

(l)(2), and (l)(3) and adding new paragraphs (n) and (o) to read as follows:

§ 3411.2 Definitions.

As used in this part and in annual program solicitations issued pursuant to this part:

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(1) *Fundamental research*, as referred to annually in the program solicitation, means research that tests scientific hypotheses and provides basic knowledge which allows advances in applied research and from which major conceptual breakthroughs are expected to occur.

(2) *Mission-linked research*, as referred to annually in the program solicitation, means research on specifically identified agricultural problems which, through a continuum of efforts, provides information and technology that may be transferred to users and may relate to a product, practice, or process.

(3) *Multidisciplinary research*, as referred to annually in the program solicitation, means research in which investigators from two or more disciplines are collaborating closely. These collaborations, where appropriate, may integrate the biological, physical, chemical, or social sciences.

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(n) *Small and mid-sized institution* means an academic institution with a total enrollment of 15,000 or less. An institution in this instance is an organization that possesses a significant degree of academic and administrative autonomy, as determined by reference to the most recent issue of the Codebook for Compatible Statistical Reporting of Federal Support to Universities, Colleges, and Nonprofit Institutions, prepared by Quantum Research Corporation for the National Science Foundation. This incorporation by reference was approved by the Director of the Federal Register in accordance with 5 U.S.C. 552(a) and 1 CFR part 51. Copies may be obtained from Quantum Research Corporation, 7315 Wisconsin Avenue, Suite 631W, Bethesda, MD 20814. Copies may be inspected at USDA, CSREES, NRICGP, 901 D. St., SW., Suite 323, Washington, DC.

(o) *USDA-EPSCoR States (Experimental Program for Stimulating Competitive Research)* means States which have had a funding level from the USDA NRICGP no higher than the 38th percentile of all States, based on a three-year rolling average, and all United States territories and possessions. A list

of eligible states is published annually in the program solicitation.

6. Newly redesignated § 3411.3 is amended by adding paragraph (d) as follows:

§ 3411.3 Eligibility requirements.

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(d) *Agricultural Research Enhancement Awards*. In addition to paragraphs (a), (b), and (c) of this section, the following eligibility requirements apply to Agricultural Research Enhancement Awards (Program reserves the right to specify funding limitations and administrative requirements each year in the program solicitation):

(1) *Postdoctoral Fellowships*. In accordance with Section 2(b)(3)(D) of the Act of August 4, 1965, as amended, individuals who have recently received or will soon receive their doctoral degree may submit proposals for postdoctoral fellowships. The following eligibility requirements apply:

(i) The doctoral degree of the applicant must be received not earlier than January 1 of the fiscal year three years prior to the submission of the proposal and not later than June 15 of the fiscal year during which the proposal is submitted;

(ii) The individual must be a citizen of the United States; and

(iii) The proposal must contain:

(A) Documentation that arrangements have been made with an established investigator to serve as mentor;

(B) Documentation that arrangements have been made for the necessary facilities, space, and materials for conduct of the research; and

(C) Documentation from the host institution's authorized organizational representative indicating that the host institution concurs with these arrangements.

(2) *New Investigator Awards*. Pursuant to Section 2(b)(3)(E) of the Act of August 4, 1965, as amended, investigators or co-investigators who are beginning their research careers, do not have an extensive research publication record, and have less than 5 years of post-graduate, career-track research experience may submit proposals as new investigators. Applicants may not have received competitively-awarded Federal research funds beyond the level of pre- or postdoctoral research awards.

(3) *Strengthening Awards*. Applicants that are eligible for any grant under this part may also be eligible for Equipment Grants, Research Career Enhancement Awards, Seed Grants, and Strengthening Standard Research Project Awards pursuant to Sections 2(b)(3)(D) and (F) of the Act of August 4, 1965, as

amended, subject to the following limitations on such eligibility:

(i) Equipment Grants. The following organizations are ineligible to apply for Equipment grants:

(A) Institutions which are among the top 100 universities for receiving Federal funds for science and engineering research as listed in the most recent release of Selected Data on Federal Support to Universities and Colleges (National Science Foundation); or

(B) non-degree granting institutions. This incorporation by reference was approved by the Director of the Federal Register in accordance with 5 U.S.C. 552(a) and 1 CFR part 51. Copies may be obtained from the Division of Science Resource Studies, National Science Foundation, Arlington, VA 22230. Copies may be inspected at USDA, CSREES, NRICGP, 901 D St., SW., Suite 323, Washington, DC.

(ii) Research Career Enhancement Awards, Seed Grants, and Strengthening Standard Research Project Awards. The following eligibility requirements apply to Research Career Enhancement Awards, Seed Grants, and Strengthening Standard Research Project Awards:

(A) No investigator listed on the Application For Funding (Form CSRS-661) may have received a USDA competitive research grant within the last five years as evidenced by an investigator listing on a prior Form CSRS-661;

(B) All investigators listed on the Application For Funding (Form CSRS-661) must be from a small or mid-sized institution that is not among the top 100 universities for receiving Federal funds for science and engineering research (as listed in the most recent release of Selected Data on Federal Support to Universities and Colleges (National Science Foundation)) or must be from an institution located in a USDA-EPSCoR state; and

(C) Every investigator listed on the Application For Funding (Form CSRS-661) must have a full-time appointment at a degree granting institution. This incorporation by reference was approved by the Director of the Federal Register with 5 U.S.C. 552(a) and 1 CFR part 51. Copies may be obtained from the Division of Science Resource Studies, National Science Foundation, Arlington, VA 22230. Copies may be inspected at USDA, CSREES, NRICGP, 901 D. St., SW., Suite 323, Washington, DC.

7. Paragraph (c)(1) of newly redesignated § 3411.4 is amended by revising all references to "Grant Application Cover Page" to read "Application for Funding form".