

Additional Instructions for the FY 2017 AFRI ELI RFA
Project Summary and Project Narrative for Pre- and Postdoctoral Fellowships Program
Areas Applications

3. R&R Other Project Information Form

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

a. Field 7. Project Summary/Abstract.

The summary should also include the relevance of the project to the goals of Agriculture and Food Research Initiative Food, Agriculture, Natural Resources and Human Sciences Education and Literacy Initiative (AFRI ELI) Competitive Grants Program. The following instructions are in addition to those included in section 4.7 of Part V of the NIFA Grants.gov Application Guide. Title the attachment as 'Project Summary' in the document header and save file as 'ProjectSummary'.

The Project Summary must indicate the following:

- a) Names and institutions of the Project Director (PD) and Primary Mentor (more than one mentor for Integrated project only);
- b) Predoctoral or Postdoctoral application
- c) Project type (research, education, extension, or integrated research, education and/or extension)
- d) Indicate the primary AFRI Farm Bill Priority area focus of the project by selecting one of the following six Farm Bill priority areas.
 - Plant health and production and plant products;
 - Animal health and production and animal products;
 - Food safety, nutrition, and health;
 - Bioenergy, natural resources, and environment;
 - Agriculture systems and technology;
 - Agriculture economics and rural communities

The Project Summary should be a short, concise description of the research, education, extension or integrated research, education and/or extension project in the applicant's proposed doctoral program or postdoctoral training. The summary should also include the relevance of the project to the goals of AFRI ELI Fellowships Grant Program.

b. Field 8. Project Narrative.

PDF Attachment. Title the attachment as 'Project Narrative' in the document header and save file as 'ProjectNarrative'.

For **Predoctoral Grant** applications, the Project Narrative section **may not exceed a total of 6-pages, including all figures and tables.**

For **Postdoctoral Grant** applications, the Project Narrative section **may not exceed a total of 10-pages, including all figures and tables.**

NOTE: ALL components of the project narrative (i.e. Response to Previous Review, if applicable; the Training/Career Development Plan; the Mentoring Plan; the Project Plan; and the Evaluation Plan) will be fully considered, in total, during the Peer Review Process. Applicants are strongly encouraged to address each component accordingly.

All applications must have 12-point font and line spacing not exceeding six lines of text per vertical inch. To ensure fair and equitable competition, applications exceeding the applicable page limitation will not be reviewed.

For Predoctoral Fellowships and Postdoctoral Fellowships, Project Narrative Attachment must include all of the following:

1) Response to Previous Review (if applicable)

This requirement only applies to Resubmitted Applications as described in Part II, B of the AFRI ELI RFA. The Project Narrative attachment should include two components: 1) a one-page response to the previous review panel summary titled “Response to Previous Review” included as the first page of the attachment and 2) the 6- or 10-page Project Narrative, as required (see Part IV, C. 3. c of the AFRI ELI RFA). The one-page Response to Previous Review does not count against the 6- or 10-page limit of the Project Narrative.

2) Project Narrative

a) Training/Career Development Plan

The Training/Career Development Plan is a description of all activities that the applicant plans to perform and participate to enhance the pre- or postdoctoral training during the fellowship award period.

For **Predoctoral Fellowship** applicants, a Training/Career Development Plan should include their personal statement addressing future career directions or preparation for entering the workforce, overall career goals and objectives, as well as how, if awarded, the fellowship will allow them to accomplish their professional goals and objectives. Any other training objectives should be included. Predoctoral students may also include any extension and educational activities (e.g., teaching in formal or informal settings) to enhance their career development that will be undertaken during their doctoral training.

For **Postdoctoral Fellowship** applicants, a Training/Career Development Plan includes plans for transition to career independence by development of professional skills. These professional skills include teaching competencies; what those career and training goals are; and results of the postdoctoral fellow’s previous and current research and scholarships that include publications, presentations, etc.

b) Mentoring Plan

The applicants are expected to engage their mentors and/or advisors in the development of their application. Thus, prior to submission of the application, prospective fellows should already identify a Primary mentor who will be willing to help them in their projects as well as professional development (note: more than one Primary Mentor is acceptable for Integrated Projects Only). If there are other collaborating mentors, their role and responsibilities to the project and development of the applicant's skills should be clearly described. For predoctoral applications, if the primary mentor is not the student's graduate advisor or laboratory sponsor, the relationship between advisor's work and the primary mentor's research should be clearly defined, and the contribution of each individual in the student's project as well as degree completion should be included. Because this is a very important component of the project, the commitment of the mentor(s) is included in the evaluation criteria as it pertains to project personnel. In describing the role of the mentor, the applicant should:

- 1) Briefly indicate how the mentoring and educational training will add to the skill sets of the National Institute of Food and Agriculture (NIFA) Fellow.
- 2) Briefly explain the commitment of the primary mentor.
- 3) Briefly describe the role of collaborating mentors (if applicable).
- 4) With respect to the Primary Mentor, provide a list of former mentees and their current positions.

NOTE: The Primary Mentor shall submit a Letter of Commitment (as an attachment to Field 12, Other Attachments, of the Other Project Information form-see section g. in the AFRI ELI RFA) explicitly indicating their respective responsibilities throughout the proposed project in relation to the Project Director.

- 5) Briefly list and explain the role of other non-primary mentors.

c) Project Plan

Predoctoral Applicants: It is expected that predoctoral students will be working with a primary mentor or advisor who has funded research and that the fellow may work on another aspect of this research. Moreover, the mentor/advisor will already have the facilities, equipment, technologies and methodologies for the projects developed with the fellow. Experimental methods, especially if these are routinely or generally used, do not need detailed description. However, sufficient details on the experimental approach or strategy as well as pitfalls must be provided to allow assessment of feasibility of study. The Project scope should be within the 2-year timeframe of the fellowship.

Postdoctoral Applicants: The research should be totally independent of the mentor's. Proven techniques and technologies as part of the experimental approach, especially if these are routinely employed, don't have to be provided in detail. Experimental approaches or strategies including possible pitfalls and alternatives must be provided in order to assess the overall feasibility of the

proposed study. Avoid open-ended screens or undefined outcomes. The scope of the project should be within the 2-year timeframe.

1) Introduction

The introduction should include a well-defined problem, a clear statement of the long-term goal(s), and supporting objectives of the proposed project. Summarize the body of knowledge or other past activities that substantiate the need for the proposed project. Describe ongoing or recently completed activities related to the proposed project including the work of key project personnel. Include preliminary data/information pertinent to the proposed work. All works cited should be referenced (see Bibliography & References Cited, see section d. in the AFRI ELI RFA).

2) Rationale and Significance

- Concisely present the rationale behind the proposed project and how it will advance the current knowledge in the field;
- Clearly describe the specific relationship of the project's objectives to one of the Program Area Priorities. The Program Area Priority(ies) must be specifically identified; and
- Describe how the proposed curricular activities (predoctoral) will support educational goals and project activities.

3) Approach

Provide a concise description of the proposed project and the problem(s) to be addressed. Clearly describe the approaches to be used. Specifically, this section must include:

- A description of the project details proposed and the sequence in which the activities are to be performed;
- Methods to be used in carrying out the proposed project and feasibility of the methods (detail only if a new and unproven method is to be used; if employing commonly used methods provide information on the expertise available);
- Expected outcomes and outcome measures;
- Means by which results will be analyzed, assessed, or interpreted;
- How results or products will be used;
- Pitfalls that may be encountered, and possible alternatives;
- Limitations to proposed procedures;
- A full explanation of any materials, procedures, situations, or activities related to the project that may be hazardous to personnel, along with an outline or precautions to be exercised to avoid or mitigate the effects of such hazards;
- A timeline for attainment of objectives and for production of deliverables that includes annual milestones with specific, measurable outcomes; and
- Establishment of a profile on an established professional social networking site to document career progress during and beyond the duration of the Fellowship.

d) Evaluation Plan

A plan for evaluating progress towards **objectives related to the training/career development plan, mentoring plan, and project plan**. The plan must include milestones, which signify the completion of a major deliverable, events, or accomplishment and serve to verify that the project is on schedule and on track for successful conclusion. The plan should also include descriptions of indicators that will be measured to evaluate whether the education activities are successful in achieving project goals and contribute to the achievement of the stated program goals and outcomes; and a dissemination plan describing the methods that will be used to communicate findings and project accomplishments.

- For **Education Project** Applications – In addition to the Project Narrative requirements above, the proposed Education Project should clearly articulate:
 - The potential for advancing the quality of education by addressing a specific problem or opportunity; and
 - The target audience and the level of education addressed.
- For **Extension Project** Applications – In addition to the Project Narrative requirements above, the proposed Extension Project should give emphasis to scholarly principles of engagement and outreach that clearly articulate:
 - The importance of informal education to address a specific local problem or issue;
 - The theoretical basis of informal outreach methods used;
 - Development and/or implementation of a curriculum-based series of connected learning activities (including educational materials) that engage the public in practical problem solving;
 - A plan for evaluating progress toward achieving project objectives. The plan must include milestones, which signify the completion of a major deliverable, event, or accomplishment and serve to verify that the project is on schedule and on track for successful conclusion;
 - The plan should also include descriptions of indicators that you will measure to evaluate whether the extension activities are successful in achieving project goals and in contributing to achievement of the stated program goals and outcomes; and
 - A dissemination plan describing the methods that will be used to communicate findings and project accomplishments.
- For **Integrated Project** Applications – In addition to the Project Narrative requirements above, the proposed Integrated Project should clearly articulate:
 - Stakeholder involvement in project development, implementation, and evaluation, where appropriate;
 - Objectives for each function included in the project (note that extension and education activities are expected to differ and to be described as separate project objectives; see enumerated descriptions in Part II, C (page 7 in the AFRI ELI RFA); and

- A dissemination plan describing the methods that will be used to communicate findings and project accomplishments.
- A plan for evaluating progress toward achieving project objectives must be included. The plan must include milestones, which signify the completion of a major deliverable, event, or accomplishment and serve to verify that the project is on schedule and on track for successful conclusion. The plan should also include descriptions of indicators that you will measure to evaluate whether the research, education, and/or extension activities are successful in achieving project goals and in contributing to achievement of the stated program goals and outcomes.