchase or installation of fixed equipment in such space; or the planning, repair, rehabilitation, acquisition, or construction of buildings or facilities.

Pursuant to Section 706 of the Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2008 (P.L. 110-161), indirect costs are limited to 20 percent of the total Federal funds provided under each award. Therefore, the recovery of indirect costs under this program may not exceed the lesser of the institution's official negotiated indirect cost rate or the equivalent of 20 percent of total Federal funds awarded. Another method of calculating the maximum allowable is 25 percent of the total direct costs. If no rate has been negotiated, a reasonable dollar amount (equivalent to or less than 20 percent of total Federal funds requested) in lieu of indirect costs may be requested, subject to approval by CSREES. This limitation also applies to the recovery of indirect costs by any sub-awardee or subcontractor, and should be reflected in the sub-recipient budget.

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 2-part process. First, each application will be screened to ensure that it meets the administrative requirements as set forth in this RFA. Second, applications that meet these requirements will be technically evaluated by a review panel.

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.

B. Evaluation Criteria

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

1. 15 Points. Statement of Need, Site Location, Scope of Project:

- Does the application specify those issues that will be addressed in this project from the list of issues facing rural youth in Part I.B? If additional issues are proposed to be addressed, are they documented by research?
- Is it likely this overall project will address the rural issues identified?
- Are the projected number of local programs to be funded and the number of youth and adults to be reached adequate for the funding amount requested?
- Will the criteria used to select new sites and/or continue existing sites ensure rural locations? Do they advance the likelihood of successful outcomes? Are the criteria to select new sites congruent with the elements in Part I.B of this RFA?
- Will youth be involved in the design and implementation of the programs?
- Is the justification and approach for funding new sites and/or renewing past sites adequate to ensure successful projects? Have the majority of community sites been funded for 2-3 years? Have the majority of youth participated for 2-3 years?
- Does the proposed project meet the objectives of the funding and provide sufficient justification for funding the proposal?

2. 10 Points. Youth Development Principles: Will the project address rural youth issues and apply community youth development principles and approaches outlined in Part I. B? If additional approaches are used, are they documented by research? Are the approaches sufficient to warrant funding?

3. 15 Points. Outcomes and Indicators: Are EACH of the outcomes listed in Part I.B articulated? If the outcomes are stated somewhat differently, are they cross-referenced with the outcomes as stated? Are the indicators selected appropriate to measure the intended outcomes? Are outcomes and indicators written in clear, concise, complete, measurable, and logically arranged statement(s)? If other outcomes and indicators are specified, are they sufficiently linked to the goals of the project, based on research, and supported with reference citations?

4. 15 Points. Program Design and Methodologies:

- Will program designs and strategies (e.g., after-school programs, teacher training, curriculum, mentoring, internships, youth-adult partnerships, and technology clubs) likely produce the articulated indicators to meet the outcomes established for the program?
- Are the scope and duration of the programs (e.g., youth will be engaged in approximately 25 weeks of the program for a total of 100 hours) adequate to produce positive outcomes? If programs are of short duration, are they linked to ongoing programs and opportunities in the community to provide long-term positive experiences for youth?
- Will programs link formal and non-formal education?
- Is the appropriate research base used to support the selected educational design and activities?

5. 10 Points. Evaluation Methodologies: Are the evaluation designs and methodologies adequate to measure the extent to which program indicators and outcomes are being met?

6. 5 Points. Communication Plan: Are there clear and acceptable strategies to communicate the results from this project to stakeholders and the public?

7. 2 Points. Project Management: Is there evidence of strong and adequate project management including key staff and their functions, time lines, accounting procedures (for funds used by the parent organizations and local sites), reporting, and collaborative efforts with the grantees?

8. 3 Points. Budget: Is there an appropriate amount of money allocated to local communities? Is the total budget allocation adequate to reach project goals?

9. 20 Points. Success of Community Projects: Have the local community projects funded in FYs 2005, 2006, and 2007 achieved the youth, adult and community outcomes specified in the national RYD logic model? Has community capital increased in communities as a result of the community projects? Does the program accomplishment report provide sufficient evidence of the extent to which national and local program outcomes were met, the scope of the program (actual versus projected numbers reached), and information requested for collaborative marketing products to justify continued funding? See Part VI.D for more information. **Please note – applicants who have not been previously funded by the RYD program will not be placed at a disadvantage based on this criteria.**

10. 5 Points. Success in Previous Project Management for RYD Projects

Using the following categories:

- Reaching objectives;
- Selecting communities based on national philosophy;
- Communicating results;
- Project leadership;
- Project budget; and
- Reporting

(i) Is there evidence that the applicant has implemented other RYD grants in accordance with the timelines and budgets reported in the FYs 2005, 2006, and 2007 applications; or

(ii) If past projects have run into difficulties or fallen behind timelines or budgets reported in the FYs 2005, 2006, 2007 and/or 2008 applications, is there sufficient evidence of corrective action(s), and a reasonable timeline for implementing corrective action(s)?

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 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 15th 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).

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.

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).

D. Expected Program Outputs and Reporting Requirements

The grantee must prepare an annual report to CSREES that details all significant activities towards achieving the goals and objectives of the project and stressing evaluation results of served populations. Organize annual reports by objectives and deliverables identified in the proposal as well as the outcomes in the national RYD logic model (see pages 6 and 7). Provide tables to facilitate comparing targeted results with actual results. Include success stories. Annual reports must cover the time period of January 1 through December 31, 2007 and be received with the application by May 21, 2008.

Applicants funded in FY 2007 must also submit summaries of the “Output Measures Report” and “Reports of Community Action and Well-Being” for projects funded in FYs 2005/2006; 2006/2007 and 2007/2008. Summary reports shall be by year and cumulative.

At the end of the grantee's final year, the grantee must prepare a final report to CSREES that summarizes all significant activities towards achieving the goals and objectives of the project, while providing final population demographics and trends in the evaluation results. Organize final reports by objectives and deliverables identified in the proposal. Provide tables to facilitate comparing targeted results with actual results, aggregated for the entire project. List all educational materials produced by the project. Include success stories. Reports must be received within 90 days of the termination of the award.

Projects may also submit program results to the Cooperative State Research, Education, and Extension System (CSREES) Current Research Information System (CRIS) data base.

Required reports should be sent to the individuals referenced under Part VII-Agency Contacts.

PART VII—AGENCY CONTACTS

Applicants and other interested parties are encouraged to contact: Nancy Valentine; National Program Leader for Rural Youth Development; Families, 4-H and Nutrition Unit; Cooperative State Research, Education, and Extension Service; U.S. Department of Agriculture; STOP 2225; 1400 Independence Avenue, SW; Washington, DC 20250-2225; Telephone: (202) 720-5347; Fax: (202) 720-9366; E-mail: nvalentine@csrees.usda.gov or Janice Clark, Program Specialist, Families, 4-H and Nutrition Unit; Cooperative State Research, Education, and Extension Service; U.S. Department of Agriculture; STOP 2225; 1400 Independence Avenue, SW; Washington, DC 20250-2225; Telephone: (202) 720-4436; Fax: (202) 720-9366; E-mail: jclark@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. 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.

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:

Administrator means the Administrator of the Cooperative State Research, Education, and Extension Service (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 instruments on behalf of the Secretary.

Authorized Organizational Representative (also referred to as 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.

Budget period means the interval of time (usually 12 months) into which the project period is divided for budgetary and reporting purposes.

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.

Grantee means an organization designated in the grant award document as the responsible legal entity to which a grant is awarded.

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

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

Project director means the single individual designated in the grant 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.

Rural areas means an area not classified as urban (i.e. both urbanized areas and urban clusters) as determined by the last available decennial census.

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

Small towns mean towns with populations of 10,000 or less as determined by the last available decennial census.