

Authority: "Sec. 2(i) of the Act of August 4, 1965, as amended (7 U.S.C. 450i(i))."

3. In newly redesignated part 3411, the term "National Competitive Research Initiative Grants Program" is revised to read "National Research Initiative Competitive Grants Program" in § 3411.1(a).

4. In newly redesignated part 3411, the term "NCRIGP" is revised to read "NRICGP", each time it appears in §§ 3411.1(a) and 3411.4(c)(9)(iii).

5. In newly redesignated part 3411, the term "Grant Application Kit" is revised to read "NRICGP Application Kit" each time it appears in § 3411.4(b) introductory text, (c)(1), (8), (9) (i), (ii) and (iii).

6. Newly redesignated section 3411.2 is amended by revising the introductory text, adding new paragraphs (l)(1), (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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(l) * * *

(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 specified in the annual program solicitation.

(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.

7. Newly redesignated section 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 received 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 and colleges for receiving Federal funds for science and engineering research as specified in the annual program solicitation; or

(B) non-degree granting institutions.

(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 NRICGP competitive research grant within the last five years as evidenced by an investigator listing on a prior Form CSRS-661 (an investigator may have received a Seed Grant, Research Career Enhancement Award, Equipment Grant, or Postdoctoral Fellowship and still be eligible to receive a Strengthening Standard Research Project Award);

(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 and colleges for receiving Federal funds for science and engineering research as specified in the annual program solicitation 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 an appointment at a degree granting institution.

8a. The heading of paragraph (c)(1) of newly redesignated § 3411.4 is revised to read as set forth below, and in paragraph (c)(1), the words "a Grant Application cover page" are revised to read "an Application for Funding form".

b. Newly redesignated § 3411.4 is further amended by revising the last sentence of paragraph (c)(4), adding three new sentences at the end of paragraph (c)(8), adding a new last sentence to paragraph (c)(9)(i), and adding a new last sentence to paragraph (c)(9)(ii), by revising the term "Institutional Review Board" to read "Institutional Committee" in paragraph (c)(9)(ii), by adding a new last sentence to paragraph (c)(9)(iii), and adding new