

Evaluation criterion	Weight
<p>This criterion relates to the degree to which the project will strengthen the teaching capacity of the applicant institution. In the case of a joint project proposal, it relates to the degree to which the project will strengthen the teaching capacity of the applicant institution and that of any other institution assuming a major role in the conduct of the project.</p> <p>(1) Institutional enhancement—Will the project help the institution to: Expand the current faculty's expertise base; attract, hire, and retain outstanding teaching faculty; advance and strengthen the scholarly quality of the institution's academic programs; enrich the racial, ethnic, or gender diversity of the faculty and student body; recruit students with higher grade point averages, higher standardized test scores, and those who are more committed to graduation; become a center of excellence in a particular field of education and bring it greater academic recognition; attract outside resources for academic programs; maintain or acquire state-of-the-art scientific instrumentation or library collections for teaching; or provide more meaningful student experiential learning opportunities?</p> <p>(2) Institutional commitment—Is there evidence to substantiate that the institution attributes a high-priority to the project, that the project is linked to the achievement of the institution's long-term goals, that it will help satisfy the institution's high-priority objectives, or that the project is supported by the institution's strategic plans? Will the project have reasonable access to needed resources such as instructional instrumentation, facilities, computer services, library and other instruction support resources?</p>	15 points.
<p>(d) Personnel Resources: This criterion relates to the number and qualifications of the key persons who will carry out the project. Are designated project personnel qualified to carry out a successful project? Are there sufficient numbers of personnel associated with the project to achieve the stated objectives and the anticipated outcomes?</p>	10 points.
<p>(e) Budget and cost-effectiveness: This criterion relates to the extent to which the total budget adequately supports the project and is cost-effective.</p> <p>(1) Budget—Is the budget request justifiable? Are costs reasonable and necessary? Will the total budget be adequate to carry out project activities? Are the source(s) and amount(s) of non-Federal matching support clearly identified and appropriately documented? For a joint project proposal, is the shared budget explained clearly and in sufficient detail?</p>	10 points.

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<p>(2) Cost-effectiveness—Is the proposed project cost-effective? Does it demonstrate a creative use of limited resources, maximize educational value per dollar of USDA support, achieve economies of scale, leverage additional funds or have the potential to do so, focus expertise and activity on a targeted need area, or promote coalition building for current or future ventures?</p>	5 points.
<p>(f) Overall quality of proposal: This criterion relates to the degree to which the proposal complies with the application guidelines and is of high quality. Is the proposal enhanced by its adherence to instructions (table of contents, organization, pagination, margin and font size, the 20-page limitation, appendices, etc.); accuracy of forms; clarity of budget narrative; well prepared vitae for all key personnel associated with the project; and presentation (are ideas effectively presented, clearly articulated, and thoroughly explained, etc.)?</p>	5 points.

**Subpart E—Preparation of a Research Proposal**

**§ 3406.16 Scope of a research proposal.**

The research component of the program will support projects that address high-priority research initiatives in areas such as those illustrated in this section where there is a present or anticipated need for increased knowledge or capabilities or in which it is feasible for applicants to develop programs recognized for their excellence. Applicants are also encouraged to include in their proposals a library enhancement component related to the initiative(s) for which they have prepared their proposals.

(a) *Studies and experimentation in food and agricultural sciences.* (1) The purpose of this initiative is to advance the body of knowledge in those basic and applied natural and social sciences that comprise the food and agricultural sciences.

(2) Examples include, but are not limited to:

(i) Conduct plant or animal breeding programs to develop better crops, forests, or livestock (e.g., more disease resistant, more productive, yielding higher quality products).

(ii) Conceive, design, and evaluate new bioprocessing techniques for eliminating undesirable constituents from or adding desirable ones to food products.

(iii) Propose and evaluate ways to enhance utilization of the capabilities and resources of food and agricultural institutions to promote rural development (e.g., exploitation of new technologies by small rural businesses).

(iv) Identify control factors influencing consumer demand for agricultural products.

(v) Analyze social, economic, and physiological aspects of nutrition, housing, and life-style choices, and of community strategies for meeting the changing needs of different population groups.

(vi) Other high-priority areas such as human nutrition, sustainable agriculture, biotechnology, agribusiness management and marketing, and aquaculture.

(b) *Centralized research support systems.* (1) The purpose of this initiative is to establish centralized support systems to meet national needs or serve regions or clientele that cannot otherwise afford or have ready access to the support in question, or to provide such support more economically thereby freeing up resources for other research uses.

(2) Examples include, but are not limited to:

(i) Storage, maintenance, characterization, evaluation and enhancement of germplasm for use by animal and plant breeders, including those using the techniques of biotechnology.

(ii) Computerized data banks of important scientific information (e.g., epidemiological, demographic, nutrition, weather, economic, crop yields, etc.).

(iii) Expert service centers for sophisticated and highly specialized methodologies (e.g., evaluation of organoleptic and nutritional quality of foods, toxicology, taxonomic identifications, consumer preferences, demographics, etc.).

(c) *Technology delivery systems.* (1) The purpose of this initiative is to promote innovations and improvements in the delivery of benefits of food and agricultural sciences to producers and consumers, particularly those who are currently disproportionately low in receipt of such benefits.

(2) Examples include, but are not limited to:

(i) Computer-based decision support systems to assist small-scale farmers to take advantage of relevant technologies, programs, policies, etc.

(ii) Efficacious delivery systems for nutrition information or for resource management assistance for low-income families and individuals.

(d) *Other creative proposals.* The purpose of this initiative is to encourage other creative proposals, outside the areas previously outlined, that are designed to provide needed enhancement of the Nation's food and agricultural research system.

#### § 3406.17 Program application materials—research.

Program application materials in an application package will be made available to eligible institutions upon request. These materials include the program announcement, the administrative provisions for the program, and the forms needed to prepare and submit research grant applications under the program.

#### § 3406.18 Content of a research proposal.

(a) *Proposal cover page.* (1) Form CSREES-712, "Higher Education Proposal Cover Page," must be completed in its entirety. Note that providing a Social Security Number is voluntary, but is an integral part of the CSREES information system and will assist in the processing of the proposal.

(2) One copy of Form CSREES-712 must contain the pen-and-ink signatures of the principal investigator(s) and Authorized Organizational Representative for the applicant institution.

(3) The title of the research project shown on the "Higher Education Proposal Cover Page" must be brief (80-character maximum) yet represent the major thrust of the project. This information will be used by the Department to provide information to the Congress and other interested parties.

(4) In block 7. of Form CSREES-712, enter "Capacity Building Grants Program."

(5) In block 8.a. of Form CSREES-712, enter "Research." In block 8.b. identify the code of the targeted need area(s) as found on the reverse of the form. If a