

DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE**Cooperative State Research,
Education, and Extension Service****Applications for FY 2002 National
Research Initiative Competitive Grants
Program**

AGENCY: Cooperative State Research, Education, and Extension Service, USDA.

ACTION: Notice of the Availability of the Solicitation for Applications for the Fiscal Year (FY) 2002 National Research Initiative Competitive Grants Program, and Request for Stakeholder Input.

SUMMARY: This notice announces the availability of the FY 2002 solicitation for applications which is titled the "NRI Program Description and Guidelines for Proposal Preparation" for the National Research Initiative (NRI) Competitive Grants Program administered by the Competitive Research Grants and Awards Management Division, Cooperative State Research, Education, and Extension Service (CSREES). The solicitation invites applications for competitive grant awards in agricultural, forest, and related environmental sciences for FY 2002.

By this notice, CSREES also requests stakeholder input regarding the FY 2002 NRI program solicitation from any interested party. These comments will be considered in the development of the next solicitation for this program.

DATES: Proposals must be postmarked on or before the dates provided in the table at the end of this notice.

Comments regarding this solicitation are invited for six months from the issuance of this notice. Comments received after that date will be considered to the extent practicable.

ADDRESSES: The address for hand-delivered proposals or proposals submitted using an express mail or overnight courier service is: NRI; c/o Proposal Services Unit; Cooperative State Research, Education, and Extension Service; U.S. Department of Agriculture; Room 1307, Waterfront Centre; 800 9th Street, SW.; Washington, DC 20024; telephone: 202-205-0241.

Proposals sent via the U.S. Postal Service must be sent to the following address: NRI; c/o Proposal Services Unit; Cooperative State Research, Education, and Extension Service; U.S. Department of Agriculture; STOP 2245; 1400 Independence Avenue, SW.; Washington, DC 20250-2245.

Written stakeholder comments should be submitted by mail to: Policy and Program Liaison Staff; Office of

Extramural Programs; USDA-CSREES; STOP 2299; 1400 Independence Avenue, SW.; Washington, DC 20250-2299; or via e-mail to: *RFP-OEP@reeusda.gov*. (This e-mail address is intended only for receiving comments regarding this solicitation and not for requesting information or forms.) In your comments, please state that you are responding to the FY 2002 NRICGP solicitation for applications.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: USDA/CSREES/NRI; Stop 2241; 1400 Independence Avenue, SW.; Washington, DC 20250-2241. Phone: (202) 401-5022. E-mail: *nricgp@reeusda.gov*.

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CSREES is requesting comments regarding the FY 2002 NRI solicitation for applications from any interested party. In your comments, please include the name of the program and the fiscal year solicitation for applications to which you are responding. These comments will be considered in the development of the next solicitation for applications for the program. Such comments will be used in meeting the requirements of section 103(c)(2) of the Agricultural Research, Extension, and Education Reform Act of 1998, 7 U.S.C. 7613(c). Comments should be submitted as provided in the "Addresses" and "Dates" portions of this notice.

Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance

The Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance number for this program is 10.206.

Authority and Applicable Regulations

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

Regulations applicable to this program include the following: (a) the

regulations governing the NRI, 7 CFR part 3411, which set forth procedures to be followed when submitting grant proposals, rules governing the evaluation of proposals and the awarding of grants, and regulations relating to the post-award administration of grant projects; (b) the USDA Uniform Administrative Requirements for Grants and Agreements with Institutions of Higher Education, Hospitals, and Other Non-Profit Organizations, 7 CFR part 3019; (c) the USDA Uniform Federal Assistance Regulations, 7 CFR part 3015; (d) the USDA Uniform Administrative Requirements for Grants and Cooperative Agreements to State and Local Governments, 7 CFR part 3016; and (e) 7 U.S.C. 3103(17), which defines "sustainable agriculture."

Conflicts of Interest

For the purpose of determining conflicts of interest in accordance with 7 CFR 3411.12, the academic and administrative autonomy of an institution shall be determined by reference to the *2001 Higher Education Directory*, published by Higher Education Publications, Inc., 6400 Arlington Boulevard, Suite 648, Falls Church, Virginia 22042. Phone: (703) 532-2305. The internet address is: <http://www.hepinc.com/>.

Project Types and Eligibility Requirements

The FY 2002 NRI program solicitation solicits proposals for the following types of projects:

I. Conventional Projects

(a) Standard Research Grants: Research will be supported that is fundamental or mission-linked, and that is conducted by individual investigators, co-investigators within the same discipline, or multidisciplinary teams. Any State agricultural experiment station, college, university, other research institution or organization, Federal agency, national laboratory, private organization, corporation, or individual may apply. Proposals submitted by non-United States organizations will not be considered for support.

(b) Conferences: Scientific meetings that bring together scientists to identify research needs, update information, or advance an area of research are recognized as integral parts of research efforts. Any State agricultural experiment station, college, university, other research institution or organization, Federal agency, national laboratory, private organization, corporation, or individual is an eligible

applicant in this area. Proposals submitted by non-United States organizations will not be considered for support.

II. Agricultural Research Enhancement Awards

To contribute to the enhancement of research capabilities in the research program areas described herein, the FY 2002 NRI program solicitation solicits applications for Agricultural Research Enhancement Awards. Such applications may be submitted by any State agricultural experiment station, college, university, other research institution or organization, Federal agency, national laboratory, private organization, corporation, or individual; however, further eligibility requirements are defined in 7 CFR 3411.3 and restated in the FY 2002 NRI program solicitation. Applications submitted by non-United States organizations will not be considered for support. However, United States citizens applying as individuals for Postdoctoral Fellowships may perform all or part of the proposed work at a non-United States organization. Agricultural Research Enhancement Awards are available in the following categories:

(a) Postdoctoral Fellowships.
 (b) New Investigator Awards.
 (c) Strengthening Awards: Institutions in USDA Experimental Program for Stimulating Competitive Research (EPSCoR) entities are eligible for strengthening awards. 7 CFR 3411.2(o) sets forth how EPSCoR entities are determined. For FY 2002, USDA EPSCoR states consist of the following:

Alaska
 Arkansas
 Connecticut
 Delaware
 Hawaii
 Idaho
 Kentucky
 Maine
 Mississippi
 Montana
 Nevada
 New Hampshire
 New Mexico
 North Dakota
 Rhode Island
 South Carolina
 South Dakota
 Vermont
 West Virginia
 Wyoming
 For FY 2002, other USDA-EPSCoR entities consist of the following:
 American Samoa
 District of Columbia
 Guam
 Micronesia

Northern Marianas
 Puerto Rico
 Virgin Islands

Investigators at small and mid-sized institutions (total enrollment of 15,000 or less) may also be eligible for Strengthening Awards. An institution in this instance is an organization that possesses a significant degree of autonomy. Significant degree of autonomy is defined by being independently accredited as determined by reference to the 2001 *Higher Education Directory*.

Institutions which are among the most successful universities and colleges for receiving Federal funds for science and engineering research, except those in USDA EPSCoR entities, are ineligible for strengthening awards. The most successful universities and colleges for receiving these funds, excluding those in USDA EPSCoR entities, are as follows:

Baylor College of Medicine
 Boston University
 California Institute of Technology
 Carnegie-Mellon University
 Case Western Reserve University
 Colorado State University
 Columbia University
 Cornell University
 CUNY Mount Sinai School of Medicine
 Duke University
 Emory University
 Florida State University
 Georgia Institute of Technology
 Harvard University
 Indiana University Purdue University at Indianapolis
 Iowa State University
 Johns Hopkins University
 Massachusetts Institute of Technology
 Medical College of Wisconsin
 Michigan State University
 New York University
 North Carolina State University
 Northwestern University
 Ohio State University
 Oregon Health Sciences University
 Oregon State University
 Pennsylvania State University
 Princeton University
 Purdue University
 Rockefeller University
 Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey
 Scripps Research Institute
 Stanford University
 State University of New York at Stony Brook
 Thomas Jefferson University
 Tufts University
 University Corporation for Atmospheric Research
 University of Alabama Birmingham
 University of Arizona
 University of California Berkeley

University of California Davis
 University of California Irvine
 University of California Los Angeles
 University of California San Diego
 University of California San Francisco
 University of California Santa Barbara
 University of Chicago
 University of Cincinnati
 University of Colorado Boulder
 University of Colorado Health Sciences Center
 University of Florida
 University of Georgia
 University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign
 University of Illinois Chicago
 University of Iowa
 University of Maryland Baltimore Prof Sch
 University of Maryland College Park
 University of Massachusetts Amherst
 University of Massachusetts Medical School Worcester
 University of Medicine and Dentistry of New Jersey
 University of Miami
 University of Michigan Ann Arbor
 University of Minnesota Twin Cities
 University of Missouri Columbia
 University of North Carolina Chapel Hill
 University of Pennsylvania
 University of Pittsburgh
 University of Rochester
 University of Southern California
 University of Texas at Austin
 University of Texas Health Science Center Houston
 University of Texas Health Science Center San Antonio
 University of Texas MD Anderson Cancer Center
 University of Texas Medical Branch Galveston
 University of Texas SW Medical Center Dallas
 University of Utah
 University of Virginia
 University of Washington
 University of Wisconsin Madison
 Vanderbilt University
 Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University
 Virginia Commonwealth University
 Wake Forest University
 Washington University
 Wayne State University
 Woods Hole Oceanographic Institute
 Yeshiva University, New York
 See 7 CFR 3411.3 and the FY 2002 NRI program solicitation for complete details on programs and eligibility.

Funding Categories for FY 2002

The FY 2002 NRI program solicitation solicits proposals, subject to the availability of funds, for support of high priority research of importance to agriculture, forestry, and related

environmental sciences, in the following research categories (*ANTICIPATED* FY 2002 (FY02) funding and *ACTUAL* FY 2001 (FY01) funding, rounded to the \$0.1M, follows in parentheses):

- Natural Resources and the Environment (FY02: \$16.3M, FY01: \$16.3M)
- Nutrition, Food Quality, and Health (FY02: \$16.7M, FY01: \$16.7M)
- Plant Systems (FY02: \$32.3M, FY01: \$32.3M)
- Animal Systems (FY02: \$22.9M, FY01: \$22.9M)
- Markets, Trade, and Policy (FY02: \$3.6M, FY01: \$3.6M)
- New Products and Processes (FY02: \$6.5M, FY01: \$6.5M)

Support for research opportunities listed below may be derived from one or more of the above funding categories based on the nature of the scientific topic to be supported. In addition, the funds described above may be used to fund proposals submitted to supplementary NRI Program Descriptions and/or solicitations for multiagency programs in which the NRI is participating.

Pursuant to 7 U.S.C. 450i(b)(10), no less than 10 percent (FY02: \$9.8M, FY01: \$9.8M) of the available funds listed above will be made available for Agricultural Research Enhancement Awards (excluding New Investigator Awards), and no more than 2 percent (FY02: \$1.9M, FY01: \$1.9M) of the available funds listed above will be made available for equipment grants. Further, no less than 30 percent (FY02: \$29.5M, FY01: \$29.5M) of the funds listed above shall be made available for grants for research to be conducted by multidisciplinary teams, and no less than 40 percent (FY02: \$39.4M, FY01: \$39.4M) of the funds listed above shall be made available for grants for mission-linked systems research.

CSREES is prohibited from paying indirect costs exceeding 19 per centum of the total Federal funds provided under each award on competitively awarded research grants (7 U.S.C. 3310). An alternative method of calculation of this limitation is to multiply total direct costs by 23.456 percent.

Strategic Issues

The NRI includes a broad portfolio of programs that address critical agricultural research needs. The NRI has now also identified two *strategic issues* where a robust investment in science will accelerate the generation of critically needed agricultural solutions. The issues are: *Agricultural Security and Safety Through Functional Genomics* and *New and Re-Emerging*

Disease and Pest Threats. It is anticipated that up to \$25 million (from the six funding categories) will be available for awards in FY 2002 for each of these issues, contingent upon the quality of the proposals received and the availability of funds. Both of these high priority issues cut across research programs in the NRI divisions and are directly applicable to a broad agricultural and consumer spectrum. Expectations are that these strategic issues will exist within the NRI for a minimum of 3–5 years. Clearly there are more than two strategic issues warranting increased emphasis, and which are currently supported by individual NRI programs. Dependent on future funding, additional strategic issues may be possible in future years.

Research proposed for these issues must be appropriate to one of the existing NRI programs listed under Research Opportunities. A separate peer review panel will not be assembled to review proposals addressing strategic issues. *Numerous NRI programs address various components of these issues.*

Research Opportunities

The funds appropriated as listed above will be used to support research grants in the following areas:

- Natural Resources and the Environment
 - Plant Responses to the Environment
 - Managed Ecosystems
 - Soils and Soil Biology
 - Watershed Processes and Water Resources
- Nutrition, Food Safety, and Health
 - Improving Human Nutrition for Optimal Health
 - Food Safety
 - Epidemiological Approaches for Food Safety
- Animals
 - Animal Reproduction
 - Animal Growth and Nutrient Utilization
 - Animal Genome and Genetic Mechanisms
 - Animal Health and Well-Being
- Biology and Management of Pests and Beneficial Organisms
 - Entomology and Nematology
 - Biologically Based Pest Management
 - Biology of Plant-Microbe Associations
 - Biology of Weedy and Invasive Plants
- Plants
 - Plant Genetic Mechanisms
 - Plant Growth and Development
 - Plant Biochemistry
- Markets, Trade, and Rural Development
 - Markets and Trade
 - Rural Development
- Enhancing Value and Use of
 - Agricultural and Forest Products
 - Value-Added Products Research
 - Food Characterization/Process/

Product Research
Non-Food Characterization/Process/
Product Research

Application Materials

This notice does not constitute the FY 2002 NRI program solicitation. Those wishing to apply for a grant under this program should obtain a copy of the FY 2002 NRI program solicitation, which is titled the "NRI Program Description and Guidelines for Proposal Preparation," and a copy of the CSREES "Application Forms". The NRI Program Description and Guidelines for Proposal Preparation and the CSREES "Application Forms" (May 2001) contain the information and materials necessary to prepare and submit a proposal and are available on the CSREES web site

(www.reeusda.gov) under Funding Opportunities. CSREES encourages the use of these electronic documents. However, if necessary, paper copies of these application materials may be obtained by sending an e-mail with your name, complete mailing address (not e-mail address), phone number, and materials that you are requesting to psb@reeusda.gov. Materials will be mailed to you (not e-mailed) as quickly as possible. Alternatively, paper copies may be obtained by writing or calling the office indicated below.

Proposal Services Unit, Office of Extramural Programs, Cooperative State Research, Education, and Extension Service, U.S. Department of Agriculture, STOP 2245, 1400 Independence Ave., S.W., Washington, DC. 20250–2245, Telephone: (202) 401–5048.

Electronic Subscription to NRI Documents

The NRI has set up a mailserver which will notify subscribers when publications such as its Program Description or Abstracts of Funded Research are available electronically on the World Wide Web. Subscribers will not receive the document itself, but instead will receive an e-mail containing an announcement regarding the document's availability on the NRI home page.

To subscribe:

Send an e-mail message to:

majordomo@reeusda.gov. In the body of the message, include only the words: *subscribe nri-epubs*.

To unsubscribe:

Send an e-mail message to:

majordomo@reeusda.gov. In the body of the message, include only the words: *unsubscribe nri-epubs*.

Please note that this is not a forum. Messages, other than those related to subscription, cannot be posted to this address.

NRI Deadline Dates

The following fixed dates have been established for proposal submission deadlines within the NRI. To be considered for funding in any fiscal year, proposals must be transmitted by the date listed below (as indicated by

postmark or date on courier bill of lading). When the deadline date falls on a weekend or Federal holiday, transmission must be made by the following business day.

Programs offered in any fiscal year depend on availability of funds and

deadlines may be delayed due to unforeseen circumstances. Consult the pertinent NRI notice in the **Federal Register**, the NRI Program Description, or the NRI home page (www.reeusda.gov/nri) for up-to-date information.

| Postmarked dates | Program codes | Program areas |
|------------------|---------------|--|
| November 15 | 22.1 | Plant Responses to the Environment |
| | 23.1 | Managed Ecosystems |
| | 25.0 | Soils and Soil Biology |
| | 26.0 | Watershed Processes and Water Resources |
| | 31.0 | Improving Human Nutrition for Optimal Health |
| December 15 | 51.9 | Biology of Weedy and Invasive Plants |
| | 52.2 | Plant Genetic Mechanisms |
| | 53.0 | Plant Growth and Development |
| | 61.0 | Markets and Trade |
| | 62.0 | Rural Development |
| January 15 | 71.1 | Food Characterization/Process/Product Research |
| | 71.2 | Non-Food Characterization/Process/Product Research |
| | 32.0 | Food Safety |
| | 32.1 | Epidemiological Approaches for Food Safety |
| February 15 | 41.0 | Animal Reproduction |
| | 44.0 | Animal Health and Well-Being |
| | 51.2 | Entomology and Nematology |
| | 51.7 | Biological Control |
| | 51.8 | Biology of Plant-Microbe Associations |
| | 42.0 | Animal Growth and Nutrient Utilization |
| | 43.0 | Animal Genome and Genetic Mechanisms |
| | 54.3 | Plant Biochemistry |

Done at Washington, D.C., this 9th day of August 2001.

George E. Cooper,

*Acting Administrator, Cooperative State
Research, Education, and Extension Service.*

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