

to the request for proposals (e.g., relationship of application to research program area). Proposals that do not fall within the guidelines as stated in the annual request for proposals will be eliminated from competition and will be returned to the applicant. Proposals whose budgets exceed the maximum allowable amount for a particular program area as announced in the request for proposals may be considered as lying outside the guidelines.

(b) All applications will be reviewed carefully by the Administrator, qualified officers or employees of the Department, the respective merit review panel, and ad hoc reviewers, as required. Written comments will be solicited from ad hoc reviewers, when required, and individual written comments and in-depth discussions will be provided by peer review group members prior to recommending applications for funding. Applications will be ranked and support levels recommended within the limitation of total available funding for each research program area as announced in the applicable request for proposals.

(c) Except to the extent otherwise provided by law, such recommendations are advisory only and are not binding on program officers or on the awarding official.

**§3401.17 Review criteria.**

(a) Federally funded research supported under these provisions shall be designed to, among other things, accomplish one or more of the following purposes:

- (1) Improve management of rangelands as an integrated system and/or watershed;
- (2) Remedy unstable or unsatisfactory rangeland conditions;
- (3) Increase revegetation and/or rehabilitation of rangelands;
- (4) Examine the health of rangelands; and
- (5) Define economic parameters associated with rangelands.

(b) In carrying out its review under §3401.16, the peer review panel will use the following form upon which the evaluation criteria to be used are enumerated, unless, pursuant to §3401.7(a), different evaluation criteria are speci-

fied in the annual solicitation of proposals for a particular program:

Peer Panel Scoring Form

Proposal Identification No. \_\_\_\_\_  
 Institution and Project Title \_\_\_\_\_

I. Basic Requirement:

Proposal falls within guidelines? \_\_\_\_\_  
 Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No. If no, explain why proposal does not meet guidelines under comment section of this form.

II. Selection Criteria:

	Score 1-10	Weight factor	Score X weight factor	Comments
1. Overall scientific and technical quality of proposal .....	.....	10	.....	.....
2. Scientific and technical quality of the approach .....	.....	10	.....	.....
3. Relevance and importance of proposed research to solution of specific areas of inquiry .....	.....	6	.....	.....
4. Feasibility of attaining objectives; adequacy of professional training and experience, facilities and equipment ....	.....	5	.....	.....

Score \_\_\_\_\_  
 Summary Comments \_\_\_\_\_

(c) Proposals satisfactorily meeting the guidelines will be evaluated and scored by the peer review panel for each criterion utilizing a scale of 1 through 10. A score of one (1) will be considered low and a score of ten (10) will be considered high for each selection criterion. A weighted factor is used for each criterion.

**PART 3402—FOOD AND AGRICULTURAL SCIENCES NATIONAL NEEDS GRADUATE AND POST-GRADUATE FELLOWSHIP GRANTS PROGRAM**

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## Subpart A—General Introduction

### § 3402.1 Applicability of regulations.

(a) The regulations of this part apply to competitive grants awarded under the provisions of section 1417(b)(6) of the National Agricultural Research, Extension and Teaching Policy Act of 1977, as amended, 7 U.S.C. 3152(b)(6). The Act designates the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) as the lead Federal agency for agricultural research, extension, and teaching in the food and agricultural sciences. Section 1417(b)(6) authorizes the Secretary of Agriculture, who has delegated the authority to the Cooperative State Research, Education, and Extension Service (CSREES), to make competitive grants to land-grant colleges and uni-

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versities, colleges and universities having significant minority enrollments and a demonstrable capacity to carry out the teaching of food and agricultural sciences, and to other colleges and universities having a demonstrable capacity to carry out the teaching of food and agricultural sciences, to administer and conduct graduate and postdoctoral fellowship programs to help meet the Nation's needs for development of scientific and professional expertise in the food and agricultural sciences. The Graduate Fellowships are intended to encourage outstanding students to pursue and complete graduate degrees in the areas of food and agricultural sciences designated by CSREES through the Office of Higher Education Programs (HEP) as national needs. The postdoctoral Fellowships are intended to provide additional mentoring and training to outstanding USDA Graduate Fellows who completed their doctoral degrees no more than five (5) years before they begin the postdoctoral Fellowships.

(b) The regulations of this part do not apply to grants awarded by the Department of Agriculture under any other authority.

### § 3402.2 Definitions.

As used in this part:

*Citizen or national of the United States* means—

(1) A citizen or native resident of a State; or,

(2) A person defined in the Immigration and Nationality Act, 8 U.S.C. 1101(a)(22), who, though not a citizen of the United States, owes permanent allegiance to the United States.

*College and university* means an educational institution in any State which—

(1) Admits as regular students only persons having a certificate of graduation from a school providing secondary education, or the recognized equivalent of such a certificate,

(2) Is legally authorized within such State to provide a program of education beyond secondary education,

(3) Provides an educational program for which a bachelor's degree or any other higher degree is awarded,

(4) Is a public or other nonprofit institution, and