The National Institute of Food and Agriculture was established by the 2008 Farm Bill to serve the nation’s needs by supporting exemplary research, education, and extension that addresses many challenges facing the nation. NIFA works with the best and brightest scientists at universities and colleges throughout the United States and around the world to find innovative solutions to global problems. With a timely, integrated approach and collaboration with other federal science agencies, NIFA will also serve as a vital contributor in science policy decision-making.

Research enables us to develop the knowledge needed to solve many of the issues facing our nation and the world. Education strengthens schools and universities to train the next generation of scientists, educators, producers, and citizens. Extension brings the knowledge gained through research and education to the people who need it most—in the United States and around the world.

Priority Science Areas

Global Food Security and Hunger
NIFA supports new science to boost U.S. agricultural production, improve global capacity to meet the growing food demand, and foster innovation in fighting hunger by addressing food security for vulnerable populations.

Climate Change
NIFA-funded projects generate knowledge to develop an agriculture system that maintains high productivity in the face of climate changes. This will help producers plan for and make decisions to adapt to changing environments and sustain economic vitality and can take advantage of emerging economic opportunities offered by climate change mitigation technologies.

Sustainable Energy
NIFA contributes to the President’s goal of energy independence with a portfolio of grant programs to develop biomass used for biofuels, design optimum forestry and crops for bioenergy production, and produce value-added bio-based industrial products.

Childhood Obesity
NIFA-supported programs ensure that nutritious foods are affordable and available and provide guidance so that individuals and families are able to make informed, science-based decisions about their health and well-being.

Food Safety
NIFA food safety programs work to reduce the incidence of food-borne illness and provide a safer food supply by addressing the causes of microbial contamination and antimicrobial resistance, educating consumer and food safety professionals, and developing food processing technologies.

Leadership
Roger Beachy, Director

Employees
Approximately 320

Structure
Institute of Food Production and Sustainability
• Enhancing global food security through productive and sustainable agricultural systems

Institute of Bioenergy, Climate, and Environment
• Ensuring energy independence through clean, biobased energy systems
• Ensuring sustainable and adaptive agro-ecosystems in response to climate change

Institute of Food Safety and Nutrition
• Ensuring a safe food supply
• Improving citizens’ health through nutrition
• Reducing childhood obesity
• Improving food quality

Institute of Youth, Family, and Community
• Enabling vibrant and resilient communities
• Preparing the next generation of scientists
• Enhancing science capacity in minority-serving institutions
• Enhancing youth development

Center for International Programs
• Educating the next generation of scientists in developing economies
• Sharing research discoveries to enhance food production and stabilize economies

Budget
Total FY10 .............................................. $1,488,335,000
Research ............................................. 736,027,000
Education ............................................ 68,363,000
Extension ............................................... 494,923,000
Integrated .............................................. 60,022,000
Mandatory .............................................. 129,000,000

Partner Land-Grant Institutions
Total ......................................................... 109
1862 Land-Grant Universities ................. 57
1890 Land-Grant Universities ................. 18
1994 Land-Grant Universities ................. 34

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Tips for Developing and Implementing Integrated Projects

This tip sheet was developed as a resource to help applicants develop and implement Integrated Projects. It should be used as an additional resource to the “General Grant Writing Tips for Success” document.

CSREES competitive programs define “Integrated” as bringing together the three components of the agricultural knowledge system (research, education, and extension) around a problem or issue.

- **Research activity** means a scientific investigation or inquiry which results in the generation of knowledge.

- **Education Activity** means formal classroom instruction, laboratory instruction, and practicum experience in the food and agricultural sciences and other related matters such as faculty development, student recruitment and services, curriculum development, instructional materials and equipment, and innovative teaching methodologies.

- **Extension Activity** means a series of educational activities with identified learning objectives that deliver science-based knowledge to people outside of the traditional classroom, enabling them to make practical decisions.

The following tips are intended to aid in the process of developing and implementing Integrated Projects. Use of the Logic Model Planning Process is recommended to assist applicants in developing their projects – see [http://www.uwex.edu/ces/pdande/evaluation/evallogicmodel.html](http://www.uwex.edu/ces/pdande/evaluation/evallogicmodel.html).

**Project Area Identification:**
- Aim for high potential impact and significant public benefit for agriculture, the environment, human health and well being, and communities
- Address current data/knowledge gaps
- Identify those who will be benefited/affected by this project
- Identify goals and possible positive outcomes by evaluating short, intermediate, and long term results
  - Short term – *Learning* (awareness, knowledge, attitudes, skills, opinions, aspirations, motivations)
  - Intermediate – *Action* (behavior, practice, decisions, policies, social action)
  - Long term – *Conditions* (social, economic, civic, environmental)
- Match the problem to an appropriate funding opportunity within CSREES programs

**Team Building:**
- Build a synergistic collaboration representative of the integrated approach
- Design an interdisciplinary team and clearly identify the roles and responsibilities of each team member
- Build on existing partnerships while allowing new alliances to be formed
• Include collaborators that are trusted by and representative of the stakeholder community
• Recognize the importance of diversity within the team
• Ensure proper balance relative to fields of expertise and organizations
• Essential Factors for Successful Teamwork
  o Mutual Respect
  o Trust
  o Follow through on Actions
  o Communication
  o Flexibility
  o Shared Values
  o Allocation of Resources among Integrated Functions and Participating Institutions

Stakeholder Input:
• Identify key stakeholders
• Include stakeholders early and often
  o To identify the problem
  o To develop the project
  o To evaluate progress
• Create a stakeholder advisory committee
• Maintain constant and effective communication with stakeholders
• Substantial involvement of stakeholders will help to ensure true integration

Project Development:
• Begin early! Integrated projects take more time to develop than standard research projects
• Invest in face-to-face meetings for project planning/proposal writing
• Define and document the extent of a problem
• Identify existing resources
• Consider how the solutions will be implemented
• Clearly identify and involve information providers that advise end users on implementation of new knowledge
• Establish measures of project performance and supporting evaluations
• Include mechanisms to capture new knowledge in sustained education or extension activities that have impact beyond the life of the project
• Create an integrated approach (two or more of the following):
  o Research: What are the gaps in knowledge?
  o Extension: How will you reach those who need the information?
  o Education: How will you train the next generation?

Writing the Proposal:
• Ensure all team members are involved from the beginning of project development
• Represent all project functions (research, extension, education) in one or more project objectives
• Address the funding program’s evaluation criteria
• Identify expenses for all project activities
• Clearly identify the stakeholder community and their involvement in the project (include letters of support when appropriate)

Implementing the Project:
• Maintaining the Collaboration
  o Regular project team meetings (at minimum, annual meetings)
  o Mini team meetings at conferences, etc.
  o Regularly scheduled conference calls
  o Regular e-mail correspondence
• Project Management
  o Clearly stipulate roles of team members, including identification of project leader(s)
  o Ensure that administrative and management strategies are clearly articulated
  o Allow for transparency in budget issues
  o Create a realistic agenda and timeframe for delivery of products
  o Develop coordination strategy to enhance communication, data sharing, reporting, etc.
  o Establish a protocol to continuously report progress to team members
  o Include all team members in the development of progress reports to ensure that all project components receive appropriate recognition for accomplishments