

Additional Instructions for the FY 2017 AFRI ELI RFA
Mentor and Reference Letters for Pre- and Postdoctoral Fellowships Program Areas Applications

f. Field 12. Other Attachments

The following instructions are in addition to those noted in Part V 4.12 of the NIFA Grants.gov Application Guide.

1. *Key Personnel Roles* – **PDF Attachment. 2-Page Limit.** Title the attachment as ‘Key Personnel’ and save file as ‘KeyPersonnel’.

Clearly describe the roles and responsibilities of the PD, collaborator(s), mentor(s) *etc.* (biographical sketches for key personnel including mentor(s) should not be included here). If it will be necessary to enter into formal consulting or collaborative arrangements with others, such arrangements should be fully explained and justified. Evidence (letters of support) for this type of collaboration should be provided in the ‘Documentation of Collaboration’ attachment.

2. *Mentor Letter, Reference Letters, and Documentation of Collaboration* – **PDF Attachment. No Page Limit.** Title the attachment as ‘Documentation of Collaboration’ in the document header and save file as ‘Collaboration’.

Primary Mentor Letter of Commitment – One Primary Mentor letter is required. If there is more than one Primary Mentor (Integrated Projects Only), a Primary mentor letter should be provided for each mentor. The mentor letter(s) should indicate:

- a) the quality of the applicant in regards to their ability to develop into a leader in agriculture;
- b) the applicant’s oral and written communication skills and critical and analytical skills;
- c) the applicant’s level of intellectual independence;
- d) the role of the student and mentor in the development of the application;
- e) **their respective committed responsibilities throughout the proposed project in relation to the Project Director;**
- f) a statement that the research by the applicant is independent and not an extension of the mentor’s research (for postdoctoral applicants only); and
- g) any other pertinent and relevant information to indicate the applicant is deserving of being awarded a prestigious AFRI ELI Fellowship.

Collaborating Mentor Letters – As applicable, the other mentor letter(s) should generally comment on items a) through d), f), and g) of the Primary Mentor Letter of Commitment noted above.

Reference Letter(s) – Three reference letters are required. Letters should not come from identified mentors, but must be obtained from other individuals who know the applicant well to substantially speak towards the applicant’s academic and research accomplishments and ability to complete the doctoral degree program, or undertake an independent postdoctoral research, education, extension, or integrated research, education and/or extension project. Reference letters should be no longer than 1 page.

Academic Standing – For predoctoral applications, documentation from the graduate advisor, graduate committee or the institution indicating that the applicant has advanced to candidacy, as per institutional requirements, by **June 21, 2017**. For postdoctoral applications, documentation from the graduate advisor, graduate committee or the institution that all doctoral degree requirements were satisfied **no earlier than January 1, 2014** or will be satisfied **no later than March 21, 2018**.