

# Federal Competitive Grants:

## Where to Find Them and How to Get Them

Quality research and development is essential to the long term success of any industry. Therefore, [The Council on Food, Agricultural and Resource Economics \(C-FARE\)](#), and [The National Association of Agricultural Economics Administrators \(NAAEA\)](#) cosponsored a pre-conference at the 2002 AAEA Annual Meetings, entitled, “Federal Competitive Grants: Where to Find Them and How to Get Them.” This brochure is a summary of the information provided, including background on a variety of government grants, as well as tips and useful web sites.

### USDA’s Cooperative State Research, Extension, and Education Program

National Research Initiative Competitive Grants Program (NRI) The NRI is the most familiar competitive research grants program at USDA, with a 25% funding rate. The primary source of funding for economists is through either the “Markets and Trade” or “Rural Development” programs. While other areas of the NRI also provide opportunities for economists to apply, the downside is that typically to be successful you should have someone on the panel from your discipline who understands the science. In order to get an economist on the panel of the non-traditional program areas, they need to receive more economic proposals.

After the NRI proposal is submitted, it is reviewed by “ad hoc” external reviewers for the panel. The panel then does an evaluation, selecting the top proposals on the basis of scientific merit, and relevance of the project to improvements and sustainability of agriculture. For more information on the review process, we recommend you read Mary Marchant’s “The Keys to Preparing Successful Research Grant Proposals,” (2001 JAAE)

### If You **DO** Get Funded

- ◆ Fulfill all your promises.
- ◆ Publish findings.
- ◆ Encourage others to apply.
- ◆ Stay in touch with the Program Director - let them know you will be a reviewer.
- ◆ Contact C-FARE with your results! We will use them as success stories in congressional correspondence.

### Other CSREES Grant Programs

While the NRI is the most popular of the CSREES grants, they also offer a wide variety of other program areas that are very attractive to economists, such as the Initiative for Future Agricultural and Food Systems, Section 406 – Integrated Research, Education and Extension Competitive Grants Program, National Integrated Food Safety Initiative, and Biotechnology Risk Assessment Program. Many of these programs can be pursued by economists as either the principal investigators or through a multidisciplinary research approach. Public funding for multidisciplinary research is growing relative to economic disciplinary research. Colleagues from related disciplines are often eager for economists to participate in their research. However, the turnaround time may be slower and it may be more difficult to have research results published in disciplinary journals.

### National Institute of Health (NIH)

The NIH has a new emphasis on social and behavioral research, which opens unexplored doors for many agricultural economists. In some cases these grants may be more challenging for our profession to apply for since there is not a strong history established. However the grants are generous and the opportunity to work with this popular agency is very attainable. It is important to contact the relevant program staff for advice before you apply.

NIH has four main grants for junior investors; they are: (1) R01 – Research Project Grant – this is the main research grants, and averages five years. With this grant you can revise and submit up to two times. (2) R03 – Small Grant (3) R21 – Planning Grant (4) K01 – Research Career Development Award – this is a mentor research award. It is recommended to work with someone who has been successful at obtaining NIH grants, and to review past proposals before applying.

### If You Do **NOT** Get Funded

- ◆ Make suggested changes.
- ◆ Describe how your resubmission changed from the original proposal.
- ◆ Call the program director for an assessment of the evaluation.
- ◆ Request to read the successful proposals from the previous year.

### **Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)**

EPA's main grant program is entitled, "Science to Achieve Results" (STAR). Two offices are involved in the STAR program. The National Center for Environmental Research (NCER) runs the program and the National Center for Environmental Economics (NCEE) works with NCER on developing solicitations and serving on review panels.

Generally, several subject areas are released for research each year. In your proposal you should answer whether you have a testable hypothesis, and the means to test it. STAR's formal solicitation periods are January, April, August, and October.

### **National Science Foundation (NSF)**

NSF funds research through a variety of means. It is important to keep updated on new initiatives since this is where most new funding has gone. When searching the NSF website for grants with possible economics components look for "SBE" in the funding description. Also, reference the Grant Proposal Guide located on the NSF web site.

### **Economic Research Service (ERS)**

Initiated in 1998, ERS's Food Assistance and Nutrition Research Program (FANRP) is an extramural research program that awards funds through competitive grants and cooperative agreements. Program areas associated with FANRP include (1) Diet and nutritional outcomes (2) Food program targeting and delivery, and (3) Program dynamics and administration. Peer review is conducted by experts from academia, government and the private sector.

### **Rural Business Service (RBS)**

The RBS provides funding for cooperative related research. The funding programs are driven by either the Farm Bill, or Appropriations Programs. The Farm Bill driven programs include; (1) Value-Added Agricultural Marketing Development Grant –universities are not eligible recipients but may be funded by the recipients to help do feasibility studies, (2) Agricultural Marketing Resource Center, Agriculture Innovation Center - supports research at a university concerning the effects of projects for value-added agricultural commodities or

### **TIPS**

- ◆ Follow directions.
- ◆ Proofread! Typos are interpreted as sloppy research.
- ◆ Double check due dates each year.
- ◆ Consult the Program Director.
- ◆ Prepare a quality project summary.
- ◆ Don't use jargon.
- ◆ Consider collaboration with others.
- ◆ Ask peers to review your proposal.
- ◆ Consider research areas that are in demand by agencies.
- ◆ Have independent objectives.
- ◆ Work at it daily.
- ◆ Often universities have personnel to assist faculty in writing proposals.
- ◆ Do not ask for more than you need.
- ◆ Offer to be a reviewer – you will see well-written successful proposals.

products on agricultural producers and the commodity markets, and (3) The Demonstration Program.

Appropriations driven programs include; 1.) Rural Cooperative Development Grant Program – Made for establishing and operating Centers for Cooperative Development. They provide technical assistance primarily to new and start-up cooperatives. 2.) Research on Rural Cooperative Opportunities and Problems 3.) Research on Cooperative Energy Alternatives, and 4.) Unsolicited Cooperative Research Agreements.

### **Useful Web Sites**

- USDA/CSREES – [www.reeusda.gov/nri](http://www.reeusda.gov/nri) or <http://www.reeusda.gov/1700/funding/ourfund.htm>
- EPA – <http://es.epa.gov/ncer/> or <http://www.epa.gov/economics/>
- USDA/ERS – [www.ers.usda.gov](http://www.ers.usda.gov)
- NIH – Homepage: <http://www.nih.gov/>
  - NICHHD: Division of Demographic and Behavioral Sciences - <http://www.nichd.nih.gov/about/cpr/dbs/dbs.htm>
  - NIA: Behavioral and Social Research - <http://www.nia.nih.gov/research/extramural/behavior/>
  - NIMH: Mental Health Economics Program - <http://www.nimh.nih.gov/>
  - OBSSR: Office of Behavioral and Social Science Research - <http://obssr.od.nih.gov/>
  - FIC: Fogarty International Center - <http://www.nih.gov/fic>
  - Health and Economic Development - <http://www.nih.gov/fic/programs/econ.html>
  - CSR: Center for Scientific Review - <http://www.csr.nih.gov/committees/rosterindex.asp>
- NSF - <http://www.nsf.gov> or the grant proposal guide at <http://www.nsf.gov/pubs/2001/nsf012/start.html>
- USDA/RBS – <http://www.rurdev.usda.gov/rbs/>

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# *Calendar of Dates for Federal Grants*

**\*Dates are an approximation based on previous years. Other grants are also available\***

## **January**

- Closing date for Institutional National Research Service Awards (NIH)
- Closing date for Academic Research Enhancement Awards (NIH)
- Regular Proposals due for NSF January 15

## **February**

- Deadline Integrated Research, Education, and Extension Competitive Grants Program (CSREES)
- Deadline Higher Education Challenge (HEC) Grant Program. (CSREES)
- Deadline for Biotechnology Risk Assessment Research Grants Program (CSREES)
- Closing date for New Research Grants, Conferences, and Research Career Awards (NIH)

## **March**

- Deadline Agricultural Risk Management Education Competitive Grants Program (CSREES)
- Deadline Community Food Projects Competitive Grants Program (CFPCGP) (CSREES)
- Closing date Educational Programs for Data, Methods, and Interdisciplinary Approaches to Population Research (NIH)

## **April**

- Deadline for Initiative for Future Agriculture and Food Systems (CSREES)
- Closing date for Individual National Research Service Awards (NIH)

## **May**

- Deadline for Valuation of Environmental Impacts on Children's Health (EPA)
- Deadline for Food Assistance and Nutrition Research Program (ERS)
- Institutional National Research Service Awards (NIH)
- Academic Research Enhancement Awards (NIH)

## **June**

- New Research Grants, Conferences, and Research Career Awards (NIH)
- Interactive Research Project Grants (NIH)

## **July**

- Deadline for Social, Behavioral and Economic Sciences (SBE) at NSF
- Deadline for Decision-Making and Valuation for Environmental Policy (With EPA and NSF)
- Competing Continuation, Supplemental, and Revised Grants (NIH)

## **August**

- CSREES program description and changes in programs available annually
- Deadline for Market Mechanisms and Incentives for Environmental Management (EPA)
- Law and Social Science Deadline (PD 98-1372) (NSF)
- Scholars Awards Deadline (SF 01-129) (NSF)
- Methodology, Measurement, and Statistics (PD 98-1333) (NSF)
- Decision, Risk, and Management Science (PD 98-1321) (NSF)
- Joint NSF/Private Sector Research Opportunities Initiative Announcement (NSF 92-136) (NSF)
- Mid-Career Methodological Opportunities (NSF 99-33) (NSF)
- Value-Added Agricultural Market Development Grant Program (RBS)

## **September**

- Institutional National Research Service Awards (NIH)
- Academic Research Enhancement Awards (NIH)

## **October**

- New Research Grants, Conferences, and Research Career Awards (NIH)
- Interactive Research Project Grants (NIH)

## **November**

- Closing date for Competing Continuation, Supplemental, and Revised Grants (NIH)
- Deadline for Biocomplexity in the Environment (BE) (NSF 02-167) (NSF)

## **December**

- Deadline for NRI's "Markets and Trade", and "Rural Development" (CSREES)